

LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES (LEKALA LA TSA BOLEPI)



Ten-Day Agrometeorological Bulletin

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*...dedicated to the agricultural community
... aimed at harmonizing agricultural activities with weather and climate*

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Highlights

- ❑ Good rains experienced at some parts.
- ❑ Consistently low cumulative rainfall at some parts.
- ❑ Warm temperatures experienced during the dekad.
- ❑ Weeding in progress.

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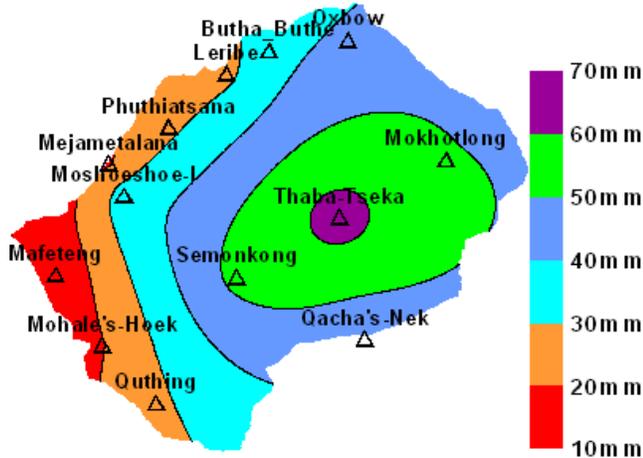
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DEKADAL WEATHER SUMMARY

Sporadic rain was experienced in the last ten days. Most precipitation was as a result of localized convection resulting in intense thunderstorm activities accompanied by strong damaging winds. Otherwise the interior surface remained shallow advecting little moisture into our area.

RAINFALL SITUATION

Second dekad of December 2008 recorded rainfall of great spatial distribution variability. While most parts of the country recorded normal to above normal rainfall, areas like Quthing, Qacha’s Nek, Phuthiatsana and Mafeteng experienced below normal dekadal rainfall. Temporal distribution of the rainfall was also highly variable. At some parts of the country high intensity rainfall was recognized especially on the 18th where Butha-Buthe and Semonkong registered 39.5mm and 38mm of rainfall respectively.



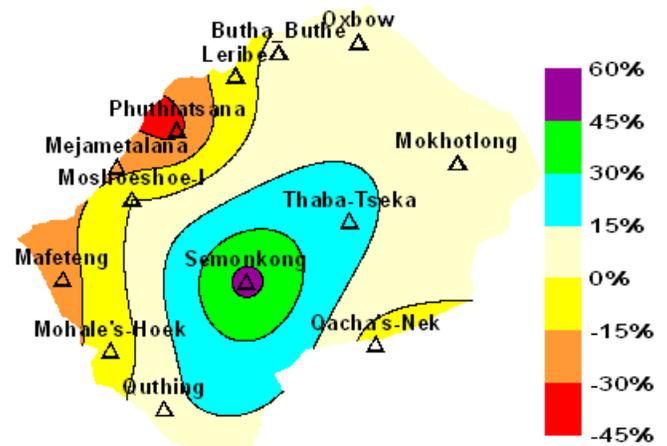
Map 1: Dekadal Rainfall for December Dekad 3, 2008

Rain days ranged from three days at Mafeteng and Phuthiatsana to eight days at Semonkong.

Cumulative Percentage Rainfall Departure from Normal

Cumulative rainfall since first dekad of September 2008 to the current reporting period at Phuthiatsana and other parts of the lowlands has been consistently below normal (see Map 2). That is despite some improvements at other areas at different dekads during the development of the season. Prolonged deficiency in cumulative rainfall can have undesirable

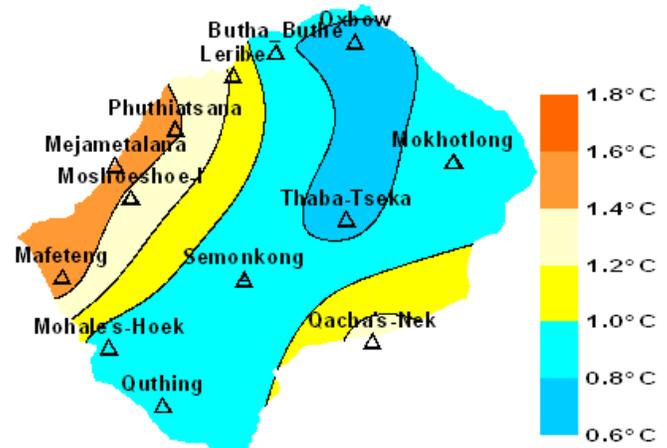
consequences in water resources as well as agricultural activities.



Map 2: Cumulative Rainfall Percentage Departure from Normal

TEMPERATURE

The period under review was generally warm. Mean temperatures were normal at most parts of the country. Highest mean temperatures deviations were experienced along the western border from Phuthiatsana to Mafeteng (see Map 3). The highest recorded daily maximum temperature of the dekad was 31.2°C (Mejametalana) on the 20th.



Map 3: Dekadal Mean Temperature Deviation from Normal

RAINFALL ANOMALIES

Rainfall performance since November has been relatively normal to above normal in all agroecological zones (see Fig.3). However, caution should be taken to use more of the station data since there can be high variability from agroecological zone to station information.

CROP STAGE AND CONDITIONS

Most parts of the country maintain optimum soil moisture that can facilitate agricultural activities. Planting has decreased and weeding has started. Summer crops conditions are generally good and they are at vegetative stages.

Wheat grown in winter has matured and harvesting is in progress.

Water resources have improved but not stabilized at most parts of the country. Parts of the country that have consistently recorded below normal rainfall have not adequately recharged water resources.

Fig.1

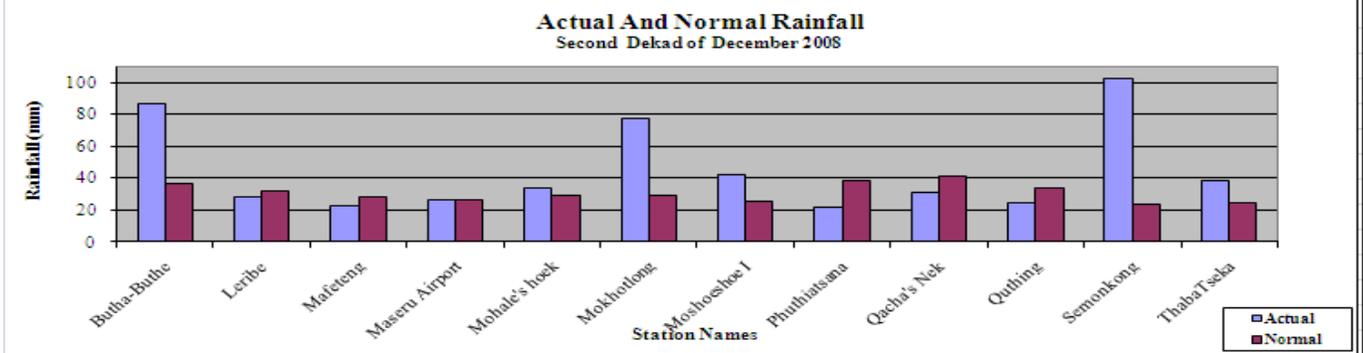


Fig.2

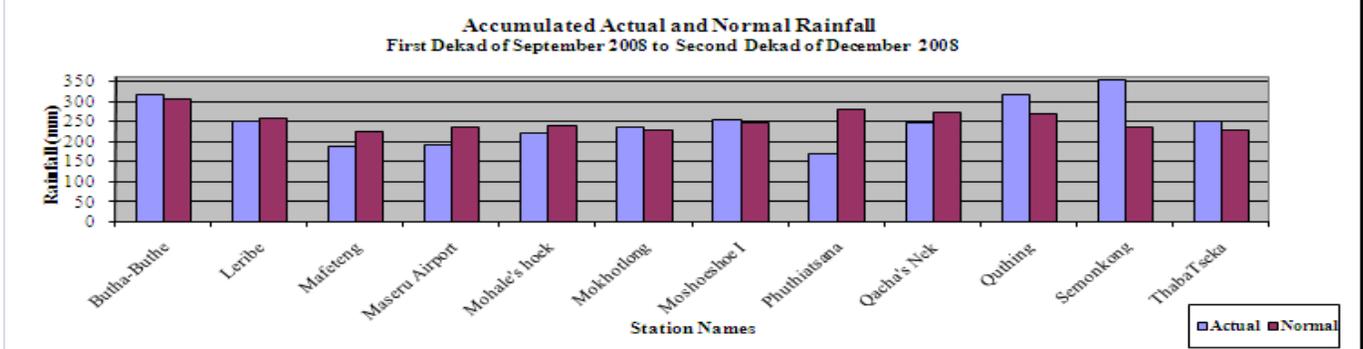


Fig.3

Rainfall Anomaly (%) for the period September Dekad 1, 2008 to December Dekad 2, 2008

