

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

- ❑ Wet conditions prevailed at most places.
- ❑ Cumulative rainfall has improved.
- ❑ Normal temperatures experienced at most parts.
- ❑ Weeding hampered by rains

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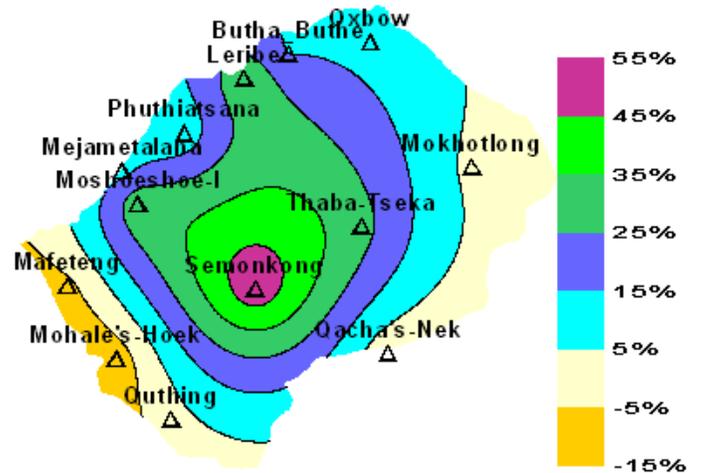
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DEKADAL WEATHER SUMMARY

Significant amounts of rainfall were experienced in the past ten days. A typical summer system dominated towards the end of the period where there was influx of moist tropical air from the Congo Air basin into the interior of the subcontinent resulting in widespread rain and thundershowers.

RAINFALL SITUATION

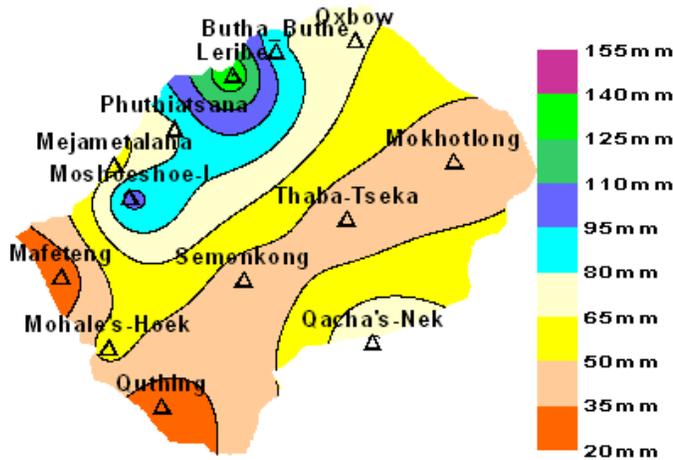
The first dekad of February 2009 recorded normal to above normal rainfall at most places. Widespread rainfall was experienced in most of the days during the dekad. Quthing and Mafeteng were the only parts that had below normal rainfall. Leribe experienced torrential rains on more than one occasion. Highest and lowest dekadal rainfall is 140.9mm (Leribe) and 21.7mm (Mafeteng). The highest daily rainfall of the dekad was 64.8mm at Leribe on the last day of the dekad (see Map 1). Good rainfall during the dekad improved soil moisture at most parts of the country.



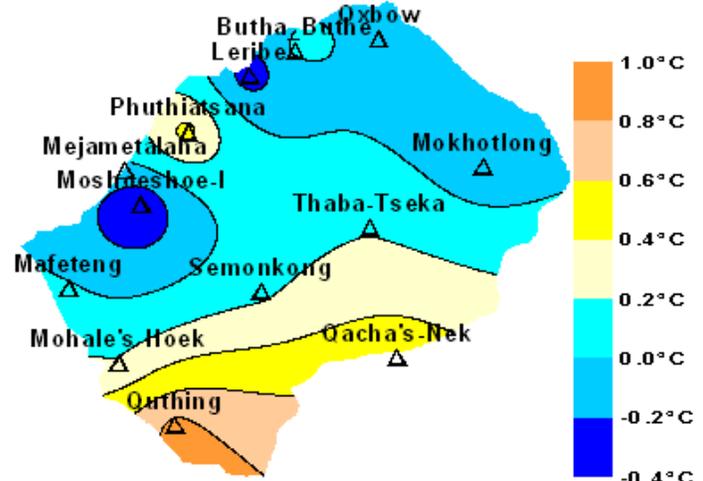
Map 2: Cumulative Rainfall Percentage Departure from Normal

TEMPERATURE

Temperatures in the period under discussion were generally normal. Highest mean temperature deviation from normal was in the southern parts of the country while lowest deviations were in the vicinity of Maseru and Leribe (see Map 3).



Map 1: Dekadal Rainfall for February First Dekad 2009



Map 3: Dekadal Mean Temperature Deviation from Normal

Cumulative Percentage Rainfall Departure from Normal

The recent rains that the country experienced have increased cumulative rainfall. Map 2 shows that cumulative rainfall is normal to above normal countrywide. Lowest departures are observed in the southern to southwestern parts of the country. That is because rainfall in the recent dekads had been confined mainly in the northern parts of the country. Increase in cumulative rainfall will likely improve water resources recharge.

RAINFALL ANOMALIES

Fig 3 below shows that the northern lowlands collectively recorded above normal rainfall during the period in discussion. The rest of the agroecological zones jointly experienced normal rainfall. Last two dekads received good rainfall in most parts of the country and that should be beneficial to most weather sensitive sectors.

CROP STAGE AND CONDITIONS

Huge amounts of rainfall that were experienced in most parts of the country improved soil moisture. Field operations could not be done due to water-logging and muddy conditions. Water-logging could be harmful to crops in these flowering stages. Weeding was hampered with at most places due to rain. Crop stages range from vegetative to early flowering stages. Crops are generally in fair to good conditions at most places.

DEKADAL OUTLOOK

11 – 20 February 2009

The coming ten days are expected to continue to experience scattered to widespread rain at the beginning of the dekad and isolated to scattered thundershowers towards the end of the dekad. Temperatures are expected to remain cool to warm due to increased cloudiness.

Fig. 1

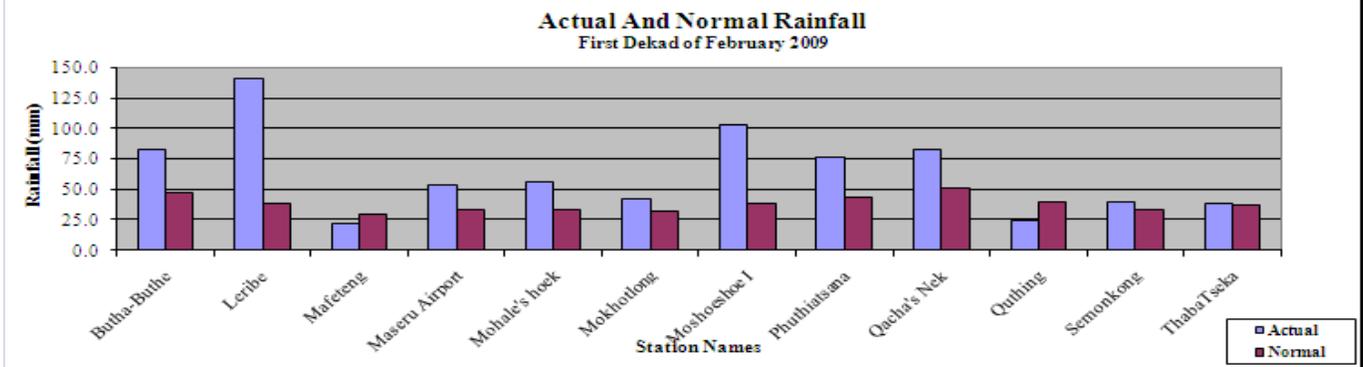


Fig. 2

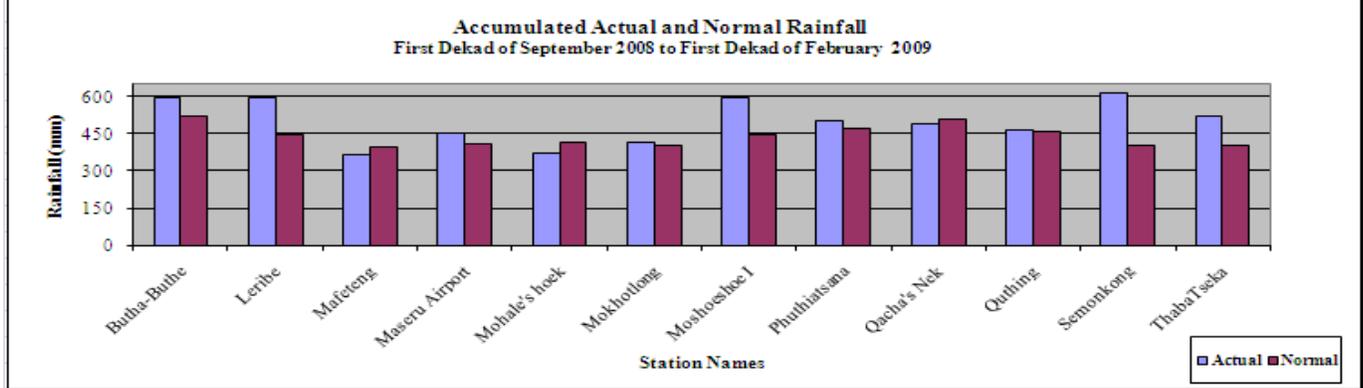


Fig. 3

Rainfall Anomaly (%) for the period September dekad 1, 2008 to February dekad 1, 2009

