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Agro-Met Monthly Update:

February 2009

Date of issue: March 2009

Highlights

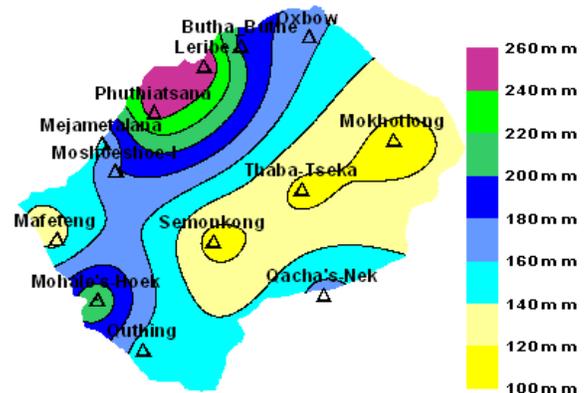
1. Above normal rainfall recorded
2. Normal mean temperatures experienced during the month
3. Field operations were hampered with
4. Vegetation good

Rainfall

Monthly Actual Rainfall

February 2009 recorded above normal rainfall countrywide. Torrential rains were recorded throughout the month. Highest rainfall amounts were in the northern parts of the country where Leribe had highest rainfall with 260mm. Lowest rainfall for the month was 114mm at both Thaba-Tseka and Mokhotlong in the eastern to northeastern parts of the country respectively (see Map 1).

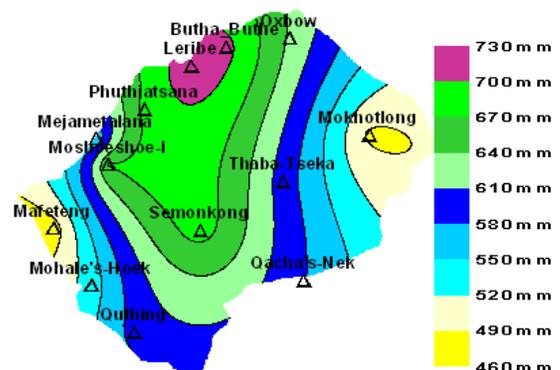
Localized flooding and over flowing of rivers were experienced at most places and incidences of people taken by water trying to cross swollen rivers were reported.



Map 1: February 2009 Monthly Rainfall

Cumulative Rainfall since September 2008

Cumulative rainfall since September 2008 is normal in most parts of the country, and above normal in the central parts of the country, and Leribe (sees Map 2). High rainfall amounts recorded during the month of February enhanced cumulative rainfall and areas which had below normal cumulative rainfall just over a month ago now have above normal cumulative rainfall. Hydrological conditions were highly improved by the rainfall during the period under review.



Map 2: Cumulative Rainfall, September 08 - February 2009

Temperatures

Normal temperatures were recorded during the month of February 2009. Rather comfortable temperatures were experienced due to mostly

cloudy conditions that persisted during the reviewed period.

Crop Stage and Conditions

Soil moisture conditions were high the entire month of February. Weeding and other field operations became difficult due to waterlogging and muddy conditions in the fields. Crops were reported to be eroded by water at some parts of the country. Waterlogging can be dangerous to crops at this stage of their development. Crop stages range from vegetative to flowering stages. Crops are generally in fair to good conditions at most places.

Water and livestock conditions

Water and livestock conditions have improved. Flooding in major river channels was observed and crossing of rivers was difficult at some places.

Vegetation monitoring

Vegetation condition improved due to rains experienced during the period in discussion. General vegetation is good in the country and should improve more due to recent rains.
