

LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES (LEKALA LA TSA BOLEPI)



Ten-Day Agrometeorological Bulletin

01st – 10th January 2004



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

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Highlights

- ❑ Rainfall situation improved.
- ❑ High day temperatures were recorded.
- ❑ Summer crops at vegetative stage.
- ❑ Harvesting of winter wheat affected by rains.
- ❑ Light rains expected in the next dekad.

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WEATHER SUMMARY
01st – 10th January 2004

The first dekad of January was warm and wet. The conditions were due to a low pressure system that had been dominant over the interior parts of the sub- region. The system brought tropical moisture into the country. This resulted in some significant rains over many parts of the country.

RAINFALL SITUATION
01st – 10th January 2004

The rainfall for the 1st dekad of January 2004 has improved as compared to the previous dekad throughout the country. The rains received were normal to above normal. Butha-Buthe, Qacha’s Nek and Oxbow registered the highest dekad rainfall of 129.4mm, 89.1mm and 82.8mm respectively (see table 1). The lowest rainfall was experienced in Moshoeshoe I, Phuthiatsana and Mafeteng with 19.7mm, 23.9mm and 31.8mm respectively (see table 1 & fig 2). Over 75% of the rainfall received was experienced on the 7th and 10th of January. For example, in Butha-Buthe 45.7mm and 57mm were recorded on those days respectively. These heavy falls resulted in minor flooding over fields and a lot of soil erosion. On average, the good rains received throughout the country improved greatly the available soil moisture to crops thus benefiting the summer crops.

Accumulated Rainfall From 1st Sept 03 to 1st Dek. Jan 04

Almost all the stations recorded good rains but the cumulative rainfall since 1st September to 10th January 2004 is mostly below normal with few exceptions with near normal cumulative rainfall (see fig 3). The percentage cumulative rainfall departure from normal is mostly negative around the country (see fig 1). However, a larger part of the country experienced quite an improvement in rainfall situation except for the south western to the extreme southern tip of the country (see fig 1).

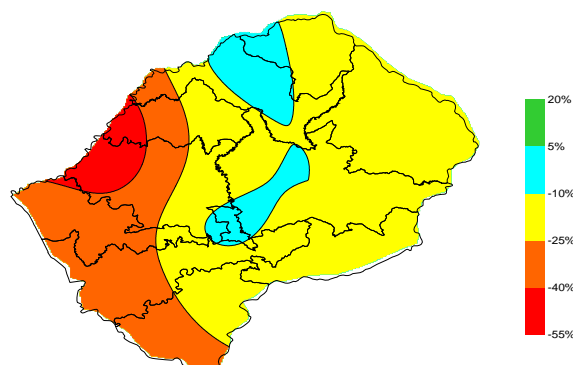


Fig.1: Cumulative rainfall departure from normal since 1st Sept to 1st dek. Jan 04.

TEMPERATURE
01st – 10th January 2004

The country experienced normal to above normal temperatures. Deviation from normal ranged from -0.4°C to 1.6°C (see table 1). Day temperatures in some days were very high especially over the lowlands.

CROP STAGE AND CONDITION
01st – 10th January 2004

An improved crop condition can be observed over some parts of the country where planting was done successfully. This improvement was a result of rains that were received during the previous dekad and into the dekad in review. Moreover, some farmers especially over the lowlands have taken the opportunity of the prevailing moisture to continue with the planting of beans as it is now too late to plant the staple cereals (maize, sorghum, wheat). However, summer crops are generally at vegetative to early flowering stage and conditions range from fair to good. Weeding at some places is complete while it is still going on at some.

Harvesting of winter wheat was hampered by the rains at some places over the lowlands.

DEKADAL OUTLOOK
11th – 20th January 2004

The country will receive light isolated to scattered thundershowers. Temperatures are also anticipated to be warm to hot.

Table 1

		Rainfall (mm)						TEMPERATURE (°C)				
		Total From Sept. 03 to 1st Dek Jan. 04										
STATION	ALT.	Actual	Normal	Rain			%Dept. from	Minimum	Maximum	Dekadal	Dekadal	
NAME	(M)	R/Fall	R/Fall	Days	Actual	Normal	Normal	Lowest(Day)	Highest (Day)	Mean	Normal	Deviation
Butha-Buthe	1770	129.4	31.6	6	351.1	347.3	1	12.5(9)	29.5(4)	21.2	19.7	1.5
Leribe	1740	60.6	33.4	5	254.2	285.4	-11	12.2(9)	29.7(4)	21.4	20.1	1.3
Mafeteng	1610	31.8	32.2	5	194.0	265.8	-27	12.1(9)	30.6(5)	20.8	20.2	0.6
Maseru Airport	1530	32.4	29.6	6	131.8	283.7	-54	13.5(5)	31.4(4)	22.1	20.8	1.3
Mohale's hoek	1600	34.5	33.6	3	183.2	301.3	-39	13.0(2)	32.0(5)	22.0	21.0	1.0
Mokhotlong	2200	66.1	34.8	6	241.9	275.9	-12	8.6(9)	29.3(5)	17.8	16.5	1.3
Ox-Bow	2600	82.8	57.6	7	447.4	552.5	-19	4.2(9)	21.5(5)	13.3	11.9	1.4
Phuthiatsana	1750	23.9	39.1	6	206.5	316.0	-35	13.5(9)	29.5(5)	21.6	20.2	1.4
Qacha's Nek	1970	89.1	42.6	6	266.6	346.6	-23	9.5(4)	30.4(5)	18.5	18.2	0.3
Quthing	1740	54.8	26.9	5	203.6	294.4	-31	14.0(4)	31.5(5)	21.6	20.1	1.5
Semonkong	2458	35.5	29.7	5	267.6	283.8	-6	5.6(4)	26.5(5)	16.3	16.7	-0.4
Moshoeshoe I	1628	19.7	25.9	6	151.5	304.9	-50	13.5(5)	30.6(4)	21.9	N/A	N/A
Thaba-Tseka	2160	45.4	26.8	5	242.6	271.0	-10	9.1(2)	26.6(4, 5)	18.2	17.0	1.2

Fig.2

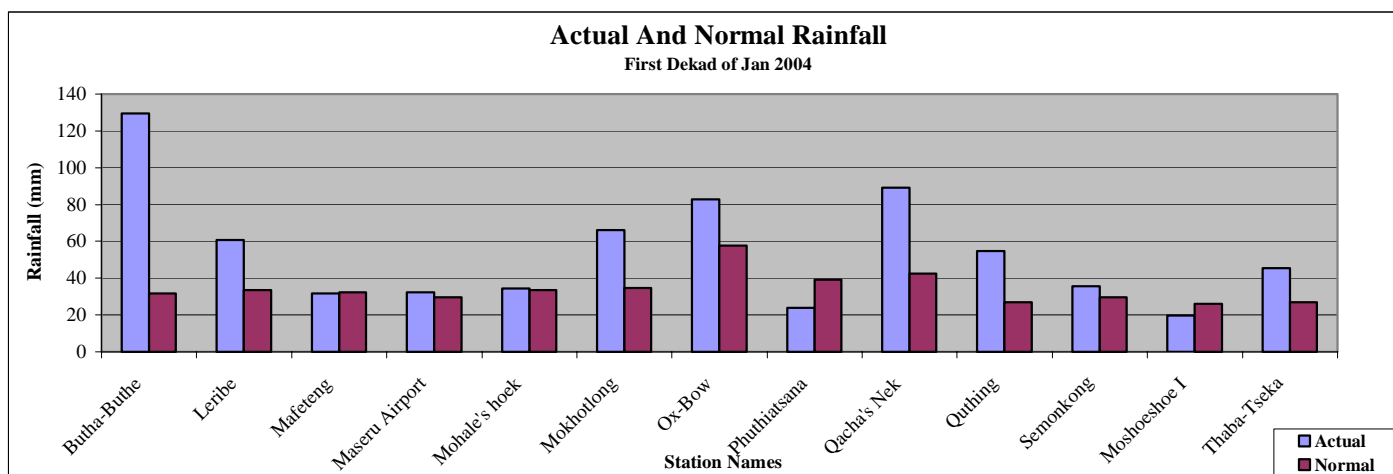
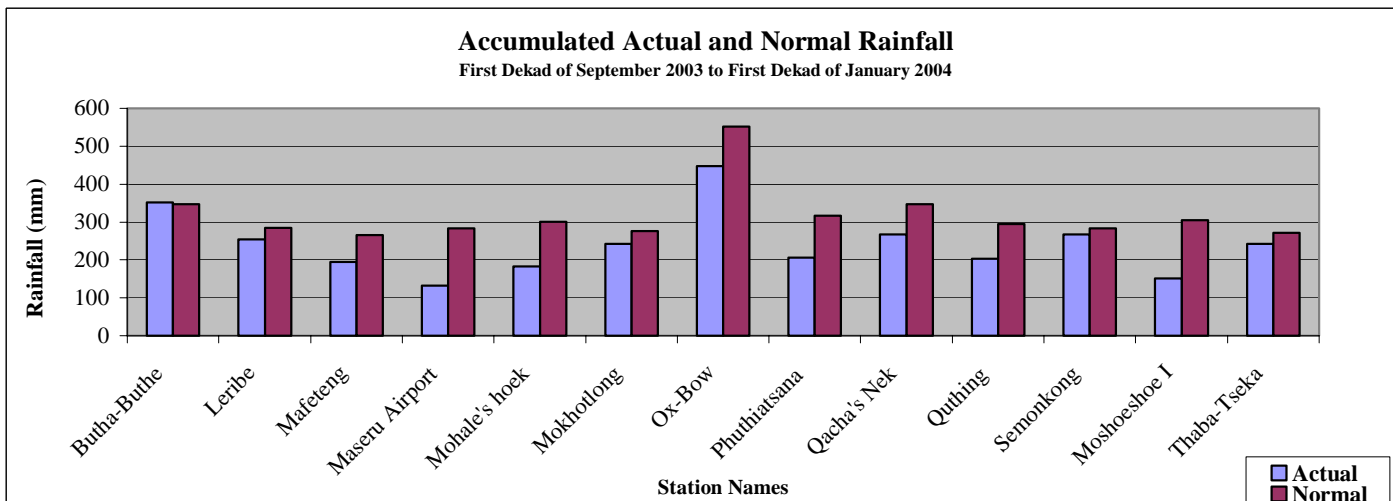


Fig.3



Glossary

Dekad : Ten day period

Normal: Average figure over a specific time period.

% Rainfall Departure from Normal: $(\text{Actual Rainfall} - \text{Normal Rainfall}) / \text{Normal Rainfall} \times 100$

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And it is

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Comments and Contributions would be highly appreciated.