

# LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES (LEKALA LA TSA BOLEPI)



## Ten-Day Agrometeorological Bulletin

1 – 10 January 2009



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

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## Highlights

- ❑ Dry weather experienced at some parts.
- ❑ Consistently low cumulative rainfall at some parts.
- ❑ Normal temperatures experienced at most parts.
- ❑ Weeding in progress.

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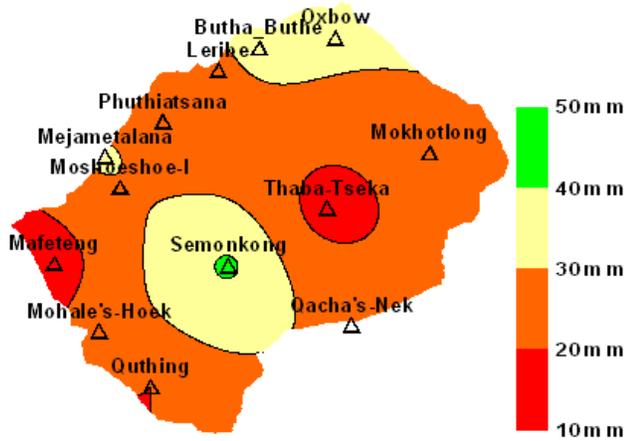
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### DEKADAL WEATHER SUMMARY

Low rainfall amounts were experienced in the last ten days as the rain bearing system, in particular the surface interior trough remained shallow resulting in little moisture advection into the southern Africa interior. Low rainfall figures that were observed were largely as a result of localized convection coupled with low level convergence.

### RAINFALL SITUATION

The first dekad of January 2009 was predominantly dry countrywide. Below normal rainfall was recorded in the region extending from Thaba-Tseka to Quthing in the east, Mafeteng and Phuthiatsana (Berea). The last dekad of December 2008 was generally dry in most parts of the lowlands including Quthing and wet in the highlands. Central to eastern parts of the country are shown in Map 1 and Fig. 1 that they recorded good rains while western parts that extend from parts of Berea to Quthing had relatively bad rains. Lowest and highest dekadal rainfall was 11.6mm (Mafeteng) and 64.3mm (Thaba-Tseka). Temporal distribution of the rain was uneven as rain days ranged from three days at Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek and Quthing to six days at Thaba-Tseka.

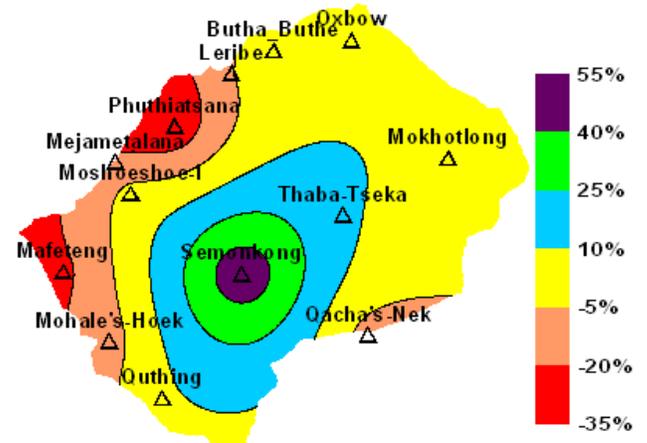


Map 1: Dekadal Rainfall for January Dekad 1, 2009

#### Cumulative Percentage Rainfall Departure from Normal

Cumulative rainfall since first dekad of September 2008 to the last dekad of December 2008 remains low mainly in the western parts of the country. It is still lowest at Phuthiatsana and Mafeteng (see Map 2 & Fig. 3). Dry spells have been prominent especially in the lowlands. That has resulted in low accumulated

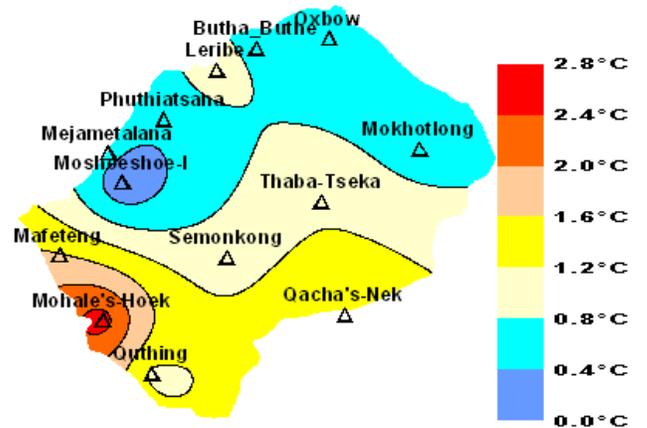
rainfall. Low rainfall accumulation can have impacts in that water resources may not be sufficiently recharged.



Map 2: Cumulative Rainfall Percentage Departure from Normal

### TEMPERATURE

Mean temperatures were mostly normal during the period under review. Mohale's Hoek with dekadal mean deviation of 2.6°C was the only area to have above normal dekadal temperatures.



Map 3: Dekadal Mean Temperature Deviation from Normal

### RAINFALL ANOMALIES

Rainfall conditions have been very poor during the dekad under review. Fig 3 shows that the southern lowlands and the Senqu River Valley were affected most by the dry weather as these zones had below normal rainfall.

### CROP STAGE AND CONDITIONS

Dry spells have halted crop developments in most parts of the country. Crops have are currently experiencing water deficits and soil moisture content

remains inadequate for crops in most parts of the country. Crop stages are generally at vegetative stages with some starting to tassel, and crops are in fair to good conditions at most places. Weeding is still active.

Wheat grown in winter has matured and harvested.

Potable water availability is challenged by the current dry weather. Abnormal queues can be observed at some villages. Vegetation conditions are low in the region extending from Berea to Mohale's Hoek which is the area that had lowest cumulative rainfall for a major part of the current season.

## **DEKADAL OUTLOOK**

**11 – 20 January 2009**

The coming dekad is expected to continue to experience reduced rainfall activities. Thus mostly isolated rain and thundershowers are likely with a chance of scattered thundershowers towards the end of the dekad. Strong winds and intense thunderstorms are likely at times. Temperatures will be mostly hot.

Fig.1

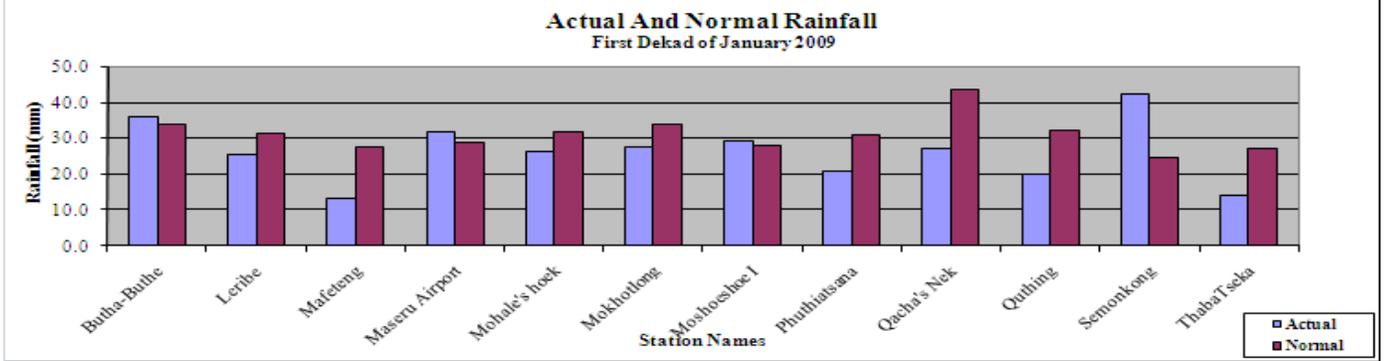


Fig.2

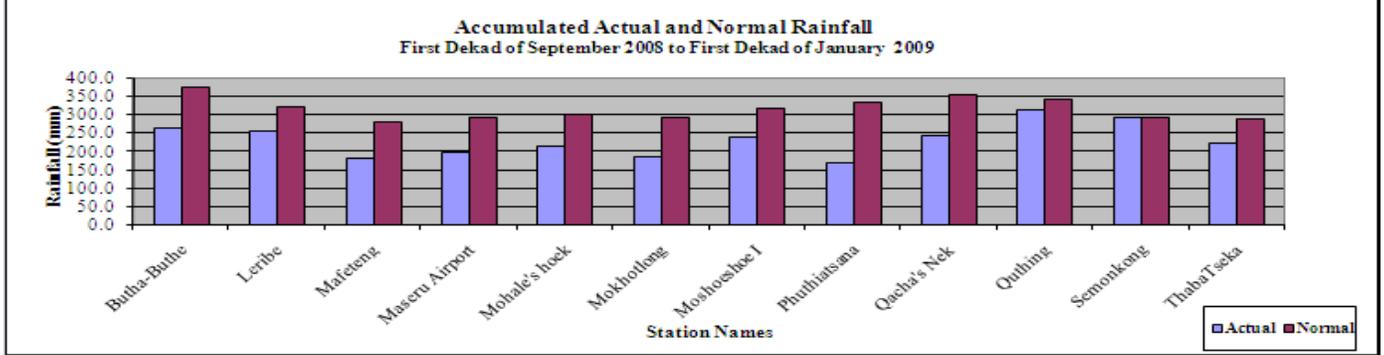


Fig.3

