

LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES (LEKALA LA TSA BOLEPI)



Ten-Day Agrometeorological Bulletin

21st – 31st 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

- ❑ Significant rainfall experienced over a greater part of the country.
- ❑ Some regions remain the worst hit by rainfall deficiency.
- ❑ High temperatures registered at most places.
- ❑ Western to southern regions are likely to face soil moisture deficit.

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WEATHER SUMMARY
21st – 31st January 2004

The first half of the 3rd dekad of January was generally dominated by a surface trough. This resulted in scattered rainshowers during the 1st half of the dekad. However, the rains deteriorated towards the end of the dekad. Temperatures were generally hot throughout that dekad.

RAINFALL SITUATION
21st – 31st January 2004

The 3rd dekad of January 2004 experienced significant rainfall as compared to the previous dekad over a greater part of the country. The central to the northern region of the country received rainfall within the range 40mm to 67mm and Maseru, Phuthiatsana and Qacha’s Nek registered the highest dekad rainfall of 66.8mm, 66.7mm and 61.7 respectively while stations over the southern region registered as little as 22.3mm and 12.5mm of rainfall at Quthing and Mohale’s Hoek respectively (see table 1).

Cumulative Rainfall from 1st Sept 03 to 31st Jan 04

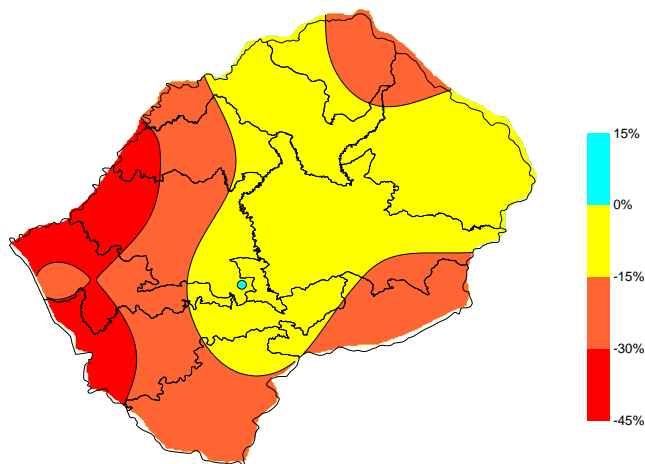


Fig.1: Cumulative rainfall departure from normal since 1st Sept 03 to 31st Jan 04.

Although good rains were received over most parts of the country, cumulative rainfall since the beginning of the rain season still shows below normal rainfall. This is depicted by the negative percentage rainfall departure from normal

experienced over a larger part of the country (see table 1 & fig.1). The south western, the extreme south and extreme eastern regions remain the worst hit by rainfall deficiency. The northern tip that had been performing well seems to be declining (see fig.1).

TEMPERATURE
21st – 31st January 2004

The long days of intense heating resulted in high temperatures at most places. This can be seen from the positive temperature deviations obtained during this period (see table 1 under temperatures) at most stations. Qacha’s Nek and Semonkong in the highlands obtained negative temperature deviations, however no significantly low temperatures that could have adverse impacts on crops were registered.

CROP STAGE AND CONDITION
21st – 31st January 2004

Crops over the central to the northern part of the country benefited from the good rains that were received during the dekad under review. However, although the southern to western lowlands planting was not successful, the little planted area is likely to face soil moisture deficit especially as no good rains are foreseen in the near future. Nevertheless, crop (maize) over much of the central and northern regions ranges from vegetative to tasseling stage with sorghum and wheat at vegetative stage. Crops are generally at fair to good condition.

Table 1

Rainfall and Temperature Summaries												
		Rainfall (mm)						TEMPERATURE (°C)				
		Total From Sept. 03 to 3rd 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	51.4	49.6	5	434.9	434.2	0	13.2(30)	30.6(27,28)	21	19.5	1.5
Mafeteng	1610	36.6	43.1	2	244.0	341.2	-28	12.5(24)	32.6(28)	21.9	20.1	1.8
Maseru Airport	1530	66.8	44.6	3	229.9	359.2	-36	12.5(29)	31.5(26,27)	21.9	20.8	1.1
Mohale's hoek	1600	12.5	44.8	3	236.2	381.7	-38	13.0(21)	32.0(21)	22.4	21.0	1.4
Mokhotlong	2200	58.8	43.5	8	312.8	348.8	-10	11.0(26)	28.3(28)	18.6	16.5	2.1
Ox-Bow	2600	32.6	66.6	-	524.2	672.2	-22	6.2(26)	22.2(26)	14.6	12.0	2.6
Phuthiatsana	1750	66.7	40.1	5	286.2	399.0	-28	14.3(21)	30.4(27)	21.5	20.0	1.5
Qacha's Nek	1970	61.7	49.5	5	336.7	437.0	-23	10.5(30)	-	18.1	18.3	-0.2
Quthing	1740	22.3	40.9	5	273.4	361.5	-24	13.9(21)	31.2(27,28)	21.9	20.0	1.9
Semonkong	2458	47.4	39.7	5	359.8	354.4	2	-	-	15.7	17.0	-1.3
Moshoeshoe I	1628	50.8	28.1	4	224.9	355.7	-37	14.0(21)	30.6(27,28)	22.0	N/A	N/A
Thaba-Tseka	2160	40.3	38.7	7	289.2	333.2	-13	11.4(30)	-	17.7	16.5	1.2
Leribe	1740	-	47.7	-	-	366.6	-	-	-	21.3	19.9	1.4

Fig.2

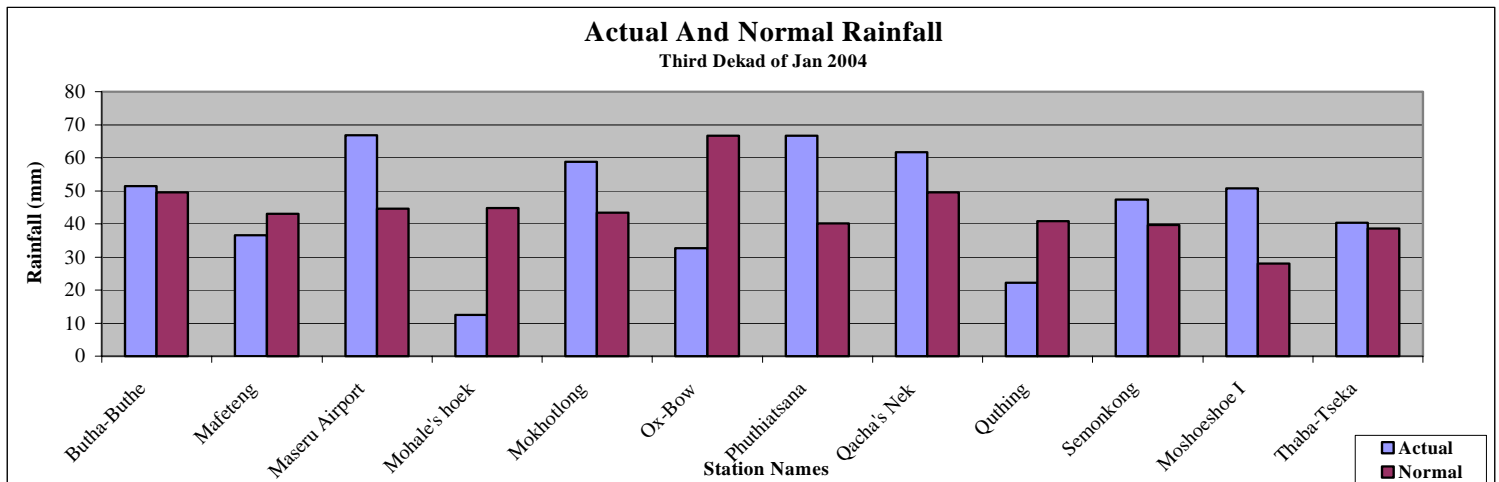
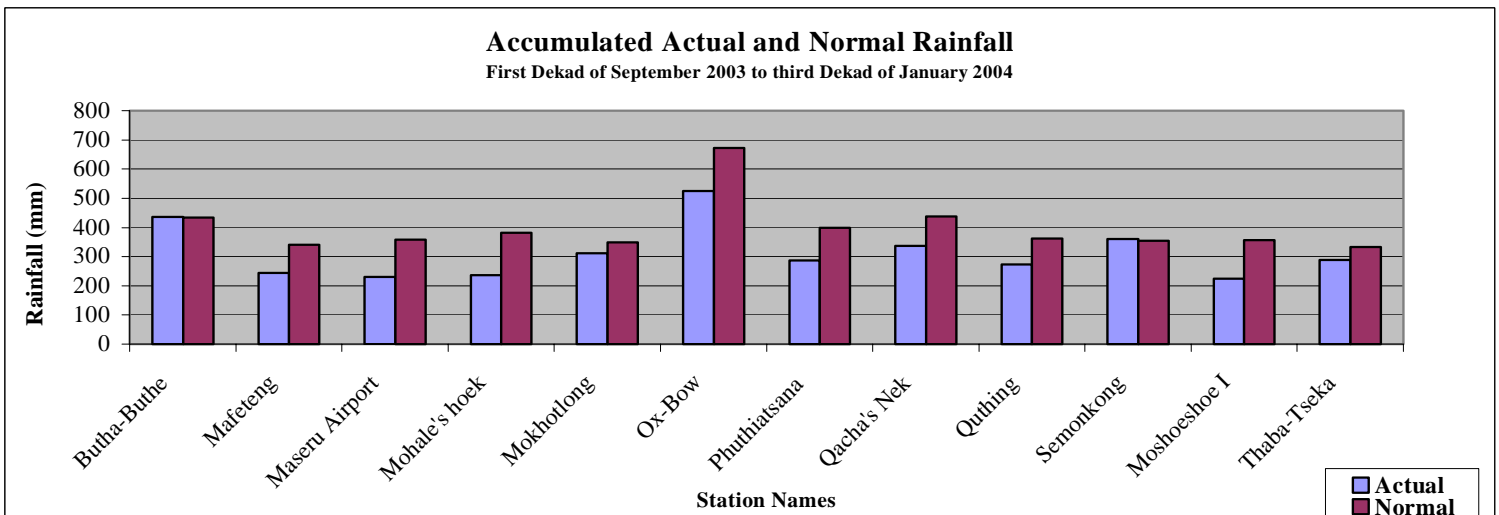


Fig.3



Glossary

Dekad : Ten day period

Normal: Average figure over a specific time period.

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

This Bulletin is issued during the Summer Cropping Season (October – April).

And it is

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Comments and Contributions would be highly appreciated.