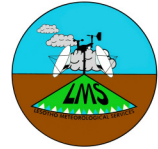




# LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES

*We are at your service. Re sebelise*



Agro-Met Monthly Update:

January 2009

Date of issue: February 2009

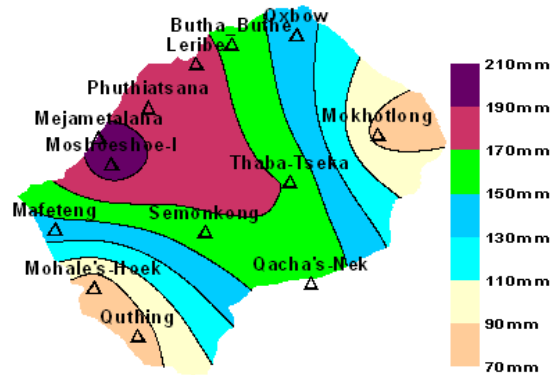
## Highlights

1. Normal to above normal rainfall recorded at most places
2. Normal mean temperatures experienced during the month
3. Crops at vegetative to tasselling stages
4. Vegetation increasing.

## Rainfall

### *Monthly Actual Rainfall*

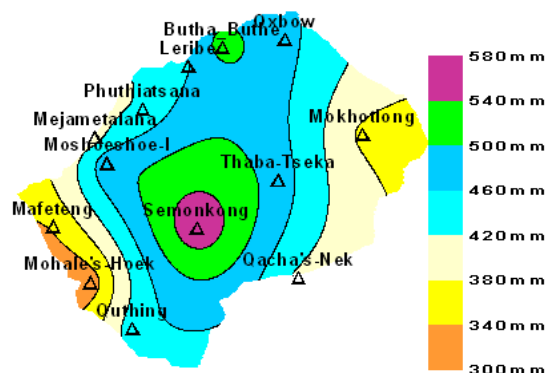
The month of January 2009 recorded normal to above normal rainfall in all parts of the country except in Quthing, Mokhotlong and Mohale's Hoek. First two dekad of the month were predominantly dry and last dekad received torrential rains at most parts of the country. The western parts of the country especially in the vicinity of Maseru urban experienced highest monthly rainfall while the northeastern as well as southwestern parts had lowest monthly rainfall amounts (see Map 1).



Map 1: Monthly Rainfall for the month of January 2009

### *Cumulative Rainfall since September 2008*

There was a significant improvement in cumulative rainfall contributed mainly by the rainfall in the last dekad of the period under review. Good recovery in cumulative rainfall was largely in the western lowlands which had some areas which were characterized by lengthy dry spells since the inception of the rainfall season. Map 2 shows that central parts of the country (Semonkong) have highest cumulative rainfall while southwestern areas (parts of Mafeteng and Mohale's Hoek) and areas in the northeastern (Mokhotlong) have lowest cumulative rainfall.



Map 2: Cumulative Rainfall (Sept 08 - Jan 09)

### Temperatures

Temperatures were normal during the period in discussion. Although temperatures were normal in

the first two dekads, evapotranspiration and crops wilted were enhanced by dry weather.

---

### Crop Stage and Conditions

Soil moisture conditions were poor in the first two dekads but improved during the last dekad in most parts of the country. There were incidences of water-logging and muddy conditions in the last dekad which prevented some fields operations like weeding. Weeding was most active in the first two dekads in many areas. Crops in the south and southwestern parts of the country were water stressed for most parts of the month. Crop stages are generally at vegetative and tasselling stages, and crops are in fair to good conditions at most places.

### Water and livestock conditions

Water and livestock conditions have improved during the last third of the month. River flows were high towards the end of the month.

### Vegetation monitoring

Vegetation condition had deteriorated during the first and second dekads especially in the entire lowlands, but conditions improved in the last dekad. General vegetation is good in the country and should improve more due to recent rains.

---