

LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES (LEKALA LA TSA BOLEPI)



Ten-Day Agrometeorological Bulletin

11th – 20th November 2003



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

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Highlights

- ❑ Slight increase in rainfall experienced.
- ❑ Most areas experienced negative rainfall percentage departure from normal.
- ❑ High temperatures as a factor contributing towards rapid loss of soil moisture.
- ❑ Planting still in progress.
- ❑ Normal rainfall expected for November to January 2004.

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Weather Summary
11th – 20th November 2003

The second dekad of November received some light isolated thundershowers that gave rise to some slight rainfall increase from that of the previous dekad. However, hot weather conditions prevailed during this period.

RAINFALL SITUATION
11th – 20th November 2003

Some parts of the country experienced slight increase in rainfall as compared to the previous dekad. Above normal rainfall for the dekad with Ox-Bow almost doubling the normal value were registered (see table 1 & fig.4). Butha-Butha, Mohale's hoek, Qacha's Nek, Leribe registered significant rains of the order, 46.6mm, 37,0mm, 36.4mm, 36.8 and 20.0mm respectively. The remainder of the stations reported rainfall between 10.4mm – 18.4mm.

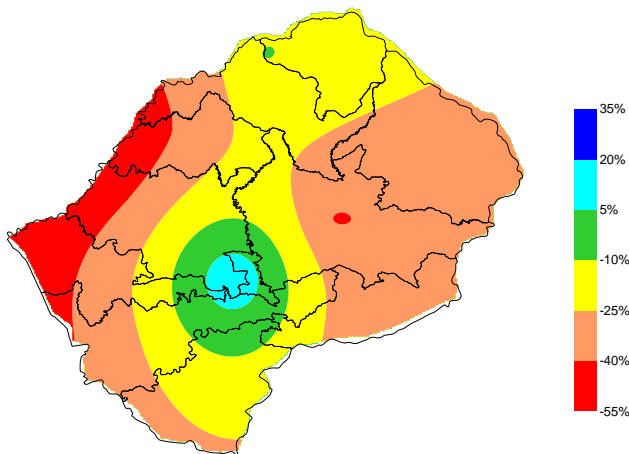


Fig.1: Cumulative rainfall departure from normal since 1st Sept to 2nd dekad. Nov 03.

Cumulative rainfall since 1st September to 2nd dekad of November still remains below normal with the exception of Leribe (see table 1). Most areas experienced negative percentage departure from normal (see fig.1 above) which signifies soil moisture deficit. However, there has been some general improvement in rainfall though the southwestern lowlands still remain critical with regard to rainfall deficiency hence soil moisture deficit.

These conditions are expected to support agricultural activities such as land cultivation and planting.

TEMPERATURE
11th – 20th November 2003

Slightly high positive temperature deviations were registered at several places (see table 1), this suggests that the dekad experienced relative high temperatures as compared to the normal temperatures. This is one factor that contributes towards a rapid loss of soil moisture through evaporation and evapotranspiration and therefore soil moisture depletion.

CROP STAGE AND CONDITION
11th – 20th November 2003

Summer crops (maize, sorghum, wheat) are mostly at emergence to early vegetative stage especially over the highlands. However, planting is still in progress. Due to the rainfall received, planting is expected to progress intensively in the lowlands areas.

Winter wheat is at milking stage with poor condition.

DEKADAL OUTLOOK
21st – 30th November 2003

Rainfall situation is anticipated to remain generally the same as the previous dekad, however, light isolated thundershowers to widespread rains are expected to occur especially during the last half of the dekad. Temperatures are expected to remain warm to hot.

SEASONAL OUTLOOK
(November 03 – January 2004)

Rainfall situation is anticipated to improve during this period, especially in December whereby normal rainfall is still expected to occur.

Table 1

Rainfall and Temperature Summaries													
		Rainfall (mm)						Temperature (°C)					
						Total From Sept 03 to 2nd Dek Nov 03							
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	46.6	32.1	4	143.2	156.7	-9	9.4(16)	29.5(18)	19.4	18.0	1.4	
Maseru Airport	1530	10.4	25.7	3	59.3	142.3	-58	8.4(12)	32.2(18)	20.0	18.3	1.7	
Mohale's hoek	1600	37.0	24.6	5	91.2	144.2	-37	6.5(12)	30.3(18)	19.7	18.8	0.9	
Mokhotlong	2200	23.0	23.8	4	88.3	127.3	-31	7.5(13)	27.6(18)	16.4	14.4	2.0	
Ox-Bow	2600	76.9	49.7	5	233.6	281.1	-17	1.8(13)	21.4(18)	11.1	10.3	0.8	
Phuthiatsana	1750	16.6	30.0	3	89.1	152.6	-42	10.1(12)	30.3(18)	20.3	18.0	2.3	
Qacha's Nek	1970	36.4	24.8	6	99.6	156.5	-36	8.4(12)	29.2(18)	16.9	15.9	1.0	
Quthing	1740	11.3	28.0	3	82.4	159.5	-48	8.6(12)	29.8(18)	19.3	17.7	1.6	
Semonkong	2458	23.1	23.8	4	172.5	146.6	18	2.0(12)	24.5(18)	13.9	13.4	0.5	
Moshoeshoe I	1628	18.4	30.9	3	86.5	149.8	-42	8.5(12)	31.3(18)	19.4	N/A	N/A	
Leribe	1740	36.8	28.1	3	105.5	140.4	-25	10.0(16)	29.2(18)	18.8	18.3	0.5	
Thaba-Tseka	2160	20.0	17.7	4	77.8	132.8	-41	5.7(12)	26.0(18)	15.5	15.1	0.4	
Mafeteng	1610	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7.1(12)	30.0(18)	18.8	17.6	1.2	

Fig.4

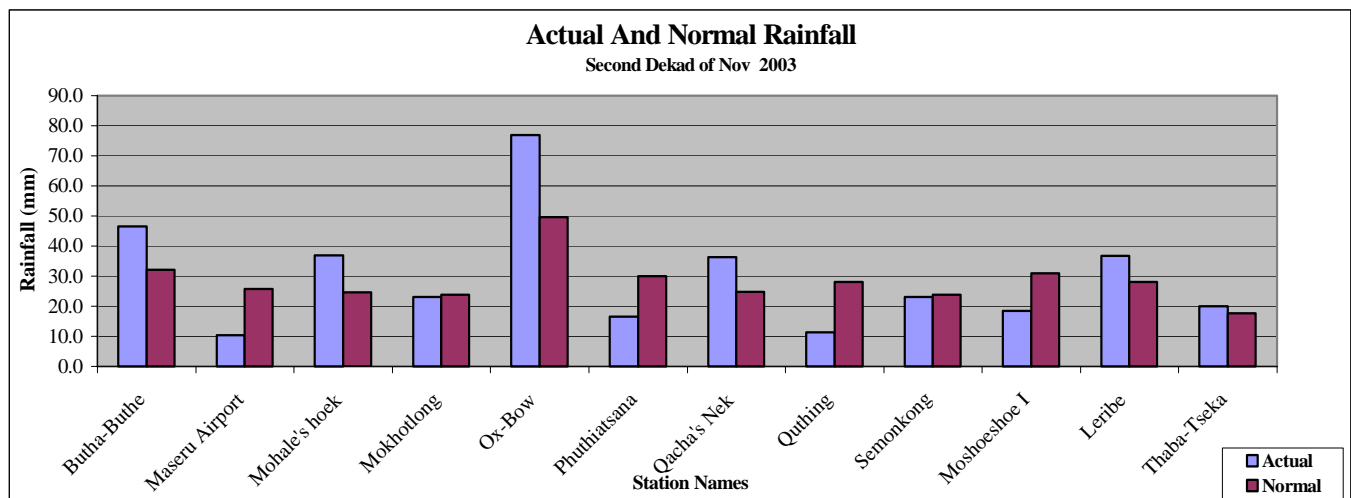
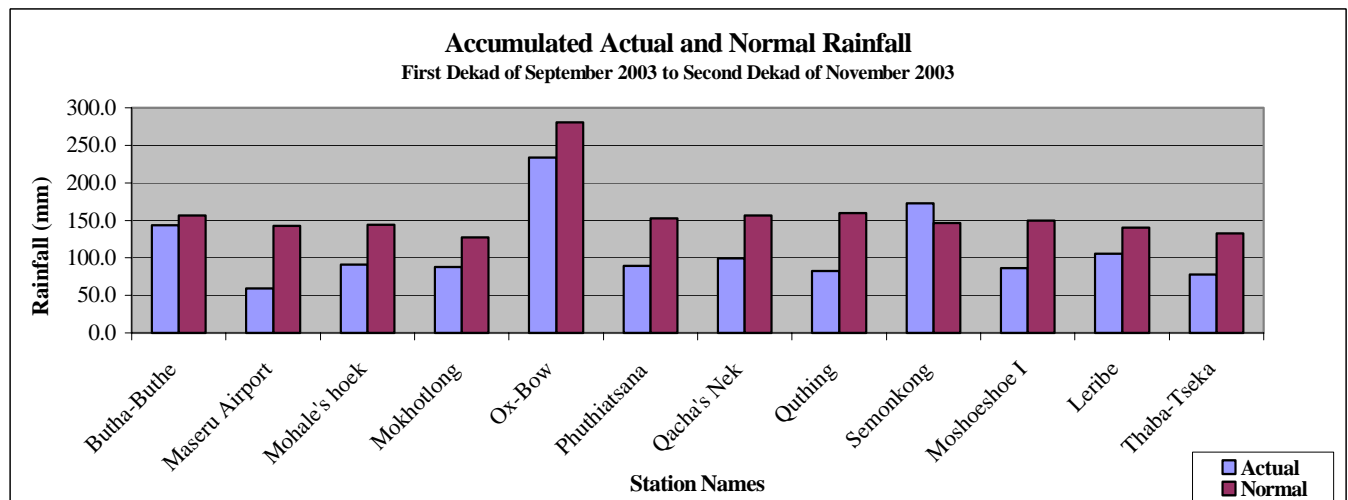


Fig.5



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.