



LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES

We are at your service. Re sebelise



Agro-Met Monthly Update

October 2007

Date of issue: November 2007

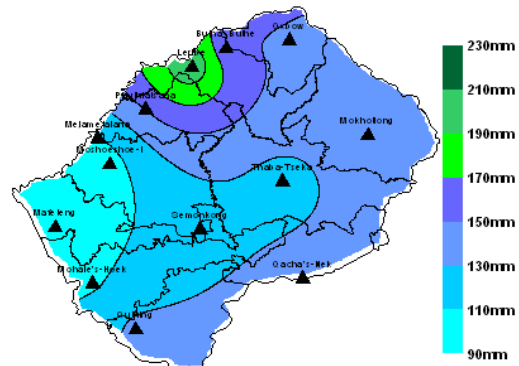
Highlights

1. Heavy rains received throughout the country
2. Below normal monthly mean temperatures experienced during the month
3. Summer cropping in progress

Rainfall

Monthly Actual Rainfall

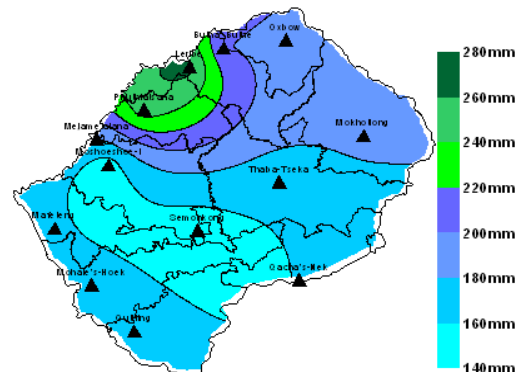
The country experienced above normal rainfall during the month of October 2007. Both temporal and spatial distributions of the rain were good during the month under review. Parts of the northern lowlands recorded highest monthly rainfall with Leribe, Butha-Buthe and Phuthiatsana accumulating respective rainfall amounts of 219mm, 152.5mm and 150.7mm. On the other hand Mafeteng (96.4mm), Moshoeshoe 1 (102.6mm) and Mohale's Hoek (106.5mm) on the west experienced lowest monthly rainfall. Map 1 shows the spatial distribution of the rain during the month of October.



Map 1: October 2007 Monthly Rainfall

Cumulative Rainfall since September 2007

Cumulative rainfall from September to October 2007 is above normal countrywide. The current cumulative rainfall results from huge amounts of rain in October and the last week of September. The region extending from Maseru to southeastern parts of the country experienced lowest cumulative rainfall (140-160mm) in that period. Otherwise, the highest cumulative rainfall was recorded at Leribe (265.6mm) and Phuthiatsana (250.5mm) as observed from Map 2 and Table 1.



Map 2: September - October 2007 Cumulative Rainfall



LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES



Temperatures

The mean monthly temperatures for October were below normal in most parts of the country (see Table 1). It was only Makhotsong that recorded above normal monthly temperature. The cooling resulted mainly from cloudiness and precipitation that prevailed during the month.

The lowest daily temperature of the month was 0°C recorded at Semonkong on the 10th, while the highest daily temperature of the month was 28.5°C at Mejametalana on the 17th.

Crop Stage and Conditions

The wet month of October brought some relief to the farming community and the nation as a whole. Farmers have started land cultivation and sowing for summer cropping. However, due to continuous heavy rain during the month under review, it is reported that some fields are waterlogged and will delay some farming activities at some places.

The Government of Lesotho has introduced a subsidy for farming inputs to this season. There are other organizations that have offered a helping hand to uplift and help farmers to recover from last cropping season's failure

Winter cropping is expected to recover. However, most farmers did not engage themselves in

agricultural activities especially field cropping due to dry weather countrywide in spring.

Water and Livestock Conditions

Water resources have improved because of the rains. Some river systems have over flown on several occasions during the month.

The general vegetation has improved because of the rain that was experienced during October. This suggests that rangelands in particular have improved and that would be good livestock. There are emerging reports that livestock died during the month of September due to drought that prevailed in the country by then. Also there was high livestock birth mortality.

Weather Outlook (October 07 - March 08)

The 2007/08 rainy season is forecasted to have generally good rains that would facilitate agricultural activities. Rainfall performance in this

season is expected to be better than its predecessor and would permit normal agricultural activities.

Table 1.

Station	ALT. (M)	Monthly R/Days	Monthly R/fall		Cumulative R/Fall since September – October 2007			Temperatures		
					Actual	Normal	%Dep. from Normal	Monthly Mean		Deviation
								Actual	Normal	
Butha-Buthe	1770	15	152.5	71	201.0	109.8	83	15.9	16.3	-0.4
Leribe	1740	18	209.8	67.8	265.6	97.1	174	15.9	16.5	-0.6
Mafeteng	1610	11	96.4	62.0	163.8	87.4	87	15.7	16.2	-0.5
Mejametalana	1530	17	109.0	66.6	179.3	94.0	91	16.3	17.2	-0.9
Mohale's Hoek	1600	13	106.5	64.5	168.6	95.0	77	16.5	16.8	-0.4
Mokhotlong	2200	15	142.9	63.4	185.2	91.3	103	13.9	13.8	0.1
Moshoeshoe 1	1628	17	102.6	78.1	151.2	105.8	43	15.9	17.2	-1.3
Ox-Bow	2660	*	*	129.2	*	183.6	*	*	9.0	*
Phuthiatsana	1750	16	150.7	77.3	250.5	108.4	131	15.8	17.0	-1.2
Qacha's Nek	1970	18	138.3	71.1	160.7	105.9	52	14.0	14.7	-0.7
Quthing	1740	14	134.5	67.7	173.7	110.8	57	16.4	16.5	-0.1
Semonkong	2458	15	123.4	68.1	149.1	107.9	38	11.5	11.7	-0.2
Thaba-Tseka	2160	16	122.0	70.1	167.5	100.3	67	12.9	13.6	-0.7

NB: * means that there was no data for that station.