



LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES

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Agro-Met Monthly Update:

September 2010

Date of issue: October 2010

Highlights

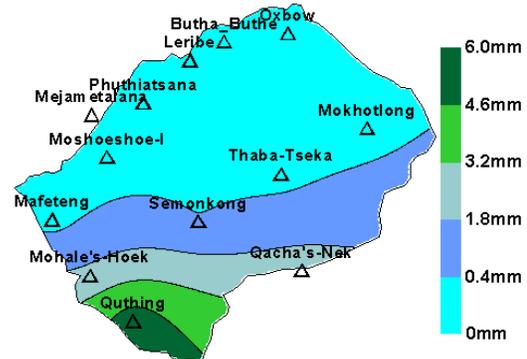
1. Below normal monthly rainfall experienced everywhere
2. Above mean monthly temperatures experienced
3. Drought conditions experienced
4. Normal to above normal rainfall forecasted in October -December

Rainfall

Monthly Actual Rainfall

Dry weather conditions prevailed into the month September. The month recorded below normal everywhere. Only small amounts of rain fell during the month of September.

The maximum rainfall recorded was only 5.4mm in Quthing and few other places (Mohale's Hoek, Qacha's Nek and Semonkong) recorded small amounts, whereas the rest of the places did not record any raindrops.

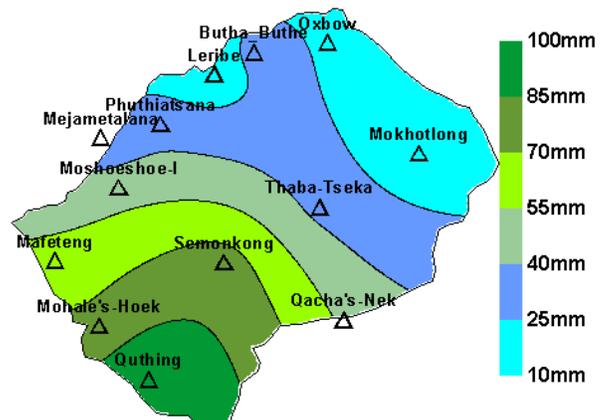


Map 1: September 2010 Monthly Rainfall

Cumulative Rainfall from May to September 2010

Cumulative rainfall for the period under review is below normal across the country. Most of the places recorded below normal rainfall due to the absence of rain since July.

Mokhotlong has recorded lowest cumulative rainfall amount of 16.1mm while Quthing has recorded highest cumulative rainfall amount of 99.5mm.



Map 2: May - September 2010 Cumulative Rainfall

Temperatures

Mean monthly temperatures were above normal everywhere for the month of September. Highest and lowest mean monthly temperature deviations

were 3.4°C and 1.9°C at Thaba-Tseka and Phuthiatsana respectively.

Crop Stage and Conditions

The absence of rains has hindered all field activities from commencing. Few farmers who have tried to cultivate their fields were not able to

do as the fields were too dry and hard to be ploughed.

Seasonal Forecast (October 2010 – March 2011)

Normal prospects of rain anticipated in the coming season...

Most places have registered below normal rainfall since February 2010, as a result the country is experiencing drought conditions. This has called for the release of water in the Katse Dam to supplement the water resources in the lowlands. The most hit places are the southern parts extending from Mafeteng to Qacha's Nek. These conditions were exacerbated by the above normal temperatures recorded during the months of July and August. However, the prevailing conditions are expected to end around mid October.

For the period October-November-December (OND) 2010, there is a likelihood of receiving normal to above normal rainfall countrywide. However, in the second half of the season, January-February-March (JFM) 2011, the region that covers Berea, Maseru, Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek and Quthing including the highlands of Semonkong and the western parts of Qacha's Nek is likely to receive normal to below normal rainfall while the northern parts which include northern lowlands of Leribe and Butha-Buthe, the highlands of Thaba-Tseka and Mokhotlong as well as the eastern parts of Qacha's Nek are likely to receive normal to above normal rainfall.

This winter has been considered warm as mean monthly temperatures were predominately above normal throughout the country with a few occasional cold spells. For October 2010 to March 2011, temperatures are expected to be normal to above normal. There is also a high likelihood of thunderstorm and hail occurrence this coming season.

The rainfall which is anticipated to commence in mid October will improve the current drought conditions, thus bringing relief to the already stressed water resources, agriculture and other socio-economic sectors. However, since Lesotho's agricultural activities normally start in September, there will be a slight delay in agricultural activities due to the late onset of rains that are anticipated to commence in mid October.