

# LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES (LEKALA LA TSA BOLEPI)



## Ten-Day Agrometeorological Bulletin

10<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> January 2006



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

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### **Highlights**

- ❑ **Below normal rainfall received.**
- ❑ **Warm to hot weather conditions observed.**
- ❑ **Insufficient cumulative rains received.**
- ❑ **High vegetation cover.**
- ❑ **The next ten days expected to be wet.**

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**WEATHER SUMMARY**

A deep interior trough that oscillated over the subcontinent including our region mainly dominated the 2<sup>nd</sup> dekad of January 2006. These brought some partly cloudy to cloudy conditions with variable but relatively low intensity of precipitation when compared with the first dekad. Reasonable amount of rainfall recorded was 23.9mm at Qacha’s Nek on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Temperatures were generally warm to hot except on the days when there was significant precipitation where drop in temperatures was observed.

**RAINFALL SITUATION**

Most parts of the country received below normal rainfall. The average number of rain-days was high (4 days) over many areas in the country as it can be seen in table 1. Mohale’s Hoek and Semonkong are the only stations which registered above normal rainfall of 36.5mm and 49mm respectively. However, the rainfall pattern has improved over the last dekad. This has given more confidence in the farmers who have been busy weeding. The widespread rainfall over the country has contributed to better tasseling in the highlands and development of crops in many areas of the country.

**Cumulative percentage rainfall departure from Normal**

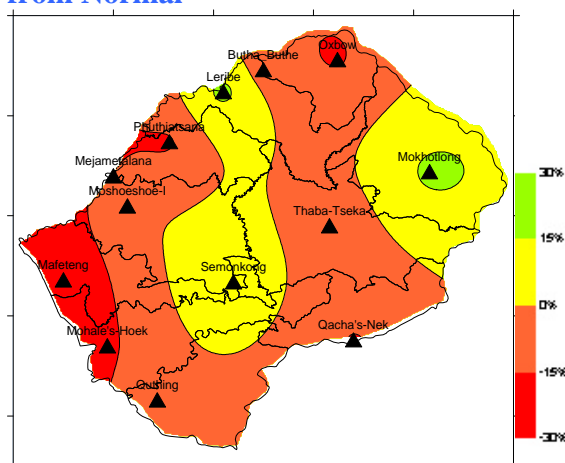


Fig.1: Cumulative rainfall departure from normal since 1<sup>st</sup> Sept to 20<sup>th</sup> January 2006.

Cumulative rainfall performance as shown in the figure 1, figure 4 and table 1 indicate that Leribe,

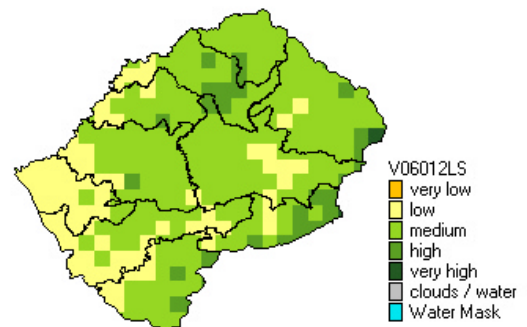
Mokhotlong and Semonkong have above normal rainfall. The rest of the country received below normal cumulative rainfall including Oxbow.

**TEMPERATURE**

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

**VEGETATION**

Figure 2



High vegetation cover is currently witnessed from the satellite map above. As compared to the last dekad now there is an improvement as far as the degree of greenness is concerned. Even though there is high degree of greenness, some parts of the lowlands are still low. This is due to the low amount of rains currently received in the lowlands, especially in the southern parts of the country.

**CROP STAGE AND CONDITION**

Some parts of low lying areas had received low rainfall, as such contributed low agricultural activities. Unless the rainfall situation improves during the coming dekad, districts like Mafeteng and some parts of Mohale’s Hoek may face water stress more especially to crops that are at

vegetation to early tassiling. The agricultural activities were favourable in the highlands during the dekad as moderate rainfall was received. The scenario is expected to continue into the coming dekad as the dekadal outlook indicates that there will be scattered thundershowers.

### **DEKADAL OUTLOOK**

**21<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> Janaury 2006**

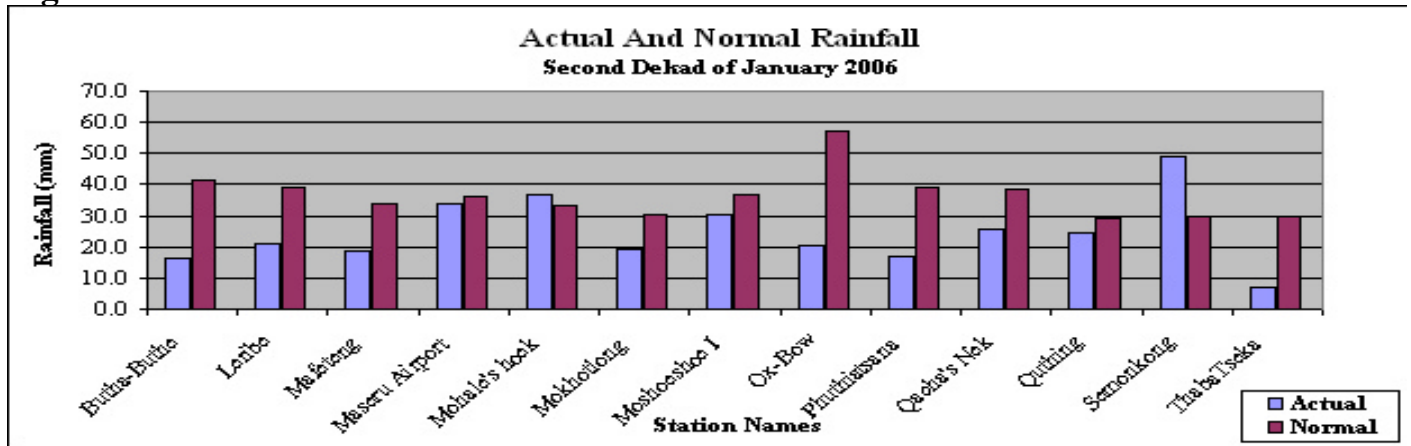
The prevailing weather conditions are expected to continue during this period since the current

synoptic situation is not expected to change significantly. However, relatively wet weather conditions are anticipated during the middle of the dekad as rain and isolated to scattered thundershowers are highly possible.

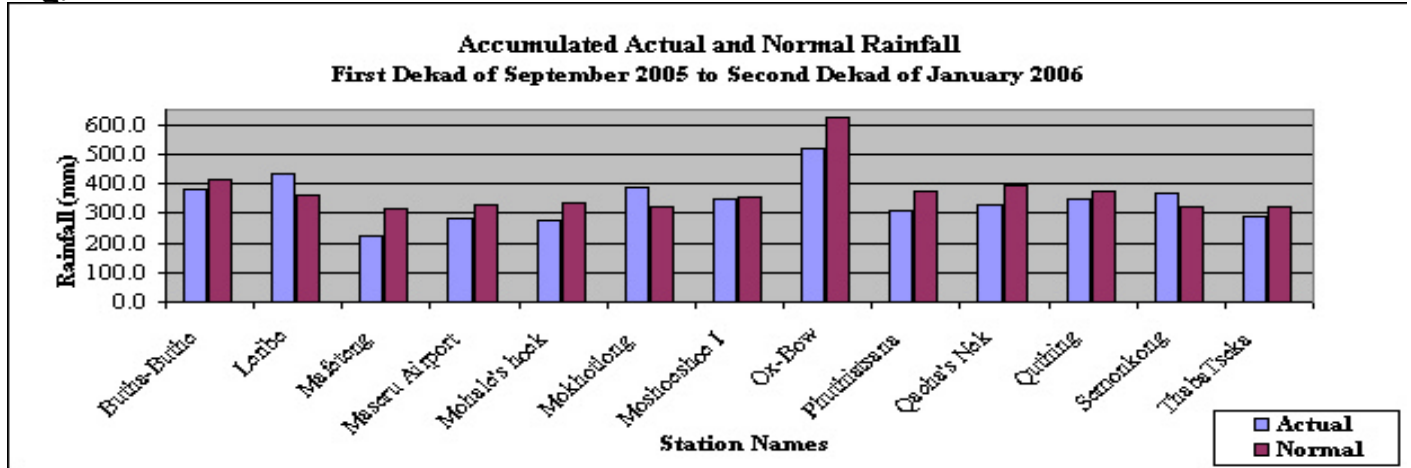
**Table 1**

Rainfall and Temperature												
Summaries		Rainfall (mm)						Temperature (°C)				
STATION	ALT.	11 - 20 Jan 2006			Total From Sept 05 to 2nd Dek Jan 06			11 - 20 Jan 2006				
		Actual	Rain	Normal	Actual	Normal	%Dept. from	Minimum	Maximum	Dekadal	Dekadal	Deviation
NAME	(M)	R/Fall	Days	R/Fall	Actual	Normal	Normal	Lowest(Day)	Highest (Day)	Mean	Normal	
Butha-Buthe	1770	16.4	1	41.5	382.2	416.3	-8	10.5 (14)	29.6 (15)	21.2	20.2	1.0
Leribe	1740	21.0	4	38.8	431.7	360.4	20	13.8 (20)	30.8 (15)	22.0	20.7	1.3
Mafeteng	1610	18.7	5	33.9	221.2	315.0	-30	12.5 (20)	30.5 (15,16)	21.8	20.6	1.2
Maseru Airport	1530	34.0	5	36.1	279.3	328.0	-15	15.0 (20)	33.0 (11)	23.1	21.7	1.4
Mohale's hoek	1600	36.5	4	33.1	274.8	335.9	-18	12.6 (20)		-	20.8	-
Mokhotlong	2200	19.3	3	30.1	384.2	323.8	19	8.5 (20)	28.8 (18)	19.2	17.7	1.5
Moshoeshe I	1628	30.2	4	37.0	349.4	354.7	-1	14.6 (20)	31.5 (15)	22.4	21.2	1.2
Ox-Bow	2600	20.6	5	57.0	521.1	624.6	-17		21.4 (13)	-	12.7	-
Phuthiatsana	1750	17.1	3	39.0	308.0	371.6	-17	14.1 (20)	31.8 (15)	22.5	21.3	1.2
Qacha's Nek	1970	25.4	3	38.4	331.1	394.2	-16	10.3 (20)	29.9 (17)	20.4	18.4	2.0
Quthing	1740	24.7	3	29.4	348.4	371.0	-6	10.5 (19)	32.2 (15)	23	21.2	1.8
Semonkong	2458	49.0	4	29.6	365.4	321.6	14	5.4 (13)	27.0 (16)	17	16.2	1.0
ThabaTseka	2160	7.0	3	29.8	290.1	320.2	-9	9.3 (20)	28.3 (16)	18.9	17.2	1.7

**Fig.3**



**Fig.4**



## **Glossary**

Dekad : Ten day period

Normal: Average figure over a specific time period.

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

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And it is

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Comments and Contributions would be highly appreciated.