LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES
(LEKALA LA TSA BOLEPI)

Ten-Day Agrometeorological Bulletin

11 – 20 January 2009

Issue No.11/2008-09

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

Contents

Highlights

- **Dry weather experienced at some parts.**
- **Consistently low cumulative rainfall at some parts.**
- **Normal temperatures experienced at most parts.**
- **Weeding in progress.**

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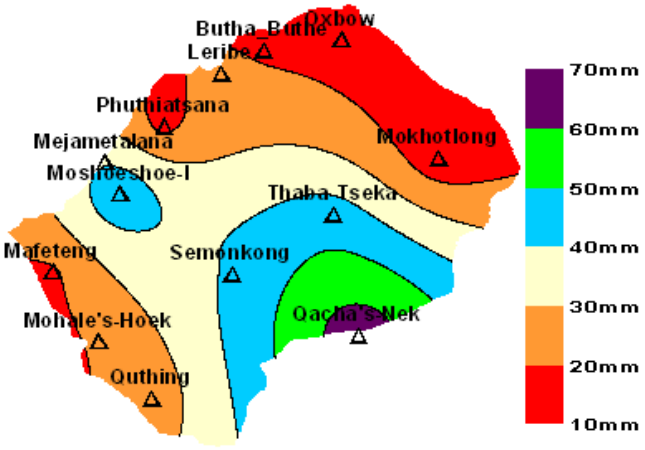
DEKADAL WEATHER SUMMARY

The country continued to experience low rainfall. That was due to a weak interior surface trough that advected little moisture in the interior of the subcontinent. Rainfall experienced was as a result of local convection and low level convergence.

RAINFALL SITUATION

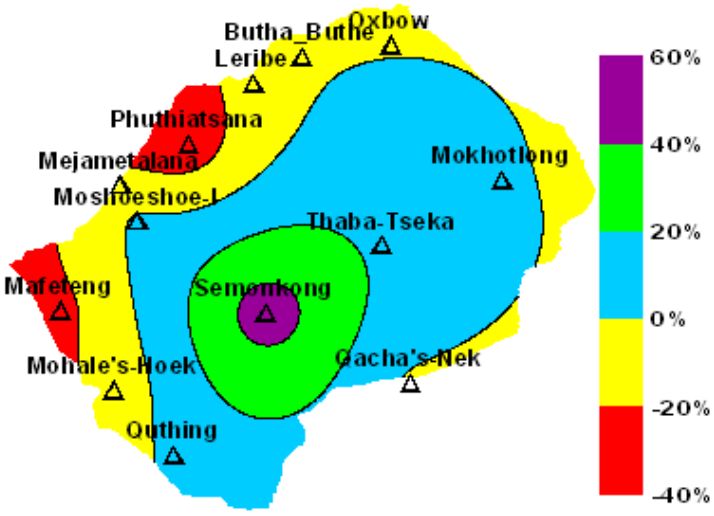
The second dekad of January 2009 was dry at most parts of the country. Dekadal rainfall was normal to above normal in the region extending from the central to the east and southeastern parts as well as in some areas in Maseru (see Map 1). Even though the dekadal rainfall was normal, it came only in the first day of the dekad except for two days at Qacha's Nek. Lowest rainfall was recorded in the north and northeast, Berea (Phuthiatsana) and parts of Mafeteng and Mohale's Hoek.



Map 1: Dekadal Rainfall for January Dekad 2, 2009

Cumulative Percentage Rainfall Departure from Normal

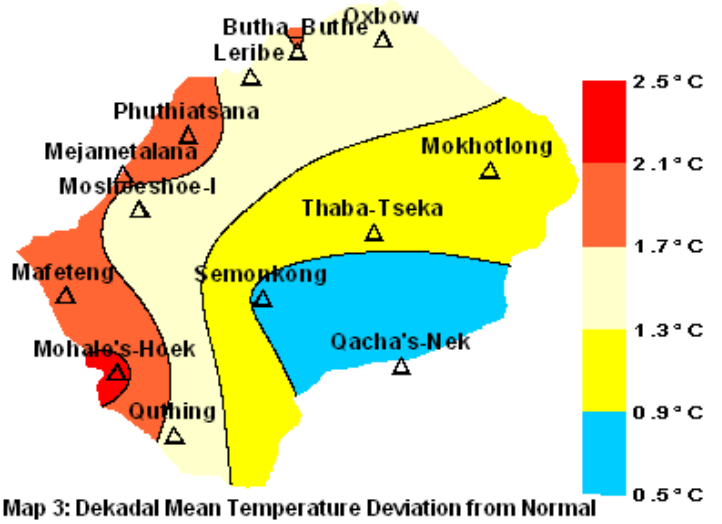
Cumulative rainfall since September 2008 to the period under review is below normal at parts of Berea (Phuthiatsana) and Mafeteng. It is above normal in the central parts surrounding Semonkong, and normal at remaining places. Most parts of the lowlands have had low cumulative rainfall since the inception of the season. Rainfall distribution was consistently sporadic in most parts of the country and in particular in the regions with low cumulative rainfall.



Map 2: Cumulative Rainfall Percentage Departure from Normal

TEMPERATURE

Mean temperatures were normal during the period under review. Mohale's Hoek with 2.2°C had highest mean temperature deviation from normal. Highest daily maximum temperature of the dekad was 34.2°C at Phuthiatsana recorded on the hottest day of the dekad (17th).



Map 3: Dekadal Mean Temperature Deviation from Normal

RAINFALL ANOMALIES

The entire lowlands received poor rainfall during the second dekad of January (see Fig.3). The other agroecological zones recorded normal rainfall. Southern lowlands have experienced suppressed rainfall for at least last consecutive dekads.

CROP STAGE AND CONDITIONS

Dry spells continued into the dekad under review. That was despite normal rainfall recorded at most parts of the country. Crops at most areas continued to experience water deficits. Crops are entering into the period of high water demands and more insufficient moisture could compromise final potential yield. Crop stages are generally at vegetative and tasselling stages, and crops are in fair to good conditions at most places. Weeding is still in progress.

Vegetation satellite imagery depicts that there was a slight decrease in the vegetation greenness in the lowlands. Prolonged dry spells and high temperatures affected general vegetation negatively. And water availability continues to be challenged by the current dry weather.

DEKADAL OUTLOOK

21 – 31 January 2009

The coming dekad is expected to remain relatively dry. However, isolated to scattered rain and thundershowers as well as damaging winds can still be expected at times.

Fig.1

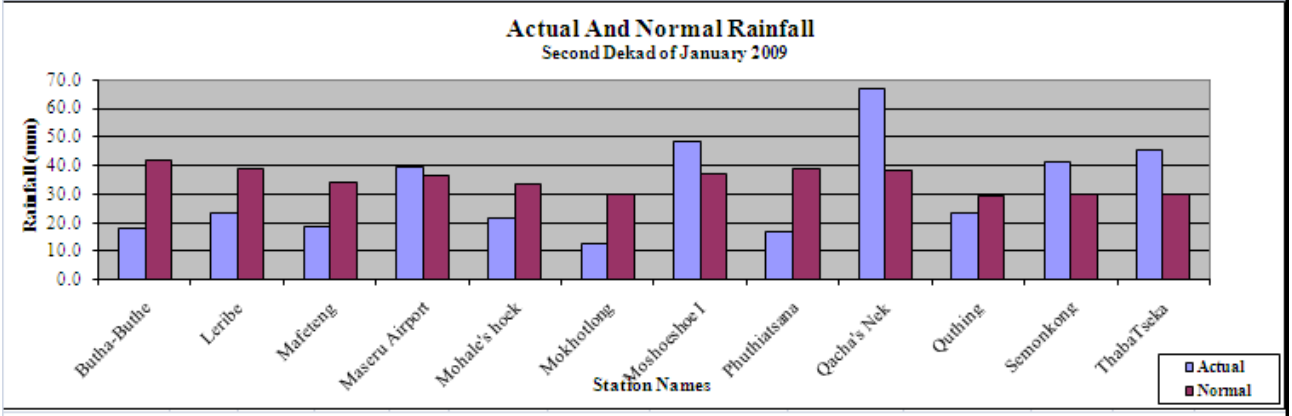


Fig.2

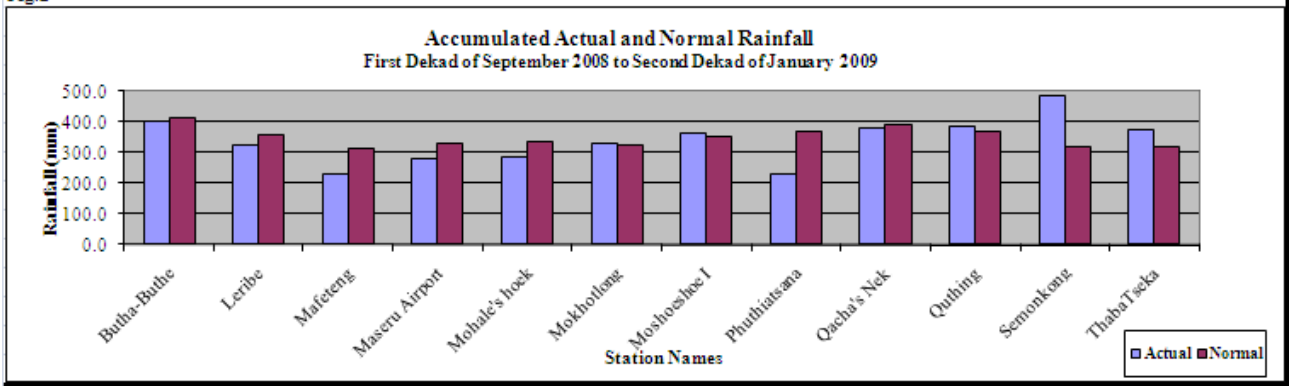


Fig.3