

LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES (LEKALA LA TSA BOLEPI)



Ten-Day Agrometeorological Bulletin

1st -10th October 2006



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

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Highlights

- ❑ Improved rainfall situation during this period.
- ❑ Planting in the highlands is in progress.
- ❑ Rainfall expected to dominate greater part of the period

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WEATHER SUMMARY

Dry air was in circulation over the sub-continent in the first part of the dekad as the Indian Ocean Anticyclone was dominant. From the 5th, the Interior trough developed from the northwest and advanced southeastwards while advecting moist tropical air from the north. As a result, much of the interior received isolated to scattered rain and thundershowers from the 6th up to the 10th. Temperatures remained mild to warm becoming cold at times with the weak cold fronts brushing over the southern parts of the subcontinent.

RAINFALL SITUATION

Rainfall distribution during this first dekad of October 2006 had improved significantly even though some stations such as Moshoeshe I in the central, Phuthiatsana in the northern lowlands and Semonkong in the central highlands registered rainfall amounts of 12.20mm, 12.50mm and 12.30mm respectively, which were slightly below dekad normal rainfall. While the rest of the country recorded rainfall above normal (see table 1). The highest amount of rainfall of 50.60mm was registered at Quthing. Rainfall received is adequate to improve or promote agricultural scenario and pasture recovery.

Cumulative percentage rainfall departure from Normal

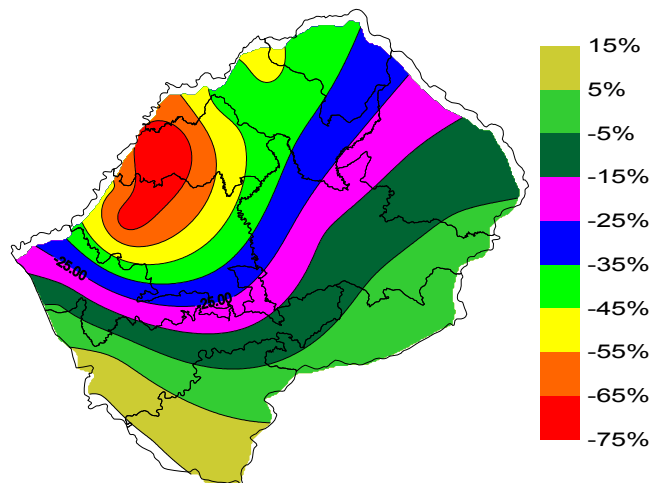


Fig.1: Cumulative rainfall departure from normal since 1st Sept to 1st dek.Oct 06.

Cumulative rainfall since 1st September to 10th October 2006 is below normal for the large part of the country. Moshoeshe I and Quthing in the south are the only parts that registered positive percentage departures from normal.

TEMPERATURE

Temperatures registered were slightly below normal mean temperatures. Exceptionally, Moshoeshe I have 1.4^oC above normal dekad mean temperature. These low temperatures were due to some passage of weak cold fronts over the region. The amount of clouding and precipitation experienced also helped reduce temperatures. The highest daily temperature of 30.6^oC was registered at Maseru on the 1st and the lowest temperature of -4.5^oC was recorded at Semonkong on the 5th.

CROP STAGE AND CONDITION

October is the beginning of the agricultural season in Lesotho and therefore with these amounts of dekad rainfall, land preparation may have commenced in some parts of the lowlands. In the highlands where farmers have started planting summer crops. Winter wheat is at vegetation stage.

DEKADAL OUTLOOK

11th – 20th October 2006

The period is expected to be generally warm and slightly wet as isolated to scattered rains and thundershowers are expected to dominate greater part of the period. On average, wind is expected to be light to moderate northerly to northeasterly.

Table 1.

		Rainfall and Temperature Summaries										
		Rainfall (mm)						TEMPERATURE (°C)				
		1-10 th Oct 2006			Total From 1st Sept. 06 to 10 th Oct. 06			1-10 th Oct 2006				
STATION NAME	ALT. (M)	Actual R/Fall	Rain Days	Normal R/Fall	Cum.Act & Nor. Rainfall		%Dept. from Normal	Minimum Lowest(Day)	Maximum Highest (Day)	Dekadal Mean	Dekadal Normal	Dev.
					Actual	Normal						
Butha-Buthe	1770	23.6	2	20.8	26.5	51.4	-48	1.8(5)	27.6(1)	15.4	15.5	-0.1
Leribe	1740	29.2	3	18.2	29.5	47.5	-38	0.5(5)	29.5(2)	15.6	15.8	-0.2
Mafeteng	1610	30.9	3	10.9	33.9	36.2	-6	0.1(5)	27(1)	13.9	15.4	-1.5
Maseru Airport	1530	20.4	2	17.3	20.8	44.7	-53	1.8(5)	30.6(1)	16.1	16.4	-0.3
Mohale's hoek	1600	41.1	3	13.8	49.9	44.3	13	1.5(5)	28(1)	14.9	15.9	-1
Mokhotlong	2200	28.00	3	17	41.3	44.9	-8	1.2(5)	26.5(1)	14.4	13	1.4
Moshoeshoe I	1628	12.20	4	16.2	12.9	44	-71	2.4(5)	29.2(1)	15.6	16.2	-0.6
Ox-Bow	2600	-	-	32.1	-	86.4	-	-	-	-	8.2	-
Phuthiatsana	1750	12.50	2	18.9	12.5	50	-75	2.4(5)	29.4(1)	16.2	16.4	-0.2
Qacha's Nek	1970	-	-	16.9	-	51.8	-	-	-	-	14.7	-
Quthing	1740	50.60	4	15.6	64.1	56	14	4.1(5)	28.4(1)	15.7	15.9	-0.2
Semonkong	2458	12.30	5	14.1	41.7	54	-23	-4.5(5)	23(1)	10.5	10.5	0
Thaba-Tseka	2160	16.70	3	18.3	43.1	48.5	-11	0(5)	23.9(1)	12.8	13.1	-0.3

Fig 2

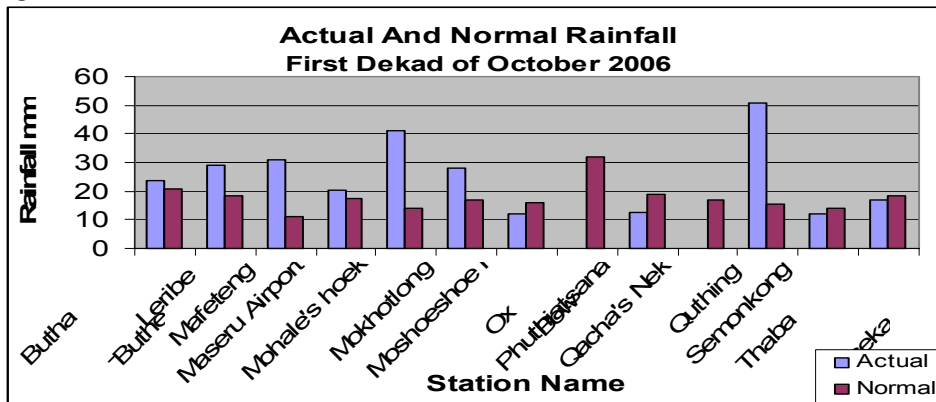
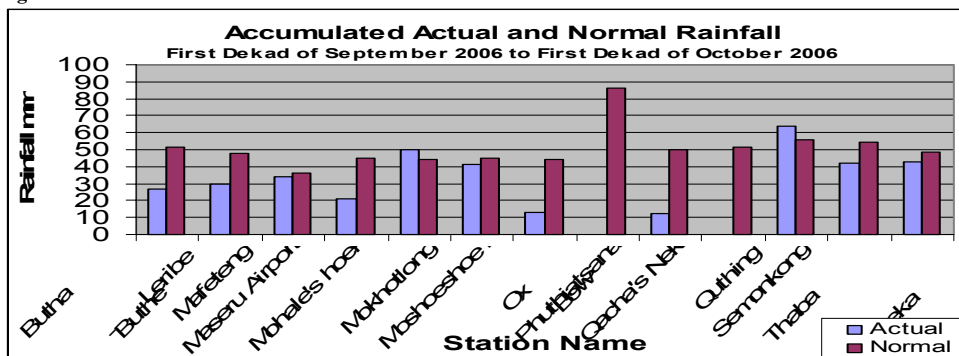


Fig3



Glossary

Dekad : Ten day period

Normal: Average figure over a specific time period.

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

NDVI: Normalized Difference Vegetation Index -

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And it is

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Comments and Contributions would be highly appreciated.