

LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES (LEKALA LA TSA BOLEPI)



Ten-Day Agrometeorological Bulletin

1st – 10th April 2005



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

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Highlights

- ❑ **Poor rains experienced countrywide**
- ❑ **Cool temperatures experienced**
- ❑ **Crops have matured in most parts of the country**
- ❑ **Poor rains expected in the next dekad**
- ❑ **Frontal systems and cool temperatures expected**

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WEATHER SUMMARY

1st – 10th April 2005

The first three days of the previous dekad were dominated by the interior trough. This resulted in cool weather conditions with isolated rains. On the 4th, the Atlantic high pressure system ridged inland and formed a high pressure cell over the interior, this cell remained dominant for the rest of the of the dekad. This caused generally partly cloudy and mild weather conditions without rainfall.

RAINFALL SITUATION

1st – 10th April 2005

The first dekad of April experienced very little rainfall in most parts of the country. Maseru Airport and Moshoeshoe 1 are the only parts that have received above normal dekad rainfall. Otherwise the remaining areas of the northern lowlands have experienced near normal dekad rainfall. The southern lowlands and the highlands have had poor dekad rainfall not exceeding 10mm, the exception is only Semonkong where 16mm were recorded. Mohale’s Hoek did not have even a single drop in this dekad. It is important to note that above 95% of the dekad rainfall occurred on the 1st day of the month (see table 1, fig 3).

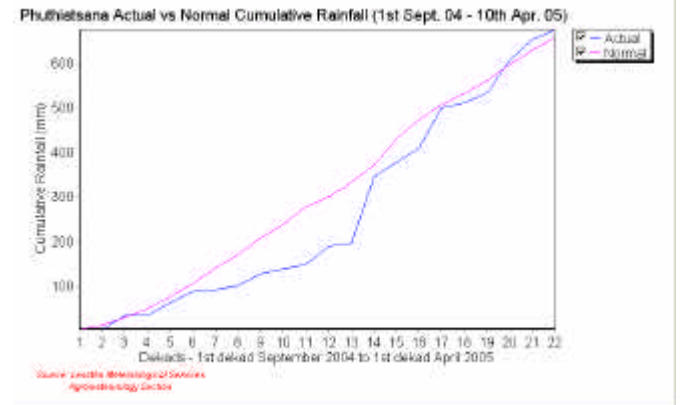
Cumulative rainfall

The cumulative rainfall since the first dekad of September 2004 to the third dekad of March 2005 is near normal to above normal in all the parts of the country. The highest accumulated rainfall that exceeds 700mm has so far been recorded at Qacha’s Nek, Leribe, Butha-Buthe and Moshoeshoe 1 (see table 1, fig 4). Mafeteng and Thaba-Tseka have accumulated rainfall less than 500mm.

Phuthiatsana has experienced very erratic rainfall since the beginning of the cropping season. The cumulative rainfall has been below normal until dekad 21 of the season (which is the last dekad of March 2005). Refer to *graph 1*. The frequency of dry spells is quite significant. Notable rainfalls have been received during the second dekad of

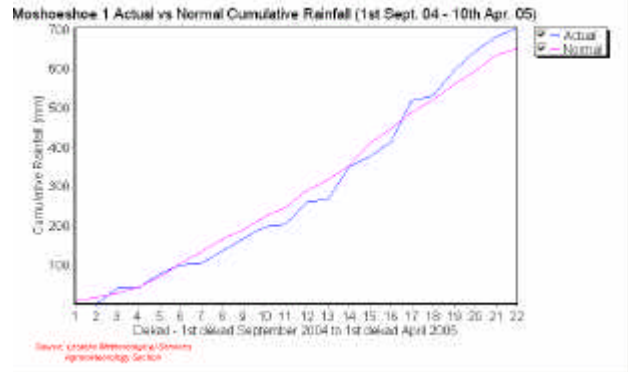
January 2005 (dekad 14 on the graph), 17th dekad (second dekad of February 2005) and the 20th dekad (second dekad of March 2005).

Graph 1



Moshoeshoe 1 too experienced poor and erratic rainfall since the inception of the season. *Graph 2* below reflects the distribution of the rainfall and the dekads that were dry. The 14th and the 17th dekads of the current season had significant rainfall.

Graph 2



Cumulative rainfall percentage departure from normal map (fig. 1 below) and *table 1* reflect that the western parts of Mafeteng and the southern tip of Quthing have experienced 80% and 79% of their normal cumulative rainfall respectively. This huge rainfall deficits have been experienced in these regions since November 2004.

Rainfall and Temperature Summaries												
STATION	ALT. (M)	Rainfall (mm)					Temperature (°C)					
		Actual R/Fall	Normal R/Fall	Rain Days	Total From Sept to 1 st Dec Apr		%Dept. from Normal	Minimum Lowest(Day)	Maximum Highest (Day)	Dekadal Mean	Dekadal Normal	Deviation
Butha-Buthe		-	. (,)	. ()	.	.	- .
Leribe	 ()	. ()	.	.	- .
Mafeteng		-	. ()	. ()	.	.	- .
Maseru Airport	 ()	. ()	.	.	- .
Mohale's hoek	 ()	. ()	.	.	- .
Mokhotlong	 (,)	. ()	.	.	- .
Moshoeshoe I	 ()	. ()	.	.	- .
Phuthiatsana	 (,)	. ()	.	.	- .
Qacha's Nek	 ()	. ()	.	.	- .
Quthing		-	. ()	. ()	.	.	- .
Semonkong	 ()	. ()	.	.	- .
Thaba-Tseka		-	. ()	. ()	.	.	- .

Fig.

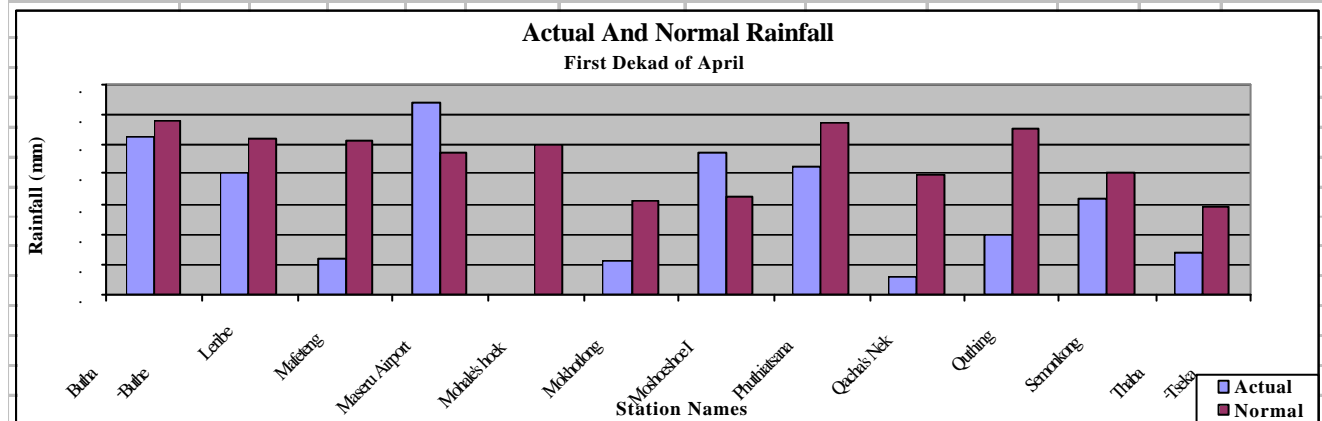
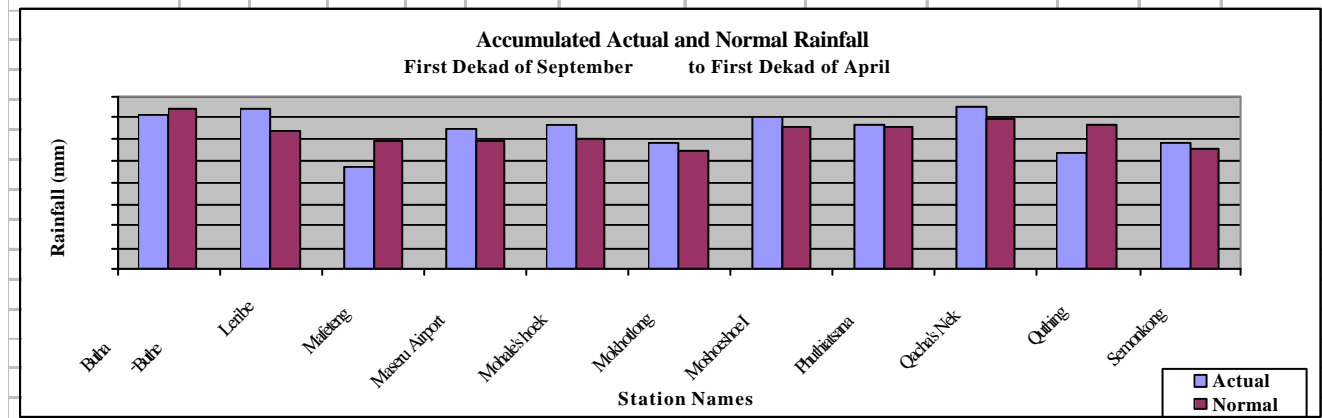


Fig.



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.