

# LESOTHO METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES (LEKALA LA TSA BOLEPI)



## Ten-Day Agrometeorological Bulletin

11<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> February 2004



Issue No.14/2003-04

Vol.3

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

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## Highlights

- ❑ Rainfall improvement over the southern lowlands
- ❑ The western to southwestern sector remain the worst hit by rainfall deficit
- ❑ Crop damage due to hail experienced
- ❑ Isolated to scattered thundershowers expected during the last dekad

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**WEATHER SUMMARY**

11<sup>th</sup>– 20<sup>th</sup> February 2004

The interior trough dominated the second dekad of February. This resulted in an influx of moist air from the tropics into the interior. However, most of that moisture did not result in much rain as most of it drifted away along the north and south of the country. Temperatures dropped slightly as compared to the previous dekad.

**RAINFALL SITUATION**

11<sup>th</sup>– 20<sup>th</sup> February 2004

There was rainfall improvement over some parts of the southern lowlands as compared to the previous dekad. Mohale’s Hoek and Quthing in the southern region registered 68.9mm and 65.9mm respectively. Leribe in the north western, Ox-Bow in the northern and Qacha’s Nek in the eastern sector also registered substantial amounts of rainfall (see table 1). Most stations registered normal to above normal rainfall for the dekad except for the ones over the western region that recorded below normal rainfall.

**Cumulative Rainfall from 1<sup>st</sup> Sept 03 to 20<sup>th</sup> Feb. 04**

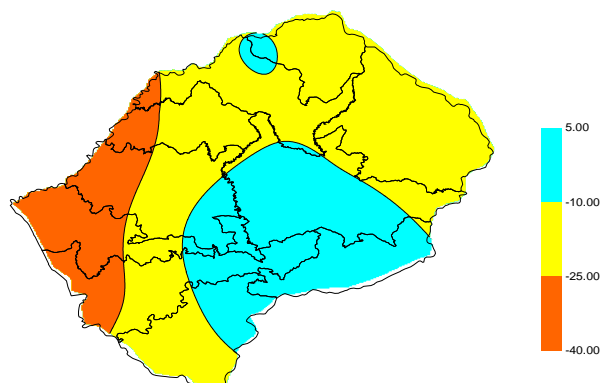


Fig.1: Cumulative rainfall departure from normal since 1<sup>st</sup> Sept 03 to 20<sup>th</sup> Feb 04.

Cumulative rainfall since September 03 to date is still below normal at most stations (see fig.3).

Percentage departure from normal (see table 1) still shows negative values implying an overall soil moisture deficit.

Despite an overall improvement of rainfall situation, the western to southwestern sector remain the worst hit by rainfall deficit (see fig.1). Crops over the remainder of the country are at an advantage of benefiting more over the accumulated soil moisture retained especially this time when crops are at grain filling stage.

**TEMPERATURE**

11<sup>th</sup>– 20<sup>th</sup> February 2004

Despite the favourable rains received over the dekad, above normal temperatures were registered at almost all reporting stations (see table 1 under temperatures). This has caused some rapid loss of soil moisture that resulted in crops losing strength especially during the daytime.

**CROP STAGE AND CONDITION**

11<sup>th</sup>– 20<sup>th</sup> February 2004

There has been a rapid crop development resulting from the rains received up to the current dekad at some places. However, there has been severe crop damage at several places around the country caused by hailstorms. Some crops were caught at critical stage of flowering and therefore crop production is likely to reduce significantly and some crops sustained permanent damage especially maize and sorghum. However, crops (maize,sorghum) are generally at vegetative to grain filling stages and crop condition ranges from poor to good. Wheat is at grain forming to wax maturity with poor to good condition.

**DEKADAL OUTLOOK**

21<sup>st</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> February 2004

The interior trough is still expected to dominate the central interior. As a result, isolated to scattered thundershowers are expected to continue during the last dekad of February, especially during the first five days, whereby light widespread rain showers are anticipated. Temperatures are expected to be mild to warm.

Table 1

Rainfall and Temperature Summaries												
		Rainfall (mm)						TEMPERATURE (°C)				
		Total From Sept. 03 to 2nd Dek Feb.04										
STATION	ALT.	Actual	Normal	Rain			%Dept. from	Minimum	Maximum	Dekadal	Dekadal	
NAME	(M)	R/Fall	R/Fall	Days	Actual	Normal	Normal	Lowest(Day)	Highest (Day)	Mean	Normal	Deviation
Butha-Buthe	1770	15.1	38.7	6	475.5	511.7	-7	12.4(18)	27.8(11)	20.2	19.1	1.1
Leribe	1740	45.3	38.1	6	368.7	442.6	-17	12.9(18)	28.8(18)	20.5	19.2	1.3
Maseru Airport	1530	10.1	33.2	3	262.0	432.8	-39	13.5(15)	29.1(16)	21.1	20.4	0.7
Mohale's hoek	1600	68.9	39.2	6	311.4	454.9	-32	12.0(16)	30.5(16)	21.3	20.2	1.1
Mokhotlong	2200	24.7	31.3	8	366.7	415.0	-12	8.1(20)	24.8(17)	17.2	16.3	0.9
Ox-Bow	2600	73.8	49.6	7	644.4	776.0	-17	4.6(18)	20.0(17)	12.7	11.9	0.8
Phuthiatsana	1750	24.7	33.0	4	351.3	467.5	-25	13.6(15)	29.2(16)	20.4	19.6	0.8
Qacha's Nek	1970	70.3	42.3	5	475.5	522.2	-9	11.5(20)	27.6(11)	19.4	18.0	1.4
Quthing	1740	65.9	32.6	5	359.4	434.6	-17	13.6(16)	28.6(11,18)	20.7	19.3	1.4
Semonkong	2458	36.4	30.4	5	423.4	420.5	1	N/A	N/A	15.6	15.8	-0.2
Moshoeshoe I	1628	22.8	43.8	5	301.1	437.0	-31	13.5(15)	29.0(11)	20.7	N/A	N/A
Thaba-Tseka	2160	24.4	25.0	6	359.1	395.2	-9	9.8(16)	N/A	17.6	15.9	1.7
Mafeteng	1610	N/A	34.9	-	N/A	413.6	N/A	N/A	N/A	20.4	19.5	0.9

Fig.2

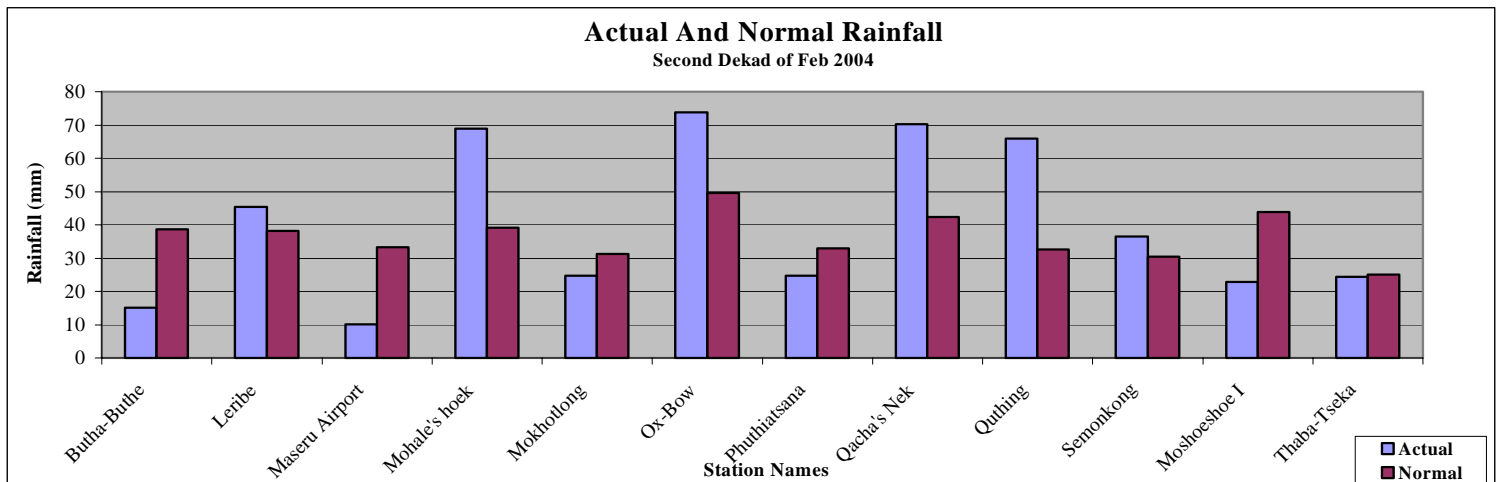
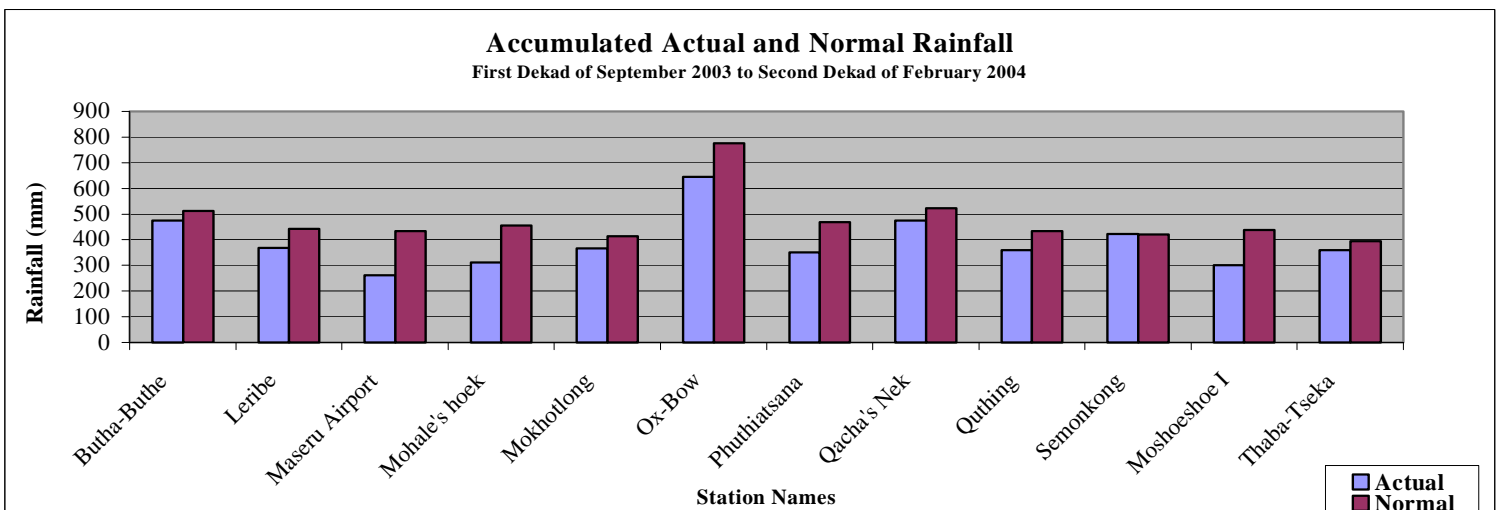


Fig.3



## Glossary

Dekad : Ten day period

Normal: Average figure over a specific time period.

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

This Bulletin is issued during the Summer Cropping Season (October – April).

And it is

Produced by the

Lesotho Meteorological Services as a contribution to the

National Early Warning Unit for Food Security.

The Unit is coordinated by the Disaster Management Authority in the

Prime Minister's Office.

Comments and Contributions would be highly appreciated.