MAURITIUS SUGAR INDUSTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Ref A 1/2010 2 April 2010

SUGAR CANE CROP 2010

Status: End March 2010

1. CLIMATE

1.1 Rainfall (Table 1a and 1b, Figure 1)

Rainfall recorded over the sugar cane areas of the island in March 2010 was 313 mm and it represented 124% of the long-term mean. March rainfall exceeded the long-term mean by 19 mm (12%) in the North, 174 mm (72%) in the East, 64 mm (20%) in the South and 12 mm (11%) in the West. In the Centre sector, rainfall for the month was inferior to the long-term mean by 99 mm (29%).

Cumulative rainfall for the period October 2009 to March 2010 amounted to 1749 mm. This is higher than the long-term mean (1199 mm) of the island by 46% for that period. During that same period, a total of 1055 mm were recorded in the North, 2378 mm in the East, 1928 mm in the South, 939 mm in the West and 1722 mm in the Centre. These amounts represented 130%, 197%, 134%, 142%, and 106% of the respective long-term mean.

Table 1a Rainfall (mm) of March for crops 2009, 2010 and the long-term means (LTM)

	North	East	South	West	Centre	Island
2009	243 *(151)*	544 *(224)*	367 *(113)*	154 *(138)*	445 *(132)*	376 *(149)*
2010	**180** *(112)*	**417** *(172)*	**389** *(120)*	**124** *(111)*	**238** *(71)*	**313** *(124)*
LTM	161	243	325	112	337	252

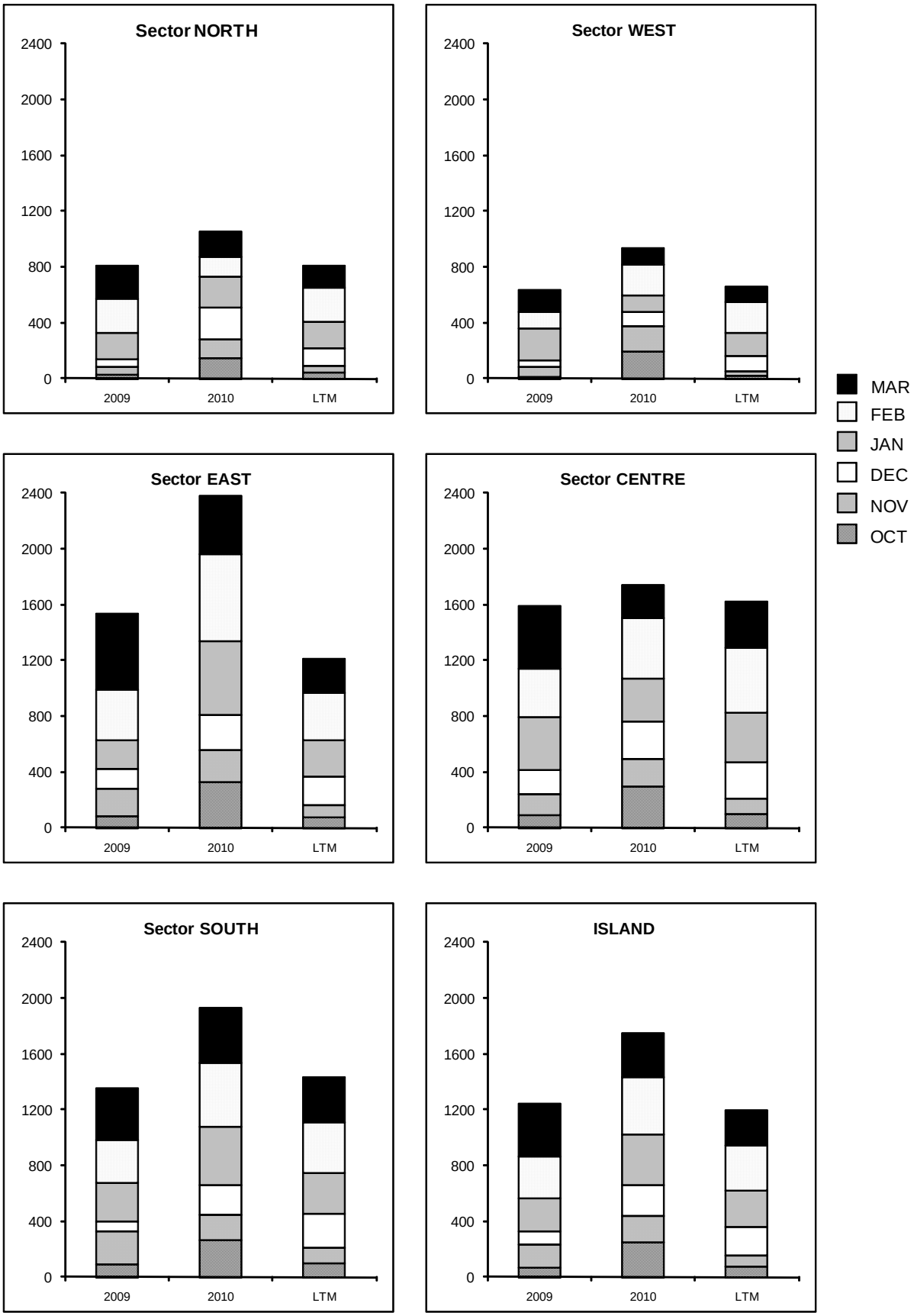
* figures in brackets are % of LTM

Table 1b Cumulative rainfall (mm) from October 2009 to March 2010 for crop 2010 compared to that of crop 2009 and the long-term means (LTM)

	North	East	South	West	Centre	Island
2009	812 *(100)*	1535 *(127)*	1352 *(94)*	632 *(96)*	1589 *(98)*	1242 *(104)*
2010	**1055** *(130)*	**2378** *(197)*	**1928** *(134)*	**939** *(142)*	**1722** *(106)*	**1749** *(146)*
LTM	812	1208	1436	661	1625	1199

* figures in brackets are % of LTM ***[Source : raw provisional data from Meteorological Services]***

Figure 1 Monthly rainfall (mm) for the period October 2009 to March 2010 for the 2010 crop compared to the corresponding period of the 2009 crop and to the long term mean (LTM).



2. STALK HEIGHT (TABLE 2)

Cane growth was assessed during the last week of March 2010 in the 63 sites representative of the five sugar cane sectors of the island. These sites cover the various agro-climatic zones, varieties under cultivation and stages of development of the crop. Data collected are compared to those of the corresponding period in March 2009 and to the mean of the five best cane yielding crops of the last ten years in each sector (referred to as normal).

2.1 Stalk elongation (Table 2a)

Growth during the month of March was inferior to that recorded during the corresponding period in 2009. Elongation amounted to 43.1 cm in the North, 41.8 cm in the East, 41.2 cm in the South, 44.6 cm in the West and 37.9 cm in the Centre and lagged by 13.8 cm, 10.1 cm, 13.7 cm, 9.3 cm and 6.5 cm in the respective sectors. The elongation rates of March 2010 were also below the normal in all sectors, the difference being 7.9 cm in the North, 5.2 cm in the East, 6.1 cm in the South, 5.0 cm in the West and 3.2 cm in the Centre. The 41.8 cm average elongation for the island represented 78.0% of that recorded in March 2009 (53.5 cm) and 86.8% of the normal (48.1 cm).

Table 2a. Stalk elongation during the month of March

	Stalk elongation (cm) during March			March 2010 as % of	
Sectors	**2010**	**2009**	**Normal**	**2009**	**Normal**
North	43.1	56.9	51.0	75.7	84.4
East	41.8	51.9	47.0	80.5	89.0
South	41.2	54.9	47.3	75.0	87.1
West	44.6	53.9	49.6	82.7	89.9
Centre	37.9	44.4	41.1	85.4	92.3
Island	**41.8**	**53.5**	**48.1**	**78.0**	**86.8**

2.2 Cumulative Elongation (Table 2b)

Cumulative growth from end-December 2009 to end-March 2010 reached 122.0 cm in the North, 126.1 cm in the East, 130.6 cm in the South, 139.9 cm in the West and 105.7 cm in the Centre. These cumulative growths were lower than those of 2009 by 11.5 cm (8.6%) in the North, 1.8 cm (1.4%) in the East, 15.4 cm (10.5%) in the South and 7.2 cm (6.4%) in the Centre. In the West, cumulative growth exceeded that of last year by 2.7 cm (2.0%).

Table 2b. Cumulative elongation at end-March

	Cum. elongation (cm) at end-March			March 2010 as % of	
Sectors	**2010**	**2009**	**Normal**	**2009**	**Normal**
North	122.0	133.5	133.6	91.4	91.3
East	126.1	127.9	136.4	98.6	92.5
South	130.6	146.0	148.0	89.5	88.3
West	139.9	137.2	138.4	102.0	101.1
Centre	105.7	112.9	122.6	93.6	86.2
Island	**125.6**	**134.3**	**139.6**	**93.5**	**90.0**

For the same period, cumulative elongation was below normal in sectors North, East, South and Centre by 11.6 cm, 10.3 cm, 17.4 cm and 16.9 cm respectively. In the West, growth was slightly better by 1.5 cm. Island-wise the cumulative elongation of 125.6 cm lagged behind that of the 2009 crop (134.3 cm) by 6.5% and the normal (139.6 cm) by 10.0%.

2.3 Total cane height (Table 2c and Figure 2)

Total stalk height at end-March 2010 stood at 146.7 cm in the North, 165.7 cm in the East, 181.9 cm in the South, 183.1 cm in the West and 153.3 cm in the Centre. Compared to end-March 2009, cane was shorter by 21.2 cm in the North, 8.5 cm in the East, 25.1 cm in the South and 10.8 cm in the Centre but was taller by 4.4 cm in the West. Total cane height at the end of March 2010 was below the normal by 15.7 cm (9.7%) in the North, 15.4 cm (8.5%) in the East, 17.8 cm (8.9%) in the South and 15.0 cm (8.9%) in the Centre but exceeded the normal by 14.7 cm (8.8%) in the West.

Island-wise the total cane height of 166.6 cm at end-March 2010 was lower than at end-March 2009 by 15.9 cm (8.7%) and the normal by 15.7 cm (8.6%).

Table 2c. Stalk height at end-March

	Stalk height (cm) at end-March			**End-March 2010 as % of**	
Sectors	**2010**	**2009**	**Normal**	**2009**	**Normal**
North	146.7	167.9	162.4	87.4	90.3
East	165.7	174.2	181.1	95.1	91.5
South	181.9	207.0	199.7	87.9	91.1
West	183.1	178.7	168.4	102.5	108.8
Centre	153.3	164.1	168.3	93.4	91.1
Island	**166.6**	**182.5**	**182.3**	**91.3**	**91.4**

3. 2010 CROP

Despite the generally favourable weather recorded during March 2010, cane growth was slower by 22% and 14.2% compared to the same month last year and the normal. This slower elongation rate cannot be attributed to the slightly lower solar radiation regime for the month as total amount of bright sunshine amounted to 92% to 99% of the normal on the MSIRI stations.

Figure 2. Stalk height at end- March 2010.