**ENVIRONMENTAL PERCEPTION AND AGRICULTURAL DECISION-MAKING**

Understanding the heterogeneity of farmers’ agricultural practices in a changing and uncertain environment

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**What is at stake?**

The seasonally flooded wetland of the Kilombero River (Tanzania) is dominated by small-holder farming. Like other sub-Saharan wetlands, this dynamic environment is reinforced due to increasing variability in the onset & intensity of the wet season.

**What influences farmers’ room of action and decision-making to sustain their livelihood within this consistent inconsistency of changing environmental & hydro-climatic risks?**

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**What did we find out?**

The more farmers expect positive agro-economic development of the valley, the more they aspire for themselves. There is a strong link between agency and aspiration as farmers with a high level of agency aspire the most. This is not only driven by socio-economic status but also by the perception of the physical environment. The response and feedback of farmers to their dynamic environment (see quotes) translates into different coping capacities and hence decision-making strategies.

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**Why is this important?**

The perception of hydro-climatic variabilities in combination with the self-assessment of coping capacity and agency creates farmers’ personal room of action.

This adds another important dimension to understand the unevenly distributed levels of agency and aspiration. For further studies we thus recommend to acknowledge human–environment interactions more intensively to understand the heterogeneity of farmers’ practices and to enable development of tailor-made support.

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