



Developing integrated approaches to climate change adaptation in rural communities of the Peruvian Andes

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Over centuries, Andean communities have developed strategies to cope with climate variability and extremes, such as cold waves or droughts, which can have severe impacts on their welfare. Nevertheless, the rural population, living at altitudes of 3000 to 4000 m asl or even higher, remains highly vulnerable to external stresses, partly because of the extreme living conditions, partly as a consequence of high poverty. Moreover, recent studies indicate that climatic extreme events have increased in frequency in the past years.

A Peruvian-Swiss Climate Change Adaptation Programme in Peru (PACC) is currently undertaking strong efforts to understand the links between climatic conditions and local livelihood assets. The goal is to propose viable strategies for adaptation in collaboration with the local population and governments. The program considers three main areas of action, i.e. (i) water resource management; (ii) disaster risk reduction; and (iii) food security.

The scientific studies carried out within the programme follow a highly transdisciplinary approach, spanning the whole range from natural and social sciences. Moreover, the scientific Peruvian-Swiss collaboration is closely connected to people and institutions operating at the implementation and political level. In this contribution we report on first results of thematic studies, address critical questions, and outline the potential of integrative research for climate change adaptation in mountain regions in the context of a developing country.