Small farmers, large issues: discourse, local knowledge, and strategies

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This research proposal aims to contribute to the body of knowledge about smallholder farmers' anthropogenic climate change perceptions, and how said perceptions shape adaptability and resilience, resulting in adopting new and old strategies grounded in local knowledge. 86% of farms in Indonesia are owned and cultivated by smallholders. This group is among the poorest and most vulnerable in Indonesia while contributing the most considerable part to the available food production in the entire country. Smallholder farmers from Lombok are, in particular, among the most vulnerable due to their socio-economic status and the high exposure of the region to climate-related hazards. The group's perceptions and discourse of anthropogenic change are shaped by local knowledge and the social environment, and top-down initiatives from the government and NGOs. The interplay of both factors has yet to be researched. This research is ethnographic and qualitative and will be conducted during three field-site visits of 6 months each. In apprentice anthropology, the notion that the farmer is the expert on local knowledge and new strategies as a means to adapt will be included wherein the researcher is the student and the respondent the teacher. The choice for this type of methodology is made because the majority of research on the intersection of agriculture, climate change, and social science is quantitative and does not consider local farmers as experts in their own field. Therefore, participant observation, semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and group discussions will be used.