

Geographisches Kolloquium

Sommersemester 2025

Mo / Mi
18:15 – 19:45 Uhr

Seminarstr. 19 a/b,
Osnabrück

Raum 02/E04

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Situated drought and flood risks in riverine communities in the Peruvian Amazon

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Approaches to understanding drought and flood risks often overlook how situatedness and social structures shape communities' knowledge-making and meaning-making processes. This can result in homogenous and detached knowledge systems and governance set-ups that simplify complex contexts, and entangled human-environment relationships. In this study, we take the case of two riverine communities in the Peruvian Amazon – Bajo Belén (lower Belén) and Tamshiyacu – to explore how these communities learn with the river how this knowledge informs their livelihood decisions, and how their differing relationships with the river influence the impacts of droughts and floods on their ways of life. From 2022 to 2024, we conducted storytelling sessions with 35 community members to understand their daily and seasonal activities, which are deeply tied to river levels. By employing reflexive qualitative analysis of these narratives alongside time-series data on river levels and precipitation, we developed community-specific calendars that identify “risk windows”—periods during which specific activities are most vulnerable to changes in river levels. Our findings underscore the importance of engaging in situated approaches to understanding and responding to risk. At a local engagement level, the remainder of our work in 2025 is targeted at working with local organizations to inspire insights on how such approaches can inform the design of community-specific projects and policies.

