

Being Small In a Big World: The Struggle 'Over' and 'Of' Smallholders

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Smallholders all over the world perform a crucial role in maintaining local and regional food production. They typically work in ecologically fragile agrarian environments, with limited control and access to land, labor and capital. Despite these adverse conditions, they often prove capable of developing adaptive, efficient and sustainable forms of agriculture. Yet, the future of smallholders is insecure due to threats from environmental change, modernization of food production, and geopolitical struggles over natural resources. It remains uncertain if and how smallholders can adapt to these threats. For this seminar I would like to discuss ways to assess the responses of smallholders to threats, and how we can explain and qualify the diversity of their responses in terms of resilience.

Wynand Boonstra graduated in Rural Sociology (MSc and PhD) from Wageningen University, and currently works as Associate Professor at the Stockholm Resilience Centre. The thematic focus of his research can be summarized broadly as the social dynamics and relations that shape the primary use of natural resources. His case studies include investigations of how primary producers - farmers and fishers - impact and depend upon terrestrial and marine ecologies. He is particularly interested in understanding (mis)matches between the values, interests of farmers and fishers and the social and ecological opportunities to realize their preferred farming and fishing styles.



Location: Blake Hall, Room 131, Cook Campus

Date: November 2, 2016

Time: 12:30 to 2:00 pm