

Abel Alarco Grijalva

PhD Researcher | Philosophy of Agriculture | Kyoto University

abel.alarco96@gmail.com ▪ Peruvian ▪ Kyoto, Japan

Summary

PhD researcher at Kyoto University. Working on the epistemology and methodology of sustainability science, with a critical eye on how research programs promising broad social change are actually delivered. I have spent the past 18 months independently building skills in academic communication through social media. I bring solid qualitative research training, database development skills, strong analytical and writing capacity, working fluency across Spanish, English and basic Japanese, and a track record of initiating and running small self-directed projects — from a graduate wellness initiative in my department to a short-lived agroecological startup in Lima.

Selected Media Projects

- Video Essay: "Por qué Cuba no puede producir su comida."
<https://youtu.be/MqxyCbDFhY?si=TTQL11u5sbFofCQV>
- Video Essay: "Young scholars under pressure fight back"
<https://youtu.be/G1r8qS8QEgA?si=hquy01vc-JVzKtQ>
- Short: "Japón tiene un problema con los PhD"
<https://www.instagram.com/p/DXY5lwJgIY1/>
- Short: "How critical can scientists be?"
<https://www.instagram.com/p/DQuFxt6Aupf/>

Full production (research, scripting, filming, editing, presentation).

Education

Kyoto University

PhD in Natural Resource Economics, Philosophy of Agriculture Lab

My dissertation examines how sustainability researchers — especially in agrifood systems — build novel research approaches to change complex social and ecological systems, and where those approaches succeed or fall short methodologically. Two studies are currently running: an ethnography of a research team working to transform Latin American agrifood systems, and a historical study of BOKU's Institute of Social Ecology in Vienna, tracing how "social ecology" developed as a field. Alongside these, I have developed an original qualitative research method built in Obsidian, integrating grounded theory, audit-trail transparency, and open-data principles — a portable, auditable, source-traceable system for qualitative analysis.

Kyoto, Japan

Oct 2024 – Present

University of Vienna

Exchange Semester, Department of Science & Technology Studies

Three-month research visit at the University of Vienna and BOKU's Institute of Social Ecology, connected to the dissertation's historical study of the latter institute.

Vienna, Austria

Sep – Dec 2025

Kyoto University

Kyoto, Japan

Master in Natural Resource Economics, Philosophy of Agriculture Lab

Oct 2022 – Sep 2024

Fieldwork visits and interviews with researchers and directors at Europe's eLTER, Malaysia's KITA, Japan's RIHN, the UK's TUKFSP, and Germany's IDOS and ZEF. Built qualitative research skills — semi-structured interviewing, thematic and narrative analysis — for studying organizational, relational and cultural dynamics in boundary-crossing research projects.

Kyoto University

Kyoto, Japan

Research Preparation Studies ("Kenkyuusei" Position)

Oct 2021 – Sep 2022

Japanese language classes, project conceptualization, and foundational reading on international agricultural politics and economics. Independently proposed and ran a tri-semester "Wellness Sessions" initiative — self-organized workshops directed at the mental wellbeing of laboratory and department members, sustained across three semesters.

National University of San Marcos

Lima, Peru

Licenciatura Thesis in Philosophy – Highest Honors

Sep 2021

Argued that contemporary ethical theories lack sufficient conceptual clarity to communicate meaningfully with one another, and proposed a basic framework for mapping their terminological differences.

National University of San Marcos

Lima, Peru

Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy – Top of Class

2013 - 2018

Academic Presentations

"*Refocusing Institutional Priorities: The Role of Educational Structures in Promoting Interdisciplinarity in Agri-Food Research.*" 5th Global Food Security Conference, April 2024, Leuven, Belgium.

"*Exploring AFS Dynamics and The Value of Self-Reflective Research.*" 4th Food & Society Conference, November 2023, Kuching (Sarawak), Malaysia.

"*The Interdisciplinary Researcher: Probing the Impact of Academic Structures and Scholarly Identity on Agri-Food Sociology.*" 7th International Workshop, ARAFE, July 2023, Ritsumeikan University, OIC Campus.

Work Experience

Vegginy

Kyoto, Japan

Weekend service & kitchen support staff - [Instagram](#)

Aug.23– Present

Grounded food work. Waiting, preparing food and drinks, and general operations at a **popular and** small Kyoto vegan restaurant.

Freelance Research & Editorial Assistant

Lima, Peru / Kyoto, Japan

Nov 2020 – Oct 2021 · Oct 2022 – Feb 2023

- Academic administrative tasks, literature reviews and critical feedback for a physician working on a PhD in Philosophy focused on medically assisted death in Peru. (Lima, Peru / 20.11 – 21.10)
- Document management and academic administrative procedures for a lawyer's graduate applications in Italy and Canada. (Lima, Peru / 20.11 – 21.10)
- Organizational and writing support for the Peruvian disability NGO SODIS during the second phase of the UNICEF-funded + *Inclusión* project. (Kyoto, Japan / 22.10 – 23.02)

Manía Vegan Food / Tejeda's Company

Lima – Trujillo, Peru

Family food business, sustainability and agroecology support

Mar – Oct 2020

Supported the business's shift toward agroecological sourcing, community engagement, and sustainability. Networked with providers and partners, mapped Lima's agroecological business landscape, and secured farmer's-market placements.

2/3 orgánico

Lima, Peru

Co-founder, agroecological weekly veggie box startup - [Instagram](#)

Dec 2018 – Dec 2019

Small two-person startup (with a childhood friend) assembling weekly vegetable boxes from regional agroecological farms, curated to meet average weekly micronutrient requirements. Ran for one year.

Skills & Languages

Research & Analysis: Qualitative interviewing, thematic and narrative analysis, narrative synthesis, fact-checking, methodological design (open-data qualitative pipelines), broad scientific literacy including statistics.

Media Production: Scriptwriting, story development, interview design, video editing (DaVinci Resolve), on-camera presentation.

Interpersonal: Workshop facilitation, initiative-building, working across languages and academic cultures.

Languages: Spanish (native), English (fluent), Japanese (conversational)