

Raksha Balakrishna

PhD Candidate
School of Sustainability
Arizona State University

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[Website](#)
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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Sustainability

2021-(Expected-2026)

School of Sustainability, Arizona State University

Tempe, USA

Dissertation: Collective Action for Solving Resource Dilemmas in a Rapidly Urbanizing Context: The Case of Groundwater Governance in India (Advisor: Marco Janssen)

M.A. in Development

2015-2017

Azim Premji University

Bangalore, India

Field Research Project: The Role of Citizen-led Initiatives in Environmental Conservation

B.A. in Psychology, Sociology, Economics

2012-2015

Christ University

Bangalore, India

RESEARCH & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Center for Behavior, Institutions and the Environment, Arizona State University

Tempe

Graduate Research Associate, *Scaling up commons dilemma experiments for research and education* 2021-2024

- Conducted online behavioral experiments with undergraduate students, to study commons dilemmas
- Analyzed text data generated via the experiment, employing computational text analysis methods
- Assisted in writing a progress report, and preparation of three manuscripts for publication (2 published)

School of Sustainability, Arizona State University

Tempe, USA

Co-PI, *An exploratory study of groundwater management in urban and peri-urban agriculture*

2022

- Prepared the study design and proposal; prepared and implemented field plan - Developed data collection instruments and implemented them on the field.
- Data analysis: translated and transcribed interview data, qualitative analysis and codebook development

International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)

Delhi, India

Research Intern, *Developing Experiential Learning Tools for Groundwater Governance*

Summer 2022

- Reviewed experimental data from impact assessment studies and devised data analysis plans
- Prepared a plan for dissemination of data and research findings to rural communities in India

Foundation for Ecological Security (FES)

Anand, India

Consultant, Studies and Policy Advocacy

2020-2021

- Design and develop an online public forum for discussion and dialogue around 'the commons'
- Lead in developing a [sourcebook](#) on strengthening management and governance of water as commons

Project Manager, Studies and Policy Advocacy

2017-2020

- Led a 5-member field research team working across the states of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka
- Designed, managed and implemented several research initiatives spanning the areas of energy-poverty-health dynamics, social-ecological systems, climate change adaptation, impact assessments, governance and institutions, and natural resource management in rural India

Key Projects:

1. Understanding Household Network and Organizational Drivers for Adoption, Sustained Use and Maintenance of Clean Cooking Fuels in Rural India in collaboration with **Boston College School of Social Work**

2019

TEACHING & MENTORING EXPERIENCE

Instructor

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| School of Sustainability, Arizona State University | Tempe, USA |
| - International Development and Sustainability (SOS322) | Summer 2024 |
| - Justice, Equity and Sustainability (SOS310) | Spring 2025 |
| - Fundamentals of Sustainable Food Systems (SOS215) | Summer 2025 |
| - The Sustainable Plate (SOS216) | Summer 2025 |

Undergraduate Advising

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| Sustainability Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE) Program, School of Sustainability, Arizona State University | Spring 2025 |
| - Project: Collective Action for Solving Resource Dilemmas in a Rapidly Urbanizing Context | |
| - Mentoring 2 undergraduate students who are assisting with literature review and data analysis | |

Guest Lectures

- Framing Environmental Science and Sustainability, Azim Premji University, Bangalore, India (Fall 2024)
- Topic: Governance of the Commons – Using Field Experiments to Strengthen Resource Governance

PUBLICATIONS

Published Papers

- Ahn, M., **Balakrishna, R.**, Simeone, M., & Janssen, M. A. (2024). When does group chat promote cooperation in shared resource governance?. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11(1), 1-10.
- Janssen, M. A., **Balakrishna, R.**, Gharavi, L., Hong, Y. C., Lee, A., Nguyen, C., & Simeone, M. (2024). Collective action within an environment of unknown unknowns: Experiences with the port of Mars Game. *Plos one*, 19(8), e0308363.
- Federico, F., **Balakrishna, R.**, & Janssen, M. A. (2025). Evolution of conditional cooperation in a spatial public goods game. *PLOS Complex Systems*, 2(4), e0000040.
- Zhang, W., Meinzen-Dick, R. S., Valappanandi, S., **Balakrishna, R.**, Reddy, H., Janssen, M. A., ... Ghate, R. (2022). How Do Game Design, Gender, and Players' Backgrounds Affect Behavior in Framed Field Experiments? Evidence from Community Forestry in India. *International Journal of the Commons*, 16(1), 341–359.
- **Balakrishna, R.**, Goldstein, B. E., & Manuel-Navarrete, D. (2022). What are the Challenges to Being an Effective Transformations Practitioner?. *Social Innovations Journal*, 15(5).
- Thomas, L., **Balakrishna, R.**, Chaturvedi, R., Mukhopadhyay, P., & Ghate, R. (2022). What influences rural poor in India to refill their LPG?. *Climate change and community resilience: Insights from South Asia*, 191-203.

Conference Papers

- **Balakrishna, R.**, Janssen, M.A., (2025, June 16). “*Collective Action for Solving Resource Dilemmas in a Rapidly Urbanizing Context: an Institutional Analysis of Shared Groundwater Governance in Peri-Urban India*” [Paper presentation]. **20th Biennial Conference of the International Association for the Study of the Commons**, Amherst, Washington.
- **Balakrishna, R.**, Janssen, M.A., (2023, May 12). “*Effects of Urbanization on Cooperation: Results from a Large-scale Implementation of a Collective Action Game*” [Paper presentation]. **Duck Family Graduate Workshop in Environmental Policy and Governance**, Seattle, Washington.

FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS & GRANTS

- Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant (2024-25), **National Science Foundation** (\$29,361)
- Graduate Completion Fellowship (2025-26), **Graduate College**, Arizona State University (\$26,600)
- University Graduate Fellowship (2025), **School of Sustainability**, Arizona State University (\$1200)
- Morrison Neely Foundation Food and Agricultural Sustainability Research Grant (2024), **School of Sustainability**, Arizona State University (\$2100)
- University Graduate Fellowship (2024), **School of Sustainability**, Arizona State University (\$1000)
- Morrison Neely Foundation Food and Agricultural Sustainability Research Grant (2022), **School of Sustainability**, Arizona State University (\$4000)
- Social Science Talent Search Scheme Scholarship (2012-2015), **Institute for Social and Economic Change, Christ University and Bangalore University**

SERVICE

- **Special Issue Editor**, International Journal for the Study of the Commons (IJoC)
- **Reviewer**, Annals of Global Health (2)
- **Membership Officer**, Early Career Network of the International Association for the Study of the Commons (IASC-ECN) (2025-2027)
- **Graduate Student Representative**, School of Sustainability, Arizona State University (2022-2023)
- **Research Grants Reviewer**, Graduate and Professional Student Association, Arizona State University (2022-2023)
- **Travel Grants Reviewer**, Graduate and Professional Student Association, Arizona State University (2022-2023)
- **Student Ambassador**, Indian Students' Association, Arizona State University (2022-2023)

SYNERGISTIC ACTIVITIES

- Conference co-organizer: International Association for the Study of the Commons (IASC) Biennial Conference (online component)
- Organizer and reviewer: International Association for the Study of the Commons (IASC)-Early Career Network (ECN) 2024 Writing Workshop
- Workshop co-organizer: The what, how and why of lake restoration, Azim Premji University, Bangalore, India
- Guest speaker: : [Collectively Responding to Urbanization](#) (2024) - [Sustaining \(in\)Justice](#) Podcast
- Working group co-organizer: Computational Modeling for Collective Action Research; International Association for the Study of the Commons (IASC) Behavior, Institutions and the Environment Workshop

SOFTWARE & LANGUAGES

- **Programming and Data Analysis:** R (Expert), MaxQDA (Expert), ArcGIS (Expert), QGIS (Intermediate), Python (Intermediate), SPSS (Basic), SQL (Basic)
- **Presentation:** Rmarkdown, Microsoft Suite
- **Languages:** English, Kannada, Telugu, Hindi