

### **What was your job in your country and what made you decide to study in Japan?**

Before coming to Japan I was working in the Electric Union of Cuba as the main specialist in Renewable Energy projects. My duties there were mainly as conceptual engineer, project manager, technology acquisition and business negotiator of all of the projects being implemented nationwide. My principal motivation for coming to study in Japan was my interest in continuing to thrive in my professional career. The graduate education in Japan offers the opportunity to learn from cutting edge companies, having renowned supervisors counted among the top researchers worldwide and the support to develop your own ideas.

### **Please describe your study at Hiroshima University and things you are now working.**

Hiroshima University is one of the top universities in Japan. It offers very professional teaching staff along with advanced experimental facilities. The curricular designs offer the student the freedom to select the classes that fits the best to each one. However, I must be honest and say that specially for graduate students, the subjects should be more detailed. In some regards the classes are too loose, general and repetitive.

My research deals with the pathway for the energy transition in developing countries. It requires a lot of experimentation and simulations using advanced laboratories and High Computational Capacity Systems, activities that have been fully supported by JICA, the university and my supervisor, allowing me to successfully achieve all the milestones of my research plan so far. Moreover, it is not strange to get involved in side projects that encompasses many members of the laboratories. Since my lab deals mainly with the climate change from the hazards managing to the renewable energy, we are currently developing an autonomous drifting ocean biophysic monitoring buoy. The main purpose of this device is the measurement of more than 7 variables that allows to monitor and analyse the water quality, healthiness of the marine ecosystems and even the occurrence of natural disasters.

### **Is there any difference between when you just came to Japan and right now.**

There are many differences from my arrival to Japan and right now. Initially, I felt kind of strange and out of place for a couple of months. Eventually, that started changing, I started making new good friends here, I started learning and understanding more about Japan and the Japanese society and commenced step by step getting more integrated in it. Right now I feel like home.

### **Please describe the best moment in Japan.**

Good moments in Japan I have had a lot. Every single success I have achieved in my research has been a moment of joy for me, many of those moments would be impossible back to my country.

Furthermore, I'm a nature and hiking lover and Japan is naturally beautiful. So far I have hiked several of the highest peaks of Japan including Mount Fuji and each one of them have filled me with pleasant joy.

**Do you interact with local Japanese people during the stay in Japan? If not, would you like to do something to interact with local people?**

I do interact with local Japanese people a lot, actually I have many Japanese friends. After you start interacting with them, one discovers that the Japanese are also excited to interact with foreigners. However it is a reality that the language and cultural barriers are there and are huge, but that's just another motivation to learn the language or try to teach them some English or even your native languages, they want to learn!

**Anything you want to share about you and/your life in Higashi-hirosima. Such as hobby, food, Japanese culture, your country.**

Higashi-hiroshima is a small town, the population and city is growing super fast. Moreover, it is a unique place where the international community is huge, allowing us to interact with so many cultures at once. It is also conveniently close to Hiroshima city for those to enjoy nightlife and big cities and sufficiently away to enjoy the tranquillity of "small town".

**After you graduate, how would like to apply what you learned in Japan to your job. Also, are you planning to keep in touch with Japanese community/people?**

My country is currently pursuing energy independence and the transition towards a fully renewable energy based system. I believe that my research will provide decision makers in my country with the ability of making informed and accurate decisions towards the final goal. Moreover, my research is not local but global, and can be replicated by any country. The bounds I have developed here with Japanese people and companies will accompany me from now on in any future step I might take.

**Message to future JICA participants.**

Japan is full of opportunities to grow and improve, seize each one of them.