

CURRICULUM VITAE (CVA)
IMPORTANT – The Curriculum Vitae cannot exceed 4 pages. Instructions to fill this document are available in the website.

Part A. PERSONAL INFORMATION		CV date	01/07/2026
First name	Alejandro		
Family name	Berlinches de Gea		
Gender (*)	Male	Birth date	18/12/1994
e-mail	alexberlinches@gmail.com	URL Web:	https://alexberlinches.phd.sh/
Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) (*)	0000-0003-4278-8628		

(*) Mandatory

A.1. Current position

Job Title	Postdoctoral Fellow		
Initial date	01/10/2024		
Institution	Wageningen University & Research (WUR)		
Department/Center	Nematology	Wageningen University & Research (WUR)	
Country	Spain/The Netherlands	Teleph. number	+34626976365
Key words	Biodiversity, protists, biodiversity-ecosystem functioning, soil microbial ecology, soil, lichens		

A.2. Previous positions

Period	Job Title / Name of Employer / Country
Aug 2020 – Aug 2024	PhD Student / Wageningen University & Research (WUR) / The Netherlands
Oct 2019 – Jun 2020	Project coordinator / Liquencity2, Real Jardín Botánico (RJB-CSIC) / Spain
Octo 2018– Jun 2019	Biologist/ Liquencity, Real Jardín Botánico (RJB-CSIC) / Spain

A.3. Education

Degree/Master/PhD	University / Country	Year
PhD in Life Sciences	Wageningen University & Research (WUR)	2025
Master's degree in "Biodiversidad en áreas tropicales y su conservación"	Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo	2018
Graduate in Biology	Universidad Rey Juan Carlos	2016

Part B. CV SUMMARY (max. 5000 characters, including spaces)

I am a researcher in **microbial, soil, and protist ecology** with a strong interdisciplinary background that integrates the **biodiversity-ecosystem functioning (BEF)** concept, **bioinformatics** and **molecular ecology**. Over the course of my career, I have completed specialized training in protist ecology, microbial community analyses, and **bioinformatic workflows** for metabarcoding, which I apply to understand how microbial and protist communities respond to global change drivers and, ultimately, how these changes affect ecosystem functioning. I have spent the last five years at **Wageningen University (The Netherlands)**, working in an international environment where I have developed advanced



skills in experimental design, biodiversity assessments, teaching and supervising skills, statistical modelling, high-throughput data analysis, and scientific communication.

My research focuses on the links between soil biodiversity, global change, and plant–soil interactions, combining **greenhouse experiments**, **controlled-environment studies**, and **farm and forest soil sampling campaigns**. I integrate large ecological datasets with bioinformatic tools such as DADA2, Tidyverse or Microeco to generate insights into ecosystem structure and function. This work has resulted in publications in high-impact journals including **Global Change Biology**, **The ISME Journal**, **Soil Biology & Biochemistry**, and **Journal of Ecology**, demonstrating both the breadth and relevance of my contributions. I currently work on **BIOserviceS** (<https://bioservices-project.eu/>), a **Horizon Europe-funded** project that studies how soil organisms sustain essential ecosystem functions and how these contributions shift under land-use and climate change. In this project I lead protist ecology and biodiversity metric components, integrating molecular, ecological and statistical approaches to produce new indicators for sustainable land management and soil health policy.

In the Netherlands, I have been actively involved in university teaching and student supervision, particularly through the mentorship of several **BSc and MSc thesis students** (more than 12 MSc and BSc thesis combined), which strengthened my skills in supervising students, guiding experimental design, data analysis, scientific writing and communication. Throughout these years, I have also gained teaching experience by teaching courses (both theoretical and practical) and ecological field activities. My ability to communicate science to broad audiences began during my work as project coordinator and biologist for the citizen science initiatives *Liquencity* (<https://liquencity.org/>) and *Liquencity 2* (<https://liquencity2.org/>). In these projects, I led outreach activities for diverse audiences—from school classrooms and public bioblitzes to scientific conferences and interviews on nationally recognized TV and radio. These communication efforts have been acknowledged through several awards, including the **Best Talk Award** at the German Protistology Meeting and the **Best Master Thesis Award** (2016–2018) for my work on lichens. A major highlight of my career was being invited to speak at the **Dies Natalis of Wageningen University**, where I presented my research in front of **over 700 attendees**, including ambassadors, university rectors, and institutional leaders—an experience that demonstrates my capacity to engage effectively with diverse audiences and represent scientific work at the highest institutional level.

Part C. RELEVANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

C.1. Publications

CA: corresponding author. (n° x / n° y): position / total authors. If applicable, indicate the number of citations

- 1) Yuxin Wang; Justine D.M. Lejoly; **Alejandro Berlinches de Gea**; Sven van den Elsen; G.F (Ciska) Veen; Stefan Geisen (CA) (2025). Protist size-dependent reduction of litter decomposition. *ISME Communications*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ismeco/ycaf231>

- 2) **Alejandro Berlinches de Gea (CA)**; Joshua Both; Nina Haas; Rutger A Wilschut; Florian Wichern; and Stefan Geisen (2025). Soil microbiome predator diversity outperforms nitrogen addition in boosting plant biomass via bacterial community shifts. *BioRxiv*. <https://doi.org/10.64898/2025.12.02.689768>
- 3) Miguel Blázquez; **Alejandro Berlinches de Gea**; Patricia Moya; Salvador Chiva; Sergio Pérez-Ortega (CA) (2025). Green algal photobiont diversity in lichen communities under forest fragmentation. *Environmental Microbiology*. Accepted
- 4) **Alejandro Berlinches de Gea (CA)**; Julia Walochnik; Jens Boenigk; Kenneth Dumack; Fiona Henriquez; Sonja Rückert; Martin Simon; Stefan Geisen (CA) (2025). Protists as determinants of the One Health framework. *The ISME Journal*. 19 - 1, pp. wraf179. Google Scholar (1) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ismejo/wraf179>
- 5) **Alejandro Berlinches de Gea (CA)**; Stefan Geisen; Franka Grootjans; Rutger A. Wilschut; Arne Schwelm (CA) (2024). Species-specific predation determines the feeding impacts of six soil protist species on bacterial and eukaryotic prey. *European Journal of Protistology*. 94, pp. 126090. Google Scholar (5) <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejop.2024.126090>
- 6) **Alejandro Berlinches de Gea**; Miguel Verdú; Mar Villar de Pablo; Sergio Pérez Ortega (CA) (2024). The combined effects of habitat fragmentation and life history traits on specialisation in lichen symbioses. *Journal of Ecology*. 112 - 1, pp. 200 - 216. Google Scholar (7) <https://doi.org/10.1111/1365-2745.14229>
- 7) **Alejandro Berlinches de Gea (CA)**; Guixin Li; Jingxuan Olivia Chen; Wenjia Wu; Aarzoo Kohra; Semih Karst Aslan; Stefan Geisen (CA) (2023). Increasing soil protist diversity alters tomato plant biomass in a stress-dependent manner. *Soil Biology and Biochemistry*. 186, pp. 109179. Google Scholar (10) <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.soilbio.2023.109179>
- 8) Shunran Hu; Guixin Li; **Alejandro Berlinches de Gea**; Joliese Teunissen; Stefan Geisen (CA); Rutger A Wilschut; Arne Schwelm; Yuxin Wang (2023). Microbiome predators in changing soils. *Environmental Microbiology*. 25 - 11, pp. 2057 - 2067. Google Scholar (8) <https://doi.org/10.1111/1462-2920.16461>
- 9) **Alejandro Berlinches de Gea**; Yann Hautier; Stefan Geisen (CA) (2023). Interactive effects of global change drivers as determinants of the link between soil biodiversity and ecosystem functioning. *Global Change Biology*. 29 - 2, pp. 296 - 307. Google Scholar (75) <https://doi.org/10.1111/gcb.16471>
- 10) **Alejandro Berlinches de Gea**; Sergio Pérez Ortega (CA) (2020). Liguency: Busca líquenes urbanitas y conoce la calidad del aire de tu ciudad. *Conservación Vegetal*. 24, pp. 42 - 45. Google Scholar (7)

C.2. Conferences and meetings

1. **Berlinches de Gea, A.**, The unsung heroes: Soil protist diversity as a driver of plant performance under global changes. 4th Global Soil Biodiversity Conference. 2026 Victoria, Canada. (**Early career Showcase talk**).
2. **Berlinches de Gea, A.**, Geisen, S., Functioning of soil biodiversity: Data, concepts, methods and ways forward. 4th Global Soil Biodiversity Conference. 2026 Victoria, Canada. (**Symposium organizer**).
3. **Berlinches de Gea, A.**, The unsung heroes: Soil protist diversity as a driver of plant performance under global changes. Protistology Open. 2026 Prague, Czech Republic. (**Karl-Gottlieb Grell Prize. Oral communication**).
4. **Berlinches de Gea, A.**, Both, J., Haas, N., Chen, J., Li, G., Wu, W., Wilschut, RA., Schwelm, A., Geisen, S. Soil biodiversity-ecosystem functioning (sBEF) using protist as a model. 43rd annual meeting of the DGP. Society of Eukaryotic Microbiology

formerly German Society for Protozoology. 2024 Haltern am See, Alemania. (**Oral communication**)

5. **Berlinches de Gea, A.**, Both, J., Haas, N., Chen, J., Li, G., Wu, W., Wilschut, RA., Schwelm, A., Geisen, S. Soil biodiversity-ecosystem functioning (sBEF) relationships depend on global change drivers. Netherlands Annual ecological Meeting. NERN (Netherlands Ecological Research Network). 2024. Lunteren, The Netherlands. (**Oral communication**)
6. **Berlinches de Gea, A.**, Both, J., Haas, N., Chen, J., Li, G., Wu, W., Wilschut, RA., Schwelm, A., Geisen, S. Protist as ideal models to study soil biodiversity-ecosystem functioning. IX European Congress of Protistology & Annual Congress of the International Society of Protistologists. ECOP-ISOP 2023. University of Vienna in scientific cooperation with the German Society for Protozoology (DGP). 2023. Vienna, Austria. (**Oral communication**)
7. **Berlinches de Gea, A.**, Geisen, S. Uncovering the intimate links between soil biodiversity and plant performance'. Virtual Nematology Conference 2021. Wageningen University. 2021. (**Oral communication**)
8. **Berlinches de Gea, A.**; Pérez-Ortega, S.. Effects of fragmentation on fungal-algal interaction networks. XXII Symposium of Cryptogamic Botany. University of Lisbon, Faculty of Sciences, Centre for Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Changes.. 2019. Lisbon, Portugal. (**Oral communication**)
9. **Berlinches de Gea, A.**, Pérez-Ortega. LiquenCity: Busca líquenes urbanitas y conoce la calidad del aire de tu ciudad. I Foro Internacional de Ciencia Ciudadana en España. Fundación Ibercivis. 2019. Madrid, España. (**Oral communication**)

C3. Supervising

Master theses

1. Protist Species-Specific Effects on Plant Growth Mediated by Shifts in Bacterial Communities. Stevie Ninoi Tualaka
2. Digging Into Disturbance: Evaluating Anthropogenic Land-Use Effects on Soil Protist across Europe's Biogeographical Regions. Hester Tolk.
3. Soil animal pathogen diversity across European land use and disturbance gradients. Eva Meulenbroeks
4. Soil microbiome predators strengthen positive effects of multiple co-occurring global change factors on *P. lanceolata* biomass. Serena Horsmans
5. Unlocking The Secrets of Soil Biodiversity: The Molecular Barcoding for Soil Protists. Fajri Maulana Anugrah
6. Elucidating the role of soil biota in parasitic nematode-plant interactions. Sem Aslan
7. Soil predators matter: protist and nematode biodiversity and nitrogen addition interactively shape the soil ecosystem and boost *C. sativa* growth. Joshua Both
8. The future of agriculture: soil predators in combination with nitrogen addition are key elements in *Cannabis sativa* cultivation. Nina Haas
9. Protist diversity mediated nematode suppression. Jingxuan Chen
10. Biodiversity-mediated suppression of root-feeding nematodes in tomato. Aarzo Kohra

Bachelor theses

1. The Species-Specific effects of Protists as Biofertilizers on the Growth of Food crops. Roos Gales
2. Feeding and encystation behaviour of six predatory soil protists when exposed to bacterial and eukaryotic prey as a food source. Franka Grootjans

3. Unlikely Alliance: Protists and Bacteria Decrease Infections of *Globodera pallida* in Tomato. Sjoerd Hendrik van Oossanen
4. Diversity of soil bacterivores is shown to increase plant performance under different nitrogen regimes. Bram Willems

C4. Teaching

Master courses

1. Frontiers in Biology (YBI37806). Type of teaching: Theory (in person). Year(s): 2025
2. Host-Parasite Interactions (NEM30306). Type of teaching: Practical (virtual): 2025, 2024, 2022, 2021, 2020
3. Ecology I (PEN10503). Type of teaching: Practical (in person): 2023, 2022
4. Ecological Aspects of Bio-Interactions (ENT30306) Type of teaching: Practical (in person): 2022, 2021

Lectures

1. Course 'Microbial Ecology and Evolution'. Leiden University. 3 hours. 15/02/2024
2. Course 'Herramientas Moleculares'. Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo. 2 hours. 16/01/2024
3. Course 'Microbial Ecology and Evolution'. Leiden University. 3 hours. 10/02/2023

C4. Journal activity

C.4.1 Editorial Board Member

1. Pedobiologia.

C.4.2 Peer review activity

1. PNAS
2. Trends in Microbiology
3. Soil Biology and Biochemistry
4. Journal of Ecology
5. Functional Ecology
6. ISME communications
7. Plant and Soil
8. Communications Earth & Environment
9. European Journal of Soil Biology
10. European Journal of Protistology