

Abram Jared Bicksler, Ph.D.

Global Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems Expert

Work Experience

- **Agricultural Officer – Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**, Rome, Italy, 2018–Present. Develop, fund, implement, communicate, and monitor programmes, policies, tools, initiatives, and projects related to agroecology, sustainable food and agriculture systems, ecosystem services, co-creation, farmer-centered participatory research, and pollinators to enable Member States and other actors to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals via operational and normative work in an inclusive, multi-stakeholder manner.
- **Director – ECHO Asia Impact Center**, Chiang Mai, Thailand, 2013–2018. Led an 11-person Thai and international team (with up to five additional interns and volunteers) for the identification, verification, and dissemination of contextually relevant information, innovations, ideas, and seeds for agricultural and community development workers, missionaries, organizations, and NGOs in the ECHO Asia network throughout Asia and planned and began developing the ECHO Asia Small Farm Center and Seed Bank.
- **Director of Sustainability Research (2011–2013) and Post-Doctoral Fellow and Instructor (2009–2011) – International Sustainable Development Studies Institute (ISDSI)**, Chiang Mai, Thailand, 2009–2013. Lead Academic Instructor for “Sustainable Food Systems” course and “Human Rights and the Environment” course and **Directed research for and empowered** local and international NGOs in northern Thailand and Asia, including ECHO (Educational Concerns for Hunger Organization) Asia, in sustainable tropical agriculture and development knowledge dissemination through their Asian network of development researchers and practitioners.

Education

- **Ph.D. Natural Resources and Environmental Science – Univ. of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign**, 2005–2009. Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences. **Dissertation Title:** “Canada Thistle Management Systems for Sustainable and Organic Farms.”
- **M.S. Natural Resources and Environmental Science – Univ. of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign**, 2003–2005. Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences.
- **OTS 04-1 Tropical Biology: An Ecological Approach- Organization for Tropical Studies (OTS)**, Costa Rica, 2004.
- **B.S. Environmental Biology - Taylor University**, Upland, IN, 1998–Jan. 2002.
- **Isabella Wells Hunnewell Intern- The Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University**, 2002.

Leadership and Managerial Skills

- **FAO:** Managed multiple national projects for country-wide initiatives in the role of Lead Technical Officer funded by various UN modalities. Led, advised, and mentored up to 5 consultants and 2 interns at a time on various projects, grant facilities, agroecology work streams, pollinators work streams, policy development, media creation, database creation, statistical analysis, and communications materials. 2018–Present.
- **ECHO Asia Impact Center:** Led 11 staff members (and up to 5 additional Western and Asian interns and volunteers) as a cross-cultural team for the Asia branch of ECHO, Inc., in the daily administrative; logistical; planning; network development; conference and workshop planning and implementation; technical writing; public relations; technical responses; seed bank operations, production, and distribution; research coordination; consultations; legal representation and status in Thailand; and fundraising needs of the organization. 2013–2018.
- **International Sustainable Development Studies Institute:** Led 6 member cross-cultural teaching team in curriculum and instructional development, risk management, logistical planning, and vision casting for experiential study-abroad courses and advised undergraduate students in research development and implementation. 2009–2013.
- **University of Illinois:** Oversaw coordination and day-to-day management of 3–5 hourly student workers who helped with graduate student research and HORT 105 class preparation. 2003–2009.

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Not-for Profit Board and Advisory Board Experience

- **Chairman of the Board. ECHO Asia Foundation, Thailand.** Responsible for maintaining the legality, compliance, and organizational good-standing of the ECHO Asia Foundation, Thailand, registered with the Kingdom of Thailand as a Social Welfare Foundation. 2013–2018.
- **Advisory Board Member. Transformative Partnership Platform on Agroecology (TPP), Global.** Advised the TPP on knowledge and implementation gaps related to agroecology research and policies to foster agroecological transitions. 2020–2022.
- **Advisory Board Member. Biovision Peer-to-Peer Exchange Among Policy Makers, Global.** Advised and networked with the project to upscale agroecology via exchanges among policy makers and official advisors. 2020–2021.
- **Advisory Board Member. PRIMA Bee, Southern Europe.** Advised the PRIMA Bee project funded by the European Union on policy and field-level approaches for the sustainable use and protection of pollinators in Southern Europe. 2020–present.
- **Project Advisory Committee Member. INGENAES Project, University of IL (USAID Funding- AID-176-LA-13-00003).** 2016–2018.

Project Development and Implementation

- **Lead Technical Officer (LTO) and Headquarters Technical Officer (HQTO) on numerous Global Environment Facility (GEF), World Bank, and FAO TCP projects.** 2018–present. LTO on 4 projects in Angola and Mozambique, and HQ Technical Officer on 10+ GEF and FAO TCP projects globally with a **portfolio worth \$34 M (LTO) and \$8 M (HQTO).** 2018–present.
- **Planned and began execution of the ECHO Asia Small Farm Resource Center and Seed Bank** in a participatory manner, building off of years of work with SFRCs throughout the region to expand ECHO Asia’s regional research, demonstration, and training capacity. 2016–2018.

Outreach, Publications, and Communications

- **Peer Reviewed Publications.** Author or co-author on **over 30** peer-reviewed publications spanning themes of agroecology, multi-dimensional assessment, neglected and utilized species, sustainable cropping, weed science, seed systems, seed biology, agroforestry, tropical ecology, and organic agriculture over a diverse academic and technical career. 2000–present.
- **International Extension and Outreach Publications and Contributions.** Author, contributor, or editor of **40** books, chapters, papers, articles, ECHO Development Notes, ECHO Asia Notes, and FAO Notes spanning many diverse facets of sustainable agriculture, international development, ecology, agroecology, and specific topics therein. 2009–present.
- **Domestic Extension and Outreach Publications and Contributions.** Author or contributor of **10** chapters, papers, and extension pieces centered on sustainable weed management, organic cropping systems, herbicides, and cover cropping for a domestic US audience. 2004–2009.
- **Abstracts and Scholarly Presentations.** Presented over **48 oral presentations or posters** at conferences, symposia, and professional development venues and published abstracts of those works. 2000–present.
- **Other communications tools.** Responsible for creating, validating, and clearing various communications media created for scientific, technical, and general public audiences, including news articles, Twitter feeds, Instagram feeds, interviews, and websites. 2013–present.

Research, Grant Writing, and Advising Experience

- **FAO’s Tool for Agroecology Performance Evaluation (TAPE).** Co-leader of the development, co-funding, piloting, utilization and validation of this innovative multi-stakeholder tool in over 30 countries to assess the multi-dimensional performance of agroecology across the different dimensions of sustainability. 2019–present.
- **PI or Co-PI on over 20 research projects.** Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator involved in the planning, grant writing, execution, monitoring and evaluation, reporting and publication of the results of over **20 research projects** spanning North America, Asia, Africa and Europe with a portfolio of over \$1.5M in grant funding. 2009–present.

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International Consulting and Speaking Experience

- **Invited speaker, convener, trainer, high-level opener, closing-remarks, workshop discussant, panelist, technical speaker, and professional development presenter** in over **57** professional, technical, policy-focused, development-focused, technical, and academic settings spanning the physical and virtual globe. 2009–present.
- **Convener and coordinator of ECHO Asia Biennial Conference.** 2013–2017.
- **International consultancy experience** providing technical, developmental, leadership, statistical, monitoring and evaluation expertise to a diverse portfolio of NGO, academic, local leadership and missions organizations. 2009–2018.

Teaching and Training Experience

- **E-learning course and MOOC.** Developed FAO e-learning curriculum, 5 videos, and 25 minutes of gamified learning in “The Agroecologist,” an immersive experience about agroecology, the 10 Elements of Agroecology, and how agroecology can help meet the SDGs. Contributor to an FAO MOOC on the interaction of sustainable agriculture and nutrition. 2018–present.
- **Training of Master Trainers, Farmer Field School Facilitators, and government extension agents.** Trained extension specialists via roles as Lead Technical Officer on various donor-funded projects for FAO on the topics of agroecology, seed saving, sustainable agriculture, and climate-smart agriculture. 2018–present.
- **Training of practitioners, NGOs, farmers, academics, and extension agents via the ECHO network.** Coordinated, convened, and trained a diverse network of ECHO Asia stakeholders via technical training sessions, workshops, and national conferences on a myriad of topics in over 9 countries. 2010–2018.
- **Academic teaching experience in United States and Thailand.** Lead academic instructor for “*Sustainable Food Systems: Social and Biological Factors in Agriculture*” and “*Human Rights and the Environment: Rivers, Dams, and Local Struggles*” at ISDSI, Chiang Mai, Thailand. 2009–2013. Teaching Assistant for *HORT 105: Home Vegetable Gardening* for 9 semesters at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. 2005–2009.

Political and Policy Experience

- **Political and policy experience with FAO to assist Member States in their particular goals and contexts to achieve the SDGs.** Created, validated, and disseminated various policy guidance documents, reports and tools, and participated in various policy discussions and events related to agroecology, multi-dimensional assessment, pollinators, and sustainable agriculture. 2018–present.

Research and Project Interests and Experience

- Agroecology and sustainable food systems
- International sustainable agriculture development, including participatory methods
- Agricultural extension and rural advisory services
- Seed systems and seed saving
- Project monitoring and evaluation, including multi-dimensional assessment development
- Underutilized and neglected food crop and cover crop biodiversity

Professional Affiliations

- International Society for Horticultural Science, Current Member.
- Association for International Agriculture and Rural Development, Current Member.
- Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education. Current Member.
- Tropical Agriculture Association, Current Member.
- World Association of Soil and Water Conservation, Current Member.

References and Full CV Available Upon Request