Curriculum Vitae

NAME
Sam Bickersteth

NATIONALITY
Not specified

LANGUAGES
Not specified

SUMMARY OF EXPERIENCE
Sam is an international climate and development expert with several decades of working alongside communities, policy makers, subject matter experts, programme leaders and donors. Over 15 years' experience of climate policy and practice with experts, policy makers and negotiators in developing countries including multiple COPs and related events leading relationships with UK and developing country governments (and groupings). As CEO of the Climate and Development Knowledge Network, he led the establishment and development of support to climate negotiators (pre-CASA) rooted in assistance to the first generation of national climate strategies and plans (the NDCs) and the climate knowledge community. Sam has worked on climate policy, diplomacy, finance, knowledge systems and programming and has recent experience of supporting learning political economy analysis for UK climate adaptation, agriculture and forestry projects. He is a trainer in political economy analysis, and is experienced in strategy, programme evaluation and policy influencing with respect to climate change and just transition.

COUNTRY EXPERIENCE
Pakistan, Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Vietnam; Nigeria, Ghana, Mozambique, Zambia, Uganda, Rwanda, Kenya, Namibia, Egypt, Congo Basin; Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia; UK Overseas Territories

EXPERTISE
- Climate policy, diplomacy, finance, knowledge systems and programming
- Support to developing country climate negotiators and national climate strategies and plans (NDCs)
- Political economy analysis and training, including the TPP course on Political Economy Analysis for Climate Action
- Energy system transition, agriculture, forestry and natural resources management, disaster risk reduction
- Strategy, programme evaluation and policy influencing on climate change and just transition
- Livelihoods, food security and financial inclusion for smallholder farmers and micro-entrepreneurs
- Senior leadership of global teams and multi-donor programmes

QUALIFICATIONS
M.Sc. Agricultural Economics, University of Oxford
BA (Hons) in Geography, University of Oxford

EMPLOYMENT / SELECTED ASSIGNMENTS

He held long term advisory and management posts for DFID in country and in headquarters. He has held senior positions with PwC's Sustainability and Climate Change group, Oxford University, Oxfam and other NGOs. As a Principal at The Policy Practice, Sam applies political economy analysis and capacity building across climate, humanitarian and development issues including energy system transition, agriculture, forestry and natural resources management and disaster risk reduction as well as the TPP course on the Political Economy Analysis for Climate Action.

Climate and Development Consultant (present)
Principal Consultant for The Policy Practice (TPP) providing development and delivery of online and direct training on Political Economy Analysis for Climate Action in multiple courses from 2023 to present including staff from FCDO, other donors, projects, NGOs and consultancies. Specific assignments include:

- A political economy assessment of the Conflict and Climate Change Nexus for FCDO Pakistan (2024)
- Independent Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning for the UK Just Rural Transitions Support Programme (JRTSP) (2025-26); leading context and political economy analysis on agriculture subsidy reform
- Political economy expert for the UK International Forests and Sustainable Land Use/Partnership for Forests Programme, Congo Basin (2025-28)
- Governance, strategy and political economy adviser to FCDO Nigeria PropCom+ (agricultural markets systems development) and SPRiNG (Strengthening Peace and Resilience) programmes (2025-ongoing)
- Senior Adviser to SRI-2030 promoting uptake of the System of Rice Intensification (nature based approach to rice cultivation that curbs methane emissions and enhances yields) in multiple countries across Africa
- Governance and institutional adviser for Scoping Study of UK Climate Programme in Mozambique (2025)
- Political economy adviser to strategic learning unit of FCDO Resilience, Adaptation and Inclusion in Nepal (RAIN) Programme (2025-26)
- Political economy analysis of the protection of Environmental Defenders in Brazil for an international think tank with a focus on indigenous rights (2024)
- Political economy analysis, advice and training on energy and e-mobility transitions in Ghana, Vietnam and Zambia for FCDO's Climate Compatible Growth (CCG) programme
- Advice to the Global Resilience Partnership for the Resilience Hubs at COP26 and COP27
- ICF review of the World Bank's Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) as quality reviewer for the FCDO/CLEAN

Advisory roles

- Chair of Board, Windle Trust International (South Sudan and Sudan)
- Trustee, Christian Aid
- Adviser, Future Horizons Institute, Norway
- Advisory Board, London School of Economics/Leeds University Centre for Climate Change Economics and Policy
- Adviser to House of Commons International Development Committee on Climate Finance
- Adviser to Wellcome Trust, Our Planet Our Health and Climate Impacts programmes
- Honorary Research Associate, Smith School of Environment and Enterprise, University of Oxford
- Chair, Low Emissions Development Strategies Global Partnership

CEO of Opportunity International UK (2019 – 2021)
Financial inclusion, livelihoods and enterprise for smallholder farmers (and agricultural supply chains) and micro-entrepreneurs:

- SME and micro-enterprise financing with Urwego Bank Rwanda, Opportunity Bank in Uganda and Ghana
- Strategy and team leadership, fund raising, raising performance and improving impact
- Developing climate resilient microfinance tools and capability

Executive Secretary, Rockefeller Foundation Economic Council on Planetary Health at Oxford Martin School, University of Oxford (2018 – 2019)

Coordinated global research programme on the economic and policy case for planetary health bringing together human and ecosystem science, public health, economics and policy. Built framework and team of global experts from Oxford University's Martin School for the Council.

Chief Executive, Climate and Development Knowledge Network at PwC (2011 – 2018)
CDKN was the earliest UK ICF programme with a focus on global climate and development knowledge led from PwC and which included the negotiations support unit that preceded CASA. Coordination of £130m multi-donor research and advisory fund, financing 400 projects with think-tanks and policy, research, consulting, NGOs and other networks. As CEO:

- Leadership and development of global team, strategy and partnerships across Asia, Africa and Latin America focused around 13 nationally facilitated policy programmes including Pakistan, Nepal, India, Colombia, Indonesia, Uganda, Rwanda, Kenya and Bangladesh
- Supported developing country planning and capacity in the UN climate negotiations establishing process of expert advice to developing country groups and contributing to successful outcome in Paris Agreement
- Established CDKN's knowledge management platform through thematic clusters and thought leadership on topics such as disaster risk management and climate finance
- Establishment of climate resilient programmes in 20 cities including Heat Health action plans and their implementation in Karachi, Pakistan and Ahmedabad, India
- Supported policy and systemic programmatic change in 30 countries (and sub-national governments) including national climate strategies and action plans and 10 NDCs

Senior Policy Adviser (Agriculture and Climate Change), DFID (2010 – 2011)
Commissioned research on agriculture and climate change including on agriculture induced deforestation; set up International Commission on Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change; led Agriculture and Climate Day at Cancun COP16 with World Bank, CGIAR/CCAFS and farmers unions.

Head of Programme Policy, Oxfam GB (2006 – 2010)
Led Oxfam GB's technical advisory, research, publications and learning team within the Campaigns and Policy Division. Leadership of 50 global advisers, researchers and communications experts supporting work on agricultural development, livelihoods and markets, climate adaptation, health, gender and governance. Global Food Policy lead for Oxfam during 2008 global food crisis.

Senior Livelihoods Adviser and Head of Country Offices, DFID (1992 – 2006)

- **Deputy Head of DFID Mozambique (2 years):** Country Strategy development and lead on agriculture and food security, humanitarian and conflict management, social development and DFID systems.
- **Head of DFID Bolivia (3 years):** Management of team and programme on civil society/human rights, health and agriculture. Led international budget support donor group and developed poverty reduction programmes to address inequality and governance crisis.
- **Senior Livelihoods Adviser, DFID Nepal (3 years):** Designed and established ten year, conflict resilient Livelihoods and (Community) Forestry Programme, Nepal; Chair of Donor Forestry Group. Restructured UK agricultural research with establishment of Hill Agricultural Research Programme.
- **Environment and Agricultural Research Adviser (7 years):** Adviser to programmes in Pakistan, Egypt, Namibia, Ghana, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, and UK Overseas Territories. Co-designed DFID's Renewable Natural Resources Research Strategy and Sustainable Livelihoods Approach; responsible for UK support to CGIAR institutions in Africa and Middle East; established Socio-Economic Research Programme.

Senior Socio-Economist, Natural Resources Institute, UK (1988 – 1992)
Applied research and economic development support to UK financed projects with focus on post harvest crop management and pest management practices in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Updated July 2026