ISABELLE K. A. BÜRGER

Chair of Sustainability Management
Institute of Responsible Innovation, Sustainability, and Energy
University of St. Gallen School of Management
isabelle.buerger@unisg.ch
LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/isabelle-k-a-buerger/



EDUCATION

University of St. Gallen, School of Management
Ph.D. in Management
Expected July 2030

- Dissertation: "Governance for a Sustainable Transition: Biodiversity Management in Intensive Horticultural Value Chains"
- Dissertation Advisor: Prof. Dr. Judith Walls

University of Zurich, Institute of Geography
Master of Science in Geography
July 2024 | GPA: 5.3/6.0 (Swiss system)

- Major: Economic Geography
- Minor: Agroecology
- Thesis: "A Sustainable Strawberry Shortcut? Governance of Value Chain Stakeholders for Environmental Upgrading in Horticulture in Huelva, Spain"
- Thesis Advisor: Prof. Dr. Christian Berndt

Leiden University College The Hague
Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts & Sciences (Honors Program)
July 2020 | GPA: 3.5 (U.S. system)

- Major: Governance, Economics and Development
- Minor: Earth, Energy and Sustainability
- Thesis: "Unpacking Trust Networks: The Bulk Food Store as a Hub for a Sustainable Food Supply Chain"
- Thesis Advisor: Dr. Annie Trevenen-Jones

RESEARCH INTERESTS

With my research, I examine governance arrangements for sustainable transitions in intensive horticultural agri-food systems. Employing the global value chain framework, I empirically investigate Mediterranean production systems critically impacted by climate change and biodiversity loss. Through qualitative and geospatial methods, I analyze how value chain actors conceptualize and coordinate environmental governance. Grounded in management as my disciplinary home and drawing on transaction cost economics, my work investigates how these governance mechanisms enable or constrain environmental upgrading across horticultural value chains supplying European food retail markets.

PUBLICATIONS

In: Hudson, P. F. (2021). Flooding and Management of Large Fluvial Lowlands: A Global Environmental Perspective. Cambridge University Press. Contributed cartography, map titled: "Rivers of the World"

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Bürger, I. K. A. (working paper). "Internalizing Environmental Externalities: An Ecological Extension of Transaction Cost Theory"

Bürger, I. K. A. (working paper). "From Efficiency to Transformation? Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives and Environmental Upgrading in Huelva's Strawberry Sector"

CONFERENCE & WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS

Bürger, I. K. A. (2025, December). "Tensions in Multi-Stakeholder Environmental Governance: Sustainability Transitions in the Spanish-Swiss Strawberry Value Chain." Paper presented at the Managing Sustainability Tension for Change (MATCH) Final Workshop, Padua, Italy.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Bürger, I. K. A. (2025, March). "A Sustainable Strawberry Shortcut? Governance of Value Chain Stakeholders for Environmental Upgrading in Horticulture in Huelva, Spain." Stakeholder presentation to the Procurement and Sustainability Departments, Migros Supermarket AG, Zürich.

Bürger, I. K. A. (2025, March). "A Sustainable Strawberry Shortcut? Governance of Value Chain Stakeholders for Environmental Upgrading in Horticulture in Huelva, Spain." Poster presented at the SDG Event, University of St. Gallen.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Graduate Level

Contextual Studies: Business, Biodiversity and People
Teaching Assistant | Spring 2026 | University of St. Gallen

Contextual Studies: Business, Biodiversity and People
Co-Teaching Assistant | Spring 2025 | University of St. Gallen

Undergraduate Level

Introduction to Sustainability Management
Teaching Assistant | Fall 2025 | University of St. Gallen

Introduction to Sustainability Management
Co-Teaching Assistant | Fall 2024 | University of St. Gallen

Executive Education

Women Back to Business Sustainability
Co-Teaching Assistant | Fall 2025 | University of St. Gallen

MBA Sustainability
Co-Teaching Assistant | Fall 2024 | University of St. Gallen

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Research Associate and Teaching Assistant

Chair of Sustainability Management, University of St. Gallen | October 2024 – Present

- Support of faculty research projects and teaching curriculum in sustainability management
- Contributions to research project on geospatial methods for biodiversity measurement

Sustainability Intern

Migros-Genossenschafts-Bund, Marketing Department | August 2023 – January 2024

- Developed company-wide biodiversity strategy and water strategy implementation plan
- Created implementation guide for WWF Risk Filter Suite for ecological risk assessment
- Collaborated with procurement and sustainability teams on risk identification in supply chain

Research Project Member
ETH Zürich Agri-Food Graduate Program | February – June 2023

- Developed biodiversity strategy for Strickhof Wülflingen (agricultural research and teaching farm)
- Conducted stakeholder interviews and environmental assessment

Student Research Assistant
Urban Food Systems Research Project | December 2018 – February 2019

- Collaborated on food security research project with Leiden University College The Hague and Gemeente Den Haag, surveying of local community

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SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Conference Organization

Organization Lead | Conference for Special Issue in *Organization & Environment*: Business and Biodiversity| December 2025 – Present

- Planning paper sessions, early-career workshop, and networking activities
- Event date: March 20–21, 2026 at University of St. Gallen

Professional Affiliations

- Group for Research on Organizations and the Natural Environment (GRONEN)
- PhD Sustainability Community
- Impact Scholar Community

RESEARCH METHODS AND SKILLS

Qualitative Research Methods: Semi-structured interviews, stakeholder analysis, case study research, thematic coding with MAXQDA

Geospatial Methods: QGIS & ArcGIS mapping and analysis, spatial data visualization, GIS cartography

Languages: - English (Native), German (Native), French (B2), Spanish (B1), Catalan (B1), Dutch (A2)

INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES

Catalan human towers, flamenco guitar, triathlons, cross country skiing, analog photography, sailing