



iies

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

Instituto de Investigaciones en Ecosistemas y Sustentabilidad

Laboratorio de Ecofisiología Agraria

Environmental Policy Lab
ETH Zurich

April 15, 2022

Dear colleagues:

I would like to be considered to be part of the Project Team Experts for the preparation of the upcoming HLPE report on *Reducing inequalities for food security and nutrition*.

Although my training is in environmental plant physiology, I have always been working in food-related topics, including arid zone crops such as the prickly pear cactus. My first encounter with the social questions of food justice and food security was during my early years as a junior faculty member, when setting up field experiments on Mexican landraces of maize. Experiments were set in actual farmland in rural regions of west-central Mexico, rather than in the same type of University-run agricultural field stations that I had in graduate school. It became clear that the healthy, green, clean, and usually expensive diets that city dwellers have become entitled to, rely on intensive, hard, and poorly compensated labor of people, who usually do not have access to the same quality of foods. Over the past decade I have studied aspects of food security and sustainability from a socioecological perspective, focusing on the livelihoods depending on cash-crops such as avocado, coffee, and tequila, which are often overlooked in the food-security and justice literature. In addition, I developed one of the first food security undergraduate/graduate courses taught at my university (since 2016).

Considering that I am proficient in environmental, agricultural, and development literature related with food, I feel that I can contribute an interesting set of skills to the elaboration of the HLPE Report no. 18. In particular, I have become comfortable with the various disciplinary languages and methodological approaches related to food systems. This will help with the incorporation of different bodies of literature. Given that my initial education is in the environmental sciences, I feel that this could be especially beneficial considering the nature-base of food systems.

From a practical perspective, I have been able to telework with my research group during the remote months of the pandemic as well as during the duration of my sabbatical leave at ETH Zurich, in a different continent. Also, having edited two books, I am familiar with the process of determining a larger outline, managing and collaborating with different authors and coauthors under strict deadlines, and going through the various phases of editing. I have coauthored and edited various research publications in different disciplines and have written texts for the general public, so I am comfortable modulating language and voice for different audiences.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Best regards,

Prof. Dr. Erick de la Barrera