



MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item 15(C)1

TO: Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez and
Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: October 20, 2026

FROM: Honorable Juan Fernandez-Barquin
Clerk of the Court and Comptroller

SUBJECT: Appointment of Christopher
Baraloto, Ph.D. to the Environmental
Quality Control Board (EQCB)

Basia Pruna, Director
Clerk of the Board

The Environmental Quality Control Board (EQCB) is a quasi-judicial board established under Section 24-8 of the Miami-Dade County Code. The Board is tasked with hearing requests for variances and time extensions, as well as appeals of related departmental decisions.

It is recommended that the Board consider the appointment of Christopher Baraloto, Ph.D., to the EQCB. Dr. Baraloto holds a Ph.D. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and meets all necessary qualifications to serve.

Attached for your review are Mayor Levine Cava's memorandum of reappointment and Dr. Baraloto's resume.

Attachment

Memorandum



Date:

To: Juan Fernandez-Barquin, Esq.
Clerk of the Court and Comptroller

From: Daniella Levine Cava *Daniella Levine Cava*
Mayor

Subject: Appointment of Christopher Baraloto, Ph.D. to the Environmental Quality Control Board by the Board of County Commissioners

Please find attached the resume of Christopher Baraloto, Ph.D., for consideration by the Board of County Commissioners (Board) for appointment to the Environmental Quality Control Board (EQCB). Members of the EQCB are appointed by the Board pursuant to Section 24-8 of the Code of Miami-Dade County (Code).

The EQCB is a quasi-judicial board created by Ordinance No. 69-30 that convenes monthly to hear cases for variances from, or time extensions to comply with, the requirements of the Environmental Protection Ordinance (Chapter 24 of the Code of Miami-Dade County) and appeals from decisions of the Directors of the Department of Environmental Resources Management and the Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources. The membership, terms of office, organization, duties and powers, and procedures which govern the EQCB are set forth in Chapter 24 of the Code.

The EQCB is composed of seven members appointed by the Board. Members serve staggered three-year terms. Quorum requires a majority of members duly appointed to the EQCB, and four votes are required for certain types of cases within specific wellfield protection areas. Due to the highly scientific and technical nature of the matters that the EQCB reviews, the members of the EQCB are required to have advanced scientific or engineering qualifications as follows:

- a) Two members shall be scientists possessing a master's or Ph.D. degree in biology or marine biology.
- b) One member shall be a scientist possessing a master's or Ph.D. degree in biochemistry or chemistry.
- c) Three members shall be professional engineers, licensed in the State of Florida, or alternatively, in lieu of two licensed professional engineers, two members may be either (i) an engineer with a Ph.D. degree in agricultural, biological, biomedical, chemical, civil or coastal, electrical, environmental, industrial, mechanical, oceanographical, marine, or nuclear engineering; or (ii) a professional geologist, licensed in the State of Florida, or a geologist with a Ph.D. degree in hydrogeology, groundwater hydrology, geology, marine and coastal geology, or geophysics.
- d) One member shall be a scientist possessing a master's or Ph.D. degree in biology, marine biology, biochemistry, chemistry, botany, environmental studies, or any related environmental field of study.

Of the five currently appointed members, the EQCB has two members with a Ph.D. in biology, one member with a Ph.D. in biochemistry, one member with a Ph.D. in biomedical engineering, and one member is a Professional Engineer with a valid license issued by the Professional Board of Engineers in the State of Florida.

Dr. Baratolo has a Ph.D. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology with extensive experience in tropical botany and ecology and meets the qualifications to serve on the EQCB. Dr. Baratolo would be the one member who is a scientist possessing a Ph.D. degree in biology, marine biology, biochemistry, botany, environmental studies, or any related environmental field of study.

Dr. Baratolo is recommended for appointment. Due to the high number of cases heard by the EQCB, the appointment of Dr. Baratolo is necessary to avoid possible delays.

Please schedule this appointment before the Board at the earliest available opportunity.

Attachment: Resume of Christopher Baraloto, Ph.D.

Memorandum



Date:

To: Daniella Levine Cava
Mayor

From: Roy Coley, Deputy Mayor *Roy Coley*
Miami-Dade County

Subject: Appointment to the Environmental Quality Control Board by the Board of County Commissioners

Please find attached the resume of Mr. Christopher Baraloto, Ph.D., for consideration by the Board of County Commissioners (Board) for appointment to the Miami-Dade County Environmental Quality Control Board (EQCB). Members of the EQCB are appointed by the Board pursuant to Section 24-8 of the Code of Miami-Dade County (Code).

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Dr. Baraloto possesses extensive scientific and technical qualifications through his distinguished career in ecology and environmental science. As a professor and director at Florida International University, he has led major research programs, secured significant grant funding, and published extensively in peer-reviewed journals. His research experience and scientific background make him well qualified to serve on the Environmental Quality Control Board.

Please sign the attached memo to Juan Fernandez-Barquin, Esq. Clerk and Comptroller, regarding this selection process. If you need additional information, please contact Loren Parra, Director of the Department of Environmental Resources Management, at 305-372-6789 or email Loren.Parra@miamidade.gov.

Attachment

Memorandum



Date: September 10, 2026

To: Roy Coley, Deputy Mayor
Miami-Dade County

From: Loren Parra, Director and Chief Resilience Officer
Department of Environmental Resources Management 

Subject: Appointment to the Environmental Quality Control Board by the Board of County Commissioners

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The County Attorney's Office has reviewed and approved the candidate's qualifications for appointment to the EQCB.

Further details of this appointment to the EQCB are included in the attached memorandum for your signature. Thank you for your attention to this matter. Should you have any questions, please email at Loren.Parra@miamidade.gov.

Attachments

CURRICULUM VITAE

CHRISTOPHER BARALOTO

EDUCATION

PhD University of Michigan Ecology and Evolutionary Biology 1997-2001

EXPERIENCE

Distinguished University Professor, Florida International University 2026 - present
Director, International Center for Tropical Botany (ICTB)
Director, Land and Biodiversity Division and Associate Director, Institute of Environment
Professor Florida International University, Biological Sciences 2019 - present
Associate Professor Biological Sciences 2015 - 2019
INPA, Manaus Affiliate Docent Botany 2014 - present
INRAe-France DR2 (Professor) Ecology 2011 - present
Director, Ecology Research Group at UMR EcoFoG, Kourou
INRAe-France CR1 (Assoc. Prof.) Ecology 2007 - 2011
AgroParisTech-France Asst. Prof Ecology 2006 - 2007
NSF-USA PostDoc Fellow Ecology 2002 - 2005

SUMMARY OF EXPERTISE

Research (

More than 170 publications in top peer-reviewed journals;
>95% in field for citation rate (h-index>60); [Google Scholar](#), [Publons](#)
More than \$7 million in external research funding
PI for multiple large, collaborative international and multidisciplinary projects

Teaching

Revision of plant sciences curriculum across departments
Design of Collaborative Online International Learning course for biodiversity monitoring
International field courses in tropical biodiversity, supported by NSF IRES
Graduate workshops in plant functional ecology and forest vegetation sampling
Expanded legacy of the intensive Tropical Botany course at The Kampong

Administration

Managed and evaluated dozens of staff and research scientists in both French and US positions
Managed budgets for research centers with more than \$1 million in annual funding
Proven leadership for strategic planning of large research teams in France and US
Designed, funded and managed construction of \$9M headquarters of FIU ICTB

Communications

Fluent in English, French, Spanish, and Brazilian Portuguese
Recognized outstanding internal communications with administrative and research staff
Recognized external communications for research centers in France and US

Fundraising

Diverse portfolio of grant writing for collaborative research and programs
More than \$3 million raised for education, outreach and training programs
More than \$7 million raised for capital project at FIU

External Relations

Developed comprehensive education and outreach programs at FIU, collaborating with multiple governmental and non-governmental partners
Maintained strong relationships with diverse fiduciary and advisory boards

REFERENCE TO PUBLICATIONS IN DISCIPLINE

Orcid 0000-0001-7322-8581
Publons [ABG-2500-2020](#) (h-index 64)
GoogleScholar <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=Xqx--LkAAAAJ> (h-index 70)

RECENT FUNDED PROGRAMS, including Principal Gifts

- 2025-2028 Graduate Research Fellowships in Tropical Botany with New York Botanical Garden. \$724,000.
- 2025 Tropical Botany International Course. Thomas Kenan, \$55,000.
- 2024-2027 Graduate Research Fellowships in Tropical Botany. McBryde Trust of NTBG, \$117,000.
- 2024-2025 Tropical Botany Education Programs. William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust. \$200,000.
- 2022-2025 Graduate Research Fellowships in Tropical Botany. William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust. \$300,000.
- 2023-2026 Tropical Botany Education Programs. Korth Family Foundation. \$150,000.
- 2023-2026 Graduate Research Fellowships in Tropical Botany. Rosenberg Family Foundation, \$150,000.
- 2022-2023 NSF IUSE via Donald Danforth Plant Science Center. Collaborative Research: Growing our Future - Evaluating the gaps among in-class learning, career advising, and workforce needs in the plant sciences. PI. \$50,000.
- 2019-2025 NSF IRES Track II. A unique opportunity for graduate training in tropical biodiversity science. PI. \$242,337.
- 2019-2022 NSF RCN-UBE Incubator: Incorporating a short but intensive botanical experience into formal college courses to alleviate plant blindness among undergraduate STEM students. Co-PI. \$53,657.

TEACHING

Revision of plant sciences curriculum across departments

As Director of the International Center for Tropical Botany, I have worked to revise the curriculum in plant sciences that spans across two departments (Biological Sciences and Earth and Environment).

Tropical Botany

I have continued the legacy initiated in the 1960s by Harvard faculty to offer an intensive month-long course in tropical botany, leveraging the extensive living collections of botanical gardens in Miami. The course weaves lectures with hands-on collections in gardens and regional field locations, with direct exposure to more than 1500 species.

International field courses in tropical biodiversity, supported by NSF IRES

Throughout my career, I have taught field courses in tropical forest and tropical biodiversity monitoring. I have integrated international training for field experiences in French Guiana and Mexico, in which students experience diverse contexts for tropical forest ecology and management and tropical biodiversity monitoring.