

STATEMENT

From Cor.-Memb. Dimiter Ivanov, DSc,
Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research - BAS, Sofia

Regarding: Competition for the academic position "Associate Professor (Docent)" for the needs of the research group "Plant diversity and local development", section "Applied botany" at the department "Plant and fungi diversity and resources" of IBER-BAS, Sofia, announced in the State Gazette no. 98/24.11.2023 by field of higher education 4. Natural sciences, mathematics and informatics; professional direction 4.3. Biological Sciences; scientific specialty "Botany".

In the announced competition, only one candidate submitted documents - Ch. Assist. Prof. Teodora Angelova Ivanova, Ph.D.

1. Brief introduction of the candidate

Ch. Assist. Prof. Teodora Ivanova, completed her higher education with a master's degree in biology with a specialization in Biotechnology, Plant Biotechnology in 2003 at the Faculty of Biology of the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". In 2003, he started working at the former Institute of Botany – BAS, where he developed his PhD thesis. In 2013, he defended a PhD thesis on the topic: In vitro cultivation of *Ruscus aculeatus* L. and *Ruscus hypoglossum* L. (Liliaceae).

Dr. Teodora Ivanova has participated in 11 scientific and scientific-applied projects, of which 5 are international. She is the winner of the Award named after Prof. E. Palamarev" for young researchers for 2009.

2. General description of the tender documents submitted

The candidate Ch. Ass. Prof. Teodora Ivanova, PhD, has submitted a complete set of documents for the competition, following the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB) and the Regulations for its application, as well as the Regulations of IBER-BAS.

3. Evaluation of scientific works and contributions

3.1. General characteristics of scientific production and publication activity

The scientific production of Dr. Teodora Ivanova covers the necessary minimum provided for in Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria

(ZRASRB) and the Rules for its application, and in some indicators it exceeds it. According to the individual indicators, she declares the following results: according to indicator **A1**: 50 points of dissertation thesis for the acquisition of the PhD degree; by a group of indicators **B** 110 points, incl. 3 publications with Q1, 1 with Q2, and 1 with Q3 (at the required 100 points); according to the group of indicators **C** – 277 points of publications and chapters of books/monographs (with a required 220 points) and according to indicator **D** (citations) – 74 points (with a required minimum of 60 points). In general, it can be concluded that Dr. Ivanova participated in the competition with a scientific production at a high international level, which covers both the requirements for an associate professor position, provided for in the ZRASRB and the additional requirements of IBER-BAS.

3.2. Research activity

The scientific works presented by Ch. Ass. Prof. Teodora Ivanova, PhD correspond to the theme of the competition – professional direction 4.3. "Biological Sciences", scientific specialty "Botany". Dr. Ivanova's main research and professional interests are in the area of the study of indigenous knowledge related to plants and their communities, landscapes, and the various services they provide recognized as key to preventing biodiversity loss, and natural habitats, as well as for adaptation to climate change. In this way, ethnobotanical studies in Bulgaria have been expanded and deepened with the study of wild and cultivated plants used for food, focused primarily on medicinal plants, while remaining aside from research interest, emphasis is placed on biocultural diversity (ethnobotany and cultural anthropology) and the transformation of the traditional knowledge about plants preserved in Bulgarian society.

It is necessary to point out that Ivanova has scientific interests and significant achievements in the study of biologically active substances and biological activity of extracts of plant origin and the application of biotechnological methods for the propagation of economically important and conservational important plants.

The results of Ivanova's research have been published in 19 scientific articles - 6 under indicator **B** and 13 under indicator **C** ((incl. 4 chapters of books), of which she is the first author and corresponding author of 11 of them.

Dr. T. Ivanova has presented her scientific contributions on the topic of the habilitation work fully and comprehensively in the presented report. They are in the following areas:

1. Plant diversity in Bulgarian song folklore;
2. Plant diversity of home gardens;
3. (Bio)cultural aspects/dimensions of plants – identity and valorization;
4. Sustainable development and socio-economic aspects – ecological agriculture, food production, and nutrition.

Contributions beyond the topic of the habilitation work are in the following directions:

1. Content of biologically active substances and biological activity of extracts of plant origin;

2. Biotechnological methods for propagation of economically important and conservational important plants;
3. Taxonomic studies using isozyme profiles and assessment of genetic affiliation.

3.3. Citation of the publications in the national and foreign literature

Ch. Ass. Prof. Teodora Ivanova has submitted information on 37 citations of publications with her participation in journals with an impact factor and/or impact rank, which is evaluated with 74 points and exceeds the requirements for an associate professor provided for in the relevant normative documents. This shows that her work is known to experts in the scientific field and is valued.

4. Critical notes and recommendations

I have no significant critical notes and recommendations.

5. General evaluation of the applicant's compliance with the conditions of the competition

Ch. Ass. Prof. Teodora Ivanova, PhD, meets the mandatory conditions and fully covers the scientific indicators for occupying the academic position "associate professor" at IBER-BAS. She is an established expert in the field of ethnobotany, the study of biological diversity, the study of biologically active substances and the application of biotechnological approaches. This is also supported by the significant number of scientific projects in which she participates, and by the high evaluation she receives from her colleagues for her work.

All this gives me a reason to positively evaluate her overall activity and to vote positively for the election of Ch. Ass. Prof. Teodora Ivanova, PhD, as an "associate professor" in the scientific specialty of Botany for the needs of the "Applied Botany" section at the "Plant and Mushroom Diversity and Resources" Department of IBER-BANS.

19.03.2024
Sofia

Signature:
(Cor.-Memb. D. Ivanov, DSc)