

STATEMENT

From

Prof. Dr. Borislav Naumov, IBER - BAS,

regarding the candidacy of chief assistant Dr. Angel Valentinov Dyugmedzhiev for the competition for the academic position of "associate professor" in professional field 4.3. "Biological Sciences", scientific specialty "Ecology and Ecosystem Conservation", for the needs of the Department "Ecosystem Research, Ecological Risk, and Conservation Biology" at IBER-BAS, announced in the State Gazette No. 32 of 15.04.2025.

The candidate participates in the competition with 27 scientific publications (15 articles in IF journals, 11 articles in SJR journals only and 1 book chapter), which bring him 116 points on indicator B (with a required minimum of 100) and 244 on indicator D (with a required minimum of 220), i.e. more than required. The remaining publications from the list presented are relevant only as additional information about the candidate's publication activity. The noted citations in IF or SJR journals are a total of 49 (35 in IF journals), i.e. bring the candidate 98 points out of a required 60.

The candidate has grouped his scientific contributions into three thematic categories, which well reflect the main directions of his work, but I believe that giving full references after each contribution unnecessarily increases the total volume of the text. It would be more appropriate to give only the numbers of the publications (according to the attached list of publications) from which the respective contribution is derived. The first group of contributions reflects the main part of the candidate's scientific work. This includes his research on *Vipera ammodytes*, which is a logical continuation and upgrade of the work on the topic of the dissertation. The results of these studies undoubtedly represent a significant and original contribution to the knowledge of habitats, seasonal and diurnal activity, nutrition, temperature preferences, reproduction, chemical communication and other aspects of the biology and ecology of the Nose-horned viper. The second group of contributions unites results of diverse studies on a number of species from the Bulgarian (in one case also from the Moroccan) herpetofauna, and here the topics of distribution, conservation, thermoecology, skin secretion, behavior, diurnal activity, etc. are touched upon. These contributions are important for increasing fundamental knowledge in the field of herpetology, but also demonstrate the candidate's interest and good abilities to work in a broad thematic framework. The third group of contributions includes the description (and successful application) of new, non-invasive

methods for individual recognition of *Hyla arborea* and *Vipera ammodytes*, as well as a comparison of two methods for extracting skin secretions from snakes. As for the last contribution in this group (No. 3.4.), I am not convinced that it can be defined as methodological. I believe that this is more of a description of a specific behavioral manifestation, which should be attributed to the ethology of the brown bear, but in itself does not contribute to changing/improving the methodology used.

From the attached references, it is clear that the candidate exceeds the required minimum values for the scientometric indicators for holding the academic position of "associate professor" according to the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, its Implementation Regulations, the internal rules of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and the specific regulations of the Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research.

Outside of scientometrics, I would like to note that I have known Angel Dyugmedzhiev for nearly 15 years. We have worked together on a number of scientific and applied science projects, I was a scientific advisor to his doctoral studies, and I am also a co-author of some of his publications. In view of this, I believe that I have a fairly good personal impression of the candidate and I would like to emphasize that my impressions of his expertise in the ecology and taxonomy of amphibians and reptiles are excellent.

In conclusion, highly appreciating the scientific activity and qualities of the candidate, I can state that he has a clearly outlined research profile, falling entirely within the field of ecology. I give a positive assessment of the candidacy and I fully recommend that Dr. Angel Valentinov Dyugmedzhiev be elected as an associate professor in the scientific specialty "Ecology and Ecosystem Protection".

Sofia

05.08.2025

Signature:

/ Borislav Naumov /