

STATEMENT

From

Prof. Dr. Borislav Naumov, IBER - BAS,

regarding the candidacy of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Michaela Nikolova Nedyalkova for the competition for the academic position of "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. 45 of 03.06.2025.

The candidate participates in the competition with 29 scientific publications (19 articles in IF journals, 7 articles in SJR journals only and 3 book chapters), which brings 142 points on indicator B (with a required minimum of 100) and 287 on indicator D (with a required minimum of 220). 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 136 (116 in IF journals), i.e. bring the candidate 272 points out of a required 60. Indicator E includes supervision of one PhD student who has defended his thesis, participation in 13 scientific projects (12 national and one international), supervision of one national scientific project and attracted funds in the amount of 116,500 BGN, i.e. a total of 208 points out of a required 150.

The candidate has grouped his scientific contributions into four thematic categories, which well reflect the main directions of the research carried out. The first group of contributions includes results from studies in the field of ecotoxicology and is based on five publications from the attached list. This group of contributions undoubtedly includes the results of publication number 23, but there is no specific reference to it, which is probably an unintentional omission. The second group of contributions is derived from 11 publications, which examine the impact of different types of radiation on indicator species of small rodents. The third group of contributions (derived from two publications) refers to studies on the role of some species of bats and small rodents in the spread of viral diseases in wildlife. The fourth group of contributions (based on three publications) includes results from faunal and ecological studies in different parts of the country. I do not consider it necessary to assess the significance of the individual contributions, since it is clear that they are based mainly on publications in periodicals with IF/SJR, i.e. these publications were reviewed by at least two narrow specialists in the relevant field, and subsequently approved by the editor-in-chief. The only thing that

remains unclear to me is the fact that no contributions have been derived from publications with numbers 12, 13, 16 and 22 (according to the attached list of publications), although the results described in these publications undoubtedly have both scientific and applied scientific contributions.

From the attached references, it is obvious that the candidate significantly exceeds the required minimum values in terms of scientometric indicators for holding the academic position of "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.

I would also like to note that I have known Michaela Nedyalkova for at least 15 years. We have worked together on several scientific and applied science projects, and I am also a co-author of one of her publications. In view of this, I believe that I have a fairly good personal impression of Dr. Nedyalkova and I would like to emphasize that my impressions of her abilities to plan and implement scientific research are excellent.

In conclusion, highly appreciating the scientific activity and qualities of Dr. Nedyalkova, I can state that she has a clearly outlined research profile, falling entirely within the field of ecology. I give a positive assessment of the candidacy and I strongly recommend that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Michaela Nikolova Nedyalkova be elected professor in the scientific specialty "Ecology and Ecosystem Protection".

28.09.2025

Signature:

/ Borislav Naumov /