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STATEMENT

By: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teodora Veselinova Tsvetkova, PhD

Academic Specialty: Associate Professor in Higher Education Area 4. Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics, Professional Field 4.3. Biological Sciences (Biodiversity, Ecological Monitoring and Control), and PhD in Higher Education Area 4. Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics, Professional Field 4.3. Biological Sciences (Ecology and Environmental Protection)

Affiliation: Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen, Faculty of Natural Sciences, Department of Biology

Regarding: Competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor", announced in the State Gazette, Issue No. 69 of July 31, 2026, in Higher Education Area 4. "Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics"; Professional Field 4.3. "Biological Sciences"; Scientific Specialty "Ecology and Conservation of Ecosystems" at the Research Group "Community Ecology and Conservation Biology", Department of "Ecosystem Research, Environmental Risk and Conservation Biology", Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IBER-BAS)

The competition was announced to meet the institutional needs of the Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IBER-BAS), in the State Gazette, Issue No. 69 of July 31, 2026. I participate as a member of the Scientific Jury for this competition pursuant to Order No. 42/28.09.2026 issued by the Director of the Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research, BAS.

Brief Biographical Profile of the Candidate

Emiliya Dimitrova Vacheva was born in 1989. She earned a Bachelor's degree in "Biology" and a Master's degree in "Vertebrate Zoology" from Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". She subsequently defended her doctoral dissertation in Professional Field 4.3. "Biological Sciences" (Vertebrate Zoology) at the National Museum of Natural History, Bulgarian

Academy of Sciences (NMNHS-BAS). Dr. Vacheva has over 12 years of professional experience in her scientific specialty.

General Overview of Submitted Materials and Scientific Activity

The candidate, Dr. Emiliya Vacheva, has submitted all required documentation in full compliance with regulatory requirements. She actively participates in research consortia and demonstrates exceptional aptitude for collaborative teamwork. A total of 31 scientific publications have been submitted for the competition, in which her individual scholarly contribution is clearly delineated. These works have been published in prestigious peer-reviewed international journals, a substantial proportion of which carry an Impact Factor (IF), high quartile rankings (Q1–Q2), and SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) indicators. Her publications have accumulated 83 citations in the scientific literature. Under the national scientometric evaluation system, Dr. Emiliya Vacheva achieves an aggregate score of 660 points.

Evaluation of Scientific Contributions

The scientific contributions of Dr. Emiliya Vacheva encompass both fundamental and applied research in the field of herpetology, specifically addressing the ecology, trophic niche partitioning, genetic diversity, and chemical communication of amphibians and reptiles in Bulgaria. Of particular scientific significance are her pioneering investigations for the country into cutaneous secretions and pheromonal communication in snakes, the characterization of the microbiome in lizards, as well as her impactful contributions to citizen science initiatives, which directly facilitated the designation of a new protected area.

Conclusion

Following a thorough evaluation of the materials submitted for the competition, I conclude that the candidate, Dr. Emiliya Dimitrova Vacheva, meets and substantially exceeds all minimum national scientometric requirements for occupying the academic position of "Associate Professor" pursuant to the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB), as well as the additional institutional criteria set forth in the Regulations on the Terms and Conditions for Acquiring Academic Degrees and Occupying Academic Positions at IBER-BAS.

In light of the foregoing, I hereby cast my unequivocal vote "IN FAVOR" of awarding the academic position of "Associate Professor" to Dr. Emiliya Dimitrova Vacheva in Higher Education Area 4. Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics, Professional Field 4.3. Biological Sciences, Scientific Specialty "Ecology and Conservation of Ecosystems" at the

Research Group “Community Ecology and Conservation Biology”, Department of “Ecosystem Research, Environmental Risk and Conservation Biology”, IBER-BAS.

19.11.2026 Prepared by:

Shumen (Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teodora Tsvetkova)