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OPINION

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" in the professional field 6.5. Forestry, scientific specialty "Forestry, including Dendrology", published by the Forest Research Institute - Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in State Gazette no. 47/24.06.2022

Candidate for participation in the competition: One candidate has participated in the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor", announced for the needs of the Section "Forestry and management of forest resources": Chief Assistant Yonko Dobrinov Dodev, Ph.D., Forest Research Institute - Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Prepared by: Prof. Dr. Maria Grozeva Sokolovska, member of the Scientific Jury, determined by Ordinance No. RD 15-367/09.08.2022 by the Director of Forest Research Institute - Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

1. Brief biographical data.

Chief Assistant Yonko Dobrinov Dodev, PhD, was born on March 30, 1983. He graduated from University of Forestry - Sofia in 2004 with a bachelor's degree, and in 2006 with a master's degree in forestry engineering, specializing in "Forest use and forestry economics". In 2016, he completed his PhD thesis in the scientific specialty "Forestry, including Dendrology". He started his professional career in 2005 as a forester, and soon after in 2007 as a deputy director at the State Forestry Department Botevgrad. In February 2010, he was appointed as a forester at the Forest Research Institute - BAS and a head of the Beech Forest Experimental Base - Etropole. In 2011, he held the academic position of assistant, and since October 2017 he has been the chief assistant at the "Forestry and Forest Resources Management" section of Forest Research Institute - Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (FRI-BAS).

2. Compliance of the submitted documents and materials of the candidate with the minimum requirements, according to the Regulations for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions at the Forest Research Institute - BAS.

The submitted documents and materials for the competition are in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (Art. 19) and the Regulations of the FRI-BAS (Art. 13, paragraph 5). According to the national minimum requirements for the scientific and pedagogical activities for obtaining the academic position "Associate Professor" and the presented scientometric indicators, as well as a reference - self-assessment, the candidate exceeds the required points for the five groups of indicators (A, B, G, D and E) . The total number of points is over 719 with a minimum requirement of 500 points. In the specific requirements adopted by the Scientific Council of FRI-BAS, the applicant indicated the total number of scientific works (not presented in previous competitions), works in print, positive citations, project management, and in the additional requirements he gave detailed information about the participation in national and international forums (presented and unpublished reports/posters). Reference, from the Sonix system of BAS, is also presented for lectures given at 17 international and/or national training courses, participation in 6 thematic national conferences, seminars and media broadcasts.

3. General description of the presented materials.

The general list of the candidate's scientific output contains a total of 39 scientific articles and conference reports. Five of these publications are related to obtaining the scientific degree "doctor", and another 3 publications are submitted for participation in the competition for "Chief Assistant". The remaining 31 publications are subject to review under this competition and are divided into indicators from group B (subgroup B4) and indicators from group G (subgroups G5, G7, G8 and G11). One of the publications (G5) is a scientifically reviewed monograph, and another (G11) is a chapter of a joint monograph. The candidate has 2 independent publications, in 8 he is the first author (with a requirement of 5), and in 21 he is the second or subsequent author. The number of journal publications referenced in world-renowned database of scientific information (Cabi, Web of Science and Scopus) is 15 (with a requirement of 3). All presented scientific publications, 20 in Bulgarian and 11 in English, are in reliance with the subject of the competition. The candidate is actively involved in promoting the results of his research through participation in international (6) and national scientific forums (17). The presented works fully meet the mandatory scientometric requirements for holding the academic position of "associate professor".

In the attached Habilitation Extended Reference of Scientific Contributions, 10 scientific publications (No. B4.1 to B4.10) are identified in editions that are referenced and indexed in world database, as equivalent to a monographic work, which is the requirement of note 12 of the Appendix to Art. 1a, para. 1 of the Regulations for the Implementation of the Rules on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (RIRDAS). Six of them are published in English, Six of them are published in English, and in another four the candidate is the first author. The habilitation reference presents the candidate's more significant personal contributions related to the study of forest ecosystems in the Lower Forest Vegetation Belt in three main directions: - *management* of eastern hornbeam forests by applying a science-based approach that takes into account their ecological role, sustainability and productivity (B4.5); - *management* of coppice oak forests by applying medium-stem farming as a system for sustainable management of coppice oak forests (B4.2), analyzing different options for the regeneration of coniferous crops created in the oak belt (B4.10), application of agroforestry practices in cultures of white acacia (*Robinia pseudoacacia* L.), creation of typical oak habitats (B4.3), use of a specific variation of gradual felling with multiple illuminations, combined with felling of the understory vegetation (B4.6); - *management* of forests with high recreational potential by identifying main groups of social services from forests - forest therapy, recreation, education, culture, sport activities, allowing to provide the population with benefic interactions with forests to improve human health and quality of life (B4.7), development and testing of an integrated method for assessment and mapping of the potential of forest territories for providing therapeutic services (B4.8), implementation of an innovative approach for assessment of the health status of different types of recreational forests, allowing an early diagnosis of degradation in urban areas and damage limitation in them (B4.9). Articles also include information on the origin and distribution of the dendroflora of Lozenska Planina (B4.1), which are thematically more detached from the general context of the reference.

4. Main directions in the candidate's research work and the most important scientific and scientific-applied contributions.

Scientific and scientific-applied contributions in the presented scientific publications, other than those included in the habilitation report, as a consequence of the conducted research and the obtained results, have contributed to the enrichment of existing scientific knowledge and/or the obtaining of confirmatory data. I accept the contributions in the form in which they are presented by the candidate in the Reference of Contributions and their classification in two main groups: a) management of forests in the lower forest vegetation belt

of Bulgaria by categories of forests - from eastern hornbeam, coppice oak forests, coniferous cultures created outside their natural area, chestnut forests, studies of invasive foreign species; and (b) studies on cultural functions of forests to improve human health and well-being. The last two contributions, based on publications G8.11 and G8.5, concern more distinct topics and are not in reliance with the subject of this group. Important positive side of Dr. Dodev's scientific research is the intention and ability, along with purely scientific contributions, to look for results with practical value for national forestry.

5. Reflection of the candidate's scientific publications in the literature.

A total of 18 positive citations have been mentioned, categorized as follows: citations in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases (D13) - 9; citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review (D14) - 5; citations in non-referenced journals with scientific review (D15) - 4. Citations in foreign language publications are predominant, 11 issues in English and 7 issues in Bulgarian. The list of citations is not submitted to the competition documents, but from the table of the candidate's scientometric indicators, where detailed information is given for group "D" indicators, we could conclude that the total number of points for this group exceeds twice the required minimum of 100 points. The specified characteristic shows the relevance and significance of the conducted research, as well as that the scientific output of Dr. Yonko Dodev is well known by the scientific community on national and international level.

6. Participation in scientific projects.

In the competition, the candidate has participated in the development of 4 national scientific projects, for which the necessary evidence materials are presented. He is the head of one of them, financed by the Forestry Executive Agency. In the period 2013-2017, Dr. Dodev has taken part in the implementation of COST Action FP1301 EuroCoppice, supported by the EU Framework Program "Horizon 2020" and it is related to the theme of the competition. From the additionally submitted reference could be seen that the candidate has led one more national research project funded by the Southwest State Enterprise and has participated in the implementation of another 3 projects funded by the Forestry Executive Agency, the South Central State Enterprise and the Scientific Research Fund. This shows that the candidate has the capacity to develop projects and is appreciated as an expert in research teams.

7. Educational and teaching activity (supervisor/consultant of doctoral students, training of students, etc.)

There are no documents provided by the candidate for pedagogical and teaching activities.

8. Evaluation of the candidate's personal contribution.

Presented scientific works, as well as formulation of conclusions, recommendations and contributions are largely a personal work and/or with the significant participation of Dr. Dodev. I consider that candidate's personal contribution is determined by his position of a researcher and supervisor of the Beech Forest Experimental Base in the town of Etropole. The large number of joint publications confirms his ability to work in a team. Dr. Dodev has not submitted separation protocols to prove the part of his participation in them, therefore I consider this participation to be equal.

9. Critical notes and recommendations.

In evaluating the works and very-well prepared materials for the competition, I have no significant critical comments on the candidate's works. Some stylistic, editorial or

technical inaccuracies have been found, which do not diminish my positive assessment of candidate's scientific research. I recommend Dr. Dodev to increase his publication activity in referenced international scientific journals, so that his research could find wider recognition.

10. Personal impressions.

My impressions of Dr. Dodev's research date from the time he was preparing his dissertation work. My positive assessment of candidate's overall scientific and research activities is also based on my personal impressions of his professional qualities, knowledge of contemporary methods and approaches, his expressed interest in research, as well as his potential for independent work as a scientist.

11. Conclusion.

The candidate Chief assistant Dr. Dodev fulfills all the mandatory conditions and requirements for the academic position "Associate Professor" at Forest Research Institute - BAS, which is evident from the submitted documents, attached materials and prepared scientometric reports. In connection with the above, I propose Chief Assistant Dr. Yonko Dobrinov Dodev, to be elected "Associate Professor" in professional direction 6.5. Forestry, scientific specialty "Forestry, incl. Dendrology".

October 07, 2022
Sofia

Prepared by:
(Prof. Dr. Maria Sokolovska)