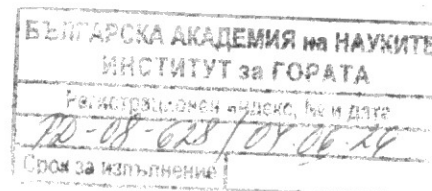


OPINION



on the materials submitted for participation in the competition for the academic position of **Associate Professor** in Professional Field 6.5 Forestry, Scientific Specialty “**Forest Amelioration, Forest Protection and Special Forest Uses**”, announced by the **Forest Research Institute – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS)** in State Gazette No. 18/17.02.2026 for the needs of the **Forest Ecology Department**. The Scientific Jury was appointed by Order No. RD 15-28/15.04.2026 of the Director of the Forest Research Institute – BAS.

Candidate: Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Eng. Todor Nikolov Stoyanov

Opinion prepared by: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nikolay Konstantinov Neykov, Associate Professor in Professional Field 3.7 Administration and Management, University of Forestry

1. Brief Biographical Information

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Eng. Todor Nikolov Stoyanov is a candidate for the academic position of Associate Professor at the Forest Research Institute – BAS. In 2020, he obtained the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” at the University of Forestry with a dissertation entitled “*Study of the Opportunities and Prospects for the Development of Credit Cooperatives in Bulgaria.*” The candidate holds Master's degrees in Business Administration and Ecology. Since 2020, he has been employed at the Forest Research Institute – BAS, successively holding the positions of Assistant Professor and Chief Assistant Professor. His scientific interests focus on forest fire risk management, forest policy, sustainable forest resource management, circular bioeconomy, and ecological aspects of forestry.

2. Compliance of the Submitted Documents and Materials with the Minimum Requirements under the Regulations for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions at the Forest Research Institute – BAS

The submitted documents and materials have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations of the Forest Research Institute – BAS. All required documents are available, including a curriculum vitae, a report on compliance with the minimum national requirements, a list of publications, a report on scientific contributions, citation records, and documentation regarding participation in research projects.

The submitted documentation demonstrates that the candidate not only meets but significantly exceeds the minimum requirements for the academic position of Associate Professor. The total score amounts to **1290.62 points**, including **233.74 points in Group B**, **206.88 points in Group G**, **580 points in Group D**, and **215 points in Group E**.

I therefore consider that the formal requirements for participation in the competition have been fully satisfied.

3. General Description of the Submitted Materials

For the purposes of the competition, the candidate has submitted a total of **22 scientific works**, including **19 publications in English** and **3 publications in Bulgarian**. The scientific output comprises publications in internationally indexed journals, a monograph, studies, scientific articles, and a chapter in a collective monograph.

A substantial part of the publications has appeared in journals indexed in **Scopus** and **Web of Science**, including publications in *Forest Policy and Economics*, *Scientific Data*, and *Trees, Forests and People*.

The submitted materials are directly related to the subject area of the competition and demonstrate a coherent and well-developed scientific profile.

4. Main Research Areas and the Most Significant Scientific and Applied Contributions of the Candidate

The candidate's research activities can be grouped into several major areas.

The first and most extensively developed area concerns the **assessment, management, and prevention of forest fire risks**. Within this field, the candidate has developed conceptual models, risk assessment methodologies, quantitative indices, and approaches for spatial modelling and risk mapping.

The second area includes research on the **effects of forest fires and silvicultural activities on forest ecosystems**, including changes in carbon and nitrogen stocks and forest regeneration processes.

The third area focuses on **forest policy, legislation, and institutional governance in the forestry sector**. The candidate's publications analyse regulatory and managerial aspects of forest fire management, institutional coordination, and European trends in sustainable forest governance.

A significant contribution is also represented by the candidate's research on the **circular bioeconomy, non-wood forest products, and cooperative forms of organisation in forestry**, which broadens the understanding of socio-economic mechanisms supporting the sustainable development of rural areas.

I consider the reported scientific and applied contributions to be genuine, well substantiated, fully relevant to the present competition, and important for the advancement of the scientific field.

5. Impact of the Candidate's Publications in the Scientific Literature

The candidate's scientific results have received substantial recognition in the specialised scientific literature. According to the submitted report, the candidate has accumulated **37**

citations in publications indexed in international databases, 2 citations in monographs and collective volumes, and 1 citation in a peer-reviewed scientific publication.

Particularly noteworthy is the fact that publications related to forest fire risk assessment are already being used as a basis for further international studies in the fields of remote sensing, spatial analysis, and wildfire risk modelling.

This demonstrates both the scientific relevance and the international visibility of the candidate's research achievements.

6. Participation in Scientific Projects

The candidate demonstrates very strong project activity. He has participated in **five national and four international scientific or educational projects**, and has served as the **principal investigator of two national scientific projects**.

The project portfolio covers a wide range of topics, including forest ecosystem resilience, wildfire impacts, climate change, circular economy, and innovation in the forestry sector. I particularly appreciate his leadership of the projects "*Integrated Decision Support System for Environmental Risk Assessment and Management – EcoRiskGuard*" and "*Consequences and Damages from Forest Fires.*"

7. Teaching Activities (Supervision of Doctoral Students, Student Training, etc.)

The candidate is employed by a research organisation, and therefore his primary responsibilities are related to scientific research. In addition, he participates in higher education as a part-time lecturer at the University of Forestry. Although teaching activities are not a principal evaluation criterion in the present competition, they contribute positively to the overall academic profile of the candidate.

8. Assessment of the Candidate's Personal Contribution

The candidate's personal contribution is clearly identifiable throughout the submitted scientific output. This is evidenced by his sole-authored monograph, individual publications, and leading role in a substantial proportion of the collaborative works. His scientific results demonstrate consistency, thematic continuity, and the development of an independent research agenda.

I consider the candidate's contribution to the presented publications to be unquestionable and sufficiently well documented.

CONCLUSION

Having examined the submitted documents, scientific publications, and supporting materials, I conclude that **Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Eng. Todor Nikolov Stoyanov** fully satisfies the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria, its

implementing regulations, and the Regulations of the Forest Research Institute – BAS for holding the academic position of **Associate Professor**.

Based on the above, I give a **POSITIVE EVALUATION** and recommend that the distinguished Scientific Jury propose to the Scientific Council of the Forest Research Institute – BAS the election of **Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Eng. Todor Nikolov Stoyanov** to the academic position of **Associate Professor** in Professional Field **6.5 Forestry**, Scientific Specialty “**Forest Amelioration, Forest Protection and Special Forest Uses.**”

Prepared by:

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