



STATEMENT

by Prof. Dr. Stefan Ivanov Shilev

Dept. „Microbiology and environmental biotechnologies“, Agricultural University – Plovdiv, member of the scientific jury, appointed according to Order № RD-16-403/20.03.2024 of the Rector of Agricultural University – Plovdiv.

Regarding the competition for the academic position “Associate Professor” in the area of „Natural sciences, mathematics and informatics“, professional field 4.3 „Biological sciences“, scientific specialty „Ecology and Ecosystems Protection“, announced in State Gazette No. 7/23.01.2024 with candidate **Assistant Professor Dr. Slaveya Tencheva Petrova**, Department „Microbiology and environmental biotechnologies“, Agricultural university – Plovdiv.

1. Brief introduction of the candidate.

The candidate, Slaveya Tencheva Petrova, obtained the Bachelor's degree in ecology in 2006 and the Master's in Ecology and ecosystem protection in 2008 from Plovdiv Polytechnic University “Paisiy Hilendarski”. She obtained PhD degree in 2012 in the professional field 4.3 “Biological Sciences”, scientific specialty “Ecology and Ecosystem Protection”.

Since 2011, she has been appointed as Chief Assistant Professor at Dept. of “Ecology and Environmental Protection” at the Biological faculty of Paisiy Hilendarski Polytechnic. Since 2017, she has also been a lecturer at the Dept. “Microbiology and Environmental Biotechnologies” of Agricultural University – Plovdiv (AUP). She is a member of the Union of Scientists of Bulgaria – Plovdiv, MENSA Bulgaria, and the editorial board of the journal “*Ecologia Balkanica*” (referenced in Scopus, Q4). In recent years (2017-2024), Dr. Petrova has participated in postgraduate qualification courses for “Teacher of Ecology and Ecosystem Protection” and “Teacher of Biology”, in training on new technologies, artificial intelligence, digital skills, training of trainers, etc., both in Bulgaria and abroad. She organizes and coordinates ecological initiatives with students, field practices, classes in a practical environment, visits, etc. She is an academic mentor for the “Student Practices” project at the Ministry of Education and Science. She works well in a team and possesses organizational and administrative skills. The public commitment of the candidate is related to her participation in the public councils on landscaping and air quality of the Municipality of Plovdiv, which is a significant positive, considering the importance of the city's problems.

2. General description of the scientific outputs.

Dr. Petrova participates in the “Associate Professor” competition with a total output of 22 scientific papers, all of which are in the professional field of the current competition. According to the present statement, these works have not been used in

previous procedures for scientific degrees and academic positions (AP) and are subject to analysis. Three scientific works have been published with the participation of Ch. Assoc. Prof. Slaveya Petrova, PhD, upon acquisition of her doctoral degree, but they are not included in the current procedure. The personal participation of the candidate in the evaluated works is illustrated by the fact that 1 is independent; in 9 she is the first; in 3 she is the second; and in the remaining 9 she is the third and subsequent author. All publications are in impact-ranked journals (IR, Q2 – 4, Q3 – 8, Q4 – 10), and 12 of them are in journals with an impact factor (IF), which satisfies the requirement on item 11 of the Appendix to the Regulation for the implementation of the Law of Academic Staff Development in the Republic of Bulgaria (RILASDRB) of the AUP for a minimum of two publications with IF. The total IF of Dr. Petrova's scientific publications is 10,671. Following the minimum requirements of the Regulation, the submitted publications are grouped by the applicant in the following way: *indicator C* – 10 papers in journals that are referenced and indexed in *Web of Science* and *Scopus* (B4), representing 120 points (min. 100); *indicator D* – 12 papers in journals with IF (G7), representing 200 points (min. 200).

3. Teaching activity.

Doctor Petrova is an established lecturer with over 13 years of work experience, who started at the Faculty of Biology of the Paisiy Hilendarski Polytechnic, and for over 7 years, he has been teaching on a permanent employment contract at the Agricultural University – Plovdiv. She gives lectures and exercises on the mandatory discipline *Geology with petrography* (the specialty of “Ecology and environmental protection”, “EEP”), as well as on the optional courses *Geoecology of settlement systems, Biosystematics, phylogeny and evolution* (specialty “EEP”) and *Environment and Health* (specialty “EEP” and “Plant Protection”) in the “Bachelor” degree. In the Master's degree, the optional courses *Environmental Ethics and Urbanization* and *Statistical Methods in Ecology* (MC “Ecology of Settlement Systems”) are offered. The average study load for the last two years of Ch. Assist Prof. Dr. Slaveya Petrova at the Agricultural University – Plovdiv is over 260 hours per year.

The candidate is a co-author in the publication of a textbook on “Biological agriculture and agrobiodiversity” with co-authors V. Popov, I. Velcheva, and I. Mollov, published in 2017. She also co-authored a study guide on “Water pollution and protection and impact on ecosystems” with co-author E. Valcheva, published in 2015.

The teaching activity is complemented by the supervision of 24 graduates with a Bachelor's degree and 14 in the Master's degree at the Paisiy Hilendarski Polytechnic, as well as 3 graduates at AUP, all of whom successfully defended their degrees.

4. Scientific research activity.

Chief Assist. Prof. Petrova participated in the current competition for AP “Associate Professor” with 22 publications in journals holding SJR. The total number of citations of her scientific works is 141, and the Hirsch index according to Scopus data, is 8, which suggests a good appreciation of the candidate's work among the international scientific community. In addition, the obtained results have been presented as 7 oral reports and 15 posters at national and international forums.

Dr. Petrova's research activities can be summarized in the following areas:

- Research in the field of ecology of urban ecosystems;
- Research in the field of ecology of natural ecosystems;
- Research in the field of organic agriculture;
- Research on sorghum cultivars.

In the report on the contributions, the candidate has formulated 28 scientific and applied contributions in the four scientific fields that I accept.

To prove the fulfillment of the minimum requirements of RILASDRB of the AUP under *indicator D*, Dr. Petrova presented 35 citations, all of them in publication G2. The sum of the citations is 70 points, which exceeds the minimum required number (50).

Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Sl. Petrova participates in the National Scientific Program “Intelligent Plant Breeding” and two scientific research projects financed by the Bulgarian National Science Fund. She was a member of an expert team from AUP on the project “Preparation of an analysis of the impact of agriculture on the state of the environment and climate changes”, assigned by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Agriculture, Foods, and Forests. Dr. Petrova participates in the Bulgarian teams of two international projects financed under the EC ERA-NET program – *SCOOP* and *ConnectFarms*.

5. Notes and recommendations.

I have no objections to the documents presented by Ch. Assist. Prof. Dr. Petrova. I recommend that she continues to work with energy and dedication in her teaching and research activities.

6. Conclusion.

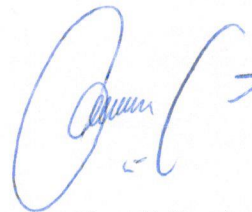
Based on the analysis of the candidate's pedagogical, scientific and scientific-applied activity, I believe that Chief Associate Professor Slaveya Petrova, Ph.D., **fully complies** with the requirements of Regulation of implementation LASDRB of the AUP. She has in-depth knowledge of the scientific specialty and research and teaching activities that exceed the requirements for holding the AP of **Associate Professor**. The candidate applies an analytical approach to researching environmental problems, has good scientific output, and her teamwork enriches the team and gives added value to the results.

Based on the above and my impressions, I give my **positive assessment** of her overall activity and recommend to the honorable Scientific Jury to also vote positively and to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of “Plant Protection and Agroecology” at the Agrarian University – Plovdiv to elect **Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Slaveya Tencheva Petrova**, as **Associate Professor** in professional field 4.3 *Biological Sciences*, the scientific specialty *Ecology and Ecosystem Protection*.

Date: 08.05.2024 г.

Plovdiv

Author of the Statement:



/Prof. Dr. Stefan Shilev/