



## STATEMENT REVIEW

regarding competition for "Associate Professor" in the scientific specialty of Ecology and Ecosystem Conservation (Higher Education Field: 4. Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and Informatics, Professional field: 4.4. Earth Sciences), announced in State Gazette No. 94 of 05.11.2024, with candidate Maria Krasimirova Chunchukova

by Ivelin Aldinov Mollov, Associate Professor, PhD, appointed as a member of the scientific jury by Order No. RD 16-12/07.01.2025 of the Rector of the Agricultural University – Plovdiv.

### 1. Brief Presentation of the Candidate

Maria Krasimirova Chunchukova is a Chief Assistant Professor at the Agricultural University – Plovdiv, where she engages in teaching and research in the field of ecology. She holds a Bachelor's degree in "Ecology and Environmental Conservation," a Master's degree in "Landscaping – Exterior and Interior Design," and a Ph.D. in "Ecology and Ecosystem Conservation." She has excellent proficiency in English and a good command of Russian.

### 2. General Description of Scientific Output

In the competition for "Associate Professor," Maria Krasimirova Chunchukova participates with a total of 27 works, categorized as follows:

- Scientific publications in the designated specialty – 27 in total, including:
  - Publications related to her doctoral dissertation – 3 (not subject to review);
  - Publications with an impact factor – 2;
  - Publications in peer-reviewed and indexed scientific journals – 22;
  - Publications in conference proceedings – 0.

Maria Krasimirova Chunchukova's personal contribution to the 24 eligible works is demonstrated by the following authorship distribution: 1 as a sole author, 12 as the first author, 11 as the second author, and 2 as the third or subsequent author.

- Textbooks – none.
- Teaching guides – none.

A total of **24 articles** are subject to analysis for the preparation of this statement review.

### 3. Teaching Activity

The candidate's teaching activity is primarily in the field of ecology, where she has delivered lectures, seminars, laboratory exercises, and practical training across a total of 14 bachelor's and master's programs, both in full-time and part-time study formats at the Agricultural University – Plovdiv.

#### *Teaching Workload*

The candidate's classroom and extracurricular workload over the past five years has ranged between 603 and 750 hours, fully meeting the requirements of the current competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor."

Her teaching activity is further complemented by supervising 17 successfully defended graduates (8 at the Bachelor's level and 9 at the Master's level).

#### *Published Teaching Materials*

Although the candidate has not yet published textbooks or teaching guides, she has developed five curricula, and the large number of successfully supervised graduates confirms her teaching competence.

#### *Developed Curricula*

The candidate has developed five curricula for the following courses:

- Invasion Ecology
- Biodiversity, Ecology, and Conservation of Freshwater Ecosystems
- Biodiversity and Ecological Risk
- Aquatic Ecosystems and Sustainable Natural Resource Use
- Protected Species in Tourist Areas

These courses are part of both Bachelor's and Master's degree programs.

### **4. Research Activity**

#### *Fields of Publication*

Maria Krasimirova Chunchukova has conducted research primarily in the fields of ecology, ecological parasitology of fish in Bulgaria, and ecotoxicology. The scientific publications presented in the competition contain original contributions of both scientific and applied significance.

#### *Citations and Referencing of Scientific Work*

The candidate has a total of 16 citations submitted for the competition, earning her 80 points under Criterion D. These citations are in prestigious international scientific journals, indicating that Maria Krasimirova Chunchukova's research is well-recognized and accepted by the scientific community.

#### *Participation in Research Projects*

The candidate has participated in a total of six research projects - four external and two internal to the Agricultural University – Plovdiv, all of which are related to the competition's thematic field.

### **5. Notes and recommendations**

My main note and recommendation to the candidate is to develop and publish independently or in co-authorship with other colleagues a textbook or teaching aid in one of the disciplines she teaches.

### **6. Conclusion**

Based on the analysis of the candidate's pedagogical, scientific and scientific-applied activities, I believe that Maria Krasimirova Chunchukova meets the requirements of the Law and the Regulations of the Agrarian University - Plovdiv. The candidate presents a sufficient number of scientific works published after the materials used in the defense of her doctorate (PhD), in which there are original scientific and applied contributions that have received international recognition as a representative part of them are published in prestigious journals published by international academic publishing houses. The theoretical developments have practical applicability, as some of them are directly oriented to the educational work. The scientific and teaching qualifications of Maria Krasimirova Chunchukova are undoubted.

All this gives me a reason to evaluate her overall activity **POSITIVELY**.

I would like to propose that the esteemed Scientific Jury also vote positively, and I recommend that the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Plant Protection and Agroecology at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv **to elect** Maria Krasimirova Chunchukova as **Associate Professor** in the scientific specialty "Ecology and Ecosystem Conservation" (field of higher education: 4. Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics, professional field 4.4. Earth Sciences).

Data: 30.01.2025.

Plovdiv

**REVIEWER:**.....

(Assoc. Prof. Ivelin Mollov, PhD)