



## REVIEW

on dissertation for obtaining the **DOCTORATE DEGREE** in Higher Education 3. Social, business and legal sciences, Professional Field 3.8 Economics, Scientific Specialty: Organization and management of production

**Author of the dissertation:** RUSLAN VELIKOV KOLAROV

Part time PhD student at the Department of Management and Marketing at the Agricultural University, Plovdiv

**Thesis topic:**

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF FORESTRY ENTERPRISES

**Reviewer:** Prof. Dr. Nelly Andreeva Bencheva,

Agricultural University, Plovdiv; 3. Social, Business and Legal sciences, Professional field 3.7 Administration and management, Scientific specialty: Organization and management appointed as a member of the scientific jury by order No. РД - 16-32 / 16. 01.2020 from the Rector of the AU.

### **1. Brief introduction of the applicant.**

Ruslan Velikov Kolarov was born on 07.10.1976. He graduated from the College of Tourism in Blagoevgrad, majoring in Organization and Management of Tourist Services. He obtained a Master's Degree in Tourism Management from the Paisii Hilendarski University in 2012. During the period 2001-2015. works in various business structures and holds positions such as: press center manager, public relations, project coordinator, manager. He currently holds the position of Head of Forestry Municipality, Svoge. He also develops political activity as chairman of the MRF-Sofia-region. She speaks good Russian and English.

### **2. The relevance of the topic under the consideration**

The Bulgarian forestry sector, which covers 37.4% of the country's territory, has numerous economic, social and environmental functions that are important for the sustainable development of the country. The favorable natural conditions as well as the traditions in the forest industry are an important prerequisite for the management and development of activities providing income from the sale of forest products. Although the forest sector has a relatively small share of GDP, it is of

particular importance for rural development in the country and for improving the quality of life.

The growing need for forestry products and services increasingly necessitates the search for increasingly adequate solutions for the sustainable and efficient management of the forestry sector. In this context, I believe that the PhD student has correctly focused on the study of current and significant problems in the development of the forestry sector in Bulgaria, such as strategic management of the sector through the development and implementation of strategies, plans and programs at different levels of government.

I think that the doctoral student very skillfully, with solid objective arguments, substantiates the relevance of the chosen dissertation topic.

### **3. Purpose, tasks, hypotheses and methods of research.**

The purpose, objectives and methods of the study are set out logically and consistently. To achieve this, six research tasks have been solved, which include the major disclosure of: clarifying the strategic management research toolkit; developing a methodological framework for evaluating forestry management; analysis of state policy and normative strategic documents for forestry development; assessment of the economic activity of forestry enterprises; revealing the main problems of management of forestry enterprises; developing proposals and guidelines to improve the enterprise management model.

A clear research thesis has been formulated which has been proven in the research process, namely that improving the organization and management of state forestry enterprises will have a positive impact on the development of the local economy. Two hypotheses have been formulated in this connection. The subject of the study is clearly and clearly justified. The subject of the study includes the economic activities of forestry enterprises.

The methods used make it possible to characterize the results completely and provide a basis for their correct interpretation. The following main methods are applied: theoretical, methodological and empirical approach; quantitative analysis; comparative, statistical and sociological analysis; the method of peer review; mathematical-statistical and econometric models. EXCEL, SPSS, etc. software was used to process the data.

The study period is six years-2012/2018.

The results achieved show that the doctoral student has a good theoretical background, good practical knowledge and skills in the scientific tools, which allowed him to conduct independent research and analysis of the obtained results.

#### **4. Visualization and presentation of the results obtained**

The dissertation is developed in a volume of 190 pages. The structure of the dissertation is constructed according to the set goals and tasks of the research. With regard to the structure and content of the dissertation, it should be noted that a good and logical presentation of the material has been achieved. The work is structured as follows: an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a list of used literature and applications. 137 literature sources (89 in Bulgarian and 39 foreign and 9 online sources) were used. The contents of the chapters are divided into separate parts, specific conclusions are drawn at the end of each chapter. The results of the empirical studies are illustrated in 14 tables and 23 figures.

#### **5. Discussion of the results and the references**

Important theoretical summaries, decisions and conclusions about the role and importance of strategic management of forestry enterprises are made in the dissertation presented. Chapter one focuses on the theoretical basis of the study. Basic concepts of strategic management as well as policies related to the organization and management of the activities of forestry enterprises are explored. The relationship between planning, programming and the importance of strategic documents in the context of strategic management and multifunctional forest management is revealed. Some of the major issues related to forestry planning have been identified. Based on the processes of monitoring and control of the implementation of plans and programs in the forestry, indicators for achieving progress, implementation and control in the implementation of the plans have been formulated. An analysis of the state policy, forest legislation and institutional structure of forestry sector management has been made. Basic approaches are proposed to stabilize the sector and improve the socio-economic dimensions of forests.

The developed methodological approach for assessing the competitiveness has allowed identifying and evaluating a number of strategic decisions and approaches that affect the level of financial competitiveness of dairy enterprises. By

testing statistical hypotheses for plausibility, strategic financial activities in dairies are shown to influence their degree of competitiveness. The proposed methodological approach for the diagnosis and strategic management of financial activities through the method of expert evaluation and SWOT analysis is used to construct a theoretical model for the diagnosis and strategic financial management of dairy enterprises.

The second chapter provides a detailed analysis of the policies and models for the development of forestry in Bulgaria. The analysis process establishes that forestry development policy should be closely linked to agricultural policy, regional development in the fields of industry, tourism, employment, ecology and environmental protection.

Particular attention is paid to the analysis and evaluation of the forestry sector in terms of the concept of strategic management. The state of the forest sector has been found to have a number of impacts in the development of the agricultural sector, climate change, biodiversity and environmental protection, tourism and local socio-economic development.

An in-depth analysis and evaluation of the economic activity of forestry enterprises has been made. The analysis focuses on the economic situation of the sector and its enterprises, the assessment of the implementation of forestry plans, the evaluation of the activity of state-owned enterprises and private companies, the economic efficiency of production and use of forest resources.

Based on the results of Chapter Two, basic directions and opportunities for improving the strategic management of forestry enterprises have been developed. Concrete ways have been developed to improve the forestry management model in Bulgaria. A model for institutional restructuring of the forest management model is proposed.

We may summarize that the dissertation contains specific results and empirical evidence that objectively reflects the real achievements of the research. The results obtained are correctly interpreted. After each chapter of the dissertation, accurate and clear summary conclusions are drawn that result from the research.

The results achieved clearly show that the doctoral student has the necessary preparation for conducting an independent research. Recommendations of practical importance have also been made.

## **6. Contributions to the dissertation.**

The content of the dissertation and the results of the research justify the following scientific and applied scientific contributions:

### **Scientific contributions**

1. On the basis of comparative and critical analysis of contemporary theoretical statements and practices, the problems of planning, programming and functional structuring of the forestry sector and its enterprises have been identified as subject to strategic management.

2. A methodological approach for evaluation and analysis for the development of forestry enterprises and their economic activity has been developed.

3. A conceptual model for management of forestry enterprises has been developed.

4. A comparative and statistical analysis of the activities of forestry enterprises has been made, revealing the relationship between selected economic factors.

### **Scientific and applied contributions**

5. Opportunities have been identified and concrete recommendations have been formulated to improve the strategic management of forestry at different levels of government.

6. A model for the establishment of an LAG is proposed to improve the forest sector management process.

### **7. Critical notes and subject matters.**

Some notes and suggestions can be made in the dissertation:

- A number of statements, both in the theoretical and the analytical part, need clearer arguments, supported by concrete results from their own research.
- The methodological part of the study is not sufficiently specific and clearly separated as a separate part. In some places, a clearer position and statements on methodological issues are needed.
- The conclusions drawn after each section and the recommendations as opportunities for strategic management of the forest sector are not sufficiently specific and substantiated.

I hope that these notes, which do not reduce the value of the dissertation, will be taken into account by the doctoral student in his future research work.

## 8. Published articles and citations.

In the dissertation there are four independently published articles. Through the scientific publications thus presented, the doctoral student meets the minimum scientific indicators for the acquisition of the Doctoral Doctorate, referred to in Art. 2A of ZRARB.

The abstract presented objectively reflects the structure and content of the dissertation.

### CONCLUSION:

Based on the scientific and applied by the doctoral student, various methods of research, correctly performed experiments, the summaries made and conclusions drawn, I believe that the submitted dissertation work meets the requirements of the Application of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, and the Regulations of the Agricultural University for its application, which gives me a reason to evaluate it **POSITIVE**.

I allow myself to propose to the venerable Scientific Jury also vote positively and to award to **RUSLAN VELIKOV KOLAROV** the educational and scientific degree "**DOCTOR**" in Organization and management of production.

Date: 27.01. 2020

Plovdiv

REVIEWER:

(Prof. Dr. Nelly Bencheva) }