

REVIEW

on the materials for participation in a competition for occupation of academic position "Associate Professor" in scientific field 6. Agricultural sciences and veterinary medicine, in professional direction 6.5. Forestry, scientific specialty „Forest Melioration, Forest Protection and Special Forest Uses“, subject "Forest Non-Wood Resources", announced by University of Forestry in State Gazette No 102 of December 8, 2023, code of the procedure: **FOR-AsP-1123-114**.

Applicant to participate in the competition: Dr. Slavcho Asenov Savev, Senior Assistant Professor

Prepared the statement: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Maria Todorova Stoyanova, Forest Research Institute - BAS, Field of higher education 6. Agricultural sciences and veterinary medicine, Professional Field 6.5. Forestry, scientific specialty „Forest Melioration, Forest Protection and Special Forest Uses“, determined as a member of the scientific jury by order No. ZPS-24/23.01.2024 by the Rector of University of Forestry

1. Brief introduction of the candidate.

In the announced competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 6. Agricultural sciences and veterinary medicine, Professional Field 6.5. Forestry, scientific specialty „Forest Melioration, Forest Protection and Special Forest Uses“, subject "Forest Non-Wood Resources", for the needs of University of Forestry there is one candidate, Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Slavcho Asenov Savev.

Slavcho A. Savev graduated from the Forestry University in 1994 with a Master's degree in Forestry, specialization "Environmental Protection". In 2003, he defended a dissertation on the topic: "Study of non-wood forest-plant resources in the Petrohan region - Western Stara Planina with a view to their rational use". From 1998 until now, he has successively held the academic positions of assistant, senior assistant and chief assistant.

His main scientific interests are related to the study of medicinal plants and mushrooms in forest areas, their rational use and conservation. Not a little attention has also been paid to the cultivation of forest-fruit plants and mushrooms with the aim of enriching the species diversity and increasing the resource base. It participates in the development and implementation of national policies for the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, the development and implementation of management plans for protected areas and action plans for the protection of endangered plant species.

2. Conformity of the applicant's submitted documents and materials with those required according to the Regulations for the Terms and Procedures for the Acquisition of Scientific Degrees and for the Occupancy of Academic Positions at University of Forestry.

Dr. Savev's documents submitted for participation in the competition show that the procedure for its disclosure and announcement was followed and they are in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its Implementation, as well as with the Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and for occupying academic positions at University of Forestry and the Regulations for activity of University of Forestry.

3. Evaluation of the candidate's educational and teaching activities.

Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Slavcho Savev teaches the following disciplines:

- "Forest Non-Wood Resources" - specialty "Forestry", Educational and Qualification Degree "Bachelor", full-time and extramural studies, lectured for 11 years;
- "Multifunctional forest management" specialty "Forestry", Educational and Qualification Degree "Master" full-time and part-time study - 8 years;
- "Management of non-wood resources in protected sites" - specialty "Forestry", Educational and Qualification Degree "Bachelor", regular and part-time study - 13 years;
- "Cultivation of mushrooms and herbs" - specialty "Forestry", Educational and Qualification Degree "Bachelor", full-time and part-time study - 11 years.

Dr. S. Savev teaches the listed disciplines according to programs approved by the Faculty Council, in the development and updating of which he actively participates. The lectures include traditional practices in the use of medicinal plants and mushrooms and their conservation, as well as the introduction of new directions.

He is the co-author of the curricula for the disciplines "Multifunctional Forest Management" and "Ecosystem Services in Forest Territories", introduced as an elective discipline for students majoring in "Forestry", Educational and Qualification Degree "Master" - full-time education in 2023.

Senior Assistant Professor Slavcho Savev has developed electronic courses in the e-learning systems of the University of Forestry (elearn.ltu.bg and in the Microsoft Teams platform) for disciplines "Forest non-wood resources", "Cultivation of mushrooms and herbs", "Management of non-timber resources in protected sites" and "Multifunctional forest management" for the students of "Forestry", Educational and Qualification Degree "Bachelor" and Educational and Qualification Degree "Master" in the form of presentations for the lectures and electronic guides for the exercises. He also developed a system for exams tests.

In the period 2014 - 2024 Senior Assistant Professor Savev was the supervisor of 18 successfully defended diploma theses students, and from 1995 until now he reviewed 16 diploma theses.

In his pedagogical work, Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Slavcho Savev is distinguished by a serious and responsible attitude, respected by students and colleagues from the university. He is an established and proven teacher with a significant contribution to the education of the students he teaches.

4. Evaluation of the candidate's scientific, applied scientific and publication activity.

The candidate in the competition Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Slavcho Savev, presented a list of 21 publications, including dissertation work, monograph, book, based on the dissertation work, 7 pcs. articles and reports published in scientific editions, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information, 9 pcs. articles and reports, published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes and 2 pcs. Chapters of collective monographs.

The presented works are correctly assigned to the individual sections, according to the requirements of the Regulations for the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and for holding academic positions at University of Forestry and are sufficient for the position of "Associate Professor" - total number of points - 522.16, in demand - 400.

4.1. Participation in scientific, scientific-applied and educational projects

Senior Assistant Professor Savev actively participates in research activities with 12 scientific and scientific-applied projects as a member and with 7 as a supervisor with different funding – University of Forestry, Education and Experimental Forest Enterprises, International Organizations, Executive Forest Agency etc. He is also a participant in 4 scientific and educational projects.

4.2. Characteristics of published scientific results

The presented monographs - 174 pages, book - 127 pages and the two chapters of collective monographs, respectively 7 and 38 pages, are independent. In the publications from section D-7, the candidate's participation is as follows - 2 independent, in one first, in one third, in one - fourth and in two fifth, and in those from D-8 - one independent, in three for first, in three for second, in one for third and in one for fourth place.

The publications are grouped according to the guidelines for meeting the minimum national requirements for holding the position of "Associate Professor" in Professional Field 6.5. Forestry, scientific specialty.

It is clear from the above that Senior Assistant Professor Slavcho Savev has a sufficient number of independent publications, but at the same time, he successfully works and presents himself in collective developments.

4.3. Reflection of the candidate's scientific activity in the literature (citability)

In the attached reference for citations Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Slavcho Savev, indicates 8 publications that are cited in 18 publications, including:

- 4 publications cited in 8 scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes;
- 4 publications cited in 10 non-refereed peer-reviewed journals.

The indicated information shows that the scientific works of Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Slavcho Savev are known both at home and abroad.

4.4. Contributions in the candidate's works (scientific, scientific-applied, applied)

The scientific contributions in the presented works fall into four main directions:

- Studies, related to non-wood forest resources;
- Cultivation, bonification and zoning, variety testing, introduction and methods of growing forest fruits, medicinal plants and mushrooms;
- Propagation and reintroduction of rare and protected plant species;
- Biological diversity in old forests and their management and conservation regimes.

Contributions in the studies related to non-wood forest resources refer to inventory and resource assessment of medicinal plants and forest fruit species in the Petrokhan region of the Western Stara Planina, development and application of a methodology for inventory and mapping of medicinal plants by types of areas in the forest territories and establishing the phytocenotic features, productivity and stocks of the European wild ginger (*Asarum europaeum* L.) and the Pheasant's eye (*Adonis vernalis* L.) in the forests of the Western Stara Planina.

Contributions to horological studies related to flora and mycota include studies on species diversity, intraspecific genetic variability, and the discovery and recording of three new species and new localities of different subterranean fungi.

In the study of the population and conservation status of some medicinal highland plants (the golden root (*Rhodiola rosea* L.), the great yellow gentian (*Gentiana lutea* L.) and the bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* L.) as contributions, the results of their population ecology were noted, as well as the results of the study of the size of their deposits, their density, their age structure and their reproductive capacity.

The candidate for associate professor Senior Assistant Professor Savev points out contributions to the ecological studies of truffles in Bulgaria, the research and development of regimes for the use and protection of resources, as well as to the study of the pharmacological features of ten species of the genus *Astragalus* in relation to the content of mauritanin.

Scientific contributions in cultivation, bonification and zoning, varietal testing, introduction and cultivation methods of forest fruit species, medicinal plants and

mushrooms are related to the methodical guide for the creation, maintenance and varietal testing of fields and plantations of tall American bilberry and chokeberry on the territories of the Education and Experimental Forest Enterprise Petrokhan" and Education and Experimental Forest Enterprise - Yundola and forest areas in free areas in forest nurseries in different parts of the country.

As a scientific contribution, the establishment of suitable methods for vegetative propagation, the appropriate substrates and the period of collection of vegetative propagation materials of the conservationally significant willow (*Salix pentandra* L.) and the snowdrop (*Galanthus elwesii* Hook.) for Vitosha, as well as that propagation and ex situ reintroduction into the wild is a good approach in the conservation of common yew (*Taxus baccata* L.).

In the direction Biological diversity in old forests and their management and conservation regimes, the determination of the area, distribution, resources, biological diversity and habitat belonging of old forests in Nature Park Strandzha and the main regimes of their management to maintain a favorable nature conservation status is noted as a contribution .

The listed 10 scientific and applied contributions are well defined and relevant both to the science of non-wood forest resources and to practice.

The applied contributions in the publications of Senior Assistant Professor Savev are reduced to determining the factors and methods for creating summer truffle and blueberry plantations and measures for their cultivation and management in different regions of the country.

I believe that the developed by Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Slavcho Savev's report on the contributions actually reflects his overall scientific activity.

5. Evaluation of the candidate's personal contribution

From the presented 21 publications in the list of Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Savev 7 are independent, and in 4 of them he is in first place, which gives me reason to give a positive assessment of his personal contribution. The independent scientific works presented in the competition are a personal work and a personal merit of the candidate and objectively show the good knowledge of the subject of study and its in-depth study.

6. Critical notes and recommendations

I have some recommendations for the candidate for his future work. The direction "Non-wood forest resources" includes a wide range of activities in forests for the utilization of biomass, it is appropriate in the programs of this discipline to reflect all possible activities - for example, the lifetime use of coniferous species for the extraction of balsam resin (although it is not currently implemented, is a possibility), using the thin branches and needles of coniferous species for the extraction of essential oils, etc.

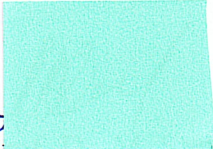
6. Personal impressions

After a detailed review of the materials and scientific works presented for the competition, their significance and the scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions contained in them, and my personal impressions of the candidate, I believe that the prerequisites for holding a higher academic position are present. The candidate works with a sense of responsibility and consistency, enjoys authority among students and in practice, maintains ethical collegial relations.

7. Conclusion

On the basis of the materials, submitted for the competition by Dr. Slavcho Savev, I am convinced that he fully meets the national criteria for holding the academic position "Associate Professor", defined by the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Rules for its Implementation, as well as with the Regulations for the Terms and Procedures for the Acquisition of Scientific Degrees and for the Occupancy of Academic Positions at University of Forestry and the Regulations for the Activity of University of Forestry, I strongly recommend to the Scientific Jury to choose Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Slavcho Savev for the academic position »Associate Professor« in the field of higher education 6. Agricultural sciences and veterinary medicine, Professional Field 6.5. Forestry, scientific specialty „Forest Melioration, Forest Protection and Special Forest Uses“, subject "Forest Non-Wood Resources".

Date: 18.03.2024
Sofia city

REVIEWER: 
(Assoc. Prof. Dr. M. Stoyanova)