

## OPINION

ЛЕСОТЕХНИЧЕСКИЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ  
ФАКУЛТЕТ ПО ГОРСКО СТОПАНСТВО

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on the materials submitted for participation in the competition for the academic position of **“Associate Professor”** in Higher Education Field 6. Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Professional Field 6.5. Forestry, Scientific Specialty “Silviculture incl. Dendrology” in the discipline “Silviculture”

In the competition for Associate Professor announced in the State Gazette, issue no. 10/04.02.2025, and on the website of the University of Forestry under procedure code FOR-AsP-0125-159, for the needs of the “Silviculture” Department of the Faculty of Forestry, the applicant is Chief Assistant Dr. Neno Alexandrov Alexandrov, Faculty of Forestry, Department of Silviculture.

Opinion prepared by: Associate Professor Dr. Ivaylo Velichkov Velichkov, Forest Research Institute at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia; Higher Education Field 6. Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Professional Field 6.5. Forestry, Scientific Specialty “Silviculture incl. Dendrology” appointed as a member of the academic jury by Rector’s Order No. ZPS-179/24.03.2025 of the University of Forestry.

### 1. Brief Biographical Information about the Candidate

Neno Alexandrov Alexandrov was born on 08.03.1979 in Velingrad.

In 1998, he graduated from the Forestry Technical School “Hristo Botev” – Velingrad, with a specialization as a forestry technician.

In 2002, he obtained a Bachelor’s degree in Forestry Engineering from the University of Forestry, Sofia, specializing in “Forestry.” In 2004, he completed his Master’s degree in “Forest Management” from the same university, with the qualification “Master Engineer.”

In 2015, he was awarded the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” in Professional Field 6.5. Forestry, Scientific Specialty “Silviculture incl. Dendrology” as a PhD student at the University of Forestry, defending a dissertation titled “Study of the Dynamics of Natural Disturbances and the Structure of High-Mountain Spruce Forests.”

Since 2006, he has worked at the Department of Silviculture at the University of Forestry, initially as an Assistant (2006–2009), later as a Senior Assistant (2009–2010), and currently as Chief Assistant (2011–present).

### 2. Correspondence of the submitted documents and materials of the applicant according to the Rules of the Development of academic staff at the University of Forestry

The submitted materials comply with the requirements. The applicant's score by indicator groups exceeds the thresholds outlined in Table 1 of the Appendix to Art. 1a, para. 1 of the Regulations on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, Field 6. “Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine.” The applicant has a total of 981.44 points, exceeding the required minimum of 400 points.

### 3. Assessment of the candidate’s educational and pedagogical activities (work with students and PhD students)

The applicant delivers lectures in the disciplines: “Forest Management,” “Silviculture,” and “Forest Certification,” and conducts practical exercises, consultations, and field training for students in: “General Silviculture,” “Silviculture,” “Forest Management,” “Global Forestry,” and “Forest Certification”.

The level of teaching is high, due to the applicant's motivation to provide excellent knowledge and skills, supported by his practical experience and participation in various projects, working groups, training programs, etc.

The applicant has supervised five successfully defended diploma theses, served as a consultant for three diploma works, and reviewed 25 diploma theses.

#### **4. Assessment of candidate's scientific, scientific-applied and publishing activities**

General description of the presented materials

Applicant Neno Alexandrov Alexandrov participated in the competition with:

- Monographs: 1 habilitation monograph and 4 additional monographs
- Textbooks: 0
- Learning materials: 7
- Books: 1
- Publications: 13
- Projects: 17

##### **4.1 Participation in scientific, scientific-applied and educational projects**

The applicant has participated in 17 research and applied projects: as a member of 3 international and 7 national scientific projects; project leader of 4 nationally significant applied projects; and as a team member in 3 applied research projects.

##### **4.2 Characterization of published scientific results**

Total submitted: 1 dissertation for awarding the doctoral degree and 26 publications, distributed as follows:

- A1 – 1 doctoral dissertation
- B3 – 1 habilitation monograph
- G6 – 1 book based on the doctoral dissertation
- G7 – 6 articles in refereed and indexed journals
- G8 – 5 articles in non-refereed journals
- G9 – 2 studies
- G11 – 11 chapters in collective monographs

##### **4.3 Reflection of Candidate's Scientific Publications in Literature (known citations)**

**Total:** 40 citations

**By type of citations:**

- In reference journals and proceedings of scientific forums: 33 citations
- In teaching aids, monographs, dissertations, etc.: 7 citations

A total of 12 publications have been cited, with more than half of the citations (22) stemming from one publication co-authored by the applicant in an international journal with impact factor (Canadian Journal of Forest Research).



#### **4.4 Contributions to the candidate's work** (scientific, scientific-applied, applied)

The applicant has outlined contributions in six main directions based on the nature of his publications, summarized in two broader areas:

1. Studies on forest dynamics, structure, growth, and productivity
2. Forest management focused on transformation, adaptation, and multifunctionality

The contributions are clearly and comprehensively defined. The most significant ones are those based on multiple publications and extensive scientific work, such as:

- Transformation of Scots pine plantations
- Conversion of coppice oak forests into seed-origin stands — two highly relevant and large-scale forestry issues for Bulgaria.

#### **5. Assessment of the applicant's personal contribution**

Of the 26 publications submitted for the competition:

- 5 are sole-authored (1 book and 4 chapters in collective monographs)
- 11 are first-authored, including:
  - 7 chapters in collective monographs
  - 1 monograph (habilitation thesis)
  - 1 article in a refereed and indexed journal
  - 1 article in a non-refereed journal
  - 1 book

The personal contribution of the applicant in his publication activity can be considered sufficient for the purposes of the competition.

#### **6. Critical Remarks**

I have no critical remarks regarding the applicant's scientific output.

As seen in Section 5, the applicant is the first author of only one article in refereed and indexed journals among 8 such publications (3 international and 5 Bulgarian). I recommend he strive to publish more frequently as lead or sole author in internationally recognized refereed journals, which significantly boost the visibility of Bulgarian researchers. This is evident from Section 4.3, where 55% of the citations are attributed to one such international publication.

#### **7. Personal Impressions**

I know Chief Assistant Dr. Neno Alexandrov personally and hold him in high regard both professionally and as a person.

#### **8. Conclusion**

In connection with the above, I propose that Chief Assistant Dr. Neno Alexandrov be elected as Associate Professor in the discipline of "Silviculture" in Professional Field 6.5. "Forestry" Scientific Specialty "Silviculture incl. Dendrology"

Prepared by:

