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OPINION

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Member of the scientific jury for the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor,
in the field of higher education: 4. Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics,
professional field: 4.4. Earth Sciences,
scientific specialty: Geology of the Oceans and Seas,
scientific area: Paleoclimate and Geoecology of the Black Sea,
scientific section: Marine Geology and Archaeology,
announced in the *State Gazette*, issue No. 63 of August 1, 2025.

Competition Information

The present opinion has been prepared pursuant to Order No. 300 of 26 September 2025 issued by the Director of the Institute of Oceanology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences – Varna, and in accordance with the decision of the meeting of the scientific jury held on 10 October 2025. This opinion complies with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its Implementation, and the Regulations on the Conditions and Procedures for the Acquisition of Educational and Scientific Degrees and for Holding Academic Positions at the Institute of Oceanology – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

For the announced competition for the academic position of „Associate Professor“ in the Section of Marine Geology and Archaeology at the Institute of Oceanology – Varna, the sole candidate is Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Krasimira Ruseva Slavova.

The review of the documents submitted by the candidate for participation in the competition shows that they fully comply with Article 24, Paragraph 1 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, Article 53 of the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, and Article 52, Paragraph 1 of the Regulations on the Conditions and Procedures for the Acquisition of Educational and Scientific Degrees and for Holding Academic Positions at the Institute of Oceanology.

The candidate fully meets the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of Associate Professor, as specified in Article 2b, Paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

Brief Biographical Data of the Candidate

In 1997, Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Krasimira Slavova graduated from the Civil Faculty of the Nikola Yonkov Vaptsarov Naval Academy, specializing in Ecology and Environmental Protection, and obtained a Master's degree. During her studies, Dr. Slavova received training in marine chemistry, marine biology, marine geology, and oceanology.

In 2004, after successfully defending her doctoral dissertation on the topic „Climatic and Geocatastrophic Events in the Black Sea before 7500 Calendar Years“, she was awarded the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” in the scientific specialty Oceanology at the Institute of Oceanology – Varna. Her areas of academic and research specialization include oceanology, marine geology, and marine ecology.

Between April 2005 and January 2011, Dr. Krasimira Slavova held the position of Research Associate I degree („Oceanologist“).

Since January 2011, she has been serving as a Chief Assistant Professor in the professional field 4.4. Earth Sciences, within the Section of Marine Geology and Archaeology at the Institute of Oceanology – Varna.

Description of the Scientific Works

For the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor, Dr. Krasimira Slavova participates with a total of 34 scientific publications, 82% of which are written in English. Of these, 6 papers are independently authored, while 28 are co-authored.

The publications subject to review include: 6 scientific papers submitted in place of a habilitation monograph, 8 papers published in peer-reviewed and indexed journals included in international scientific databases such as Web of Science and Scopus (outside the habilitation work), and 20 scientific papers published in peer-reviewed national and international journals.

The citation report confirms that the candidate meets and significantly exceeds the requirements for indicator group D, demonstrating high research activity. According to the citation record submitted for the competition for „Associate Professor“, 16 cited scientific papers with a total of 115 citations are included. Of these, 14 citations appear in peer-reviewed monographs and collective volumes, 81 citations are in journals indexed in international databases (Scopus, Web of Science), and 20 citations are in non-indexed but peer-reviewed scientific journals.

Report on Meeting the Minimum National Requirements for the Academic Position of Associate Professor

The report on compliance with the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position of Associate Professor demonstrates that Dr. Krasimira Slavova fully meets and significantly exceeds the established criteria, showing sufficient activity across indicators A, B, G, and D. The total number of points accumulated by the candidate is 914, compared to the minimum required 430 points. The distribution by categories is as follows:

- A – 50 points
- B – 115 points
- G – 262 points
- D – 487 points

During the period 2008–2025, the candidate participated in 17 international scientific forums, of which 7 were held abroad and 10 in Bulgaria.

In the documentation submitted for participation in the competition, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Krasimira Slavova reports involvement in 15 international research projects and 8 national

scientific projects, reflecting her active engagement in interdisciplinary and collaborative scientific work at both national and international levels.

Brief Characterization of the Submitted Scientific Works/Publications

The research activity of Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Krasimira Slavova is focused in the fields of marine geology, paleoclimatology, and geoecology of the Black Sea.

Her works encompass a broad spectrum of scientific issues, including: Lithostratigraphy and sedimentology of the Black Sea shelf deposits; Paleoenvironmental reconstruction of Quaternary environments; Influence of climatic fluctuations on geomorphological and sedimentary processes in the basin; Interactions between sea-level dynamics, sedimentation, and tectonics in the context of Late Quaternary environmental evolution; Application of geoecological approaches to the assessment of natural and anthropogenic impacts in the coastal and shelf zones.

Through her publications, Dr. Slavova demonstrates a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach that integrates geological, geomorphological, geochemical, and paleoenvironmental data to clarify the evolutionary trends of the Black Sea basin during the Late Quaternary. Her contributions are characterized by a solid methodological foundation, the use of modern analytical techniques, and international scientific relevance.

Dr. Slavova applies modern analytical methods – including geochemical indicators, micropaleontological data, and geophysical profiling. This enables her to make well-founded interpretations concerning the evolution of the paleoenvironment and the dynamics of sea-level changes during the Holocene and Pleistocene.

The scientific works of Dr. Slavova are characterized by precise methodology, clear argumentation, and a well-developed illustrative base, including maps, profiles, and diagrams. They demonstrate a consistent scientific direction and contribute significantly to the development of an integrated concept of the evolution of the Black Sea Basin in a paleoclimatic context.

The results of her research have high applied value – both for interpreting the geological development of the shelf and for assessing contemporary ecological trends and risks in the marine environment.

Scientific Contributions

A review of Dr. Krasimira Slavova's publication activity clearly highlights the orientation of her scientific research and applied work. Particularly significant are her contributions to the study of:

- the morphostructural and sedimentological characteristics of the shelf in the western part of the Black Sea;
- the reconstruction of the paleo-lacustrine and marine phases in the development of the Black Sea Basin;
- the analysis of paleoclimatic signals preserved in sedimentary sequences;
- the assessment of the interactions between natural geodynamic processes and contemporary anthropogenic impacts on the marine geo-ecosystem.

The presented contributions possess high scientific value and originality, expanding current knowledge on the geological history, morphostructural organization, and paleoclimatic dynamics of the Black Sea Basin. Dr. Slavova's research is distinguished by an innovative methodological approach, reliable interpretation of results, and consistent scientific advancement, fully meeting the criteria for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor" in professional field 4.4. Earth Sciences.

I support the contributory elements of the publications, which are the result of the author's scientific research work.

Critical Remarks and Recommendations

1. I have no critical remarks regarding the materials submitted for the competition.
2. I recommend that the candidate continue participating in international scientific forums and projects, as well as publish in peer-reviewed journals with a high impact factor, in order to strengthen the international visibility of her scientific results.
3. In the future, it would be beneficial to develop a comprehensive monographic work summarizing her contributions in the fields of marine geology and paleoclimatology, which would represent a significant contribution to the national scientific school in geomorphology and geoecology of the Black Sea.

Conclusion

The scientific output submitted by Dr. Krasimira Slavova for participation in the competition is of sufficient volume and good quality, and it contains both scientific and applied contributions. Her research results possess high theoretical and practical value and enrich contemporary knowledge about the geodynamic and paleoenvironmental evolution of the Black Sea Basin.

Based on the analysis of the scientific and applied activities of Chief Assistant Dr. Krasimira Slavova and the recognized original contributions in the fields of marine geology, paleoclimate, and geoecology of the Black Sea, I consider that the candidate fully meets the requirements for occupying the academic position of Associate Professor.

I hereby propose that Chief Assistant Dr. Krasimira Ruseva Slavova be elected to the academic position of Associate Professor in the field of higher education 4. Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and Informatics, professional field 4.4. Earth Sciences, scientific specialty Geology of Oceans and Seas, scientific direction Paleoclimate and Geoecology of the Black Sea, for the needs of the Institute of Oceanology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences – Varna.

Shumen, 13.11.2025

/Prof. Svetla Stankova, PhD/