

IN MEMORIAM**Prof. Dr. Ljupčo Melovski (30.06.1958 – 29.04.2019)****Doyen of environmental science in the Republic of North Macedonia,
passionate botanist, and leading conservationist in South-Eastern Europe**

Prof. Dr. Ljupčo Melovski was born on 30th June 1958 in Gostivar, the Republic of North Macedonia. In 1981, he graduated from the Faculty of Biology at the University in Skopje, defending a MSc thesis entitled: 'Dynamics of forest floor, annual litter production, decomposition rate and soil CO₂ release in the Italian and Turkey oak forest ecosystem in Galičica National Park' [*Динамика на шумската простирка, годишен опад, брзина на разградување и ослободување на CO₂ од почвата на македонскиот дабов плоскоачево-церов екосистем во националниот парк 'Таличица'*]. In 1984, Prof. Melovski was appointed at the Institute of Botany, Faculty of Biology. Since then he has worked at the same institution, currently the Department of Ecology of Plants, Institute of Biology at the Facul-

ty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, University in Skopje, as assistant professor (since 1986), associate professor (since 1997) and a full-time professor (since 2002). In 1996, he defended his PhD dissertation on the topic: 'Nutrient cycling in the Macedonian *Quercetum frainetto-cerris* ecosystem in the Galičica National Park' [*Кружење на биоелементите во македонскиот плоскоачево-церов екосистем во националниот парк 'Таличица'*].

At the University, Prof. Melovski was involved in teaching and practical training on several ecological subjects, such as Ecology and Eco-physiology of plants and Environmental protection. He also introduced and read lectures on several new subjects, such as Ecology of terrestrial ecosystems, Biogeochemical



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cycles, and Ecology of anthropogenic ecosystems. He was a teacher of and trained hundreds of students, young researchers and environmentalists. He advised many graduate and post-graduate students.

Prof. Melovski's main research efforts were focused on taxonomy and distribution of vascular plants, ecosystem functions, threats to plant diversity, protection of threatened plant species, effective management of biological resources and preservation of terrestrial and mountain ecosystems. He was a leader and participant in more than 15 research projects that resulted in the publication of numerous scientific papers.

Throughout his entire academic career Prof. Ljupčo Melovski was actively involved in many expert activities in the area of biodiversity, nature conservation and raising of public awareness on environmental issues. He was a member (since 1984) and a long-time president (2001–2015) of the Macedonian Ecological Society (MES). Under his presidency, MES has developed and considerably extended its activities, received international recognition, become member of IUCN, and conducted various projects, some of which managed by Prof. Melovski, funded by international foundations. He participated in the organisation of five congresses of MES, as well as in many other international and national scientific conferences, meetings and public events.

Furthermore, Prof. Melovski participated in the drafting of the Law on Nature Protection of the Re-

public of North Macedonia, the National Strategy for the Protection of Biodiversity, as well as many expert studies in the area of environmental protection, both national and related to South-Eastern Europe. With his expertise he contributed to the activities of the East and South European Network of Invasive Alien Species (ESENIA) and participated in the Scientific Committee of the Joint ESENIA and DIAS Scientific Conference and 9th ESENIA Workshop 'Species, ecosystems and areas of conservation concern under threat from the invasive alien species' held in 2019, in Ohrid, Republic of North Macedonia.

Prof. Melovski loved the mountains and for many years organised field trips to the mountains Šar, Korab, Bistra, Galičica, Baba Mountain, and others, together with his students and inviting scientists working in various areas from North Macedonia and abroad. He has many collaborators, followers and friends in Bulgaria.

Prof. Dr. Ljupčo Melovski is highly valued for his scientific, teaching and nature-protection contributions, as well as for his distinguished and leading personality. His passing is a great loss to scientific community and environmentalists in South-Eastern Europe, including Bulgaria. We express our deepest sympathies to his family, students, colleagues and friends!

by **Teodora Trichkova**
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