

Obituary Acad. Prof. Dr. Marian Traian Gomoiu (1936 – 2021)



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With great sadness, we announce that the academician Marian Traian Gomoiu, former Romanian National Coordinator of the International Association for Danube Research (2004 – 2016), has passed away.

Biologist and oceanographer, member of the Romanian Academy of Sciences, he was a key founder of the modern marine ecology in Ro-

mania, fostering research of Black Sea benthic biocenoses, eutrophication and invasive alien species, including scuba-diving observations. His scientific career started in 1959, as researcher at the Oceanography Lab. of the Institute of Biological Sciences, Romanian Academy. In 1970, this lab became part of the Romanian Marine Research Institute Constanta (currently, the National Institute for Marine Research and Development "Grigore Antipa" – NIMRD), where he carried out numerous projects and attended specialization internships at different international organizations.

In 1973, under the coordination of academician M. Băcescu, he received his PhD in biology at the Institute of Biological Sciences, Bucharest, with the thesis entitled "Contributions to the knowledge of the ecology of psamobiont molluscs from the sandy submerged beaches of the Romanian Black Sea coast", opening the path for a new field of marine scientific research in Romania.

The specialized fields in which he excelled throughout his scientific activity were marine ecology and the study of biodiversity, making important contributions to the dynamics of all benthic biocenoses. In the field of benthic marine biology, he was among the first to make direct observations, by diving, on benthic marine biocenoses.

In 1990 he joined the initiative group that founded the "Ovidius" University of Constanta (Romania), working from the beginning in the Faculty of Biology. Since 1990, he has been a doctoral supervisor in "Ecology" at this university.

He was also the first governor of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve (1990 – 1993), playing a major role in setting up the administrative organization and governance structure of this protected area. Since 1994, he was deputy director, and later counsellor at the National Institute for Research and Development on Marine Geology and Geo-ecology – GEOECOMAR, where he worked until 2016.

His bibliographic list includes over 200 titles (published in specialized journals in Romania, USA, Great Britain, the former Soviet Union and later in different states of the European Union). The most important scientific papers

are those included in the series of five volumes of Marine Ecology, published between 1965 and 1976 under the auspices of the Romanian Academy, reference volumes for marine scientific research in the Black Sea basin.

His scientific recognition is also acknowledged by his presence as deputy editor of "Recherches Marines / Cercetari marine" journal and as member in several editorial boards of specialized scientific publications: "Romanian Journal of Animal Biology" of the Romanian Academy, "GeoEcoMarina", "Scientific Annals of Ovidius University - Biology Series Ecology."

He was a member of several scientific structures at national and international level: chairman of the Division of Environmental Biology within the National Committee of International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS); chairman of the Government Commission "Techirghiol"; member of the National Commission for Biosafety; Rapporteur for the Black Sea of the Benthos Committee - Mediterranean Science Commission - CIESM; expert in the Commission for Environment, Ecological Balance and Water Management of the Government of Romania; member of the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS) - National Commission of the Romanian Academy; member of the Commission of Hydrology and Aquatic Ecology of the Romanian Academy; chairman of the Academy's Oceanography Commission; member of the Scientific Council of the Institute of Biology of the Romanian Academy; member of the Scientific Council of MEDIFAUNE (a biological data bank on the Mediterranean marine fauna - France); member of the Malacological Society of Italy; member of the International Association for the Study of Meiobenthos; member of the Scientific Council of the Tulcea Eco-Museum Research Institute; member of the Scientific Council of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve; member of the National Commission of the Coastal Area; president of the Oceanology and Limnology Commission of the Romanian Academy. He was also a member of national and international professional organizations: Society of Biological Sciences; Association of Romanian Scientists; Romanian Ornithological Society; Romanian Naval League; Romanian Society of Ecology; Romanian Society of Limnology; Romanian Society of Ichthyology.

Through the death of the academician professor Marian Traian Gomoiu, the marine biology loses a representative of great value and a remarkable personality. We are very thankful for his comprehensive work, for the immense contribution to nature conservation in Romania and beyond, and also for the numerous generations he formed during the past decades.

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