Institute for Fish and Wildlife Health, FIWI
Länggassstrasse 122, CH-3012 Bern

UNIVERSITÄT
BERN

Vetsuisse Faculty

Department for Infectious Diseases and Pathobiology DIP

Institute for Fish and Wildlife Health FIWI

Bern, 26.03.2025.

Host Organization's Letter of Support

The host organization **Institute for Fish and Wildlife Health (FIWI), University of Bern** hereby confirms its willingness to host the visiting PhD Student, **Tin Škugor** (Laboratory for Biology and Microbial Genetics of the Department of Biochemical Engineering at the University of Zagreb Faculty of Food technology and Biotechnology), for the duration of May 1st, 2025 to June 15th, 2025. The Host Mentor for the proposed visit will be **Prof. Dr. med. vet. Heike Schmidt-Posthaus**, and hereby she confirms her commitment to be actively engaged at the Host Institution throughout the entire mobility period.

Tin's proposed visit to the group of Prof. Dr. med vet. Schmidt-Posthaus is a part of ongoing bilateral Swiss-Croatian project "Effects of different temperature regimes on host-pathogen dynamics in freshwater ecosystems" (DROP, 310030L_219521), funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation and Croatian Science Foundation, with Prof. Dr. med vet. Heike Schmidt-Posthaus as PI and Assoc. Prof. Ana Bielen as co-PI. FIWI confirms that Prof. Dr. med vet. Heike Schmidt-Posthaus, as the Host Mentor, along with other members of the Swiss side of the DROP team (Simone Pisano, Simone Oberhänsli, Gary Delalay, Eliane Jemmi), has full support and permission to engage with the training plan (attached) for the entire duration of the PhD student's visit.

The purpose of Tin's visit is to conduct the genotyping of *Aphanomyces astaci* in approximately 300 DNA samples collected from freshwater crayfish in Croatia. This will result is a dataset of *A. astaci* genotypes from various Croatian freshwater ecosystems, which will form the basis for predicting the future distribution of this pathogen under different climate change scenarios using spatial distribution models (SDMs). This work is a part of his PhD thesis, which is in preparation under the supervision of Assoc. prof. Ana Bielen.

FIWI will provide all the necessary support to Tin's scientific training. Experimental costs of *Aphanomyces astaci* genotyping in approximately 300 DNA samples will be covered through the DROP project. All technical and administrative support needed by Tin during his stay will be given by the respective FIWI offices.

Prof. Dr. med vet. Heike Schmidt-Posthaus
Host Organization Representative & Host Mentor

Date: 26.03.2025.

Attachment: PhD Student's Scientific Training Plan

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