

**IN MEMORIAM**  
**Dr Sreten Mandić, retired scientific advisor**  
**(1947-2024)**



On January 9, 2024, at the age of 77, our esteemed colleague and longtime director of the Institute of Marine Biology, Dr Sreten Mandić, passed away suddenly. Dr Mandić was a pioneering figure in marine biology in Montenegro and he was a professor of biology and ecology at the University of Montenegro, the University of Belgrade, and the University of Banja Luka. As the director of the Institute of Marine Biology, he made invaluable contributions to its development and ensured its survival through turbulent times that often placed science in the shadow of social events.

As a scientist, Dr Sreten Mandić coordinated numerous national and international projects, exploring the depths and living ecosystems of the southern Adriatic Sea and the Boka Kotorska Bay, aiming to protect and preserve this unique environment. Research in the field of mariculture focused on the ecology of mussels and oysters in the Boka Kotorska Bay dates back to the early days of the Institute. In addition to studying the cephalopods of the southern Adriatic Sea, Dr Mandić contributed significantly to the development of mariculture, initially started at the Institute by Dr Jovan Stjepčević. International cooperation in this field was established in the 1980s through a protocol with the Federal Institute for Fisheries and the Federal Institute for Biological Research in Hamburg (FR Germany), collaborating on four projects related to mariculture and hematological-parasitological research. In the late 1980s, associates of the Institute completed several months of specialization in Japanese research centers, and later in Chinese ones, also focusing on aquaculture. Dr Mandić also established a special cooperation with the Association of Mariculturists of Italy from Trieste and the esteemed Mario Busani. The most recent collaboration was with the University of Vigo (Galicia, Spain), aiming to transfer biotechnologies for the cultivation of important species of molluscs. Sreten's knowledge was trusted by all shellfish growers in Boka Kotorska Bay, with whom he frequently interacted, generously sharing his expertise and scientific insights. The doors of the Institute, his laboratory, and his office were always open to them. He listened to

their concerns, understood their problems, and advocated on their behalf before higher competent institutions.

Dr Sreten Mandić, along with his colleagues, played a crucial role in sustaining the scientific journal *Studia Marina*, which the Institute has been publishing since 1965. Furthermore, were essential his contributions in organizing numerous international conferences and symposia, summer schools, expert forums, and roundtables. He also collaborated closely with Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Ecology, Ministry of science, Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts, Institute for Nature Protection, Natural History Museum, Hydro-meteorological Institute, Center for Ecotoxicological Research, Environmental Protection Agency, PE for Coastal Zone Management “Morsko dobro”, Green Montenegro, Marine Fishermen's Associations, and many others.

As a person, Dr Mandić was a paragon of moral integrity, embodying virtues rooted in tradition, charity, humanity, and kindness. He was especially devoted to his younger colleagues, generously sharing knowledge and providing opportunities for their advancement in scientific and social trends. Humble by nature, he was both intellectually rich and physically robust, yet tender and sensitive at heart. He possessed the qualities of a leader and was an excellent organizer of teamwork, in which he actively participated. Dr Mandić's office door and heart were always open to everyone, from ordinary individuals to prominent figures, whom he treated with equal humanity. He expressed his views and opinions clearly and loudly, often at a personal cost. This was the essence of Sreten: loud, righteous, pure, always ready to protect the weak. Even when he was "angry," it was short-lived. His responses to requests and pleas were consistently positive and direct. He was loved and respected wherever he went and by everyone he collaborated with.

As much as he loved his Herzegovina, Gacko, and village Dulići, he also deeply cherished Montenegro and Kotor, always and everywhere unique and his own.

Upon hearing of Sreten's sudden passing, his friends and colleagues were overcome with immense sorrow, realizing they would no longer hear his voice, see his face, or share laughter with him. The sadness and grief of two of Sreten's closest colleagues and friends, Dr Ivica Radović and Dr Zlatko Bulić, were particularly poignant. For a moment they were speechless with grief, but later they recalled countless unforgettable moments where Sreten's kindness and humanity were always at the forefront.

After a sudden death of our dear Sreten, a huge void remains. We will no longer benefit from his support and constructive advice, which always led to positive solutions, even in the most challenging situations.

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Institute, Sreten wrote: “It is a privilege to live in Kotor and work at the Institute”, and I say: It was a privilege to collaborate with you and learn from you, dear Sreten.

We will forever remember his warm and noble character, which he exuded among his colleagues and friends.

As a poet Njegoš wrote a long time ago: "Blessed is he whose name lives forever. He had a good reason to be borne!"

*To him be eternal glory and praise.*

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