

First circular for the SEH 24th European Congress of Herpetology and Ordinary General Meeting in Tbilisi Georgia

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Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the Local Organizing Committee, it is our pleasure to invite you to the SEH 24th European Congress of Herpetology and Ordinary General Meeting, to be hosted by the Institute of Ecology at Ilia State University in Tbilisi, Georgia, in 2027. We look forward to welcoming colleagues from across Europe, the Caucasus and beyond. The congress dates are **30 August to 4 September 2027**.

The congress will offer an opportunity to share new findings, renew friendships and begin collaborations across disciplines and borders. We welcome researchers, conservation practitioners and students working on all aspects of amphibian and reptile biology, including ecology, evolution, behaviour, systematics, biogeography, genetics and conservation. We particularly hope that the meeting will provide a welcoming setting for early-career researchers to present their work and meet colleagues with shared interests.

Scientific sessions will take place in the G and T buildings on the Ilia State University campus. The main campus address is 45 Ilia Chavchavadze Avenue, Tbilisi 0179, Georgia (Building E). The buildings are close to one another; the accompanying campus map shows their locations.

The planned programme includes plenary lectures, contributed oral presentations, poster sessions, thematic symposia and workshops, and the SEH Ordinary General Meeting.

Beyond the scientific programme, we invite you to get to know Tbilisi. A walk through the Old Town offers opportunities to explore its streets and the sulphur-bath district, while the National Botanical Garden provides another way to spend time outdoors. We hope that participants will also find time to enjoy Georgian food and meet colleagues away from the lecture rooms.

Tbilisi and its surroundings are attractive to herpetologists. To the west of the city, the mountain forests of the Trialeti Range provide habitats for parthenogenetic rock lizards, sand vipers and banded newts. To the south and east, semi-arid shrublands support dwarf snakes, various racers, cat-eyed snakes and the Levantine viper. In total, Georgia has 12 amphibian and 56 reptile species, including many endemics and Miocene relicts. Its

herpetofauna includes 15 species of Caucasian rock lizards, at least six species of vipers, the Caucasian salamander and the Caucasian parsley frog.

Social activities and excursions are also being planned as part of the congress. These will give participants further opportunities to spend time together and discover Georgia's natural and cultural heritage. Routes, schedules and booking arrangements will be shared once they have been confirmed.

Registration and the call for abstracts are expected to open in January 2027. Registration fees, submission guidelines and deadlines, together with information on accommodation and travel, will be announced on the official congress website (https://sehcongress.org/) and Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/Seh2027/). The congress website is currently being prepared.

We welcome proposals for workshops and symposia. One-page proposals should include the title, organisers, a short abstract, and a list of potential speakers. For enquiries, please contact info@sehcongress.org. Submission instructions and the deadline will be announced on the official congress website.

We look forward to welcoming you to Tbilisi for a rewarding scientific meeting and an enjoyable stay in Georgia!

David Tarkhnishvili, Natia Barateli

On behalf of the Local Organizing Committee



Figure 1. Building E of Ilia State University in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Photo: Giorgi Iankoshvili



Figure 2. Locations of Buildings E, G and T on the Ilia State University campus in Tbilisi, Georgia. Campus map provided by Ilia State University.