



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEBIOPHARM S.A. AND BIOLEX, INC. SIGN COLLABORATION

Lausanne, Switzerland, and Pittsboro, North Carolina, September 12, 2002 -- Debiopharm S.A. and Biolex, Inc. today jointly announced the signing of a collaboration to examine the feasibility of producing an undisclosed recombinant human therapeutic protein in Debiopharm's development portfolio using Biolex' patented Lemma System™. The system combines the natural characteristics of *Lemna*, a green aquatic plant, with advanced genetic engineering and protein recovery methods, and will allow Debiopharm to move further into the biotechnology sector.

According to Jan Turek, President and CEO of Biolex, Inc., "We are excited about our collaboration with Debiopharm, a proven developer of novel therapeutic products. Debiopharm and its sister companies possess multiple technologies and capabilities that are synergistic with Biolex' advanced protein expression system, permitting the creation of a new generation of novel therapeutic proteins. We see this collaboration as an important first step in what we believe will be an expansive alliance to jointly develop innovative therapeutic protein products."

Dr. R.-Y. Mauvernay, founder and President of Debiopharm, added, "Use of the Biolex technology will give us cost-effective access to recombinant versions of several crucial proteins in our development pipeline. The Lemma System™ confers not only capacity and speed advantages to development, but also provides unprecedented levels of pathogen safety to new therapeutic proteins. We look forward to combining the power of the Lemma System™ with our own novel and proprietary technologies in drug delivery."

Debiopharm, Debio R.P. and Debioclinic are an established and proven group of three synergistic and complementary companies, that has a successful track record in developing, registering and bringing to the market new chemical entities both in Europe and in the United States. Products successfully registered and launched include oxaliplatin for advanced colorectal cancer and triptorelin pamoate for prostate cancer, both market leaders in their therapeutic areas. Specialized in oncology, hormonal and niche products for serious medical conditions,

Debiopharm is a partner of research institutions, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies who seek to develop and register their drugs. Debio R.P., Debiopharm's sister company, is a leading world player in the research, development and manufacturing of polymer-based controlled release injectable formulations for peptides and proteins, including proprietary technologies suitable for other therapeutic modalities such as soluble polymer cytotoxic-drug conjugates for parenteral administration. Debio R.P. also carries out scale-up under current good manufacturing practice (cGMP) and has an FDA-inspected plant. Debioclinic, the third Debio company, is fully dedicated to clinical development.

Biolex, a private, venture-backed company located in the Research Triangle region of North Carolina, possesses a transformational system for the development of human therapeutic proteins and is emerging as a premier, plant-based therapeutic protein company. Biolex' proprietary technology, the Lemna SystemTM, is based on a unique aquatic plant, *Lemna*. The Lemna SystemTM has a number of distinct competitive advantages in comparison to field crop or animal-based transgenic production systems. These include plant replication without pollen or seeds, and a fast growth rate, with Lemna doubling its biomass every 36 hours. Lemna has a high protein content, resulting in high expression levels, and secretes its target protein into an easily purified medium. Contrary to field crops and animal systems, production is in a contained and controlled facility and offers high conformance to regulatory requirements. Scale-up is both quick and predictable. In addition to its unique technology, Biolex has the added advantage of a solid, seasoned management team with extensive industry experience with therapeutic proteins.

Biolex, Inc. is a biotechnology company devoted to discovering, developing and commercializing its proprietary advanced protein expression technology for the development of human therapeutics. Biolex' strategy focuses on the development of Biolex proteins as well as those obtained from partner companies. The Company's headquarters and laboratory facility are based in Pittsboro, North Carolina. Visit the Company's web site at www.biolex.com.

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