



AnalytiCon Discovery Announces Collaboration Agreement With Merck KGaA on Natural Product Lead Generation Program

Potsdam, Germany (May 29, 2007) – AnalytiCon Discovery GmbH, a drug discovery company specialized in natural products, and Merck KGaA of Darmstadt, Germany, have entered into an agreement whereby AnalytiCon will provide Merck with natural product lead generation services until the end of 2009.

Under the agreement, AnalytiCon will apply its proprietary MEGAbolite[®] technology to exploit a highly diverse set of more than 10,000 extracts from plants and microorganisms. A key step in the process is the identification of organisms with high potential for the delivery of novel natural products by use of AnalytiCon's chemodiversity profiling technology. Initial hits will be most efficiently explored by combining the strengths of Merck's biology expertise with AnalytiCon's expertise in rapidly dereplicating, isolating and structurally identifying biologically active natural products and optionally delivering series of focused libraries for further testing.

Attractive lead compounds will be mutually developed through pre-clinical research, one part of which will be a robust protocol to supply the partners with multi milligram-amounts of the particular biologically active natural products in order to perform hit-to-lead optimization cycles on an as-needed basis.

"The agreement is an important milestone in our work of supporting pharma-industry efforts to re-introduce natural products into their drug discovery concepts. By making use of our world-class expertise and proprietary technologies, Merck will get a superior position enabling it to exploit nature's unrivaled diversity in the most systematic manner. We are looking forward to the collaborative effort that will deliver several lead structures for further development," stated Lutz Müller-Kuhrt, CEO of AnalytiCon.

"Merck acknowledges the key role of natural products in the oncology therapeutic area. Therefore, the discovery of new chemical entities via bio-guided isolation of natural products is a strategy that we wish to pursue in cooperation with AnalytiCon," said Dr. Peter Raddatz, President of NCE Technologies at Merck KGaA. "We expect that AnalytiCon will enhance our in-house natural product program and add further novelty to Merck's drug discovery projects."

About AnalytiCon

AnalytiCon is a fully integrated provider of natural product drug discovery and development services. Founded in 2000, the company has been involved in discovery programs with over 60 pharma, biotech and food enterprises. From prospecting for biosources, *via* fermentation, isolation and high throughput structure elucidation to natural-product-focused medicinal chemistry, the company provides the entire spectrum of services needed to speed up the creation of natural-product-based lead structures. In addition, AnalytiCon has established Biology Oriented Synthesis (BIOS), a technology that delivers semi-synthetic and focused compound libraries and med-chem services.

For further information see www.ac-discovery.com