

PRESS RELEASE

Veolia Environnement and bioMérieux initiate a research partnership to develop an innovative monitoring system for drinking water quality

Paris, Lyon, March 25, 2013 – At BIOVISION, the world life sciences forum, Veolia Environnement, global leader in water services and expert in environmental services, and bioMérieux, global player in *in vitro* diagnostic solutions and world leader in industrial microbiology, announced today they have signed an agreement to undertake a research partnership. This partnership aims at developing an innovative technology for the continuous monitoring of the microbiological quality of drinking water. A preliminary step will be a study to assess the project's technical and economic feasibility.

This cooperation agreement between two industry leaders in their respective fields brings together complementary expertise and experience to contribute to protecting consumer safety and improving public health around the world.

Antoine Frérot, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Veolia Environnement, said: *“Health protection is a key issue for our businesses, especially for water. Today, major efforts in innovation are needed to make further advances. This partnership illustrates, once again, our capacity to innovate, through an unprecedented combination of expertise in the fields of water and health. It is an ambitious way to meet the new public health challenges in water, with real prospects in France and other countries.”*

Said Alain Mérieux, founder of bioMérieux and Chairman of Institut Mérieux: *“Water quality and access to safe drinking water are major public health challenges around the world, especially in developing countries. My commitment in the field, working with Fondation Mérieux, has made me acutely aware of the scale of these problems. I am very pleased with the agreement signed between bioMérieux and Veolia Environnement. Starting in France, it will enable us to develop new technologies that contribute to water quality and, more broadly, to the quality of the environment. We will thus help to prevent sanitary risks that can have major consequences for human health.”*

The challenge of this partnership is to adapt the microbiological control methods developed by bioMérieux for the biopharmaceutical and agri-food industries to the water industry. It involves detecting, more rapidly than with current techniques, the microorganisms in the natural environment or in water supply networks, as well as any contamination, whether accidental or due to bioterrorism. The partnership should lead to the development of an easy-to-use solution that could be implemented widely. It would be a promising scientific advance to have a precise evaluation of the microbiological quality of drinking water at every stage of the production chain, from the source to the consumer's tap, passing through the production plants and supply networks. In the event of a sanitary crisis, it would also enable the presence of microorganisms to be detected (bacteria, viruses and parasites, in particular).

The combined scientific expertise of the two partners, especially in infectious diseases and the modeling and control of water distribution networks, should accelerate the development of a high-value-added solution for monitoring drinking water quality.

bioMérieux is a highly specialized player in *in vitro* diagnostics, particularly in clinical and industrial microbiology, two sectors where the company is world leader. Its main goal is to develop and market innovative solutions in diagnostics that meet the new health and economic challenges. With a mastery of different diagnostic techniques, bioMérieux could use flow cytometry, a technique for rapidly detecting microorganisms, in this cooperation project.

For its part, **Veolia**, as an expert in environmental services, has developed specific know-how in microbiological analysis of the different environmental matrices (sample preconcentration, specific detection) and in water distribution network management, from disinfection techniques to monitoring flow and water quality. Its innovative real-time water traceability solutions have already been used by the Shanghai authorities and during the London Olympics.

Veolia Environnement (Paris Euronext: VIE and NYSE: VE) is the worldwide reference in environmental solutions. With 220,000 employees*, the company has operations all around the world and provides tailored solutions to meet the needs of municipal and industrial customers in three complementary segments: water management, waste management and energy management. Veolia Environnement recorded revenue of €29.4 billion* in 2012. www.veolia.com

(*) Excluding VeoliaTransdev employees and revenues currently under divestment

bioMérieux

Pioneering Diagnostics

A world leader in the field of *in vitro* diagnostics for 50 years, bioMérieux is present in more than 160 countries through 41 subsidiaries and a large network of distributors. In 2012, revenues reached €1.570 billion with 87% of sales outside of France.

bioMérieux provides diagnostic solutions (reagents, instruments, software) which determine the source of disease and contamination to improve patient health and ensure consumer safety. Its products are used for diagnosing infectious diseases and providing high medical value results for cancer screening and monitoring and cardiovascular emergencies. They are also used for detecting microorganisms in agri-food, pharmaceutical and cosmetic products.

bioMérieux is listed on the NYSE Euronext Paris market (Symbol: BIM – ISIN: FR0010096479). Other information can be found at www.biomerieux.com

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