



1201 Douglas Avenue
Redwood City
California 94063

Echelon Biosciences Inc. and Lumiphore Inc. Introduce Novel Cancer Assays

Salt Lake City, Utah, and Redwood City, California --(BUSINESS WIRE)—April 3, 2006— Echelon Biosciences Inc. and Lumiphore Inc. jointly announce the finalization of a license agreement that provides Echelon access to Lumiphore's proprietary lanthanide-complex technology for the development of TR-FRET assays and reagents for use in research and drug discovery in the field of phospholipid signaling and lipid-protein interactions.

Echelon has branded its family of assays and reagents that incorporate the proprietary Lumiphore lanthanide-complex technology as TRue-FRET™. Echelon has incorporated TRue-FRET dyes, which utilize Lumiphore's highly luminescent terbium (Tb3+) complexes, into its proprietary PI3-K screening reagents and assay platforms. This TR-FRET PI3-K assay is the most advanced yet offered for research and drug discovery. It is an easy-to-use mix and read (homogenous) format, provides a much brighter fluorescent endpoint, and eliminates many of the false positives seen with other formats. Phospholipid signaling and related lipid-protein interactions have become interesting targets for new drug development in diseases like cancer, diabetes, and inflammation.

"This agreement brings the best of both Lumiphore's and Echelon's proprietary technologies to an exciting growth segment in human cellular disease research," said W. Tim Miller, President of Echelon Biosciences. "In particular, this will offer pharmaceutical companies a new easy-to-use format for screening large libraries of compounds in a more accurate fashion. We are excited about the potential for this new research tool for our customers and for both Echelon and Lumiphore."

"This agreement with Echelon gives us an entry into the molecular biology research and pharmaceutical screening markets with a world recognized leader. We believe Echelon is the best in their space," said Scott King, President of Lumiphore.

About Echelon's True-FRET™ PI3-kinase Assay

Time Resolved – Fluorescence Resonance Energy Transfer (TR-FRET) – Historically, high throughput screening (HTS), a method for screening thousands of compounds for those with desirable therapeutic activity, has been approached through radioactive formats. In recent years, due to cost, handling and disposal complexities, the HTS market has trended away from radioactive methods to more easy-to-use fluorescent assays. However, as many compounds and biological samples can naturally fluoresce themselves, often a high number of false positives are seen. To combat this fluorescence interference, rare-earth compounds such as terbium which display a long-lived fluorescence compared to naturally fluorescent compounds have been incorporated into fluorescent assays. This time resolved (TR) format increases the accuracy of these HTS screening methodologies.

PI3-K or phosphatidylinositol 3-kinase is a cellular enzyme which phosphorylates certain lipids within the cell which in turn mediate cell proliferation and survival. The activity of PI3-K is often altered in disease leading to abnormal cell growth in cancer and incorrect cellular response in inflammation. Despite their importance, the potential of these enzymes as targets for therapeutic development has yet to be fully realized, in part due to the lack of assay methods suitable for HTS. Echelon's True-FRET assay provides an advanced research tool to scientists investigating PI3-K as a therapeutic target for drug development.

Echelon will be introducing this new True-FRET PI3-kinase assay at the 97th annual American Association for Cancer Research meeting in Washington DC, April 2-5, 2006.

About Echelon

Echelon Biosciences Inc. of Salt Lake City, Utah, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Aeterna Zentaris (AEZS) of Quebec City Quebec. Echelon Biosciences Inc. is a leader in the field of lipid research and lipid-protein interactions that are essential top-level regulators in numerous cell signaling cascades. Abnormal signaling cascades lead to many diseases like cancer, inflammation, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. Echelon has been a top supplier of research information, lipid signaling assay and reagent technology for years. It also has an early-stage program in anti-infective development, targeting a novel pathway found in many problematic gram-negative bacteria. Aeterna Zentaris Inc. is a growing global biopharmaceutical company engaged in the discovery, development and marketing of therapies for cancer, endocrine disorders, and infectious diseases.

About Lumiphore

Lumiphore, Inc. of Redwood City, California, is a private nanotechnology company and a leader in time resolved luminescence. Lumiphore has an exclusive license to specific lanthanide-complex technology from the University of California, Berkeley. Lumiphore's lanthanide reporters can be used for increased sensitivity in assays for biological activity including certain clinical tests. Luminescence of Lumiphore's terbium lanthanide complex outlasts luminescence of other molecules so that gated detection results in vastly improved signal-to-noise.

Contact: Scott R. King
President & CEO
sking@lumiphore.com
415 643-2761