Information

News – Honors – Workshops – Conferences – Lectures

News

(source *CHEManager*)

24.08.2015. **Novartis** is acquiring all the remaining rights to GlaxoSmithKline's (GSK) multiple sclerosis (MS) drug, Ofatumumab. A fully human monoclonal antibody which targets the CD20 molecule, Ofatumumab is being developed for relapsing remitting multiple sclerosis (RRMS) and other autoimmune conditions. Under the terms of the agreement, Novartis will make an initial upfront payment to GSK of $300 million for buying the drug and a further payment of $200 million following the start of a phase III study in MS by Novartis. Upon completion of pre-determined milestones, contingent payments of up to $534 million may be made. Novartis will also pay royalties of up to 12% to GSK on future net sales of Ofatumumab in autoimmune conditions. Ofatumumab is now ready to begin phase III pivotal studies.

Meanwhile, Novartis' skin cancer drug Odomzo has received European approval. Odomzo (sonidegib, formerly LDE225), in the form of 200 mg capsules, can treat adult patients with locally advanced basal cell carconima (laBCC) who are not amenable to surgery or radiation therapy. The approval applies to all 28 EU member states, plus Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein. Outside the EU, Odomzo is approved in the USA, Australia and Switzerland. Additional regulatory submissions are being reviewed worldwide by health authorities. Odomzo is currently in clinical development in other diseases.

20.08.2015. **Roche** has signed an agreement to acquire Kapa Biosystems, a provider of genomic tools in the life sciences sector that uses proprietary technologies to optimize enzymes for next-generation sequencing (NGS). The company is based in Wilmington, Massachusetts, US and has a R&D and manufacturing facility in Cape Town, South Africa. Kapa is developing solutions to accelerate genomics research that can affect the future ability to diagnose, monitor, and treat cancer and complex inherited and infectious diseases. Its proprietary protein engineering technology is highly customizable and allows for the generation and screening of large numbers of enzyme variants. Tailored enzymes with improved performance for specific applications can be selected rapidly, expediting product development timelines. Its portfolio of NGS reagents includes enzymes such as novel DNA polymerases with the potential to improve the performance of the entire sequencing workflow. Financial details of the acquisition, which is subject to the usual closing conditions, were not disclosed.

Earlier last month, **Roche** agreed to acquire GeneWeave BioSciences, an *in vitro* diagnostics company focused on clinical microbiology. The company's proprietary Smarticles technology uses biology to rapidly detect drug resistance and measure susceptibility information without the need for enrichment, culture or sample preparation. Under the terms of the agreement, Roche will pay GeneWeave's shareholders $190 million upfront and up to $235 million in contingent product-related milestones. Once the transaction has closed, GeneWeave will be integrated into Roche Molecular Diagnostics.

20.08.2015. Leading agrochemicals company **Syngenta** has announced its intention to divest its premium flower seeds business from its lawn and garden operating unit. The Swiss-based company said divestment would enable the new entity to realize its full potential in the global gardening market, which is currently undergoing consolidation in response to the changes in distribution and retail channels driven by shifts in consumer preferences. Syngenta Flowers is a market leader in mass market plants and has a competitive footprint in both developed and emerging markets. The company said it has built a high quality profitable flowers business based on seeds and vegetative genetics and efficient distribution platforms. It added it would continue to invest in high-value chemistry for professional products markets such as golf courses and industrial pest management.

19.08.2015. On August 12, a fire at a dangerous goods warehouse operated by Ruihai Logistics at the **Tianjin** harbor quickly turned into a disaster as it triggered two substantial explosions, very likely due to chemicals stored in the warehouse. These included 700 tons of sodium cyanide, 800 tons of ammonium nitrate, 500 tons of potassium nitrate and unknown amounts of calcium carbide. More than 100 people died, many of them firefighters, and several hundred people were injured, many of them residents in apartment complexes near the warehouse.

In the aftermath of the explosions, local media uncovered several examples of regulations being ignored at the Tianjin site. For example, the amount of sodium cyanide stored at the warehouse exceeded the legal limit by a factor of 70. The warehouse is located only 600 meters away from residential buildings, not the mandated 1,000 meters. And state media revealed that the organization operating the warehouse had only received its authorization to handle dangerous chemicals less than two months earlier, meaning that it had been operating illegally between October 2014 and June 2015.

Other criticism has focused on the emergency response. According to a spokesperson of the fire department, it was known to the fire fighters that calcium carbide was stored at the warehouse, but the exact location was not known. Other sources such as the Beijing News state that the firefighters were not aware that the fire involved chemicals at all. In any case, the firefighters tried to stop the initial fire using water rather than sand or foam, which would have been the appropriate approach. This may have caused the formation of acetylene from the calcium carbide and the subsequent explosions. The apparent ignorance of firefighters regarding their approach may be partly explained by the two-tier structure of China's firefighting force, in which a substantial share of the staff is low-paid and presumably has limited training as well.

19.08.2015. US biopharmaceutical company Aveo Oncology has entered into a global license agreement with **Novartis** for its AV-380 and related antibodies. AV-380 is a potent inhibitory antibody that targets growth differentiation factor 15 (GDF15), a pro-inflammatory cytokine whose elevated levels have been correlated with the complex metabolic syndrome known as cachexia.

18.08.2015. **Clariant** is to establish a separate subsidiary for plastics and coatings, comprising the three business units

for masterbatches, additives and pigments. The company said the move is designed to "fully leverage their value creation potential". The new subsidiaries will be fully owned by Clariant and will start operating as of January 1, 2016.

05.08.2015. German chemical giant BASF has lined up a loan package from large multinational banks to finance a potential takeover offer for **Syngenta**, the news agency Reuters says, citing "people familiar with the matter." Syngenta has already rejected a $45 billion takeover approach from Monsanto. The Swiss player, however has declined to open its books to its US pursuer, despite the lure of a $2 billion cash payment if the transaction failed to win regulatory approval. The source is said to have told Reuters that while BASF has secured roughly $50 billion in bridge financing, it could also finance a deal with $30 billion in debt, paying for the rest with cash and freshly raised capital subsequently unloading debt onto the merged company.

04.08.2015. Swiss fine chemicals group **Lonza** has acquired Zelam, a New Zealand-based manufacturer of fungicides, insecticides, herbicides, foliar nutrients and additives as well as wood protection products. With production facilities based in New Zealand as well as in Australia and the US, the company is a leading developer and owner of patented chemistry and delivery technologies for pastoral crops and glueline treatment of engineered wood.

Conferences in Switzerland

01.10.2015 – 31.03.2016

SCS-Syngenta Symposium 2015
15.10.2015
Syngenta Research Campus, Stein (AG)
«Chirality – Upsides for Chemical Innovation»
http://scg.ch/syngentasymposium/2015

Swiss Biotech Day Fall 2015
15.10.2015
BIOARK SA, Monthey
«Biopharmaceuticals – from Development to Production»
The Swiss Biotech Day is the leading bio-technology conference in Switzerland. This event brings together senior executives from the Swiss biotech industry. Program highlights are focusing on aspects of biopharmaceutical production and future biopharmaceuticals.
http://www.swissbiotech.org/events#event:1260

The Expanding Toolbox of Medicinal Chemistry 2015
16.10.2015
Palais des Congrès Dijon-Bourgogne
«From Chemical Biology to Clinical Applications» – Jointly organised by the SCT and the DMCCB of the Swiss Chemical Society
http://scg.ch/etmc/2015

Lift Basel Conference 2015
29.10.2015–30.10.2015
Markthalle, Basel
Join a unique event connecting innovators in life sciences and information technologies! The event provides a platform for an open and dynamic dialogue on the fast moving ideas, solutions and opportunities generated by the growing confluence of tech, bio and business.
http://liftconference.com/lift-basel-15/call

From Solar Light to Chemical Energy
27.11.2015
University of Zurich, Campus Irchel, Zürich
Symposium on the occasion of the 2015 International Year of Light.
The main objectives of the URPP Solar Light to Chemical Energy Conversion are to discover and develop new molecules, materials and processes for the direct storage of solar light energy in chemical bonds.
http://www.lightchec.uzh.ch

Olten Meeting 2015 – where the experts meet!
18.11.2015
On November 18 at Hotel Arte in Olten the biotech branch shares ideas on regenerative medicine with latest findings in antibiotics research and bioprinting.
www.biotechnet.ch
Prof. Franz Baumberger, franz.baumberger.biotechnet.ch, +41 (0)78 666 0175

20th SASP 2016
07.02.2016–12.02.2016
Sunstar Parkhotel Davos
The Symposium on Atomic, Cluster and Surface Physics (SASP) is one in a continuing biennial series of conferences (the last one was held in Obergurgl, Austria in 2014) that promotes the growth of scientific knowledge and exchange of information among scientists in the field of atomic, molecular, and surface physics.

LECTURES

01.10.15–31.10.2015

University of Basel, Department of Chemistry
Kleiner Hörsaal OC

22.10.2015 17.15 h — *Prof. Shunichi Fukuzumi Osaka University / Meijyo University / Ewha Womans University, Japan*
«New Strategies for Artificial Photosynthesis»
SCS Lectureships
http://scg.ch/scs-lectureships

University of Bern, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry
Lecture hall EG16

21.10.2015 16.30 h — *Prof. Shunichi Fukuzumi Osaka University / Meijyo University / Ewha Womans University, Japan*
«New Strategies for Artificial Photosynthesis»
SCS Lectureships
http://scg.ch/scs-lectureships

University of Fribourg, Chemistry Department
Main auditorium

06.10.2015 17.15 h — *Prof. Dr. Mika Lindén, University of Ulm, Germany*
Title to be announced

13.10.2015 17.15 h — *Prof. Alan Heeger, Nobel Prize Winner, University of California, Santa Barbara, USA*
Title to be announced
Chaim Weizmann Lecture

20.10.2015 17.15 h — *Prof. Shunichi Fukuzumi Osaka University / Meijyo University / Ewha Womans University, Japan*
«New Strategies for Artificial Photosynthesis»
SCS Lectureships
http://scg.ch/scs-lectureships

Université Genève, Chimie organique
Auditoire A-100

01.10.2015 16.15 h — *Prof. Hélène Lebel, Université de Montréal, Canada*
«Stereoselective Amination of Thioethers»

01.10.2015 17.15 h — *Prof. André B. Charrette, Université de Montréal, Canada*
«New Synthesis and Applications of Amide Derivatives in Organic Synthesis»

08.10.2015 16.30 h — *Dr. Reiko Oda, Institut Européen de Chimie et Biologie, Pessac, France*
«Nanometric Chiral Self-assemblies Based on Amphiphilic Molecules, their Structures and Functionalization»

16.10.2015 16.30 h — *Prof. Eric N. Jacobsen, Harvard University, Cambridge, USA*
«Studies in Anion-Binding Catalysis»

19.10.2015 16.30 h — *Prof. Shunichi Fukuzumi Osaka University / Meijyo University / Ewha Womans University, Japan*
«New Strategies for Artificial Photosynthesis»
SCS Lectureships
http://scg.ch/scs-lectureships/

29.10.2015 16.30 h — *Prof. Robert S. Paton, Oxford University, Chemistry Research Laboratory, Oxford, UK*
«Computing Catalytic Control: Unusual Regioselectivities and Designs for Optimal Stereoselectivities»

EPFL, Institut des Sciences et Ingénierie Chimiques
EPFL, ISIC, CH G1 495

08.10.2015 16.30 h — *Prof. Ruth Signorell, ETH Zürich*
Title to be announced

22.10.2015 16.30 h — *Prof. Henrik Stapelfeldt, University of Aarhus, Denmark*
Title to be announced

University of Zurich, Department of Chemistry
Lecture hall Y03-G-85

23.10.2015 17.00 h — *Prof. Shunichi Fukuzumi Osaka University / Meijyo University / Ewha Womans University*
«New Strategies for Artificial Photosynthesis»
SCS Lectureships
http://scg.ch/scs-lectureships

The complete and updated lecture calendar is available on *www.scg.ch*