

Penzberg, 26 January 2007

## **Roche's Genome Sequencer 20 Enters the African Continent: First System Installation at inqaba biotec's Sequencing Facility in South Africa**

The ultrafast Genome Sequencer 20 System from Roche Applied Science, a business area of Roche Diagnostics, continuously conquers the world. South Africa's inqaba biotec will be the first user on the African continent. From March 2007 on, the company will offer their sequencing service to customers not only in Southern Africa but also worldwide. The company supports all the applications available from 454 and Roche Diagnostics, including whole genome sequencing, Paired-End, Amplicon, etc., and provides a tailor-made service according to their customers' requirements.

"The professional management of inqaba biotec's sequencing service will give life scientists in Africa easy access to the next generation sequencing technology. We are glad that we can contribute to boost genetic research in this region," states Manfred Baier, Head of Roche Applied Science. "The substantial reductions in both time and costs by using the system offer the prospect of applications for sequencing in the fields of whole genome sequencing, transcriptome and gene regulation studies, or amplicon analysis e.g., as a basis for the detection of somatic mutations in cancer samples."

"The GS 20 sequencer from Roche is based on a cutting edge technology for generating and analysing sequence data in the megabase range at a cost level making this available to many more life scientists now than ever before. We are excited that inqaba biotec was enabled by BioPAD ([www.biopad.org.za](http://www.biopad.org.za)), a biotechnology investment trust funded by the Department of

Science and Technology of South Africa, to establish a sequencing service based on the GS technology in South Africa to serve regional as well as international customers,” explains Oliver Preisig, CEO of inqaba biotec.

The Genome Sequencer 20 System, is based on 454 Sequencing™ technology, developed by the US company 454 Life Sciences, and can perform sequencing runs up to 60 times faster than conventional commercially available platforms. For preparation of a whole genome, only one single preparation step, without extensive robots for colony picking and handling of the microtiter plates, is needed. One single instrument can produce dozens of megabases of sequence data within a few hours, thanks to parallel-processing, the latest imaging techniques and unique data analysis.

### **About Roche and the Roche Diagnostics Division**

Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Roche is one of the world’s leading research-focused healthcare groups in the fields of pharmaceuticals and diagnostics. As a supplier of innovative products and services for the early detection, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of disease, the group contributes on a broad range of fronts to improving people’s health and quality of life. Roche is a world leader in diagnostics, the leading supplier of medicines for cancer and transplantation and a market leader in virology. Roche employs roughly 70,000 people in 150 countries and has R&D agreements and strategic alliances with numerous partners, including majority ownership interests in Genentech and Chugai. Roche’s Diagnostics Division offers a uniquely broad product portfolio and supplies a wide array of innovative testing products and services to researchers, physicians, patients, hospitals and laboratories world-wide. For further information, please visit our website [www.roche.com](http://www.roche.com).

### **About inqaba biotec**

Inqaba Biotechnical Industries (Pty) Ltd, trading as inqaba biotec, is a private South African genomics company founded in 2002. inqaba means ‘rare and precious’ in Xhosa and is pronounced with a loud click. inqaba biotec was initiated and funded by a few scientists from South Africa, the USA, Germany and Switzerland. inqaba biotec is based in Pretoria, South Africa. A Swiss government loan with the aim of facilitating investments in developing and emerging countries was crucial in the start-up years. At the end of 2005 BioPAD ([www.biopad.org.za](http://www.biopad.org.za)), a biotechnology investment trust funded by the Department of Science

and Technology of South Africa, joined inqaba biotec as a shareholder and strategic partner. inqaba biotec's customer base covers whole of South Africa as well as other African countries, like Botswana, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. For further information, please visit inqaba biotec's website [www.inqababiotec.co.za](http://www.inqababiotec.co.za).

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