



# **BERGENBIO ANNOUNCES LATE-BREAKING ABSTRACT PRESENTATION AT ECCMID 2021**

**Bergen, Norway, 10 June 2021** – BerGenBio ASA (OSE: BGBIO), a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company developing novel, selective AXL kinase inhibitors for severe unmet medical need, today announces that an analysis of its Phase II clinical trial of bemcentinib, a first-in-class selective oral AXL inhibitor, in hospitalised COVID-19 patients has been selected as a late-breaking abstract at the European Congress of Clinical Microbiology & Infectious Diseases (ECCMID), which will take place online from 9 – 12 July 2021.

Further details on the presentation will follow. To learn more, visit the ECCMID website here: <https://www.eccmid.org/>

**-Ends-**

## **About AXL**

AXL kinase is a cell membrane receptor and an essential mediator of the biological mechanisms underlying life-threatening diseases.

In COVID-19, AXL has two synergistic mechanisms of action, it acts a co-receptor to ACE2, to which the spike protein of the SARS-CoV-2 virus attaches and enters the host cell, and AXL expression is upregulated that leads to suppression of the Type 1 Interferon immune response by host cells and in their environment. Research data confirms bemcentinib inhibits SARS-CoV-2 host cell entry and promotes the anti-viral Type I interferon response. Data from a Phase II in human clinical trial has shown that treatment with AXL inhibitor bemcentinib increased the rate ventilator free survival in hospitalised COVID-19 patients.

In cancer, increase in AXL expression has been linked to key mechanisms of drug resistance and immune escape by tumour cells, leading to aggressive metastatic cancers. AXL suppresses the body's immune response to tumours and drives treatment failure across many cancers. High AXL expression defines a very poor prognosis subgroup in most cancers. AXL inhibitors, such as bemcentinib, therefore, have potential high value as monotherapy and as the cornerstone of cancer combination therapy, addressing significant unmet medical needs and multiple high-value market opportunities. Research has also shown that AXL mediates other aggressive diseases including fibrosis

Composite AXL (cAXL) is a proprietary biomarker developed by BerGenBio that simultaneously scores AXL expression on tumour cells and immune cells in the tumour microenvironment, as determined by Immune Histo Chemistry (IHC) assay. Data from on-going clinical trials suggest ca. 50% of patients are high cAXL and this is predictive of improved clinical outcomes for patients receiving bemcentinib.

## **About Bemcentinib**

Bemcentinib (formerly known as BGB324), is a potential first-in-class, potent and highly selective AXL inhibitor, currently in a broad phase II clinical development programme. It is administered as an oral capsule and taken once per day. Ongoing clinical trials are investigating bemcentinib in COVID-19, and multiple solid and haematological tumours, in combination with current and emerging therapies (including immunotherapies, targeted therapies and chemotherapy), and as a single agent. Bemcentinib targets and binds to the intracellular catalytic kinase domain of AXL receptor tyrosine kinase and inhibits its activity.

## **About BerGenBio ASA**

BerGenBio is a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company focused on developing transformative drugs targeting AXL as a potential cornerstone of therapy for aggressive diseases, including immune-evasive, therapy resistant cancers. The company's proprietary lead candidate, bemcentinib, is a potentially first-in-class selective AXL inhibitor in a broad phase II clinical development programme focused on combination and single agent therapy in cancer, leukaemia and COVID-19. A first-in-class functional blocking anti-AXL antibody, tilvestamab, is undergoing phase I clinical testing. In parallel, BerGenBio is developing a companion diagnostic test to identify patient populations most likely to benefit from AXL inhibition: this is expected to facilitate more efficient registration trials supporting a precision medicine-based commercialisation strategy.

BerGenBio is based in Bergen, Norway with a subsidiary in Oxford, UK. The company is listed on the Oslo Stock Exchange (ticker: BGBIO). For more information, visit [www.bergenbio.com](http://www.bergenbio.com)

## **Contacts**

[ir@bergenbio.com](mailto:ir@bergenbio.com)

Richard Godfrey CEO, BerGenBio ASA

Rune Skeie, CFO, BerGenBio ASA

[rune.skeie@bergenbio.com](mailto:rune.skeie@bergenbio.com)

+47 917 86 513

## **International Media Relations**

Mary-Jane Elliott, Chris Welsh, Lucy Featherstone, Carina Jurs

Consilium Strategic Communications

[bergenbio@consilium-comms.com](mailto:bergenbio@consilium-comms.com)

+44 20 3709 5700

## **Media Relations in Norway**

Jan Petter Stiff, Crux Advisers

[stiff@crux.no](mailto:stiff@crux.no)

+47 995 13 891

## **Forward looking statements**

This announcement may contain forward-looking statements, which as such are not historical facts, but are based upon various assumptions, many of which are based, in

turn, upon further assumptions. These assumptions are inherently subject to significant known and unknown risks, uncertainties, and other important factors. Such risks, uncertainties, contingencies and other important factors could cause actual events to differ materially from the expectations expressed or implied in this announcement by such forward-looking statements

**This information is subject to the disclosure requirements pursuant to section 5-12 of the Norwegian Securities Trading Act.**