



# **BERGENBIO TO PRESENT AT 4th ANNUAL NEXT GEN IMMUNO-ONCOLOGY VIRTUAL CONGRESS**

**Bergen, Norway, 28 June 2021** – BerGenBio ASA (OSE:BGBIO), a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company developing novel, selective AXL kinase inhibitors for severe unmet medical need, is pleased to announce that Prof. Hani Gabra MD PhD, Chief Medical Officer of BerGenBio, will deliver a virtual presentation at the 4th Annual Next Gen Immuno-Oncology Congress, which is taking place virtually from 28 June – 1 July 2021.

Prof. Gabra will discuss the important role of AXL kinase in regulation of immune suppression in the tumour microenvironment. As part of the presentation, Prof Gabra will also discuss how targeting AXL with BerGenBio's lead asset, bemcentinib, involves innate immune activation and reduced cancer cell and immune-evasion to leverage an anticancer T-cell response.

The presentation will be made available on the Company website under 'Presentations' at the date of the presentation on [www.bergenbio.com/investors/presentations/](http://www.bergenbio.com/investors/presentations/)

**Title:** The role of AXL in immuno-oncology: A translational perspective

**Date and time:** Thursday 01 July 2021 at 11.30-12.00 EST

**-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 in infected organs with an activation of the signalling pathway leading to suppression of the Type 1 Interferon immune response by infected cells and neighbouring cells, in their environment. Pre-clinical research studies demonstrate that bemcentinib inhibits SARS-CoV-2 host cell entry and promotes anti-viral Type I interferon response.

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.

## **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)

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## **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.**