



## Evogene Provides 2020 Year-End Update for CRISPR-IL Consortium

**Progress includes completion of a first version of the artificial intelligence-driven platform for genome-editing**

**Rehovot, Israel – January 5, 2021** – Evogene Ltd. (NASDAQ: EVGN), (TASE: EVGN), a leading computational biology company targeting to revolutionize life-science product development across several market segments, provided today a year-end update for the CRISPR-IL consortium, of which it is a member and Evogene's CSO, Dr. Eyal Emmanuel, serves as the consortium's Chairman. The CRISPR-IL consortium, which is supported by the Israeli Innovation Authority, was established to develop an artificial intelligence-based system, for CRISPR-CAS based workflows, "*Go-Genome*", providing end-to-end genome-editing, with improved precision and efficiency.

The Company announces today, CRISPR-IL's completion of a first version of the artificial intelligence-driven platform for genome-editing, CRISPR-CAS based, design; a major milestone in the development roadmap of "*Go-Genome*". Also announced is the addition of two new members, Better Seeds and FreeZem, active in the areas of agriculture and alternative protein sourced from insects, respectively. The addition of these two companies is expected to widen the system's applicability.

CRISPR-CAS is a revolutionizing genome-editing technology that enables precise genomic changes, which are expected to lead to the development of a new set of products and services. The products and services are expected to include human therapeutics such as CAR-T treatments and curing monogenic diseases, and agricultural uses such as adding nutritional value to food products, among others. This technology can result in products and services in a wide range of markets that could potentially reach a total market size of \$500 billion in 2025.<sup>1</sup>

While current CRISPR-CAS based workflows target precise areas within the DNA, these workflows still face several challenges, which prevent more extensive use of this technology, including (i) accidental off-target modification, (ii) inefficient modifications requiring repeated trials, and (iii) inaccurate measuring tools to ascertain that the modification was effective as intended. The CRISPR-IL consortium was established to address these challenges.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ark-invest.com/white-papers/crispr-white-paper/>

Evogene led the consortium's work package for the development of this first version of a genome-editing design platform. The platform is intended to enable predicting the design of guide-RNA, which directs the CRISPR-CAS to make **on-target** DNA modifications. Moreover, the developed platform has already produced guide-RNA predictions, which are currently being utilized by the consortium members to perform genome-editing experiments in pharma and agriculture.

These new capabilities are expected to extend the range of Evogene's **GeneRator AI** solution by supporting products based on changes in genetic elements via genome editing.

**Dr. Eyal Emmanuel, Chairman of the CRISPR-IL consortium and CSO of Evogene commented:** "We are proud of the consortium's advancement according to plan and the launch of the first version of a genome editing design platform. We are happy to welcome new partners to the consortium that allow the increased application of this technology to existing and new areas such as alternative protein-based on insects. We believe that CRISPR-CAS based genome-editing holds great promise, and that the work of the CRISPR-IL consortium positions both Israel and Evogene at the forefront of applicability of CRISPR technologies."

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#### **About the CRISPR-IL consortium:**

The CRISPR-IL consortium was established to develop an artificial intelligence-based system, "Go-Genome", providing users genome-editing workflows with improved precision and efficiency. This system is intended to be effective in multi-species, including human, plant, and certain animal DNA applicable to market segments in pharma, agriculture, and aquaculture. [For more information see the press release from June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020.](#)

CRISPR-IL participants include leading companies, medical institutions, and academic institutions. In addition to Evogene, participants include: Better Seeds, BTG – Bio-technology General Israel, Colors Farm, FreeZem, Hazera Seeds, NRGene, Pluristem, Rahan Meristem Ltd., TargetGene; medical institutions: Sheba Medical Center, Schneider Children's Medical Center; and academia: Bar-Ilan University, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, IDC Herzliya, Tel-Aviv University and the Weizmann Institute of Science.

The CRISPR-IL consortium was approved in June 2020. Its budget for the initial period is approximately ILS 36 million (approximately \$10 million), partially funded by a grant from the Israeli Innovation Authority.

## About Evogene Ltd.:

Evogene (NASDAQ: EVGN), (TASE: EVGN) is a leading computational biology company targeting to revolutionize product development for life-science based industries, including human health, agriculture, and industrial applications. Incorporating a deep understanding of biology and leveraging Big Data and Artificial Intelligence, Evogene established its unique technology, the *Computational Predictive Biology (CPB)* platform. The CPB platform is designed to computationally discover and develop life-science products based on microbes, small molecules, and genetic elements as the core components for such products. Evogene holds a number of subsidiaries utilizing the CPB platform to develop human microbiome-based therapeutics, medical cannabis, ag-biologicals, ag-chemicals, seed traits, and ag-solutions for castor oil production. For more information, please visit [www.evogene.com](http://www.evogene.com).

## Forward Looking Statements:

*This press release contains "forward-looking statements" relating to future events. These statements may be identified by words such as "may", "could", "expects", "intends", "anticipates", "plans", "believes", "scheduled", "estimates" or words of similar meaning. For example, Evogene is using forward-looking statements in this press release when it discusses the promise held by the CRISPR-CAS genome editing technology, the end-to-end solutions provided by the "Go-Genome" system and the platform for genome editing design being developed, their applicability and ability to predict the design of guide-RNA and to address the challenges of current CRISPR-CAS workflows, as well as the positioning of Israel and Evogene in respect of the applicability of CRISPR technologies. Such statements are based on current expectations, estimates, projections and assumptions, describe opinions about future events, involve certain risks and uncertainties which are difficult to predict and are not guarantees of future performance. Therefore, actual future results, performance or achievements of Evogene and its subsidiaries may differ materially from what is expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements due to a variety of factors, many of which are beyond the control of Evogene and its subsidiaries, including, without limitation, the global spread of COVID-19, or the Coronavirus, the various restrictions deriving therefrom and those risk factors contained in Evogene's reports filed with the applicable securities authorities. In addition, Evogene and its subsidiaries rely, and expect to continue to rely, on third parties to conduct certain activities, such as their field-trials and pre-clinical studies, and if these third parties do not successfully carry out their contractual duties, comply with regulatory requirements or meet expected deadlines (including as a result of the effect of the Coronavirus), Evogene and its subsidiaries may experience significant delays in the conduct of their activities. Evogene and its subsidiaries disclaim any obligation or commitment to update these forward-looking statements to reflect future events or developments or changes in expectations, estimates, projections and assumptions.*

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