



PRESS RELEASE

BioMarine Announces the BioMarine International Clusters Association (BICA) *Federating Marine and Biomarine Clusters for Innovation and the Sustainable Utilization of Marine Bioresources and Biotechnologies*

Paris, France, 29 July--The **BioMarine International Clusters Association (BICA)**, the new international association of the biomarine industry, will be launched at the **2013 BioMarine Business Convention** to be held in **Halifax, Nova Scotia** from **9 to 12 September**. The biomarine industry is an emerging economic sector based on biotechnology and marine bioresources. This new “transversal” industry sector brings a novel approach to economic growth and a large potential for new business opportunities and jobs at the regional, national and international levels. **This new initiative seeks to structure and integrate the biomarine industry and foster economic development by creating international business opportunities and partnerships.**

Pierre Erwes, Chairman and Founder of BioMarine; Founder of the BioMarine International Clusters Association (BICA) explains, “The world of marine bioresources is a complex mosaic with fast and changing boundaries, affecting on one hand the industries involved and, on the other hand, the various innovation processes. I have often emphasized throughout our BioMarine conventions how the disparity of our activities offers a world of opportunities and synergies. By structuring our marine bioresources industry with a transversal approach, we open new walkways for applied research and development of international collaboration, as well as numerous business opportunities. The BioMarine sector is a new source of economic development, one where the value chains and the business models are still under development. Simultaneously, the oceans are the only remaining truly unexplored resource, a resource we cannot afford to ignore. Since we started the first BioMarine platform in 2008, I have been preparing the next big step forward to structure our industry. The timing is perfect!”

The “cross-border” nature of the emerging biomarine industry is opening new pathways for Research, Development & Innovation and market opportunities, with at least four structural advantages:

1. A fast-growing business environment;
2. Synergies and cross-fertilization among sectors;
3. Access to unexplored natural resources;
4. Prime access to emerging Research, Development & Innovation opportunities.

What is unique about BICA is the conjugation of a strong international business community and an intensely networked set of marine bioclusters.

BICA’s Mission is to champion marine bioresources and their sustainable and innovative utilization. We will federate national and regional marine and biomarine clusters, advocate policies that will enable the realization of marine biotechnology’s promise for providing breakthrough products to feed the world, clean our environment, and improve health and nutrition.

HE Bernard Fautrier, CEO of the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation; Co-founder of BioMarine International Clusters Association (BICA) addresses their involvement, “The Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation is committed, among others, to ocean sustainability and marine conservation. Environmental issues in marine bioresources spheres are of considerable importance: energy, health, food and environment. It appears that industry and finance are two fundamental components of ocean sustainability. If we wish to foster the development of ocean conservation we must increase the rational collaboration between marine stakeholders: research community, industry and investment sectors as well as the civil society.”

As a leader in marine bioresources, Norway is in a position to attest to the tremendous added value of public-private partnerships especially when putting research projects on the market.

Øystein Lie, Chairman MareLife, Norway; Founding Member BioMarine International Clusters Association (BICA) speaks of the role BICA can play in the global context, “Access to finance is always the most difficult part for an SME. On the other side the investors need to foster their deal flow and make sure the scouting process is accurate, with minimal risk. Since MareLife and BioMarine have joined their effort and expertise we can now provide a unique scouting platform that guarantees the minimal risk investment for VCs and private equity. BICA is DE FACTO the global unique organization which will offer both the SMEs and the investor a true meeting place to exchange, discuss and finalize their deals.”

The North Carolina Marine Bio-Technologies Center of Innovation is a new driving force in the biomarine sector. **Deborah Mosca, CEO Marine Bio-Technologies Center of Innovation (MBCOI), USA; Founding Member of BioMarine International Clusters Association (BICA)** on how the MBCOI will benefit from the BICA organization: “MBCOI facilitates collaboration on emerging marine biotechnologies between researchers, industry, and funding organizations to commercialize new scientific discoveries. Centered in Wilmington, North Carolina, MBCOI combines a regional focus with a global perspective. North Carolina is a coastal state with a wealth of natural resources and human capital invested in marine science. Pre-eminent marine scientific communities have been established at several campuses within the University of North Carolina system such as Chapel Hill, East Carolina, State, and Wilmington as well as private institutions such as Duke University. Their efforts are supported by multiple state and federal organizations such as NC Sea Grant, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Environmental Protection Agency and National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. Along with a proximity to the Research Triangle Park, one of the nation’s largest and most prestigious biotechnology clusters, MBCOI is centrally positioned to facilitate partnerships between scientists and industry wherever they are located. Our mission in partnering with BICA is to provide a conduit for the global exchange of ideas, perspectives, and collaboration on a range of projects and programs. BICA is a valuable resource committed to actively supporting and promoting interdisciplinary biomarine research, development, and entrepreneurial opportunities. MBCOI is proud to be a founding member of this organization.”

Ilaria Nardello, Marine Biotechnology Research Coordinator at the National University of Ireland, Galway; Founding Member BioMarine International Clusters Association (BICA) explains how BICA can help the Irish marine biocluster, “The Marine Biotechnology Research Coordination unit (MBRC) at the National University of Ireland Galway fosters collaborative research and development initiatives between research centres, industry and development agencies, at the national and international level. With the support of national funding agencies and the EU, and in collaboration with various institutes across the Island of Ireland, the aim for the MBRC is to support the development of Ireland’s marine knowledge economy by connecting the actors that,

together, can contribute to societal innovation. Our focus is on the area of health and well-being, with applications for the biomedical, cosmeceutical and nutraceutical sectors.

We believe that BICA can importantly contribute to create awareness of the business opportunities connected with marine biological knowledge and the importance of biotechnology in achieving a sustainable exploitation of our resources. BICA can further support our mission to develop a functionally interconnected marine biotech community by exposing and exploring aggregation models and practices. Finally, BICA will provide effective mechanisms for Ireland's marine biotechnology R&D capabilities to connect to the global sphere of sensible entrepreneurs, investors and markets. It is through these connections that innovation occurs to tackle the societal grand-challenges of sustainable food provision, environment protection and increased well-being,"

BICA will provide associates with international business contacts and networking tools to enhance global communication and foster innovation through its think-tank approach. The Association is not a substitute for actors involved or pre-existing initiatives. Its added value lies in its capacity to federate and integrate the most appropriate partnerships to support innovative programs by drawing on the intelligence and networks created and reinforced by BioMarine at its Forum sessions.

The 2013 BioMarine Business Convention in Halifax, Nova Scotia, 9-12 September is open to the press. For more information and accreditation, please see our website www.biomarine.org or contact Barbara Erskine at barbara@barbaraerskine.com, telephone +39 320 840 5805.