

## Press release



### **Action Pharma's CEO awarded the Novo Nordisk Prize 2009**

Holte, Denmark, February 12, 2009

Action Pharma A/S, a Danish biotech company, is very pleased to announce that Søren Nielsen, its CEO has been awarded the Novo Nordisk Prize 2009.

The Novo Nordisk Prize was founded by the Novo Nordisk Foundation and is awarded in the Foundation's name and from the Foundation's funds. The prize is awarded - without application - in recognition of unique medical research or other research contributions that are of benefit to medical science. The prize is awarded for a predominantly Danish contribution.

The prize is awarded annually and comprises a personal award as well as an allowance for research purposes within the prize recipient's area of expertise.

"With his impressive scientific results Søren Nielsen is placed in the international elite with a very comprehensive scientific production published in high impact research journals," says Professor Jan Fahrenkrug, chairman of the Prize committee at the Novo Nordisk Foundation.

"I am deeply honored and very proud of this prestigious award" says Søren Nielsen, CEO. "It gives major attention to our research achievements and to Action Pharma A/S which was founded in 2000 based on part of this research."

The prize was awarded based on Søren Nielsen's and his colleagues' discoveries on the fundamental role of cell membrane water channels (aquaporins) in water balance regulation and that dysregulation of aquaporins play pivotal roles in water balance disorders including acquired and inherited kidney diseases, heart failure and brain edema. This work was performed in close collaboration with Professor Peter Agre, Johns Hopkins University Medical School, who received the 2003 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for the discovery of aquaporin water channels.

"In our parallel studies we identified very potent effects of melanocortins to protect against kidney dysfunction and dysregulation of aquaporins and sodium transporters in models of kidney ischemia and reperfusion organ damage" says Søren Nielsen, CEO. "This was subsequently extended in many additional disease models such as

acute myocardial infarction, kidney injury in major surgery, intestinal ischemia, stroke and others. All was achieved in close collaboration with co-founders of Action Pharma Professor Jørgen Frøkiær and Thomas Jonassen, CSO of Action Pharma.”

Action Pharma A/S has an advanced drug candidate pipeline based on in house development, licensing agreements and acquisitions. Action Pharma A/S has two drug candidates in clinical development. AP214 is in a phase-II clinical trial in the USA for the protection of kidney injury associated with major cardiac surgery. AP1030 is in a phase-Ib clinical trial and is targeted for the treatment of type-II diabetes. In addition Action Pharma has two drug candidates in late preclinical development and has several discovery projects. The drug candidates are all first in class and have unique mode of action through melanocortin receptors, which are a new class of pharmaceutical targets. The commercial strategy is partnering after early clinical proof of concept.

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## **About Action Pharma A/S**

Action Pharma is a privately owned Danish biotech company. The main strategy of Action Pharma is to develop novel drug candidates targeting melanocortin receptors and bring these to clinical proof of concept for subsequent partnering. The drug candidates are first in class and exploit novel mode of action profiles with efficacy that is superior compared to the current market. Action Pharma has a pipeline of several patent protected drug candidates of which two currently are in clinical development and two in late preclinical development.

AP1030, the lead compound within the company's small molecule program, has potent pre-clinically documented anti-diabetic and anti-obesity effects. AP1030 is currently in clinical development in obese individuals. AP1030 has the potential to be superior to other anti-diabetics including GLP-1 analogues, DPP-4 inhibitors and glitazones. AP1030 can be administered orally in contrast to GLP-1 analogues. The marked weight reducing effects contrast the absence of weight reduction by other

orally available antidiabetics (DPP-4 inhibitors and others). Thus, this makes AP1030 highly attractive in the market for Type II diabetes associated with obesity. The mode of action of AP1030, first in class, involves a central melanocortin type 4 receptor mediated effect, thereby modulating appetite and central regulation of glucose metabolism plus a systemic anti-inflammatory melanocortin type 1 receptor mediated anti-diabetic effect aimed at reverting low grade inflammation in fatty tissue and thereby reducing peripheral insulin resistance.

Action Pharma is developing AP214 to prevent post-surgical kidney injury after major thoracic surgery. AP214 is currently being tested in a phase II clinical trial in the USA investigating the effect of AP214 on organ protection in patients undergoing cardiac surgery, who are at increased risk of kidney injury. More than 150,000 patients in the USA and EU undergo major thoracic surgery every year. Approximately 10-20% of these patients experience various degrees of kidney injury which again is associated with increased mortality, morbidity and prolonged hospitalization. Thus there is a major unmet medical need. AP214 mediates its potent effect via the type 1 and type 3 melanocortin receptors (first in class).

In addition, Action Pharma develops AP1189 which is targeted at systemic inflammatory diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis or inflammatory bowel diseases. Similarly, AP405 is developed for the treatment of inflammatory skin diseases, such as atopic dermatitis.

Action Pharma has a strong investor base of leading European investors including Sunstone Capital, Global Life Science Ventures, InnovationsKapital, SLS Venture, Inventure Capital, and Oestjysk Innovation. For more information, please visit [www.actionpharma.com](http://www.actionpharma.com)

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