



## MORVUS TECHNOLOGY AND NUCANA BIOMED SIGN EXCLUSIVE WORLD-WIDE LICENCE TO DEVELOP PROTIDE TECHNOLOGY IN CANCER

**November 18, 2009 Cardiff.** Morvus Technology Ltd (“Morvus”) and NuCana BioMed Ltd (“NuCana”) today announce that an agreement has been signed by which Morvus has granted to NuCana an exclusive, world-wide, licence with rights to develop its ProTide technology for the enhancement of nucleoside analogues (“nucleosides”). These are important drugs used in the treatment of many common cancers and in 2008 the top-selling drug of this type, Gemzar® (gemcitabine: Eli Lilly) had world-wide sales of over \$1.7billion.

The two companies have been jointly developing the technology under an existing exclusive option arrangement and will continue to work on the project, but under the new agreement NuCana will fund the project and take responsibility for the commercial and clinical development strategy. Phil Burke, the CEO of Morvus said: “We are delighted that the ProTide technology is now being taken forward into clinical development in cancer. We see this technology as a major advance on existing cancer treatments”. The agreement grants Morvus certain rights and future milestone payments and royalties.

The ProTide technology was invented at the School of Pharmacy at Cardiff University by Professor Chris McGuigan and the patented rights were acquired by Morvus. The technology enhances known cancer agents, some of which are blockbuster medicines in the cancer market, and improves their efficacy and reduces toxicity. Adding the ProTide moiety to certain cancer drugs allows them to more effectively bypass the major blocks to their actions – which can cause drug resistance – and avoid early breakdown of the drugs in the body. Professor McGuigan commented: “With our collaborations with GSK, Roche and Inhibitex we have seen how effective the ProTide technology can be when applied to antiviral nucleosides and we are excited at the prospect of collaborating with NuCana to apply it to known cancer drugs.”

NuCana has already applied the ProTide technology to several of the most widely used nucleosides, including Gemzar®, and tested their potency in experimental models. The clinical and commercial development will be expanded under this new agreement and ProTides of other existing and new nucleosides will be synthesised and tested. Hugh Griffith, the CEO of NuCana stated: “The NuCana team have considerable experience in developing nucleosides for cancer treatment and the

ProTide technology gives us a great opportunity to take these important cancer drugs to a new level and significantly improve the treatment options for patients with cancer”.

### **About Morvus Technology Ltd.**

Morvus Technology is a privately-owned company engaged in the discovery, development and commercialisation of novel drugs for the oncology market. The Company was established in 2004 and has offices and laboratories near Llanarthe, South Wales. Morvus has a broad portfolio of technology which is focused on disease areas for which there is a clear, unmet medical need.

### **About Nucana Biomed Ltd.**

NuCana BioMed is an emerging biopharmaceutical company dedicated to the discovery, development and commercialisation of innovative, rationally designed medicines that address significant unmet medical needs. The NuCana BioMed management team has a successful track record of building virtual biopharmaceutical organisations to global integrated companies..

### **CONTACTS:**

Phil Burke  
CEO  
Morvus Technology Ltd  
E: [pburke@morvus.com](mailto:pburke@morvus.com)  
T: +44 (0) 1558 667 184

Hugh Griffith  
CEO  
NuCana BioMed Ltd  
E: [hughgriffith@nucanabiomed.com](mailto:hughgriffith@nucanabiomed.com)  
T: +44 (0) 131 248 3660

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