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## News Release

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### **Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, Illumina and Genea Form the Global Fertility Alliance for Excellence in Assisted Reproductive Treatment**

- **Global Fertility Alliance will identify and work on improvements of fertility-related laboratory processes**

Darmstadt, Germany, June 8, 2015 – Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, a leading company for innovative and top-quality high-tech products in healthcare, life science and performance materials today announced the formation of the Global Fertility Alliance, a new collaboration to advance excellence in fertility technologies and processes within the assisted reproductive treatment (ART) laboratory. The alliance is a partnership between the biopharmaceutical business of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, Illumina Inc., San Diego, US, a leader in developing and commercializing systems for analysis of genetic variation and function, and Genea Limited, Sydney, Australia, which develops innovative fertility technologies.

“We are the global leader in the field of fertility drugs and committed to supporting the success and improvement in ART by going beyond drugs with innovative technologies,” explained Meeta Gulyani, Head of Global Strategy and Franchises at the biopharmaceuticals business of Merck, KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany. “By forging the Global Fertility Alliance with partners like Illumina and Genea we aim to support the development of needed global standards in ART labs. This will ensure a consistently high level of performance between different centers and countries.”

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#### Merck KGaA

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The alliance aims to improve the consistency in ART worldwide and addresses the need for more standardization of fertility processes within the ART laboratory. The three companies will launch their initiative at the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology (ESHRE) in Lisbon, Portugal, on 13 June 2015. This is another important step for the biopharmaceuticals business of Merck, KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, towards establishing global standards in the growing market of fertility technologies and the ultimate goal of helping families to have a baby.

With the establishment of the alliance, the biopharmaceuticals business of Merck, KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, Illumina and Genea emphasize their desire to help improve fertility outcomes by contributing to the standardization of technologies and protocols in ART labs. Currently, variation in practices and techniques can lead to inconsistent results and outcomes. Recognizing the importance of innovation in ART technologies the alliance aims to enhance progress and innovation in three ways: Firstly, the founding members aim to foster integration of multiple, leading fertility technologies. Secondly, building on this, the alliance will aim to collaborate with leading health care professionals and medical societies to develop global standards. And finally, as technologies in the fertility space are rapidly advancing, the alliance will also develop educational resources for health care professionals worldwide. These efforts will include training curricula and workshops as well as access to model labs, symposia and events at medical meetings.

Illumina's Senior Vice President and General Manager of Reproductive and Genetic Health, Tristan Orpin, also highlighted the significance of the alliance for the reproductive biology community: "Illumina has a strong commitment to improving in vitro fertilization (IVF) outcomes through the use of industry leading genomics but appreciates that there are many factors that impact ART outcomes. Founding the Global Fertility Alliance together with the two partners represents an exciting opportunity for us to share our knowledge and experience with the wider community and to help bring alignment and higher consistency to ART practices worldwide. Having already partnered with the biopharmaceuticals business of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, in other treatment areas, we are confident this collaboration of innovators in the fertility field will deliver a



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significant positive impact for health care professionals, fertility labs, and most importantly their patients.”

“Increasing success rates for patients worldwide and advancing the science of fertility treatment is an integral part of our mission,” said Tomas Stojanov, CEO of Genea. “The new Global Fertility Alliance for excellence in ART will drive automation and standardization in the field and support health care professionals in providing their patients with the best possible outcomes.”

In order to rapidly progress the initiative, the biopharmaceuticals business of Merck, KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, Illumina and Genea will actively contribute to the alliance and establish a board of representatives, which will meet regularly. At the same time, the companies invite new members, who demonstrate a consistent commitment to driving technology innovation and improving ART results, to join the alliance.

### **About Genea**

Genea is a fertility pioneer, researching, developing and introducing breakthrough techniques and technologies in assisted reproductive treatment for almost 30 years. Genea is a strongly interconnected group of three companies:

Genea Fertility has clinics across Australia, as well as in New Zealand and Thailand.

Genea Biomedx creates and manufactures practical, accessible and precise fertility technologies that help standardise and automate fertility treatment. Its unique relationship with Genea Fertility means that Genea Biomedx is a manufacturer that truly understands the customers’ perspective. As a result Genea Biomedx has developed the world’s first automated vitrification instrument, and has other projects well advanced in the product pipeline.

Genea Biocells develops unique disease-specific and unaffected human pluripotent stem cell platforms, differentiated cells, including the first robust skeletal muscle differentiation platform; culture media and small molecule libraries for use in research, drug development and cell therapy. Genea Biocells partners with scientists in industry and academia to advance innovative projects using chemical biology and stem cell-driven approaches.

### **About Illumina**

Illumina is improving human health by unlocking the power of the genome. Our focus on innovation has established us as the global leader in DNA sequencing and array-based technologies, serving customers in the research, clinical and applied markets. Our products are used for applications in the life sciences, oncology, reproductive health, agriculture and other emerging segments.



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Merck KGaA of Darmstadt, Germany, is a leading company for innovative and top-quality high-tech products in healthcare, life science and performance materials. The company has six businesses – Biopharmaceuticals, Consumer Health, Allergopharma, Biosimilars, Life Science and Performance Materials – and generated sales of € 11.3 billion in 2014. Around 39,000 employees work in 66 countries to improve the quality of life for patients, to foster the success of customers and to help meet global challenges. Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, is the world's oldest pharmaceutical and chemical company – since 1668, the company has stood for innovation, business success and responsible entrepreneurship. Holding an approximately 70% interest, the founding family remains the majority owner of the company to this day. Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany holds the global rights to the Merck name and brand. The only exceptions are Canada and the United States, where the company operates as EMD Serono, EMD Millipore and EMD Performance Materials.