

PRESS RELEASE

**NB RENAISSANCE PARTNERS, CHEQUERS CAPITAL AND BIOLCHIM CEO
LEONARDO VALENTI ACQUIRE CONTROL OF BIOLCHIM GROUP**

Milan, 3 August 2017 – NB Renaissance Partners and Chequers Capital have signed a binding agreement for the acquisition from Wise SGR of the control stake in Biolchim Group, a leading specialty fertilizers company. Biolchim Group's management team, headed by CEO Leonardo Valenti, will retain a stake of approximately 8% following completion of the deal.

Headquartered in Medicina (Bologna), Biolchim Group produces and sells a full range of specialty fertilizers products, mainly biostimulants, marketed under the Biolchim, Cifo, Ilsa and Bionatura brands. Biolchim's business model is built upon a complete offering of diversified products, direct access to raw materials and a global sales network which is supported by a highly specialized team of agronomists, biologists and chemists engaged in the development of innovative products and technologies.

Under the leadership of Leonardo Valenti since 2008, Biolchim has completed four strategic acquisitions, among which Cifo and 60% of Ilsa, aimed at expanding the Group's product portfolio, production capacity and research and development activities.

Biolchim Group experienced significant growth over the last years, increasing sales from approximately €30 million in 2008 to approximately €115 million expected in 2017. International markets now represent 35% of total sales with further expansion abroad expected to be achieved due to significant R&D synergies related to the acquisition of Ilsa.

Biolchim Group is present in over 80 countries, operates seven production plants, of which four are in Italy, and sells its products through all distribution channels including professional agriculture, home & gardening and B2B. Biolchim Group has subsidiaries in Brazil, Germany, Hungary, Poland, China, New Zealand and Canada, and during 2014 it opened representative offices in Colombia and Turkey, while continuing to operate in other geographies with local personnel and a network of importers and distributors.

Michele Semenzato and Luigi Vagnozzi, investment professionals of Wise, commented: *"Biolchim represented a transaction "by the book": we invested in an Italian excellence operating in a fast growing market, headed by an outstanding management team that we have supported through a growth path, organic and through acquisitions, so as to create a leading player in the biostimulants market worldwide. We are confident that the growth and consolidation path conducted in the recent years will continue successfully under the new ownership."*

Stefano Bontempelli and Marco De Simoni, Partners of NB Renaissance said: *"Biolchim represents an Italian leader with a global reach and a strong positioning in the specialty fertilizers industry, a sector underpinned by important secular growth trends worldwide. Thanks to its successful business model and its continuous investment in R&D, Biolchim today represents a unique player in the sector and our goal is to support management to further accelerate the Group's expansion at an international level."*

Guillaume Planchon and **Philippe Guérin**, respectively **Partner and Head of Italy at Chequers Capital**, added: *"We are very excited to support Biolchim Group and its management in their international expansion and innovation policy. Biolchim will further strengthen its leadership position in the biostimulants market over the coming years and we will provide our experience and support to help the management to complete synergetic acquisitions and realize its strategic plan."*

Leonardo Valenti, Chairman and CEO of Biolchim Group said: *"After the outstanding results already reached thanks to Wise, the ambitions of the Group and the management remain unchanged and we believe NB Renaissance and Chequers, primary private equity players with a strong international standing, represent the ideal partners to support the Group throughout its next phase of growth and to further enhance its expansion and positioning, mainly in foreign markets. Our commitment as both managers and shareholders is solid and represents the best guarantee for the future of the Group, whose goal is to continue strengthening its position in the biostimulants market to reach new and more prestigious milestones."*

NB Renaissance Partners was been advised by Banca IMI and Gatti Pavesi Bianchi, M&A and legal advisors, respectively. KPMG acted as financial and tax advisor, and Long Term Partners as strategic advisor.

Chequers Capital was been advised by Ethica Corporate Finance and NCTM, M&A and legal / tax advisors, respectively. PWC acted as financial advisor, and Arthur D. Little as strategic advisor.

Essentia Advisory and Ethica & Mittel Debt Advisory assisted NB Renaissance Partners and Chequers Capital on the financing of the transaction.

Wise and other sellers have been advised by Simmons & Simmons and KPMG, legal and financial advisors, respectively. Advancy supported the sellers in the redaction of a strategic plan.

Wise SGR

Wise SGR SpA (www.wisesgr.it) specializes in the management of Private Equity closed-end funds, investing in small and medium-sized companies, with a special focus on Italy. The funds managed by Wise are typically involved in leverage buy-out and capital increase transactions, dedicated to companies that are leaders in their niche markets. The two major objectives are to lead "build-up" transactions, in order to enhance competitiveness and profitability, and to push the international development. Wise, controlled by the management team, has currently three funds under management: Wisequity II, with total commitment of 170 M€, that is in the divestment process; Wisequity III, with commitment exceeding 180 M€, has four remaining companies in the portfolio: Alpitour, Colcom Group, NTC-PH&T e Controls, having already realized the investments held in Edos Media, Kijan, Primat and now Biolchim; Wisequity IV closed the fund raising in March 2016 reaching its hard cap at 215 M€ and already invested in five companies: Corob, Imprima (KBC and Guarisco), Tapi, Tatuus Racing and Aleph.

For further information

Close to Media

Luca Manzato – 335.8484706 - luca.manzato@closetomedia.it

Adriana Liguori – 345.1778974 - adriana.liguori@closetomedia.it