

**PRESS RELEASE**

***Atlante Ventures acquires interest in Tethis (Genextra Group)***

**THREE MILLION EURO CAPITAL INCREASE TO FUND THE FINAL STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT OF AN INNOVATIVE DIAGNOSTIC DEVICE, A NEW WAY TO FIGHT CANCER WITH NANOTECHNOLOGY**

Milan, 6 July 2010 – The nanotechnology firm Tethis S.p.A., a subsidiary of Genextra S.p.A., a biotechnology holding company founded by Francesco Micheli, has approved a 3 million euro share capital increase that will result in the acquisition of an interest by the new shareholder **Atlante Ventures**, the Intesa Sanpaolo Group’s venture-capital fund, which will participate in the company alongside other minority-interest shareholders. The share capital increase, to be executed in two tranches, the first of which has already been subscribed for, is intended to fund the final stages of development of the **microFIND™** device prior to its market launch.

**microFIND™** is an innovative device for the detection of genetic alterations in tumours with florescent in situ hybridisation (FISH). **microFIND™** is currently undergoing clinical testing for the diagnosis and prognosis of leukaemia as well as bladder and cervix cancer, for which a more efficient and effective laboratory test will soon be available. The novelty of **microFIND™** lies in the use of Tethis’ nanostructured materials, which for the first time allow the integration of a consolidated analysis protocol such as FISH into a miniaturised device. Tethis’ technology has also been designed for the automation of the diagnostic tests, thus permitting wide-scale distribution.

Upon completion of the second tranche of the share capital increase, Atlante Ventures will hold a 16% interest in Tethis, whereas Genextra, which has participated in the capital increase along with other shareholders, will remain the majority shareholder with a 56% investment. The rest of the shares will remain divided amongst the current shareholders, including the fund AGITE! and the scientific team.

“We are highly satisfied with the completion of this new round of funding,” commented Lorenzo Tallarigo, chief executive officer of Genextra S.p.A. and chairman of Tethis S.p.A., “as it will allow us to continue developing a program that we believe can seriously contribute to cancer diagnosis. The investment by Atlante Ventures, one of Italy’s leading venture-capital funds, represents further evidence of the validity of the **microFIND™** project, in which the company has strongly believed since its inception.”

“An excellent technology with applications in multiple sectors and a team of managers and researchers of high standing have convinced us to invest in Tethis. Our goal is to contribute to bringing new products successfully to market, beginning with **microFIND™**,” explained Davide Turco, manager of Atlante Ventures.

\*\*\*\*

**Tethis S.p.A.** was founded in 2004 as a spin-off of the University of Milan by a team of researchers under the guidance of Paolo Milani, Professor of Structure of the Matter at the University of Milan’s Physics Department and Scientific Director of Fondazione Filarete. The develops nanopowders and nanocoatings for applications in various fields such as diagnostics, environmental monitoring and telecommunications. In just a few years since inception, the company has already established a number of collaborations with leading Italian and international firms to develop new products based on the proprietary technologies of Tethis S.p.A.. Today the company’s primary focus is to develop and market its novel **microFIND™** diagnostic device.

**Atlante Ventures** is one of Intesa Sanpaolo’s two venture-capital funds. It invests in the technological innovation and development of Italian companies. The project was created on the initiative and based on the experience of the bank’s **Corporate and Investment Banking Division** and **Intesa Sanpaolo Eurodesk**, a group team specialised in institutional and technical support for companies engaged in research projects. The Atlante Ventures fund, which began to operate in late 2008, was created with initial assets of 25 million euro (all of which was provided by the Intesa Sanpaolo Group). With an expected life of 12 years, the fund is placed to act as an ideal partner for Italian SMEs and start-ups that are developing cutting edge products and technologies. In particular, all this is possible thanks to its extensive global network of companies and its relationships with Italy’s main players in research and university fields. Atlante Ventures acts as an open platform aimed at allowing the best exploitation of opportunities for collaborative projects, including between the public and private sectors.

**Genextra S.p.A.** is a private biotechnology holding company that focuses on the research and development of innovative treatments and technologies. Genextra was founded in 2003 by a group of Italian entrepreneurs led by Francesco Micheli and top scientists from the European Institute of Oncology (IEO) coordinated by Professor Piergiuseppe Pelicci and Professor Umberto Veronesi, scientific co-directors of the IEO and co-chairs of Genextra’s scientific committee. In addition to Tethis, Genextra currently controls three other companies: Intercept Pharmaceuticals Inc., focused on fibrotic liver diseases and metabolic disorders; Congenia S.r.l., which develops drugs that target the mitochondrial permeability transition pore involved in various pathologies such as reperfusion injury in myocardial infarction; and DAC S.r.l., which develops innovative anticancer agents.

*For further information:*

**Genextra S.p.A.**  
Federica Saita  
tel. +39.02.3651.5110  
[info@genextra.it](mailto:info@genextra.it)

**Tethis S.p.A.**  
Isabella Colciago  
tel. +39.02.3656.8349  
[info@tethis-lab.com](mailto:info@tethis-lab.com)

**Intesa Sanpaolo**  
Media Office – Corporate and  
Investment Banking  
tel. +39.02.8796.3851 / 3010  
[stampa@intesasanpaolo.com](mailto:stampa@intesasanpaolo.com)