

'Our APAC market is growing fast'

04 September 2007 | News

image not found or type unknown



'Our APAC market is growing fast'

-Dr Manfred Baier, Global Business Head Roche Applied Science

Roche Applied Science, a division of Roche Diagnostics, is positioned as the world's number one supplier to diagnostics manufacturers in the areas of clinical chemistry, immunology and molecular diagnostics. In the half-yearly results in 2007, the division posted a strong nine percent sales increase led by sales of the LightCycler 480, Genome Sequencer 20 and Genome Sequencer FLX systems, and research reagents. In an e-mail interview with BioSpectrum, Dr Manfred Baier, head of global business at Roche Applied Science shares the scaling up that is happening at the division.

Can you give an overview of the market penetration that Roche Applied Science division has in the Asia Pacific region?

Roche Applied Science (RAS) is a business area of the Roche Diagnostics division. We are active in the field of systems and reagents for life science research. According to an independent study, we have about five percent market share in the Asia Pacific region. Worldwide the division employs about 1,800 people.

How has Roche's acquisition of 454 Life Sciences helped the division? What kind of scaling up do you expect from this?

The acquisition of 454 Life Sciences, completed in late May, has strengthened our position as a key player in the sequencing market. This acquisition is a logical result from the strategy of Roche Applied Science to become a major player in the

genomics and post-genomics life science markets. Therefore, it lies at the core of the RAS strategy by allowing RAS to compete in an important new segment that was previously not accessible to the same extent. The potential of the technology for diagnostic application is currently under evaluation.

We expect that the new ultrafast sequencing technologies will replace the until now widely used Sanger technology-454 sequencing was the first ultrafast technology on the market.

What is the size of DNA sequencing research market, globally and in the Asia Pacific region?

Global market for sequencing is estimated at \$800 million, mainly in the US and in Europe. We see a fast growing market share in APAC.

Are you looking at boosting the portfolio further?

Besides our own extensive research activities we are always ready to look at new, innovative technologies from outside the company, via our partnering department. Recently, we signed a definitive agreement under which we will acquire NimbleGen, a USA-based company active in high-density DNA microarrays.

This acquisition closes a gap in Roche Applied Sciences genomic research workflow and creates portfolio synergies with its sequencing and qPCR systems: results from sequencing experiments conducted for example with the 454 technology are used to define the content for microarray design whereas qPCR (LightCycler) is the major technology employed for the validation and further detailed analysis of results from array experiments.

Nandita Singh