



PRESS RELEASE

bioMérieux - First-Quarter 2011 Business Review

Sales growth: 3.5% like-for-like

- ▾ Strong momentum in North America
- ▾ Temporary slowdown in China and India
- ▾ Robust growth in clinical microbiology

2011 sales growth objective confirmed at 5% to 6%*

MARCY L'ETOILE, France - April 21, 2011 – bioMérieux, a world leader in the field of *in vitro* diagnostics, today released its business review for the three months ended March 31, 2011.

Net sales for the period reached €328 million, up a reported 6.8% from €307 million in first-quarter 2010. Growth amounted to 3.5% like-for-like (at constant exchange rates and scope of consolidation).

Sales by Region In € millions	Three Months Ended March 31, 2011	Three Months Ended March 31, 2010	% Change As Reported	% Change Like-for-Like
Europe ⁽¹⁾	176.9	173.3	+2.0%	-0.5%
North America	76.0	69.7	+9.1%	+6.7%
Asia-Pacific	46.6	40.8	+14.2%	+8.2%
Latin America	28.1	22.8	+23.4%	+16.3%
TOTAL	327.6	306.6	+6.8%	+3.5%

⁽¹⁾ Including the Middle East and Africa

“bioMérieux’s sales rose by 3.5% like-for-like in the first quarter of 2011,” said Chief Executive Officer Stéphane Bancel. “In North America, our sales performance over the quarter confirmed the improvement observed late last year. Europe remains a challenging region, with virtually flat sales, despite encouraging growth in some countries. Business was strong in Latin America and Asia-Pacific, with the exception of China and India where sales are expected to gain faster momentum over the rest of the year after distribution agreements have been renegotiated and tenders awarded. Backed by our broad global footprint, we are confirming our objective of achieving 2011 sales growth of between 5% and 6%, at constant exchange rates and a comparable business base.”

* At constant exchange rates and a comparable business base

SALES

Sales for the three months ended March 31, 2011 were up 3.5% like-for-like, or 4.2%, including sales by Dima GmbH, which had not been consolidated in the year-earlier period.

Analysis of Sales		
In € millions		
Sales - Three Months Ended March 31, 2010	307	
Currency Effect	+8	
Organic Growth (Like-for-Like) ⁽¹⁾	+11	+3.5%
Dima Sales ⁽²⁾	+2	+0.7%
Sales - Three Months Ended March 31, 2011	328	+4.2%

⁽¹⁾ The North American culture media business for routine clinical tests, which is being discontinued, did not have a material impact on sales for the period

⁽²⁾ Dima GmbH was not consolidated in first-quarter 2010

During the quarter, the situation improved in certain traditional markets like North America, where the upturn gained momentum, and Germany and the United Kingdom, which reported rapid growth. This encouraging trend was nevertheless obscured by the temporarily modest growth in certain emerging markets. In China, major distribution contracts were renegotiated and certain public contracts are on hold, and in India, tenders have been delayed.

Geographically, first-quarter like-for-like sales may be analyzed as follows:

- ▼ Sales in the **Europe-Middle East-Africa** region (54% of the consolidated total) were virtually unchanged over the period.

 - In Western Europe (47% of the consolidated total), budget difficulties weighed on demand, particularly in Greece, Spain and Portugal, where public debt remained at critical levels.

Sales in France contracted by 3%, impacted by the anticipation of deliveries to some customers in December 2010 as part of the Global ERP deployment process. Microbiology and high medical-value VIDAS[®] test sales continued to expand, while sales of routine VIDAS[®] tests declined. During the quarter, the Ballereau legislative order, designed to enhance the medical role of laboratories and make their accreditation mandatory, was further debated in parliament. It is unlikely that any significant change will be made to the order.

Sales growth was strong in Germany, the United Kingdom and the Nordic countries, and remained vigorous in Italy.
 - Sales in Turkey, Russia, the Middle East and Africa, which had risen sharply in fourth-quarter 2010, confronted some difficulty in early 2011, although they picked up in March. In South Africa, sales fell steeply. The good performance of VIDAS[®] and microbiology sales was unable to compensate for the loss of the HIV viral load contract, which had an almost €4 million impact on the quarter. Sales were also dampened by the protest movements in Arab countries.
- ▼ Sales in **North America** (23% of the consolidated total) climbed 6.7%, after gaining 4.3% in fourth-quarter 2010.

In the United States, sales of clinical microbiology reagents rose sharply. BacT/ALERT[®] instrument sales also increased significantly, driven by the gain of several new customers over the quarter. Sales of VITEK[®] instruments were penalized by an unfavorable base of comparison, due to the large number of installations in first-quarter 2010, in particular to replace first-generation systems. VIDAS[®] continued to benefit from the success of the VIDAS[®] B.R.A.H.M.S PCT assay in the critical care market. Industrial application sales were negatively impacted by the consolidation of certain customer sites.

In Canada, sales of clinical reagents rose quickly, in particular due to seasonal flu. In addition, in industrial applications, reagent sales were buoyed by instruments installed in the second half of 2010.
- ▼ In the **Asia-Pacific** region (14% of the consolidated total), sales rose 8.2%, with the impact of recovery in Australia and expansion in South Korea attenuated by the modest 3% sales growth in both China and India. For these last two countries, sales are expected to gain faster momentum over the rest of the year, since tenders are in the process of being written or awarded. After a particularly dynamic fourth-quarter 2010, sales in China were impacted by the renegotiation in first-quarter 2011 of several distribution agreements for clinical and industrial applications. In Japan, after the March 11 earthquake and tsunami, the Company actively participated in healthcare initiatives and made emergency deliveries of reagents and instruments.

Sales of clinical applications were supported by growth across all of the microbiology lines and the sustained development of VIDAS[®].

- In **Latin America** (9% of the consolidated total), sales were up 16.3% for the period. Except for Chile, all of the subsidiaries there reported rapid growth, including Brazil (up 25%), Mexico (up 21%) and Argentina (up 18%).

In clinical applications, sales in microbiology and VIDAS[®] immunoassays were held back by the decline in microplates. Industrial applications, whose sales had surged more than 50% in first-quarter 2010, turned in a gain of almost 9% this quarter.

Like-for-like first-quarter 2011 sales may be analyzed by application as follows:

Sales by Application In € millions	Three Months Ended March 31, 2011	Three Months Ended March 31, 2010	% Change As Reported	% Change Like-for-Like
Clinical Applications	277.7	259.1	+7.2%	+3.8%
Industrial Applications	49.9	47.5	+5.0%	+2.1%
TOTAL	327.6	306.6	+6.8%	+3.5%

- Sales of **clinical** applications varied by technology. Microbiology sales rose 9.2%, further strengthening bioMérieux's leadership. The VITEK[®] and BacT/ALERT[®] lines delivered a good performance. After a vigorous fourth-quarter 2010, sales of VIDAS[®] immunoassays increased slightly, hurt by the fall-off in instruments. Routine test sales continued to contract in Europe, but high medical-value tests rose by 23%, impelled in particular by the success of VIDAS[®] B.R.A.H.M.S PCT. Due to the termination of the quantitative HIV reagents contract in South Africa, molecular biology sales fell 14% over the quarter, but would have been up 12% year-on-year excluding that impact.
- In the **industrial** segment, sales were temporarily dampened by delays in several major instrument sale contracts. Reagent sales rose by 4%, impacted, among others, by the termination of blood culture bottle production for Millipore following that company's acquisition by Merck KGaA.
- Excluding the impact from the termination of the exclusive quantitative HIV reagent contract in South Africa, sales of **reagents** and **services** increased by around 5%, led by clinical microbiology and high medical-value VIDAS[®] tests. **Instrument** sales rose by 2%, reflecting, in particular, the high prior-year comparatives due to the nearly 25% surge in instrument sales in first-quarter 2010.

OTHER QUARTERLY FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

- The Group had 6,378 full-time-equivalent **employees** as of March 31, 2011, reflecting a reinforcement of the international commercial network, notably in North America and China. There were 6,306 employees as of December 31, 2010.
- Net cash** amounted to €33 million at March 31, 2011, compared with €24 million at December 31, 2010.
- bioMérieux has not experienced any disruption in reagent or instrument production following the March 11 earthquake and tsunami in Japan. A supply chain review including tier 3 suppliers was performed and a limited number of products dependent on Japanese components at risk was identified. The Company, which has safety inventories, has deployed a **plan to secure supply** that identifies alternative suppliers. As of today, the overall risk is deemed to be low.

FIRST-QUARTER OPERATING HIGHLIGHTS

Commercial offer

The Company has introduced a CE-marked version of its **VITEK[®] MS** mass spectrometry solution for bacterial identification in microbiology laboratories. The new identification solution will be fully integrated with the VITEK[®] platform, the world's leading system for automated ID/AST, via the Myla[™] middleware. A request for 510(k) clearance will be filed with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the second half.

bioMérieux has CE-marked the first **bioNexia[®]** rapid tests produced at the Shanghai plant in China. Other tests are expected to be CE-marked in the second quarter.

The Company also launched **chromID™ C. difficile**, the first chromogenic culture medium for the isolation and identification of *Clostridium difficile* in just 24 hours. *C. difficile* is a bacterium responsible for epidemics of healthcare-associated infections, some of which are very serious and associated with high mortality rates.

In addition, the **Myla™** middleware continued to be developed over the quarter, with a new version now in the launch phase. It should soon be brought to market in such new territories as the United States, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

At the end of the quarter, the Company informed the FDA, other regulators and customers that VITEK® 2 susceptibility testing results for the antibiotic **Piperacillin/Tazobactam** (TZP) no longer meet previously stated acceptance criteria. Consequently, results of this test have been deactivated on the corresponding cards. The Company can nevertheless offer as an alternative the manual Etest® method. It has also implemented an aggressive action plan based on redeveloping a new version of the test and working closely with regulatory agencies. The Company believes that the action plan should enable it to mitigate any risk to patients, as well as the financial impact of the product recall.

▼ **System development pipeline**

During the quarter, the Company continued to actively prepare the many product launches planned for 2012 and 2013.

- In molecular biology, bioMérieux and **Biocartis** teams have initiated their collaboration, Biocartis platforms have been installed at the Grenoble (France) site and the development of three tests is now beginning.
- **VIDAS® New** has entered into a key stage in its development, with the creation of the initial prototypes, which will be used for the instrument's validation phases. This milestone marks the completion of design determination and opens a new phase of trials with biological assays.
- In microbiology, a prototype of the **new automated blood culture system** has been developed, a milestone that will make it possible to test the system's biological performance.
- Partnerships were defined with key suppliers for the development of the "**Smart Incubator**" instrument.
- Teams from bioMérieux and **Philips** pursued their work to develop Point-Of-Care diagnostic solutions in order to achieve the next 2011 milestone.

▼ **Partnership agreements**

- Theranostics partnership with **Ipsen**

In February, bioMérieux and Ipsen announced the signature of a framework agreement to facilitate collaboration on the co-development of a therapeutic and a companion diagnostic test, notably for hormone-dependent cancers.

- Collaboration with SIBS in industrial applications

In late March, bioMérieux and the **Shanghai Institutes for Biological Sciences** (SIBS) announced the creation of a long-term strategic partnership to develop tests for the microbiological quality control of food products, including those manufactured in China.

▼ **Microbiology Unit**

Following the retirement of Dr. Peter Kaspar on March 31, **Alexandre Mérieux**, Directeur Général Délégué, has been appointed Corporate Vice President of the Microbiology Unit, whose scope of operations has been extended to include the Molecular Biology Unit.

INVESTOR CALENDAR

June 15, 2011: Annual Shareholders Meeting

July 19, 2011: Second-Quarter Sales

The above forward-looking statements are based, entirely or partially, on assessments or judgments that may change or be modified, due to uncertainties and risks related to the Company's economic, financial, regulatory and competitive environment, notably those described in the 2009 Reference Document. Accordingly, the Company cannot give any assurance nor make any representation as to whether the above objectives will be met. The Company does not undertake to update or otherwise revise any forecasts or objectives presented herein, except in compliance with the disclosure obligations applicable to companies whose shares are listed on a stock exchange.

ABOUT BIOMERIEUX

Advancing Diagnostics to Improve Public Health

A world leader in the field of *in vitro* diagnostics for over 45 years, bioMérieux is present in more than 150 countries through 39 subsidiaries and a large network of distributors. In 2010, revenues reached €1.357 billion with 87% of sales outside of France.

bioMérieux provides diagnostic solutions (reagents, instruments, software) which determine the source of disease and contamination to improve patient health and ensure consumer safety. Its products are used for diagnosing infectious diseases and providing high medical value results for cancer screening and monitoring and cardiovascular emergencies. They are also used for detecting microorganisms in agri-food, pharmaceutical and cosmetic products.

bioMérieux is listed on the NYSE Euronext Paris market (Symbol: BIM – ISIN: FR0010096479). Other information can be found at www.biomerieux.com.

CONTACTS

Investor Relations

bioMérieux

Isabelle Tongio
Tel: + 33 4 78 87 22 37
investor.relations@biomerieux.com

Media Relations

bioMérieux

Koren Wolman-Tardy
Tel: + 33 4 78 87 20 08
media@biomerieux.com

Pure Communications

Kathryn Cook
Tel: + 1 910-239-5098
kathryn@purecommunicationsinc.com

Image Sept

Laurence Heilbronn
Tel: + 33 1 53 70 74 64
lheilbronn@image7.fr

Albane de La Tour d'Artaise

Tel: + 33 1 53 70 74 84
adelatour@image7.fr