

Dr. Carsten Sjøholm

## **Novozymes and Kenya Wildlife Service enter into partnership on biodiversity R&D.**

**The partnership includes a research and development programme and the rights for Novozymes to make use of microbial diversity from Kenyan protected areas. The programme will involve local institutional capacity-building in Kenya**

Novozymes and Kenya Wildlife Service have entered into an agreement on biological diversity with effect from May 2007. The agreement is in line with the principles of the United Nations' Convention on Biological Diversity.

Together, Novozymes and Kenya Wildlife Service will initiate a collaboration to characterize Kenyan microbial diversity from specific biological niches. As part of the project Novozymes will train Kenyan students in taxonomy, isolation and identification of micro-organisms. Furthermore, Novozymes will transfer advanced technology to Kenya, including knowledge of how to collect and isolate micro-organisms and how to characterize microbial diversity.

The agreement gives Novozymes the right to make commercial use of Kenya's microbial diversity in return for financial compensation, and local institutional capacity-building. Under this agreement, if Novozymes commercializes products developed on the basis of microbial strains isolated as part of the collaborative project, Kenya Wildlife Service will receive a milestone payment and a running royalty from sales. Furthermore, Novozymes has been granted rights on similar terms to commercially make use of specific strains isolated in Kenya which are already in Novozymes' possession. One minor product has already been marketed based on one of these strains. Kenya Wildlife Service will receive a payment as well as a royalty on any future sales.

"Kenya is a country rich in biodiversity. At Novozymes we build our business on nature's resources, and it is therefore important that we can access microbial diversity. In return for this, I am glad to give something back to Kenya," said Steen Riisgaard, CEO at Novozymes.

"The strategic plan takes cognizance of the need to contribute to the broad national macro and sectoral objectives and targets as outlined in the National Biodiversity Action Plan and Strategy, national development plans, the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation, Principles of Sustainable Development as contained in Agenda 21, and the Millennium Development Goals. Kenya Wildlife Service will optimize utilization of wildlife resources, which plays an important role in the country's economic development," said Mr Julius Kipngetich CEO Kenya Wildlife Service.

### **Project sponsored by Novozymes**

Novozymes will sponsor the collaboration project on the characterization of Kenyan microbial diversity. The sponsorship of local institutional capacity-building consists of a Kenyan laboratory facility and necessary materials for implementing enzyme screening in Kenya, as well as costs related to training of the Kenyan students and travel costs. The specific research by now focus on isolating enzyme producing fungi from dung from wild herbivorous animals.

Novozymes has similar collaborations with other countries.