

Media release

30 November 2010

For immediate release:

CSIR takes the lead towards further development of *Hoodia*

The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) announced today that a cooperation agreement has been signed with Phytopharm, a United Kingdom-based pharmaceutical development and functional food company, for further development and commercialisation of *Hoodia gordonii* for the management of obesity. In terms of this agreement the commercialisation process will be led by the CSIR in collaboration with national and regional stakeholders, and has the full support of the South African San Council. Phytopharm is committed to support this development effort by sharing supporting intellectual property and the know-how and will share benefit from future commercialisation income.

Johan Hattingh, the CSIR's Group Manager Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer (IPTT), states that this provides a unique opportunity for South Africa and the region to build on the vast knowledge generated from cultivation to multiple clinical studies, to potentially develop a new product derived from *Hoodia Gordonii*, effective in the management and prevention of obesity.

He further states that the challenges must not be underestimated and that the development of an effective *Hoodia* based product will need scientific innovation and substantial investment in order for it to be successful. This will require a collective and inclusive effort from all relevant South African and regional stakeholders to ensure that we are successful. As a first step, a detailed scientific review of all the associated *Hoodia* programme know-how and clinical study findings will be initiated, co-opting external experts, with a view to advising the CSIR and our Southern African stakeholders as to further development options for products based on *Hoodia gordonii*.

Ends

Issued by CSIR Strategic Communication and Stakeholder Relations

Tendani Tsedu

Manager: CSIR Media Relations

Tel: 012 841 3417

Cell: 082 945 1980

E-mail: mtsedu@csir.co.za

Enquiries:

Johan Hattingh

CSIR's Group Manager Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer

Tel: 012 841 2080

E-mail: jhattingh@csir.co.za

Dr Vinesh Maharaj

Research group leader Bio-prospecting

Tel: 012 841 3295

E-mail: vmaharaj@csir.co.za

NOTE:

The CSIR (Council for Scientific and Industrial Research) is one of the leading R&D, technology and innovation institutions in Africa, with a track record spanning over 60 years. Structured to manage the entire research and innovation value chain, the CSIR strives for excellence in all its endeavours in order to improve the quality of life of South Africa's people and to increase the global competitiveness of South African industry. Visit www.csir.co.za or contact us at 012 841 2000.

The CSIR – *our future through science*