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**Richard Allan** (CEO Biozone International) shaking hands after signing contract with Liu Yizhu (deputy editor-in-chief) of People's Education Press, P.R. China at the Beijing International Book Fair.

## Smart Kiwi resources for teaching biology snapped up by China

Thousands of Chinese high school students will soon be studying biology using unique student resources developed by Hamilton company Biozone International.

Biozone has signed a cooperation agreement with **People's Education Press**, China's largest educational publisher in China and a subsidiary of China's Ministry of Education, which will see an initial run of 100,000 Biozone workbooks adapted for the China market and translated into Chinese.

CEO Richard Allan says with around five million Chinese students studying biology at senior secondary school level at

any one time, the deal opens the door to a significant potential market for the company.

Biozone met representatives from the People's Education Press last year when it joined a New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) showcase of New Zealand publishing at the Beijing International Book Fair. The deal was signed at the recent 2007 fair, which Biozone again attended. NZTE's Hamilton office has worked closely with Biozone in recent years, helping with business development and market development in export destinations.

"This is a huge opportunity for us," says Mr Allan. "The

Chinese recognise that we are the gold standard of student workbooks in biology - our resources meet demand in China for progressive teaching methodologies and up to date content.

"There is a real surge of interest in biology in China. They want to produce highly skilled gene technologists and need cutting edge content in an engaging format to do that."

Biozone International has been producing resources for senior secondary school biology students and their teachers for 20 years. These are used widely in New Zealand and exported to Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States. In

addition, Biozone has sold the rights to its material for translation and use in Poland and Slovenia, and now China.

Mr Allan, a former secondary school biology teacher, says a key to the company's success is the clever use of visuals in its core product - Student Workbooks - to engage and inform students, along with carefully thought out questions to test and advance students' understanding.

"These are immensely popular wherever students and teachers come across them. We put a very strong emphasis on visual delivery of information and use lots of graphics and diagrams with text scattered around them," he says.

"We also produce new editions every year and add in content in rapidly changing and developing areas of study like medical advances, genetics, evolution and conservation. These ensure the material is at the cutting edge of biological research and thinking."

In addition to student workbooks for complete programmes, the company's suite of products includes stand alone, modular workbooks on selected biology topics and CD ROMs with PowerPoint presentations on areas covered by biology curriculum.

Mr Allan says these appeal to the Chinese because the materials can easily be customised to suit their own work programme by mixing and matching the modular workbooks and the CD ROM presentations."

Jonathan Watt, NZTE's Trade Commissioner in Beijing, says Biozone's success is testimony to the quality of its offering

"The contract with People's Education Press shows what can be achieved by a good product in a saturated and protected market. The ongoing sales potential for Biozone International is very strong given the number of students studying biology at the level its resources target," he says.

NZTE hosted a stand of New Zealand publishing companies at the Beijing International Book Fair in 2005 and 2006 and Mr Allan says he couldn't imagine a more cost effective and comprehensive platform for publishers wanting to enter the challenging Chinese market.

"Cold calling and sending emails are pretty ineffectual ways of building relationships. Being at the fair and meeting people face-to-face was the key to our securing this contract with China."

He says Biozone International also made important contacts at the event with representatives from India and other Asian markets which the company will be following up.

"Economies like China and India are the economic powerhouses of the future and there is strong interest in using quality New Zealand resources to build their education capability."

#### Further Information

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#### Signing Ceremony

After signing contract with People's Education Press (left to right), Zheng Wangquan (assistant to the editor-in-chief), Ms. Jane Yang (NZTE, Beijing), Jonathan Watt (Trade Commissioner, NZTE Beijing), Richard Allan (CEO Biozone International), Liu Yizhu (deputy editor-in-chief), Yin Hongzhu (deputy president), Zhang Xiaoxia (director of copyright department), Li Hong (deputy director of biology department)

