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Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, Elevates Leadership for a Future of Innovation and Growth

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Strategic internal appointments bring fresh vision and continuity as Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, strengthens its global leadership in Life Science, Healthcare, and People Management.



"This transition is a testament to our commitment to both continuity and innovation," announced Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, as it appointed three internal executives to its Executive Board. This strategic shift reinforces the company's dedication to sustainable growth, groundbreaking innovation, and cultivating top-tier talent for the future.

Belén Garijo, Chair of the Executive Board and CEO of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, Said " We have announced a very important evolution of our Executive Board at Merck Group.After putting Life Science and Healthcare on a path to sustainable growth, both Matthias Heinzel and Peter Guenter are now passing on the baton to Jean-Charles Wirth and Danny Bar-Zohar. I want to extend my most sincere gratitude to Matthias and Peter for their strong leadership of their business sectors during very challenging times these past years. I have personally enjoyed working with them as a team. Additionally, we have announced the creation of a new Executive Board position, Chief People Officer, to showcase how important people, talent and culture are to Merck's long-term success. And I am delighted about the appointment of Khadija Ben Hammada to that role. My warmest congratulations to Jean-Charles, Danny and Khadija. Their appointment is a testament to the strength of our internal talent bench and our commitment to developing leaders from within.
The collective focus of the new Executive Board team remains firmly on Growth, Innovation, and People. We will continue building on our strong foundation while shaping the future of our company together with more than 62,000 colleagues worldwide, who are the driving force behind our success."

Leadership Transitions: A Strategic Continuum

The appointment of Jean-Charles Wirth as CEO Life Science, Danny Bar-Zohar as CEO Healthcare, and Khadija Ben Hammada as Chief People Officer marks a significant step in the company's leadership evolution. These changes, effective in 2025, come as Matthias Heinzel and Peter Guenter step down after guiding the Life Science and Healthcare sectors through transformative phases.

Jean-Charles Wirth, a long-standing executive at Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, will take over as CEO Life Science on **June 1, 2025**, succeeding Matthias Heinzel. Having played a pivotal role in the growth of the Science & Lab Solutions division, Wirth's deep financial and strategic expertise is expected to reinforce the company's market leadership in life sciences.

Danny Bar-Zohar, currently Global Head of R&D and Chief Medical Officer, will assume the role of CEO Healthcare, also effective **June 1, 2025**. His leadership in fostering a "drug-hunter mindset" and his vast experience in global pharmaceutical innovation position him as the right leader to steer the Healthcare division toward sustained innovation and strategic growth.

Additionally, **Khadija Ben Hammada** will join the Executive Board as **Chief People Officer (CPO) on March 1, 2025**—a newly created role emphasizing the company's dedication to talent development and corporate sustainability. Her expertise in human resources and organizational strategy will drive a stronger people-centric culture within the company.

Ensuring a Seamless Transition

To facilitate a smooth transition, both Jean-Charles Wirth and Danny Bar-Zohar will engage in a **90-day handover period** with their predecessors. The structured transition plan is designed to maintain stability and strategic direction across Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany's global businesses.

In welcoming the new executives, Johannes Baillou, Chairman of the Executive Board and Family Board of E. Merck KG, Darmstadt, Germany, stated:

> *"Matthias Heinzel and Peter Guenter have been instrumental in shaping the strategic trajectory of our Life Science and Healthcare divisions. Their leadership has positioned Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, for sustained success. We extend our gratitude for their invaluable contributions and look forward to the leadership of Jean-Charles Wirth, Danny Bar-Zohar, and Khadija Ben Hammada, who bring deep industry expertise and a forward-thinking approach to our Executive Board."*

A Leadership Team Poised for Future Growth

As of June 2025, the newly structured **Executive Board** will be composed of:

- **Belén Garijo** – Chair of the Executive Board and CEO
- **Jean-Charles Wirth** – CEO Life Science
- **Danny Bar-Zohar** – CEO Healthcare
- **Kai Beckmann** – CEO Electronics
- **Helene von Roeder** – Chief Financial Officer
- **Khadija Ben Hammada** – Chief People Officer

Belén Garijo, Chair of the Executive Board and CEO of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, emphasized the strategic importance of these appointments, noting:

> *"Our company is a value compounder, driven by resilient growth, innovation, and people. These appointments reflect our strong talent pipeline and our commitment to long-term success. The next generation of leadership will be instrumental in reinforcing our position as a global leader across Life Science, Healthcare, and Electronics."*

Looking Ahead: Innovation, People, and Resilience

As Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, transitions into this new era, the company remains focused on its long-term mission—delivering cutting-edge innovations, fostering a strong internal talent ecosystem, and ensuring sustainable growth across its business sectors. With a reinforced leadership structure in place, the company is well-positioned to navigate industry challenges while capitalizing on emerging opportunities in life sciences, healthcare, and electronics.

These strategic appointments not only reinforce Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany's leadership stability but also signal a renewed commitment to driving innovation, talent development, and sustained business growth in an evolving global landscape.