THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:-

1. A method of prophylactic or therapeutic treatment of chronic kidney disease in a subject, the method comprising administering to the subject at risk of developing chronic kidney disease, or to a subject having chronic kidney disease, a composition comprising a pharmaceutically effective amount of vasoactive intestinal peptide (VIP) or one or more functional VIP fragments selected from VIP(10-28), VIP(4-12), VIP(4-16), VIP(4-20), VIP(4-24), VIP(6-10), VIP(6-12), VIP(6-16), VIP(6-20), VIP(6-24) or conservative substitutions thereof.

2. A method of prophylactic or therapeutic treatment of kidney failure in a subject, the method comprising administering to the subject at risk of developing kidney failure, or to a subject having kidney failure, a composition comprising a pharmaceutically effective amount of vasoactive intestinal peptide (VIP) or one or more functional VIP fragments selected from VIP(10-28), VIP(4-12), VIP(4-16), VIP(4-20), VIP(4-24), VIP(6-10), VIP(6-12), VIP(6-16), VIP(6-20), VIP(6-24) or conservative substitutions thereof.

3. A method of prophylactic or therapeutic treatment of kidney fibrosis in a subject, the method comprising administering to the subject at risk of developing kidney fibrosis, or to a subject having kidney fibrosis, a composition comprising a pharmaceutically effective amount of vasoactive intestinal peptide (VIP) or one or more functional VIP fragments selected from VIP(10-28), VIP(4-12), VIP(4-16), VIP(4-20), VIP(4-24), VIP(6-10), VIP(6-12), VIP(6-16), VIP(6-20), VIP(6-24) or conservative substitutions thereof.

4. The method according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the chronic kidney disease or kidney failure is associated with kidney fibrosis.

5. The method according to claim 3 or claim 4, wherein the treatment prevents, slows down or reduced the degree or intensity of chronic kidney disease, kidney failure and/or kidney fibrosis.

6. The method of any one of claims 1 to 5, further comprising the simultaneous or sequential administration of one or more other agents active in the treatment of chronic kidney disease, kidney failure and/or kidney fibrosis.

7. A method of reducing the levels, inhibiting or reducing the production of pro-fibrotic mediators in a subject at risk of developing, or having established kidney

disease, kidney failure and/or kidney fibrosis, the method comprising administering to the subject a composition comprising a pharmaceutically effective amount of vasoactive intestinal peptide (VIP) or one or more functional VIP fragments selected from VIP(10-28), VIP(4-12), VIP(4-16), VIP(4-20), VIP(4-24), VIP(6-10), VIP(6-12), VIP(6-16), VIP(6-20), VIP(6-24) or conservative substitutions thereof.

8. A method of reducing collagen formation or enhancing collagen degradation in the kidney of a subject, the method comprising administering to the subject a composition comprising a pharmaceutically effective amount of vasoactive intestinal peptide (VIP) or one or more functional VIP fragments selected from VIP(10-28), VIP(4-12), VIP(4-16), VIP(4-20), VIP(4-24), VIP(6-10), VIP(6-12), VIP(6-16), VIP(6-20), VIP(6-24) or conservative substitutions thereof.

9. Vasoactive intestinal peptide (VIP) or one or more functional VIP fragments selected from VIP(10-28), VIP(4-12), VIP(4-16), VIP(4-20), VIP(4-24), VIP(6-10), VIP(6-12), VIP(6-16), VIP(6-20), VIP(6-24) or conservative substitutions thereof, for use in the prophylactic or therapeutic treatment of chronic kidney disease.

10. Vasoactive intestinal peptide (VIP) or one or more functional VIP fragments selected from VIP(10-28), VIP(4-12), VIP(4-16), VIP(4-20), VIP(4-24), VIP(6-10), VIP(6-12), VIP(6-16), VIP(6-20), VIP(6-24) or conservative substitutions thereof, for use in the prophylactic or therapeutic treatment of kidney failure.

11. Vasoactive intestinal peptide (VIP) or one or more functional VIP fragments selected from VIP(10-28), VIP(4-12), VIP(4-16), VIP(4-20), VIP(4-24), VIP(6-10), VIP(6-12), VIP(6-16), VIP(6-20), VIP(6-24) or conservative substitutions thereof, for use in the therapeutic or prophylactic treatment of kidney fibrosis.

12. Vasoactive intestinal peptide (VIP) or one or more functional VIP fragments according to any one of claims 9 to 11, wherein use prevents or slows down the progression of established chronic kidney disease, prevents or slows down the development of fibrosis or reduces the degree of established fibrosis.

13. A composition for the prophylactic or therapeutic treatment of chronic kidney disease, the composition comprising a pharmaceutically effective amount of vasoactive intestinal peptide (VIP) or one or more functional VIP fragments selected from VIP(10-28), VIP(4-12), VIP(4-16), VIP(4-20), VIP(4-24), VIP(6-10), VIP(6-12), VIP(6-16), VIP(6-20), VIP(6-24) or conservative substitutions thereof.

14. A composition for the prophylactic or therapeutic treatment of kidney failure, the composition comprising a pharmaceutically effective amount of vasoactive intestinal peptide (VIP) or one or more functional VIP fragments selected from VIP(10-28), VIP(4-12), VIP(4-16), VIP(4-20), VIP(4-24), VIP(6-10), VIP(6-12), VIP(6-16), VIP(6-20), VIP(6-24) or conservative substitutions thereof.

15. A composition for the prophylactic or therapeutic treatment of kidney fibrosis, the composition comprising a pharmaceutically effective amount of vasoactive intestinal peptide (VIP) or one or more functional VIP fragments selected from VIP(10-28), VIP(4-12), VIP(4-16), VIP(4-20), VIP(4-24), VIP(6-10), VIP(6-12), VIP(6-16), VIP(6-20), VIP(6-24) or conservative substitutions thereof.

16. A composition according to any one of claims 13 to 15, for administration in combination with or in conjunction with a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

17. A composition according to any one of claims 13 to 16, in combination with one or more other active agents useful in the treatment of chronic kidney disease, kidney fibrosis or kidney failure.

18. A composition according to any one of claims 13 to 17, formulated for administration by oral, intravenous, intramuscular or subcuticular routes.

19. A composition according to any one of claims 13 to 18, wherein the composition reduces the risk of developing, prevents establishment of, or slows progression of kidney fibrosis or kidney disease.

CLAIMS

1. Use of a composition comprising a pharmaceutically effective amount of vasoactive intestinal peptide (VIP) or one or more functional VIP fragments selected from VIP(10-28), VIP(4-12), VIP(4-16), VIP(4-20), VIP(4-24), VIP(6-10), VIP(6-12), VIP(6-16), VIP(6-20), VIP(6-24) or conservative substitutions thereof, for the manufacture of a medicament for the prophylactic or therapeutic treatment of kidney fibrosis in a subject at risk of developing kidney fibrosis or a subject having kidney fibrosis, wherein the subject at risk of developing kidney fibrosis does not have hypertension.

2. The use according to claim 1, wherein the kidney fibrosis is associated with chronic kidney disease or kidney failure.

3. The use according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the medicament prevents, slows down or reduces the degree or intensity of kidney fibrosis.

4. The use according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the medicament further comprises one or more other agents active in the treatment of chronic kidney disease, kidney failure and/or kidney fibrosis.

5. Use of a composition comprising a pharmaceutically effective amount of vasoactive intestinal peptide (VIP) or one or more functional VIP fragments selected from VIP(10-28), VIP(4-12), VIP(4-16), VIP(4-20), VIP(4-24), VIP(6-10), VIP(6-12), VIP(6-16), VIP(6-20), VIP(6-24) or conservative substitutions thereof, for the manufacture of a medicament for reducing the levels, inhibiting or reducing the production of pro-fibrotic mediators in a subject at risk of developing kidney fibrosis or a subject having kidney fibrosis, wherein the subject at risk of developing kidney fibrosis does not have hypertension.

6. Use of a composition comprising a pharmaceutically effective amount of vasoactive intestinal peptide (VIP) or one or more functional VIP fragments selected from VIP(10-28), VIP(4-12), VIP(4-16), VIP(4-20), VIP(4-24), VIP(6-10), VIP(6-12), VIP(6-16), VIP(6-20), VIP(6-24) or conservative substitutions thereof, for the manufacture of a medicament for reducing collagen formation or enhancing collagen

degradation in the kidney of a subject at risk of developing kidney fibrosis or a subject having kidney fibrosis, wherein the subject at risk of developing kidney fibrosis does not have hypertension.

7. The use according to claim 5 or claim 6 wherein the kidney fibrosis is associated with chronic kidney disease or kidney failure.