









Secondary metabolites: paths to discovery

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28 April 2021

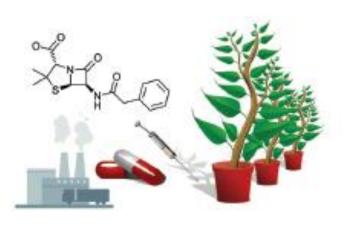
Natural Products Discovery

Why is this still a relevant field?

Rise of **multidrug- resistan**t pathogens

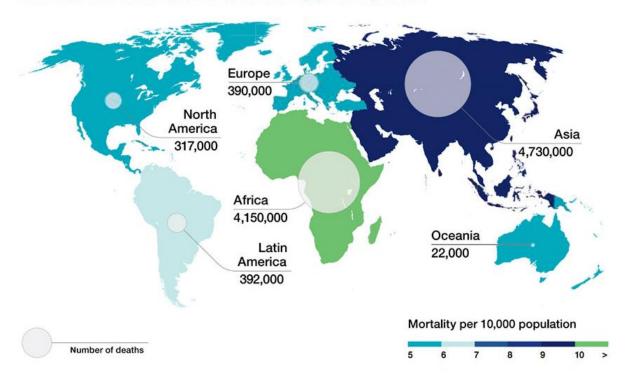
+ Acute and long-term side effects of widely used drugs

Urgent need for **new therapeutic agents**



Natural Products Discovery

Deaths attributable to AMR every year by 2050



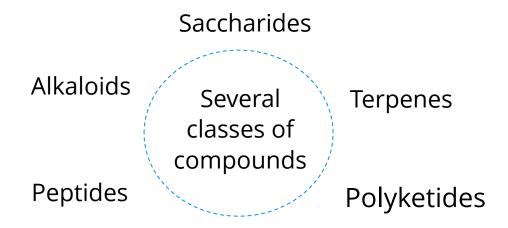
- **Antibiotic resistance** accounts for at least 50,000 deaths each year in Europe and the US.
- It is predicted that drug resistant infections will be responsible for the deaths of 10 million people worldwide by 2050.
- Cancer is a leading cause of death worldwide with 7.6 million deaths each year with numbers continuously rising.

Source: Antimicrobial Resistance: Tackling a Crisis for the Health and Wealth of Nations (2014)

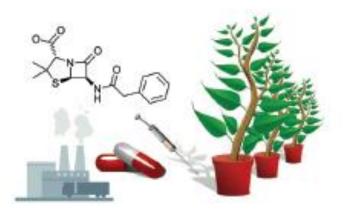
The need for new therapeutical drugs is real

Natural Products Discovery

- Small organic molecules produced by living organisms;
- Normally are secondary metabolites:
 - Not essential for growth and reproduction;
 - Provide survival advantage.

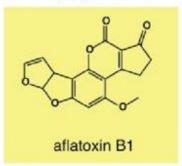


Non-ribosomal peptides (NRPs)

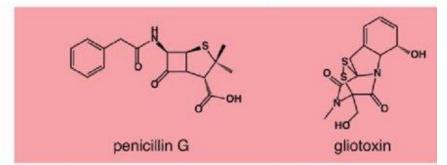


Secondary metabolites – classes:

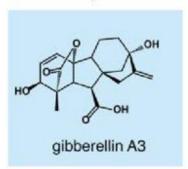
polyketide



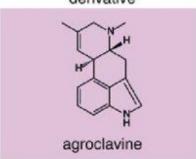
non-ribosomal peptides



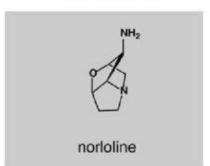
terpene



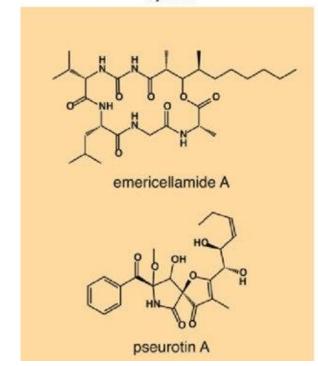
prenylated tryptophan derivative

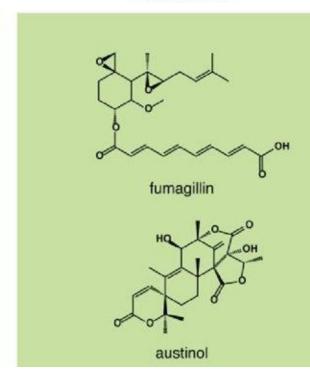


non-canonical



polyketide/non-ribosomal peptide hybrids





Secondary metabolites encoding genes are organized in:

Biosynthetic Gene Clusters (BGCs)

Physically clustered group of two or more genes in a particular genome that together encode a biosynthetic pathway to produce a specialized metabolite.



A BGC represents a biosynthetic and evolutionary unit.

Encodes for:

- Biosynthetic enzymes;
- Resistance enzymes;
- Enzymes to produce unusual building blocks;
- Regulatory machinery.

Horizontal gene transfer (HGT)

BGCs are prone to **horizontal gene transfer** (HGT)

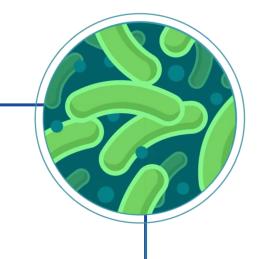
Evidenced by:

- Their clustering;
- Frequent linkage with mobile genetic elements;
- Detection on plasmids.

Mutation
Recombination
Gene gain
Gene loss
Gene duplication
Successive merge of smaller subclusters

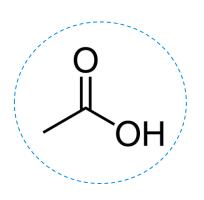
BGC diversification mechanisms Guided by:

- selective pressures;
- opportunities for genetic exchange.

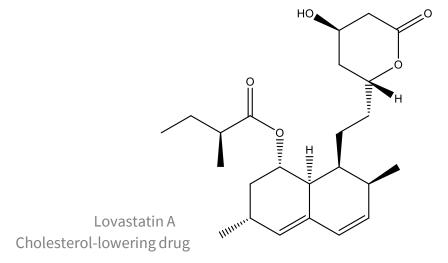


Polyketides

- One of the largest classes of natural products.
- Synthesized by large multifunctional enzymes: Polyketide Synthases (PKS).
- Extremely high structural diversity.
- Important applications in medicine and pharmaceutical industry.

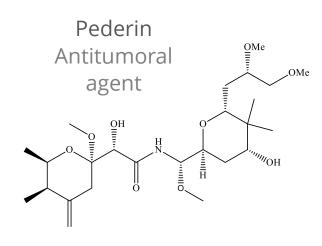


The building blocks used are derived from one of the simplest molecules available in nature: **acetic acid**



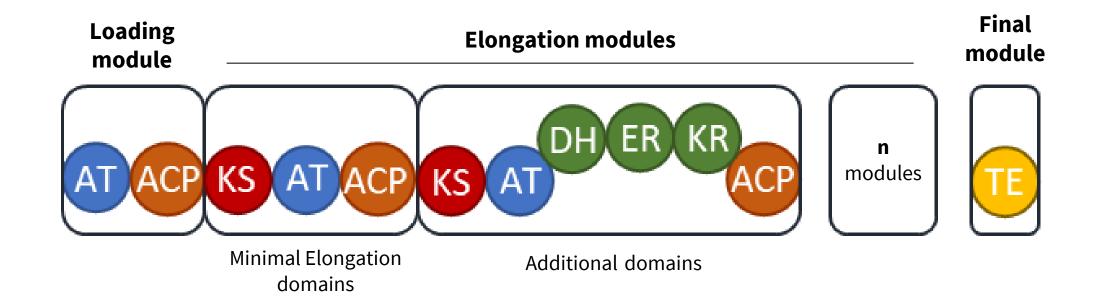
Famous Polyketides

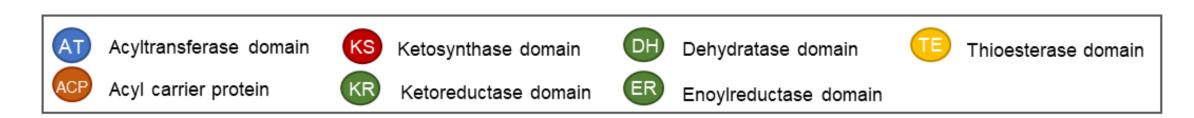
Important therapeutic drugs



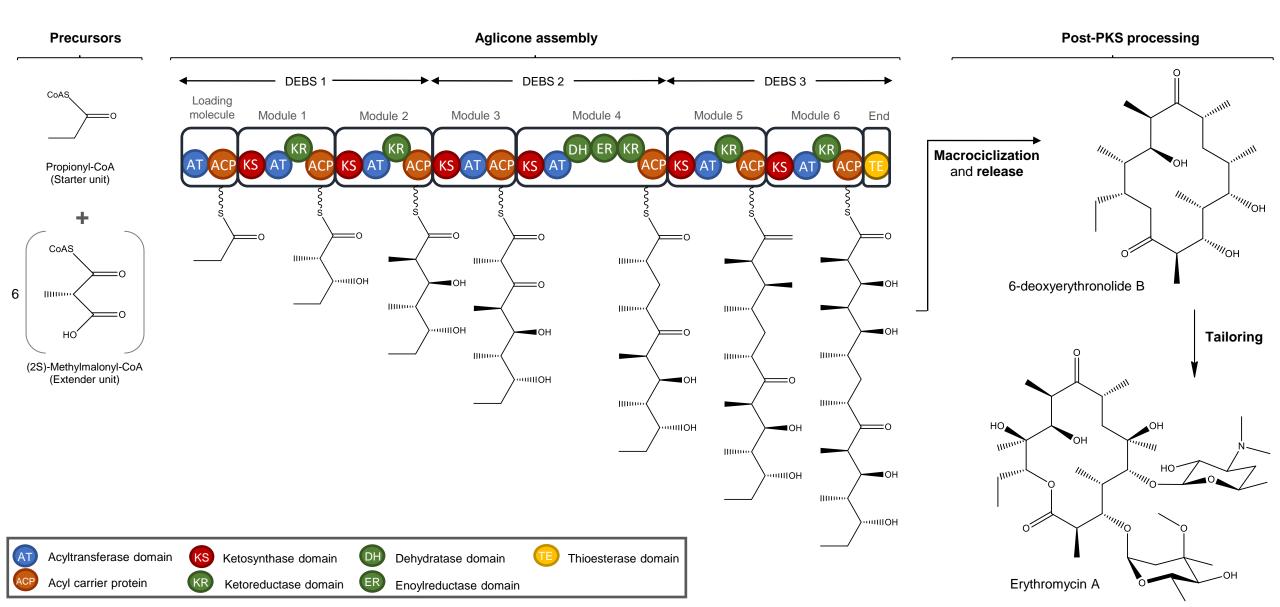
Tetracycline Antibiotic

General PKS composition





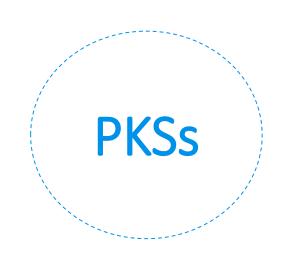
"DEBS": the prototype of type I PKS



PKSs classification

Based on enzyme architecture:

Type II
Type III



Based on domain organization:

Iterative Modular (only type I)

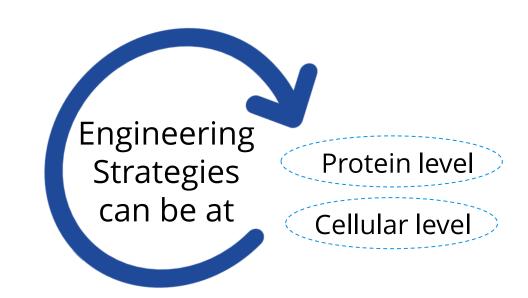
There are also diverse **PKS-NRPS hybrids** worth to mention.

Engineering Polyketides

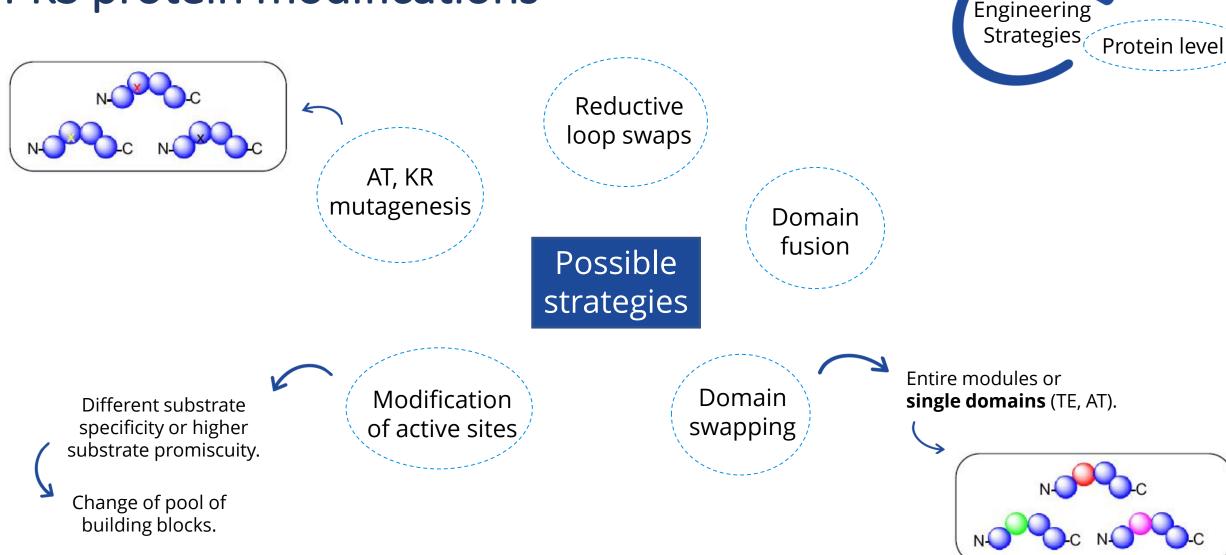
Polyketides are promising targets for **synthetic biology**:

- Highly modular architecture;
- Clinical relevance;
- High abundance.

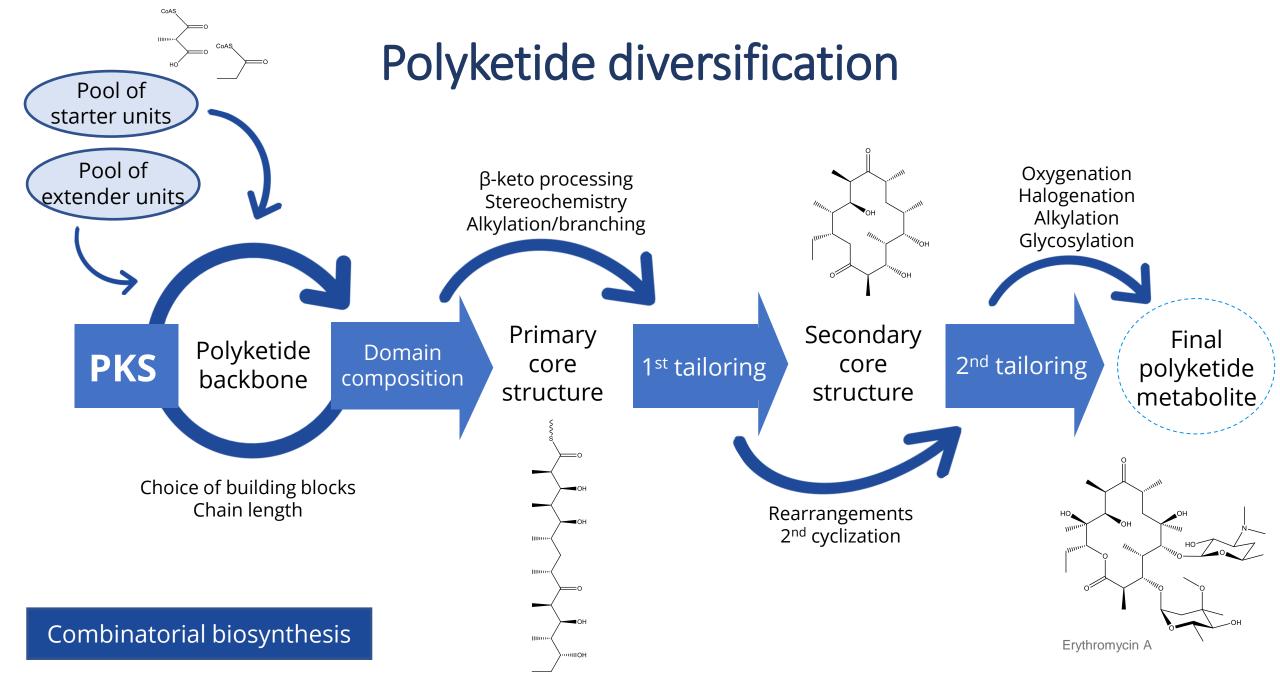
Pathways can be manipulated/redesigned to produce new molecules.



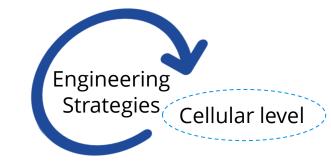
PKS protein modifications



Barajas, Jesus F. et al. 2017. "Engineered Polyketides: Synergy between Protein and Host Level Engineering." *Synthetic and Systems Biotechnology* 2(3): 147–66. Sun, Huihua, Zihe Liu, Huimin Zhao, and Ee Lui Ang. 2015. "Recent Advances in Combinatorial Biosynthesis for Drug Discovery." *Drug Design*, Development and Therapy 9: 823–33.



Heterologous expression of BGCs



Strategy to produce compounds

Too complex to be chemically synthesized.

Produced by complex, slow-growing microorganisms.



- Allow the expression of cryptic (silent) BGCs.
- Overproduction of target compounds.

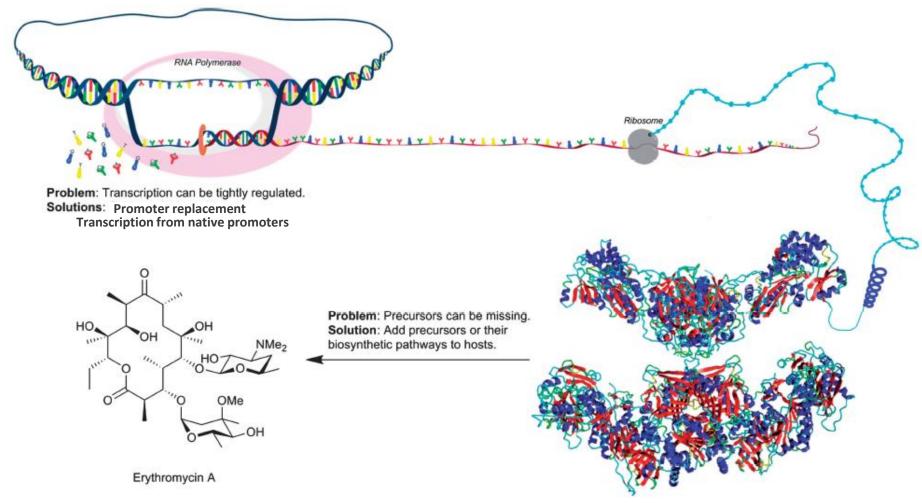


Possible hosts:

- Streptomyces
- Myxobacteria
- Escherichia coli
- Saccharomyces cerevisiae

Heterologous production of polyketides was first demonstrated with Streptomyces parvulus in 1984.

Challenges in Heterologous BGC expression



Problem: Produced compounds can kill host.

Solution: Co-expression of resistance pathway/Sensitive host

has not prevented mg/L of product formation.

Problem: Proteins must fold and ACP must be phosphopantetheinylated. **Solution:** Chaperones aid folding and phosphopantetheinyl transferases are added to hosts.

Discovery methods of new BGCs



Discovered from sponge's metagenomic DNA.

H₃CO₂

Psymberin

OH

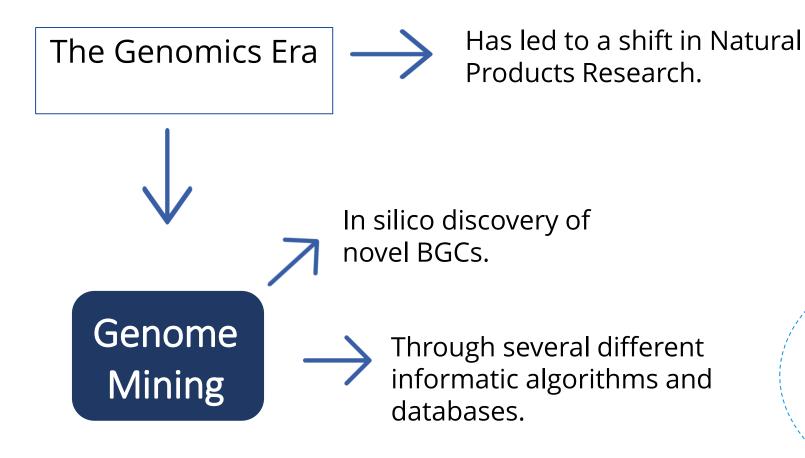
Metagenomics



Powerful tool for the discovery of novel PKSs, particularly from **uncultivable bacteria**.

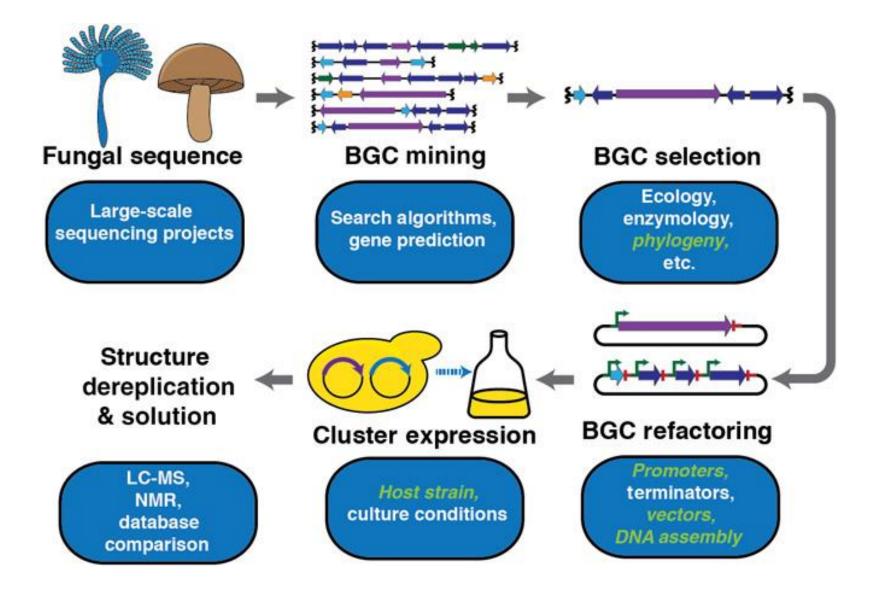


Discovery methods of new BGCs

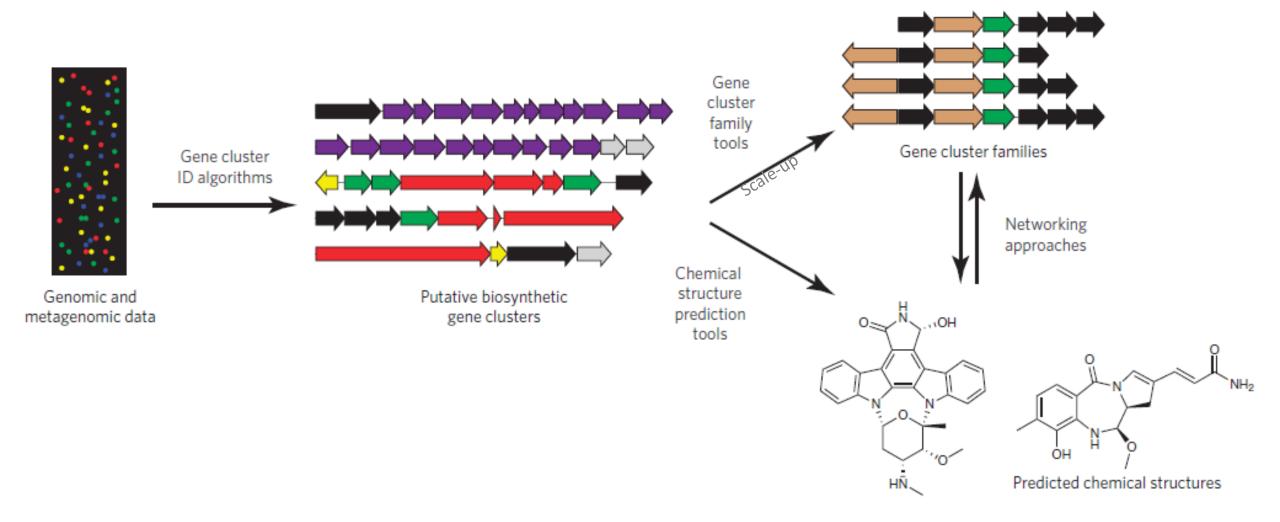




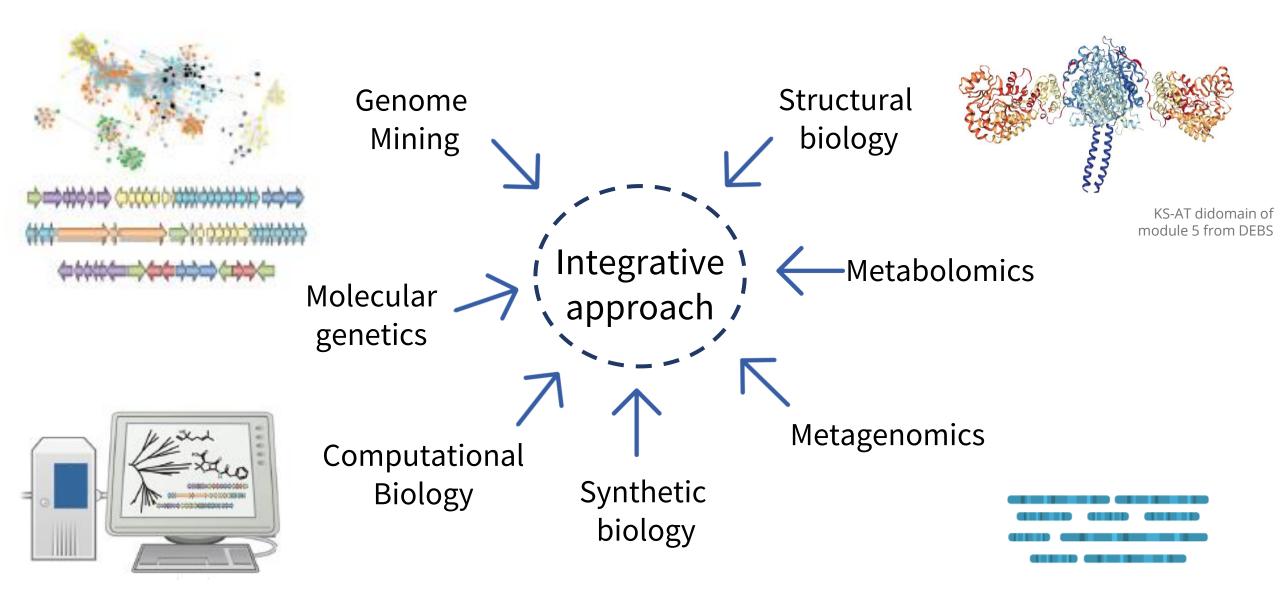
Discovery methods of new BGCs



Computational Approaches in Natural Products Discovery



The ultimate goal: an integrative approach



Case-study:

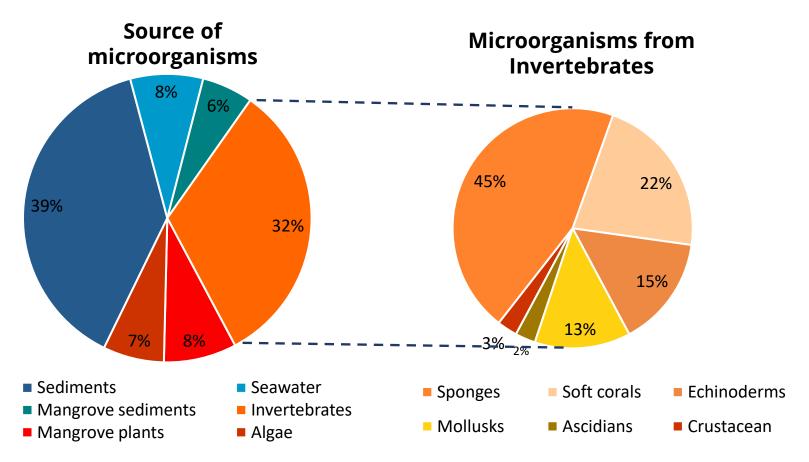
Secondary metabolite biosynthesis by *Aquimarina* species: emerging bioactivities from the rare marine biosphere

The marine environment

Is a prolific source of novel bioactive natural products



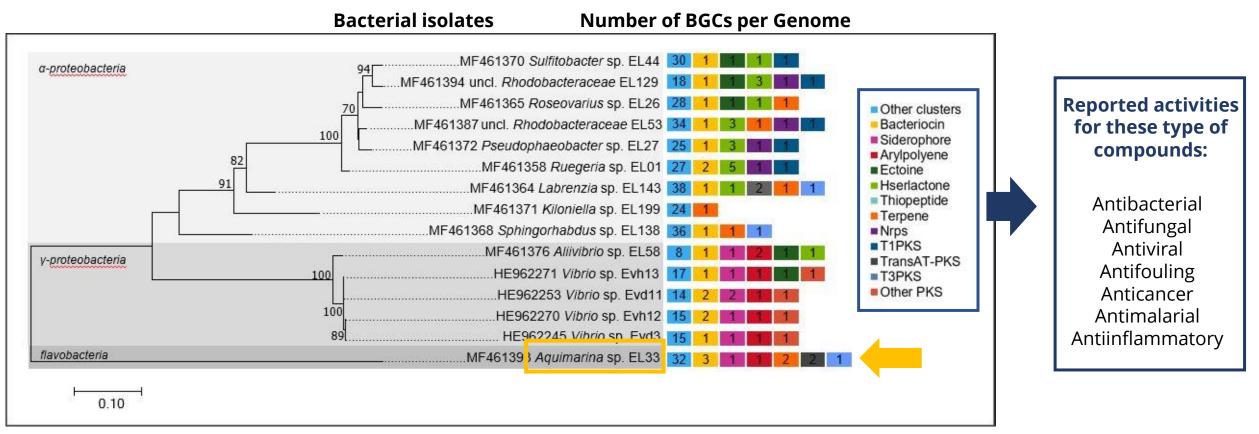
Novel Natural Products from the Seas



Sponges and soft corals stand out as hosts for microorganisms with potential for the biosynthesis of new compounds.

Year: 2013

Potential for Secondary Metabolite Synthesis in Soft Coral-Associated Bacteria



440 biosynthetic gene clusters (BGCs) on the genomes of 15 bacterial associates (12 genera) isolated from the soft corals *Eunicella labiata* and *Eunicella verrucosa*.

The Aquimarina genus



Phylum: Bacteroidetes Family: Flavobacteriaceae Genus: *Aquimarina*

- Gram-negative bacteria;
- Strictly marine;
- Heterotrophic;
- Versatile carbon metabolism;
- Yellow or orange-pigmented.

The Aquimarina genus



Unknown biotechnological potential?

- Involved in the regulation of harmful microbial blooms through mediation of carbon and nitrogen cycling.
- Emerging evidence of pathogenic behavior in some marine invertebrates.
- **Distinct secondary metabolism** already observed for some isolates.

environmental microbiology



Environmental Microbiology (2019) 21(11), 4002-4019

doi:10.1111/1462-2920.14747

Comparative genomics reveals complex natural product biosynthesis capacities and carbon metabolism across host-associated and free-living *Aquimarina* (*Bacteroidetes, Flavobacteriaceae*) species

Sandra G. Silva ¹, Jochen Blom, Tina Keller-Costa ¹ and Rodrigo Costa ¹, 3*

Comparison of 26 Aquimarina genomes from several isolation sources

HOST-ASSOCIATED (HA)

FREE-LIVING (FL)

Red algae

Marine sponges Gorgonian coral

Seawater

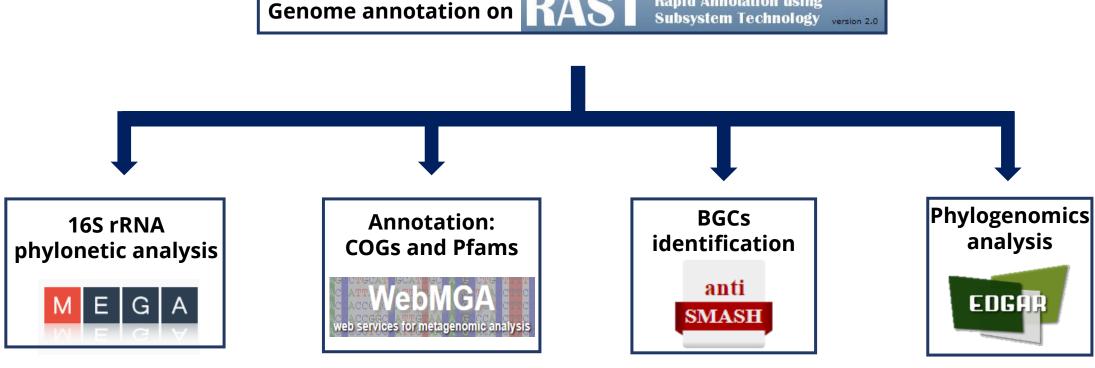
Marine sediments

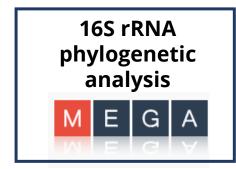
Methods

Analysis of all available *Aquimarina* genomes at NCBI (25/02/2019)

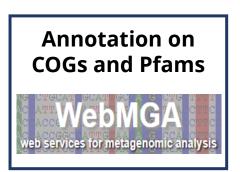
> Download of 26 genomes

Genome annotation on RAS **Rapid Annotation using** Subsystem Technology version 2.0



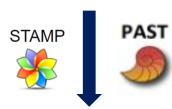


Construction of a phylogenetic tree



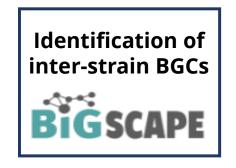


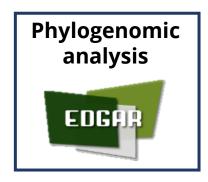
Data treatment

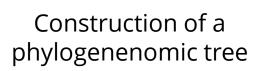


Statistical analysis





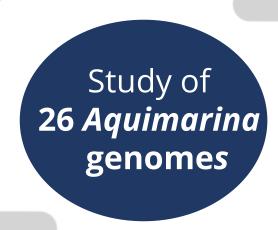




Goals

Search for biosynthetic gene clusters (BGCs).

Are *Aquimarina* species potential sources of novel bioactive natural products?



Comparison between host-associated and free-living organisms.

Describe general features of the genus.

Genomes Overview

- 26 genomes.
- Genome size range: from **4.07Mb** (*Aq. atlantica*) to **6.5 Mb** (*Aq.* AU119). Average: **5,6 Mb**.
- GC content range: from **31.4** (*Aq. muelleri*) to **35.9** (*Aq. spongiae*). Average: **32.72%.**
- Average number of coding sequences per genome: **5480 CDSs.**
- Core genome: 1226 CDSs.
- Pan genome: 21211 CDSs.



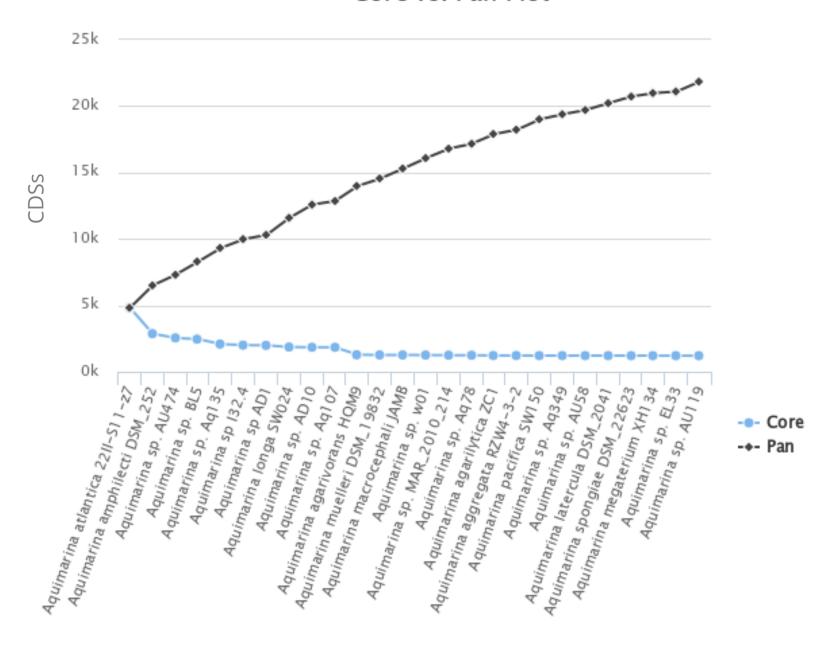
Whole-genome sequence alignment

These data suggests: open pangenome.

Common in species living in a community.

Tendency to large genomes and high horizontal rate of genes transfer.

Core vs. Pan Plot



Functional Annotation

COG

Clusters of Orthologous Groups

Pfam

Protein families' database

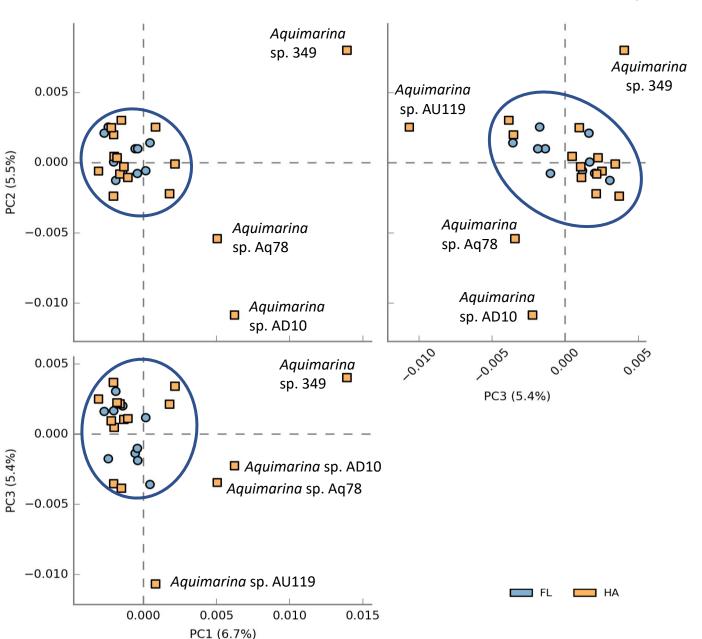


	2320	Number of different ORFs	4187
-	1024	Core (Nr. ORFs present in all strains)	1130
		(Nr. OKFS present in all strains)	
	248	Unique	1716
		(Nr. of ORFs only present in one strain)	
	07646		0.4000.4
_	87646	Total number of ORFs	242234
	3371	Average of number of ORFs per strain	9317
		-	

Principal Component Analysis (PCA)

Pfom annotation

Absence of a statistical difference between annotated genomes



One single group:

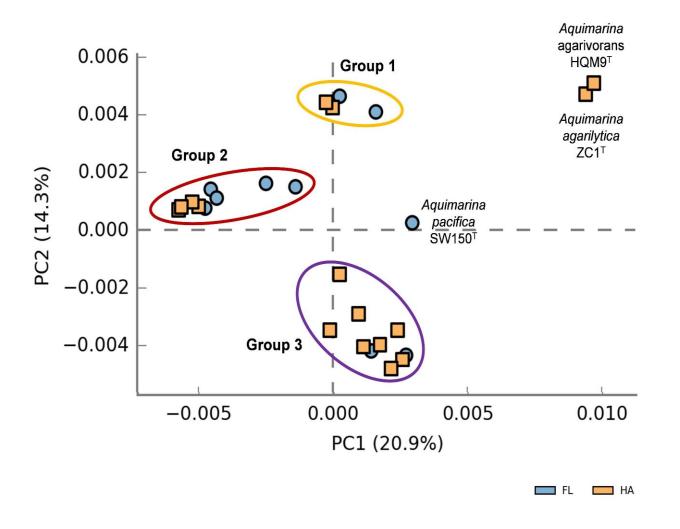
Aquimarina sp. 132.4 Aquimarina longa Aquimarina muelleri Aquimarina sp. Aq135 Aquimarina sp. w01 Aquimarina sp. MAR Aquimarina atlantica Aquimarina macrocephali Aquimarina sp. AU58 Aquimarina sp. EL33 Aquimarina megaterium Aguimarina sp. AU474 Aquimarina spongiae Aquimarina sp. Aq107 Aquimarina aggregata Aquimarina latercula Aquimarina sp. BL5 Aquimarina sp. AD10 Aquimarina pacifica Aquimarina agarivorans Aquimarina agarilytica Aquimarina amphilecti

Outside of the group:

Aquimarina sp. 349 Aquimarina sp. 78 Aquimarina sp. AD10 Aquimarina sp. AU119







Group 1

Aquimarina sp. 132.4 Aquimarina longa SW024^T Aquimarina muelleri DSM 19832^T Aquimarina sp. Aq135

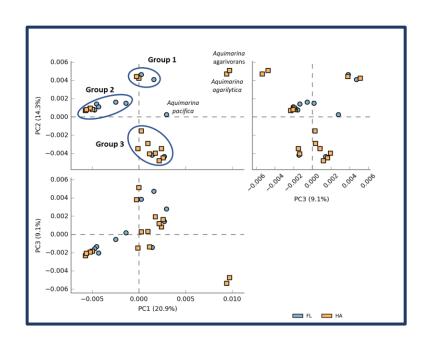
Group 2

Aquimarina sediminis w01^T
Aquimarina sp. MAR_2010_214
Aquimarina atlantica 22II-S11-z7^T
Aquimarina macrocephali JAMB N27^T
Aquimarina sp. Aq349
Aquimarina sp. AU58
Aquimarina sp. EL33
Aquimarina sp. Aq78
Aquimarina megaterium XH134^T

Group 3

Aquimarina sp. AU474
Aquimarina sp. AU119
Aquimarina spongiae A6^T
Aquimarina sp. Aq107
Aquimarina aggregata RZW4-3-2^T
Aquimarina latercula SIO-1^T
Aquimarina sp. BL5
Aquimarina sp. AD10
Aquimarina sp. AD1
Aquimarina amphilecti 92V^T





Are these groups statistically significant?



Yes

Confirmed by one-way
Permanova
(Permutational analysis of variance)

1

Division of the 26 genomes into **3 clusters**



Which COGs are more contributive for the formation of these 3 groups?



SIMPER analysis

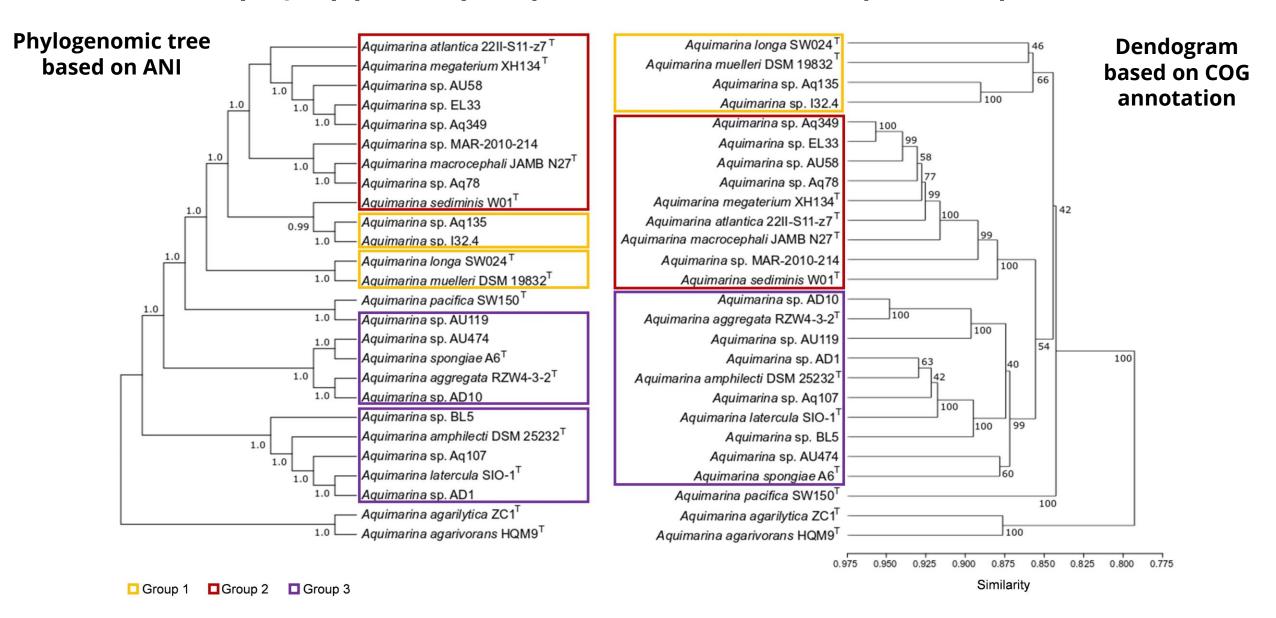




COGs related with secondary metabolism

Taxon	Av. dissim	Contrib. %	Annotation
COG3321	0,05777		Acyl transferase domain in polyketide synthase (PKS) enzymes
COG4886	0,04966	0,3238	Leucine-rich repeat (LRR) protein
COG2273	0,04762	0,3105	Beta-glucanase, GH16 family
COG2207	0,04713	0,3073	AraC-type DNA-binding domain and AraC-containing proteins
COG3275	0,04656	0,3036	Sensor histidine kinase, LytS/YehU family
COG1020	0,04599	0,2999	Non-ribosomal peptide synthetase component F
COG3279	0,04131	0,2693	DNA-binding response regulator, LytR/AlgR family
COG3979	0,03851	0,251	Chitodextrinase
COG3501	0,03683	·	Uncharacterized conserved protein, implicated in type VI secretion and phage assembly
COG2335	0,03568	1 -	Uncharacterized surface protein containing fasciclin (FAS1) repeats

Phylogeny primarily shapes the metabolism of Aquimarina species



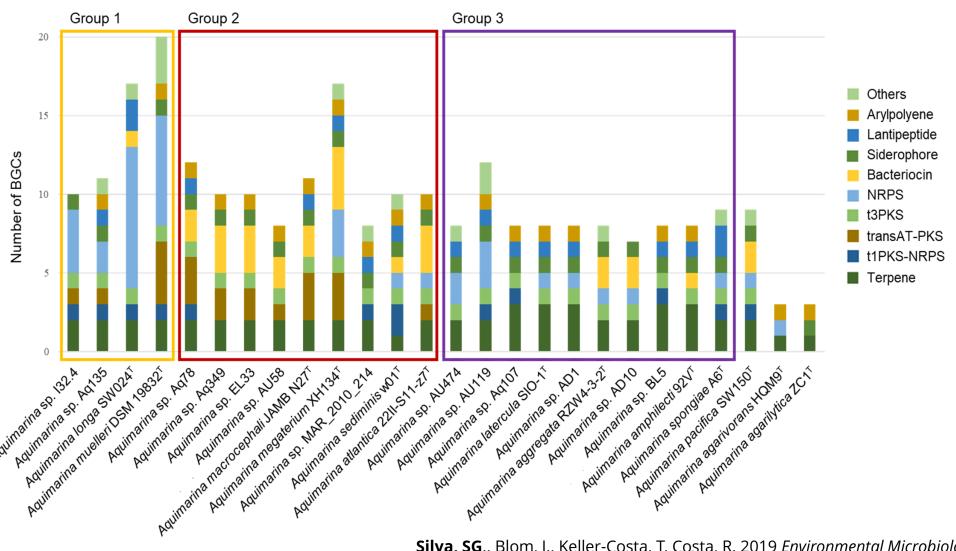
Identification of BGCs

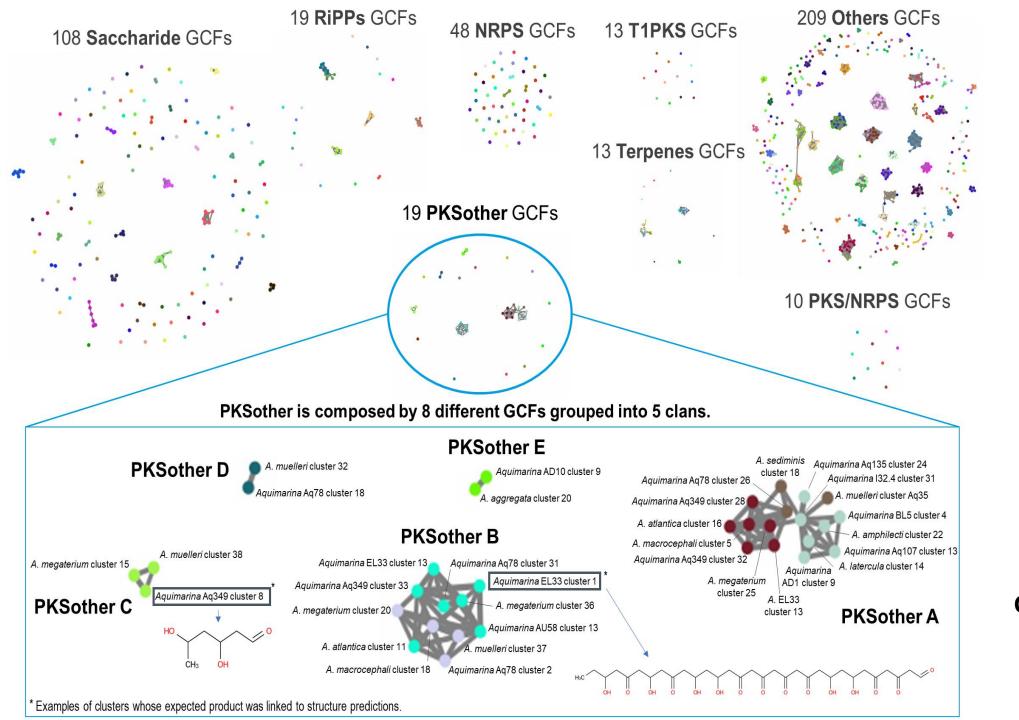




54 terpenes 13 t1PKS-NRPS 21 transATPKS 24 t3pPKS **39 NRPS**

High biosynthetic diversity

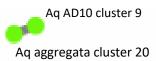




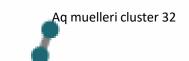


Gene Cluster Families

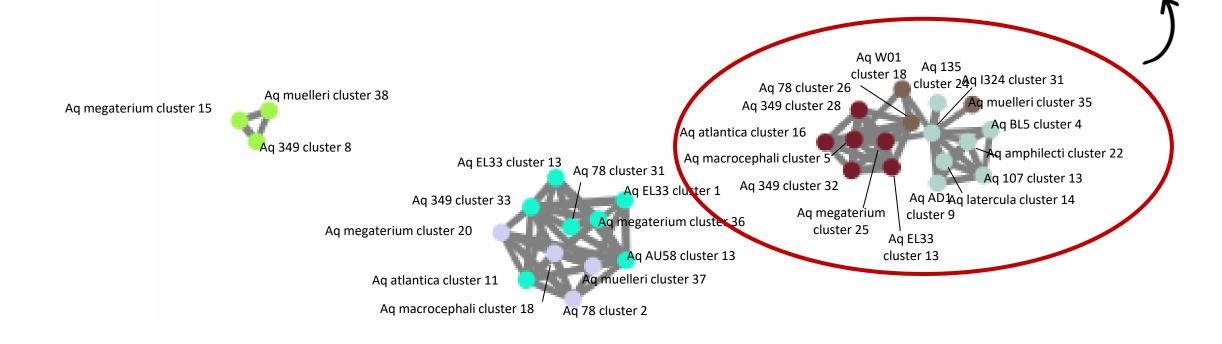
PKS-other class







Genomes belong to COG cluster no 2



Next steps

What is the coding potential within this genus?

105K1

The

Aquimarina

genus

Comparative genomics approach

Can we extract potential new drugs?

Chemical identification and isolation of bioactive compounds

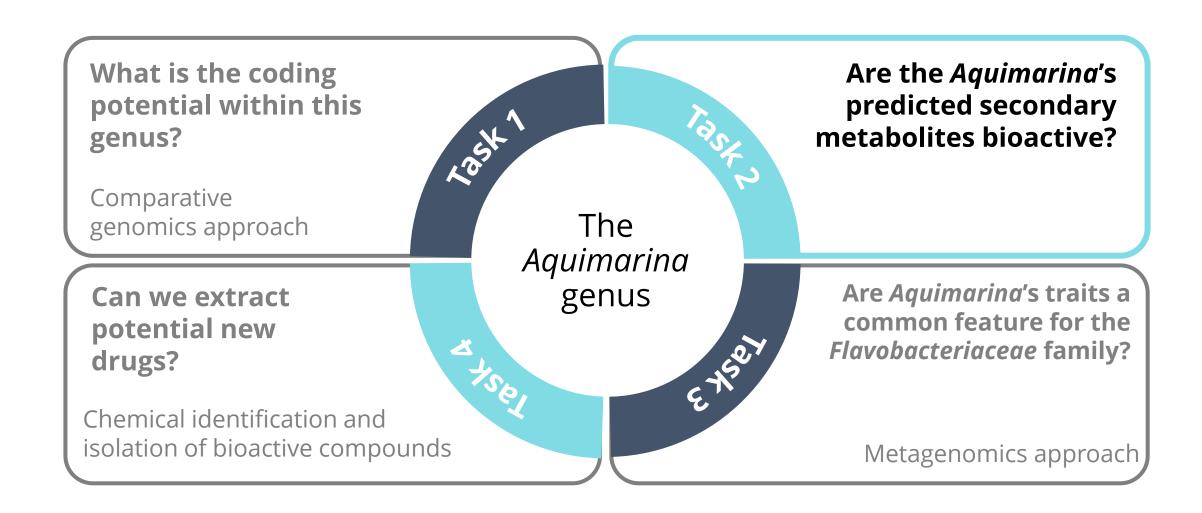
Are the *Aquimarina*'s predicted secondary metabolites bioactive?

Bioactivity assays

Are *Aquimarina*'s traits a common feature for the *Flavobacteriaceae* family?

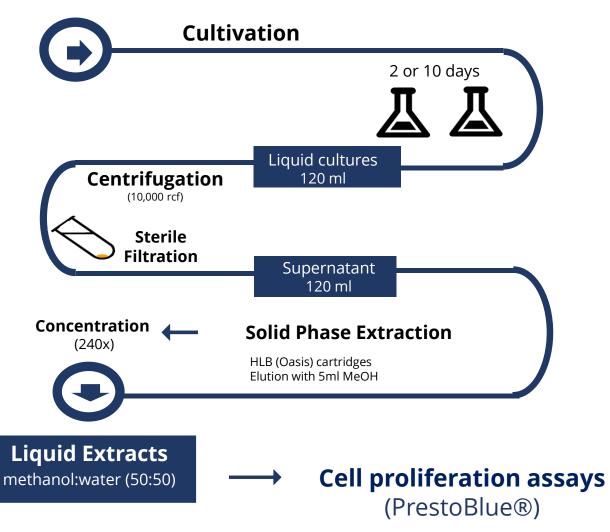
Metagenomics approach

Next steps



9 Aquimarina strains





Growth inhibition assays ("MIC"-type)

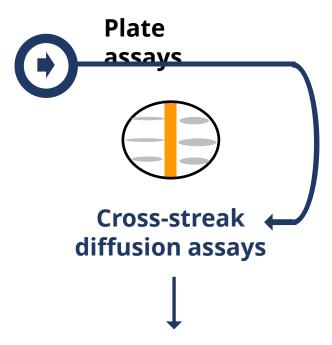


Antifungal Activity Antibacterial activity

Antitumoral activity

9 Aquimarina strains

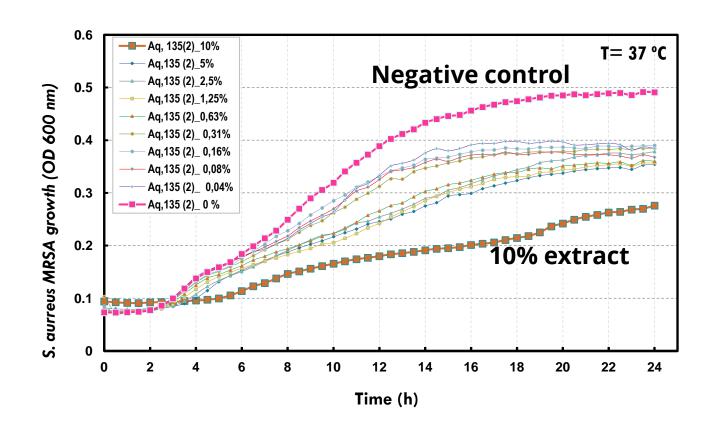




Antibacterial activity
Antifungal Activity

Aquimarina sp. strain Aq135 (day 2) extract versus S. aureus JE2 (MRSA)

Overnight kinetic assay



60% reduction of *S.*aureus MRSA growth
with the **10% Aq135 extract**

Inhibition of marine bacteria growth in Cross-streak Diffusion Assays

	Vibro spp.							Vibrio	Micrococcus sp.	Pseudovibrio sp.	Labrenzia sp.	
	EL22	EL36	EL38	EL41	EL49	EL62	EL67	EL112	schiloi	MC110	Pv125	EL143
A. muelleri DSM19832	+++	++	++	+++	+++	++	+++	+++	-	-	+++	++
A. latercula DSM2041	-	-	-	+++	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
A. spongiae DSM22623	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Aquimarina</i> sp. Aq78	+	-	+	+++	-	+	++	+	-	-	+	-
Aquimarina sp. Aq107	+	-	+	+++	-	+	+	++	-	-	-	-
<i>Aquimarina</i> sp. Aq135	-	-	+	+++	+	-	++	+	-	-	++	++
Aquimarina sp. Aq349	++	-	+	+++	-	+	++	++	-	-	+	-
Aquimarina sp. EL33	++	-	++	+++	-	+	++	++	-	-	+	-
Aquimarina sp. EL43	++	-	+	+++	-	+	++	++	-	-	-	-

Growth	+++	++	+	+/-	-
inhibition	100%	75%	50%	25%	0%

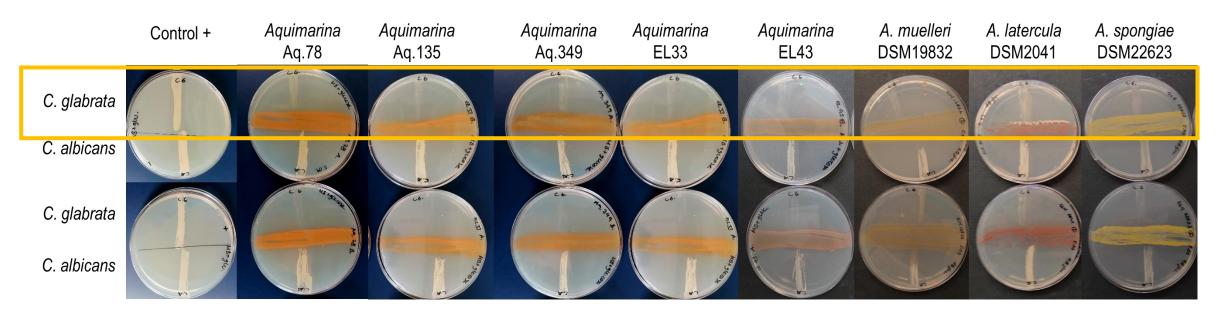




trol +

Strong inhibitory activity of all Aquimarina strains against C. glabrata KCHr606

Cross-streak Diffusion Assays



All cross-streak assays were performed at least in duplicates.

Preliminary conclusions:

- Aguimarina's extracts show anti-staphylococcal activity in "MIC"-type assays.
- In-plate activity was observed against several marine bacteria and Candida glabrata.



Aguimarina sp. EL33 (x25)

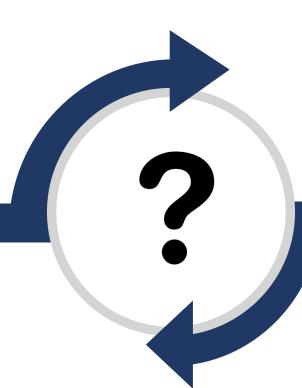
Future work:

- Conclusion of cell proliferation assays against human tumoral cells.
- LC-MS based "Metabolomic" profiling of the liquid extracts from Aquimarina strains.

Next steps

What is the coding Are the *Aquimarina*'s potential within this predicted secondary 10st metabolites bioactive? genus? Comparative The Bioactivity assays genomics approach Aquimarina Are Aquimarina's genus Can we extract potential new traits a common drugs? feature of the Flavobacteriaceae Chemical identification and isolation of bioactive family? compounds

The genomic identification of **BGCs** coupled with the observed **bioactivities** in the *Aquimarina* genus.



Raised an urgent question:

are all marine Flavobacteriaceae species an underexplored biotechnological potential?

To answer this:

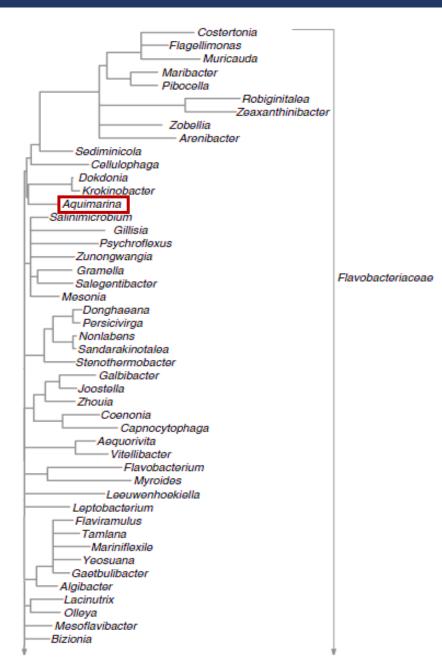
a metagenomic approach

was planned.

The Flavobacteriaceae family

Largest family in the phylum Bacteroidetes.

- Contains at least 90 genera and hundreds of species.
- Wide variety of marine, freshwater, and soil habitats
 Several know associations with animals and plants.



The Flavobacteriaceae family

 Common specialization in the degradation of high molecular weight (HMW) compounds.



Found in high abundances during natural and induced **phytoplankton blooms.**

Phytoplankton Bloom Iceland June 24, 2010



Use **existing MAGS** by mining public databases and huge sequencing projects such as TARA Oceans (estimation: ~300 MAGs).

1

Inspection of **genomes** and **metagenome-assembled genomes (MAGs)** from the *Flavobacteriaceae* family.

Are available aprox.

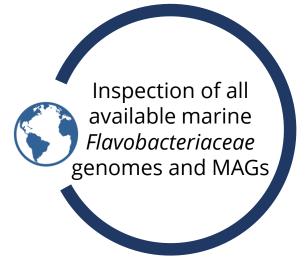
1000 genomes coming

from 90 genus.

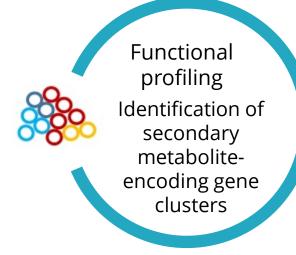
De-novo construction of MAGs from inhouse metagenomic datasets of sponges and coral samples (estimation: ~25MAGs).



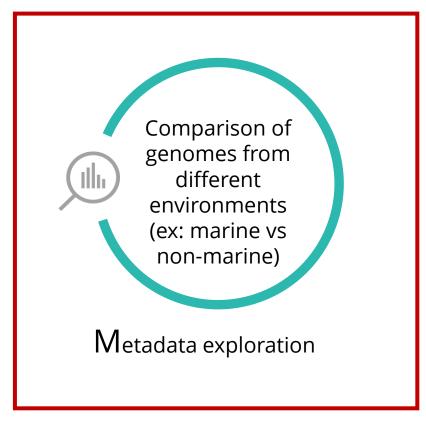
Obtained by 'binning' together assembled metagenomic contigs with similar sequence composition.



High throughput mining of public databases and global datasets (e.g. TARA Ocean)



Genome annotation





Next steps

What is the coding potential within this genus?

Comparative genomics approach

Chemical identification and isolation of an *Aquimarina*' bioactive compound

Are the Aquimarina's predicted secondary metabolites bioactive?

The

Aquimarina

genus

Bioactivity assays

Are *Aquimarina*'s traits a common feature of the *Flavobacteriaceae* family?

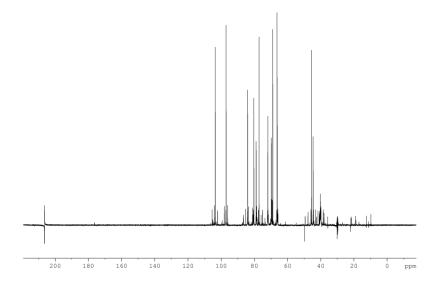
Metagenomics approach

Chemical identification and isolation of an Aquimarina' bioactive compound

Among the in-house *Aquimarina* strains available, one will be chosen for further studies.



Goal: isolation and identification of a bioactive compound.



Erythomycin NMR spectra

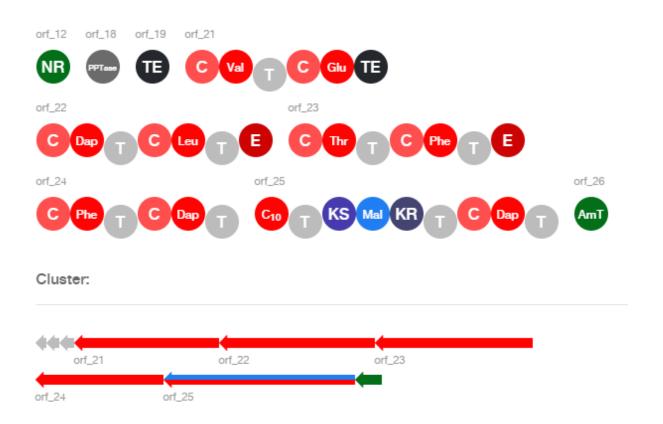
Secondary metabolite structure elucidation will be accomplished by:

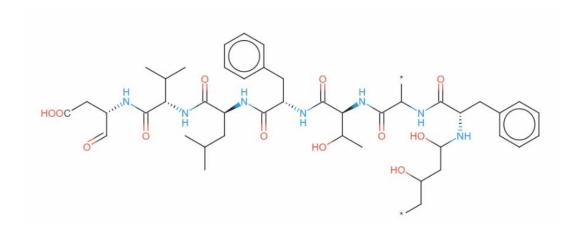
- 1. Bioassay-guided fractionation
- 2. High-Resolution Mass Spectrometry

Chemical identification and isolation of an Aquimarina' bioactive compound

Genome and bioactivity guided approach

Example: NRPS/PKS BGC from Aquimarina sp. Aq78

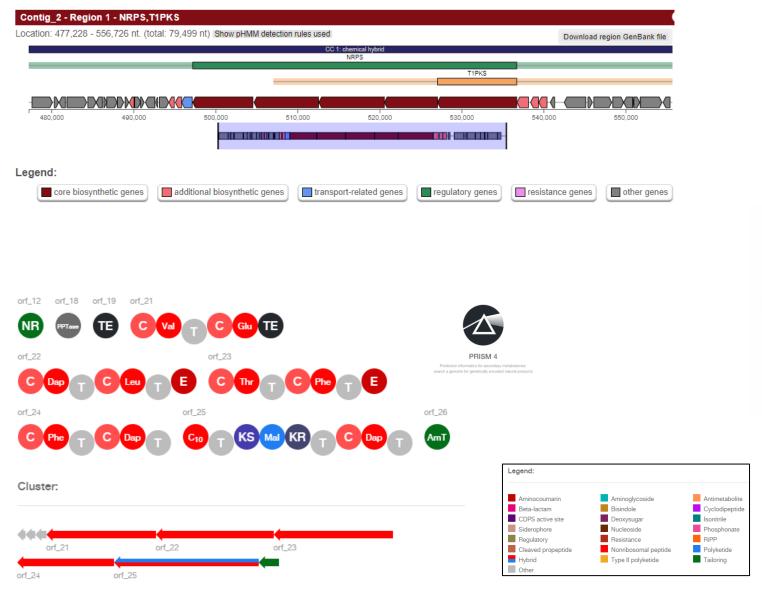




Putative compound

Putative BGC

Chemical identification and isolation of an Aquimarina' bioactive compound



Example: **NRPS/PKS BGC** from *Aquimarina* sp. Aq78

Rough prediction of core scaffold based on assumed PKS/NRPS colinearity; tailoring reactions not taken into account

Polymer prediction:

Acknowledgments

Special thanks to:

- Prof. Dr. Rodrigo Costa
- Dr. Tina Keller-Costa
- Prof. Dr. Isabel Sá-Correia
- Prof. Dr. Margarida Casal

Collaborators:

- Patrícia Paula
- Matilde Marques
- Dr. Nuno Bernardes
- Dr. Dalila Mil-Homens
- Prof. Dr. Arsénio Fialho
- Prof. Dr. Miguel Teixeira
- Dr. Ulisses Nunes da Rocha (UFZ)
- Prof. Dr. Jörn Piel (ETH Zurich)



MicroEcoEvo team

















PD/BD/143029/2018 PTDC/MAR-BIO/1547/2014 PTDC/BIA-MIC/31996/2017 Project N.007317 UIDB/04565/2020

Hands-on 3:

Metagenome mining of secondary metabolite biosynthetic gene clusters (SM-BGCs)





antiSMASH

https://antismash.secondarymetabolites.org/

Web-based tool that allows the rapid genome-wide identification, annotation and analysis of secondary metabolite biosynthesis gene clusters in bacterial and fungal genomes.

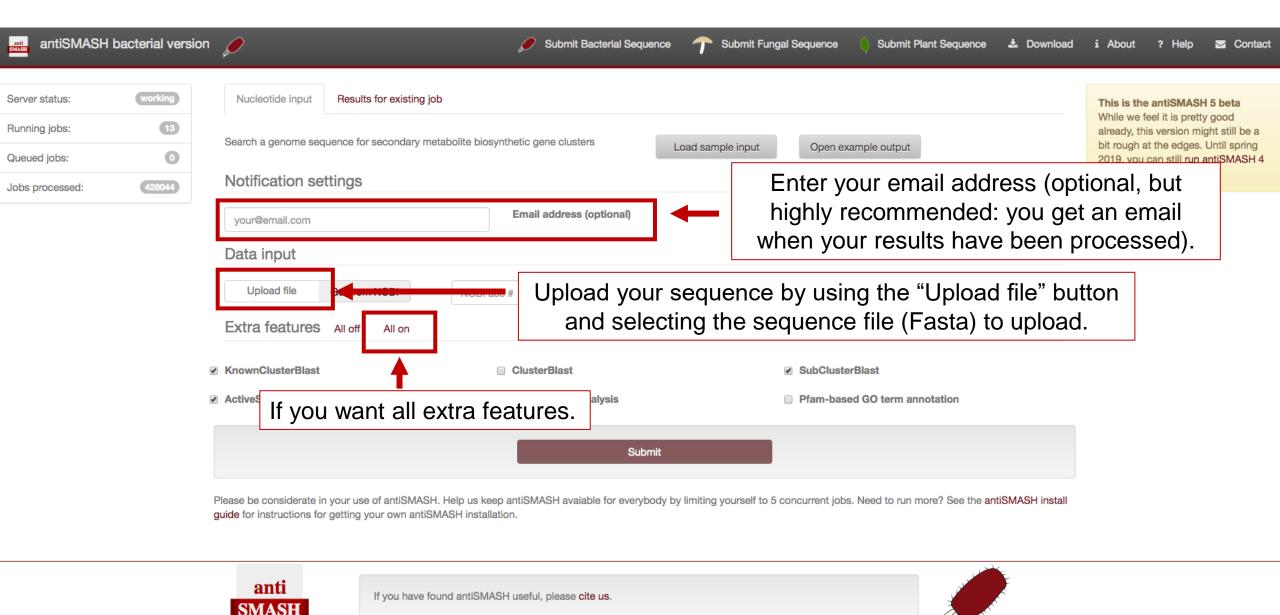
It integrates and cross-links with many in silico secondary metabolite analysis tools and is powered by several open-source tools:

- NCBI BLAST+
- HMMer 3
- Muscle 3
- FastTree
- PySVG
- JQuery SVG.



Created in 2011 Current version: 5.0

antiSMASH - Job submission page

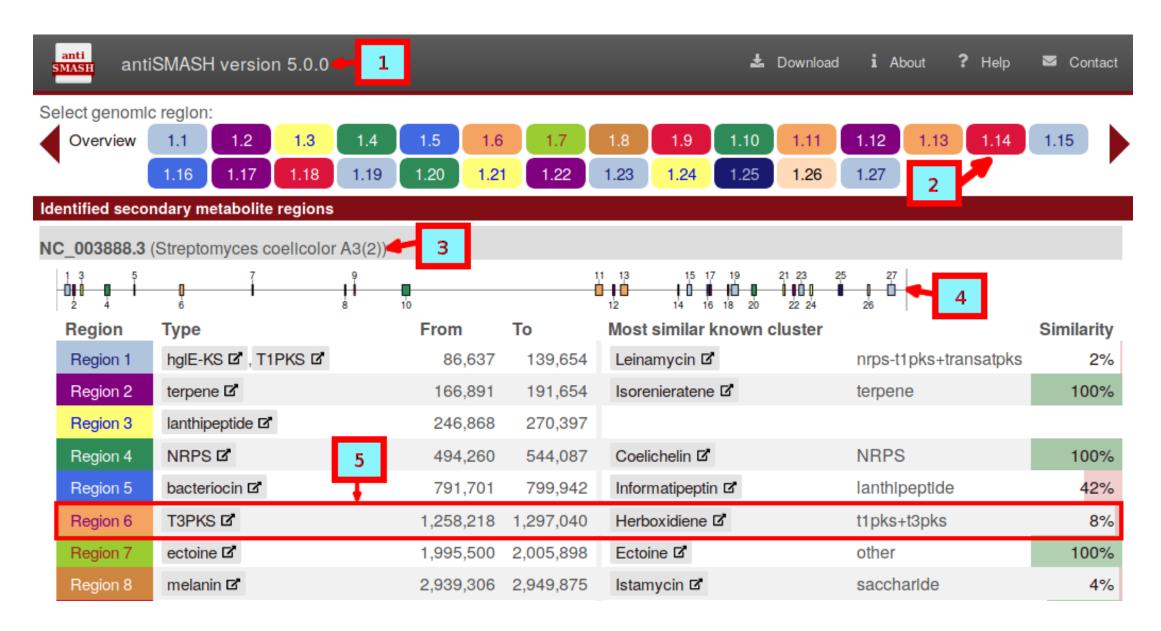


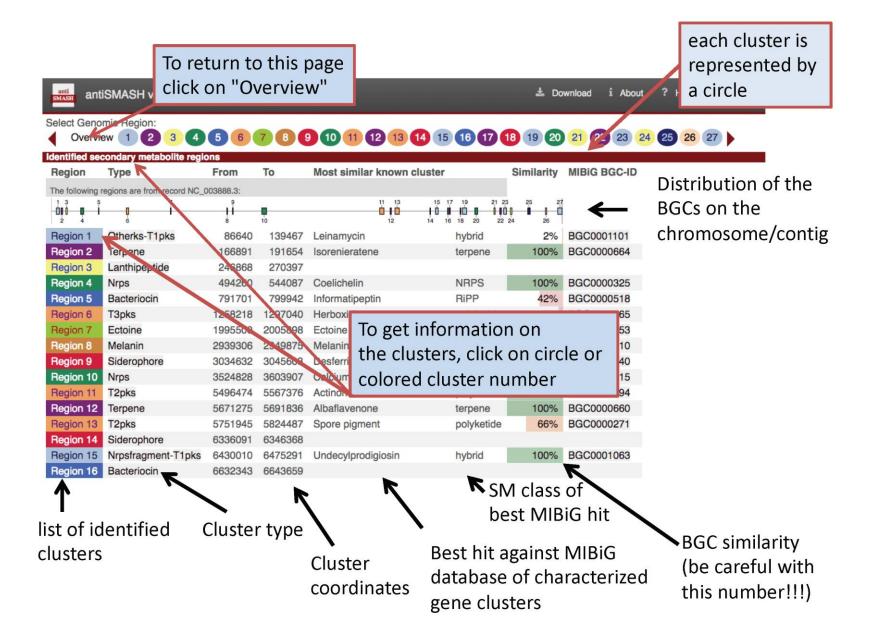
Now it's your turn!

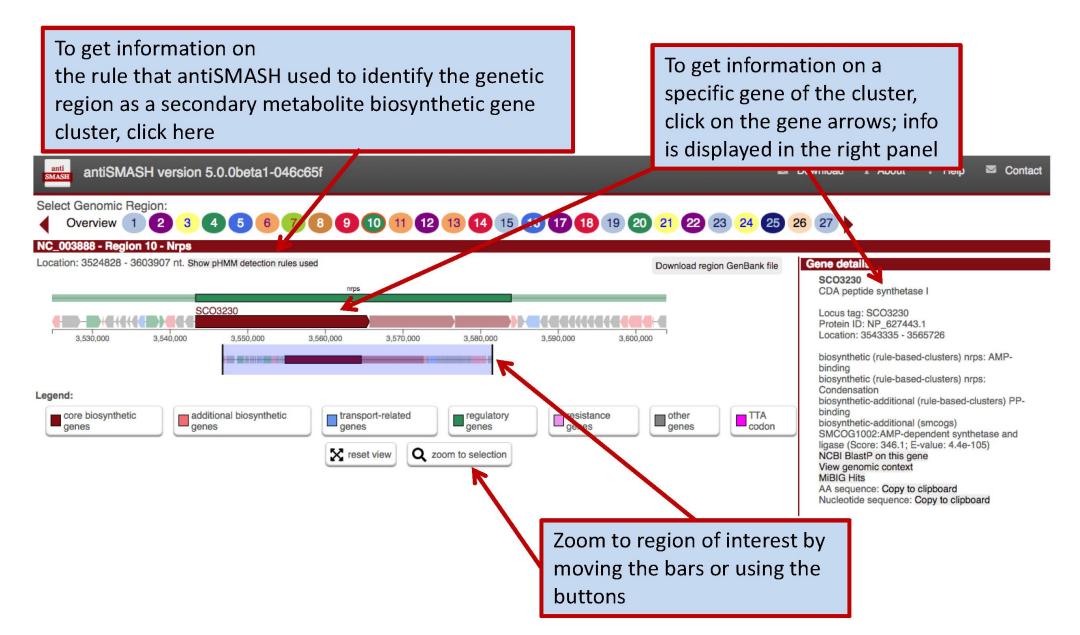
Practical exercise: submit your metagenome sequences (fasta files) into antiSMASH.

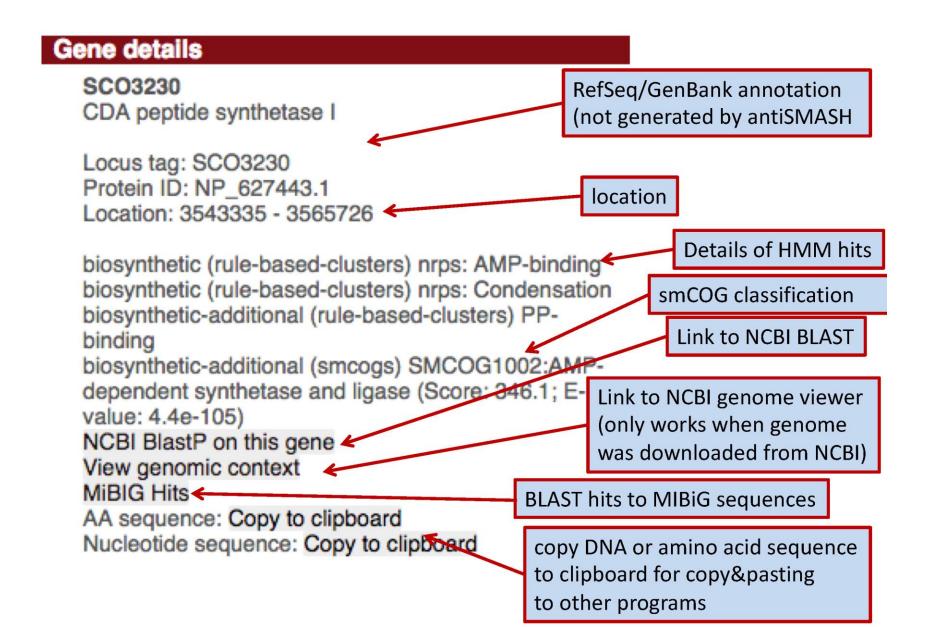
https://antismash.secondarymetabolites.org/

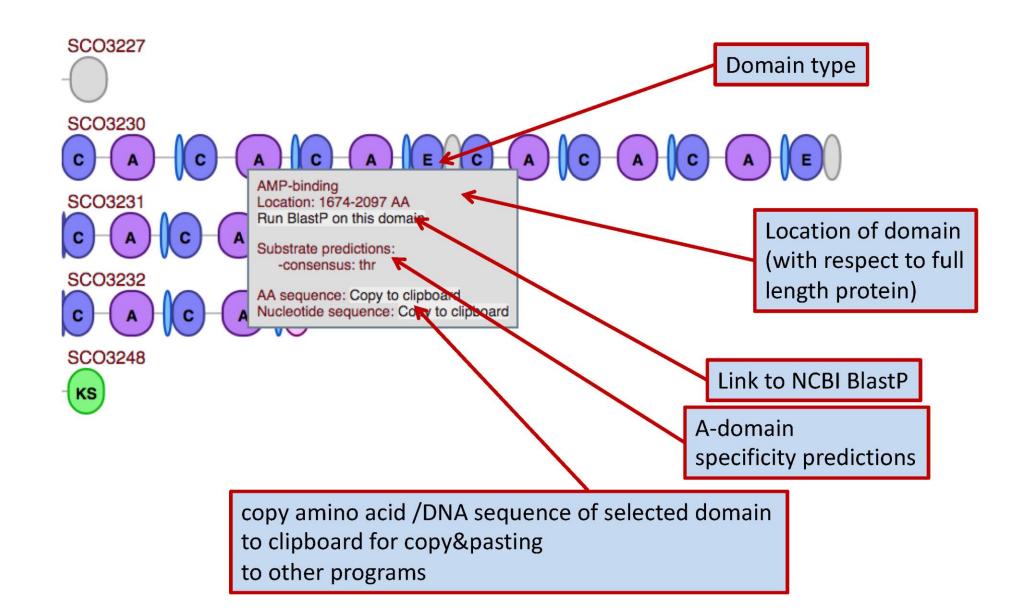








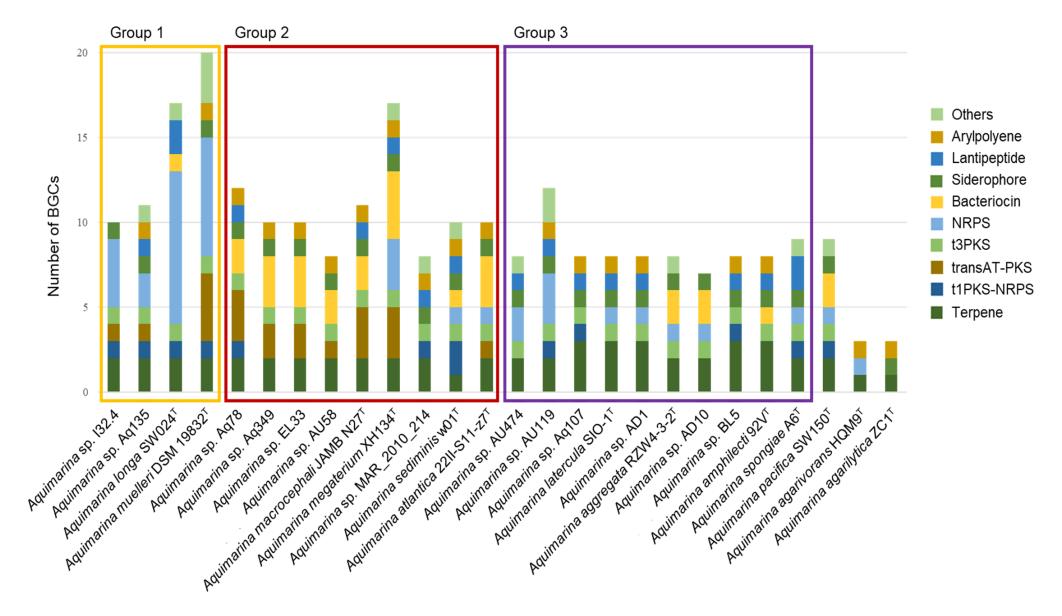




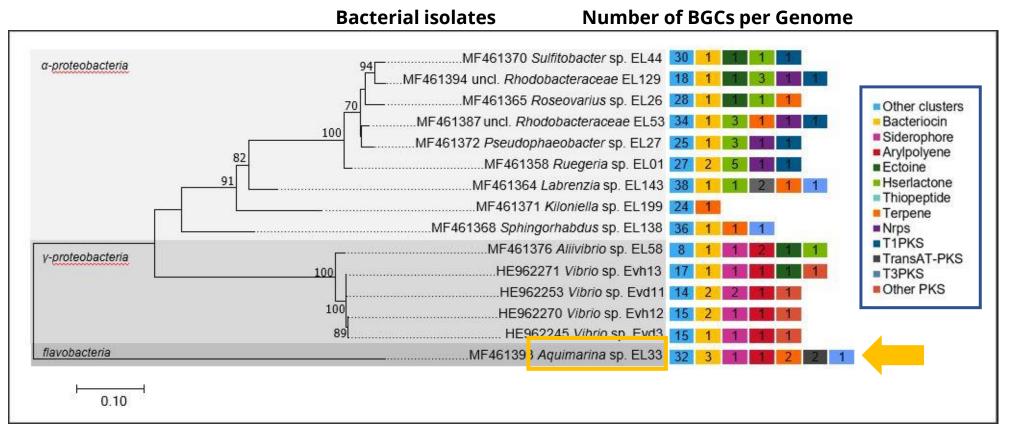
antiSMASH - The output



Result obtained for the *Aquimarina study:*



Potential for Secondary Metabolite Synthesis in Soft Coral-Associated Bacteria



440 biosynthetic gene clusters (BGCs) on the genomes of 15 bacterial associates (12 genera) isolated from the soft corals *Eunicella labiata* and *Eunicella verrucosa*.

BIG-SCAPE

Biosynthetic Gene Similarity Clustering and Prospecting Engine

BiG-SCAPE is a tool that **calculates distances between BGCs** in order to map the BGC diversity onto sequence similarity networks, which are then processed for automated reconstruction of **Gene Cluster Families**

Groups of gene clusters that encode biosynthesis of highly similar or identical molecules.

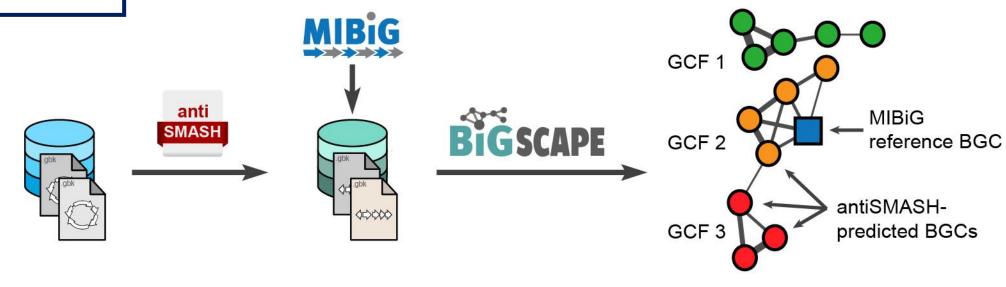
BiG-SCAPE's interactive visualizations of these similarity networks allows effective exploration of the diversity of BGCs, linking them to knowledge from reference data within the **MIBiG repository**



https://git.wageningenur.nl/medema-group/BiG-SCAPE

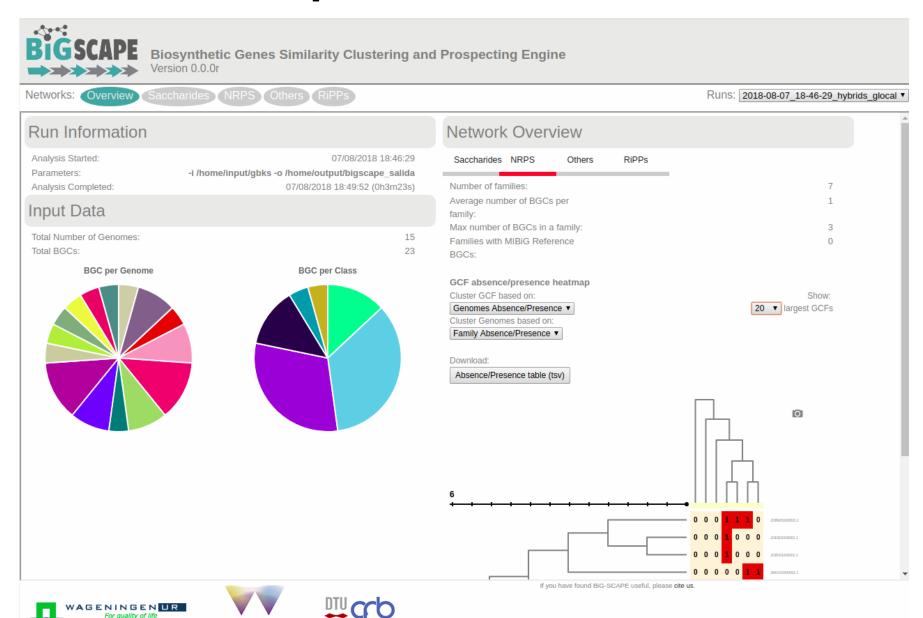
The BiG-SCAPE workflow uses sequence similarity networking to group biosynthetic gene clusters into families

Input: results from antiSMASH



Output: graphical visualization of similarity networks

BiG-SCAPE – The output



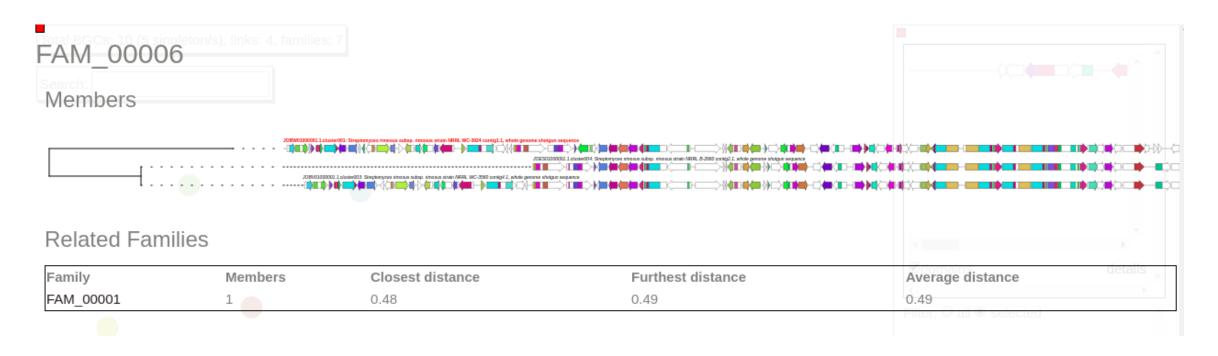
BiG-SCAPE – The output



The distances for each cutoff value will be used to automatically define 'Gene Cluster Families' (GCFs) for each compound class.

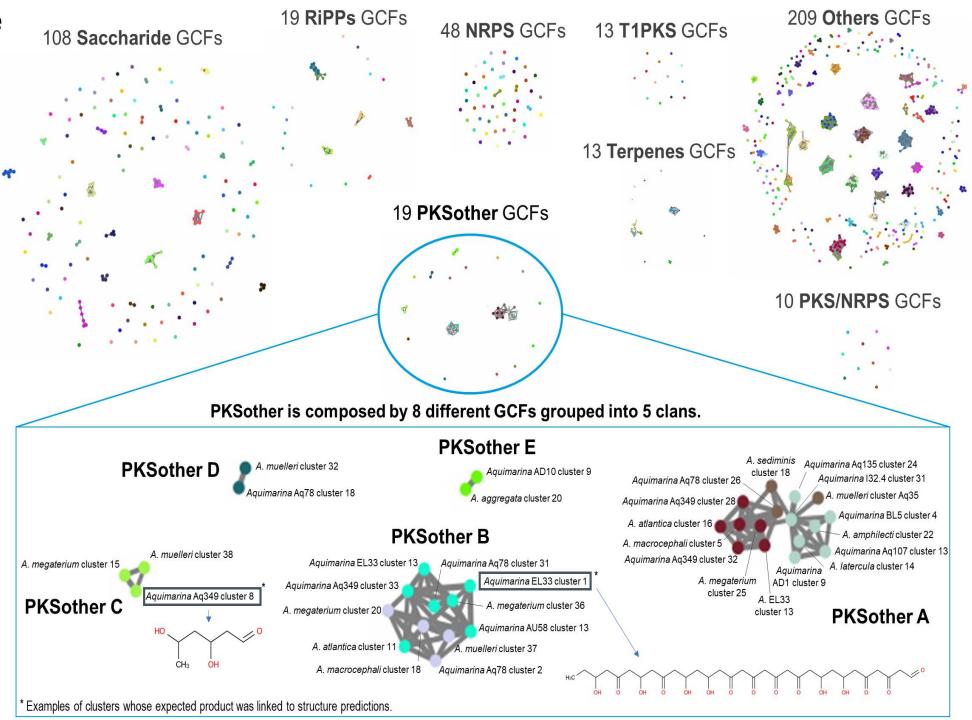
BiG-SCAPE – The output

Gene Cluster Family (GCF) example:



Result obtained for the *Aquimarina* study:

439 Gene Cluster Families



What you'll need to apply the BiG-SCAPE workflow to your antiSMASH results:

- **1)** Once the antiSMASH run is finished, you'll receive an email. Open the link provided.
- **2)** On the top of "overview" page", you will find the option "Download all results". Click on it. A zip folder will be downloaded. Unzip it.
- **3)** On each antiSMASH results folder you will find several different files in different formats. For the BiG-SCAPE workflow you will need the GenBank (.gbk) files corresponding to each BGC identified.

For later identification, the filename of each gbk file must be renamed so that you later know from which genome each BGC came from.

Example of a suitable filename: Aq_Aq78_contig_1.region001.gbk Make sure that you don't have any spaces in the filename.

- **4)** Move all the .gbk files into a single folder. Zip the folder to make the file transfer easier.
- **5)** Send this zipped folder to: sandragodinhosilva@tecnico.ulisboa.pt I'll run the BiG-SCAPE pipeline and return the results to you as soon as possible.



If you want to run BiG-SCAPE on your own:

- **1)** Unfortunately, this workflow needs to be run on a Linux operating system. As most of us have a Windows operating system on our computers, this might be the major difficulty.
- **2)** If that isn't a problem for you, you can try to install BiG-SCAPE. All the instructions to do so are available in the following link: https://git.wageningenur.nl/medema-group/BiG-SCAPE/-/wikis/installation
- 3) Please talk with me and I'll be happy to help you on this process.













Thank you for your attention.

Sandra Godinho Silva

sandragodinhosilva@tecnico.ulisboa.pt