

# ***Biological Systems Science Division Update***

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June 27, 2013



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
**ENERGY**

Office  
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and Environmental Research

# **Update Outline**

- *Completed Programmatic Actions*
- *Division Components*
- *Core Philosophy*
- *Significant Activities*
- *Division Science Highlights*

# ***Completed Programmatic Activities***

## ***FY2013 Reviews of DOE National Laboratory programs – Completed***

- **Genomic Science: Biofuels Research**
  - Pacific Northwest National Laboratory – reverse site visit - Feb 27
- **Radiochemistry & Imaging**
  - Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory – reverse site -June 5
  - Oak Ridge National Laboratory – reviews completed June 10

## ***Upcoming Reviews***

- **Science Focus Area competition – Program plans due in September**
- **Annual Bioenergy Research Center Reviews**
  - BioEnergy Science Center (BESC) – Oak Ridge, TN – Oct 23-24
  - Great Lakes Bioenergy Center (GLBRC) – East Lansing, MI – Nov 12-13
  - Joint Bioenergy Institute (JBEI) – Emeryville, CA – Dec 11-12

***..And Busy FY2014 Ahead!***

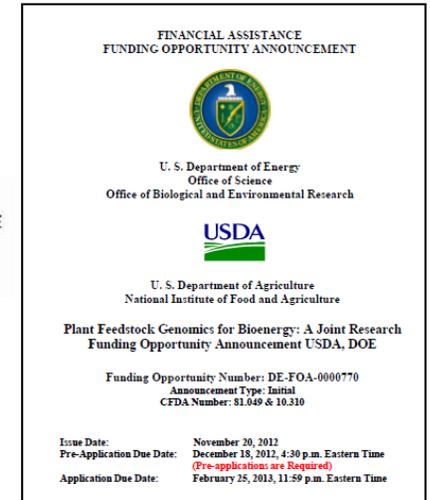
# Completed Programmatic Activities Cont'd

## *Plant Feedstocks Genomics for Bioenergy: A Joint Research Funding Opportunity Announcement USDA, DOE (DE-FOA-0000770)*

Panel met on April 24-25  
A total of 54 proposals reviewed  
Selections are in progress  
Joint announcement (with USDA) of awards later this Summer.

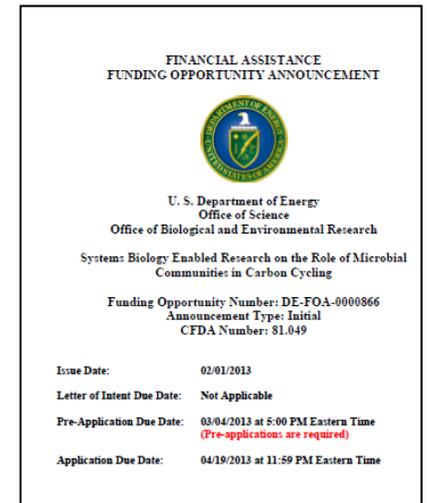


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## *Systems Biology Enabled Research on the Role of Microbial Communities in Carbon Cycling (DE-FOA-0000866)*

Panel met on June 5-6  
A total of 67 proposals reviewed  
Selections are in progress



**Several proposals in each Notice with linkages to KBase**

# Division Components

## Genomic Science: Foundational

- Argonne National Laboratory
- Los Alamos National Laboratory
- Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
- Oak Ridge National Laboratory
- Pacific Northwest National Laboratory

## Genomic Science: Biofuels

- Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
- National Renewable Energy Laboratory
- Oak Ridge National Laboratory
- Pacific Northwest National Laboratory

## Genomic Science: Systems Biology Knowledgebase

- Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory  
(ANL, BNL and ORNL)

## Radiobiology : Low Dose Radiation Research

- Pacific Northwest National Laboratory
- Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

## Radiochemistry and Imaging

- Brookhaven National Laboratory
- Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
- Oak Ridge National Laboratory
- Thomas Jefferson National Laboratory

**16 Science Focus Areas (SFAs)**

**3 Bioenergy Research Centers**

- BESC
- GLBRC
- JBEI

**1 User Facility**

- Joint Genome Institute (JGI)

**20 Beamlines at DOE Synchrotron Light and Neutron Sources**

- Some joint with NIH

**~100 Academic Lead PIs**



**How to Coordinate Research Efforts Towards DOE Mission areas?**

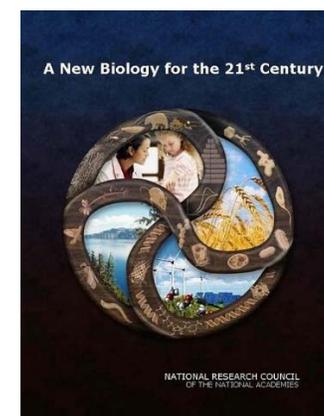
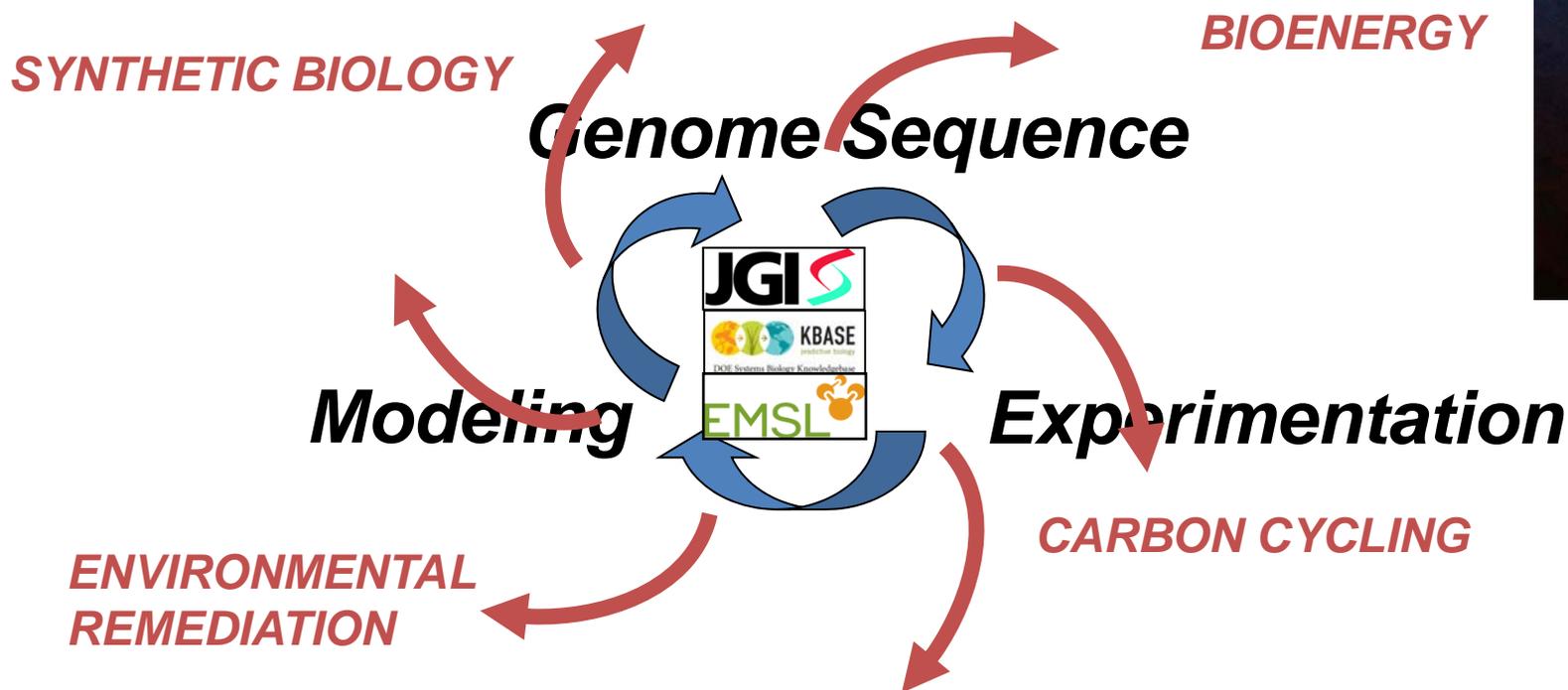
# Core Philosophy

## Advancing Systems Biology Research

### Resources:

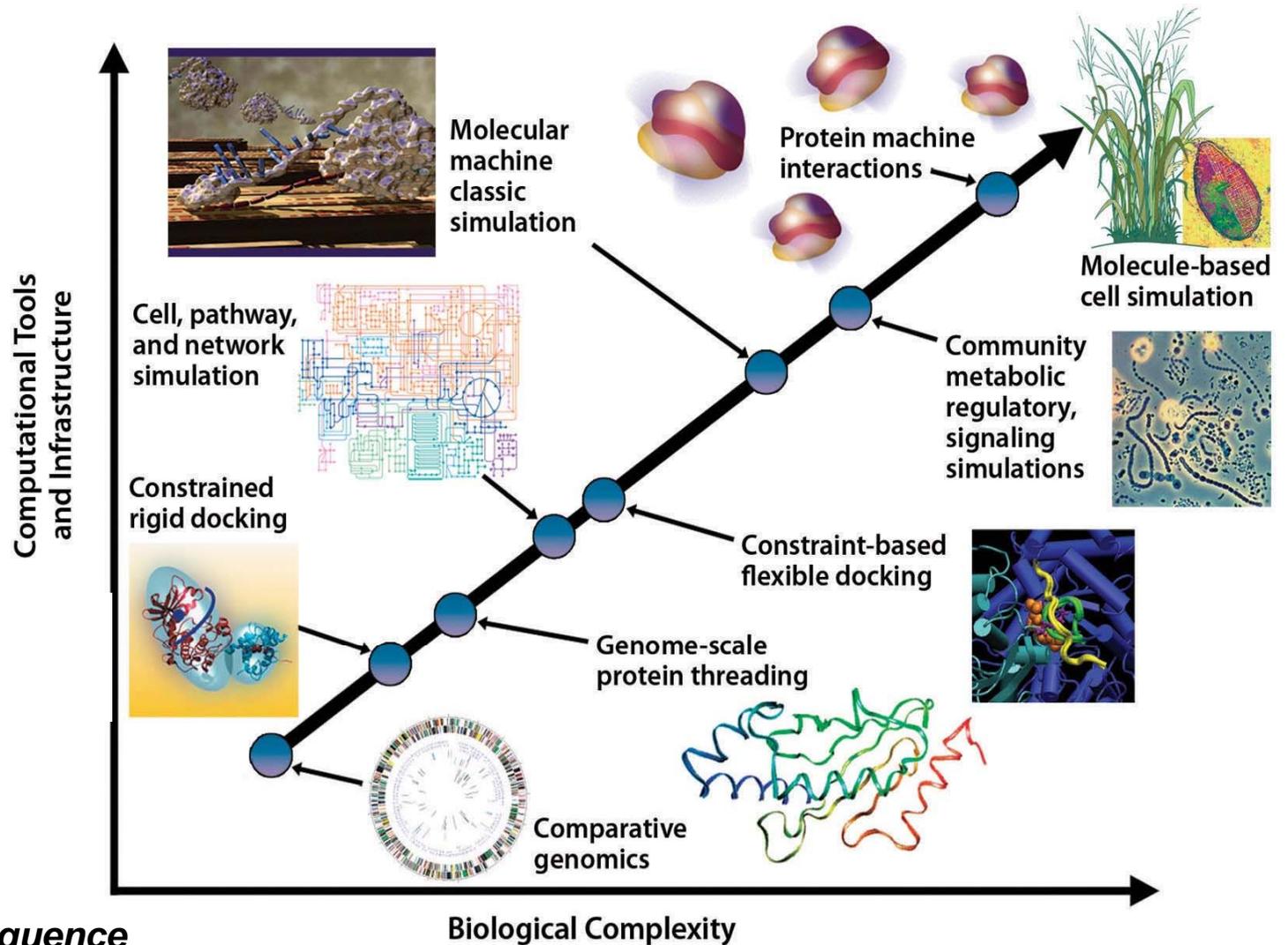
Researchers (National Labs, Academic Centers)  
Technological capabilities (DOE User Facilities)  
Computational systems

➔ **Integrative Research**



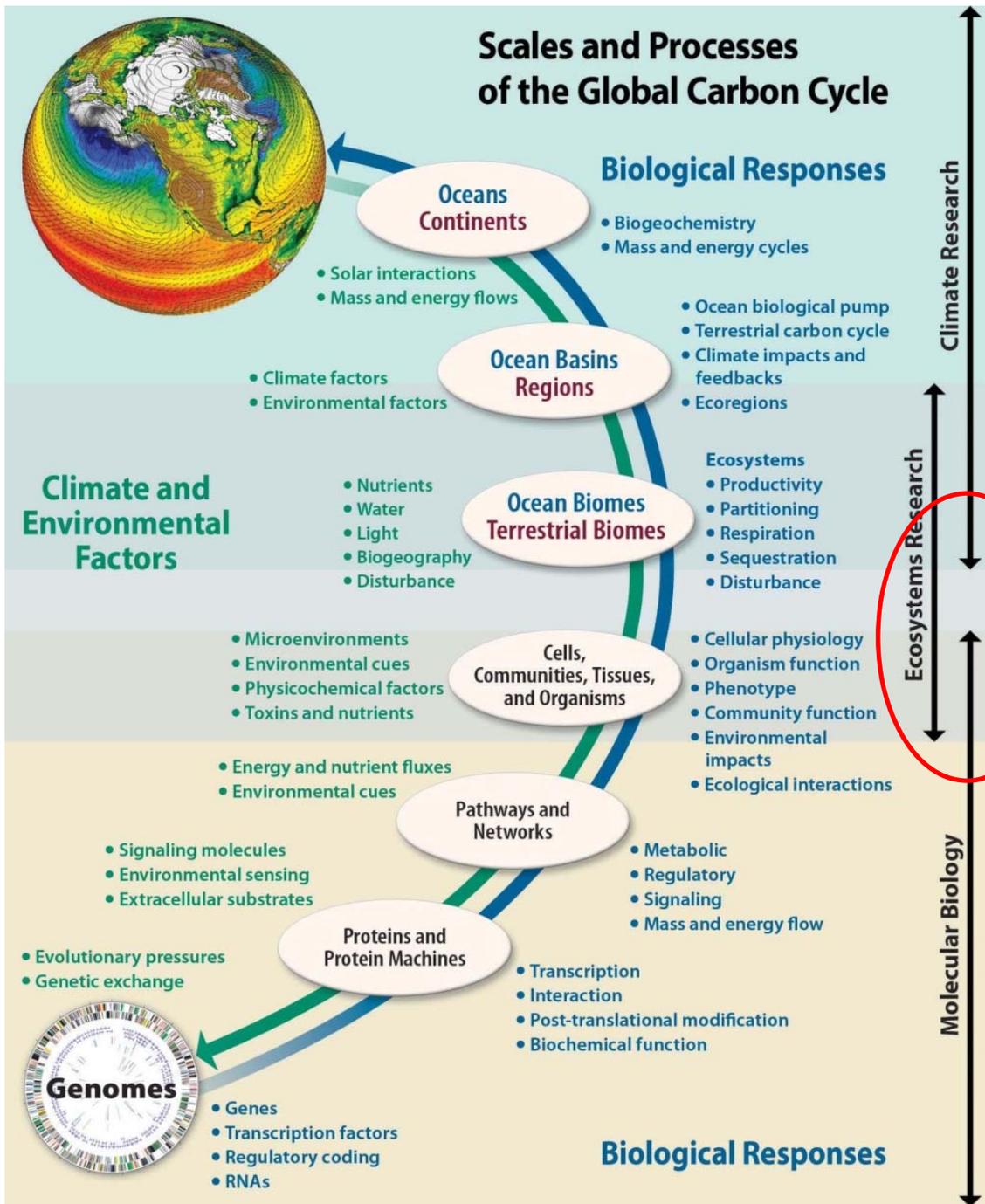
**Hypothesis-Generating Engine for BSBD Programs**

# Core Approach is Applicable Across Observations Scales



Genome Sequence





# Resolving Biological Systems at Multiple Scales

Understanding & Model development facilitates science across larger scales relevant to BER Science

➤ Creates opportunities for interdivisional collaboration where programs meet.

## Genome Sequence



U.S. DOE. 2008. U.S. Department of Energy, *Carbon Cycling and Biosequestration: Integrating Biology and Climate through Systems Science* Report from the March 2008 Workshop, DOE/SC-108

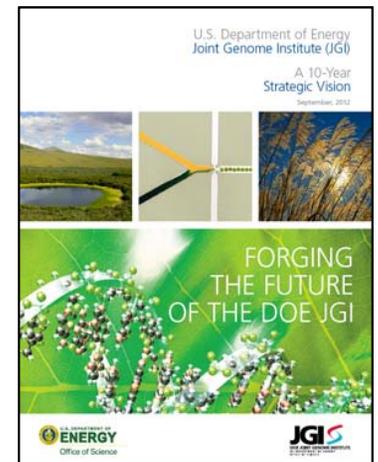
# Emerging Technologies Opportunity Program

## Six New Projects Awarded

- **New technologies & capabilities for JGI**
  - *Single cell Raman spectroscopy (Stocker, MIT)*
  - *Microfluidics for single cells (Quake Stanford)*
  - *New metagenome assembly approaches (Banfield, UC Berkeley)*
  - *Advanced DNA synthesis strategies (Shendure, U. Washington)*
- **Services enabling JGI user programs**
  - *Specialized plant genomic libraries (Wing, U Ariz.)*
  - *High-throughput fungal DNA prep & phenotyping (Magnuson, PNNL)*



<http://www.jgi.doe.gov/programs/ETOP/>



# KBase Launch: Continuing

## New Biological Capabilities:

- Increased metabolic, regulatory and functional associations
- New capabilities to understand protein interactions
- Added functional abundance data

## Outreach:

- Launched KBase YouTube channel with webinars and tutorials
- Launched Help Desk
- Ongoing Bootcamps and Tutorials

## Infrastructure:

- Deployed redundant infrastructure at all sites
- Launched a monitoring system with visualization of computing system operations across all 4 sites

The Department of Energy Systems Biology Knowledgebase (KBase) is an emerging software and data environment designed to enable researchers to collaboratively generate, test and share new hypotheses about gene and protein functions, perform large-scale analyses on a scalable computing infrastructure, and model interactions in microbes, plants, and their communities. KBase provides an open, extensible framework for secure sharing of data, tools, and scientific conclusions in predictive and systems biology.

**Try KBase Now**  
Use a web-based command-line interface—no installation necessary

**Download the Tools**  
Install KBase command-line tools on your computer

**Visit KBase Labs**  
Peek a peek at KBase

**KBase includes**

- 925 data types
- 5695 prokaryotic genomes
- 175 eukaryotic genomes
- 4985 models
- 23 services
- 821 functions

**What can KBase do?**

- Efficiently annotate new microbial and regulatory networks.
- Transform network inferences to missing reactions to genes using
- Test microbial ecological hypothesis functional analysis of quality-as
- Discover genetic variations with these to complex organismal tr

Search the database:  
Search Advanced search

**YouTube Channel: DOE KBase**

- DOE KBase uploaded a video: *Genome Annotation and Reconstruction.mpt* 1 view
- Using KBase services, learn how to use the command-line (and PRIS) to pull out gene them and create a metabolic reconstruction.
- Using the Sequence Quality Control Pipeline in the KBase Notebook 4 views
- A brief overview of QC visualizations available through KBase

# Joint Call for Exploratory Collaborations

- *First-ever call between EMSL and DOE-JGI*
- *Focused on plant, fungal, soil and microbial interactions and physiology related to*
  - *Biofuel production*
  - *Carbon cycling*
- *Must require capabilities from both facilities*
- *Schedule:*
  - **27 Proposals Submitted!**
  - *Approved proposals start October 1, 2013*



# Thermophile simultaneously solubilizes lignin and carbohydrate in non-pretreated switchgrass biomass

## Objective

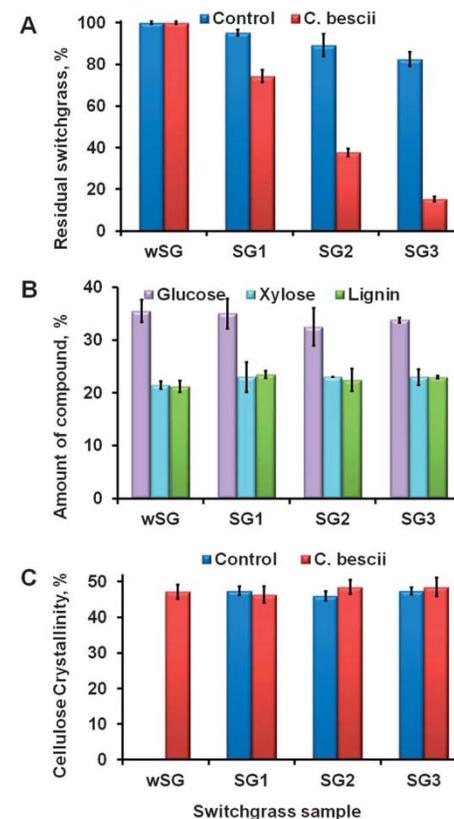
- Determine the extent of untreated biomass solubilization by the anaerobic thermophile, *Caldicellulosiruptor bescii*

## Approach

- Incubate *C. bescii* with untreated switchgrass at 78 C
- Analyze remaining biomass

## Results/Impacts

- The composition of remaining biomass was not significantly different from starting biomass indicating carbohydrates and lignin were solubilized at similar rates
- Lignin monomers were found free in solution so they were not incorporated into microbial biomass
- First anaerobe to solubilize cellulose, hemicellulose and lignin!
- Microbial solubilization of biomass without pretreatment is more efficient and economical



Kataeve et al., Carbohydrate and lignin are simultaneously solubilized from unpretreated switchgrass by microbial action at high temperature. EES DOI: 10.1039/c3ee40932e



## Degradation of Recalcitrant Plant Polymers in Leaf-Cutter Ant Fungus

### Objective:

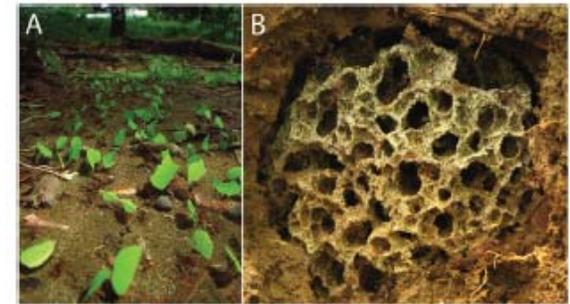
- Understand the role of *Leucoagaricus gongylophorus* enzymes in digestion of plant material in the leaf-cutter ants fungus garden

### Approach:

- Generate draft genomic sequence of *L. gongylophorus*
- Metaproteomics of fungus garden

### Results/Impact:

- Fungus produces distinct sets of lignocellulases throughout the different stages of biomass degradation, including numerous cellulases and laccases
- Provides a detailed analysis of plant biomass degradation in leaf-cutter ant fungus gardens
- Adds to the set of lignocellulases to be mined for improved deconstruction



# Genetically engineering plant results in decreased ferulic acid and increased saccharification

## Objective

- To understand the role of BAHD acetyltransferases in synthesis of plant secondary wall and lignin

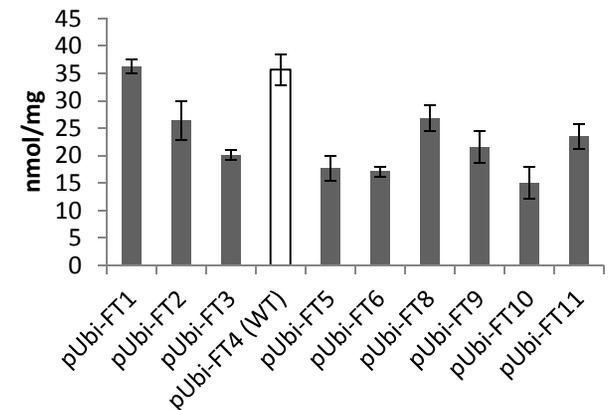
## Approach

- Identify a clade of acyltransferase genes expanded in grasses
- Identify an activation mutant of OsAT10 with altered distribution of hydroxycinnamic acids

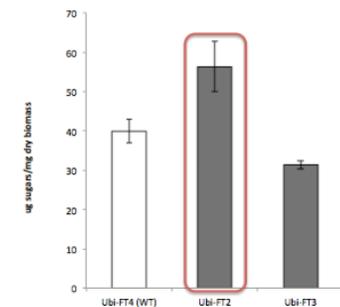
## Results/Impacts

- OsAT10 plants had no discernible difference in growth or vitality
- Biochemical analyses reveal reduced FA and increased *p*-CA in matrix polysaccharides
- OsAT10 is a *p*-coumaroyl coenzyme A transferase involved in glucuronoarabinoxylan modification
- Thus, OsAt10 is an attractive target for improving grass cell wall quality for fuel and animal feed

Ferulic acid content green leaves



Enzymatic saccharification



40% increase in sugar release  
(following hot water pre-treatment)

Bartley et al., 2013 Overexpression of a BAHD Acyltransferase, OsAt10, Alters Rice Cell Wall Hydroxycinnamic Acid Content and Saccharification. *Plant Physiol* 161:1615-1633

**Enabling rapid solution of SAXS and SANS protein experimental data**

**Objective:**

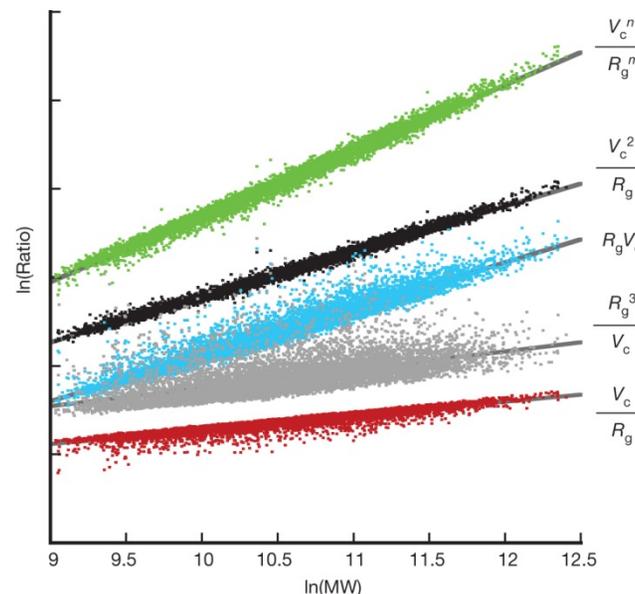
- Rapidly obtain shapes of proteins in solution under a wide range of experimental conditions.

**Approach:**

- Define a new invariant parameter, the volume of correlation ( $V_c$ ), that can be calculated from a single scattering dataset.
- Employ and test  $V_c$  to define metrics for conformation, mass, and model accuracy from parameters measured experimentally. Test several proteins with known structures, using SAXS

**Results/Impacts**

- $V_c$  predicts changes in shape when solution conditions change. Ex. smaller  $V_c$  when a metal ion is added that tightly binds to the macromolecule, causing it to become more compact.
- Enables the application of SAXS and SANS to many new types of biological systems and requires 1/100 the amount of time for experimental data collection.



Defining the power-law relationship between  $V_c$ , the radius of gyration ( $R_g$ ) and protein mass. Fitting the linear power-law relationship (black) produces an average mass error of  $4.0 \pm 3.6\%$ . The other ratios display asymmetric nonlinear relationships.

Robert A. Rambo and John A. Tainer, "Accurate assessment of mass, models and resolution by small-angle scattering", **Nature** 496, 477–481(25 April 2013) doi:10.1038/nature12070

## **Structural Systems Biology Illustrates a New Method to Predict Heat Tolerance in *E. coli***

### Objective:

Simulate growth of microbial species under various temperature conditions and provide mechanistic interpretations of mutations that conferred greater

### Approach:

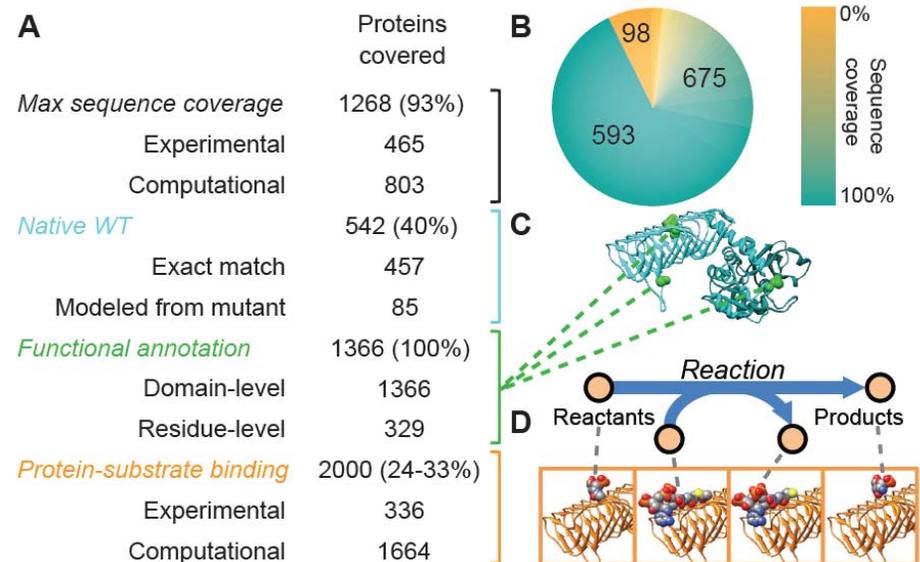
Integrate together the metabolic reactions of *E. coli* with the protein three dimensional structures of each catalytic enzyme

- 93% of Sequence Covered with functional annotations and 3-D protein structures
- 24% of protein-substrate binding reactions covered with 3-D structures
- Simulate temperature-dependent growth by imposing protein activity constraints on the metabolic models

### Results/Impact:

- Simulation of growth of *E. coli* under various temperature conditions consistent with experimental growth data
- implications for development of industrial microbes for biocatalysts.

Roger L. Chang, Kathleen Andrews, Donghyuk Kim, Zhanwen Li, Adam Godzik and Bernhard O. Palsson, "Structural Systems Biology Evaluation of Metabolic Thermotolerance in *Escherichia coli*", **Science**, 2013, 1220-1223 doi:10.1126/science/1234012



## Fungi Significantly Modify the Soil Bacterial Community and Nitrogen Cycling During Litter Decomposition

### Objective

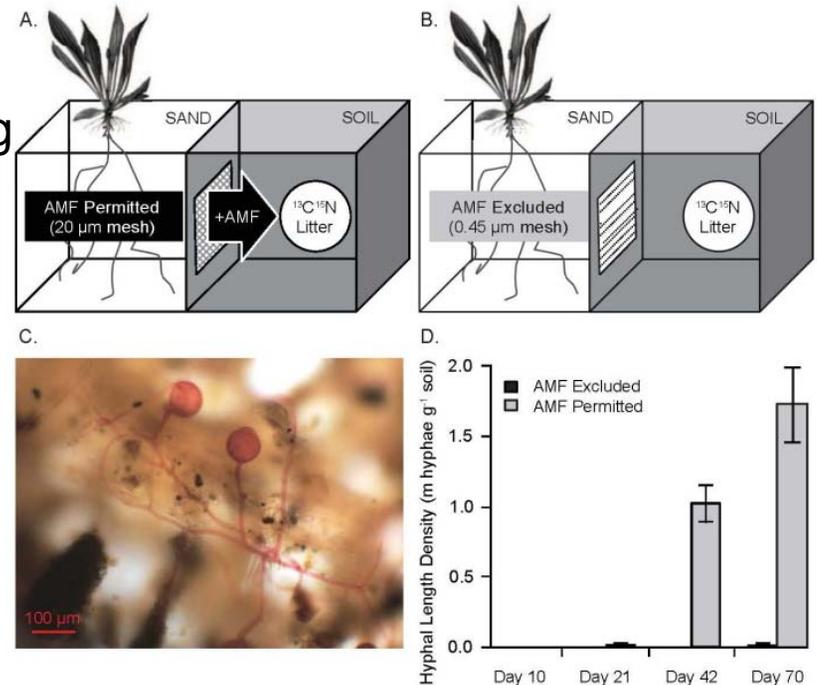
- Investigate how arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi (AMF) influence soil microbial communities during nutrient uptake. Do AMF modify the soil microbial community and N cycling during litter decomposition?

### Approach

- Two-chamber system with  $^{13}\text{C}$ - and  $^{15}\text{N}$ -labeled litter in root-free soil; AMF either allowed access to or excluded from litter.
  - Significant uptake of microbially-released N, but not C, by the AMF.

### Results/Impact

- AMF may modify community and decomposition process through N export, part of a complex process by which C and N flow through ecosystems.



Nuccio EE, Hodge A, Pett-Ridge J, Herman DJ, Weber PK, and Firestone MK. 2013. An Arbuscular Mycorrhizal Fungus Significantly Modifies the Soil Bacterial Community and Nitrogen Cycling During Litter Decomposition. *Environmental Microbiology*, DOI: 10.1111/1462-2920.12081.

## Objectives

Develop agents for assessing sucrose transport in higher plants using PET.

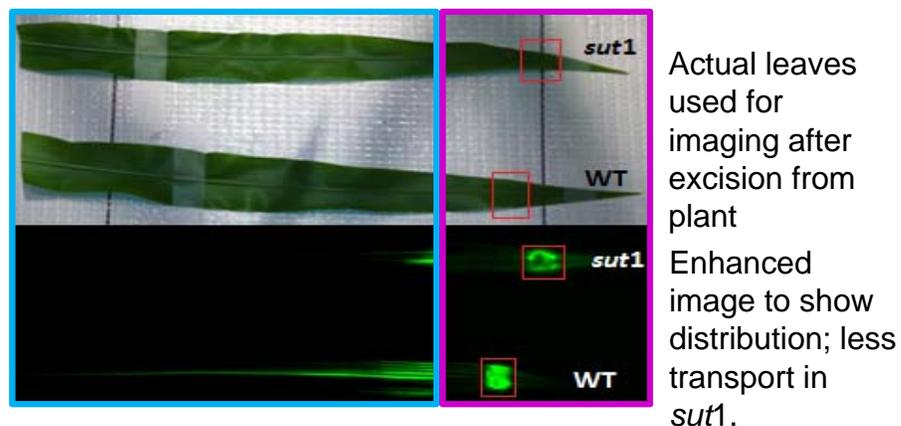
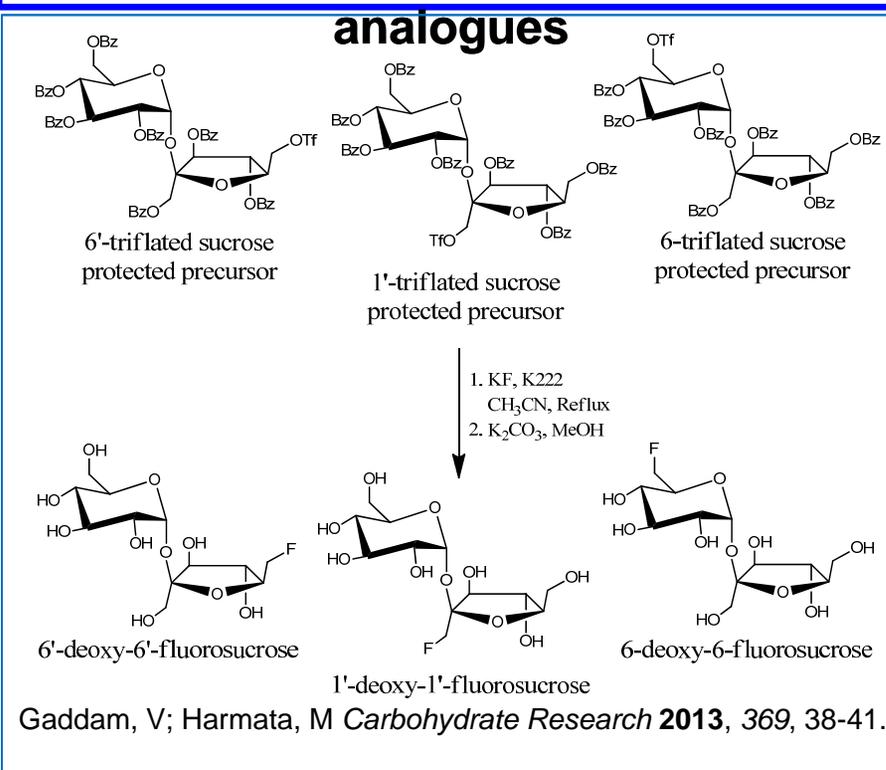
## Approach

Develop syntheses of 3 isomers of deoxy-fluorosucrose suitable for incorporation of  $^{18}\text{F}$ . Perform the hot syntheses and study the transport of the molecules in plants.

## Results and Impact

- 6'-[F-18]fluoro-6'-deoxy-sucrose (FDS) has been synthesized to study sucrose transport in living plants.
- Automated synthesis of FDS has been developed to make it widely available for plant metabolic imaging studies.
- Positional isomers of [F-18]fluoro-deoxy-sucrose will allow probing of plant utilization of sucrose and its mechanism of transport.

## Synthesis of 3 fluorosucrose analogues



Rotsch, D; Brossard, T; Vikram, G; Harmata, M; Cutler, C; Robertson, JD, Jurisson, SS; Braun, D *J. Labelled Compds Radiopharm.* **2013**, 56, S118

## Combining Predictive Models with Experiments to Understand Radiation Effects in Skin Tissue

### Objective

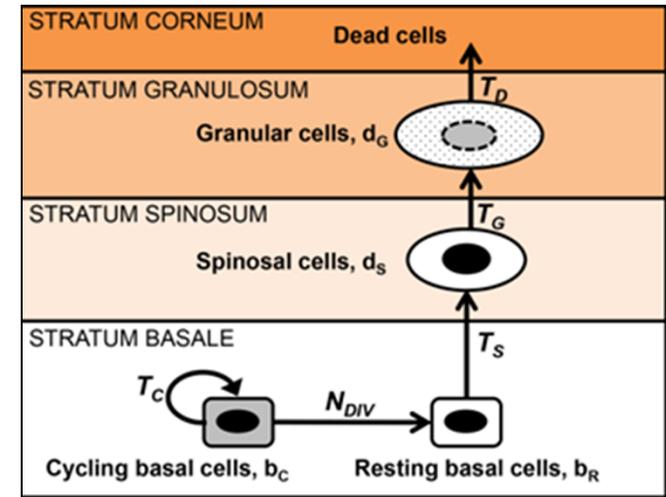
- To understand and predict risks from heavy ion radiation by studying effects on molecular, cellular and tissue-level processes in relevant experimental systems

### Approach

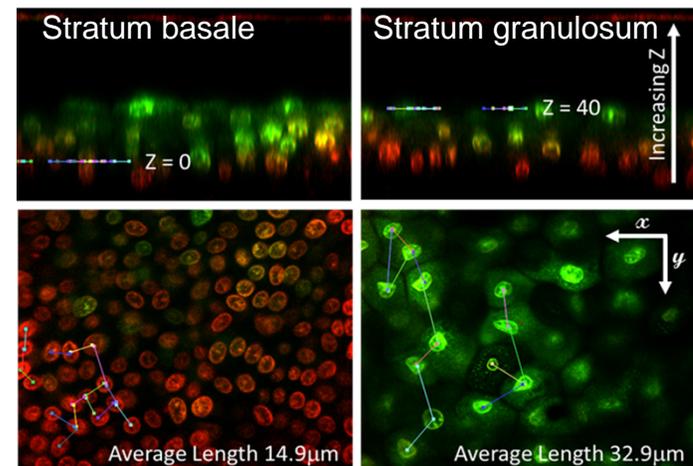
- Engineered 3D human skin tissues were exposed to neon ion irradiation, then several tissue-level properties were measured
- A mathematical model was developed to simulate the complex homeostatic changes in cell division, differentiation, and proliferation that were induced by the neon ion exposures

### Impact

- Integrated approach provides a framework to understand responses of multicellular systems and can be adapted to other epithelial tissues and radiation exposure scenarios



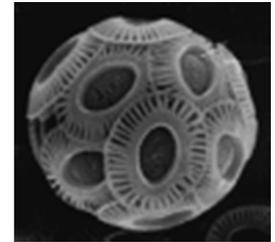
Schematic descriptions of the mathematical models for unirradiated and neon irradiated skin tissue



Confocal images to spatially characterize cell density in the tissue

von Neubeck C, H Shankaran, MJ Geniza, PM Kauer, RJ Robinson, WB Chrisler, and MB Sowa, "Integrated Experimental and Computational Approach to Understand the Effects of Heavy Ion Radiation on Skin Homeostasis." *Integrative Biology* (Accepted).

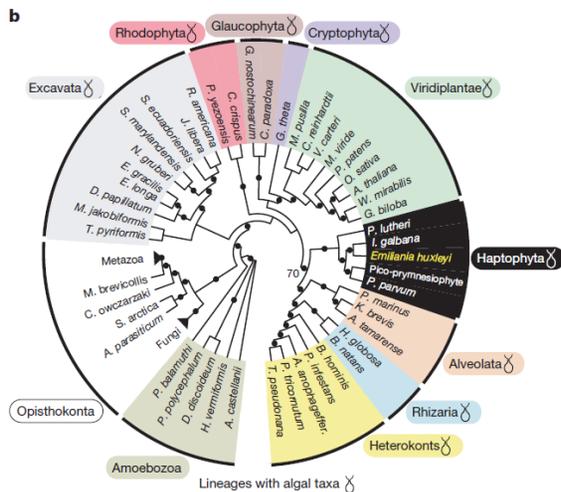
# Pan genome of the phytoplankton *Emiliana* drives its global distribution



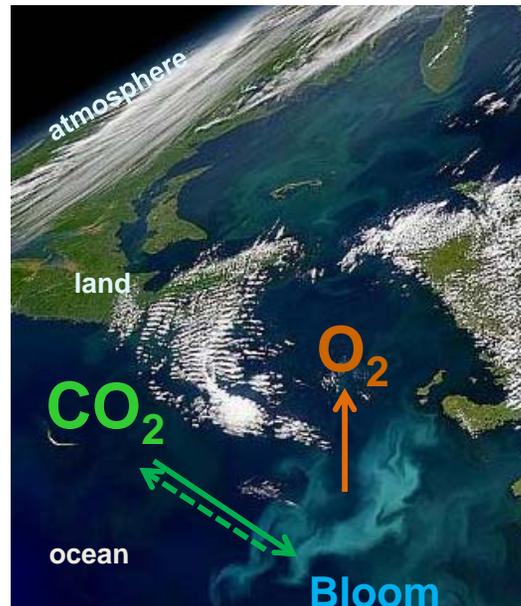
Betsy Reed, *et al.* (published on June 18 2013)

*Emiliana huxleyi*, a single cell marine alga;

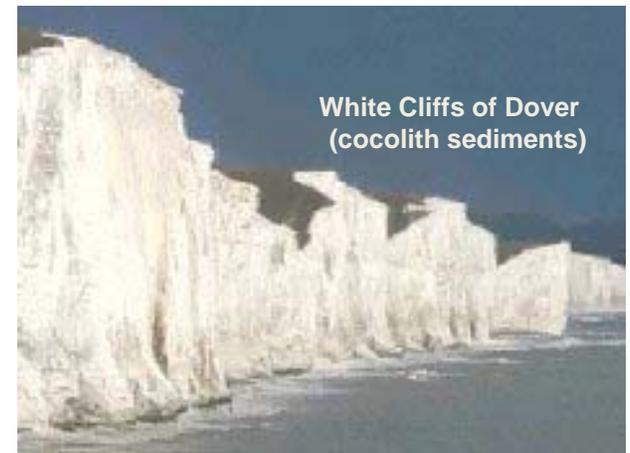
- Model for biomineralization (calcium carbonate exoskeleton);
- Balance of CO<sub>2</sub> fixed during photosynthesis and released during calcification;
- The first sequenced haptophyte Ref Genome of (*E hux*) and 13 additional isolates.



**Evolutionary significance:**  
fills a gap (Haptophytes) in the Tree of Life



**Ecological significance:**  
large blooms seen from satellites



**Geological significance:**  
*Coccoliths* sediments - global fossil archive (200Myrs)

# Insights into the Phylogeny and Coding Potential of Microbial Dark Matter

## Objective

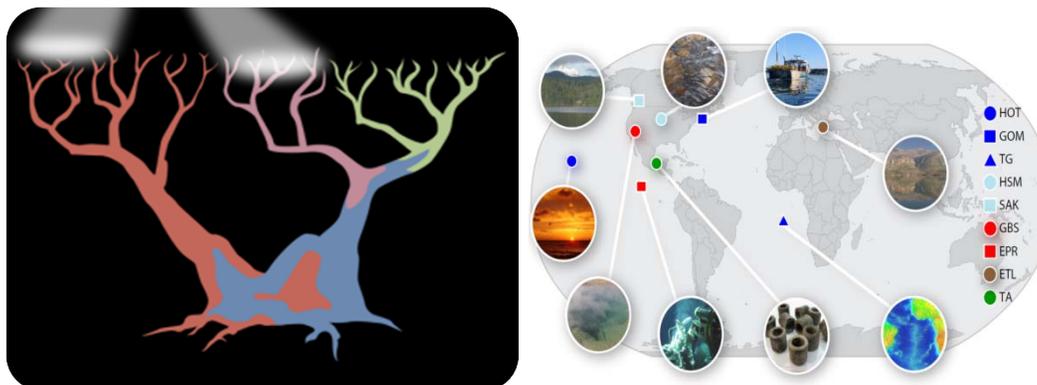
- Analyze genomes of Microbial Dark Matter (lineages/phyla without cultured representatives).

## Approach

- Sample nine broadly distributed sites across the globe
- Recovered 201 genomes belonging to 29 uncharted branches of the tree of life

## Results/Impacts

- Two recovered genomes exhibit evidence of recoding suggesting that the canonical genetic code may not be all that is out there in the wild



	# contigs	Length, Mb	Evidence that reassignment pipeline works (Positive controls)
Opal UGA->aa	290,064	1390.4	<b><i>Mycoplasma, GN02 taxa.</i></b>
Ochre UAA->aa	20,357	480.3	<b><i>Tetrahymena, ciliated protists</i></b>
Amber UAG->aa	10,314	130.1	

Rinke, et al. (2013 *Nature*, in press)

## Selected JGI Publications



Read B et al. [Pan genome of the phytoplankton \*Emiliania\* underpins its global distribution.](#) *Nature*. 2013 June 12. doi: 10.1038/nature12221.

Stanley DN et al. [Comparative Analysis of 126 Cyanobacterial Genomes Reveals Evidence of Functional Diversity Among Homologs of the Redox-Regulated CP12 Protein.](#) *Plant Physiol*. 2013 Feb;161(2):824-35. doi: 10.1104/pp.112.210542. Epub 2012 Nov 26.

Sutter M et al. [Crystal structure of the FRP and identification of the active site for modulation of OCP-mediated photoprotection in cyanobacteria.](#) *Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A*. 2013 May 28. [Epub ahead of print]

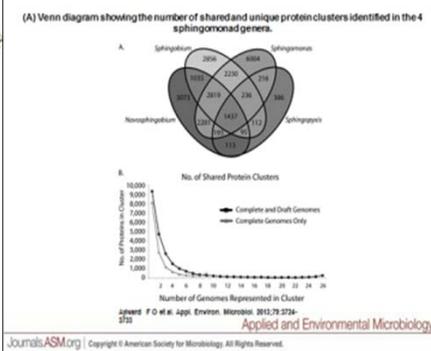
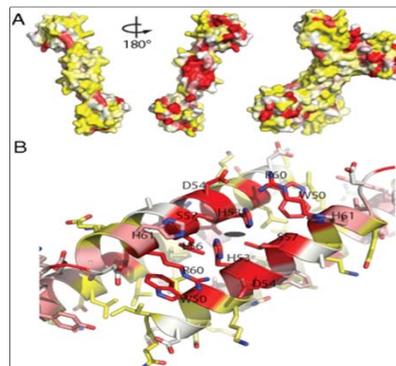
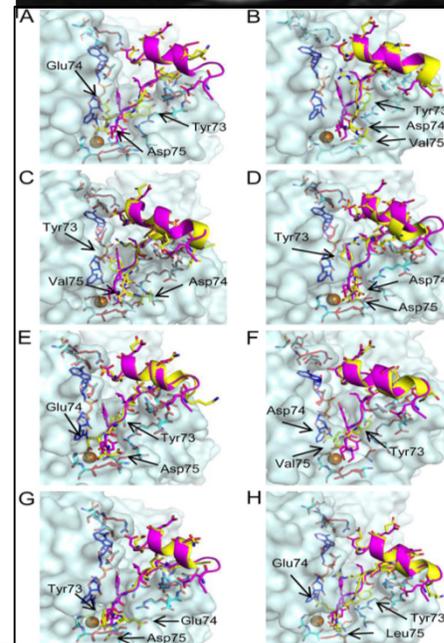
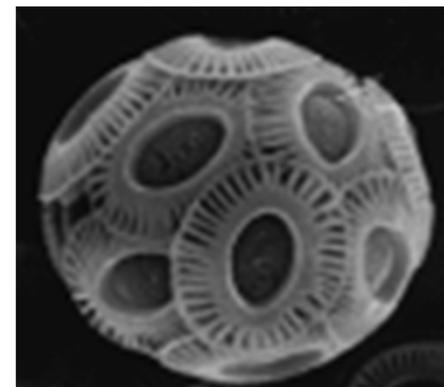
Zhang JY et al. [Development of an integrated transcript sequence database and a gene expression atlas for gene discovery and analysis in switchgrass \(\*Panicum virgatum\* L.\).](#) *Plant J*. 2013 Apr;74(1):160-73. doi: 10.1111/tpj.12104. Epub 2013 Feb 18.

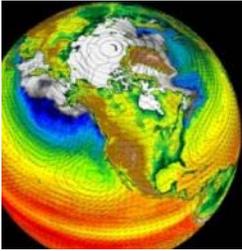
Aylward FO et al. [Comparison of 26 Sphingomonad Genomes Reveals Diverse Environmental Adaptations and Biodegradative Capabilities.](#) *Appl Environ Microbiol*. 2013 Jun;79(12):3724-33. doi: 10.1128/AEM.00518-13. Epub 2013 Apr 5.

Chen IM et al. [Improving microbial genome annotations in an integrated database context.](#) *PLoS One*. 2013;8(2):e54859. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0054859. Epub 2013 Feb 12.

**54 other publications since the last BERAC meeting**

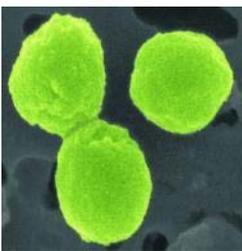
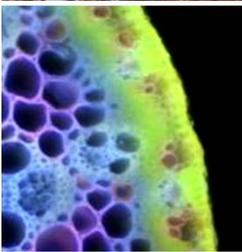
**JGI Publication Highlights:**  
<http://www.jgi.doe.gov/News/pubs.html>





**Systems science to meet DOE mission needs in bioenergy, climate and the environment.**

<http://science.energy.gov/ber>



**Thank you!**

<http://genomicscience.energy.gov>



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# Dissecting laccase regulatory network in poplar using miRNA

## **Objective:**

- Understand role of the microRNA, ptr-miR397a, in the regulation of laccase genes in *Populus trichocarpa*

## **Approach:**

- BLAST of *Arabidopsis* laccase genes against *P. trichocarpa* genome identified 49 laccase gene models in 6 clades
- Clone the full length ptr-miR397 and overexpress in *P. trichocarpa*
- Overexpression of a microRNA targets four clades of laccase gene models

## **Results/Impact:**

- Overexpression of ptr-miR397a results in overall 40% less laccase activity and 12%-20% reduction in lignin content
- Transcripts for monolignol biosynthesis genes remain unchanged
- Lignin structure the same as determined by NMR
- Developed a regulatory network model based on differentially expressed genes between wt and the microRNA overproducing strain
- Illustrates importance of microRNAs in regulation of gene sets in lignin biosynthesis

Lu et al. 2013, Ptr-miR397a is a negative regulator of laccase genes affecting lignin content in *Populus trichocarpa*, **PNAS**