

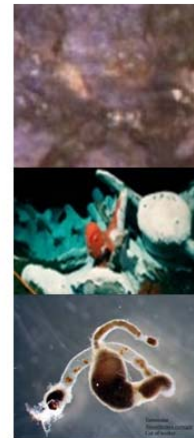
IMG/M Genomes		
	finished/draft	Total
Bacteria	540/279	819
Archaea	46/4	50
Eukarya	19/21	40
Plasmids	687/0	687
Viruses	2044/0	2044
Microbiomes	0/46	46
All Genomes	3336/350	3686

[IMG/M Statistics](#)

Using IMG-M

Comparative Analysis with the IMG/M System

Addendum to Using IMG



Technical Report LBNL-63614

Genome Biology Program

Department of Energy Joint Genome Institute

Biological Data Management and Technology Center

Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

September 1, 2008

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September 1, 2008

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1 Background

Metagenome (environmental genome, community genome) is a sample of the collective genome of all the community members obtained directly from the natural environment, without a preliminary cultivation step.

Two alternative **metagenome sequencing** strategies are generally followed:

- 1) *directed sequencing*, i.e. sequencing of long-insert libraries after screening for the presence of certain phylogenetic (e.g. – 16S rRNA genes) or functional (e.g. – certain enzymatic activity) markers;
- 2) *shotgun sequencing* of random clones generated from aggregate DNA by Sanger sequencing or pyrosequencing of aggregate DNA without cloning.

Metagenome data analysis aims at addressing at least one of the following three questions:

- 1) Diversity and abundance of community members (“**who is there**”);
- 2) Metabolic potential of the community and its members (“**what they are doing**”);
- 3) Ecological relations between members of the community (“**why they are there**”).

1.1 Definitions

Metagenomic sample – usually is equivalent to the isolated aggregate DNA obtained from a certain environment; ideally should be accompanied by comprehensive *metadata* describing how this sample was obtained (e. g. – location, type of an environment, host, isolation protocol, etc.). The DNA is used to create a metagenomic clone *library*, which is further sequenced to produce *reads*. DNA isolation and cloning may introduce certain biases, so the representation of each species in metagenomic sequence may be different from that in the environment.

Read – Sanger sequencing read; if left unassembled, becomes a *single-read contig* in the metagenomic dataset. Single-read contigs almost never appear in isolate genomes (even at the draft stages), but some metagenomic datasets consist almost entirely of unassembled reads (so called *shrapnel*).

Contig – the result of assembly of *reads* based on nucleotide sequence identity; the sequence of the contig is a consensus sequence of multiple reads generated by genome assembler (such as JAZZ, PHRAP or Celera assembler [1-3]) and may not be identical to any particular *read*.

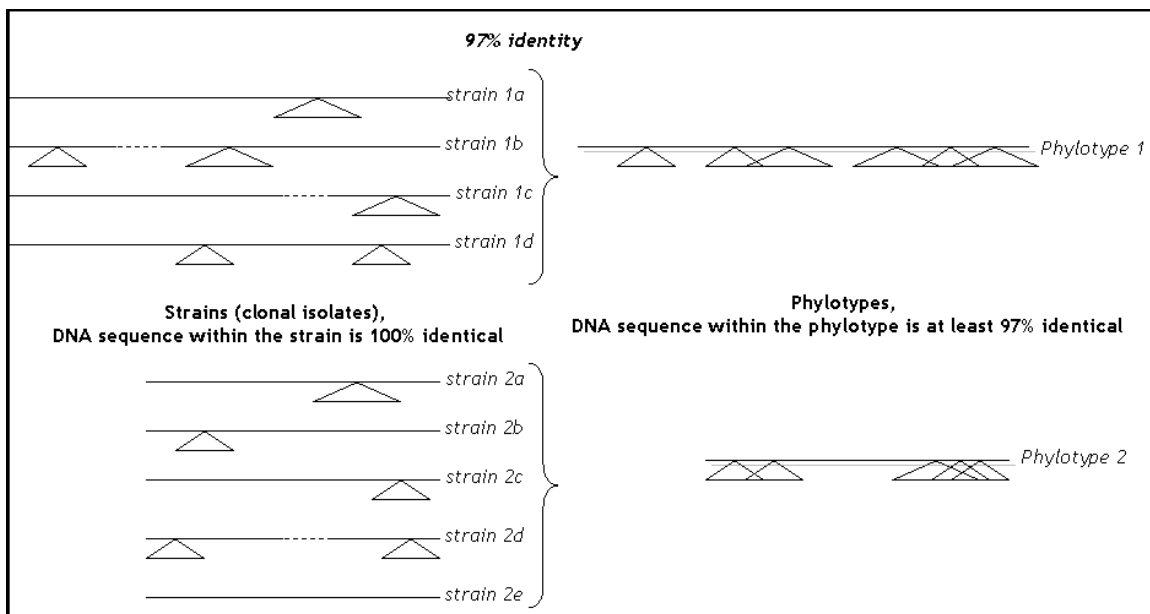
Scaffold – the result of assembly of contigs joined by N-bridged gaps based on read mate-pair information; both *scaffold* and *contig* sequences are further used to identify genes.

RNA-coding genes: 16S and 23S rRNAs are usually identify by BLASTn against the corresponding sequences in isolate genomes; 5S rRNA is identified by BLASTn or using Rfam/INFERnal approach [4]. *tRNA-coding genes* are identified using tRNA-Scan-SE [5]. Other stable RNAs including RNase P, SsrS RNA, SRP and riboswitches are rarely predicted in metagenomic datasets.

CDSs (protein-coding gene) are usually identified automatically by *ab initio* gene finding software, such as fgenesb, Glimmer or GeneMark [6-8]; alternatively, they can be predicted by running BLASTx against the protein databases.

Functional annotations (protein product descriptions) are usually performed automatically using RPS-BLAST hits against the Conserved Domain Database (CDD) [9], which combines information from COG (Clusters of Orthologous Groups) and Pfam with several other minor sources; this approach is complemented by BLASTp against protein databases. In addition, hmm searches against the Pfam and TIGRFam databases can be employed.

Bins are sets of metagenomic sequence fragments originating from one phylogenetic group, preferably from the same strain (or phylotype) as illustrated below.



Scaffolds, contigs and *reads* are assigned to bins by a *binning tool*, which can use either oligonucleotide composition of DNA fragments (TETRA, PhyloPythia [10-11]) or phylogenetic affiliations of protein-coding genes (e. g. - MEGAN[12] is not a binning tool, but similar to what phylogenetic binning tools would do).

1.2 Data Processing

Processing of metagenomic datasets, especially those derived from high-complexity microbiomes, is characterized by significantly higher error rate than processing of isolate genomes [13]. The problems include assembly of chimeric contigs (i. e. assembly of reads originating from different taxonomic groups), under-assembly (i. e. reads that should have been assembled remain as single-read contigs), higher rate of false-positive and false-negative results of gene prediction (mostly due to gene fragmentation), and low sensitivity of binning (i. e. relatively small portion of scaffolds and contigs are assigned to bins, bins correspond to larger taxonomic groups than a species, etc.). Therefore the importance of manual inspection of the data and validation of the results of any analysis cannot be overestimated.

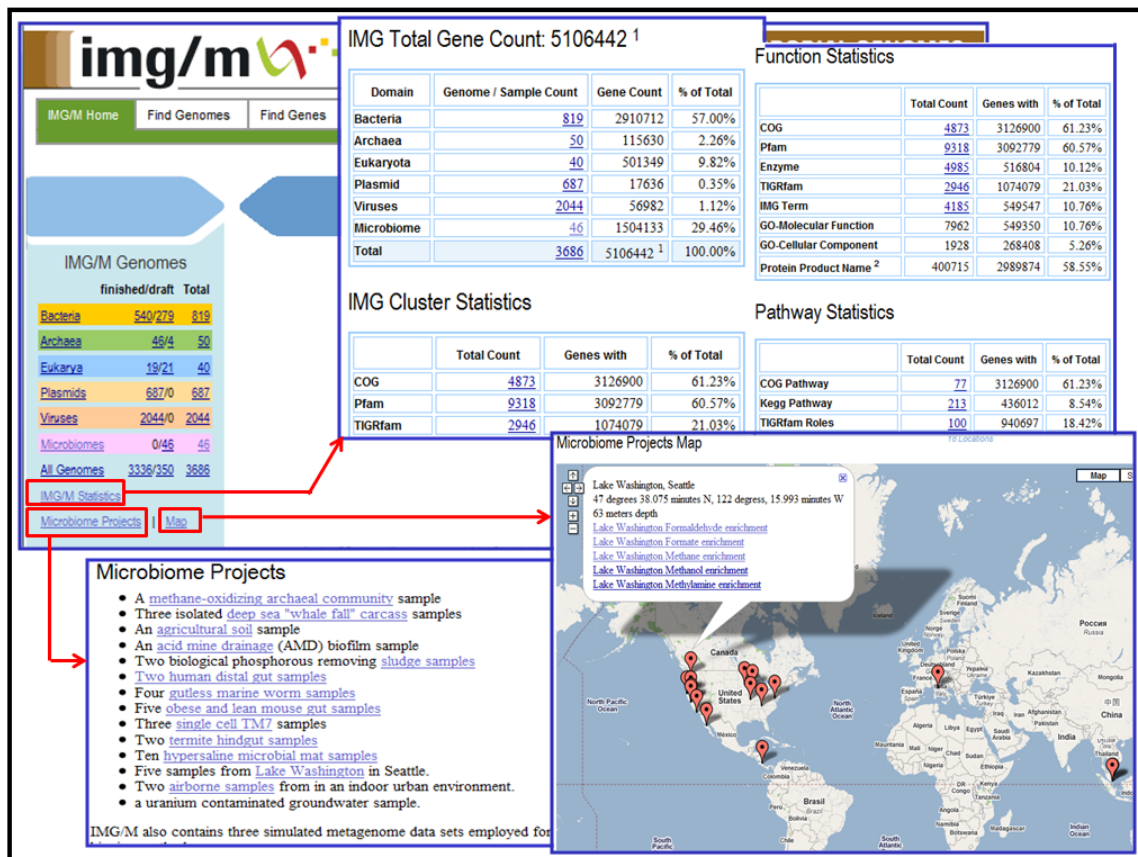
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2 IMG/M Overview

2.1 IMG/M Data Content

IMG/M consists of microbial metagenome data integrated with isolate microbial genomes from the Integrated Microbial Genomes (IMG) system (<http://img.jgi.doe.gov>). The current version of IMG/M (as of September 2008) includes 3,686 genomes from IMG 2.4 (released on December 1st, 2007). IMG/M contains metagenome datasets generated using shotgun sequencing for 14 projects involving a total of 43 microbiome samples, as listed below. IMG/M also contains three simulated metagenome data sets employed for benchmarking assembly, gene prediction, and binning methods.



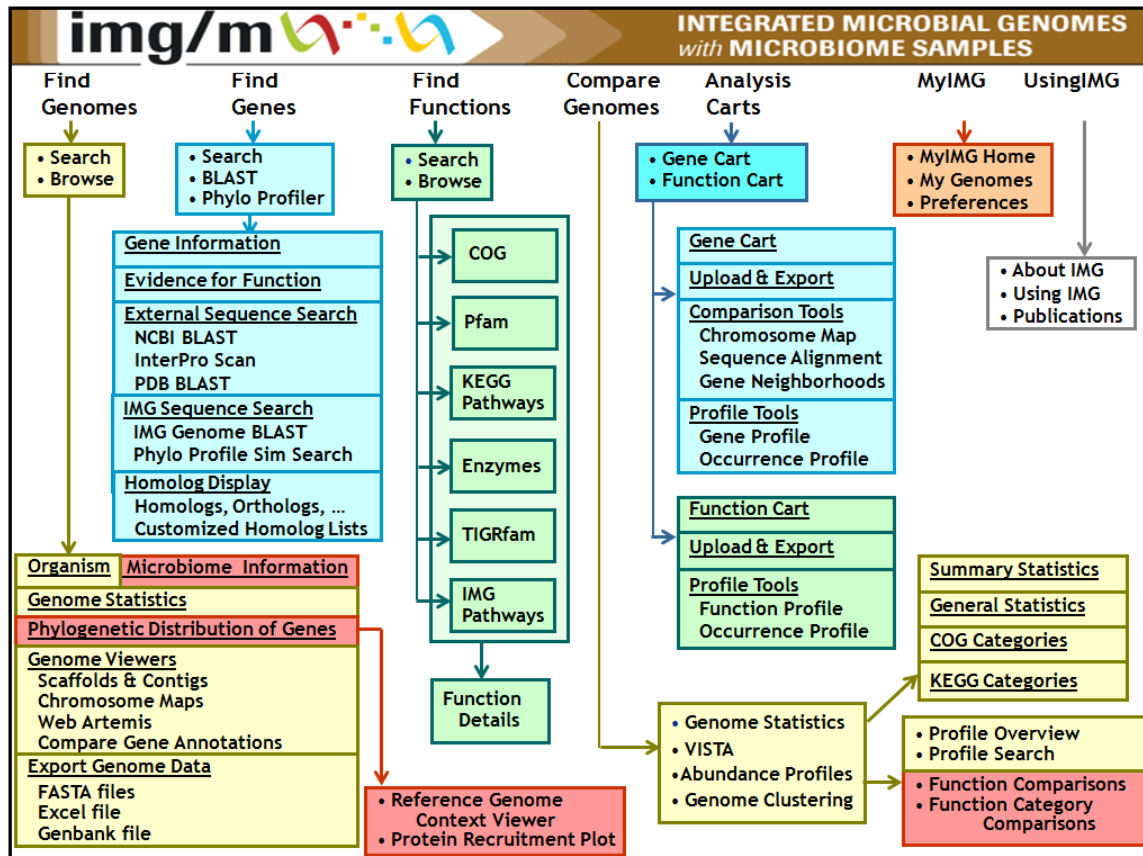
Similar to IMG, the data model underlying IMG/M allows recording the primary sequence information and its organization in scaffolds and/or contigs, together with computationally predicted protein-coding sequences and some RNA-coding genes. Protein-coding genes are characterized in terms of additional annotations, such as motifs, domains, pathways and orthology relationships, which may serve as an indication of their functions. These annotations are based on diverse data sources, such as COG, Pfam, and KEGG. Genes are assigned to COGs and Pfams based on RPS-BLAST (Reverse Position Specific BLAST) and NCBI's Conserved Domain Database. Homologs are computed as unidirectional hits with an E-value of 10^{-2} or better, with IMG/M providing support for filtering homolog lists by percent identity, bit score, and more stringent E-values.

Isolate organisms are identified via their taxonomic lineage (domain, phylum, class, order, family, genus, species, strain), while individual microbiome samples are treated as

“meta” organisms. The sequences of a microbiome sample together with their associated genes and annotations are grouped into *bins* when *binning* has been performed to assign these sequences to organism types (phylotypes). Both isolate organisms and microbiome samples are characterized by a variety of *metadata* attributes.

2.2 IMG/M Data Analysis

Genome data analysis in IMG/M is an extension of IMG data analysis to include metagenomes. The tools provided by IMG/M are summarized below, with metagenome specific analysis tools emphasized by the red background.



Data exploration tools in IMG/M help selecting and examining genomes/metagenomes, genes, and functions of interest. Similar to IMG, genes and functions can be selected using keyword searches or functional classification (e.g., COG, Pfam) browsers. Lists of genes and functional annotations of interest can be maintained and further explored using various “**Analysis Carts**”.

Metagenomes and isolate genomes can be selected using a keyword based **Genome Search** tool or a **Genome Browser**. Microbiomes can be further examined using the **Microbiome Details** where a user can find relevant metadata, such as sample site, along with various summaries of interest, such as the total number of scaffolds and genes or the number of genes associated with functional characterizations (e.g., COG, Pfam). The **Phylogenetic Distribution of Genes**, further discussed in Section 3.1, provides an estimate of the phylogenetic composition of a microbiome sample based on

the distribution of the best BLAST hits of the protein-coding genes in the sample. For each phylum/class, the phylogenetic distribution of genes can be projected onto the families in that phylum/class; for each family the distribution of genes can be further projected onto the species in that family. Finally, the genes in the sample can be viewed in the context of individual reference isolate genome, using either the **Reference Genome Context Viewer** or the **Protein Recruitment Plot**.

Similar to genes of isolate genomes, metagenome genes can be examined using **Gene Details** pages, which include information on locus, biochemical properties of the product, KEGG pathways, as well as evidence for the functional prediction: gene neighborhood, COG and Pfam, and pre-computed lists of homologs, orthologs and paralogs (for isolate organisms), or intra-metagenome homologs as well as homologs to other genomes and metagenomes (for microbiomes).

For metagenomes that include contigs and scaffolds generated by assembly of individual reads and potentially comprised of sequences from multiple strains, a “**NP BLAST**” tool, further discussed in Section 3.3, allows to examine the heterogeneity between the reads contributing to the composite population contigs and scaffolds.

Comparative analysis of genomes and metagenomes is provided in IMG/M through a number of tools that allow to examine their gene content and functional capabilities. The differences in gene content of genomes and metagenomes can be examined with a profile-based selection tool (**Phylogenetic Profiler**) and further explored through gene neighborhood analysis and multiple sequence alignment tools which are similar to their IMG counterparts.

Functional capabilities of a microbial community can be examined using several occurrence and abundance profile-based tools. **Abundance Profile** tools can be used for comparing the functional capabilities of metagenomes and genomes. The **Abundance Profile Overview** tool, further discussed in Section 4.1, provides an overview of the relative abundance of protein families (COGs and Pfams) and functional families (Enzymes) across selected metagenomes and isolate genomes. The **Abundance Profile Search** tool, further discussed in Section 4.2, is similar to the **Phylogenetic Profiler** tool for gene selection, but operates on protein families rather than individual genes. This tool allows finding protein families (COGs and Pfams) in metagenomes and isolate genomes based on their relative abundance.

The **Abundance Profile Overview** and **Function Profile** tools provide a rough estimate of the functional capabilities of metagenomes. When metagenomes are compared to each other or to isolate genomes, statistical tests are needed for estimating the *statistical significance* of the observed differences. The **Function Comparison** tool, further discussed in Section 4.3, and **Function Category Comparison** tool, further discussed in Section 4.4, take into account the stochastic nature of metagenome datasets and test whether the differences in abundance can be ascribed to chance variation or not. The results provided by these tools include an assessment of statistical significance in terms of associated **p-value** and **d-scores** (for Function Comparison) or **d-ranks** (for Function Category Comparison).

3 Analysis of Community Diversity & Abundance

3.1 Phylogenetic Distribution of Genes

Purpose. Assess phylogenetic composition of a metagenome sample based on the distribution of the best BLAST hits of the protein-coding genes found in the dataset.

Navigation: IMG/M Microbiomes or Find Genomes/Genome Browser → Microbiome Details → Phylogenetic Distribution of Genes.

Phylogenetic Distribution of Genes

Genome Browser

Microbiome Information

Microbiome Name	Acid Mine Drainage
Taxon Object ID	2001200000
NCBI Taxon ID	256318
NCBI Project ID	13696
GOLD ID	Gm00001
External Links	NCBI/GenBank: AADL00000000; PUF
Sequencing Status	Draft
Sequencing Center	JGI
Funding Agency	DOE
Phenotype	

Phylogenetic Distribution of Genes

Distribution of Best Blast Hits

Compare	Phylum/Class	No. Of Genomes	No. Of Hits 30%	Histogram 30%	No. Of Hits 60%	Histogram 60%
<input type="checkbox"/>	A. Crenarchaeota	15	181	1	6	
<input type="checkbox"/>	A. Euryarchaeota	34	1319		1946	
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Acidobacteria	2	78		12	
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Actinobacteria					
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Aquificae					
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Bacteroidetes					
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Chloroflexi					
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Chlorobi					
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Cyanobacteria					
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Desulfococcus-Th					
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Bacilli					
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Clostridia					
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Mollicutes					
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Fusobacteria					
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Lentisphaerae					
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Planctomycetes					
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Alphaproteobacter					
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Betaproteobacter					
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Deltaproteobacter					
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Epsilonproteobact					

Best Hits at 90% Identity

Gene ID	Percent	Name	COG ID	COG Name	COG Function	COG Gene Count
2001200003	100%	Proteobense ferro-lyase (ferrochelatase) [Acid Mine Drainage]	CO00276	Coenzyme transport and metabolism	Coenzyme transport and metabolism	937
2001200004	98	Selenocysteine-specific translation elongation factor [Acid Mine Drainage]	CO03276	Translation, ribosomal structure and biogenesis	Translation, ribosomal structure and biogenesis	355
2001200006	100	Phosphoribosylamino-glycine ligase [Acid Mine Drainage]	CO00151	Nucleotide transport and metabolism	Nucleotide transport and metabolism	1221
2001200007	100	Predicted transcriptional regulator containing the JFH1 domain [Acid Mine Drainage]	CO01386	Transcription	Transcription	753
2001200008	100	Purine-cytosine permease and related proteins [Acid Mine Drainage]	CO01457	Nucleotide transport and metabolism	Nucleotide transport and metabolism	576
2001200009	100	Deoxyribidase [Acid Mine Drainage]	CO00719	Nucleotide transport and metabolism	Nucleotide transport and metabolism	800

Functionality (1). The phylogenetic distribution of best BLAST hits of protein-coding genes in the metagenome is displayed as a histogram; counts correspond to the number of metagenome genes that have best BLASTp hits to proteins in this phylum or class with more than 90% identity (right column), 60-90% identity (middle column) and 30-60% identity (left column). The higher the number of hits and percent identity cutoff, the more likely it is that the metagenome contains close relatives of the sequenced representatives from this phylum/class.

Gene counts in the histogram are linked to the lists of genes in the metagenome that have best BLAST hit in a certain phylum/class with specified percent identity. The genes in the list can be sorted either by their IDs (“Table View”) or by their assignment to COGs, which in turn can be classified according to COG Functional Categories (“COG Functional Cat.”) or COG Pathways (“COG Pathways”). The genes in the table can be selected and added to Gene Cart or analyzed through the corresponding Gene Pages.

Navigation (cont.): Phylogenetic Distribution of Genes → Compare COG Functions; View all COG Functional Category/Pathways

Phylogenetic Distribution of Genes

Acid Mine Drainage
Phylogenetic Mapping Of Genomic Fragments

Domains(D): *=Microbiome, B=Bacteria, A=Archaea, E=Eukarya, V=Viruses.

Compare max. 2	D	Phylum/Class	No. Of Genomes	No. Of Hits 30%	Histogram 30%
<input type="checkbox"/>	A	Crenarchaeota	6	155	
<input type="checkbox"/>	A	Euryarchaeota	25	1352	
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Acidobacteria	2	99	
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Actinobacteria	42	194	
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Aquificae	1	42	
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Bacteroidetes	17	33	
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Chlamydiae	11	6	
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Chlorobi	10	72	
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Chloroflexi	6	79	
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Cyanobacteria	25	139	
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Deinococcus-Thermus	4	33	
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Bacilli	83	116	
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Clostridia	21	235	
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Mollicutes	17	2	
<input type="checkbox"/>	V	Unclassified	27	7	
<input type="checkbox"/>	-	Unassigned		368	

Histogram is a count of best hits within the phylum/class at 30% identity. Unassigned are the remainder of genes less than the percent identity.

Percent: 30 Difference Factor: 2

Compare COG Functions

View all COG Functional Category 30% Statistics
View all COG Functional Category 60% Statistics
View all COG Functional Category 90% Statistics

View all COG Pathways 30% Statistics
View all COG Pathways 60% Statistics
View all COG Pathways 90% Statistics

Comparison Summary Statistics for Crenarchaeota and Euryarchaeota COG Functional Categories 30%

COG Functional Category	Crenarchaeota	Euryarchaeota
Amino acid transport and metabolism	19 (16.8)	107 (11.1)
Carbohydrate transport and metabolism	9 (8.0)	71 (7.4)
Cell cycle control, cell division, chromosome partitioning	0	10 (1.0)
Cell wall/membrane/envelope biogenesis	3 (2.7)	22 (2.3)
Coenzyme transport and metabolism	3 (2.7)	53 (5.5)
Defense mechanisms	3 (2.7)	13 (1.3)
Energy production and conversion	10 (8.8)	71 (7.4)
Function unknown	14 (12.4)	92 (9.5)
General function prediction only	22 (19.5)	125 (13.0)
Inorganic ion transport and metabolism	4 (3.5)	37 (3.8)

Summary Statistics of COG Functional Categories 30%

COG Functional Category	Crenarchaeota	Euryarchaeota	Acidobacteria	Actinobacteria	Aquificae	Bacteroidetes	Chlamydiae
Amino acid transport and metabolism	19 (16.8)	107 (11.1)	3 (3.7)	9 (6.8)	8 (19.5)	3 (11.1)	0
Carbohydrate transport and metabolism	9 (8.0)	71 (7.4)	5 (6.2)	5 (3.8)	3 (7.3)	7 (25.9)	1 (20.0)
Cell cycle control, cell division, chromosome partitioning	0	10 (1.0)	0	0	0	0	0
Cell motility	0	0	1 (1.2)	1 (0.8)	0	0	0
Cell wall/membrane/envelope biogenesis	3 (2.7)	22 (2.3)	8 (9.9)	8 (6.1)	1 (2.4)	0	1 (20.0)
Chromatin structure and dynamics	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Coenzyme transport and metabolism	3 (2.7)	53 (5.5)	4 (4.9)	6 (4.5)	5 (12.2)	0	0
Defense mechanisms	3 (2.7)	13 (1.3)	7 (8.6)	2 (1.5)	0	1 (3.7)	0

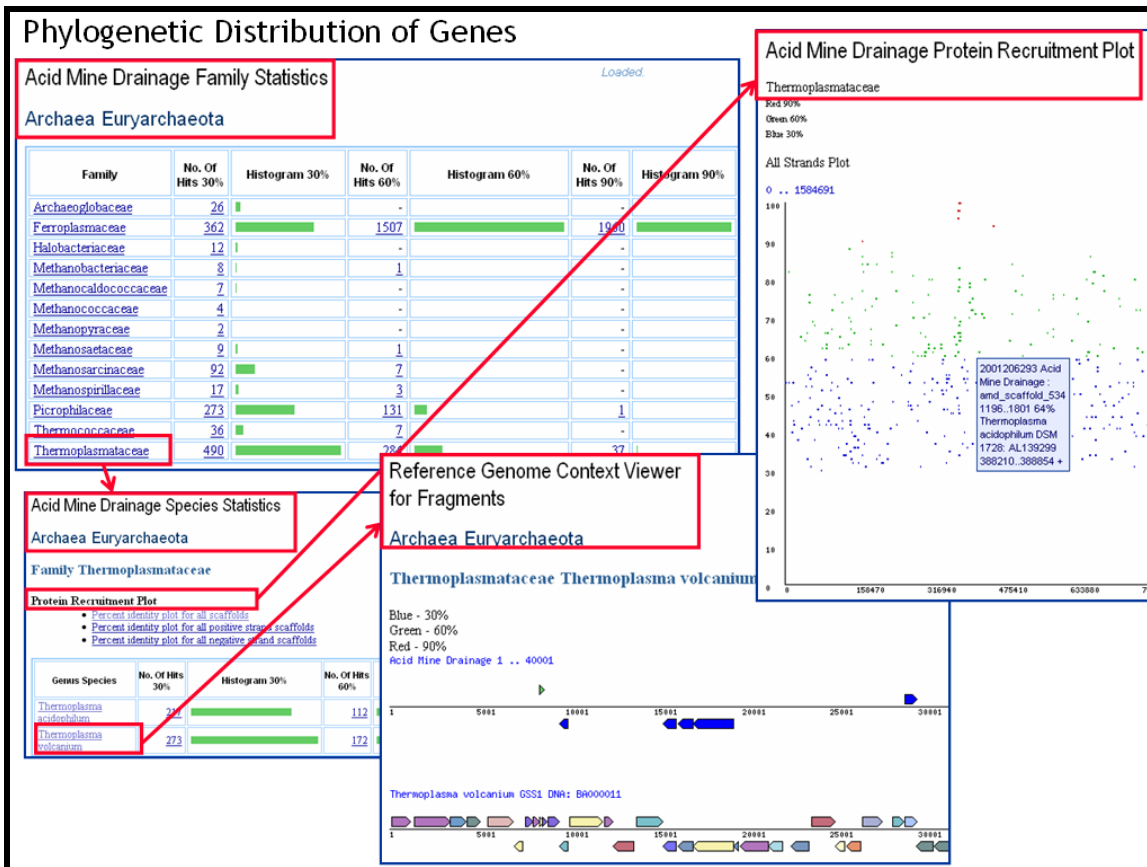
Functionality (2). For metagenome genes that have best BLASTp hits with 30%, 60-90%, and 90% identity, the tool displays summary statistics of COG functional categories and pathways associated with the metagenome genes either across all phyla/classes or across two selected phyla/classes. The statistics show the number of genes associated with a specific COG category or pathway, as well as the percentage of these genes out of the total number of genes with affiliation to this particular class or phylum in the certain interval of percent identity of the best BLAST hits (shown in parenthesis).

These summary statistics tables provide a quick overview of the functional complement of metagenomic proteins with likely affiliations to different phyla/classes (e. g. which COG categories are populated with most genes). In addition, they help to identify the areas of metabolism overrepresented among the genes with different phylogenetic affiliations as defined by their best BLAST hits thus indicating possible functional specialization within the community.

Notes. It should be pointed out that these comparisons provide reliable estimates of functional complement only for well-populated phyla/classes and COG categories; if very few genes are affiliated with certain phylum/class it is likely that either these genes originated from a poorly sampled organism with very low abundance or that these genes belong to an abundant organism but were subject to horizontal transfer and therefore appear to have different phylogenetic affiliation than the rest of the genome.

The summary statistics can be exported to an Excel file.

Navigation (cont.): Phylogenetic Distribution of Genes → (Project on Family) → (Project on Species) → Protein Recruitment Plot / Reference Genome Context Viewer



Functionality (3). The phylogenetic distribution of best BLAST hits can be projected onto the families in a phylum/class, and then further onto species in a family. For a specific species, the metagenome genes can be displayed using the **Protein Recruitment Plot** which displays the BLASTp hits of the metagenomic CDSs against the genes of the isolate genomes within this species, with the coordinates of the scaffolds for the isolate genomes and the BLAST percent identities shown on the X and Y axis, respectively. Each gene on the plot is linked to its Gene Details page. From the group of isolate genomes in a species, one can select a reference genome and view the metagenome genes either using the **Protein Recruitment Plot** or in the context of the chromosome view for this genome using the **Reference Genome Context Viewer**: the metagenome genes are colored according to the % identity of the BLAST hits, while the reference genome genes are colored according to their COG assignments.

This tool allows higher granularity display of the functional content of the “bins” represented by the metagenomic CDSs with different phylogenetic affiliations according to their best BLAST hits. In addition, whenever a reference genome close to an organism in the metagenomic dataset exists, it helps identify the similarities and differences in genetic content of the two organisms.

Notes. This analysis is based on all protein-coding genes in the metagenome, including those protein families prone to rapid expansion/reduction and horizontal transfer. Thus the histogram cannot be used as a good estimate of the phylogenetic composition of a microbiome – especially when the phyla/classes with low counts are considered.

3.2 Phylogenetic Marker COGs

Purpose. Tool for multiple sequence alignment (MSA) of metagenome genes assigned to single-copy COGs against the representatives of these COGs from finished isolate genomes; based on Multalin MSA tool [Corpet, F. 1988. Multiple sequence alignment with hierarchical clustering. *Nucleic Acids Res.*, 16(22), 10881-10890].

Navigation: Compare Genome → Phylogenetic Marker COGs

The screenshot shows the 'Phylogenetic Marker COGs' interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Compare Genomes' highlighted. Below this, the 'Genome Statistics' section shows various genomic metrics. The central 'Phylogenetic Marker COGs' section lists several COGs, with 'COG0194' selected. To the right, the 'Phylogenetic Marker COG Genes' table displays a list of genes, including 'phosphoribosylglycinate formyltransferase' from *Yersinia pestis KDM*. A phylogenetic tree is displayed at the bottom right, showing the evolutionary relationships between the selected genes. Red annotations highlight the 'Compare Genomes' button, the 'Phylogenetic Marker COGs' section, the 'Phylogenetic Marker COG Genes' table, and the 'Phylogenetic Marker COGs' section in the left sidebar.

Functionality. Select one or more metagenomes; then select a COG of which should be aligned. COGs in the list were selected by following criteria:

- genes assigned to this COG with at least 30% identity and aligned over at least 80% of both COG and gene length are found in at least 50% of finished genomes;
- no more than 10 finished genomes have 2 genes assigned to this COG, while all others have only 1.

The COGs are annotated with regard to whether they are strictly single-copy (i. e. there isn't a single genome with more than 1 gene assigned to this COG). Select a COG for alignment, select genes to be included in the alignment - the list of genes includes multiple representatives from the strains of the same species (e. g., *E. coli*, *S. pyogenes*, etc.), some of them can be deselected to reduce the size of the tree. The genes selected for the alignment can be added to the Gene Cart.

Alignment of a large number of genes may take some time; the genes on the tree are linked to the corresponding Gene Pages and the representatives of the metagenome are

highlighted in red. Multiple sequence alignment in MSF format is provided in the bottom of the page.

Notes. The tree generated by Multalin is not a phylogenetic tree, but rather a hierarchical clustering tree. To calculate a phylogenetic tree, use the alignment in MSF format provided at the bottom of the page and the tools outside IMG (e. g. see <http://au.expasy.org/tools/#align>). Beware of the effects of gene fragmentation on MSA and phylogenetic trees.

3.3 SNP BLAST and SNP VISTA

Purpose. Examine strain-level heterogeneity in the metagenomes of the communities with highly abundant members by analyzing SNPs (single nucleotide polymorphisms) within multi-read contigs and scaffolds.

Navigation. Gene Details → SNP BLAST → SNP VISTA

The screenshot displays the IMG/M interface for gene 2001202539. The 'Gene Details' section on the left provides information such as the gene object ID, locus tag, product name (DNA-directed RNA polymerase, beta subunit/140 kD subunit), genome, DNA coordinates, and scaffold source. The 'Evidence for Function Prediction' section includes a neighborhood map and related links and tools, with 'SNP BLAST' highlighted in red. The 'SNP BLAST' page shows a search for 'BLAST against SNP Databases' with a sequence input and a list of results. The 'SNP VISTA' page shows a multiple sequence alignment (MSA) of the gene across various samples, with a phylogenetic tree on the left. Red arrows indicate the navigation path from Gene Details to SNP BLAST and then to SNP VISTA.

Functionality. Under the **Evidence for Function Prediction** on the **Gene Details** page there is a list of **Related Links and Tools**, including SNP BLAST. The sequence of a particular gene can be used (with or without upstream and downstream regions); alternatively the whole contig sequence can be used or you can replace the sequence with your favorite nucleotide sequence by pasting it in the window. The databases contain the reads generated for the corresponding metagenomes; by default the database corresponding to the selected gene is chosen. The raw BLAST output shows you whether there are any SNPs among the reads corresponding to this contigs (shown

by letters, while identical nucleotides are replaced by dots). On the bottom of the page with raw BLAST output a button for running SNP VISTA [16] is available.

Notes. For some samples (AMO community, annamox bacteria, human and mouse gut microbiomes) there are no read databases. BLAST is run against all reads and contigs in the database and the output makes no distinction between the reads that were included in the contig being analyzed and other reads with sequence similarity to the contig.

4 Analysis Protein Family Relative Abundance

4.1 Abundance Profile Overview

Purpose. Examine relative abundance of all protein families (COGs and Pfams) and functional families (Enzymes) in metagenomes and isolate genomes.

Navigation: Compare Genomes → Abundance Profiles → Abundance Profile Overview

The screenshot displays the 'Abundance Profile Overview' page. At the top, there are navigation tabs: 'IMG/M Home', 'Find Genomes', 'Find Genes', 'Find Functions', 'Compare Genomes', and 'Analysis Carts'. Below these are sub-tabs: 'Genome Statistics', 'VISTA', 'Abundance Profiles', and 'Genome Clustering'. The 'Abundance Profiles Tools' section lists 'Abundance Profile Overview (All Functions)', 'Abundance Profile Search', and 'Function Comparisons'. The 'Abundance Profile Overview Results' section shows a heatmap with three columns representing 'Whalefall Sample #1', '#2', and '#3'. The heatmap cells are colored red, yellow, and green, indicating relative abundance. Below the heatmap is a table with columns for 'Select', 'Row No.', 'ID', 'Name', and three columns for 'Wha Sam #11', 'Wha Sam #22', and 'Wha Sam #33'. The table lists three protein families: COG0001 (Glutamate-1-semialdehyde aminotransferase), COG0002 (Acetylglutamate semialdehyde dehydrogenase), and COG0003 (Oxvanion-translocating ATPase). The 'Abundance Profile Overview Results' section also includes a 'Download tab-delimited file for Excel' link and a 'Pages: [1] 2 3 4 5 6 7 [Next Page]' indicator. The right-hand side of the interface contains 'Display Options' for 'Output Type' (Heap Map or Matrix) and 'Normalization Method' (None, Scale for genome size, Gene count, Estimated gene copies²). It also includes a 'Function' section with radio buttons for COG, Pfam, Enzyme, and TIGRfam, and a 'Genomes' section with a list of selected genomes.

Select	Row No.	ID	Name	Wha Sam #11	Wha Sam #22	Wha Sam #33
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	COG0001	Glutamate-1-semialdehyde aminotransferase	19	5	11
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	COG0002	Acetylglutamate semialdehyde dehydrogenase	9	10	10
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	COG0003	Oxvanion-translocating ATPase	1	1	4

Functionality. Select the type of format for displaying the results (“Heat Map” or “Matrix”), the type of protein/functional families (COG, Pfam, Enzyme), normalization method, and a set of metagenomes/isolate genomes.

For “Heat Map” output, the abundance of protein/functional families will be displayed as a heat map with red corresponding to the most abundant families. Each column on the map corresponds to a genome or metagenome, each row – to a family; mouse over each cell to see the count of a particular family in a genome/metagenome. Clicking on the id of the family displayed right to the column will add the corresponding family to the **Function Cart**; clicking on the cell will retrieve the list of genes assigned to this particular family in this genome or metagenome. By default the map is sorted by the abundance of families in the first sample, but can be resorted according to the abundance in other samples by clicking on the corresponding column header.

If the “Matrix” output is selected, the abundance of protein/functional families is displayed in a tabular format, with each row corresponding to a family and each cell containing the number of genes associated with a family for a specific genome or

metagenome. Click on the cell in order to retrieve the list of genes assigned to this particular family in a genome or metagenome. Families of interest can be selected for inclusion into the **Function Cart**. The results in “**Matrix**” format can be exported to a tab-delimited Excel file.

Notes. This analysis does not include the read depth coverage of each gene when counting family abundance. Beware when comparing high-complexity metagenomes with very low degree of assembly (e. g. soil) with low-complexity well-assembled metagenomes, such as AMD sample, since each gene in the latter may correspond to many reads.

4.2 Abundance Profile Search

Purpose. Selection of protein families (COGs and Pfams) in metagenomes and isolate genomes based on their relative abundance; similar to Phylogenetic Profiler for gene selection, but operates on protein families rather than individual genes.

Navigation. Compare Genomes → Abundance Profiles → Abundance Profile Search

Abundance Profile Search Results

Selection	Pfam Id	Pfam Name	Ferroplasma acidarmanus Type I	Ferroplasma acidarmanus Type II	Thermoplasmatales archaeon Gpl
<input type="checkbox"/>	pfam00488	MutS_V	1 (369.959)	0 (0.000)	5 (1230.921)
<input type="checkbox"/>	pfam00654	Voltage_CLC	1 (369.959)	0 (0.000)	3 (738.552)
<input type="checkbox"/>	pfam00903	Glyoxalase	1 (369.959)	0 (0.000)	2 (492.368)
<input type="checkbox"/>	pfam00925	GTP_cyclohydro2	1 (369.959)	0 (0.000)	3 (738.552)
<input type="checkbox"/>	pfam01112	Asparaginase_2	1 (369.959)	0 (0.000)	4 (984.737)

Functionality. Select the type of protein families (COG or Pfam), normalization method, and display of results. Abundance cut-offs can be set up for the genomes/metagenomes/bins of interest (e. g. – find all COGs in Ferroplasma Type I bin that are at least twice as abundant in this bin as in Ferroplasma Type II and are at least twice less abundant than in Thermoplasmatales archaeon). The families in the Results table can be selected and added to the Function Cart, while gene counts in the table are linked to the corresponding lists of genes, which can be also selected and added to the Gene Cart.

Notes. Abundance Profile Search does not take into account the degree of assembly of a metagenome/bin, i.e. the differences in read depth coverage between the genes and gene families in well assembled and poorly assembled metagenomes or bins. Beware when comparing poorly assembled metagenomes/bins with well assembled metagenomes/bins.

4.3 Function Comparison

Purpose. Comparison of a query metagenome/ isolate genome with one or several reference metagenomes/ isolate genomes, in terms of their relative abundance of protein families (COGs, Pfams, TIGRfams) and functional families (Enzymes), with estimates of the *statistical significance* of the observed differences

Navigation. Compare Genomes → Abundance Profiles → Function Comparisons

The screenshot shows the 'Function Comparisons' tool interface. The main table displays the following data:

Select	Row No.	ID	Name	Whalefa Sample #1 Gene Count (Q)	Whalefa Sample #2 (R)	Whalefa Sample #2 p-value (R)	Whalefa Sample #2 Gene Count (R)
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	COG0001	Glutamate-1-semialdehyde aminotransferase	19	2.69	3.54e-03	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	COG0002	Acetylglutamate semialdehyde dehydrogenase	9	-0.38	3.53e-01	10
<input type="checkbox"/>	21	COG0022	Pyruvate/2-oxoglutarate dehydrogenase complex, dehydrogenase (E1) component, eukaryotic type, beta subunit	9	-4.47	3.93e-06	38

Functionality. Select one query metagenome or genome, **Q**, and one or several reference metagenomes or genomes, **R**. Select the type of protein/functional families (COG, Pam, Enzyme, TIGRfam), the metric for comparison (count of genes or estimated gene copies, when read depths are available), and the type of comparison results to be included into the output, that is: (i) list all functions, even without any associated genes for the query and reference genomes/metagenomes! (ii) list the functions that have associated genes in one of the genomes/metagenomes; or (iii) list only the functions with significant differences between the query and reference genomes/metagenomes.

The function comparison output lists for each function, **F**: (i) the number of genes or estimated gene copies in the query genome/metagenome, **Q**, associated with **F**, and (ii) for each reference genome/metagenome, **R**, the number of genes or estimated gene

copies in R associated with F , together with the D-score and p-value associated with the comparison of Q to R . The computation of the D-score and p-values is further discussed below.

Comparison of frequencies of occurrence of a protein family between a query (meta)genome and a reference (meta)genome. Consider a query (meta)genome Q , and a reference (meta)genomes R . Given a protein family f , let X_1 and X_2 be the random variables representing the number of genes annotated with F in Q and R , respectively. Let n_1 and n_2 be the number of genes in Q and R , respectively, that are annotated with a protein family. Then $F_1=X_1/n_1$ and $F_2=X_2/n_2$ are the random variables representing the proportion of genes in Q and R , respectively, that are annotated with f . Then, the random variable that measures the difference between the abundances of the protein family f in Q and R is F_1-F_2 .

Let the probabilities that a gene is annotated with protein family f be p_1 and p_2 in Q and R , respectively. Then, the distribution of X_1 and X_2 can be approximated by the Binomial distributions¹ $B(X_1; n_1, p_1)$ and $B(X_2; n_2, p_2)$, respectively. Recall that the binomial probability $B(X; n, p)$ is the probability that X out of n members of a sample display a property of interest. When the sample sizes n_1 and n_2 are large, the binomial distribution can be approximated by the normal distribution².

The null hypothesis in this scenario is:

$$H_0: F_1=F_2 \text{ or } F_1-F_2=0.$$

Under the null hypothesis, both distributions $B(X_1; n_1, p_1)$ and $B(X_2; n_2, p_2)$ are identical with $p_1=p_2=p$. Therefore, when H_0 is true, p can be approximated as follows:

$$p=(X_1+X_2)/(n_1+n_2).$$

The random variable being tested here is $F_D=F_1-F_2$. Under the null hypothesis, both X_1 and X_2 are binomially distributed with parameter p , and the expected value (mean) of F_D is 0. The standard deviation (SD) of F_D is given by

$$\text{sqrt}(\text{var}(F_1)+\text{var}(F_2)) = \text{sqrt}(p(1-p)/n_1 + p(1-p)/n_2) = \text{sqrt}(p(1-p)(1/n_1+1/n_2)).$$

The above result is obtained by using the standard expressions for variance and standard deviation for the binomial distribution. As an example, $\text{var}(F_1)=p_1(1-p_1)/n_1$.

Then the following variate, which we call the D-score

$$D = (F_1 - F_2) / \text{sqrt}(p(1-p) * (1/n_1 + 1/n_2))$$

is the Z-score of F_D under the null hypothesis and is approximately normally distributed with mean zero and unit variance, $N(0,1)$ ³.

The significance of individual D-scores can be computed using the standard normal distribution tables and the standard Z-test¹.

When the abundances of multiple protein families f_1, f_2, \dots, f_n are being tested simultaneously (in a functional category), consider the following variate:

$$D^* = \sum D_i / \text{sqrt}(n), i=1 \dots n.$$

¹ Freedman D, Pisani R, and Purves R, (1997) **Statistics**, Third Ed., W. W. Norton & Comp.

² Papoulis A. (1984) Probability, Random Variables, and Stochastic Processes, 2nd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 102-103.

³ Hoel PG, Introduction to Mathematical Statistics (1971) Fourth Ed, Wiley.

Assuming that all the identically distributed D_i s above are independent, according to the Central Limit Theorem, D^* is normally distributed with mean 0 and variance = square(sqrt(n))*var($\sum D_i/n$) = $n*1/n = 1$. Therefore, $D^* = N(0,1)$, too. Then using the tables for the Z-distribution, the p-value corresponding to a given D^* value can be computed.

The null hypothesis is rejected when the absolute value of D^* is greater than 1.96, which is equivalent to a p-value less than 0.05. Note that an absolute value of D^* greater than 2.33 is equivalent to a p-value less than 0.01.

Multiple Hypothesis Testing Correction. When multiple hypotheses are being tested simultaneously, the likelihood of false predictions, and hence the number of type-I errors increases significantly. In order to remove the effect of testing multiple hypotheses simultaneously, a False Discovery Rate (FDR) correction⁴ is used prior to the display of significant hypotheses. FDR correction is meant to control the expected number of false predictions in a multiple-testing scenario. For a given FDR α , the hypotheses are first ordered according to increasing p-values. For n hypotheses, let this order be $H_{(0)}, H_{(1)} \dots H_{(n)}$ and the respective ordered p-values be $p_{(0)}, p_{(1)} \dots p_{(n)}$. Then, the k^{th} hypothesis $H_{(k)}$ is rejected (i.e., the alternate hypothesis is accepted as a statistically significant discovery) if $p_{(k)} \leq k\alpha/n$.

In displaying the result of a function comparison, the FDR correction is used for highlighting significant differences: non-significant differences or differences that are not significant for the number of genes annotated with protein families (see above) are not highlighted. An FDR with $\alpha = 0.05$ is used for selecting p-values at or better than $p_{(k)}$. The number of functions, n , represents the number of hypotheses tested.

⁴ Benjamini Y and Hochberg Y. (1995) Controlling the false discovery rate: a practical and powerful approach to multiple testing. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* **57** (1), 289–300.

4.4 Functional Category Comparison

Purpose. Comparison of a query metagenome/ isolate genome with one or several reference metagenomes/ isolate genomes, in terms of the relative abundance of the genes assigned to different functional categories (COG Pathway, KEGG Pathway, KEGG Pathway Category, Pfam Category, TIGRfam sub-roles), with estimates of the *statistical significance* of the observed differences

Navigation. Compare Genomes → Abundance Profiles → Functional Category Comparisons

Function Category Comparisons

Page Options:
500 functions per page.

Select One Query Genome¹:
Whalefall Sample #1 (*)[D]
Whalefall Sample #2 (*)[D]
Whalefall Sample #3 (*)[D]

Select Multiple Reference Genomes¹:
Whalefall Sample #1 (*)[D]
Whalefall Sample #2 (*)[D]
Whalefall Sample #3 (*)[D]

Function Category:
 COG Pathways
 Kegg Pathways
 Kegg Pathways Category
 Pfam Categories (formed from COG categories / pathways)
 TIGRfam Category Roles

Measurement:
 Gene count
 Estimated gene copies²
 5 Minimum function gene count to calculate d-score³

Output:
 D-rank⁴
 D-rank (unsigned)⁵
 Include all rows, including those without hits.

Row No.	ID	Name	Whalefa Sample #1 Gene Count (Q)	Whalefa Sample #2 (R)	Whalefa Sample #2 p-value (R)	Whalefa Sample #2 Gene Count (R)	Whalefa Sample #3 (R)
1	1	Archaeal/Vacuolar-type H+ ATPase subunits	13	0.00	5.00e-01	1	0.00
2	10	Isoleucine biosynthesis	123	-0.41	3.40e-01	115	-1.77 3.86e-02 136
3	11	Leucine biosynthesis	183	0.26	3.99e-01	155	-1.07 1.42e-01 185
4	12	Methionine biosynthesis	108	-2.65	4.02e-03	137	-2.11 1.75e-02 129

Functionality. Select one query metagenome or genome, **Q**, and one or several reference metagenomes or genomes, **R**. Select the type of functional category (COG Pathway, KEGG Pathway, KEGG Pathway Category, Pfam Categories, TIGR Role Categories), the metric for comparison (count of genes or estimated gene copies, if read depths for the genes are available), and the type of statistical significance estimate (D*-rank or D*-rank unsigned). Pfam Categories is a classification of Pfams based on their mapping to COGs through the genes assigned to both types of protein families; only those Pfams that can be unambiguously mapped onto COGs are included in classification, which mirrors COG Functional Categories and COG Pathways.

The function category comparison output lists for each function category **F**: (i) the number of genes or estimated gene copies in the query genome/metagenome, **Q**, associated with **F** and (ii) for each reference genome/metagenome, **R**, the number of genes or estimated gene copies in **R** associated with **F** together with the D*-rank and p-

value associated with the comparison of **Q** to **R**. The computation of the D*-rank and p-values is further discussed below.

The comparison result includes an assessment of statistical significance of the relative frequencies of the genes assigned to different functional categories in terms of **D*-rank** which represents a normalization ranking of each pair wise comparison. D*-rank is calculated by adding the **D-scores** of all protein families (see section 3.3 above) assigned to a certain functional category normalized by the square root of the number of these categories including those with no genes assigned (zero hits). In calculating the D*-rank, we use the observation that the sum of normally distributed values is normally distributed. Similar to D-scores for individual protein families, the null hypothesis assumes that the probability of occurrence of the genes assigned to a certain functional category is the same for both metagenomes. Under the assumption of the null hypothesis D-rank values are approximately normally distributed with mean zero and unit variance, N(0,1). As in the case of D-scores of individual protein families, the null hypothesis of equal probabilities of functional categories is rejected if absolute D-rank value is greater than 1.96 at p<0.05 and at p<0.01 if absolute D*-rank value is greater than 2.33. In addition to signed or unsigned D*-rank values counts of genes assigned to a functional category in each metagenome is displayed.

Notes. In the computation of D*-ranks, the D-scores invalid due to low counts of genes assigned to a protein family in at least one metagenome are not excluded from the calculation but rather assigned a zero value, which represents a penalty for low gene counts. The result of this penalty is that the null hypothesis will be harder to reject as the proportion of invalid D-scores increases thus avoiding overestimation of statistical significance of the differences of gene counts in sparsely populated functional categories.

Calculations.

$f_1 = x_1/n_1$ = frequency of functional occurrence in query group.

$f_2 = x_2/n_2$ = frequency of functional occurrence in reference group.

$p = (x_1 + x_2) / (n_1 + n_2)$ = probability of occurrence.

$q = 1 - p$ = probability of non-occurrence.

$d_score = (f_1 - f_2) / \sqrt{p * q * (1/n_1 + 1/n_2)}$

$D^*-rank = \sum_{l=1}^N d_score_l / \sqrt{N}$

Where:

x_1 = count of a given function in query group.

x_2 = count of a given function in reference group.

n_1 = total counts of all function occurrences in query group.

n_2 = total counts of all function occurrences in reference group.