

1 **Title: A simple modification of library length for highly divergent gene capture**

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29

30 **Abstract:** Hybridization capture is considered very cost- and time-effective method for enriching  
31 a massive amount of target loci distributed separately in a whole genome. However, divergent  
32 loci are difficult to enrich for the sequence mismatch between probes and target DNA. After  
33 analysis the distributional pattern of divergent loci in mitochondrial genomes (mitogenomes), we  
34 notice that the relatively variable regions are intercept by the relatively conservative regions. We  
35 propose to extend the length of library to overcome the problem. By using a home-made probe  
36 set to bait amphibian mitogeneomes DNA, we demonstrate that using 2 kb DNA libraries  
37 generate high sequence coverage in the highly variable regions than using 400 bp DNA libraries.  
38 These suggest that longer fragments in the library generally contain both relatively variable  
39 regions and relatively conservative regions. The divergent part DNA along with conservative  
40 part DNA is captured during hybridization. We present a protocol that allows users to overcome  
41 the gap problem for highly divergent gene capture.

42

43 **Key words:** In-solution hybridization capture, high-throughput sequence, long-range PCR, bait,  
44 mitochondrial genome.

45

## 46 **1. Introduction**

47 Target-sequence enrichment coupled with high-throughput sequence is very popular  
48 method in many disciplines, including evolutionary biology, population genetics, and human  
49 disease (1-3). Hybridization capture is considered very cost- and time-effective for enriching a  
50 massive amount of target loci distributed separately in a whole genome (4). There are exist  
51 versatile approaches to various target loci of interest, including exon-capture, ultra-conservative  
52 elements and home-made probe capture for any specific gene (2-3). Moreover, there is no need  
53 of *a priori* gene sequence of a species of interest. Currently, DNA sequence from closely relative  
54 species available in public databases allows researchers to design probe to bait target loci (5).

55 The general experimental steps of in-solution hybridization capture method is as follows:  
56 1) prepare a DNA/RNA library from species of interest; 2) prepare probe to bait target genes; 3)  
57 then mix the probe and the library for enriching target genes; 4) sequence the enriched library.  
58 Sequence mismatch between probe and target sequence greatly influences gene coverage.  
59 Divergent gene region is difficult to design suitable probes referred to the closely relative species  
60 (5). Some studies report various ways to overcome the problem, such as optimize hybridization  
61 temperature (6-8), re-capture strategy (9), and probe optimization (10). Various temperature,  
62 including standard hybridization temperature 65 °C, low temperature 60 °C, 50 °C, 48 °C and  
63 45 °C, touchdown approach are tried (1, 6-8). But temperature has been proved not the crucial  
64 parameter (5). In a mitochondrial genome research (1), we notice that gene conservativeness has  
65 striking relation with gene coverage. The most conserved regions, such *12s* and *16s rRNA*, have  
66 extremely high sequence-depth. In contrast, control region and NADH dehydrogenase genes  
67 have low or even no coverage. These suggest that sequence-depth is enough high for the  
68 mitogenome. The lack of read mapped to the divergent gene results from the extremely low

69 efficiency of probe binding with the DNA fragments. Therefore, we focus on the molecular  
70 experiment solution instead of computational method to overcome the problem. To clearly  
71 understand divergent regions distributed in mitogenomes, we select 40 loci from 13 protein-  
72 coding genes and two rRNA genes in 33 mitogenomes from 24 amphibian genera. The length of  
73 variable regions are range from 400 bp to 1021 bp. The divergent regions are intercepted by the  
74 conservative region. The distributional pattern indicates that shearing the genome longer enable  
75 fragments generally contained both relatively conservative part and relatively divergent part.

76 In this study, to address the problem of gap in divergent genes, we hypothesis that  
77 extending library length to hybridization (termed LR-HY) is an effective optimization for  
78 improving the coverage of high divergent gene. In the standard protocol of in-solution capture  
79 hybridization, the length of the library is usually range from 200 to 500 bp for the convenient of  
80 the high-through sequence. This parameter is not suitable for the gene contained long divergent  
81 fragment. Just like the example of amphibian mitogenomes as above. To testify the hypothesis,  
82 we choose amphibian mitogenomes to illustrate the performance of LR-HY. The reasons we  
83 choose this animal group are: 1) the lengths of control region are varied from approximately 100  
84 bp to more than 2kb; 2) the sequence of whole mitogenomes are more variable as compare to  
85 them from Aves and Mammalia; 3) Gene rearrangement of NADH dehydrogenase genes are  
86 common in many families. We compare the modified method with standard method with two  
87 species *Rana sp.1* and *Onychodactylus sp.1*. There are two gaps existed in the mitogenome of  
88 *Rana sp.1* and four gaps in *Onychodactylus sp.1* at these highly variable loci (Figure 2 A and B,  
89 orange line) when we use standard method. Instead, the LR-HY greatly improves the sequence  
90 coverage in these regions (Figure 2, green line).

91           The general pipeline of this study is shown in Figure 1A. A suitable probe set and long  
92 DNA library are necessary to prepare first. The probe set is randomly generated from Long-  
93 range PCR (LR-PCR) products since it is cost-effective and convenient to prepare. We designed  
94 a new set of universal primers by using mitogenomes from Amphibia, Aves and Mammalia. Two  
95 PCR reactions cover a complete mitogenome from any vertebrate species. To prepare long  
96 library, we shear a total DNA to the length of approximately 2-3 kb depended on the length of  
97 control region of amphibian mitogenome. Then the home-made probe is used to enrich target  
98 long DNA fragments in the library. In the downstream sequence experiment, an Ion Torrent  
99 Personal Genome Machine (PGM) is used to sequence because it is fast and relatively  
100 inexpensive in terms of each run (not price per base). Each run using 316 chip generated over  
101 800 Mb for 60 samples and the data size for each sample is more than 10 Mb in general. These  
102 generated data are sufficient for *de novo* assembly of a complete mitochondrial genome.  
103 Although we sequenced with Ion torrent platform, the protocol could also be applied to Illumina  
104 platform with accordance with its library construction protocol. The detail LR-HY protocol is as  
105 follow. This protocol can be carried out in any molecular biology lab with standard library  
106 construction equipment.

107

## 108 **2. Materials**

109 All reagents and plastic ware should be sterile.

- 110 1. LongAmp DNA Polymerase (New England BioLabs).
- 111 2. 2.5 mM dNTP (Takara).
- 112 3. WIZARD gel extraction kit (Promega).

- 113 4. Ampure Beads (Beckman).
- 114 5. Ion Xpress Barcode Adapter Kits from 1 to 96 (ThermoFisher).
- 115 6. Ion Plus Fragment Library Kit (ThermoFisher).
- 116 7. IonShear kit (ThermoFisher).
- 117 8. Agarose gel.
- 118 9. Human Cot-1 DNA (Agilent).
- 119 10. Hybridization buffer and blocking agent (from a Agilent aCGH kit).
- 120 11. Streptavidin beads (M-270, Invitrogen).
- 121 12. Tween-20.
- 122 13. 3M sodium acetate.
- 123 14. TE buffer (10 mM Tris, 1 mM EDTA, pH 8.0).
- 124 15. EBT and TET: 1× TE buffer, 0.05% Tween-20.
- 125 16. 1× bind and wash (BWT) buffer: 1 M NaCl, 10 mM Tris-Cl, 1 mM EDTA, 0.05%
- 126 Tween-20, pH 8.0.
- 127 17. Hot wash (HW) buffer: 200 mL 10× PCR buffer, 200 mL MgCl<sub>2</sub> (25 mM), 1.6 mL H<sub>2</sub>O.
- 128 18. Library Amplification Kit (KAPA).
- 129 19. 2100 Bioanalyzer (Agilent).
- 130 20. Qubit 2.0 (Invitrogen).
- 131 21. 2% E-gel (Invitrogen).
- 132 22. Focused-ultrasonicator M220 (Covaris).
- 133 23. PCR reaction tubes.
- 134 24. Covaris microTUBE.
- 135 25. NanoDrop (ThermoFisher).

136 26. Magnetic rack.

137 27. Hybridization oven.

138 28. A thermal cycler.

139

### 140 **3. Methods**

#### 141 *3.1 Prepare Probe*

##### 142 1. Primes for amplifying mitogenome

143 To achieve universality and avoid impact on the gene rearrangement, we designe  
144 degenerate primers on the conservative regions as shown in Table 1 (Design principle see  
145 Note 1). TF1 is amplified using (F2/F4)/R3 (expected length: 5–9 kb, figure 1B, red) and  
146 TR1 is amplified using F3/(R1/R2) (expected length: 7–12 kb, Figure 1B, red). Primer  
147 pair F1/R2 is used to amplify OA1 (expected length: >14 kb, Figure 1B, green), which  
148 covers all the protein-coding and control regions. Primer pair F2/R4 is used to amplify  
149 OS1 (expected length: >2 kb, figure 1B, green) covers two rRNA genes: *16s rRNA* and a  
150 portion of *12s rRNA*. (Note 2)

##### 151 2. Long-range PCR

152 Long-range PCR is conducted in 25  $\mu$ L reactions and mix the following reagents:

153 (a) 0.8  $\mu$ L forward primers (10  $\mu$ M).

154 (b) 0.8  $\mu$ L reverse primers (10  $\mu$ M).

155 (c) 3  $\mu$ L dNTP (2.5 mM).

156 (d) 1  $\mu$ L LongAmp DNA Polymerase.

157 (e) 5  $\mu$ L 5 $\times$  PCR buffer.

158 (f) 50–200 ng template.

159 LR-PCR condition is as follows: initial incubate at 95  $^{\circ}$ C for 1 min, 30–32 cycles at  
160 94  $^{\circ}$ C for 10 s, 58  $^{\circ}$ C for 40 s, and 65  $^{\circ}$ C extensive for variable times, a final extension at  
161 65  $^{\circ}$ C for 10 min, and hold 10 $^{\circ}$ C forever. Extension times are 3 min for OS1, 10 min for TF1  
162 and TR1, and 16 min for OA1 (Figure 1B). Check PCR product by using 0.8% agarose gel.

163 3. Purify LR-PCR product by using WIZARD gel extraction kit.

164 4. Measure the concentration with a Nanodrop. The amounts of products should be up to 0.1-  
165 1.2  $\mu$ g (To ensure enough quantity of PCR product see Note 3).

166 5. Mix PCR products according to amplicon length (and empirically adjusted according to  
167 sequence-depth). The ratio of the TF1 to TR1 amplicon is 5:8. The ratio of the OS1 to OA1  
168 amplicon is 1:12. Probe making is conducted in 50  $\mu$ L reactions and mix the following reagents:

169 (a) PCR product mixture 1.3  $\mu$ g.

170 (b) 5  $\mu$ L 10 $\times$  dNTP Mix.

171 (c) 5  $\mu$ L 10 $\times$  Enzyme Mix.

172 6. Mix and centrifuge briefly (15,000  $\times$  g for 5 sec).

173 7. Incubate at 16  $^{\circ}$ C for 90 min (The time parameter setting is different from manufactory  
174 protocol, the reason in Note 4).

175 8. Add 5  $\mu$ L Stop Buffer.



176 9. Add 1/10 volume 3 M sodium acetate and 2 volumes cold (-20 °C) ethanol to the reaction  
177 tube. Freeze at -70 °C for 30 min.

178 10. Centrifuge at 15,000 × g for 10 min. Carefully remove the supernatant with an pipettor  
179 and dry the pellet.

180 11. Resuspend the pellet in 50 µL H<sub>2</sub>O and precipitate the probe with sodium acetate and  
181 ethanol as described above.

182 12. Resuspend the probe in TE buffer and store at -20 °C.

### 183 *3.2 Library construction 1 for capture hybridization*

184 1. LR-PCR products are mixed at a certain ratio the same with step 5 in the section Prepare  
185 Probe.

186 2. Shear the mixture in a Focused-ultrasonicator M220 (Covaris) by selecting the method  
187 DNA\_2000bp\_200\_ul\_Clear\_microTUBE for 12 min. The shear volume is 200 µL (The  
188 shearing length can be adjusted and details is in Note 5).

189 3. End-repair reaction is carried out in 100 µL reactions and mix the following reagents:

190 (a) 130 ng sheared DNA.

191 (b) 20 µL 5 × End Repair Buffer.

192 (c) 1 µL End Repair Enzyme.

193 4. Adaptor ligation is carried out in 100 µL reactions and mix the following reagents in Ion  
194 Plus Fragment Library Kit:

195 (a) 130 ng of sheared DNA.

196 (b) 1.6  $\mu$ L (Ion Xpress Barcode Adapter Kits from 1 to 96).

197 (c) 10  $\mu$ L 10  $\times$  Ligase Buffer.

198 (d) 2  $\mu$ L dNTP Mix.

199 (e) 2  $\mu$ L DNA Ligase.

200 (f) 8  $\mu$ L Nick Repair Polymerase.

201 Incubate for 20 min at 25  $^{\circ}$ C in a thermal cycler and followed 72  $^{\circ}$ C incubation for 5 min.

202 5. Select long DNA fragment by using 0.4 volume of Ampure beads (i.e., 100  $\mu$ L sample of  
203 DNA gets 40  $\mu$ L of Ampure beads) (alternative choice is gel selection, see Note 6)

204 6. Library amplification is carried out in 100  $\mu$ L reactions and mix the following reagents:

205 (a) Size-selected library;

206 (b) 10  $\mu$ L 5 $\times$  PCR buffer;

207 (c) 5  $\mu$ L 2.5 mM dNTP;

208 (d) 2  $\mu$ L of 10  $\mu$ M forward and reverse primers (Primer information in Note 7);

209 (e) 2  $\mu$ L LongAmp DNA Polymerase.

210 Incubate 95  $^{\circ}$ C for 1 min, then 15 cycles of 94  $^{\circ}$ C for 10 s, 58  $^{\circ}$ C for 40 s, 65  $^{\circ}$ C for 3  
211 min, and finally 65  $^{\circ}$ C for 10 min followed by holding at 4  $^{\circ}$ C.

212 7. Purify with Ampure bead and add 15  $\mu$ L 1  $\times$  TE buffer.

213 *3.3 In-solution Capture hybridization*

- 214 1. In-solution capture hybridization is carried out in 100  $\mu$ L reactions:
- 215 (a) 25  $\mu$ l 2 $\times$  hybridization buffer.
- 216 (b) 5  $\mu$ l 10 $\times$  blocking agent.
- 217 (c) 2  $\mu$ l Human Cot-1 DNA.
- 218 (d) 2  $\mu$ l of blocking adaptors (from Ion Plus Fragment Library Kit, ThermoFisher).
- 219 (e) 10-100 ng of bait and 100-1000 ng library (Certain ratio of library and probe is 1:10).
- 220 Incubate for 5 min at 95  $^{\circ}$ C, and then incubated for 72 hr at 65  $^{\circ}$ C.
- 221 2. After hybridization, incubate the mixture with 5  $\mu$ L magnetic streptavidin beads (M-270,
- 222 Invitrogen) for 20 min at room temperature.
- 223 3. Place the mixture into a magnetic rack to separate the magnetic beads from the supernatant.
- 224 4. Discard the supernatant.
- 225 5. Wash the beads using 200  $\mu$ L of 1x BWT buffer, vortex the mixture for 30 s each time.
- 226 6. Discard the supernatant.
- 227 7. Repeat steps 5 and 6 for four times.
- 228 8. Wash the beads once with warmed HW buffer at 50  $^{\circ}$ C for 2 min.
- 229 9. Wash the beads once with 200  $\mu$ L of 1x BWT buffer, vortex the mixture for 30 s.
- 230 10. Wash the beads once with 100  $\mu$ L of TET, vortex the mixture for 30 s.

231 11. Separate hybridized target molecules from the bait in 30  $\mu$ L TE by incubation at 95  $^{\circ}$ C  
232 for 5 min in a thermal cycler.

233 12. The PCR condition is the same with step 6 in section Library construction 1 for capture  
234 hybridization.

### 235 *3.4 Library construction 2 for sequencing*

236 1. Shear the enriched libraries for 120 s using an IonShear kit (ThermoFisher) in an open  
237 thermocycler. The 2 kb DNA fragments will be sheared to 300-500 bp.

238 2. Adaptor ligation is the same with step 4 in the section Library construction 1 for capture  
239 hybridization.

240 3. Select 450 bp reads by using 2% E-gel.

241 4. Library amplification is carried out in a PCR volume of 50  $\mu$ L by using a Library  
242 Amplification Kit:

243 (a) 25  $\mu$ L HiFi mix;

244 (b) 21  $\mu$ L selected fragment solution;

245 (c) 4  $\mu$ L primer mix (from Ion Plus Fragment Library Kit, ThermoFisher);

246 5. Concentration is measured by using Qubit. Length of library is measured by using 2100  
247 Bioanalyzer (Agilent).

248

## 249 **4. Notes**

- 250 1. All of the primer structures are delicately refined. We separate the primers into two regions:  
251 the 5' non-degenerate clamp region and the 3' degenerate core region (11). The 3' degenerate  
252 core region contains almost all the degenerate points for increasing the possibility mapped to the  
253 template. To stabilize the extension of the polymerase, we increase the GC content of the 5' non-  
254 degenerate clamp and the AT content of at the beginning of the 3' degenerate core region (12).
- 255 2. We recommend TF1 and TR1 amplification as *a priori* choice. If it failed, the OA1 also hard to  
256 success.
- 257 3. To assure the quantity of product enough for probe making, we recommend to amplify  
258 multiple tubes of LR-PCR instead of increasing cycles for a tube.
- 259 4. We tried short time of 20 min, 30 min, 40 min and 1h. Although the short time setting enable  
260 us to get long probe. But the efficiency of the probe is low. There is generally less than 10%  
261 reads mapped to reference genome.
- 262 5. Coveris provides many programs to shear DNA to different length from 50 bp to more than 10  
263 kb. According the divergent gene length, we could adjust the shearing length. But it is not  
264 recommend to exceed >10 kb, because extremely high quality DNA samples are required. The  
265 long-range PCR also have high failure rate.
- 266 6. Using agarose gel to do size selection is another choice. But it loss more DNA and cost more  
267 time as compare to using Ampure beads.
- 268 7. Primers for Ion torrent library amplification can be booked by ourselves. Forward primer: 5'-  
269 CCATCTCATCCCTGCGTGTCTC-3' and Reverse primer: 5'-  
270 CCACTACGCCTCCGCTTTCCTC-3'.

271

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276

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307

### 308 **Figure captions**

309 **Figure 1. Variation rate cross-region in two rRNA and 13 protein-coding genes.** The  
310 histogram represents variation rate across 40 loci in two rRNA and 13 protein-coding genes. Red  
311 column represent highly variable loci. The length of 16s\_2 is 400 bp. The length from ND2\_2  
312 and ND2\_3 is 699 bp. The length from apt8 and apt6\_1 is 529 bp. The length from ND41 to

313 ND4\_2 is 996 bp. The length from ND4\_4 to ND5\_1 is 717 bp. The length from ND5\_4 to  
314 ND6\_2 is 1021 bp.

315 **Figure 2. Coverage distributions for 400 bp and 2 kb library. A** represents *Rana sp.1* results  
316 by using standard capture hybridization (orange line) and LR-HY (green line). Black line  
317 represents DNA sequence distance between *Rana sp.1* and *Rana sp.2* (Kimura 2-parameter  
318 distance). The sliding window length is 50 bp and the step length is 5 bp (below is the same).  
319 Dashed lines in A and B are constant at 0.15 and 0.3 sequence distance. The repetitive regions in  
320 *Rana sp2* which is labeled with yellow ranged from 13,424 to 13,572 bp, 15,402 to 15,660 bp,  
321 16,593 to 16,770 bp and 17,382 to 18,498 bp. **B** represents *Onychodactylus sp.1* results by using  
322 standard capture hybridization (orange line) and LR-HY (green line). Black line represents DNA  
323 sequence distance between *Rana sp.1* and *Onychodactylus sp.1*. Dashed lines in A and B are  
324 constant at 0.15 and 0.3 of Kimura 2-parameter distance. The regions with greatest sequence-  
325 depth improvement are highlighted with red box.

326 **Figure 3. A. Schematic pipeline for enriching mitochondrial DNA to high-throughput**  
327 **sequencing.** Compared to standard library, the long-range library hybridization strategy (LR-HY)  
328 has some modifications in library construction 1 and 2. LR-HY requires a long fragment during  
329 shearing in library construction 1 for capturing high variable loci and additional library  
330 construction 2 for Ion Torrent Personal Genome Machine sequencing. In standard hybridization,  
331 there is no construction library 2 and the enriched fragments directly sequenced; **B. Two**  
332 **strategies for amplifying mitochondrial genomes, termed OA1/OS1 and TF1/TR1.**  
333 OA1/OS1: amplification of OA1 and OS1 regions uses primers F1/R2 and F4/R4, respectively.  
334 TF1/TR1: amplification of fragments TF1 and TR1 using primers (F2/F4)/R3 and F3/(R1/R2),  
335 respectively



336

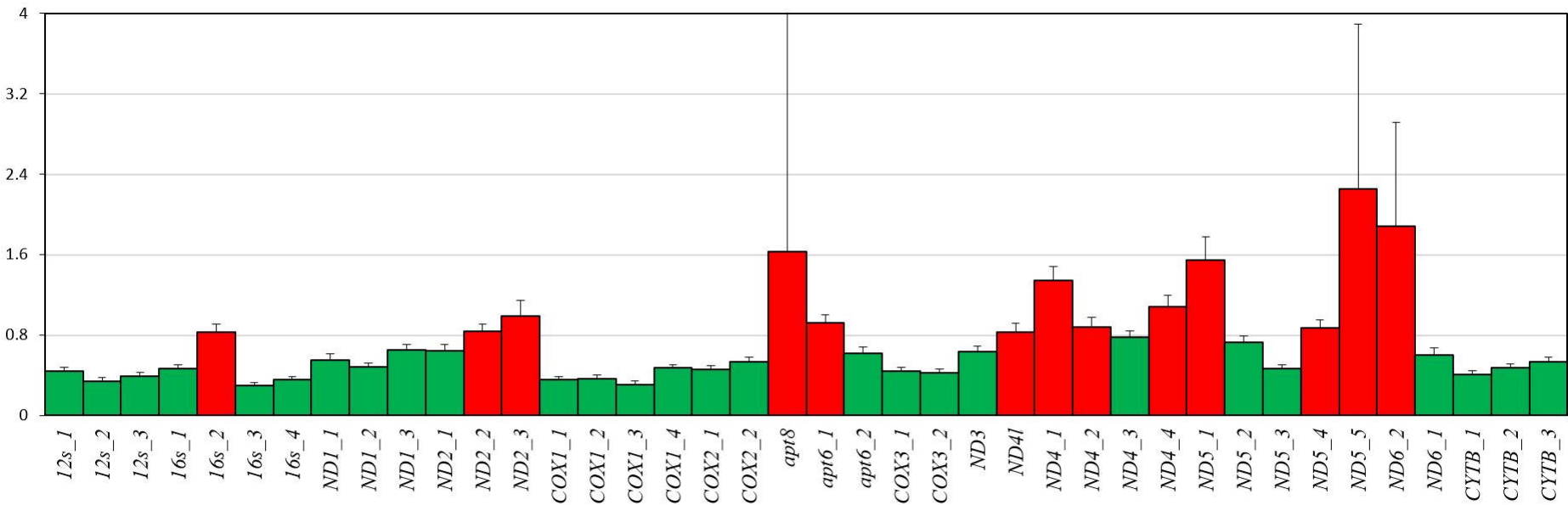
337 **Tables with captions**

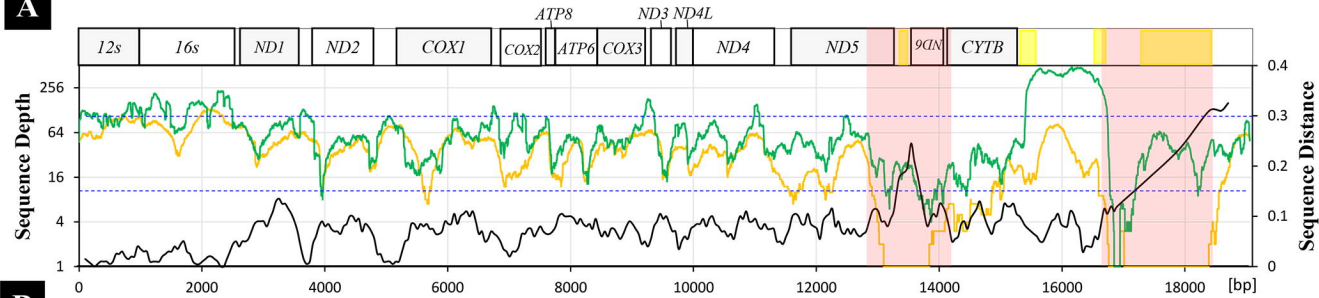
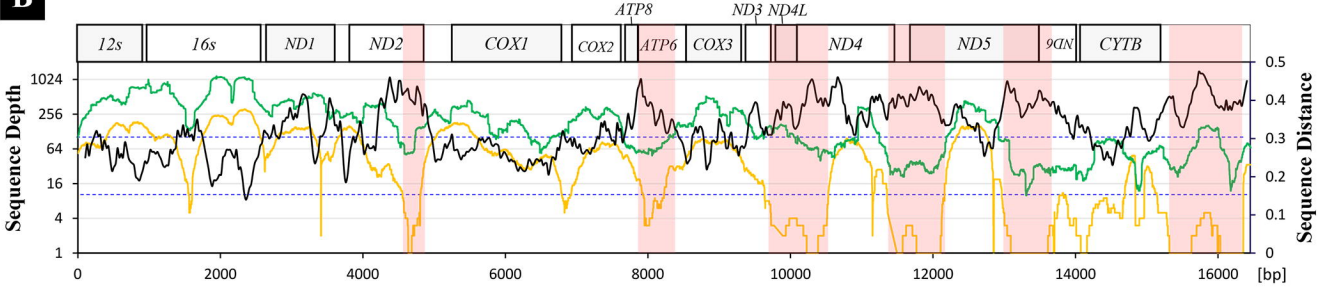
338 **Table 1. Primer information.**

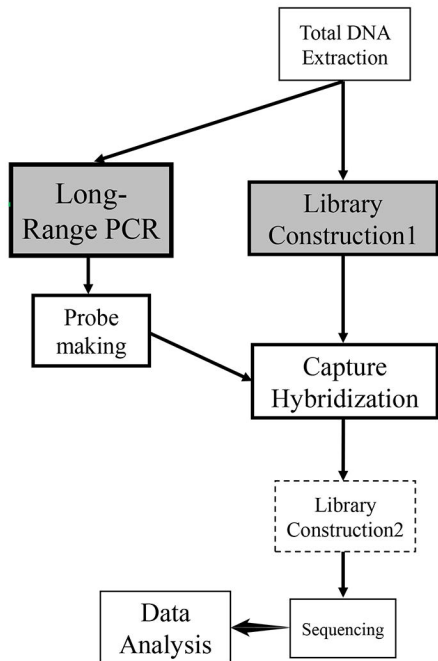
Primer Name	Sequences	Location	ID
MtG_16s_1645_F	CAGGCCGGAGCAATCCAGGTCr <b>GTTTCTA</b>	<i>16s rRNA</i>	F1
MtG_16s_1075_R	AGAGGACArGTGATTry <b>GCTACCTT</b>	<i>16s rRNA</i>	R1
MtG_12s_600_R	GGACACCGCCAAGTCCTTTGGGTTTAA	<i>12s rRNA</i>	R2
MtG_12s_480_F	GCTAGGAAACAAACTGGGATTAGATACC	<i>12s rRNA</i>	F2
MtG_cox3_R	AGCTGCGGCTTCAAakCCrA <b>ArTGrTG</b>	<i>COX3</i>	R3
MtG_cox3_F	ATGGCACACCAAGCACAyGChTwyCA <b>yATAGT</b>	<i>COX3</i>	F3
MtG_12s_270_F	TCGTGCCAGCCACCGCGGTT <b>AnAC</b>	<i>12s rRNA</i>	F4
MtG_ND1_R	GAGTCCGTCdGCnAndGGTTG	<i>ND1</i>	R4

339

**Variation Rate**



**A****B**

**A****B**