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## **Prometheus: omics portals for interkingdom comparative genomic analyses**

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**Running Title:** Portal for interkingdom comparative genomics

### **Keywords**

Comparative genomics, Molecular evolution, Interkingdom analysis, Domain architectures-based gene search, Web-based platform

1 **Abstract**

2 Functional analyses of genes are crucial for unveiling biological responses, for genetic engineering, and  
3 for developing new medicines. However, functional analyses have largely been restricted to model  
4 organisms, representing a major hurdle for functional studies and industrial applications. To resolve this,  
5 comparative genome analyses can be used to provide clues to gene functions as well as their evolutionary  
6 history. To this end, we present Prometheus (<http://prometheus.kobic.re.kr>), web-based omics portal that  
7 contains more than 17,215 sequences from prokaryotic and eukaryotic genomes. This portal supports  
8 interkingdom comparative analyses via a domain architecture-based gene identification system, Gene  
9 Search, and users can easily and rapidly identify single or entire gene sets in specific pathways.  
10 Bioinformatics tools for further analyses are provided in Prometheus or through BioExpress, a cloud-  
11 based bioinformatics analysis platform. Prometheus suggests a new paradigm for comparative analyses  
12 with large amounts of genomic information.

13

## 1 **Introduction**

2           The completion of the Human Genome Project (2003) was not an end but rather a new beginning  
3 for further functional genomic analyses. The ENCyclopedia Of DNA Elements (ENCODE) was launched  
4 to begin investigating the functions of the identified human genes<sup>1</sup>. In addition, large-scale functional  
5 studies, such as interactome or network analyses, were performed in model organisms, including  
6 *Arabidopsis thaliana*, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, and *Drosophila melanogaster*. These efforts accumulated  
7 network information on various interactomes and gene functions. These vast amounts of biological  
8 information enabled functional studies that contributed to the unveiling of biological responses, the  
9 cloning of genes of interest, and the development of molecular markers for model organisms or medicines  
10 in humans<sup>2,3</sup>. Thus, the trend of functional analyses has been transferred from candidate gene research to  
11 genome-wide research. However, this flood of information has largely been restricted to model  
12 organisms, and it has been challenging for researchers to apply these data to newly sequenced genomes.

13           Since next-generation sequencing (NGS) technology was developed in the mid-2000s, an  
14 enormous amount of genomic information has been analyzed and amassed in public databases. As the  
15 numbers of sequenced genomes increased, many tools and pipelines were developed to investigate gene  
16 functions, identify gene families, and perform comparative genomic analyses. However, the application of  
17 comparative analyses is restricted to functional gene annotations and newly sequenced genome analyses.  
18 Newly sequenced genomes are initially compared to those that have previously been analyzed, including  
19 genomes of closely related species, to provide information on genome structure changes and gene  
20 repertoires. Such comparisons can also predict gene paralogues, which are genes related by duplication  
21 events, or orthologues, which are those related by speciation events<sup>4-6</sup>. As orthologues tend to be more  
22 similar in function than paralogues<sup>7</sup>, they are widely used for functional gene annotations<sup>8</sup>. Moreover,  
23 recent gene-of-interest studies that include multigenome orthologues offer insight into their mechanisms  
24 for adapting to the environment<sup>9,10</sup>. However, these comparative genomic analyses were performed at  
25 genome-, genus-, or kingdom-wide levels, thereby restricting comparisons to the species, family, or order  
26 level<sup>11-13</sup>. To understand the evolution of genes of interest more precisely, interkingdom analyses are  
27 needed, particularly because many genes in eukaryotic genomes have universal common ancestries in  
28 Bacteria and Archaea<sup>14</sup>.

29           Here, we report an omics portal for interkingdom comparative genomic analyses named  
30 Prometheus (<http://prometheus.kobic.re.kr>). We collected 17,215 sequences from 16,730 species and  
31 constructed four primary databases to provide basic genome information, with more detailed information  
32 on individual genes provided in secondary databases. Researchers can then access detailed information on  
33 genes of interest, such as gene structure, domain architecture, subcellular localization, orthologues, and  
34 paralogues, as well as their sequences. In particular, Prometheus provides Gene Search to identify genes

1 of interest based on their domain architectures from prokaryotes to eukaryotes and performs various  
2 comparative analyses, such as comparison of chromosome sequences, sequence alignment, and  
3 phylogenetic analyses. Furthermore, researchers can perform various bioinformatics analyses with these  
4 and their own sequencing data in a cloud-based platform, BioExpress. Prometheus suggests a new  
5 paradigm for genome research, from single genes of interest to entire gene pathways.

## 7 **Materials and Methods**

### 8 **Web interface**

9 Prometheus furnishes data search, configuration of data analyses, data visualization, and storage  
10 of users' own data. The interface is implemented using a Hypertext Markup Language (HTML),  
11 cascading style sheets (CSS) and uses a jQuery JavaScript library (jQuery) to modify web page contents.  
12 To visualize data, dynamic web interface is constructed by Asynchronous JavaScript and XML (Ajax)  
13 using JavaScript Object Notation (JSON) data format. Furthermore, genome browser was constructed  
14 using Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG) and phylogenetic viewer is constructed using JavaScript. Web  
15 interface of Prometheus supports a cross-browsing.

### 17 **Construction of taxonomy combined heatmap of photolyase/cryptochrome family**

18 Sequences for the photolyase/cryptochrome family of genes from different species in previous  
19 study<sup>15</sup> were collected and domain architectures were investigated using InterProScan v5.0<sup>16</sup>. Each of the  
20 subtypes reported in previous studies were investigated using Gene Search in Prometheus. The numbers  
21 of each of the subfamily genes were calculated for individual species and visualized as a heatmap using R  
22 scripts. The taxonomic tree was constructed using phyloT in iTOL<sup>17</sup>, an online tool that generates  
23 phylogenetic trees based on the NCBI taxonomy. Finally, the taxonomic tree and heatmap were combined  
24 using Adobe Illustrator.

### 26 **Bioinformatics analysis using a cloud-based analysis system, BioExpress**

27 LAST<sup>18</sup>, BLAST<sup>19</sup>, Clustal Omega<sup>20</sup>, MUSCLE<sup>21</sup> and InterPro<sup>16</sup> programs are run in hybrid-  
28 cluster system, BioExpress. To support further genomic analyses using personal data such as RNA-Seq,  
29 Chip-Seq, or genome resequencing data, Prometheus links to BioExpress and users can perform further  
30 various genomic analyses using personal data in My Gene and various analysis pipelines in BioExpress.  
31 BioExpress is constructed by Hadoop to support high-speed analysis of a large amount of data. To  
32 maintain a large data of user, Prometheus stores the data divided by optimized block size using Hadoop  
33 Distributed File System (HDFS) into various computer servers. These storage system can maintain three  
34 copies of user data and provides stable data storage by reducing risk of data loss. Web server of

1 Prometheus transmits task, progress and result of data analysis to BioExpress server using apache thrift  
2 library-based Remote Procedure Call (RPC) and received result as JSON format data. The result of  
3 genomic analyses is stored in HDFS and downloaded in web browser using HTTP protocol. In case of  
4 large amount of data, users can download their data using KoDS (KOBIC Data Transfer Solution). KoDS  
5 is a high-speed file transfer software using TCP/IP protocol and transferred user data is stored in HDFS.

## 6 7 **Construction of Database**

8 The database consisted of primary and secondary data tables in the Prometheus was constructed  
9 using MySQL database management system. In database, primary data tables were created through data is  
10 opened in five public databases and secondary data tables were constructed by parsing results of  
11 bioinformatics tools such as InterProScan<sup>16</sup>, OrthoMCL<sup>22</sup>, MultiLoc2<sup>23</sup> and TargetP<sup>24</sup>. Detailed methods  
12 for construction of database are described in Supplemental Note Section 1.

## 13 14 **Results**

### 15 **Concept and construction of Prometheus**

16 Prometheus provides an integrated pipeline for interkingdom comparative genomic analyses and  
17 comprises four major sections, Genome Archive, Gene Search, BioExpress, and Genome Analysis. Users  
18 can identify genes of interest using Gene Search and investigate their domain architectures using  
19 InterPro<sup>16</sup> in Genome Analysis. Furthermore, users can obtain additional species information via  
20 accessing the Korean Bioresource Information System (KOBIS) or perform further analyses by accessing  
21 the cloud-based BioExpress (Figure 1).

22 To establish Prometheus, 17,215 sequences from 16,730 species were collected and stored in four  
23 primary databases. The genomic information in Genome Archive (Figure 2A and Supplementary Table 1)  
24 is arranged by taxonomic rank (obtained from NCBI), which users can access by clicking the species  
25 name in the taxonomic tree or using a key word search. This General Information provides details on  
26 genome assembly, annotation, and taxonomy. In eukaryotic genomes, distinct versions of genome  
27 assembly and annotation were provided, and so each version is stored separately (Figure 2B). In  
28 prokaryotic genomes, genomic information is separated by strain to support metagenomics analyses.  
29 Genomes were classified according to criteria from RefSeq, which provided most of the genomic data  
30 (Supplementary Table 1), to construct the database and to visualize the genomic information. In total, 435  
31 eukaryotic genomes, 15,984 prokaryotic genomes, and 311 archaea genomes were collected and  
32 assembled into the four primary databases containing information on assembled genomes, general feature  
33 formats (GFFs), coding sequences (CDSs), and protein sequences, for a grand total 213,478,449 records  
34 (Supplementary Table 2). Taxonomic information in Genome Archive is stored in a taxonomy database

1 and general information of genome assembly and annotation is stored in a genome report databank.  
2 Totally, 51 database were constructed with 1,163,053,603 records (Supplementary Tables 3, 4, and 5).

3 General information on individual genomes is obtained using Genome Browser (Figure 2C), with  
4 zoom in/out functions ranging from 100% to 1,000% and a gene search function by position or gene  
5 name. Users can access and download the individual gene's information (CDS and peptide sequence) by  
6 key word search or by clicking within the Genome Browser. Detailed information on individual genes is  
7 provided in Gene Viewer (Figure 2D), and users can access the Genome Browser or result pages in Gene  
8 Search. Bioinformatics analyses, including InterPro<sup>16</sup>, OrthoMCL<sup>22</sup>, MultiLoc2<sup>23</sup>, and TargetP<sup>24</sup> were  
9 performed using protein sequences of each species to construct six secondary databases, which are  
10 presented in separate sections within the Gene Viewer (Figure 2D). In summary, genomic information  
11 collected from major public databases is contained in the Genome Archive, and integrative information of  
12 genomes or individual genes from individual databases is accessed via Gene Viewer.

13

#### 14 **Analyses of transcriptional factors and tricarboxylic acid (TCA) cycle in Gene Search**

15 The major function of Prometheus is to perform interkingdom comparative analyses. To support  
16 this objective, secondary databases containing information on domain architectures and  
17 orthologues/paralogues of individual genes were constructed. We validated the utility of Prometheus by  
18 performing an interkingdom investigation of transcription factors (TFs) and genes involved in the TCA  
19 cycle using Gene Search (Figure 3, Supplementary Tables 6, and 7). A pipeline (iTAK v1.7)<sup>25</sup> was used to  
20 identify plant TFs and classify protein kinases. TFs, transcriptional regulators (TRs), and kinases were  
21 identified by consensus rules mainly summarized from PlnTFDB<sup>26</sup>, PlantTFDB<sup>18</sup> with families from  
22 PlantTFact<sup>27</sup>, and AtFDB<sup>28</sup>. Domain architectures of each TF were investigated using InterProScan, and  
23 their domain architectures depicted by InterPro entry (IPR) terms were used for further analyses using  
24 Gene Search. To provide additional information about identified genes, the number of domain subtypes  
25 are depicted in a summary table in Gene Search and as a header of sequence data in a FASTA file  
26 (Supplementary Figure 1). Users can categorize identified genes into each subtype. We identified and  
27 validated 79,960 genes from 15 gene families using the iTAK v1.7 (Figure 3A and Supplementary Table  
28 6)<sup>25</sup>. The accuracy of our Gene Search ranged from 86.03% to 99.98%, with an average accuracy of  
29 96.41%. High rates of accuracy were observed for genes encoding TFs containing significant IPR terms,  
30 such as FAR1, MADS-box, NAC or Dof domains, whereas those for TFs without significant IPR terms,  
31 such as B3-type TFs or CAMTA, showed lower rates. Thus, these data suggest that specific IPR terms or  
32 exact domain architectures are required to enhance the accuracy of Gene Search.

33 Genes involved in the TCA cycle were further investigated with Gene Search to demonstrate the  
34 potential for applying comparative genomics at the pathway level. As the TCA cycle is a fundamental

1 metabolic pathway for survival in prokaryotes and eukaryotes, we selected this for an interkingdom  
2 comparative genomic analysis. A total of 435,044 genes were identified from 20 individual genes in the  
3 TCA cycle using Gene Search, and the ratios of species harboring each gene in the TCA cycle were  
4 shown as heatmaps (Figure 3B and Supplementary Table 7). These results showed that some genes, such  
5 as those encoding isocitrate dehydrogenase (IDH1 and IDH2) and malate dehydrogenase (MDH1 and  
6 MDH2) evolved in a lineage-specific manner. Furthermore, the results show the lineage-specific rates of  
7 functionally redundant genes, such as those encoding succinate dehydrogenase and succinyl-CoA  
8 synthase. This investigation of the TCA cycle also provided information on the gene repertoires and the  
9 evolution of the TCA cycle in each kingdom. Thus, Prometheus provides information for evolutionary  
10 studies of single genes or those in specific pathways, including the distributions and rates of genes, as  
11 well as repertoires of gene orthologues in pathways. In addition, Prometheus provides the domain  
12 architectures of genes as well as their CDSs and/or peptide sequences.

13

#### 14 **Tools for comparative analyses and personalized management system via My Genes in Prometheus**

15 To support comparative analyses in Prometheus, essential tools such as LAST (a program for  
16 comparing sequences at the chromosome level)<sup>29</sup>, Basic Local Alignment Search Tool (BLAST)<sup>19</sup>, and  
17 InterPro are provided in Genome Analysis (Supplementary Figure 2). Users can monitor the progress of  
18 analysis in a personalized page, My Genes (Supplementary Figure 3), and download the result files from  
19 each program via a file menu. In the case of data from InterProScan, the result file is shown in a graphic  
20 format and results are downloaded in a tsv file format (Supplementary Figure 4). Thus, users can  
21 investigate domain architectures of genes of interest and perform interkingdom identification using Gene  
22 Search.

23 We performed a comparative analysis of genes in the photolyase/cryptochrome family using a  
24 gene set from a previous study<sup>15</sup> as a control (Figure 4 and Supplementary Table 8). The domain  
25 architectures of photolyase/cryptochrome subfamilies are the same and family IPR terms are different  
26 (Figure 4A), enabling a more accurate identification of each subfamily. The results also indicated lineage-  
27 specific distributions of photolyase/cryptochrome gene families in each kingdom. Furthermore, the gene  
28 repertoires of each subgroup of these families are shown in a combined taxonomy heatmap (Figure 4B),  
29 demonstrating lineage-specific evolution and the expansion of subgroups at the species level. These data  
30 demonstrate that Gene Search and bioinformatics tools in Genome Analysis in Prometheus support  
31 interkingdom comparative analyses. In summary, Prometheus provides the bioinformatics tools essential  
32 for comparative analyses, and users can combine these tools with interkingdom comparative analyses in  
33 Gene Search to unveil gene function or the evolution of genes/gene families.

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1

## 2 **Further genomic analyses using BioExpress with personalized data via My Genes**

3           Personal data, such as RNA-Seq or Chip-Seq data, and downloaded data from Prometheus, such  
4 as genome sequences (genome, CDS, and peptide) in Genome Archive or FASTA files from Gene Search  
5 can be uploaded and stored in My Genes (Supplementary Figure 3) and further analyzed using the  
6 BioExpress platform (<http://bioexpress.kobic.re.kr/bioexpress.en/>). BioExpress is a cloud-based analysis  
7 platform, and programs for bioinformatics analysis are modularized and shown as icons (Supplementary  
8 Figure 5). Users can construct their own analysis pipelines by selecting and linking each modularized  
9 program using arrows.

10           We performed a transcriptomic analysis in BioExpress using the genome of *Hibiscus syriacus*<sup>6</sup>  
11 and RNA-Seq data. For this, TopHat<sup>30</sup> and Cufflink<sup>31</sup> programs were used, and genes differentially  
12 expressed in tissues from a previous study were identified and visualized as a heatmap (Supplementary  
13 Figure 6). Thus, users can perform bioinformatics analyses with personal data in My Genes by linking to  
14 BioExpress. This combination of Prometheus and BioExpress can provide convenient and user-friendly  
15 analysis conditions for non-bioinformatician scientists.

16

## 17 **Discussion**

18           Since NGS technology was developed and applied to biology, vast amounts of genomic data have  
19 accumulated. With these data, comparative analyses of species or genes can be performed to unveil gene  
20 function or evolution. For instance, the evolution of pungency in peppers was discovered by a  
21 comparative analysis with tomato and potato genomes<sup>5</sup>. However, only a small number of biologists can  
22 perform these comparative analyses using bioinformatics tools. Indeed, the accessibility of bioinformatics  
23 analysis is currently a major hurdle for ongoing biologic research. Thus, we constructed Prometheus, a  
24 web-based omics portal for interkingdom comparative genomic analyses. Biologists can identify genes or  
25 gene families of interest using the domain architectures in Gene Search. Genes from multigene families  
26 containing various domain architectures can be detected, such as for the photolyase/cryptochrome  
27 family<sup>15</sup> and the nucleotide-binding leucine-rich repeat gene family<sup>32</sup>. Additional subtype information of  
28 identified genes is provided in the headers for their sequences in FASTA files.

29           The goal of combining kingdom-wide gene identification with subtype information is to provide  
30 evolutionary insight by detecting lineage-specific subtypes or subtype distribution patterns, as  
31 exemplified by the analysis of gene subtypes involved in the TCA cycle. Moreover, users can perform  
32 comparative analyses of single genes as well as sets of genes involved in specific signaling pathways. We  
33 found that genes containing specific domains showed high rates of accuracy in domain architecture-based  
34 Gene Search in Prometheus. However, the accuracy was reduced for genes without specific IPR terms,



1 which is a limitation of domain architecture-based gene search systems using InterPro<sup>16</sup> or the pfam<sup>33</sup>  
2 database. Nevertheless, this limitation will be minimized as Prometheus is updated with new releases of  
3 these databases.

4 To support comparative analyses, Prometheus incorporates various tools, such as LAST<sup>29</sup>, Clustal  
5 Omega<sup>20</sup>, and Phylogeny viewer, in Genome Analysis. This is a valuable addition, as there are currently  
6 few web sites for comparative analyses with large restrictive or functionally important gene families, such  
7 as TFs. For TFs in plants, there are two representative web sites, PlnTFDB<sup>26</sup> and PlantTFDB<sup>18</sup>, but their  
8 gene repertoires differ due to their rules for indemnification of TFs<sup>25</sup>. Prometheus clears this particular  
9 hurdle via its domain architecture-based Gene Search system, thereby providing biologists with a  
10 powerful comparative analysis platform with various tools for further studies.

11 Prometheus provides information to users on individual genomes assigned by taxonomy in  
12 Genome Archive via Genome Browser. Here, users can download the genomic and peptide sequences and  
13 CDSs as well as upload their own data for further analyses in Prometheus or the cloud-based BioExpress  
14 platform. Furthermore, user can access detailed information of genes of interest in the Gene Viewer page.  
15 The connection with BioExpress enables Prometheus to provide various bioinformatics tools and allows  
16 biologists to analyze their own data in same platform. Thus, unlike other comparative genomics portals or  
17 platforms, Prometheus provides tools not only for comparative analyses but also for genomic analyses,  
18 such as transcriptome or resequencing analyses. In conclusion, Prometheus is an integrated platform for  
19 interkingdom comparative genomic analyses with additional support for other genomic analyses with the  
20 user's own data. Thus, Prometheus offers biologists a new paradigm for comparative genome analyses  
21 and evolution studies. The platform and InterPro version will be updated annually with newly sequenced  
22 genomes to ensure that broad and precise data are available to researchers. Furthermore, newly developed  
23 tools for comparative genomic analyses will continue to be added to support various analyses. Finally,  
24 visualization of domain subtype architectures identified by Gene Search is now being developed and will  
25 be available for updates in the near future.

26

### 27 **Availability of data and materials**

28 The raw sequence reads of RNA-Seq from *Hibiscus syriacus* has been deposited at DDBJ/ENA/GenBank  
29 under accession SRP087036 (PRJNA341314). Detailed methods to perform comparative analysis of  
30 Prometheus are provided in Tutorial section (<http://prometheus.kobic.re.kr>)

31

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4

5 **Competing interests**

6 The authors declare that they have no competing financial interests.

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8

1 **Figure 1.** Concept and construction progresses of Prometheus.

2 Schematic showing the workflow for the construction of Prometheus (left), detailed information for each  
3 stage (middle), and the functions available with Prometheus (right).

4

5 **Figure 2.** Construction of primary and secondary databases.

6 (A) Screenshot of the Genome Archive page. (B) The numbers of species and genome versions used for  
7 the construction of Prometheus. (C) Screenshot of the Genome Browser of Prometheus. A region of the  
8 human genome (HGP 38) is shown enlarged in the small box. (D) Screenshot of the Gene Viewer for  
9 providing detailed information of individual genes. Gene structure, domain architecture, subcellular  
10 localization, and orthologous and paralogous genes are shown in each panel.

11

12 **Figure 3.** Identification of TFs and genes in the TCA using Gene Search.

13 (A) Validation of identified TFs using iTAK pipeline. (B) Human TCA cycle genes were investigated and  
14 used for further analysis. The ratios of each gene are shown as heatmaps.

15

16 **Figure 4.** Interkingdom comparative analysis of the photolyase/cryptochrome gene family.

17 (A) Domain architectures of the photolyase/cryptochrome gene family. (B) Distribution of  
18 photolyase/cryptochrome genes and taxonomic tree.

Figure1

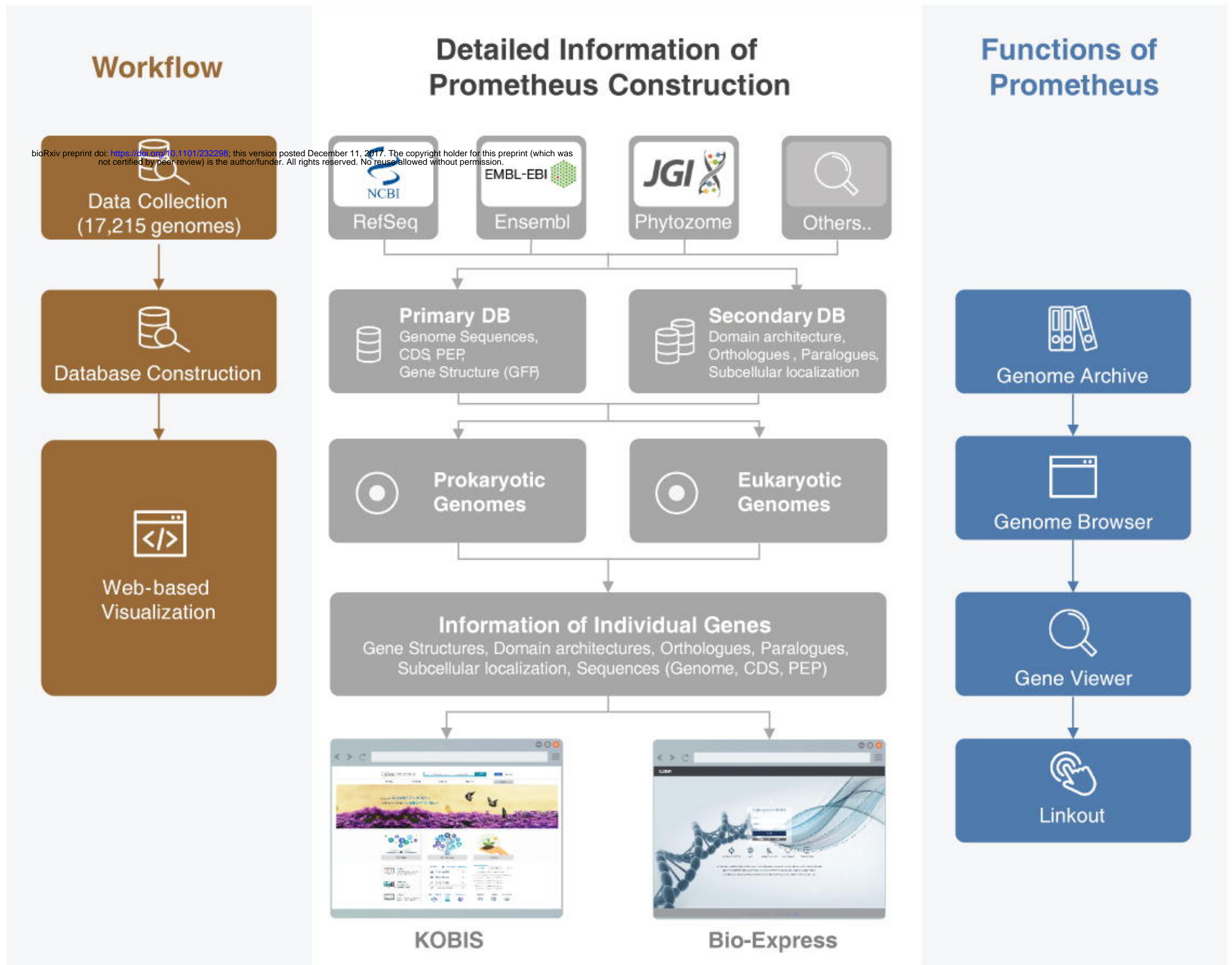
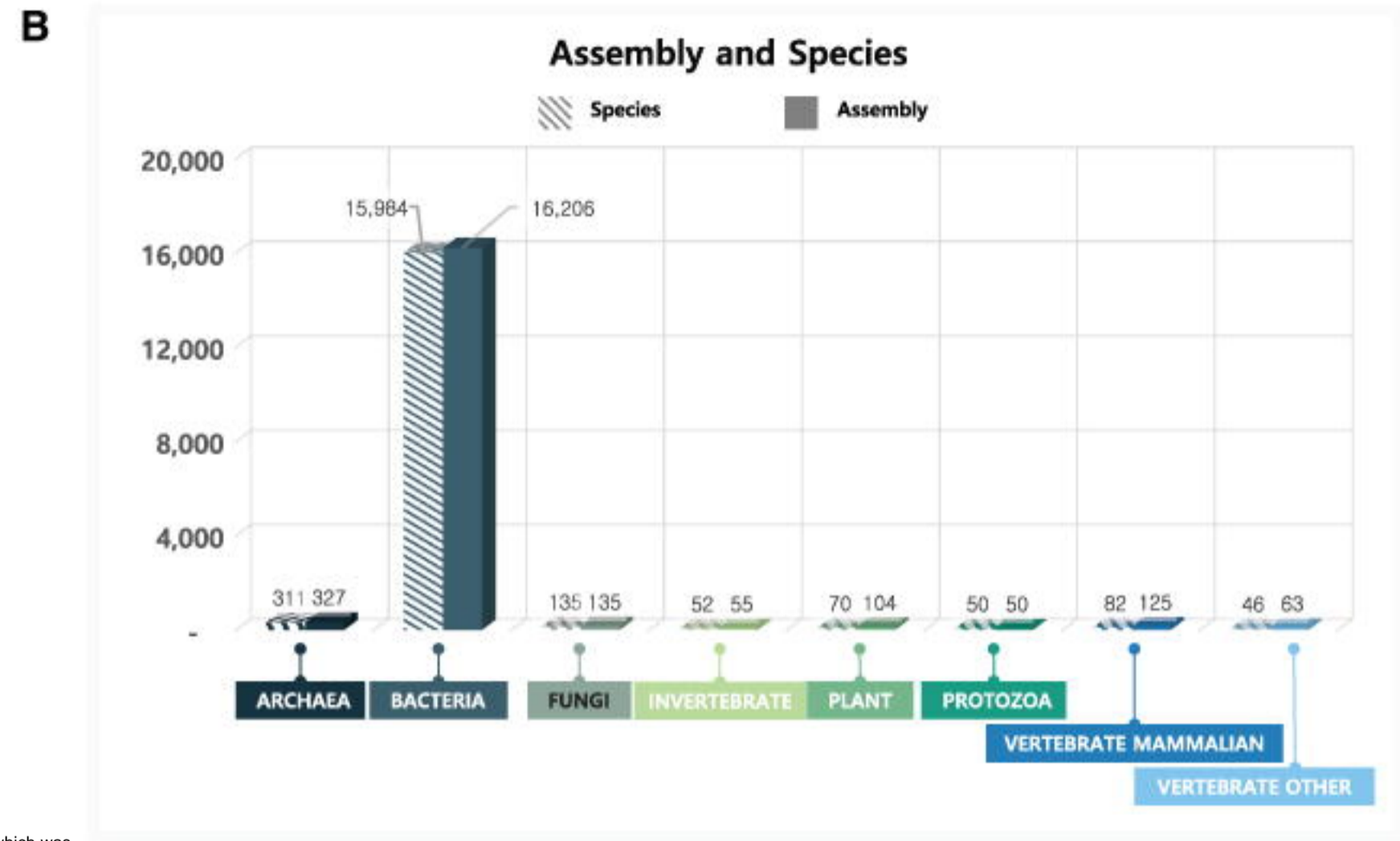


Figure 2

**A**



**C**

**Genome-Browser**

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**D**

**Gene Viewer**

**Gene Information**

Location	Species Name	Accession version
PH000002	Phytoeclysin	K00001

**Gene Structure**

Gene Type	Protein Domain	CDS Domain
Gene Type	PH000002	PH000002

**Domain Architecture**

Phytoeclysin (PH000002)

**TargetP for prediction of the subcellular location of eukaryotic proteins**

Seq	CTP	WT	SP	Other	TM	PS	Other
PH000002	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01

**Ortholog or Paralog information**

No.	Query Organism	Query Assembly ID	Query GI	Subject Organism	Subject Assembly ID	Subject GI	Descr. (bits)
1	Phytoeclysin	PH000002	PH000002	Phytoeclysin	PH000002	PH000002	100.0

**Subcellular localization**

TMHMM for prediction of transmembrane helices in proteins



Figure3

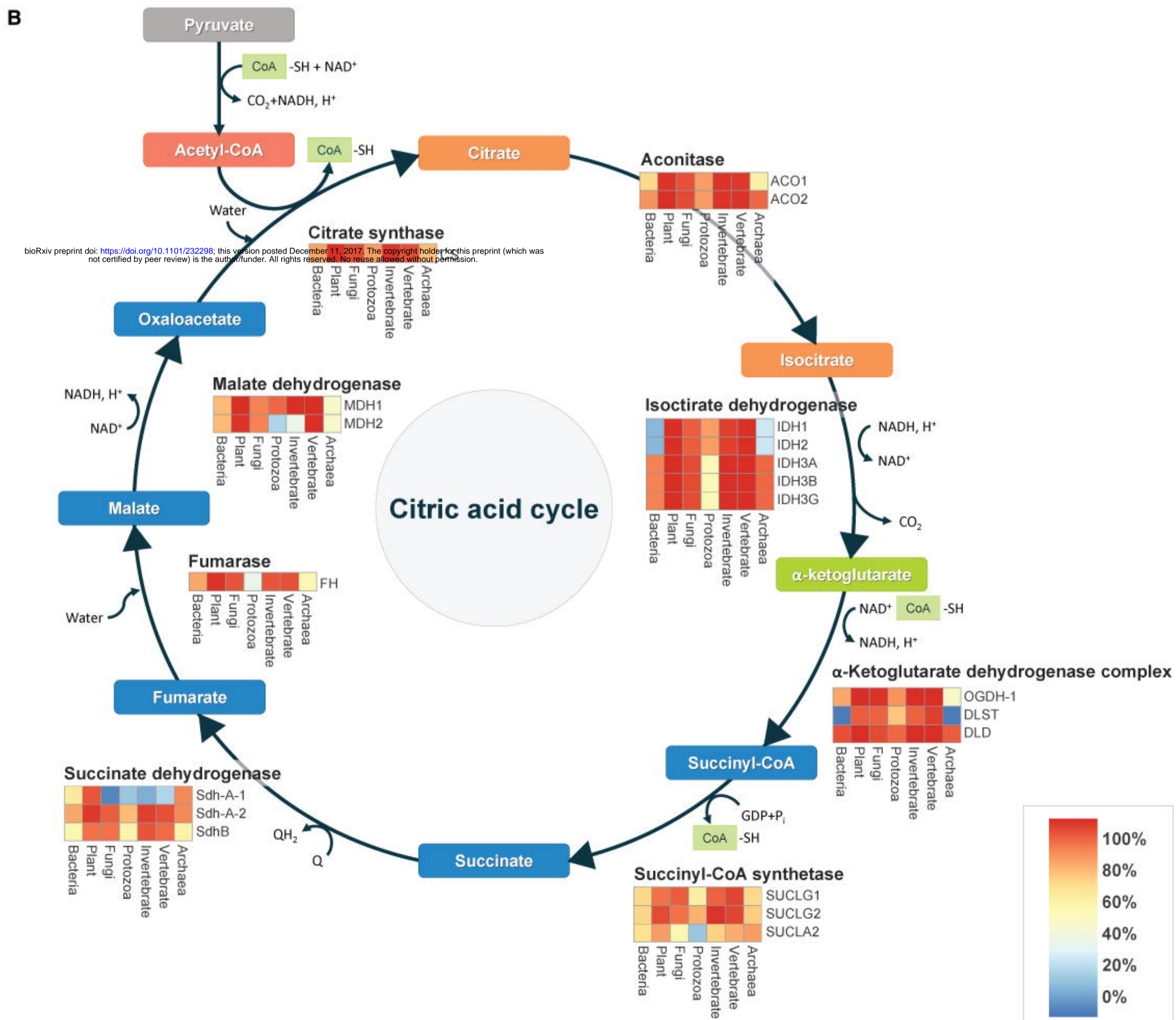
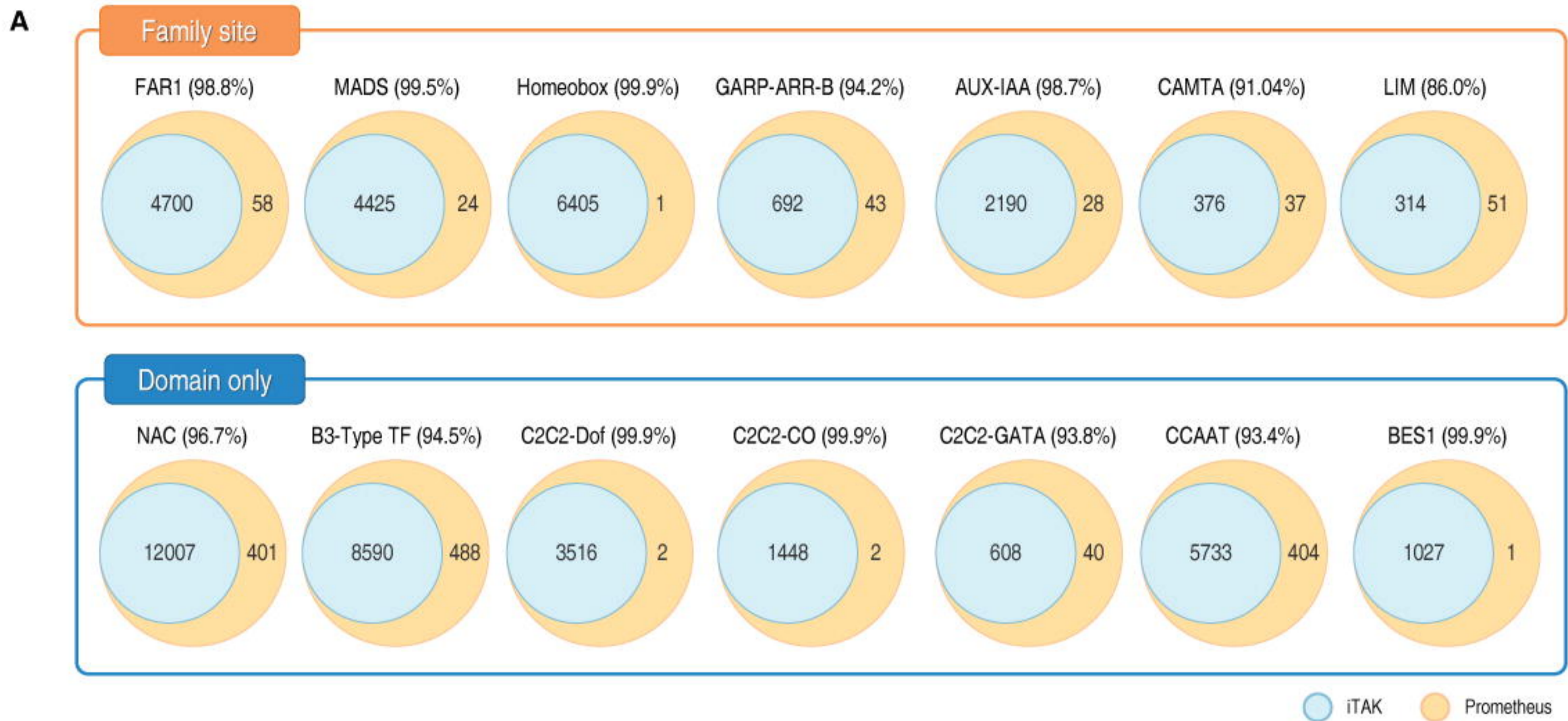


Figure4

