

1 **An integrated Asian human SNV and indel benchmark combining multiple** 2 **sequencing methods**

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32

33 **Abstract**

34 Precision medicine of human requires an accurate and complete reference variant benchmark
35 for different populations. A human standard cell line of NA12878 provides a good reference
36 for part of the human populations, but it is still lack of a fine reference standard sample and
37 variant benchmark for the Asians. Here, we constructed a stabilized cell line of a Chinese
38 Han volunteer. We received about 4.16T clean data of the sample using eight sequencing
39 strategies in different laboratories, including two BGI regular NGS platforms, three Illumina
40 regular NGS platforms, two linked-read libraries, and PacBio CCS model. The sequencing
41 depth and reference coverage of eight sequencing strategies have reached the saturation. We
42 detected small variants of SNPs and Indels using the eight data sets and obtained eight variant

43 sets by performing a series of strictly quality control. Finally, we got 3.35M SNPs and 349K
44 indels supported by all of sequencing data, which could be considered as a high confidence
45 standard small variant sets for the studies. Besides, we also detected 5,913 high quality SNPs
46 located in the high homologous regions supported by both linked-reads and CCS data
47 benefited by their long-range information, while these regions are recalcitrant to regular NGS
48 data due to the limited mappability and read length. We compared the later SNPs against the
49 public databases and 969 sites of them were novel SNPs, indicating these SNPs provide a
50 vital complement for the variant database. Moreover, we also phased more than 99%
51 heterozygous SNPs also supported by linked-reads and CCS data. This work provided an
52 integrated Asians SNV and indel benchmark for the further basic studies and precision
53 medicine.

54

55 **Keywords**

56 Reference standard NGS Linked-read CCS Benchmark

57

58 **Introduction**

59 Thousands of human genomes are now available and whole genome sequencing (WGS) is
60 likely to become a routine part of medical care in many countries. WGS data allows the
61 identification of genetic changes associated with disease and paves the way for precision
62 medicine, medical care customized according to the genetic make-up of a patient [1].
63 Diseases are often associated with particular single nucleotide variants (SNVs), or insertion
64 or deletion events (indels) [2, 3]. In order to fully capitalize on the vast genome data
65 generated, reference genomes are required to allow genome comparisons and benchmarking
66 of new sequencing technologies and analysis methods. The current human reference genome
67 (NA12878) is from a Caucasian from the U.S. state of Utah. Significant insights have been
68 gained from NA12878, but it is appreciated that reference genomes from additional
69 populations are needed [4]. Several Asian genomes are now available from individuals of
70 Chinese [5], Korean [6] and Pakistani [7] descent. However, the majority of these studied
71 used next-generation sequencing (NGS) platforms to generate short reads and could not
72 resolve SNVs and indels located in complex regions. For example, targeted DNA-HiSeq [8]
73 identified 1,281 SNVs in 193 genes in the Asian reference sample YH that could not be
74 detected in the original study [5]. The 193 genes are associated with hereditary diseases with a
75 higher incidence in the Chinese population, a clear example of the need for high quality
76 reference genomes in addition to NA12878 [7]. It is now apparent that a combination of long
77 read, short read, and linked-read sequencing is required to fully characterize human reference
78 genomes [9]. Herein, we generated an Asian SNV and indel benchmark genome by
79 combining diverse short and long read sequencing platforms, an approach which could
80 balance the systematic sequencing bias of different platforms.

81

82 **Results**

83 **Sequencing and quality control**

84 To develop a represented Asian high-quality genotype call sets, we recruited a Han Chinese
85 volunteer from Beijing City (Research ethics ID: XHEC-C-2019-086, HJ). We sequenced
86 this individual using five frequently-used NGS short-read sequencing platforms (BGISEQ-
87 500, MGISEQ-2000, NextSeq-CN500, NextSeq550Dx and NovaSeq6000; three technical
88 replicates), single tube long fragment read (stLFR) sequencing [10], 10X Genomics
89 Chromium linked-read sequencing [11], PacBio single molecule real-time circular consensus
90 sequencing (SMRT CCS) long-read sequencing [12] and Oxford Nanopore MinION

91 sequencing [13]. After processing (**Figure 1**), we generated 3.12Tb high quality general NGS
92 data for HJ totally. This included an average coverage of 86.58× from 2×100bp reads on two
93 BGISEQ-500 sequencers and 60.07× from 150bp reads on three Illumina sequencers. We
94 obtained 250.78 Gb (~51.97×) stLFR data with a molecular length of 117,499 bp, 277.60 Gb
95 (~84.7×) 10X Genomics Chromium data with a molecular length of 191,294bp, and 77.23 Gb
96 (~24.4×) PacBio CCS data with mean read length of 12.09 kb. For the general NGS data,
97 99.88% of raw reads could be mapped to the human reference genome (hs37d5) with
98 coverage of 99.92% and 85.75% of mapped reads were uniquely mapped reads. For the
99 stLFR data and 10X Genomics Chromium data, we aligned 99.35% and 99.71% of them
100 against the reference genome with 98.86% and 98.90% coverage, respectively. For the CCS
101 reads, it could be unambiguously mapped to reference genome at 93.18% coverage (**Figure**
102 **S1, Table S1**).

103

104 **SNV and indel detection**

105 To find the saturated sequencing depth of the different platforms, we hierarchically detected
106 SNVs and indels by randomly extracting alignment results from the bam by picard. We found
107 that 30× depth sequencing ensured a consistent rate of uniquely mapped reads (~99%) and
108 number of SNVs (~3.84 M) and indels (~897 K) (**Figure 2, Figure S2**).

109 We also evaluated the consistency of BGI and Illumina short sequence reads generated
110 from short-insert libraries on the same and different instruments. We found 3.26%, 95.49%,
111 and 1.25% of SNVs could be detected, suggesting that the choice of short-read sequencing
112 platform introduces little bias (**Figure S3**). Nevertheless, despite an adequate sequencing
113 depth, ~33.62 Mb of the genome could not be resolved by short-read BGISEQ-500 and
114 Illumina data (**Figure 3, Table S2**). These regions were assigned into 51,612 blocks, with an
115 N50 of 3,942 bp, and correspond to highly homologous regions (HHRs), of which were
116 previously reported as recalcitrant to short-read NGS sequencing[14]. Interestingly, 73.3%,
117 65.41% and 68.53% of these HHRs were accessible by stLFR, 10X Genomics Chromium,
118 and PacBio SMRT CCS data, technologies which benefits from barcoding information of
119 linked-reads or long reads (**Table S3**). We detected 3.87M, 3.47 M, and 3.80M SNPs, along
120 with 822K, 721K, and 797K indels using stLFR, 10X Genomics Chromium, and PacBio
121 SMRT CCS data, respectively (**Table S1**). We next wished to characterize SNVs and indels
122 in the HJ sequencing data that could not be mapped to the Caucasian reference genome, even
123 with long-read sequencing data. We focused on HHRs and uniquely mapped regions (UMRs).

124

125

126 **Consistence of SNPs and indels in UMR**

127 In the uniquely mapped regions (UMRs) 1,712,393 SNPs and 186,641 indels could be
128 detected by all eight sequencing methods. This is less than the average number of variations
129 (~3.72M SNPs and ~859 K indels). Unexpectedly, 10X Genomics Chromium missed ~1.63M
130 SNPs which could be detected by all of the other methods (**Figure S4**). We, therefore,
131 excluded this data in the further analysis, retaining ~3.35M high quality common SNPs
132 supported by seven sequencing methods. PacBio SMRT CCS detected 234.46K specific
133 SNPs and 240.74K specific indels; stLFR 210.45K and 223.25K; BGISEQ-NGS 11.78K and
134 71K; and Illumina-NGS 5.57K and 1.98K (**Figure 4, Figure 5**). We compared the SNP
135 quality distribution between specific SNPs and whole SNPs and found that the quality of the
136 majority of specific SNPs were lower than whole SNPs, likely stemming from sequencing
137 method bias Interestingly, PacBio SMRT CCS and stLFR consistently resulted in high
138 quality variant calls (**Figure S5**).

139

140 **Accessibility of SNPs and indels in HHRs**

141 A total of 74.7K SNPs and 23.4K indels could be called by both stLFR and PacBio SMRT
142 CCS data but not by the five short-insert library, short-read methods. These variants,
143 nonsynonymous, were located on 129 genes and were significantly enriched for the gene
144 ontology (GO) categories olfactory receptor activity, IgG binding, transmembrane signaling
145 receptor activity, G protein-coupled receptor activity, molecular transducer, and signaling
146 receptor activity pathways. We speculate that these variants are associated with immune
147 disease in Chinese population. Among all special SNPs, 7.9% (5,913/74,717) located in
148 HHRs, with 69 SNPs in coding regions and 19 SNPs in UTR regions. We also performed
149 function enrichment analysis, revealing three genes significantly enriched in blood antigen-
150 related or immune response (LILRB3, RHD, and RHCE) pathways involved into immune
151 response diseases.

152 Highly homologous or repetitive regions on the genome, NGS is difficult to fully cover
153 due to its read length, which may lead to false negative of mutations, but stLFR and CCS
154 perform well. Complex genes are hard to be covered by NGS platforms, while linked-reads
155 method and long reads sequences platforms do well in detecting the regions. For example,
156 IGV shows a typical gene NBPF4, who is a member of the neuroblastoma breakpoint gene
157 family (NBPF) which consists of dozens of recently duplicated genes primarily located in

158 segmental duplications on human chromosome 1 (**Figure 6**). Another gene is NAIP which is
159 part of a 500kb reverse replication on chromosome 5q13, contains at least four repeated
160 elements and genes, and making it easy to rearrange and delete. The repeatability and
161 complexity of the sequences also make it difficult to determine the organization of this
162 genomic region. It is thought that this gene, modifier of spinal muscular atrophy, is a
163 mutation in a neighboring gene SMN1. Variations detected on NAIP for NGS platform are
164 relative small and nearly included in linked reads and long reads platforms (**Figure S6**). In
165 addition to the genes mentioned above, there is XAGE2 (**Figure S7**), and other genes.

166

167 **Haplotype phasing small variants**

168 Human genomes are diploid, with chromosome pairs from each parent. However, most
169 paired-end reads cannot assign variants to a particular chromosome, resulting in a combined
170 haplotype (genotype) [15]. The popular NGS sequencing technology is all about shuffling
171 sequences together for sequencing. After sequenced, we cannot directly distinguish which of
172 these sequences is the parent source. It is only after phasing that we are able to make this
173 distinction. Phasing is strongly correlated with functional interpretation of genetic variation.
174 Therefore, due to the BGI and Illumina short sequence reads generated from short-insert
175 libraries, we using long-range information from PacBio SMRT CCS and stLFR data to
176 phasing, 99.63% and 99.91% of heterozygous SNPs could be phased into 19,584 and 1,262
177 blocks, respectively. Of these, 1.96 M were shared, with a phasing N50 of more than 11.26
178 Mb and 388.5k. What's more, some of chromosomes (such as Chr5 and Chr6) were almost
179 completely phased (**Table 1**). According to the results of phasing, stLFR data performed
180 better, so we can be assumed that the long range reads may a good choice in phasing process.

181

182 **Discussion**

183 Gene sequencing is an important part of precision medical, widely used in detection and
184 diagnosis of various diseases, and brought potential benefits to patients. However, the NGS
185 also some deficiencies, such as short reads, structure mutation detection, especially about the
186 detection of HHR area will miss part of the results, thus caused by false negatives. There is
187 currently a lack of a standard data set that represents Asian populations due to ethnic
188 differences. In this paper, a Han Chinese adult male was recruited and 8 sequencing
189 platforms were used to detect and compare SNV and indel. Finally, we identified a standard
190 data set which contains 3.35M SNPs and 349K indels.

191 We compared and contrasted eight sequencing platforms to generate an Asian human SNV
192 and indel benchmark. Unexpectedly, and found that 10X Genomics Chromium data did not
193 correlate well with data generated by the other platforms, the reasons for this are not clear.
194 However, a total of 3.35M high quality SNPs were supported by seven other methods, while
195 linked-read stLFR and long-read PacBio SMRT CCS resolved an additional 74.7K SNPs in
196 highly homologous regions, providing a comprehensive small variation benchmark of an
197 Asian human. stLFR and CCS can be well supplemented and improved on the basis of NGS
198 results.

199 In summary, NGS results will miss some mutations in the HHR region. By adding analysis
200 results of stLFR and CCS platforms, standard data sets and high confidence regions that are
201 considered relatively reliable can be obtained. This data set can be well used for further study.
202 In order to improve the data set, it may be necessary to add samples and analysis methods for
203 integrated analysis.

204

205 **Methods**

206 **Sample collection**

207 This study was carried out in accordance with relevant guidelines and regulations, in line
208 with the principles of the Helsinki declaration[16] and was approved by the institutional
209 review committee (IRB) of BGI. In this experiment, cell line genomic DNA was prepared
210 from the National Institutes for food and drug Control (NIFDC), and it contained 10 μ g per
211 tube. Used Qubit 3.0 to quantified the genomic DNA and agarose gel to make sure the
212 genomic DNA molecular was not substantially degraded.

213

214 **Library and sequencing**

215 NGS library construction adopts the normal NGS construction process. The difference
216 between BGISEQ-500 and Illumina platform is that the former involves rolling amplification
217 while the latter use PCR amplification technology. In particular, the BGISEQ-500 library
218 protocol contain three steps: including making DNA nanoballs (DNBs), loading DNBs, and
219 sequencing. Single tube long fragment read (stLFR) library construction physically breaks
220 the DNA into fragments of about 50Kbps, and then use Tn5 transposase for library
221 construction, so that each identical fragment bears the same barcode[10], while 10X
222 Genomics Chromium library construction uses microdroplets where, after the ligation step,

223 PCR is performed and the library is ready to enter any standard next generation sequencing
224 (NGS) workflow.

225 Large-insert single molecule real-time circular consensus sequencing (SMRT CCS) library
226 preparation was conducted following the Pacific Biosciences recommended protocols[17]. In
227 brief, a total of 60 μ g genomic DNA was sheared to ~20kb targeted size by using Covaris g-
228 TUBEs (Covaris). Each shearing processed 10 μ g input DNA and a total of 6 shearings were
229 performed. The sheared genomic DNA was examined by Agilent 2100 Bioanalyzer
230 DNA12000 Chip (Agilent Technologies) for size distribution and underwent DNA damage
231 repair/end repair, blunt-end adaptor ligation followed by exonuclease digestion.

232

233 **NGS data preprocess**

234 Data filter: SOAPnuke (version 1.5.6) was used to pre-process the 15 NGS data by removing
235 reads with (1) adaptor contaminations, (2) more than 10% low-quality bases (quality < 10), (3)
236 more than 10% N bases.

237 Mapping and variant calling: All NGS reads were mapping to the human reference genome
238 (hs37d5) using BWA 0.71.5 [18] (an in-house Apache Hadoop version). The Genome-
239 Analysis-ToolKit (GATK) 2.3.9-lite [19] (an in-house Apache Hadoop version) was used for
240 variant calling from BAM files with HaplotypeCaller v2.3.9-lite .

241

242 **Saturation of NGS data**

243 Picard (version 2.18.9) was used to down-sample BAM files from 10 \times to the maximum depth
244 in a 10 \times -step for each NGS data. Next, MegaBOLT (version 1.15) was used for variant
245 calling from down-sampled BAM files. SNPs were hard-filtered using “QD < 2.0 || FS > 60.0
246 || MQ < 40.0 || MQRankSum < -12.5 || ReadPosRankSum < -8.0” and Indels were hard-
247 filtered using “QD < 2.0 || FS > 200.0 || ReadPosRankSum < -20.0”.

248

249 **Uncovered region of NGS data**

250 For each NGS data, any block with approximate read depth (DP) ≥ 5 were extracted from
251 gVCF as a covered region. The uncovered regions of each NGS data were built by
252 subtracting the covered regions from the human genome by BEDtools (v2.16.2). Meanwhile,
253 the common uncovered regions of NGS data were built by subtracting the union of covered
254 regions in all 15 NGS data from the human genome.

255

256 **Linked reads Mapping**

257 The output files (FASTQ) of the linked-read sequencing methods stLFR and 10X Genomics
258 Chromium are similar, enabling the use of the 10X Genomics Long Ranger software after
259 converting stLFR barcodes to a Chromium compatible format. We used SOAPnuke 1.5.6 to
260 filter out low quality and adapter reads. Clean reads were mapped and phased using the Long
261 Ranger 2.1.2 wgs model. Briefly, de-multiplexed FASTQ files from were de-duplicated and
262 filtered and phased SNPs, indels were called. SNP and indel information were parsed from
263 the final VCF file using GATK SelectVariants.

264

265 **Pacbio data process**

266 PacBio single molecule real-time circular consensus sequencing (SMRT CCS) have low base
267 error rates, providing both highly-accurate variant calls and long-range information needed to
268 generate haplotypes. We used the pbmm2 (version 1.0.0) alignment tool to map reads to the
269 hs37d5 human reference genome, with the parameter --preset CCS --sample HJ --sort. GATK
270 HaplotypeCaller was used to call SNVs and small indels. Different values of the
271 HaplotypeCaller parameter --pcr-indel-model and VariantFiltration parameter --filter-
272 expression were considered, setting the minimum mapping quality to 60 and using allele-
273 specific annotations (--annotationgroup AS_StandardAnnotation) and --pcr_indel_model
274 AGGRESSIVE. SNVs and short indels were filtered using GATK VariantFiltration with --
275 filter_expression of AS_QD < 2.0 . Longer read lengths improve the ability to phase variants,
276 as tools like WhatsHap demonstrate for PacBio reads [17].

277

278 **Data resource access**

279 The sequence data from this article can be found in the CNSA databases under the following
280 accession numbers: CNP0000091.

281

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285 on the project and technical assistance.

286

287 **Competing Interests**

288 Competing interest statement: The author denies that he has any intention to obtain any
289 financial interests.

290

291 **Figure 1. Overview of variation calling pipeline. The major steps included data filtering,**
292 **alignment, variation calling, and integrated analysis.**

293 **Figure 2. Saturation analysis. The relationship between SNPs(A)/indels(B) and depth,**
294 **with the X axis for sequencing depth and the Y axis for the number of SNPs/indels**
295 **detected.**

296 **Figure 3. Uncovered region by NGS in each sequencing platform.**

297 **Figure 4. Density maps of sequencing platforms SNP and indel variations. From inside**
298 **to outside circles are BGISEQ-NGS, Illumina-NGS, stLFR and Pacbio CCS respectively,**
299 **Window =1000000bp, Inside and outside are SNP and indel.**

300 **Figure 5. Consistency analysis: BGI regular NGS platforms, Illumina regular NGS**
301 **platforms, two linked-read libraries, and PacBio CCS mode SNP(A) and indel(B)**
302 **consistency analysis.**

303 **Figure 6. Depth and coverage of NBPF4 gene in HHRs.**

304 **Table 1. Haplotype phasing small variants.**

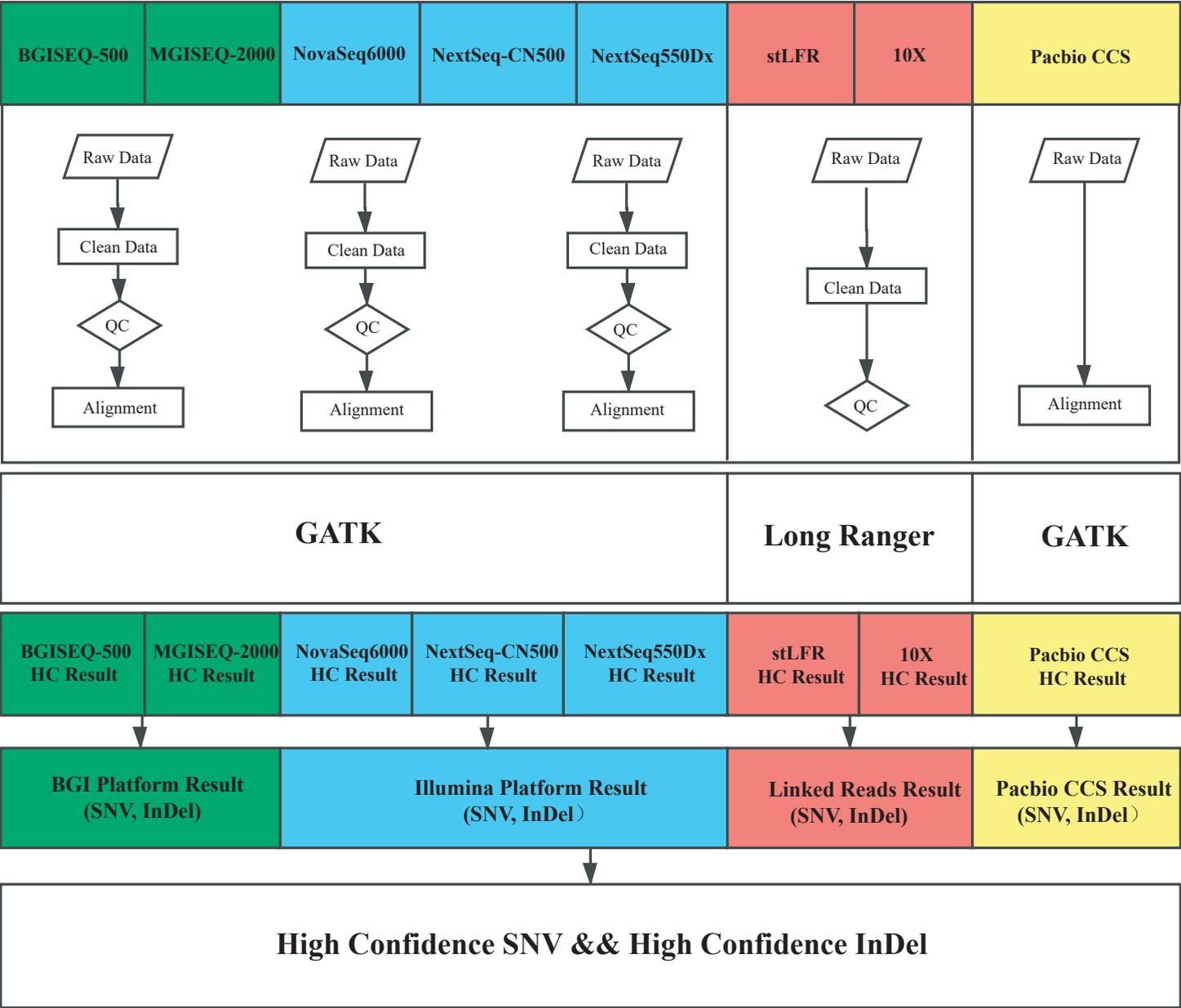
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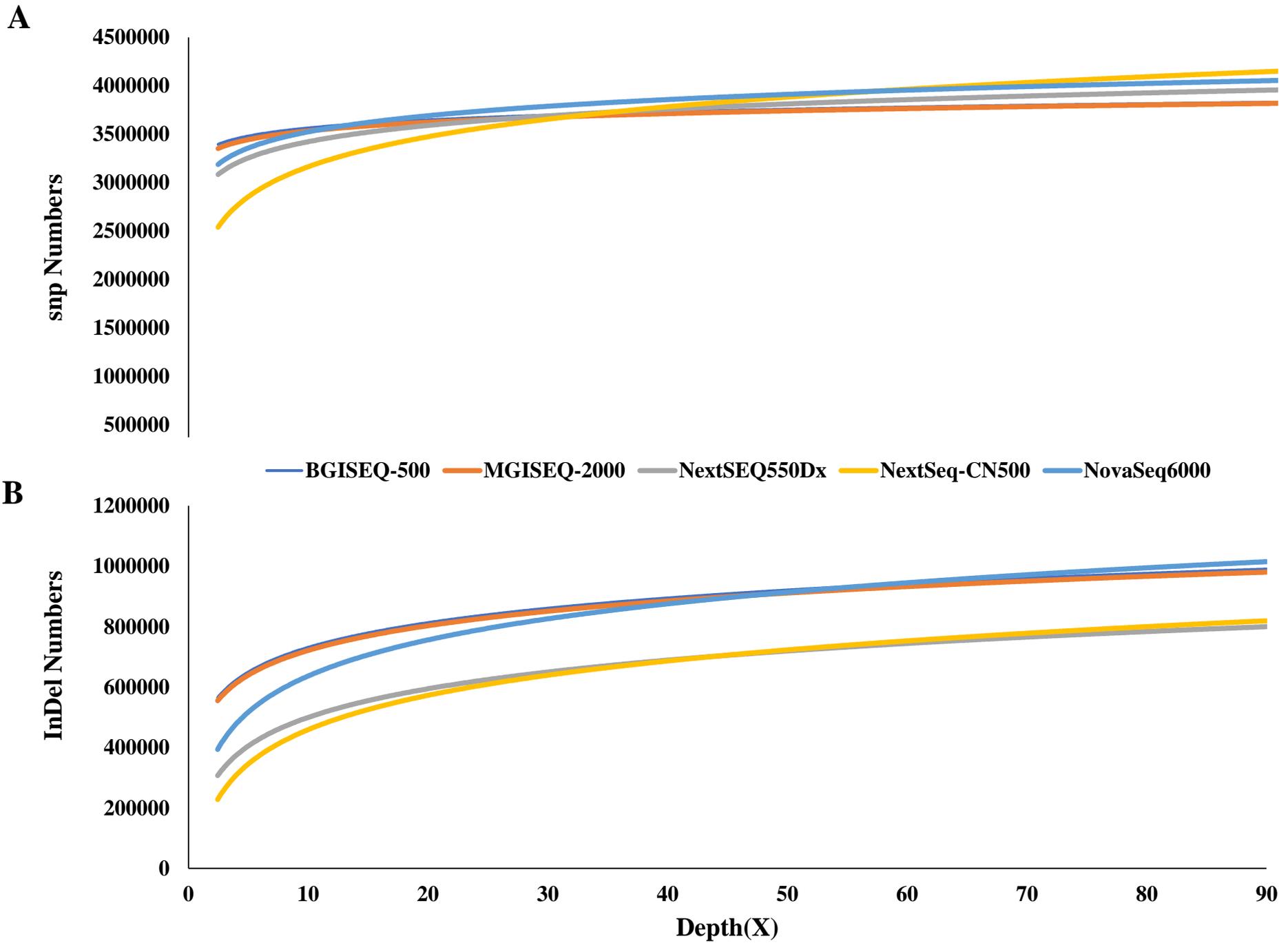
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BGISEQ-500_1	77.69	100	96.16	96.9	96.7	95.59	95.99	85.05	83.29	83.35	93.34	93.22	90.29	91.62	89.22	89.14
BGISEQ-500_2	78.5	97.17	100	97.39	96.83	96.26	96.59	85.74	84.05	84.11	93.52	93.38	90.82	92.18	90.03	89.98
BGISEQ-500_3	77.23	96.33	95.81	100	95.94	95.17	95.77	84.67	82.95	83.03	92.77	92.63	89.88	91.29	89.01	88.94
MGISEQ-2000_1	78.26	97.41	96.53	97.22	100	96.08	96.39	85.56	83.81	83.87	93.76	93.61	90.75	92.07	89.7	89.63
MGISEQ-2000_2	79.39	97.69	97.35	97.84	97.46	100	97.1	86.55	84.86	84.9	94.17	94.02	91.55	92.78	90.71	90.64
MGISEQ-2000_3	78.56	97.08	96.67	97.43	96.77	96.09	100	85.71	84.03	84.09	93.45	93.3	90.78	92.49	90.28	90.25
NextSeq550Dx_1	87.38	95.66	95.44	95.81	95.53	95.26	95.33	100	94.6	94.69	98.28	98.36	97.65	95.33	94.84	94.56
NextSeq550Dx_2	89.44	95.89	95.76	96.07	95.78	95.59	95.67	96.83	100	96.06	98.35	98.45	98.07	95.61	95.43	95.14
NextSeq550Dx_3	88.92	95.41	95.27	95.6	95.29	95.09	95.17	96.36	95.51	100	97.94	98.06	97.66	95.1	94.93	94.62
NextSeq-CN500_1	75.28	90.45	89.69	90.43	90.19	89.29	89.55	84.67	82.78	82.91	100	94.51	91.14	88.79	86.6	86.44
NextSeq-CN500_2	75.21	90.25	89.47	90.22	89.97	89.07	89.32	84.67	82.79	82.94	94.43	100	91.08	88.59	86.47	86.28
NextSeq-CN500_3	79.64	92.56	92.13	92.69	92.35	91.84	92.02	89	87.32	87.46	96.41	96.44	100	91.58	90.21	90.06
NovaSeq6000_1	80.82	95.31	94.9	95.53	95.08	94.45	95.14	88.17	86.4	86.44	95.32	95.19	92.94	100	93.96	94.09
NovaSeq6000_2	83.58	95.99	95.86	96.33	95.8	95.5	96.05	90.72	89.18	89.23	96.15	96.1	94.67	97.17	100	95.95
NovaSeq6000_3	83.79	96.15	96.04	96.51	95.96	95.66	96.26	90.67	89.14	89.16	96.22	96.12	94.76	97.55	96.19	100

Common

BGISEQ-500_1

BGISEQ-500_2

BGISEQ-500_3

MGISEQ-2000_1

MGISEQ-2000_2

MGISEQ-2000_3

NextSeq550Dx_1

NextSeq550Dx_2

NextSeq550Dx_3

NextSeq-CN500_1

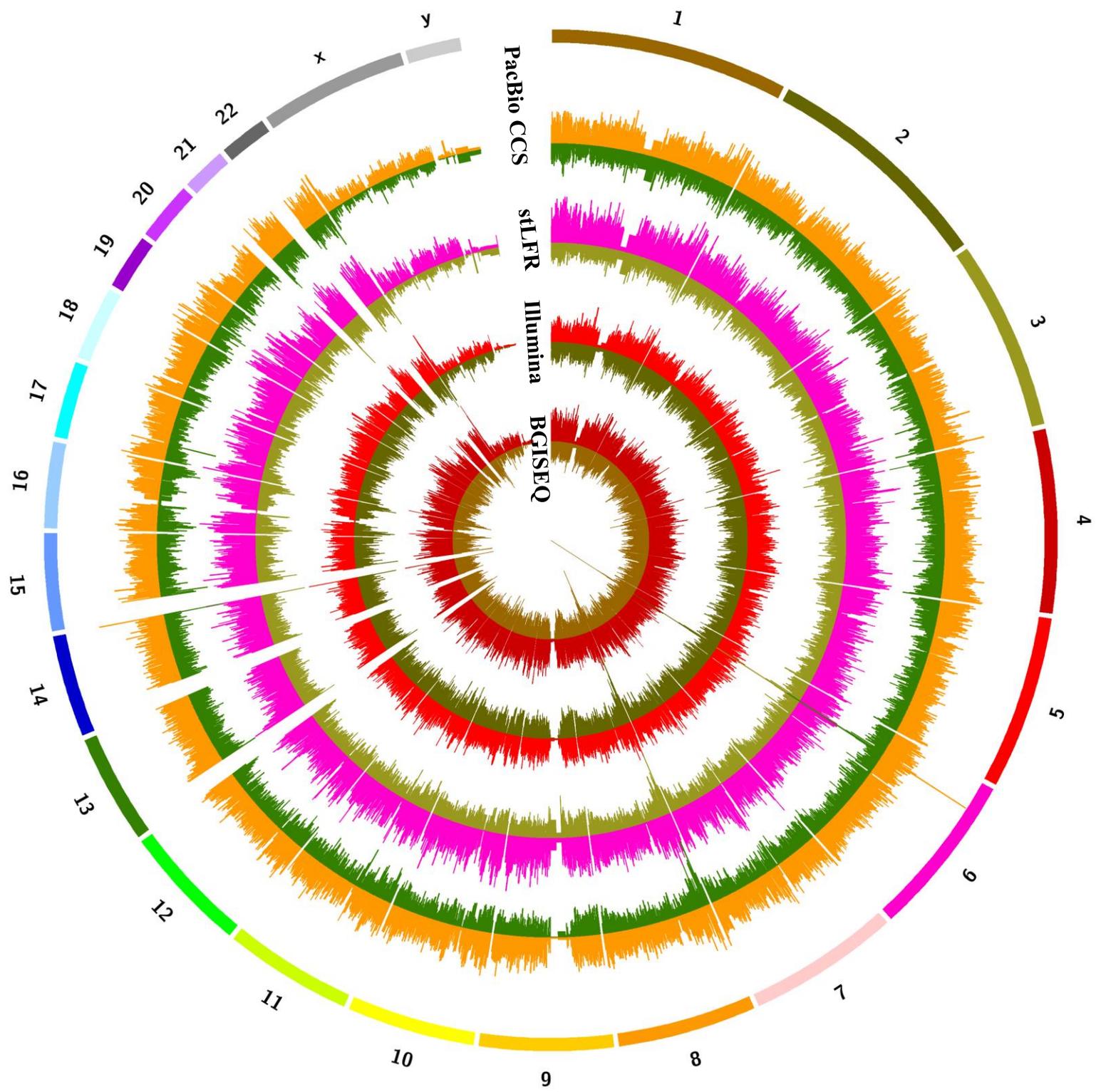
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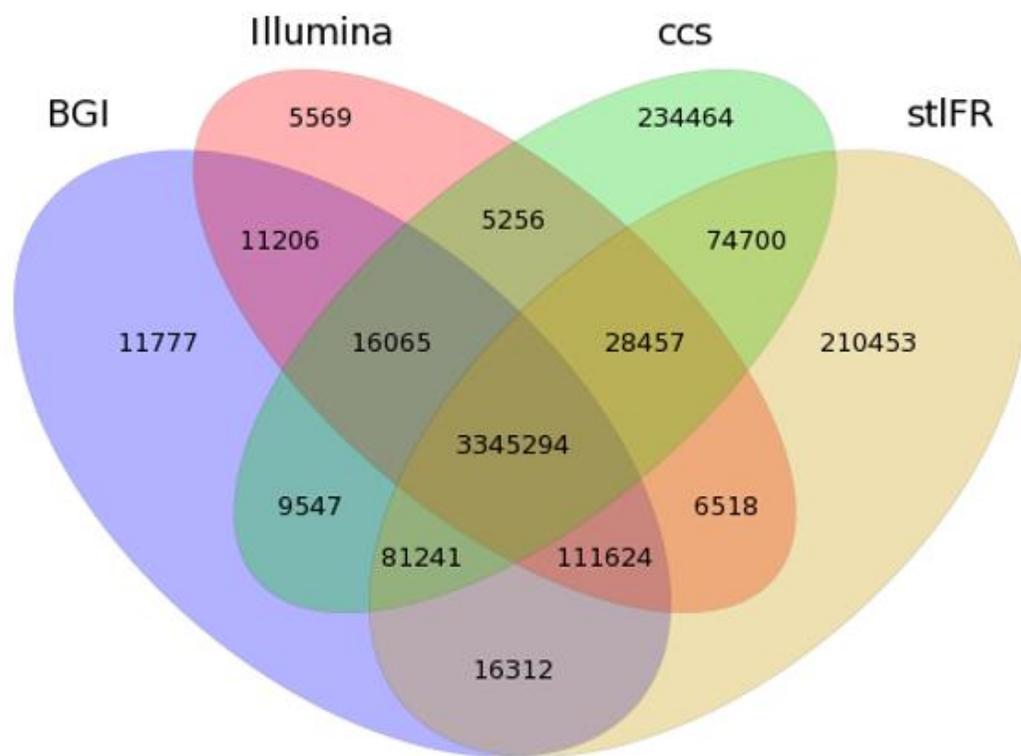
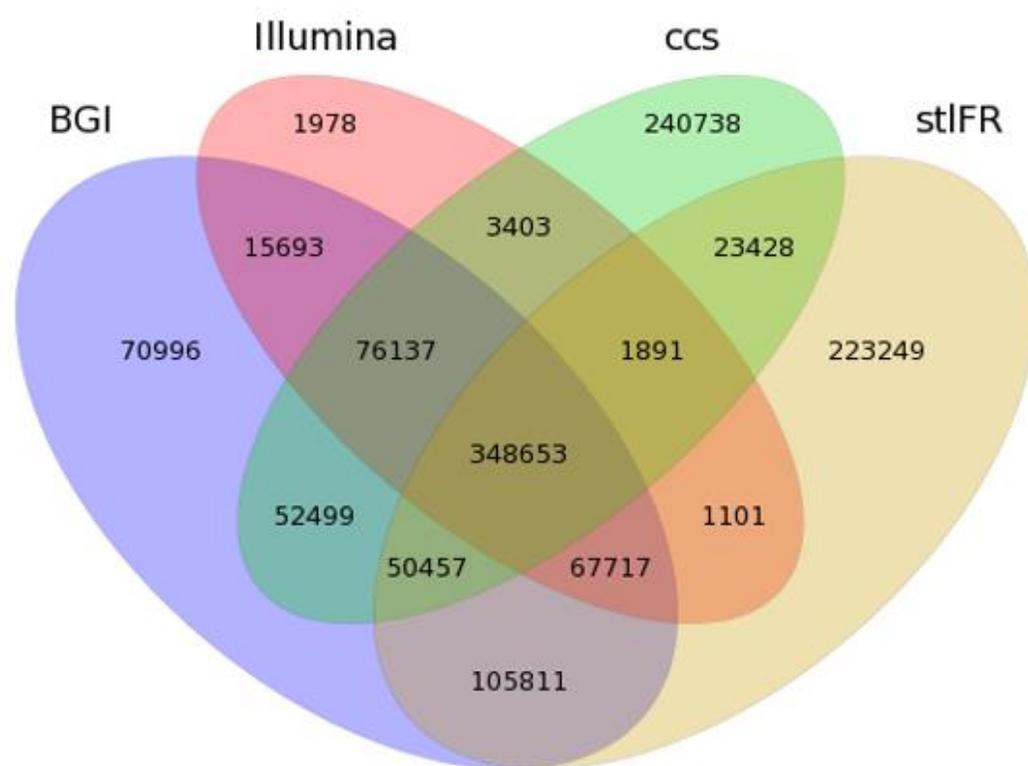
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NovaSeq6000_1

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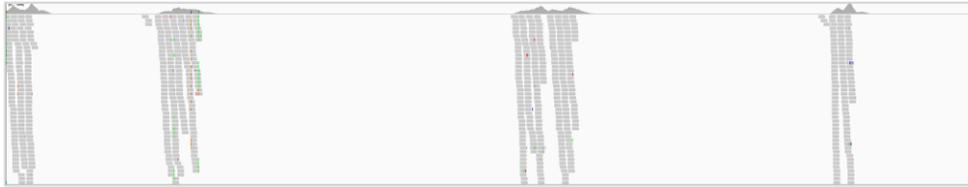
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A**B**

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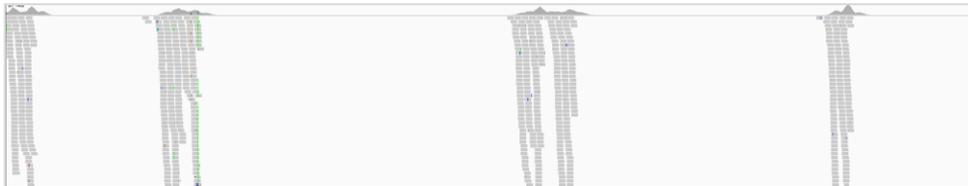
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NextSeq550Dx



BGISEQ-500



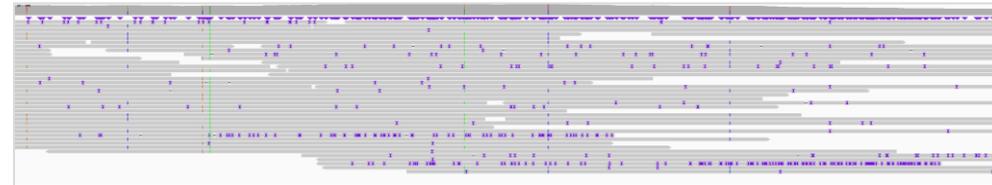
stLFR



Novaseq6000



CCS



NextSeq-CN500

