

# Analisi sequenze

**laboratorio Interazioni**

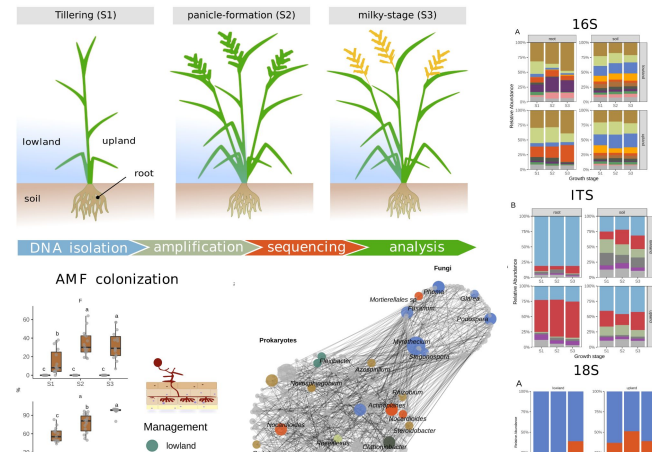
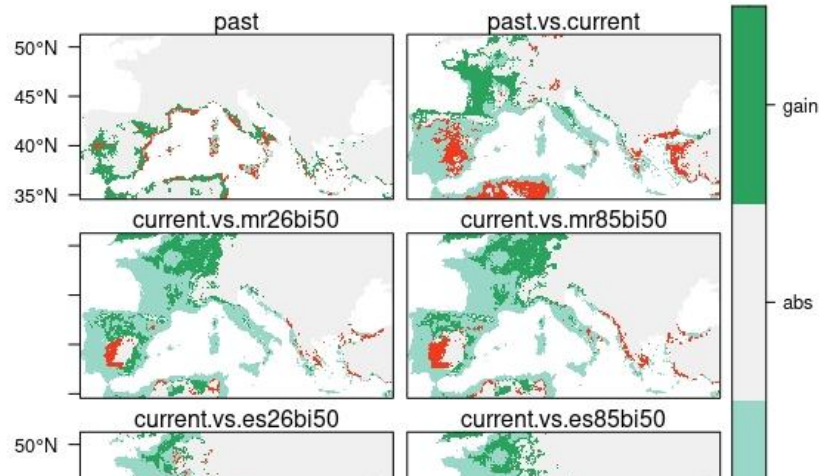
# 0. teachers for a day

Dr. Martino ADAMO

Postdoc researcher since 2018, I work on plants diversity conservation and orchid mycorrhizas using bio-molecular tools and boring statistical model to study traits influence on species spatial distribution.

Dr. Matteo CHIALVA

He is post-doctoral researcher since 2017 and his research focuses on plant-microbes interactions in model crop species by using multi-omics approaches from transcriptomics to metagenomics. By coupling these tools with systems biology and biostatistics he is interested in linking soil microbiota diversity and functioning to plant responses and ecosystem services.

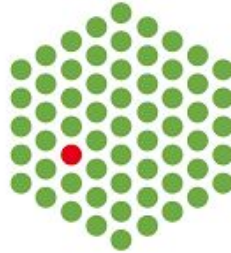


# 1. Genetic sequence databases

DNA, RNA and protein sequences are stored in dedicated databases. The most known is the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI). European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) is the European twin. UniProt repository is the most complete protein focused public database. Most of EMBL and UniProt data are automatically uploaded in NCBI.



EMBL



# 1. Genetic sequence databases

**NCBI** (National Center for Biotechnology Information) includes several repositories with different functions. The main focus is to cover all aspects of molecular diversity.



**nt** :: comprehensive collection of nucleotides from different DBs (87 M sequences)

**Protein (nr)** :: translated proteins

**RefSeq** :: representative genomes (including organelles), cDNAs and proteins sequences (high quality)

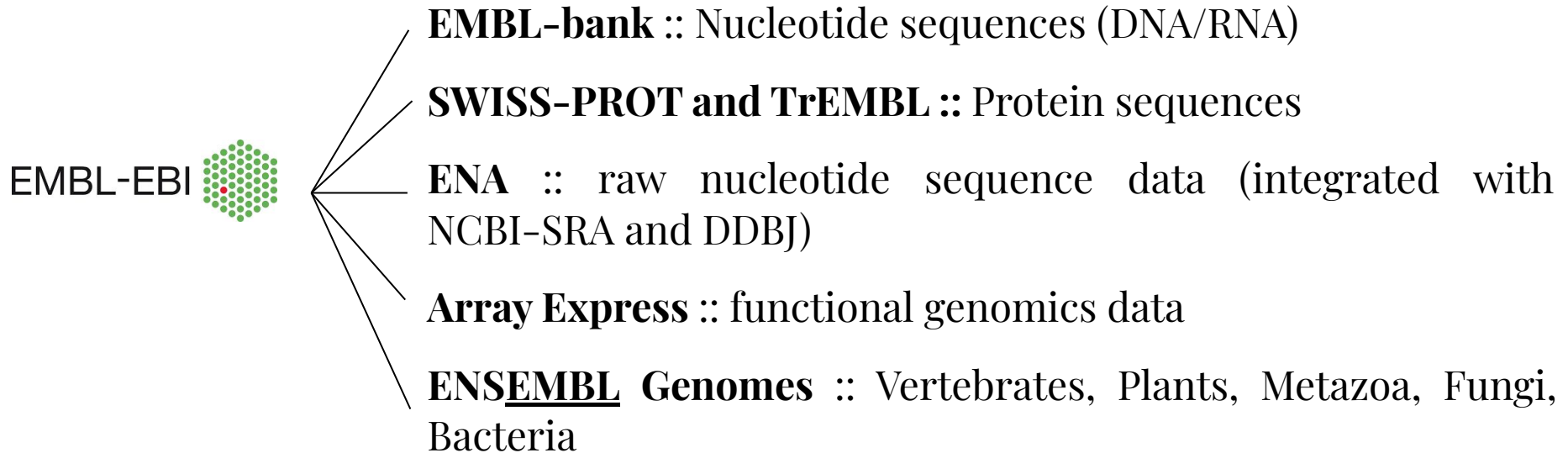
**SRA** :: raw -omic stuffs

**GeneBank** :: nucleotide sequence database (NCBI only)

**Taxonomy** :: taxonomic annotation to all NCBI sequences

# 1. Genetic sequence databases

**EMBL-EBI** (European Molecular Biology Laboratory-European Bioinformatics Institute) also includes several repositories. Similar to NCBI database



# 1. How are sequences stored?

Different type of files (mostly simple or compressed **text file**)

- FASTA (\*.fasta/ \*.fa/ \*.faa/ \*.fas): *nucleotides or proteins*

description line (header) → >NG\_008679.1:5001-38170 Homo sapiens paired box 6 (PAX6)  
ACCCCTCTTTTCTTATCATTGACATTTAAACTCTGGGGCAGGTCCCTCGCGTAGAACGCGGCTGTCAGATCT  
GCCACTTCCCCTGCCGAGCGGCGGTGAGAAGTGTGGGAACCGGCGCTGCCAGGCTCACCTGCCTCCCCGC  
CCTCCGCTCCCAGGTAACCGCCCCGGGCTCCGGCCCCGGCCCGGCTCGGGGCCCGCGGGGCCCTCTCCGCTG  
CCAGCGACTGCTGTCCCCAAATCAAAGCCCCGCCCAAGTGGCCCCGGGGCTTGATTTTTTGCTTTTAAAAG  
GAGGCATACAAAGATGGAAGCGAGTTACTGAGGGAGGGATAGGAAGGGGGGTGGAGGAGGGACTTGTCTT  
TGCCGAGTGTGCTCTTCTGCAAAAGTAGCAAAATGTTCCACTCCTAAGAGTGGACTTCCAGTCCGGCCCT  
GAGCTGGGAGTAGGGGGCGGGAGTCTGCTGCTGCTGTCTGCTAAAGCCACTCGCGACCGCGAAAAATGCA  
GGAGGTGGGGACGCACTTTGCATCCAGACCTCCTCTGCATCGCAGTTCACGACATCCACGCTTGGGAAAG  
TCCGTACCCGCGCCTGGAGCGCTTAAAGACACCCTGCCGCGGGTTCGGGCGAGGTGCAGCAGAAGTTTCCC  
GCGGTTGCAAAGTGCA

nucleotide or protein  
sequence

multiple sequences can be stored in a single file  
(e.g. a whole genome)

Header —●>VIT\_201s0011g03530.1  
Sequence —●AATTAAGCATAAAATACTCACTCTTACCCCTTATTTTCTTATCTCTCATCACTTTTGGTGCGAAG  
●GACCATGAGAACAAAGCTGCAATGGGTGTAGGGTTCTTCGCAAGGCATGCAGCCAAGACTGCATCA  
Header —●>VIT\_201s0011g03540.1  
Sequence —●CAGGTAGCGTGAAGTTAAACCTAGCGCTTTAGACAAACAGCTGTAGTCACCGCCCACAAACACC  
●AGCCTCTGAGACACCACCTCAAACCTTTCCACTTAAATACACATCCCTCACACCTTTTCAATTC  
Header —●>VIT\_201s0011g03550.1  
Sequence —●CATGCAAAGCTGAACGCGATGCTGTGATTGGTGGTAAGTGGTAGTTGAGTAAATTTGACAGTGAA  
●GCCGAAATGGTAAAAGACTAAGGCTAGAAGTAGAATACCACTGTTCTTCTCATCAGTGGGCCCA

# 1. How are sequences stored?

- FASTA with quality (\*.fastq/ \*.fq/\*.fastq.gz): *nucleotides from NGS sequencing*

Header

Sequence

Quality

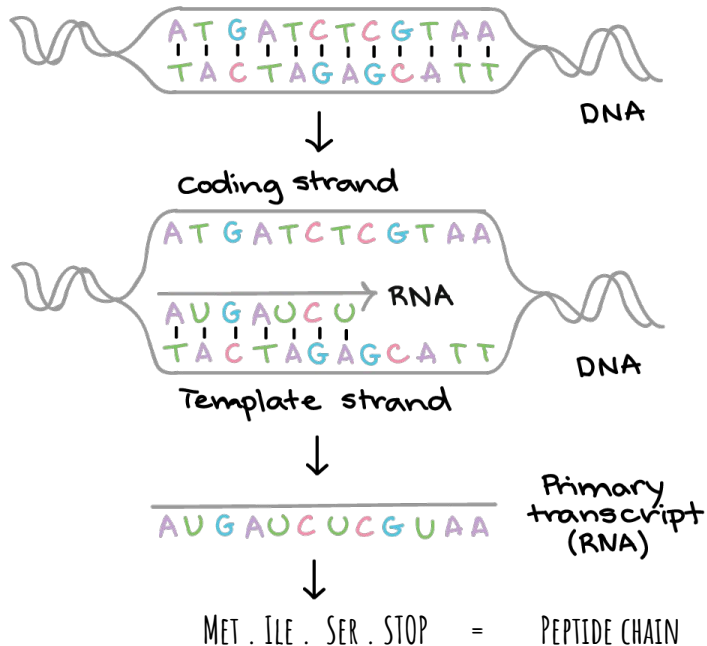
```
@HWI-ST227:389:C4WA2ACXX:7:1204:2272:59979
GGAGGAAGGTCCTCGCTCCTCTTTCATATAAGGGAAATGGCTGAAT
+
FFFFHHHHHHHJIIJJJJJJJJIIJJJIGIGIGIGIJJIIJJJJJJIIII
@HWI-ST227:389:C4WA2ACXX:7:1205:15214:42893
GAGGATCCCAGGGAGGAAGGTCCTCGCTCCTCTTTCATCTAAGGGA
+
12BAFB?A:3<AE1@<FF;1*@EG*)?0?DBD>9BF9B*?#####
@HWI-ST227:389:C4WA2ACXX:8:2208:2467:44624
AAAGAGGAGAGAGGACCATCCTCCCTGGGATCCTCAGAAGTCTACT
+
BDDA:DB?2AA@FC>F?EEGC<FED>GFD;?GBB?<?F99*/9?9?
```

millions of sequences can be  
stored in a single file

- Other formats
  - nucleotides electropherograms from sanger sequencing :: \*.ab1
  - alignments :: \*.bam/ \*.sam)
  - variants (SNPs/INDELs) :: \*.vcf
  - NCBI sequence file formats :: \*.gbf/ \*.gbk

## 2. Sequences similarity

A sequence could be a DNA, an RNA (usually mRNA), or a protein sequence:



We can statistically compare sequences to measure how many similar they are.

- 2 seqs comparison is intuitive
- multiple seqs comparison is an alignment
- comparison of a sequence *vs* a whole database is known as a BLAST

(**B**asic **L**ocal **A**lignment **S**earch **T**ool)



## 2. Sequences similarity

<https://blast.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/Blast.cgi>

### Basic Local Alignment Search Tool

**BLAST** finds regions of similarity between biological sequences. The program compares nucleotide or protein sequences to sequence databases and calculates the statistical significance. [Learn more](#)

**NEWS**

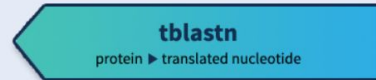
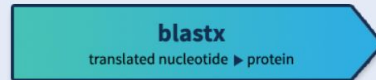
BLAST+ 2.13.0 is here!

Starting with this release, we are including the blastn\_vdb and tblastn\_vdb executables in the BLAST+ distribution.

Thu, 17 March 2022

[More BLAST news...](#)

### Web BLAST



### BLAST Genomes

Search

[Human](#)

[Mouse](#)

[Rat](#)

[Microbes](#)

you can blast both  
nucleotide and protein  
sequences

blast could include  
translation from  
nucleotide to protein  
and *vice-versa*

## 2. Sequences similarity

The screenshot shows the NCBI BLAST suite web interface. At the top, it says "BLAST® » blastn suite". Below this are tabs for "blastn", "blastp", "blastx", "tblastn", and "tblastx", with "blastn" selected. The main section is titled "Enter Query Sequence". It has a text input for "Enter accession number(s), gi(s), or FASTA sequence(s)" with a "Clear" button. To the right is a "Query subrange" section with "From" and "To" input fields. Below the main input is a section for "Or, upload file" with a "Choose File" button and "No file chosen" text. There is also a "Job Title" input field and a checkbox for "Align two or more sequences". The "Choose Search Set" section includes a "Database" dropdown set to "Nucleotide collection (nr/nt)", an "Organism" input field with an "Add organism" button, and checkboxes for "Exclude" (Models, Uncultured/environmental sample sequences) and "Limit to" (Sequences from type material). The "Entrez Query" section has an input field for "Enter an Entrez query to limit search". The "Program Selection" section has radio buttons for "Optimize for" (Highly similar sequences, More dissimilar sequences, Somewhat similar sequences) and a "Choose a BLAST algorithm" button. At the bottom, there is a "BLAST" button and a checkbox for "Show results in a new window". A footer bar contains a "+ Algorithm parameters" link.

A blast needs few mandatory parameters ...

- a sequence (the **QUERY**)
- database selection (the **Subject**)

and too many options

- taxonomic trim
- ... and many others

## 2. Sequences similarity

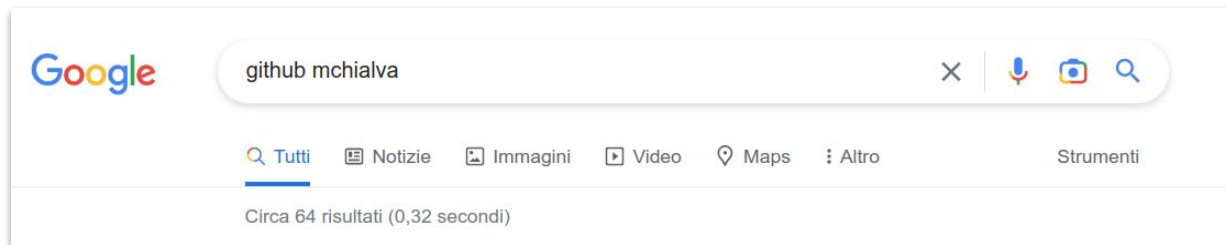
Descriptions										
Graphic Summary										
Alignments										
Taxonomy										
Sequences producing significant alignments										
Download Select columns Show 100 ?										
select all 100 sequences selected										
GenBank Graphics Distance tree of results MSA Viewer										
	Description	Scientific Name	Max Score	Total Score	Query Cover	E value	Per. Ident	Acc. Len	Accession	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Tulasnella australiensis isolate CLM1945 large subunit ribosomal RNA gene, partial sequence: mitochondrial</a>	<a href="#">Tulasnella aust...</a>	941	941	100%	0.0	100.00%	509	<a href="#">MT786789.1</a>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Tulasnella australiensis isolate CLM2005 large subunit ribosomal RNA gene, partial sequence: mitochondrial</a>	<a href="#">Tulasnella aust...</a>	909	909	96%	0.0	100.00%	493	<a href="#">MT786787.1</a>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Tulasnella sp. CLM031 large subunit ribosomal RNA gene, partial sequence: mitochondrial</a>	<a href="#">Tulasnella sp. CL...</a>	817	817	86%	0.0	100.00%	442	<a href="#">KF476484.1</a>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Tulasnella tomaculum strain KC429 large subunit ribosomal RNA gene, partial sequence: mitochondrial</a>	<a href="#">Tulasnella tomac...</a>	787	787	90%	0.0	97.41%	461	<a href="#">AY382812.1</a>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Tulasnella sp. 07033.II.1 large subunit ribosomal RNA gene, partial sequence: mitochondrial</a>	<a href="#">Tulasnella sp. 07...</a>	776	776	100%	0.0	94.31%	535	<a href="#">HM196774.1</a>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Tulasnella sp. CP0835.III.2 large subunit ribosomal RNA gene, partial sequence: mitochondrial</a>	<a href="#">Tulasnella sp. C...</a>	771	771	100%	0.0	94.12%	535	<a href="#">HM196773.1</a>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Tulasnella occidentalis isolate CLM1938 large subunit ribosomal RNA gene, partial sequence: mitochondrial</a>	<a href="#">Tulasnella occide...</a>	767	767	99%	0.0	94.11%	516	<a href="#">MT786777.1</a>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Tulasnella occidentalis isolate CLM1942 large subunit ribosomal RNA gene, partial sequence: mitochondrial</a>	<a href="#">Tulasnella occide...</a>	767	767	99%	0.0	94.11%	523	<a href="#">MT786776.1</a>	

**E-value:** expect value is a sort of “significance” of the hits. The lower the E-value, the better the hit. The E-value is dependent on the length of the query sequence and the size of the database.

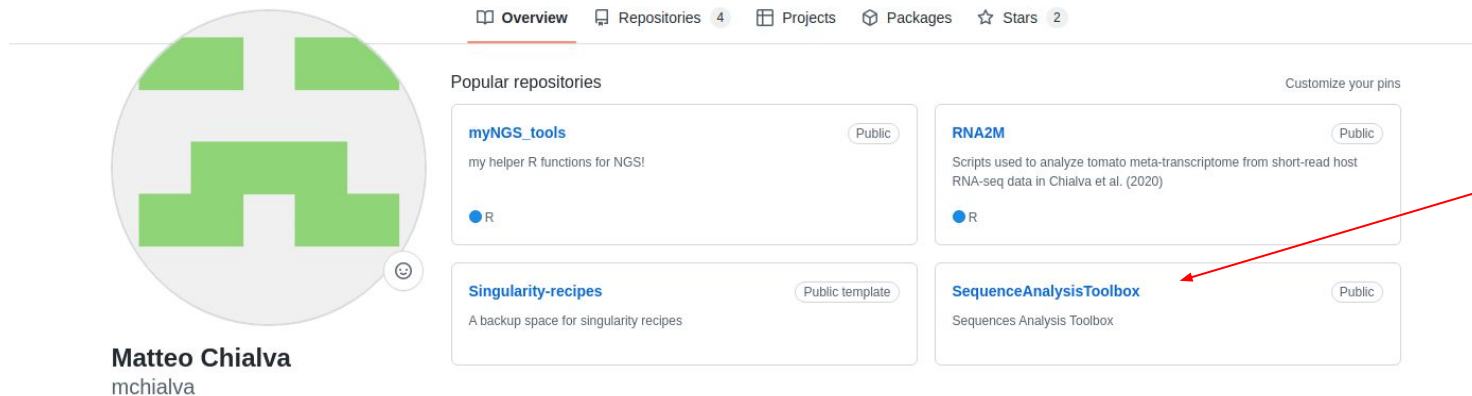
**Percentual identity:** percentage of identical bp between query and subject

**Accession:** univocal sequence identifier

click here!



<https://github.com/mchialva>



## 2. Sequence similarity: a real BLAST example

**Task:** Given an unknown rRNA marker sequence, blast it and infer its taxonomy

- when isolating microorganisms *in vitro*, a molecular characterization is often required (and integrated with other phenotypic traits) to assign isolates to species/genus.

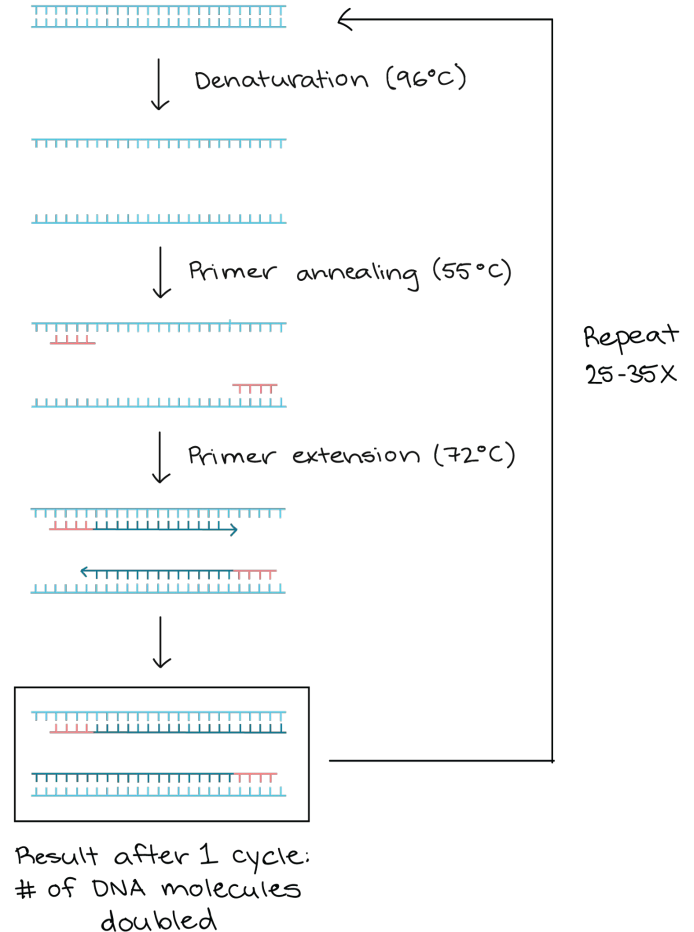
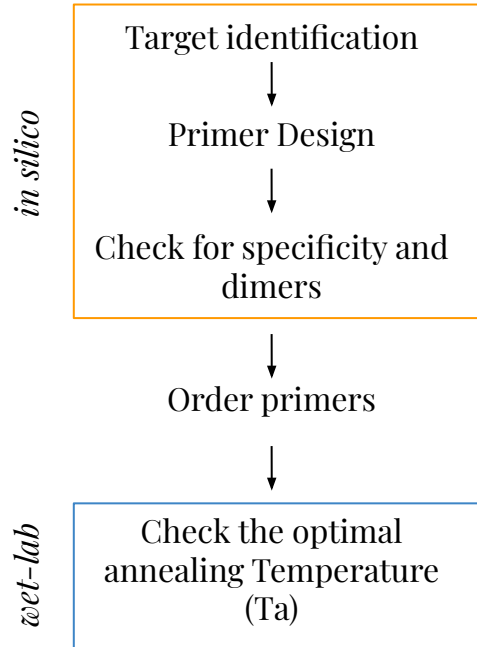
**Dataset:** 16S rRNA.fasta

**Activity:** BLAST the given nucleotides sequence

# 3. Primer design

What are *primers*?

Short synthetic oligonucleotides which targets a portion of DNA (or cDNA/eDNA..)



# 3. Primer design: oligonucleotides features

## Primers and amplicon size

- Avoid too short (lack of specificity) or too long (lack of annealing efficiency) primers
  - optimal at 18-24 nucleotides
  - annealing efficiency is proportional to primer length
- final amplicon size should not exceed 1000-2000 bp (standard Taq polymerases)

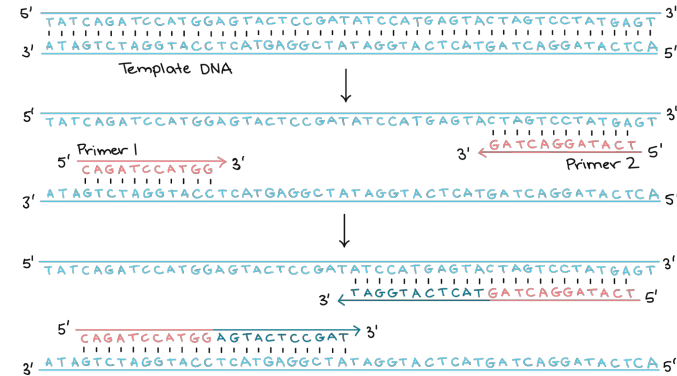
## GC content

primer GC content influence its melting temperature ( $T_m$ )\*

$$T_m = 2^{\circ}\text{C} \times (\text{A}+\text{T}) + 4^{\circ}\text{C} \times (\text{G}+\text{C}) \text{ [Wallace formula]}$$

- both primers should have a GC content of 40-60%
- The two primers should have a similar  $T_m$  (delta of 3-5°C maximum)
- The  $T_m$  should be within the range of 55-72°C (optimal at 60°C)
- primers should have a terminal G or C (G/C) clamp to ensure stable primer pairing to their target (GC have a stronger hydrogen bonding)

\*the temperature at which half of the primers dissociate from the template DNA

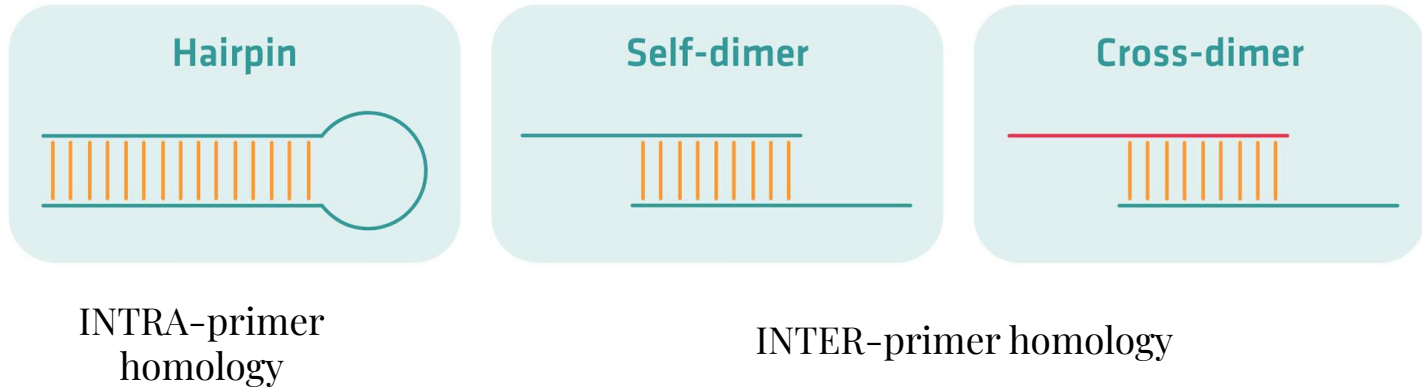


# 3. Primer design: oligonucleotides features

## Primers specificity

A primer pair must be complementary only to the target sequence (in most cases...)

- off-targets: primers are homologous to nucleotides outside the region of interest (your target gene)



Effect: decrease in PCR yield!





### 3. How-to: a real primers design example

**Task:** Check presence/absence of a disease-resistance gene in different tomato genotype

- I-3 gene confers resistance against race 3 *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *lycopersici* (Fol) in tomato

**Dataset:** Tomato\_gene1.fasta

**Activity:** Design standard PCR primers using primerBLAST web-tool and pick the most specific primer pairs

# 3. Primer design: Primer-BLAST web-tool

Your PCR template is highly similar to the following sequence(s) from the search database. To increase the chance of finding specific primers, please review the list below and select all sequences (within the given sequence ranges) that are intended or allowed targets.

Select: All None Selected:0

Accession	Title	Identity	Alignment length	Seq. start	Seq. stop
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OU640350.1	Solanum lycopersicum genome assembly, chromosome: 7	99.94%	6614	64553227	64559840
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HG975519.1	Solanum lycopersicum chromosome ch07, complete genome	99.89%	6614	60923760	60930372
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CP023763.1	Solanum lycopersicum cultivar I-3 chromosome 7	99.02%	6614	63600224	63606836

Submit

☐ Show results in a new window

## Graphical view of primer pairs



## Detailed primer reports

### Primer pair 1

	Sequence (5'→3')	Template strand	Length	Start	Stop	Tm	GC%	Self complementarity	Self 3' complementarity
Forward primer	GGGATCTCAATTCATGTGCGAG	Plus	22	2186	2207	59.45	50.00	4.00	2.00
Reverse primer	GGCACATCCCATTCAGTGGA	Minus	20	2510	2491	60.03	55.00	5.00	3.00
Product length	325								

### Products on intended targets

>OU640350.1 Solanum lycopersicum genome assembly, chromosome: 7

product length = 325  
Forward primer 1 GGGATCTCAATTCATGTGCGAG 22  
Template 64555413 ..... 64555434

# 4. How to build a Phylogeny

*What is Phylogeny?* The study of evolutionary relationships of organisms through the comparative analysis of traits (including molecular sequences, but not only..) with the aim to reconstruct genealogical relationships between organisms or gene/proteins families

Different steps:

- 1) **Select sequences by taxonomy/orthology including the outgroup:**  
it depends on the biological question posed. Often it is the most time-consuming task in phylogeny
- 2) **Align sequences and generate the multiple sequences alignment file (MSA)**  
Different computational strategies (i.e. different software available). MSA should be high quality as possible and often require manual curation
- 3) **Select the best evolutionary model**  
Select the model which better describes the MSA i.e. the way and the rate nucleotides/amino acids change across taxa and the
- 4) **Infer Phylogeny**  
Different algorithms available: distance-based models (neighbour-joining [NJ]) or heuristics models (maximum likelihood [ML] or Bayesian models)
- 5) **Plot and annotate the tree and draw biological/evolutionary conclusions**

### 3. How-to: a complete phylogenetic reconstruction workflow

**Task:** Reconstruct phylogeny of 13 different mammalian species using K-casein exon 4 DNA.

**Dataset:** KCAS\_13\_mammals.fasta

from Gatesy et al. (1999)

**Activity:** Use [ngphylogeny.fr](http://ngphylogeny.fr) web-service to perform all the phylogenetic reconstruction step from alignment to the tree plot.

## 4. how to build a phylogeny

<https://ngphylogeny.fr/>

› A La Carte Using the workflow maker, customize your workflow by selecting the right tools

› Name

Workflow name...

› Tools



Multiple Alignment

- ☐ MAFFT
- ☒ MUSCLE
- ☐ Clustal Omega



Alignment Curation

- ☐ BMGE
- ☐ Gblocks
- ☐ Noisy
- ☐ trimAl



Tree Inference

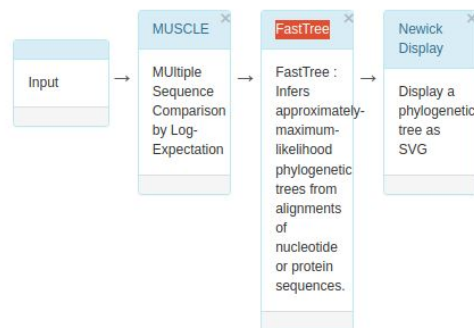
- ☐ FastME
- ☐ TNT
- ☐ PhyML+SMS
- ☐ PhyML
- ☒ FastTree
- ☐ MrBayes



Tree Rendering

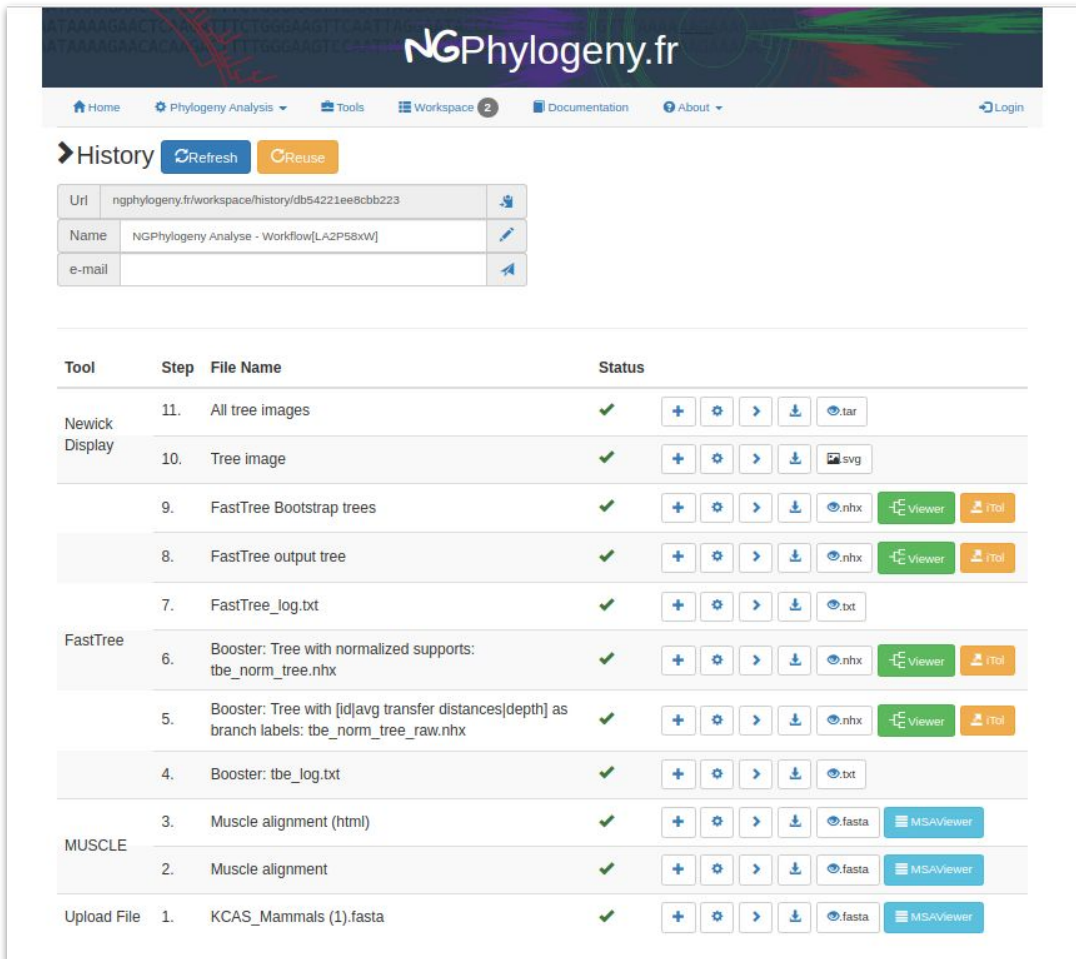
☒ Newick Display

› Workflow skeleton



## 4. how to build a phylogeny

<https://ngphylogeny.fr/>



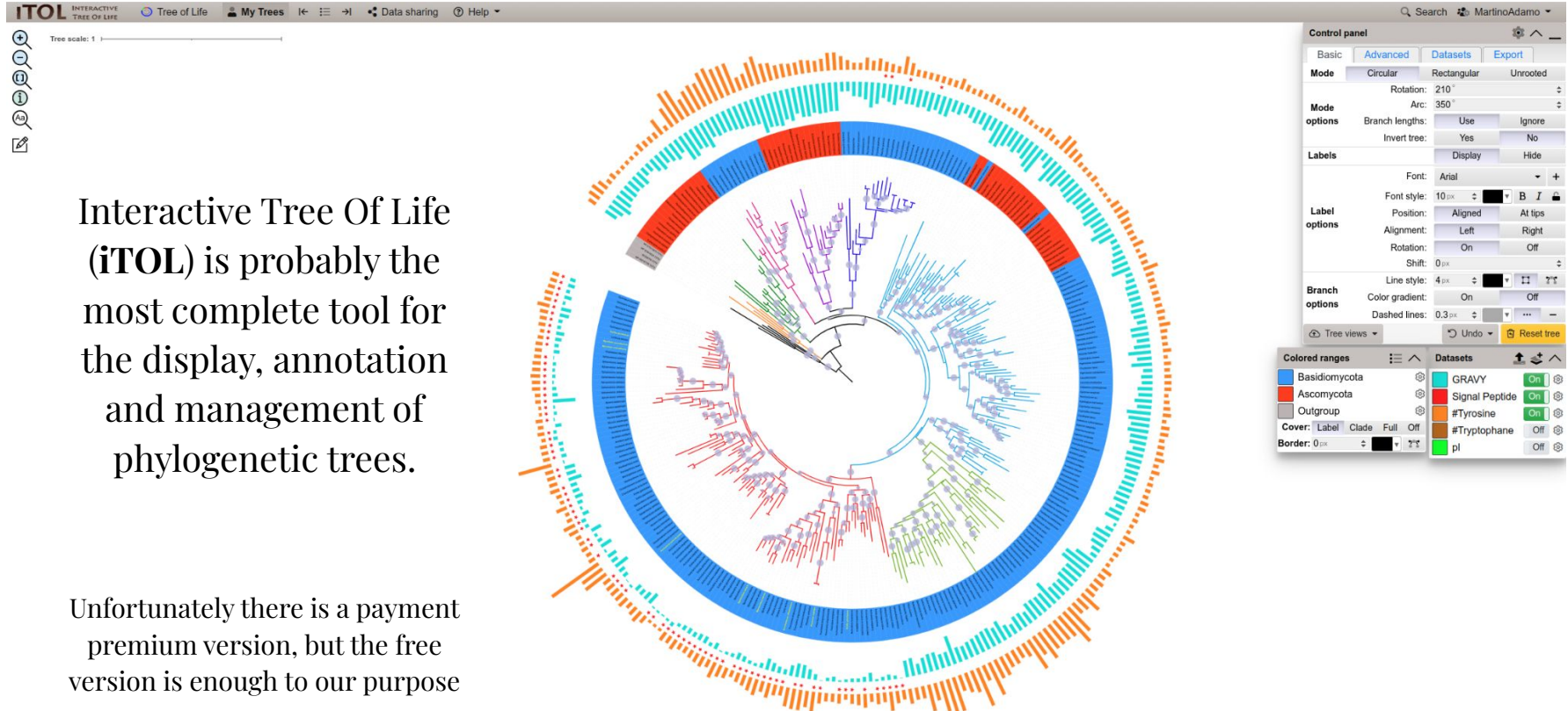
The screenshot displays the NGPhylogeny.fr web interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Phylogeny Analysis, Tools, Workspace (2), Documentation, and About, along with a Login button. Below the navigation bar, there is a History section with a Refresh button and a Reuse button. The History table lists the following entries:

Tool	Step	File Name	Status
Newick Display	11.	All tree images	✓
	10.	Tree image	✓
	9.	FastTree Bootstrap trees	✓
	8.	FastTree output tree	✓
FastTree	7.	FastTree_log.txt	✓
	6.	Booster: Tree with normalized supports: tbe_norm_tree.nhx	✓
	5.	Booster: Tree with [id avg transfer distances depth] as branch labels: tbe_norm_tree_raw.nhx	✓
	4.	Booster: tbe_log.txt	✓
MUSCLE	3.	Muscle alignment (html)	✓
	2.	Muscle alignment	✓
Upload File	1.	KCAS_Mammals (1).fasta	✓

Each row in the table includes a set of icons for file management (add, edit, delete, download) and specific tool actions (e.g., viewer, download, total). The interface is designed to track the steps of a phylogenetic analysis workflow.

# 4. how to build a phylogeny

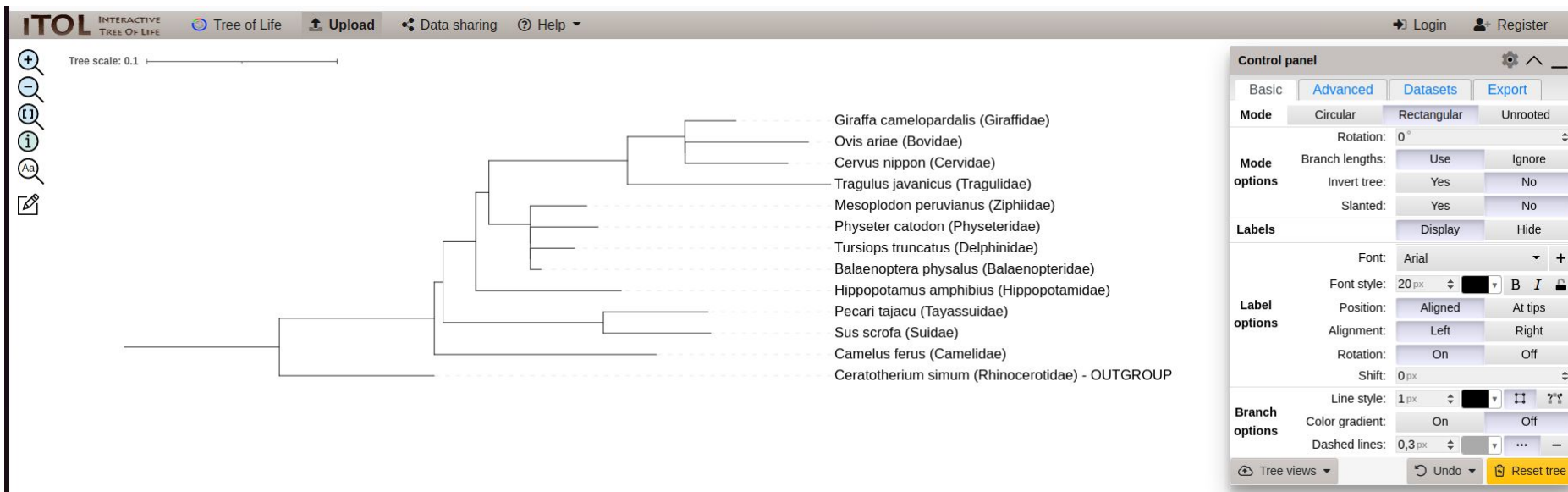
<https://itol.embl.de/>





# 4. how to build a phylogeny

<https://itol.embl.de/>



## 5. Useful online and off-line resources

MEGA [<https://www.megasoftware.net/>] sequence editing, alignment, NJ & ML, tree editing

SeaView [<https://doua.prabi.fr/software/seaview>] alignment, alignment edit, NJ & ML, tree editing

PhyML [<http://www.atgc-montpellier.fr/phyml/>] model selection, ML

MrBayes [<https://nbiSweden.github.io/MrBayes/>] bayesian phylogeny

RaxML [<https://cme.h-its.org/exelixis/web/software/raxml/>] model selection, ML multicore

FastTree [<http://www.microbesonline.org/fasttree/>] very fast and inaccurate ML

FigTree [<http://tree.bio.ed.ac.uk/software/figtree/>] desktop cool tree editing

