Using the SRAdb Package to Query the Sequence Read Archive

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1 Introduction

High throughput sequencing technologies have very rapidly become standard tools in biology. The data that these machines generate are large, extremely rich. As such, the Sequence Read Archives (SRA) have been set up at NCBI in the United States, EMBL in Europe, and DDBJ in Japan to capture these data in public repositories in much the same spirit as MIAME-compliant microarray databases like NCBI GEO and EBI ArrayExpress.

Accessing data in SRA requires finding it first. This R package provides a convenient and powerful framework to do just that. In addition, SRAdb features functionality to determine availability of sequence files and to download files of interest.

SRA currently store aligned reads or other processed data that relies on alignment to a reference genome. Please refer to the SRA handbook (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK47537/) for details. NCBI GEO also often contain aligned reads for sequencing experiments and the SRAdb package can help to provide links to these data as well. In combination with the GEOmetadb and GEOquery packages, these data are also, then, accessible.

2 Getting Started

Since SRA is a continuously growing repository, the SRAdb SQLite file is updated regularly. The first step, then, is to get the SRAdb SQLite file from the online location. The download and uncompress steps are done automatically with a single command, getSRAdbFile.

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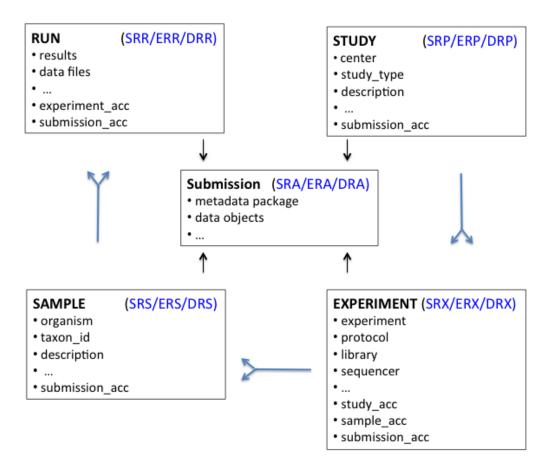


Figure 1: A graphical representation (sometimes called an *Entity-Relationship Diagram*) of the relationships between the main tables in the SRAdb package.

```
> library(SRAdb)
> sqlfile <- 'SRAmetadb.sqlite'
> if(!file.exists('SRAmetadb.sqlite')) sqlfile <<- getSRAdbFile()</pre>
```

The default storage location is in the current working directory and the default filename is "SRAmetadb.sqlite"; it is best to leave the name unchanged unless there is a pressing reason to change it. Note: the above downloading and uncompressing steps could take quite a fews moments due to file size, depdending on your network bandwidth. If interested, it can be timed using the following commands:

```
> timeStart <- proc.time()
> sqlfile <- getSRAdbFile()
> proc.time() - timeStart
```

Since this SQLite file is of key importance in SRAdb, it is perhaps of some interest to know some details about the file itself.

Then, create a connection for later queries. The standard DBI functionality as implemented in RSQLite function dbConnect makes the connection to the database. The dbDisconnect function disconnects the connection.

```
> sra_con <- dbConnect(SQLite(),sqlfile)
For further details, at this time see help('SRAdb-package').</pre>
```

3 Using the SRAdb package

3.1 Interacting with the database

The functionality covered in this section is covered in much more detail in the DBI and RSQLite package documentation. We cover enough here only to be useful. The dbListTables function lists all the tables in the SQLite database handled by the connection object sra_con created in the previous section. A simplified illustration of the relationship between the SRA main data types is shown in the Figure 1.

There is also the dbListFields function that can list database fields associated with a table.

> dbListFields(sra_con, "study")

```
[1] "study_ID"
                             "study_alias"
 [3] "study_accession"
                             "study_title"
 [5] "study_type"
                             "study_abstract"
 [7] "broker_name"
                             "center_name"
 [9] "center_project_name"
                             "study_description"
[11] "related_studies"
                             "primary_study"
[13] "sra_link"
                             "study_url_link"
[15] "xref_link"
                             "study_entrez_link"
                             "ena_link"
[17] "ddbj_link"
                             "submission_accession"
[19] "study_attribute"
[21] "sradb_updated"
```

Sometimes it is useful to get the actual SQL schema associated with a table. Here, we get the table schema for the study table:

> dbGetQuery(sra_con, 'PRAGMA TABLE_INFO(study)')

	cid	name	type	notnull
1	0	study_ID	REAL	0
2	1	study_alias	TEXT	0
3	2	study_accession	TEXT	0
4	3	study_title	TEXT	0
5	4	study_type	TEXT	0
6	5	study_abstract	TEXT	0
7	6	broker_name	TEXT	0
8	7	center_name	TEXT	0
9	8	<pre>center_project_name</pre>	TEXT	0
10	9	study_description	TEXT	0

```
11
    10
             related_studies TEXT
                                             0
12
                                             0
    11
                primary_study TEXT
13
    12
                     sra_link TEXT
                                             0
14
    13
              study_url_link TEXT
                                             0
15
    14
                    xref_link TEXT
                                             0
           study_entrez_link TEXT
16
    15
                                             0
17
    16
                                             0
                    ddbj_link TEXT
18
    17
                     ena_link TEXT
                                             0
19
    18
             study_attribute TEXT
                                             0
20
    19 submission_accession TEXT
                                             0
21
    20
                sradb_updated TEXT
                                             0
   dflt_value pk
1
          <NA>
                 0
2
          <NA>
                 0
3
          <NA>
                 0
4
          <NA>
                 0
          < NA >
                 0
5
6
          <NA>
                 0
7
          <NA>
                 0
8
          <NA>
                 0
9
          <NA>
                 0
10
          <NA>
                 0
11
          <NA>
                 0
12
          <NA>
                 0
13
          <NA>
                 0
14
          <NA>
                 0
15
          <NA>
                 0
16
          <NA>
                 0
17
          <NA>
                 0
18
          <NA>
                 0
19
          <NA>
                 0
                 0
20
          < NA >
21
          <NA>
                 0
```

The table "col_desc" contains information of filed name, type, descritption and default values:

```
4 submission submission_comment
5 submission files
type
1 int
2 varchar
3 varchar
4 text
5 text
```

3.2 Writing SQL queries and getting results

Select 3 records from the *study* table and show the first 5 columns:

```
> rs <- dbGetQuery(sra_con, "select * from study limit 3")
> rs[, 1:3]
  study_ID
                         study_alias
                           DRP00001
         1
1
         2
                           DRP000002
2
         3 DLD1_normoxia_nucleosome
  study_accession
        DRP00001
1
2
        DRP000002
3
        DRP000003
```

Get the SRA study accessions and titles from SRA study that study_type contains "Transcriptome". The "%" sign is used in combination with the "like" operator to do a "wildcard" search for the term "Transcriptome" with any number of characters after it.

Of course, we can combine programming and data access. A simple sapply example shows how to query each of the tables for number of records.

Get some high-level statistics could be to helpful to get overall idea about what data are available in the SRA database. List all study types and number of studies contained for each of the type:

```
> rs <- dbGetQuery(sra_con, paste( "SELECT study_type AS StudyType,
          count( * ) AS Number FROM `study` GROUP BY study_type order
          by Number DESC ", sep=""))
> rs
                 StudyType Number
   Whole Genome Sequencing
                             24014
1
2
                              9797
3
    Transcriptome Analysis
                              5813
4
              Metagenomics
                              3688
5
               Epigenetics
                              1901
6
       Population Genomics
                               640
7
                       <NA>
                               199
8
          Exome Sequencing
                               119
9
           Cancer Genomics
                                64
10 Pooled Clone Sequencing
                                32
11
        Synthetic Genomics
                                 9
12
                                 8
                    RNASeq
```

List all Instrument Models and number of experiments for each of the Instrument Models:

	Instrument Model		
1	Illumina HiSeq 2000		
2	Illumina Genome Analyzer II		
3	454 GS FLX Titanium		
4	Illumina MiSeq		
5	Illumina Genome Analyzer IIx		
6	unspecified		
7	Illumina HiSeq 2500		
8	454 GS FLX		
9	Illumina Genome Analyzer		
10	454 GS Junior		
11	<na></na>		
12	AB SOLiD 4 System		
13	PacBio RS II		
14	Ion Torrent PGM		
15	Complete Genomics		
16	Illumina HiSeq 1000		
17	454 GS FLX+		
18	AB SOLiD System 3.0		
19	PacBio RS		
20	Helicos HeliScope		
21	AB 5500 Genetic Analyzer		
22	AB 5500xl Genetic Analyzer		
23	Illumina HiScanSQ		
24	454 GS 20		
25	Illumina HiSeq 1500		
26	454 GS		
27	AB SOLiD System 2.0		
28	AB SOLiD System		
29	Ion Torrent Proton		
30	AB SOLiD 4hq System		
31	AB SOLiD 3 Plus System		
32	· ·		
33	454 GS FLX		
34	NextSeq 500		
35	MinION		
36	AB 3500xL Genetic Analyzer		
37	AB 3730 Genetic Analyzer		
38	Illumina NextSeq 500		
39	AB 3130xL Genetic Analyzer		
40	AB SOLiD PI System		
	Experiments		

1	505887
2	73168
3	70272
4	64058
5	40107
6	30262
7	26223
8	24459
9	16182
10	9747
11	8493
12	7233
13	5598
14	3969
15	3026
16	2735
17	2541
18	2363
19	2293
20	2089
21	1602
22	1550
23	894
24	873
25	642
26	485
27	441
28	376
29	194
30	158
31	131
32	12
33	10
34	9
35	7
36	6
37	5
38	4
39	3
40	1

List all types of library strategies and number of runs for each of them:

```
> rs <- dbGetQuery(sra_con, paste( "SELECT library_strategy AS
           'Library Strategy', count( * ) AS Runs FROM `experiment`
           GROUP BY library_strategy order by Runs DESC", sep=""))
> rs
         Library Strategy
                              Runs
                       WGS 333250
1
2
                  AMPLICON 154421
3
                       WXS 154255
4
                   RNA-Seq 124480
5
                     OTHER
                            63479
6
                  ChIP-Seq
                            33640
7
                      <NA>
                              8493
8
            Bisulfite-Seq
                              5754
                 POOLCLONE
9
                              4550
10
                       WGA
                              4233
11
                     CLONE
                              3731
12
                 miRNA-Seq
                              3472
                       EST
13
                              3318
14
                VALIDATION
                              3266
15
                   FL-cDNA
                              1276
16 DNase-Hypersensitivity
                              1201
17
                 MeDIP-Seq
                              1134
18
                    Tn-Seq
                              768
19
                 MNase-Seq
                               763
20
                   MBD-Seq
                               605
21
                   RAD-Seq
                               539
22
                   MRE-Seq
                               436
23
                       WCS
                               318
24
                 ncRNA-Seq
                               262
25
                   RIP-Seq
                               240
26
                       CTS
                               104
27
                 FAIRE-seq
                                59
28
                  CLONEEND
                                41
29
                  ChIA-PET
                                10
30
                 FINISHING
                                 6
31
      Synthetic-Long-Read
                                 4
```

3.3 Conversion of SRA entity types

Large-scale consumers of SRA data might want to convert SRA entity type from one to others, e.g. finding all experiment accessions (SRX, ERX or DRX) and run accessions (SRR,

ERR or DRR) associated with "SRP001007" and "SRP000931". Function sraConvert does the conversion with a very fast mapping between entity types.

Covert "SRP001007" and "SRP000931" to other possible types in the SRAmetadb.sqlite:

```
> conversion <- sraConvert( c('SRP001007', 'SRP000931'), sra_con = sra_con ) > conversion[1:3,]
```

```
study submission sample experiment
1 SRP000931 SRA009053 SRS003454 SRX006123
2 SRP000931 SRA009053 SRS003459 SRX006128
3 SRP000931 SRA009053 SRS003463 SRX006134
```

run

- 1 SRR018257
- 2 SRR018262
- 3 SRR018268

Check what SRA types and how many entities for each type:

> apply(conversion, 2, unique)

\$study

[1] "SRP000931" "SRP001007"

\$submission

[1] "SRA009053" "SRA009276"

\$sample

- [1] "SRS003454" "SRS003459" "SRS003463"
- [4] "SRS003455" "SRS003464" "SRS003460"
- [7] "SRS003456" "SRS003453" "SRS003461"
- [10] "SRS003462" "SRS003458" "SRS003457"
- [13] "SRS004650"

\$experiment

- [1] "SRX006123" "SRX006128" "SRX006134"
- [4] "SRX006124" "SRX006135" "SRX006131"
- [7] "SRX006125" "SRX006122" "SRX006130"
- [10] "SRX006132" "SRX006133" "SRX006127"
- [13] "SRX006126" "SRX006129" "SRX007396"

\$run

- [1] "SRR018257" "SRR018262" "SRR018268"
- [4] "SRR018258" "SRR018269" "SRR018265"
- [7] "SRR018259" "SRR018256" "SRR018264"

```
[10] "SRR018266" "SRR018267" "SRR018261" [13] "SRR018260" "SRR018263" "SRR020739" [16] "SRR020740"
```

3.4 Full text search

Searching by regular table and field specific SQL commands can be very powerful and if you are familiar with SQL language and the table structure. If not, SQLite has a very handy module called Full text search (fts3), which allow users to do Google like search with terms and operators. The function getSRA does Full text search against all fields in a fts3 table with terms constructed with the Standard Query Syntax and Enhanced Query Syntax. Please see http://www.sqlite.org/fts3.html for detail.

Find all run and study combined records in which any given fields has "breast" and "cancer" words, including "breast" and "cancer" are not next to each other:

```
> rs <- getSRA( search_terms = "breast cancer",
          out_types = c('run', 'study'), sra_con )
> dim(rs)
[1] 9414
           23
> rs <- getSRA( search_terms = "breast cancer",
          out_types = c("submission", "study", "sample",
          "experiment", "run"), sra_con )
> # get counts for some information interested
> apply( rs[, c('run', 'sample', 'study_type', 'platform',
          'instrument_model')], 2, function(x)
          {length(unique(x))} )
                           sample
             run
                             6580
            9414
                         platform
      study_type
instrument_model
              21
>
```

If you only want SRA records containing exact phrase of "breast cancer", in which "breast" and "cancer" do not have other characters between other than a space:

```
[1] 8226 23
```

```
Find all sample records containing words of either "MCF7" or "MCF-7":
```

```
> rs <- getSRA( search_terms ='MCF7 OR "MCF-7"',
+          out_types = c('sample'), sra_con )
> dim(rs)
```

[1] 1573 10

Find all submissions by GEO:

```
> rs <- getSRA( search_terms ='submission_center: GEO',
+         out_types = c('submission'), sra_con )
> dim(rs)
```

[1] 6622 6

Find study records containing a word beginning with 'Carcino':

```
> rs <- getSRA( search_terms ='Carcino*',
+          out_types = c('study'), sra_con=sra_con )
> dim(rs)
```

[1] 363 12

3.5 Download SRA data files

List ftp addresses of the fastq files associated with "SRX000122":

```
> rs = listSRAfile( c("SRX000122"), sra_con, fileType = 'sra' )
```

The above function does not check file availability, size and date of the sra data files on the server, but the function getSRAinfo does this, which is good to know if you are preparing to download them:

```
> rs = getSRAinfo ( c("SRX000122"), sra_con, sraType = "sra" )
> rs[1:3,]
```

- 1 ftp://ftp-trace.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sra/sra-instant/reads/ByExp/sra/SRX/SRX000/SRX000122/
- 2 ftp://ftp-trace.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sra/sra-instant/reads/ByExp/sra/SRX/SRX000/SRX000122/
- 3 ftp://ftp-trace.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sra/sra-instant/reads/ByExp/sra/SRX/SRX000/SRX000122/experiment study sample run
- 1 SRX000122 SRP000098 SRS000290 SRR000648
- 2 SRX000122 SRP000098 SRS000290 SRR000649

```
3 SRX000122 SRP000098 SRS000290 SRR000650 size(KB) date
1 281 Jan 19 2012
2 130940 Jan 19 2012
3 844 Jan 19 2012
```

Next you might want to download sra data files from the ftp site. The getSRAfile function will download all available sra data files associated with "SRR000648" and "SRR000657" from the NCBI SRA ftp site to the current directory:

```
> getSRAfile( c("SRR000648", "SRR000657"), sra_con, fileType = 'sra' )
                study
                          sample experiment
        run
1 SRR000648 SRP000098 SRS000290
                                  SRX000122
2 SRR000657 SRP000098 SRS000290
                                  SRX000122
1 ftp://ftp-trace.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sra/sra-instant/reads/ByExp/sra/SRX/SRX000/SRX000122/
2 ftp://ftp-trace.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sra/sra-instant/reads/ByExp/sra/SRX/SRX000/SRX000122/
   Then downloaded sra data files can be easily converted into fastq files using fastq-dump
in SRA Toolkit (http://trace.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/Traces/sra/sra.cgi?view=software):
> ## system ("fastq-dump SRR000648.lite.sra")
   Or directly download fastq files from EBI using ftp protocol:
> getFASTQinfo( c("SRR000648","SRR000657"), srcType = 'ftp' )
> getSRAfile( c("SRR000648", "SRR000657"), sra_con, fileType = 'fastq' )
```

3.6 Download SRA data files using fasp protocol

Curretly both NCBI and EBI supports fasp protocol for downloading SRA data files, which has several advantages over ftp protocol, including high-speed transfering large files over long distance. Please check EBI or NCBI web site or Aspera (http://www.asperasoft.com/) for details. SRAdb has indeluded two wraper functions for using ascp command line program (fasp protocol) to download SRA data files frm either the NCBI or EBI, which is included in in Aspera Connect software. But, due to complexity of installation of the software and options within it, the functions developed here ask users to supply main ascp comands.

Download fastq files from EBI ftp siteusing fasp protocol:

```
> ## List fasp addresses for associated fastq files:
> listSRAfile ( c("SRX000122"), sra_con, fileType = 'fastq', srcType='fasp')
> ## get fasp addresses for associated fastq files:
> getFASTQinfo( c("SRX000122"), srcType = 'fasp' )
```

```
> ## download fastq files using fasp protocol:
> # the following ascpCMD needs to be constructed according custom
> # system configuration
> # common ascp installation in a Linux system:
> ascpCMD <- 'ascp -QT -1 300m -i
  /usr/local/aspera/connect/etc/asperaweb_id_dsa.putty'
> ## common ascpCMD for a Mac OS X system:
> # ascpCMD <- "'/Applications/Aspera Connect.app/Contents/
> # Resources/ascp' -QT -1 300m -i '/Applications/
> # Aspera Connect.app/Contents/Resources/asperaweb_id_dsa.putty'"
> getSRAfile( c("SRX000122"), sra_con, fileType = 'fastq',
          srcType = 'fasp', ascpCMD = ascpCMD )
  Download sra files from NCBI using fasp protocol:
> ## List fasp addresses of sra files associated with "SRX000122"
> listSRAfile( c("SRX000122"), sra_con, fileType = 'sra', srcType='fasp')
> ## download sra files using fasp protocol
> getSRAfile( c("SRX000122"), sra_con, fileType = 'sra',
+ srcType = 'fasp', ascpCMD = ascpCMD )
```

The downloading messege will show significant faster downloading speed than the ftp protocol:

'SRR000658.sra 100 Completed: 159492K bytes transferred in 5 seconds (249247K bits/sec), in 1 file. ... '

4 Interactive views of sequence data

Working with sequence data is often best done interactively in a genome browser, a task not easily done from R itself. We have found the Integrative Genomics Viewer (IGV) a high-performance visualization tool for interactive exploration of large, integrated datasets, increasing usefully for visualizing sequence alignments. In SRAdb, functions startIGV, load2IGV and load2newIGV provide convenient functionality for R to interact with IGV. Note that for some OS, these functions might not work or work well.

Launch IGV with 2 GB maximum usable memory support:

```
> startIGV("mm")
```

IGV offers a remort control port that allows R to communicate with IGV. The current command set is fairly limited, but it does allow for some IGV operations to be performed in the R console. To utilize this functionality, be sure that IGV is set to allow communication via the "enable port" option in IGV preferences. To load BAM files to IGV and then manipulate the window:

```
> exampleBams = file.path(system.file('extdata',package='SRAdb'),
+ dir(system.file('extdata',package='SRAdb'),pattern='bam$'))
> sock <- IGVsocket()
> IGVgenome(sock, 'hg18')
> IGVload(sock, exampleBams)
> IGVgoto(sock, 'chr1:1-1000')
> IGVsnapshot(sock)
```

5 Graphic view of SRA entities

Due to the nature of SRA data and its design, sometimes it is hard to get a whole picture of the relationship between a set of SRA entities. Functions of entityGraph and sraGraph in this package generate graphNEL objects with edgemode='directed' from input data.frame or directly from search terms, and then the plot function can easily draw a diagram.

Create a graph NEL object directly from full text search results of terms 'primary thy roid cell line'

Please see the Figure 2 for an example diagram.

It's considered good practise to explicitely disconnect from the database once we are done with it:

```
> dbDisconnect(sra_con)
[1] TRUE
```

6 Example use case

This sesection will use the functionalities in the SRAdb package to explore data from the 1000 genomes project. Mainly,

1. Get some statistics of meta data and data files from the 1000 genomes project using the SRAdb 2. Download data files 3. Load bam files into the IGV from R 4. Create some snapshoots programmtically from R

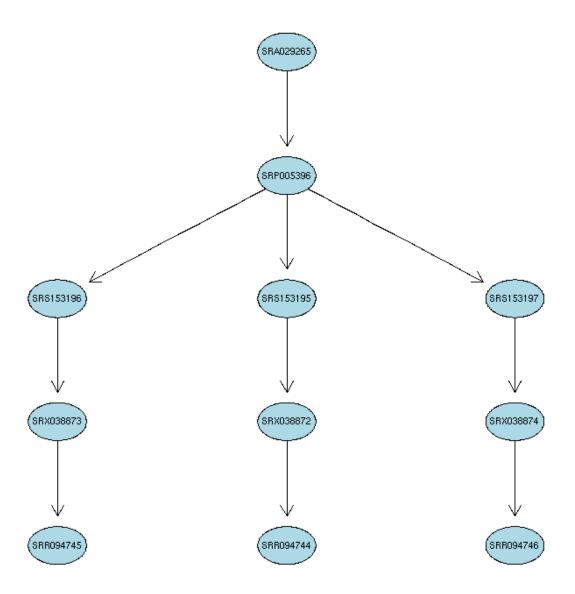


Figure 2: A graphical representation of the relationships between the SRA entities.

```
> setwd('1000g')
> if( ! file.exists('SRAmetadb.sqlite') ) {
          sqlfile <- getSRAdbFile()
+ } else {
          sqlfile <- 'SRAmetadb.sqlite'
+ }
> sra_con <- dbConnect(SQLite(),sqlfile)
> ## get all related accessions
> rs <- getSRA( search_terms = '"1000 Genomes Project"',
          sra_con=sra_con, acc_only=TRUE)
> dim(rs)
> head(rs)
> ## get counts for each data types
> apply( rs, 2, function(x) {length(unique(x))} )
   After you decided what data from the 1000 Genomes, you would like to download data
files from the SRA. But, it might be helpful to know file size before downloading them:
> runs <- tail(rs$run)</pre>
> fs <- getSRAinfo( runs, sra_con, sraType = "sra" )</pre>
   Now you can download the files through ftp protocol:
> getSRAfile( runs, sra_con, fileType = 'sra', srcType = "ftp" )
   Or, you can download them through fasp protocol:
> ascpCMD <- "'/Applications/Aspera Connect.app/Contents/Resources/ascp' -QT -1 300m -
> sra_files = getSRAfile( runs, sra_con, fileType = 'sra', srcType = "fasp", ascpCMD =
   Next you might want to convert the downloaded sra files into fastq files:
> for( fq in basename(sra_files$fasp) ) {
          system ("fastq-dump SRR000648.lite.sra")
+ }
   ... to be compeleted.
```

7 sessionInfo

> library(SRAdb)

- R version 3.1.2 (2014-10-31), x86_64-unknown-linux-gnu
- Locale: LC_CTYPE=en_US.UTF-8, LC_NUMERIC=C, LC_TIME=en_US.UTF-8, LC_COLLATE=C, LC_MONETARY=en_US.UTF-8, LC_MESSAGES=en_US.UTF-8, LC_PAPER=en_US.UTF-8, LC_NAME=C, LC_ADDRESS=C, LC_TELEPHONE=C, LC_MEASUREMENT=en_US.UTF-8, LC_IDENTIFICATION=C

- Base packages: base, datasets, grDevices, graphics, methods, stats, utils
- Other packages: DBI 0.3.1, RCurl 1.95-4.5, RSQLite 1.0.0, SRAdb 1.20.11, bitops 1.0-6, graph 1.44.1
- Loaded via a namespace (and not attached): Biobase 2.26.0, BiocGenerics 0.12.1, GEOquery 2.32.0, XML 3.98-1.1, parallel 3.1.2, stats4 3.1.2, tools 3.1.2