Dr. Sajjad **Asaf**

Research Assistant Professor



Contact

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Languages

Pashto: mother tongue English: fluent

Bioinformatics

Genome and transcriptome assembly, Canu Assembler, reference and ab initio genome annotation with Maker, Augustus and Braker, Python, R software,dnaSP, RAXML,PAUP, PHYML, MrBayes, Perl, tophat, cuffdiff, cufflinks, DESeq2, edgeR

Skills

Plant microbes interaction, qRT-PCR, phytohormonal analysis, Microbial genome and metagenomics analysis, plant metabolomics, Bio-control of plant pathogen, Modern bioinformatic analysis of NGS data.

Statistics

Publications: 89 Citations: 2129 h-index: 29

education

2014–2017 **PhD** Plant Physiology and genomics Kyungpook National University, Daegu, South Korea

Research: Plant microbe's interaction, Plant genomics.

Thesis Title: Physiology and genomics of plant growth promoting bacteria and its

role in environmental stress tolerance.

2010–2012 **M.Phil** Botany Kohat University of Science and Technology, Pakistan

Graduated with High Distinction.

Thesis Title: Effect of Acacia and Cymbopogon smoke solutions on carrot seed ger-

mination and seedling vigour and its comparison with Auxin

2008–2010 **Master of Science** Botany Kohat University of Science and Technology, Pakistan

Graduated with High Distinction (Gold Medal)

employment

2018-Current Assistant Professor University of Nizwa, Oman

Omics and biotechnology lab. Key tasks: Genome sequencing of various medicinally important plant, chloroplast genomes, mitochondrial genomes, sequencing of endophytic microbes by using IonS5 sequencing platform. Genomics and transcriptomics data analysis from different platforms like Illumina and Ion torrents. Taught courses related to genomics, molecular biology and bioinformatics. Guide and supervised un-

dergraduate and master student in various research projects.

2017–2018 **Postdoctoral researcher** Kyungpook National University, South Korea

Plant physiology Lab. Key tasks:Genome sequencing and analysis of various plant growth promoting endophytic bacteria and fungi. Chloroplast and mitochondrial genome sequencing. Supervised underrate students during their research projects.

Taught courses related to plant physiology and plant microbe interaction.

2013–2014 **Research Associate** Kohat University of Science and Technology Kohat, Pakistan

Plant Biotechnology Lab. Key tasks:Lab management. Taught courses related to allelopathy and introductory genetic at bachelor level.

publications

Khan, A. L., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Numan, M., AbdulKareem, N. M., Imran, M., Riethoven, J.-J., Kim, H.-Y., Al-Harrasi, A., Schachtman, D. P., Al-Rawahi, A., "Transcriptomics of tapping and healing process in frankincense tree during resin production" Genomics (2021). Elsevier

Jan, R., Khan, M. A., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Lubna, Lee, I.-J., Kim, K.-M., "Over-Expression of Chorismate Mutase Enhances the Accumulation of Salicylic Acid, Lignin, and Antioxidants in Response to the White-Backed Planthopper in Rice Plants" Antioxidants 10.11 (2021)

Asaf, Sajjad, Khan, A. L., Al-Harrasi, A., Al-Rawahi, A., "Comparative Analysis of Date Palm (Phoenix dactylifera L.) Mitochondrial Genomics" (2021) pp. 211–222. Springer

Asaf, Sajjad, Khan, A. L., Jan, R., Khan, A., Khan, A., Kim, K.-M., Lee, I.-J., "The dynamic history of gymnosperm plastomes: Insights from structural characterization, comparative analysis, phylogenomics, and time divergence" The plant genome () e20130

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- Khan, M. A., Hamayun, M., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, M., Yun, B.-W., Kang, S.-M., Lee, I.-J., "Rhizospheric Bacillus spp. Rescues Plant Growth Under Salinity Stress via Regulating Gene Expression, Endogenous Hormones, and Antioxidant System of Oryza sativa L" Frontiers in Plant Science 12 (2021) p. 1145. Frontiers
- Jan, R., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Numan, M., Lubna, Kim, K.-M., "Plant Secondary Metabolite Biosynthesis and Transcriptional Regulation in Response to Biotic and Abiotic Stress Conditions" Agronomy 11.5 (2021)
- Khan, A. L., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Al-Rawahi, A., Al-Harrasi, A., "Decoding first complete chloroplast genome of toothbrush tree (Salvadora persica L.): insight into genome evolution, sequence divergence and phylogenetic relationship within Brassicales" BMC genomics 22.1 (2021) pp. 1–16. BioMed Central
- Khan, M. A., Sahile, A. A., Jan, R., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Hamayun, M., Imran, M., Adhikari, A., Kang, S.-M., Kim, K.-M., Lee, I.-J., "Halotolerant bacteria mitigate the effects of salinity stress on soybean growth by regulating secondary metabolites and molecular responses" BMC plant biology 21.1 (2021) pp. 1–15. BioMed Central
- Numan, M., Khan, A. L., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Salehin, M., Beyene, G., Tadele, Z., Ligaba-Osena, A., "From Traditional Breeding to Genome Editing for Boosting Productivity of the Ancient Grain Tef [Eragrostis tef (Zucc.) Trotter]" Plants 10.4 (2021)
- **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Numan, M., Al-Harrasi, A., "Mangrove tree (Avicennia marina): insight into chloroplast genome evolutionary divergence and its comparison with related species from family Acanthaceae" Scientific reports 11.1 (2021) pp. 1–15. Nature Publishing Group
- Al-Mahruqi, S., Al-Wahaibi, A., Khan, A. L., Al-Jardani, A., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Alkindi, H., Al-Kharusi, S., Al-Rawahi, A. N., Al-Rawahi, A., Al-Salmani, M., Al-Shukri, I., Al-Busaidi, A., Al-Abri, S. S., Al-Harrasi, A., "Molecular epidemiology of COVID-19 in Oman: A molecular and surveillance study for the early transmission of COVID-19 in the country" International Journal of Infectious Diseases 104 (2021) pp. 139–149
- Jan, R., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Paudel, S., Lee, S., Kim, K.-M., "Discovery and Validation of a Novel Step Catalyzed by OsF3H in the Flavonoid Biosynthesis Pathway" Biology 10.1 (2021) p. 32. Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute
- Jan, R., Khan, M. A., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Lee, I.-J., Bae, J.-S., Kim, K.-M., "Overexpression of OsCM alleviates BLB stress via phytohormonal accumulation and transcriptional modulation of defense-related genes in Oryza sativa" Scientific reports 10.1 (2020) pp. 1–15. Nature Publishing Group
- Jan, R., Khan, M. A., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Lee, I.-J., Kim, K.-M., "Modulation of sugar and nitrogen in callus induction media alter PAL pathway, SA and biomass accumulation in rice callus" Plant Cell, Tissue and Organ Culture (PCTOC) (2020) pp. 1–14. Springer Netherlands
- Jan, R., Khan, M. A., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Lee, I.-J., Kim, K.-M., "Overexpression of OsF 3 H modulates WBPH stress by alteration of phenylpropanoid pathway at a transcriptomic and metabolomic level in Oryza sativa" Scientific Reports 10.1 (2020) pp. 1–16. Nature Publishing Group
- Lubna, **Asaf, Sajjad**, Jan, R., Khan, A. L., Lee, I.-J., "Complete Chloroplast Genome Characterization of Oxalis Corniculata and Its Comparison with Related Species from Family Oxalidaceae" Plants 9.8 (2020) p. 928. Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute
- Khan, A. L., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A., Khan, A., Imran, M., Al-Harrasi, A., Lee, I.-J., Al-Rawahi, A., "transcriptomic analysis of Dubas bug (Ommatissus lybicus Bergevin) infestation to Date palm" Scientific reports 10.1 (2020) pp. 1–15. Nature Publishing Group
- Khan, M. A., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Jan, R., Kang, S.-M., Kim, K.-M., Lee, I.-J., "Thermotolerance effect of plant growth-promoting Bacillus cereus SA1 on soybean during heat stress" BMC microbiology

- **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Khan, A., Al-Harrasi, A., "Unraveling the Chloroplast Genomes of Two Prosopis Species to Identify Its Genomic Information, Comparative Analyses and Phylogenetic Relationship" International Journal of Molecular Sciences 21.9 (2020)
- Khan, A., Khan, A. L., Imran, M., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Kim, Y.-H., Bilal, S., Numan, M., Al-Harrasi, A., Al-Rawahi, A., Lee, I.-J., "Silicon-induced thermotolerance in Solanum lycopersicum L. via activation of antioxidant system, heat shock proteins, and endogenous phytohormones" BMC Plant Biology 20.1 (2020) pp. 1–18. BioMed Central
- Khan, M. A., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Jan, R., Kang, S.-M., Kim, K.-M., Lee, I.-J., "Extending thermotolerance to tomato seedlings by inoculation with SA1 isolate of Bacillus cereus and comparison with exogenous humic acid application" PloS one 15.4 (2020) e0232228. Public Library of Science San Francisco, CA USA
- Khan, M. A., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Adhikari, A., Jan, R., Ali, S., Imran, M., Kim, K.-M., Lee, I.-J., "Plant growth-promoting endophytic bacteria augment growth and salinity tolerance in rice plants" Plant Biology (2020)
- Khan, A., Numan, M., Khan, A. L., Lee, I.-J., Imran, M., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Al-Harrasi, A., "Melatonin: Awakening the Defense Mechanisms during Plant Oxidative Stress" Plants 9.4 (2020) p. 407. Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute
- Kang, S.-M., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Khan, A., Mun, B.-G., Khan, M. A., Gul, H., Lee, I.-J., "Complete Genome Sequence of Pseudomonas psychrotolerans CS51, a Plant Growth-Promoting Bacterium, Under Heavy Metal Stress Conditions" Microorganisms 8.3 (2020) p. 382. Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute
- **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Khan, A., Khan, G., Lee, I.-J., Al-Harrasi, A., "Expanded inverted repeat region with large scale inversion in the first complete plastid genome sequence of Plantago ovata" Scientific reports 10.1 (2020) pp. 1–16. Nature Publishing Group
- Khan, A., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Shehzad, T., Al-Rawahi, A., Al-Harrasi, A., "Comparative chloroplast genomics of endangered Euphorbia species: Insights into hotspot divergence, repetitive sequence variation, and phylogeny" Plants 9.2 (2020) p. 199. Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute
- Khan, A. L., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Abed, R. M., Ning Chai, Y., Al-Rawahi, A. N., Mohanta, T. K., Al-Rawahi, A., Schachtman, D. P., Al-Harrasi, A., "Rhizosphere Microbiome of Arid Land Medicinal Plants and Extra Cellular Enzymes Contribute to Their Abundance" Microorganisms 8.2 (2020) p. 213. Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute
- **Asaf, Sajjad**, Numan, M., Khan, A. L., Al-Harrasi, A., "Sphingomonas: from diversity and genomics to functional role in environmental remediation and plant growth" Critical Reviews in Biotechnology (2020) pp. 1–15. Taylor & Francis
- **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A., Khan, A. L., Al-Harrasi, A., Al-Rawahi, A., "Complete Chloroplast Genomes of Vachellia nilotica and Senegalia senegal: Comparative Genomics and Phylogenomic Placement in a New Generic System" PloS one 14.11 (2019). Public Library of Science
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- growth of Oryza Sativa, via regulating its antioxidant machinery and endogenous hormones" Plants 8.10 (2019) p. 363. Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute
- Khan, M. A., Khan, A. L., Imran, Q. M., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Lee, S.-U., Yun, B.-W., Hamayun, M., Kim, T.-H., Lee, I.-J., "Exogenous application of nitric oxide donors regulates short-term flooding stress in soybean" PeerJ 7 (2019) e7741. PeerJ Inc.
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- Kang, S.-M., Khan, A. L., Waqas, M., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Lee, K.-E., Park, Y.-G., Kim, A.-Y., Khan, M. A., You, Y.-H., Lee, I.-J., "Integrated phytohormone production by the plant growth-promoting rhizobacterium Bacillus tequilensis SSB07 induced thermotolerance in soybean" Journal of Plant Interactions 14.1 (2019) pp. 416–423. Taylor & Francis
- Khan, M. A., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Jan, R., Kang, S.-M., Kim, K.-M., Lee, I.-J., "Rhizobacteria AK1 remediates the toxic effects of salinity stress via regulation of endogenous phytohormones and gene expression in soybean" Biochemical Journal 476.16 (2019) pp. 2393–2409. Portland Press Ltd.
- Khan, A., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Khan, A., Al-Harrasi, A., Al-Sudairy, O., AbdulKareem, N. M., Al-Saady, N., Al-Rawahi, A., "Complete chloroplast genomes of medicinally important Teucrium species and comparative analyses with related species from Lamiaceae" PeerJ 7 (2019) e7260. PeerJ Inc.
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- Khan, M. A., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Ullah, I., Ali, S., Kang, S.-M., Lee, I.-J., "Alleviation of salt stress response in soybean plants with the endophytic bacterial isolate Curtobacterium sp. SAK1" Annals of Microbiology 69.8 (2019) pp. 797–808. Springer International Publishing
- Lubna, L., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Waqas, M., Kang, S.-M., Hamayun, M., Lee, I.-J., Hussain, A., "Growth-promoting bioactivities of Bipolaris sp. CSL-1 isolated from Cannabis sativa suggest a distinctive role in modifying host plant phenotypic plasticity and functions" Acta Physiologiae Plantarum 41.5 (2019) p. 65. Springer Berlin Heidelberg
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- Arif, K., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Al-Harrasi, A., Al-Sudairy, O., AbdulKareem, N. M., Khan, A., Shehzad, T., Alsaady, N., Al-Lawati, A., Al-Rawahi, A., "First complete chloroplast genomics and comparative phylogenetic analysis of Commiphora gileadensis and C. foliacea: Myrrh producing trees" PloS one 14.1 (2019). Public Library of Science
- Khan, A. L., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Lee, I.-J., Al-Harrasi, A., Al-Rawahi, A., "First reported chloroplast genome sequence of Punica granatum (cultivar Helow) from Jabal Al-Akhdar, Oman: phylogenetic comparative assortment with Lagerstroemia" Genetica 146.6 (2018) pp. 461–474. Springer International Publishing
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- "Endophytic fungus Paecilomyces formosus LHL10 produces sester-terpenoid YW3548 and cyclic peptide that inhibit urease and α -glucosidase enzyme activities" Archives of microbiology 200.10 (2018) pp. 1493–1502. Springer Berlin Heidelberg
- **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Khan, M. A., Al-Harrasi, A., Lee, I.-J., "Complete genome sequencing and analysis of endophytic Sphingomonas sp. LK11 and its potential in plant growth" 3 Biotech 8.9 (2018) p. 389. Springer International Publishing
- Khan, M. A., Hamayun, M., Iqbal, A., Khan, S. A., Hussain, A., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Yun, B.-W., Lee, I.-J., "Gibberellin application ameliorates the adverse impact of short-term flooding on Glycine max L." Biochemical Journal 475.18 (2018) pp. 2893–2905. Portland Press Ltd.
- Khan, A. L., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Lee, I.-J., Al-Harrasi, A., Al-Rawahi, A., "First chloroplast genomics study of Phoenix dactylifera (var. Naghal and Khanezi): A comparative analysis" PloS one 13.7 (2018). Public Library of Science
- **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Al-Harrasi, A., Kim, T. H., Lee, I.-J., "The first complete mitochondrial genome of wild soybean (Glycine soja)" Mitochondrial DNA Part B 3.2 (2018) pp. 527–528. Taylor & Francis
- Shahzad, R., Khan, A. L., Bilal, S., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Lee, I.-J., "What is there in seeds? Vertically transmitted endophytic resources for sustainable improvement in plant growth" Frontiers in plant science 9 (2018) p. 24. Frontiers
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- **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Al-Harrasi, A., Al-Rawahi, A., "First complete mitochondrial genome of Phoenix dact ylifera var. Khanezi" Mitochondrial DNA Part B 3.2 (2018) pp. 778–779. Taylor & Francis
- Lubna, L., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Hamayun, M., Khan, A. L., Waqas, M., Khan, M. A., Jan, R., Lee, I.-J., Hussain, A., "Salt tolerance of Glycine max. L induced by endophytic fungus Aspergillus flavus CSH1, via regulating its endogenous hormones and antioxidative system" Plant Physiology and Biochemistry 128 (2018) pp. 13–23. Elsevier Masson
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- Bilal, L., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Hamayun, M., Gul, H., Iqbal, A., Ullah, I., Lee, I.-J., Hussain, A., "Plant growth promoting endophytic fungi Asprgillus fumigatus TS1 and Fusarium proliferatum BRL1 produce gibberellins and regulates plant endogenous hormones" Symbiosis 76.2 (2018) pp. 117–127. Springer Netherlands
- Lubna, **Asaf, Sajjad**, Hamayun, M., Gul, H., Lee, I.-J., Hussain, A., "Aspergillus niger CSR3 regulates plant endogenous hormones and secondary metabolites by producing gibberellins and indoleacetic acid" Journal of plant interactions 13.1 (2018) pp. 100–111. Taylor & Francis
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- Waqas, M., Shahzad, R., Hamayun, M., **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Kang, S.-M., Yun, S., Kim, K.-M., Lee, I.-J., "Biochar amendment changes jasmonic acid levels in two rice varieties and alters their re-

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- **Asaf, Sajjad**, Khan, A. L., Khan, A. R., Waqas, M., Kang, S.-M., Khan, M. A., Shahzad, R., Seo, C.-W., Shin, J.-H., Lee, I.-J., "Mitochondrial genome analysis of wild rice (Oryza minuta) and its comparison with other related species" PloS one 11.4 (2016). Public Library of Science

Current projects

- Genome sequencing and analysis of different plants, bacteria and fungi.
- Mitochondrial genome sequencing of important plants, fungi and their comparative analysis with related species.
- Chloroplast genome sequencing and comparative analysis of gymnosperms. Infer phylogenetic position of gymnosperms on the basis of complete chloroplast genomes.
- Metagenomic analysis of rhizospheric bacteria associated with medicinally important plants growing in harsh conditions.
- Role of plant growth promoting bacteria during abiotic stresses (salinity/drought/flood/heavy metal).
- Whole plant genome sequencing and transcriptomics analysis of date palm (Phoenix dactylifera) and pomegranate (Punica granatum) plants.
- · The first draft genome and evolutionary history of frankincense producing Boswellia sacra

plant.

- Transcriptomic analysis of Date palm during Dubas bug (Ommatissus lybicus Bergevin) infection.
- Molecular responses involved in wound-induced tapping of Boswellia sacra tree for Frankincense.
- Sugar synthesis related genes expression pattern during fruit developmental stages of various Phoenix dactylifera L. cultivars.
- Metabolomic and genetic diversity in frankincense tree populations.

awards & funding

University of	Faculty Mentored Undergraduate Research Award Program Nizwa,Oman	2019
commiphora foli-	Grant to cover the First Chloroplast genomics and barcoding of cacea and commophora gileadensis form Dhofar region	
University of Nizwa,	Faculty Mentored Undergraduate Research Award Program Oman	2018
important Omani	Grant to cover the chloroplast DNA extraction and sequencing of date palm varieties	
ional University, South	Korea	2017
iversity	Two year fellowship to pursue research at Kyungpook National Uni	
ok National University,	Awarded KNU Honour Scholarship for PhD studies South Korea Three years scholarship for PhD studies	2014
nat University, Pakistan	Awarded Gold Medal Awarded a Gold medal and graduated with distinction	2012

teaching

2020-current	University teaching Supervise and co-supervise undergraduate students, computational analysis for biology students and various current projects	
2019	Introduction to genomics and molecular biology Introduction to microbial genomics and basic analysis University of Nizwa	
2019	Introduction to bioinformatics University of Nizwa Introduction to bioinformatic, NCBI Blast, download fasta files and sequence alignment.	
2018	Plant microber interaction Introduction to plant microbe interaction and use of plant growth promoting bacteria to alleviate salinity stress.	
2018	Plant physiology and genome Introduction to phytohormones and secondary metabolites. University of Nizwa	
2017	Genome sequencing and analysis of endophytic bacteria University Genome sequencing and analysis of various plant growth promoting endophytic bacteria.	

presentations

2018	Chloroplast and mitochondrial genome sequencing of Boswellia sacra and its comparative analysis Oman Sultan Qaboos Univesity, Oman
2017	Plant growth promoting rhizospheric bacteria isolated from sand dunes of Pohang coastal area South Korea Youth Development Programme for Revolutionary 4-H Agricultural Bio-indutry Scholarship Symposium.
2015	Specific PCR-based assay for detection of three Xanthomonas species infecting bulbs and flowers. japan 100th Anniversary Meeting of The Phytopathological Society of Japan
2016	The complete genome sequence of the plant growth promoting bacterium Sphingomonas taxi LK11 South Korea International symposium and annual meeting of the KSABC
2014	Development and application of rapid and sensitive detection of Marssonina ko coronaria causing apple blotch disease by using loop-mediated isothermal amplification assay South Korea The Korean society of Plant Pathology

editorial responsibilities

2019	
	Review editor in Scientific reports
2018	
	Review editor in Frontier in Plant Sciences
2017	
0017	Review editor in PLOSone
2017	Review editor in Journal of Crop Science and Biotechnology