

Microbial Association with Light Emission; Emitting Microbes

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Abstract: Mechanism of luminescence is a chemical reaction that produces brightness in firefly. Living organisms including certain bacteria are capable of luminescence. Bacteria are the most abundant luminescent organisms in nature. Bacterial luminescence is due to the action of the enzyme called luciferase. Other interesting features of marine microorganisms are having their ability to survive at low temperatures and high salinity. The emission of light is a result of the enzymatic activity and biochemical of the living organism (Malave & Orengo et al.,2010). While the luminescence (lux) genes of symbiotic *V. fischeri* have been shown to be highly induced within the crypts, the role of these genes in the initiation and persistence of the symbiosis. We including genetic elements that allow recombination with the host, the lux DNA can also be integrated into the bacterial genome. Interaction of the two fusion proteins results in energy transfer from the bioluminescent molecule to the fluorescent molecule, with a concomitant change from blue light to green light (Angers et al. 2000). In this review we had discussed Bioluminescence emission of different patterns as flashes (Fireflies, Squids), continuous glow (Bacteria, fungi), blinking (Bacteria), wavy (sea pansy, *Renilla*), and switched on and off the system (Angler fishes). Although bacterial luciferases, particularly from *V. harveyi* and *X. luminescens*, are quite stable the fused luciferase cannot fold efficiently at 37°C (Ulitzurs, & Kuhnj, 2006). Bioluminescence property of these different microbes may also be used in different fields also.

Keywords: Crypts, Luminescence, Wavy, Concomitant, Emission. **Key words:** Crypts, Luminescence, Wavy, Concomitant, Emission.

I. INTRODUCTION

Bioluminescent organisms with their attractive beauty and ease of detection have drawn interest among scientists to study about them. It is the ability of organisms to release visible light by using natural chemical reaction. The emission of light is a result of the enzymatic activity and biochemical of the living organism (Malave & Orengo et al.,2010). Bioluminescence has been established in the diverse group of organisms ranging from microorganisms like bacteria and protists to the macro-organism such as fish and squid. Meighen et al.,1988, had studied that the light producing organisms can be found in terrestrial, lake and oceanic classes (Danyluk et al.,2007). The most abundant and widely distributed light emitting organism is luminous bacteria, and this will be found as free-living in the ocean, as gut symbionts in the digestive tracts of marine fish, as parasites in crustacean and insects, as light organ symbionts in teleost fish and also as saprophytes growing on dead fish or meat (Danyluk et al., 2007; A. Nawaz et al., 2011). These sets of species are diversely spread in terrestrial environment, freshwater and also in a marine ecosystem. These bioluminescent bacteria reported belonging to the class Gamma proteobacteria. Among the bioluminescent bacteria reported, 17 bioluminescent species were currently known (Kita-Tsukamoto et al., 2006). The luminous bacteria were also classified into three genera which are *Vibrio*,

Photobacterium and *Xenorhabdus* (*Photorhabdus*) and the species within the genus *Vibrio* and *Photobacterium* usually exist in the marine environment and *Xenorhabdus* belong to the terrestrial environment. Bioluminescence is the phenomenon that consists of light emission from the results of biochemical and enzymatic activity of the living organism (Danyluk et al.,2007). It is a group of genes that are

responsible for this known as the lux operon found in the luciferase enzymes (Bluth et al.,2013). The reaction of bioluminescence involves the oxidation of a long-chain aliphatic aldehyde and reduced flavin mononucleotide (FMNH₂). This mechanism needs oxygen and is catalyzed by enzyme luciferase. In this process, the excess energy is liberated and emitted as a luminescent blue-green light at 490nm (Kumar,2010; Malave-Orengo et al.,2010). The lux operon basically contains the genes lux ICDABEG. Lux A gene and LuxB gene are the luciferase gene which codes for α and β subunits respectively. On the other hands, lux CDE genes are fatty acid reductase genes that codes for polypeptides. It is important and necessary for the conversion of fatty acids into the long chain aldehyde (fatty acid pathway) (Malave-Orengo et al.,2010; E.A. Meighen.,1991). Bacterial luciferase is also the target gene in a mutagenicity assay and has been used to quantitate long-chain aldehydes protease activity and intracellular concentrations of NADH,

NADPH, and flavin mononucleotide (FMN) (Baldwin TO. et. al.,1983). Therefore, the reaction of bioluminescence emission of light can be written as follows:



2. MECHANISM OF BIOLUMINESCENCE IN DIFFERENT SPECIES:

Bioluminescence emission may be in different patterns as flashes (Fireflies, Squids), continuous glow (Bacteria, fungi), blinking (Bacteria), wavy (sea pansy, Renilla), and switched on and off the system (Anglerfishes).

2.1. Firefly: Bioluminescence is an enchanting process in which living organisms convert chemical energy into light. The light results from the oxidation of an organic substrate, a luciferin, catalyzed by an enzyme called a luciferase. In nature, there is an amazing diversity of organisms that emit light including bacteria, fungi, crustaceans, mollusks, fishes and insects (Hastings, 1995). While the specific biochemistries of bioluminescence are diverse, all include an enzyme-mediated reaction between molecular oxygen and an organic substrate. It is likely to that all bioluminescence processes involve the formation and breakdown of four-member ring peroxide or a linear hydroperoxide (Wilson, 1995; Wood, 1995). An overview of the chemical and mechanistic aspects of a major bioluminescence process that of the bioluminescent beetles will be presented here. The reader is also directed to another review of firefly luciferase (Inouye, 2010). Representing an estimated 2,000 species of luminous beetles (Coleoptera), are three families: Lampyridae (the true fireflies), Phengodidae (click beetles), and Elateridae (glow-worms). Kang et al., 2006; Naylor,1999; Gelmini et al., 2000; Kalra et al., 2011; Dragulescu-Andrasi et al.,2011; Branchini et al., 2010; Kato et al., 1997)

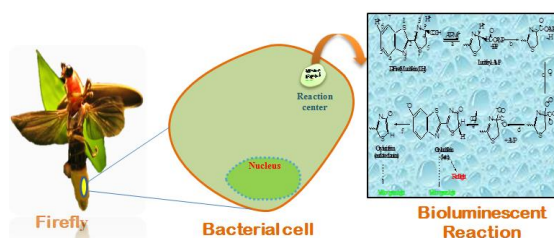


Figure.No.1. Showing mechanism of Bioluminescence in firefly.

Following the formation of the enzyme-bound luciferyl adenylate (step a), a proton is abstracted from the C-4 carbon of the adenylate by a basic side chain amino acid residue of luciferase (step b). Next, molecular oxygen adds to the newly formed anion (step c); and an electronically excited state oxyluciferin molecule and carbon dioxide are produced (step e) from a highly reactive dioxetanone intermediate (step d). According to the original mechanism based predominantly on chemo-luminescence model studies, red light emission (λ_{max} 615 nm), which is observed at pH 6.0, results from the keto form of the emitter. At pH 8, the familiar yellow-green light emission (λ_{max} 560 nm) is produced from the enolate dianion form of the excited state oxy-luciferin by a presumed enzymatic assisted tautomerization (step f). However, more recent experimental evidence with a firefly luciferin analog is consistent with the keto form of oxyluciferin alone being capable of producing all of the colors of firefly bioluminescence (Branchini et al., 2002). In nature, beetle luciferases display various colors of light from green (λ_{max} ~535 nm) to red (λ_{max} ~630 nm). Probably, luciferase modulates emission color by altering the resonance-based charge delocalization of the excited state, shown below in figure No.3 (Branchini et al., 2004; Viviani, 2002; Liu et al., 2008; Hirano et al., 2009; Navizet et al., 2010).

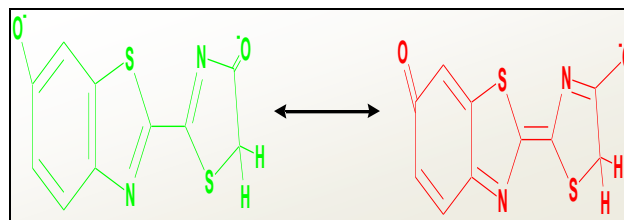


Figure no. 3. Showing the color change in compounds

2.2. Luminous Bacteria:

Those species that are involved into the light-emitting reaction are having an intracellular luciferase-catalyzed, oxidation reaction of reduced Flavin mononucleotide

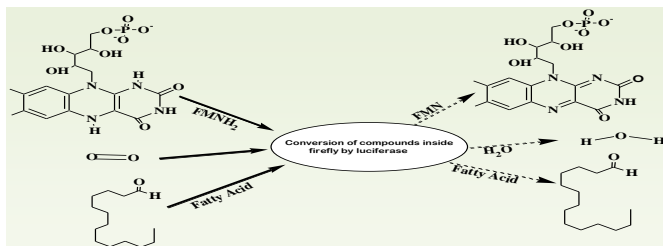


Figure no.2. Showing the reaction of bioluminescence in bacterial species

The Luminescent nature of bacterial species requires oxygen, a source of energy, a luciferase enzyme and a long-chain fatty aldehyde. Bacterial luciferase reduced-FMN: oxygen oxidoreductase, 1-hydroxylating luminescent is a heterodimeric enzyme for which the subunits cc (~ 40 kDa) and p (x 37 kDa) is coded by the luxA and luxB genes respectively.

According to the observations finding by Foran & Brown (1988) that in both species of *V. harveyi* and *V. fischeri*, first four amino acid residues of the α and β subunits are identical. It has been suggested that luxA and luxB shows tandem duplication transferred from ancestors. The reactive conformation of luciferase is a $\alpha\beta$ dimer but the active site is confined primarily to the α subunit (Cohn et al., 1985). Recently, LuxAB fusion proteins have been produced certain biological functions (Boylan et al., 1989; Escher et al., 1989; Kirchner et al., 1989). These fusion proteins have specific importance in improving expression in recombinant bacterial systems (Engebrech et al., 1983; Musa et al., 2008; Orengo et al., 2010; Kumar, 2010, Ransanga et al., 2012; Kannahi) Maximum investigations of bioluminescent bacterial systems have been based upon two genera, *Photobacterium* and *Vibrio*. Enzymatic and regulatory functions required for expression of bioluminescent properties were firstly investigated (Engebrecht & Silverman, 1984). In addition to luxA and luxB, the lux operon characteristically contains three additional structural genes luxC, luxD and luxE that encode the subunits of a fatty acid reductase. The remaining lux genes, luxR and luxI, are involved in the regulation of lux expression (Meighen, 1988, 1991; Silverman et al., 1989). Maximum micro-organisms shows deficiency of genetic blueprint for luciferase and fatty acid reductase but they can supply FMNH₂, so for a dark bacterium such as *Escherichia coli* had the properties of bioluminescent, it only had the requirement of genetic transfer of luciferase genes and fatty acid reductase. With this addition, the genetic components necessary for bioluminescence are reduced to only 2 kb of DNA, comprising the luxA and luxB genes. Providing that these genes are expressed and that the luciferase is

sufficiently stable, the potential exists to confer a bioluminescent phenotype on any prokaryotic organism. For eukaryotic micro-organisms the firefly luciferase (lux) (Tatsumi et al., 1988; Gould & Subramani, 1988; Alam & Cook, 1990) and other eukaryotic luciferases (Wood et al., 1989) are required.

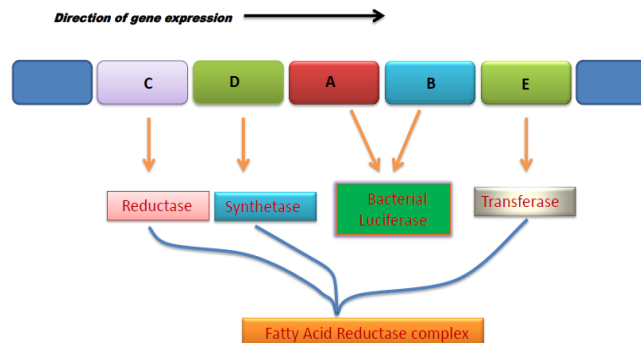


Figure no. 3. Showing the direction of gene expression

3. visualization of illumination:

The application of lux genes in any field of science requires the accessibility of instrumentation aimed for the visualization and quantification of photon emission. A scientific objective with appropriate instrumentation has possibly restricted the uptake of lux gene as a molecular biology tool. The most sensitive detector of photon emission which is available in most laboratories is the Scintillation Counter. A relatively unsophisticated instrument, without sample cooling, can be configured of less than 10 bioluminescent bacteria per ml of sample. To achieve this coincidence counting, a standard feature of scintillation counting must be disengaged, thus enabling the photon detectors to register every photon, not just those that arrive at the detectors with coincidence has been undertaken by Jago et al.1989; Engebrech et al., 1983; Musa et al., 2008; Orengo et al., 2010; Ransanga et al., 2012; Kannahi and Shivshankari, 2014).

4. Gene transfer in species: The lux gene may be transferred to another species by the method of transformation by using different varieties of plasmids. The high expression of lux gene which requires a promoter on the plasmid. After the successful transformation, RNA polymerase RNA polymerase to recognize the transcription initiation sites in the lux DNA from other luminescent bacteria as a result of the absence of the appropriate regulatory lux genes and lux DNA has been transferred into a multitude of different prokaryotic species including many plant and mammalian pathogens. Transfer of DNA into the enteric bacteria, including *E. coli*, as well as into the gram-positive bacteria,

has been accomplished directly by transformation method. Transduction of lux DNA by means of bacteriophages. By including genetic elements that allow recombination with the host, the lux DNA can also be integrated into the bacterial genome. Interaction of the two fusion proteins results in energy transfer from the bioluminescent molecule to the fluorescent molecule, with a concomitant change from blue light to green light (Angers et al. 2000). A major limitation of many of these systems is the relatively long half-life of the reporter protein(s), which prevents monitoring both the initiation and the termination of transcription in real-time (Allen. et al., 2007)

| Species | Method of Gene Transfer | Host Integration | Gene transferred |
|--------------------------------|---|------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Citrobacter koseri</i> | Transformation | - | Vf luxAB |
| <i>Escherichia coli</i> | Conjugation, transformation, transduction | ± | Vf, Vh, Pp, P1, XI, lux |
| <i>Klebsiella aerogenes</i> | transformation | - | Vf luxAB |
| <i>Pseudomonas fluorescens</i> | Conjugation | - | Vf luxABCDE |
| <i>Salmonella typhimurium</i> | Transformation, transduction | - | Vf luxAB |
| <i>Shigella flexneri</i> | transformation | - | Vf luxAB |
| <i>Vibrio parahaemolyticus</i> | Transduction | + | Vf luxABCDE |
| <i>Xenorhabdus luminescens</i> | Conjugation | - | Vf luxABCDE Vh luxABCD |
| Plant Pathogens | | | |

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| <i>grobacterium radiobacter</i> | Conjugation | + | Vh luxAB |
| <i>Agrobacterium tumefaciens</i> | Conjugation | ± | Vh luxAB, Vf luxABCDE |
| <i>Bradyrhizobium japonicum</i> | Conjugation | ± | Vh luxAB, Vf luxABCDE |
| <i>Erwinia amylovora</i> | Conjugation | + | Vh luxAB |
| <i>Erwinia caratovora</i> | Conjugation | - | Vf luxABCDE |
| <i>Pseudomonas glumae</i> | Conjugation | - | Vf luxABCDE |
| <i>Pseudomonas putida</i> | Conjugation | - | Vf luxABCDE |
| <i>Pseudomonas syringae</i> | Conjugation | + | Vh luxAB |
| <i>Rhizobium meliloti</i> | Conjugation | - | Vf luxABCDE |
| <i>Rhizobium leguminosarum</i> | Conjugation | ± | Vh luxAB, Vf luxABCDE |
| <i>Xanthomonas campestris</i> | Conjugation | ± | Vh luxAB |
| Marine bacteria | | | |
| <i>Vibrio harveyi</i> | Conjugation | - | Vh.luxABC DEFGH, Pp luxABCDE |
| <i>Vibrio fischeri</i> | Conjugation | - | - Vh luxABCD |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|---|--------------------|
| <i>Photobacterium phosphoreum</i> | Conjugation | - | - Vh luxABCD |
| Cyanobacteria | | | |
| <i>Anabaena spp.</i> | Conjugation | - | Vf luxAB, Vh luxAB |
| Gram-positive bacteria | | | |
| <i>Bacillus megaterium</i> | Transformation | - | Vf luxAB |
| <i>Bacillus subtilis</i> | Transformation | - | Vf luxAB, |
| <i>Lactobacillus casei</i> | Transformation | - | Vf luxAB |
| <i>Lactococcus lactis</i> | Transformation | - | Vf luxAB |
| <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> | Transformation | - | Vf luxAB |
| <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> | Transformation | - | Vf luxAB |

Whereas: Vf =V. fischeri; Vh= V. harveyi; Pp= P. phosphoreum, PI= P. leiognathi, XI=X. luminescens

5. Application of Bioluminescence:

•Transformation: The primary function of bacterial luciferase is to catalyze the emission of light; this feature together with generation of the aldehyde substrate by fatty acid reductase can be successfully produced in other bacteria, by the transfer of the luxCDABE genes, which convert non-luminescent bacteria into light emitters.

•Detection: It is also currently being practiced for the development of auto luminescent plants for light production and whole-cell biosensors for detecting various toxicants (Carmi, et al.,2009; Denyers. P et al.,1992 ; D. M. Close et al.,2011). Besides, cloning studies of luciferases of different luminescent organisms and their fluorescent proteins such as the well-known green fluorescent protein (GFP) have got a wide importance in bioluminescent Imaging (BLI) to study the interaction of infectious microorganisms with living cells (E.N. Harvey et al., 1992).

•Screening: The ability to introduce the lux gene into different bacterial species provides a convenient method for rapidly screening for the presence of specific bacteria. Because very low levels of light can be measured, only a short period is required for transcription and translation of the lux genes before there will be sufficient synthesis of luciferase (Stewart, G et al., 1989, Ulitzur & Kuhn, Doyle et al. 2004; Shadel et al., 1990) for detection of light.

•Recombinant preparation: Ulitzur & Kuhn (1987) described the engineering a 9kb DNA segment encoding the entire lux pathway from V. fischeri. Although the detection of specific pathogens such as Salmonella spp., Campylobacter spp. genes requires a committed programme for the genetic engineering of host-specific bacteriophage, this technology offers the potential for rapid, user-friendly microbial testing. A revolution in microbial testing can, however, is perceived with the near on-line detection of indicator micro-organisms (Kodikara et al., 1991). Recombinant lux bacteriophages can detect such indicator bacteria without recovery or enrichment, provided the bacteria are present in a food matrix at levels greater than 10⁵ per gram .Since the assay requires only 30-50 min, this allows the evaluation of indicator strains in less than an hour.

•Markers: The importance of in vivo bioluminescence as a reporter of cellular viability has been subject to several recent reviews (Branchini, B. R. et al., 2004; Hirano. T et al., 2009). Given that the production of light from recombinant bacteria containing the lux genes depends upon a functional intracellular biochemistry, it can be established that any substance or environment that impairs that biochemistry and thus compromises cellular viability which will lead to a reduction in light emission. In many cases there is a close interaction between the potential of lux to monitor gene expression and established as an environmental monitor of industrial effluents and toxicants. The most famous and rapid system for toxicity test is by using Vibrio fisheri. This system has some limitation being of marine origin and need the presence of high salts concentration that could mask the effect of toxicants being tested or so called the matrix effects (Bulich A. A. et al.,1981; Kurvet I. et al.,2011). For example, the detection of aromatic hydrocarbons such as toluene and xylene could be achieved by constructing a lux gene fusion to the meta-pathway promoter from the TOL plasmids of Pseudomonas (Engebrecht, J et al.,1986). Dual-reporter assays can control for much of this variability, leading to more accurate and meaningful comparisons between samples (Hawkins et al. 2002; Hannah et al. 1998; Wood, 1998; Faridi et al. 2003). One of the earliest uses of luciferase imaging to detect microbial contamination involved eukaryotic firefly (Photinus) luciferase (Luc) not

bacterial luciferase samples. They suggested that this technology may also be used to distinguish genetically modified bacteria from indigenous bacteria in environmental samples (Levin GV, Chen CS et al.,1967).

6. CONCLUSION:

During the study of bioluminescent properties of bacterial species we are now concluded that phenomena of bioluminescence in nature have always been a focus of human attention. Prior to the identification of luminous organisms, the presence of even a dim luminous glow in the dark frightened countless numbers of individuals, who perceived the glimmer as ghosts or supernatural spirits. However, the curiosity of scientists to solve the mysteries of nature led to the identification of many luminous organisms responsible for the light emission in different environmental settings. The isolation of luminous bacteria from marine and terrestrial environments, and the characterization of their properties have resulted in the identification of a number of luminous bacterial species classified into several genera. All luminescent bacteria utilize FMNH₂, O₂, and long fatty aldehyde as substrates for the bioluminescence reaction catalyzed by luciferase (Lux-AB), with the fatty acid reductase complex (Lux-CDE) synthesizing the long chain aldehyde substrate of tetra decanal. A NADPH-dependent FMN reductase found in most if not all bacteria generates the FMNH₂ substrate. We had found only the five genes in the lux operon, lux-CDABE, are needed to produce light emission, even in bacteria that normally do not emit light, and thus provide the opportunity to utilize the bacterial lux system as a light emitting sensor in many bacteria. The regulation of the induction of expression of the luxCDABE genes in luminescent bacteria at high cell density has led to the development of molecular prototypes for quorum sensing, an important new regulatory mechanism signaling bacterial crowding, and now found controlling key secondary metabolic pathways in many nonluminescent bacteria.

7. FUTURE PROSPECTS:

The high sensitivity, depend directly on the amount of luciferase over a very wide range and assay times of only seconds or minutes are unique features of luminescence assays. Besides, most assays for enzymes from non-luminescent organisms are relatively with narrow limits for the amount of enzyme and time of assay so that the response is directly proportional to the enzyme, conditions that may be difficult to achieve for routine analysis of samples expressed to different levels.

Currently, the major disadvantage in the use of the bacterial luciferase genes as reporter of gene expression resides in the

necessity to use a monocistronic fused luxA-luxB gene for expression under a single promoter in eukaryotic cells. Although bacterial luciferases, particularly from *V. harveyi* and *X. luminescens*, are quite stable the fused luciferase cannot fold efficiently at 37°C (Ulitzurs, & Kuhnj, 2006). This property would therefore limit the use of the fused bacterial lux gene in eukaryotic cells to plant, insect, and yeast cells grown at Temperatures at or below 30°C, which give very high levels of expression. Development of new luxA-luxB constructions coding for bacterial luciferases which can refold efficiently at 37°C will be necessary to obtain levels of expression in mammalian cells comparable to the expression of firefly luciferase. It is well established that luminescent bacteria (including *V. harveyi*) emit light efficiently only when they are at high cell density. This regulation is known as quorum sensing (Swift et al., 1998)

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