

# Community structure and metabolic potentials for biofuel production of an ancient beer starter 'emao' revealed by a whole-metagenome study

Diganta Narzary (✉ [d\\_narzary@gauhati.ac.in](mailto:d_narzary@gauhati.ac.in))

Gauhati University

Nitesh Boro

Gauhati University

Ashis Borah

Gauhati University

Okubo Takashi

Yokohama Institute for Earth Sciences, JAMSTEC, Yokohama

Hideto Takami

Yokohama Institute for Earth Sciences, JAMSTEC, Yokohama

---

## Research Article

**Keywords:** Traditional beer starter, community structure, metagenomics, feasible metabolic modules, biofuel producing enzymes

**Posted Date:** December 15th, 2020

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-124778/v1>

**License:**  This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

[Read Full License](#)

---

**Version of Record:** A version of this preprint was published at Scientific Reports on July 16th, 2021. See the published version at <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-021-94059-x>.

1 **Community structure and metabolic potentials for biofuel production of an ancient beer**  
2 **starter ‘*emao*’ revealed by a whole-metagenome study**

3  
4 Diganta Narzary<sup>ab\*</sup>, Nitesh Boro<sup>a</sup>, Ashis Borah<sup>a</sup>, Takashi Okubo<sup>b#</sup> and Hideto Takami<sup>b#</sup>

5  
6 <sup>a</sup>Microbiology and Molecular Systematics Lab, Department of Botany, Gauhati University,  
7 Guwahati, Assam, India

8 <sup>b</sup>Yokohama Institute for Earth Sciences, JAMSTEC, Yokohama 236-0001, Japan

9  
10 \*Corresponding author: d\_narzary@gauhati.ac.in

11 #Current address: Atmosphere and Ocean Research Institute, The University of Tokyo, 5-1-5  
12 Kashiwanoha, Kashiwa 277-8564, Japan

13  
14 **Abstract**

15 The community structure and functional metabolic modules occurring in ‘*emao*’ – a  
16 traditional rice beer starter of ancient origin from north-east India has been unearthed for the  
17 first time using shot-gun whole-metagenome sequencing. *Emao* harbours potential  
18 microorganisms for saccharification, lignocellulose degradation, and biofuel production that  
19 correlate with probable metabolic functional modules. Eukaryotic microorganisms, especially  
20 moulds and yeasts, dominated over the prokaryotes in *emao* compared to previous  
21 metagenomic studies on such traditional starters where the relative abundance of prokaryotes  
22 was higher than the eukaryotes. The comprehensive microbial species diversity, community  
23 structure, and metabolic modules exhibited in *emao* would be practical in the formulation of  
24 mixed-microbial cultures for biofuel production from plant-based feedstocks.

25  
26 **Keywords:** Traditional beer starter, community structure, metagenomics, feasible metabolic  
27 modules, biofuel producing enzymes

28  
29  
30  
31

## 32 Introduction

33 The starter cultures used in traditional beer fermentations are generally composed of  
34 diverse microorganisms [1] that form a complex microbial consortium in each starter that  
35 gives us desirable end-products in fermentations. Understanding of community structures in  
36 various environmental samples, including traditional starters, is crucial for bioprospection.  
37 However, the estimation of community structure using culture-dependent methods is difficult  
38 due to various reasons such as non-cultivable of specific microbes in laboratory conditions  
39 [2], competition for nutrients and dominance of some microbes over the others in culture  
40 media, and the different growth rates among the species that hamper the community structure  
41 analysis. In contrast, culture-independent methods, such as metagenomics through Next  
42 Generation Sequencing (NGS), allow the microbial communities to study without the need  
43 for microbial isolation and cultivation [2]. Although recently PCR-amplicon sequencing of  
44 16S rRNA genes and ITS rDNA regions have been used for microbial diversity study in  
45 many environmental samples including traditional starter cultures, this method is vulnerable  
46 to biases [3,4] due to copy number variation of the target marker at the species level (e.g.,  
47 16S rRNA genes in bacteria) and the inherent PCR problems (such as template competition,  
48 primer mismatch, biased amplification due to different template copy number) while using  
49 metagenomic DNAs. Therefore, the use of PCR amplicon-based NGS sequencing is also not  
50 reliable for microbial community structure analysis. Alternatively, the use of ribosomal  
51 proteins as markers for community structure estimation in the whole-metagenome approach  
52 is new hope in microbial ecology due to occurrence of almost a single-copy of each  
53 ribosomal protein in an individual [5,6].

54 The craft of brewing rice-beer (*zu* or *zou*) using *emao* (also written as *amao*) is an age-  
55 old tradition among the Bodo tribe – one of the aborigines of northeast India [7,8]. The origin  
56 of the Bodo tribe and thus their brewing tradition is still obscure. The Bodo, Dimasa, and  
57 Garo tribes of North East India are supposed to be segregated from a common ancestor about  
58 1,500 years ago [9]. They have close similarities in their language, culture, and brewing  
59 traditions. Preparation of *emao* from non-sticky rice powder adding certain herbs and a small  
60 portion of *emao* from existing stock is the Bodos tradition (Table 1). The traditional belief of  
61 using the herbs in *emao* is to bring sweetness or hardness to the beer, depending on the herb  
62 used. Usually, 3–5 herbs are used in *emao* preparation, sometimes alternatively based on  
63 availability at the time of its preparation. Researchers studied the microbial diversity on  
64 several such traditional starters across the world using both culture-dependent [10-16] and

65 culture-independent methods [14,17-23]. Nonetheless, the microbial study on *emao* is  
66 limited, and only four fungal species (one mould and three non-*Saccharomyces* yeasts) have  
67 been reported to date using culture-dependent methods [27-27]. In the case of *emao*, bacterial  
68 diversity and culture-independent studies are not yet available.

69 The occurrence of three major groups of microorganisms *viz.* amylolytic, alcohol-  
70 producing, and lactic acid bacteria (LAB) are reported in similar kinds of traditional beer  
71 starter cultures by other researchers. Thus, several microorganisms work together in consortia  
72 mode in most traditional beer fermentation, which gives us unique products. The traditional  
73 way of starter culture preparations, maintenance, and the substrate used for fermentation  
74 varies among the people from the different locality as well as the community [1], so thus the  
75 microbial species diversity and the fermented products differ from starter to starter. More  
76 than two dozen traditional beer starters are in practice throughout northeast India [28], and  
77 only a few of them have been studied using culture-independent method [21,23,42]. Here, we  
78 unravelled the microbial community structure of *emao* based on ribosomal protein sequences  
79 derived from the whole-metagenome sequences and the metabolic potentials of *emao* for  
80 biofuel production for the first time.

## 81 **Results**

### 82 *Whole-metagenome overview*

83 The number of nucleotide pair sequences obtained from the pooled-sample of six *emao*  
84 representatives was 13,060,410, and the total contigs with  $\geq 400$  nt in each were 6,530,205  
85 (Table 2). We obtained a total of 1,285,880 amino acid (AA) sequences with  $\geq 50$  AA in each,  
86 which was subsequently used as an input for taxonomic binning, enzyme identification, and  
87 metabolic module analyses.

### 88 *Community structure and species diversity*

89 The taxonomic binning of the non-redundant ribosomal protein (r-protein) sequences  
90 revealed 92% Eukarya and 8% Bacteria with a ratio of 9:2:1 for Mucoromycota (moulds),  
91 Ascomycota (yeasts), and Firmicutes (bacteria), respectively (Fig. 1a). The relative  
92 abundance of moulds was the highest (73.44%), followed by yeasts (18.02%) and lactic acid  
93 bacteria (LAB) (7.87%) (Fig. 1b), in contrast to four times higher relative species diversity in  
94 yeasts than bacteria and moulds, both showing equal numbers of species (12) in *emao* (Table  
95 S1). The relative abundance of the genus *Rhizopus* and its family Rhizopodaceae were the  
96 highest among the groups in *emao* (Fig. 1c, d). Among the yeasts, the relative abundance of  
97 the genus *Wickerhamomyces* and its family Phaffomycetaceae were the highest.

98 We identified a total of 74 microbial species in *emao* based on r-protein sequences (Fig.  
99 2 and Table S1). *Rhizopus delemar* (syn. *R. oryzae*) was the highest with 56% overall relative  
100 abundance (ORA), followed by *R. microsporus* (7% ORA) and *Mucor circinelloides* (5%  
101 ORA) among the moulds. Among the yeasts, *Wickerhamomyces anomalus* was the most  
102 dominant (9% ORA), followed by *W. ciferrii* (1% ORA), *Ascoidea rubescens* (0.6% ORA),  
103 *Cyberlindnera fabiani* (0.6%), *Pachysolen tannophilus* (0.6% ORA), *Candida tropicalis*  
104 (0.5% ORA), *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* (0.4% ORA), and a few more ethanol-producing  
105 species with low ORA (Table S1). Among LAB, the most dominant species was *Leuconostoc*  
106 *mesenteroides* (1.9% ORA), followed by *Weissella confusa* (1.8% ORA) and *Lactococcus*  
107 *garvieae* (1% ORA).

108 The microbial diversity compared to other traditional beer starters revealed that the *emao*  
109 exhibits 26% of its microbial species common to *Nuruk* from Korea [20,29], 18% to both  
110 *Marcha* [30] and *Xaj-pitha* [21] from India, and 16% to *Daku* from China [11,18]. Some of  
111 the dominant species recorded in *emao* were also common in several other traditional beer  
112 starters considered for comparison. Out of 24 other traditional starters (OTS) compared to  
113 *emao*, the dominant microbial species, *W. anomalus* was found common in 20 OTS, *S.*  
114 *cerevisiae* in 15 OTS, *R. delemar* in 13 OTS, *M. circinelloides* in 12 OTS, *Pediococcus*  
115 *pentosaceus* in 9 OTS, *R. microsporus* in 7 OTS, and *Torulasporea delbrueckii*, *L.*  
116 *mesenteroides* and *Candida tropicalis* in 6 OTS. However, the other dominant species (*R.*  
117 *stolonifer*, *Choanephora cucurbitarum*, *Parasitella parasitica*, *W. ciferrii*, *C. fabianii*, *A.*  
118 *rubescens*, *L. citreum*, *W. confusa*, and *L. garvieae*) as recorded in *emao*, was reported only  
119 in a few OTS (Table S1). The overall species similarity of microorganisms recorded in *emao*  
120 is only 43% compared to other traditional beer starters.

#### 121 *Identification of CAZymes and BPZymes in emao*

122 A total of 19,702 CAZymes (out of which only 45% were assigned to a total of 123  
123 CAZyme sub-families) and 34,493 BPZymes were recorded in *emao* (Fig. 3a-b, Fig. S1 &  
124 S2). Among the CAZymes, glycoside hydrolases (GH) were recorded the highest (21%),  
125 followed by glycosyltransferases (GT, 18%), whereas the rest four types of CAZymes were  
126 comparatively quite low ( $\leq 3\%$ ). We also emphasized identifying the lignocellulolytic  
127 enzymes occurring in *emao* as essential for mobilizing lignocellulosic substrates into useful  
128 products such as biofuel. There is no readymade database for lignocellulolytic enzymes as  
129 such; therefore, we compared the CAZymes and BPZymes of *emao* to the previous reports on  
130 lignocellulolytic enzymes [31,32] and identified a total of 1,929 lignocellulolytic CAZymes

131 and 5,576 lignocellulolytic BPZymes in *emao* (Fig. 3c-d). A comparison of lignocellulolytic  
132 enzymes of *emao* to pill bug (*Armadillidium vulgare*) gut microbiome [32] revealed seven  
133 times higher lignin modifying enzymes, four times higher hemicellulases, and four times  
134 higher hemicellulases and/or cellulases in *emao*, in contrast to four times higher  
135 lignocellulose-binding modules in pill bug. In BPZyme analysis, enzymes associated with  
136 alcohol production were found two times higher than the enzymes associated with diesel  
137 production and fuel cells. We could identify 44% ethanol-producing, 26% fuel-cell  
138 producing, 20% diesel producing, and 10% alternate-biofuel producing enzymes (Fig. 3b).

### 139 *Metabolic and physiological potentials in emao*

140 An analysis of amino acid sequences in Genomape [33,34] revealed the most feasible  
141 functional modules with significant module completion ratio (MCR) and  $Q$ -values at an  
142 individual taxonomic rank (ITR) or whole microbial count (WC) level. Any module having  
143 100% MCR and/or less than 0.5  $Q$ -value is considered significant and feasible [33, 35]. A  
144 total of 489 metabolic KEGG (Kyoto Encyclopedia of Genes and Genomes) modules with >  
145 0% MCR (WC) scores were recorded in *emao*, out of which 46% (*i.e.*, 28% out of total 804  
146 existing modules in KEGG) had 100% MCR (WC), and that could be the crucial modules in  
147 determining the functionality and uniqueness of *emao* in beer fermentations (Table S2). The  
148 carbohydrate and lipid metabolisms are involved directly or indirectly in plant biomass  
149 degradation and biofuel production. Therefore, we focused on carbohydrate and lipid  
150 metabolic modules having significant MCR and  $Q$ -values (Fig. 4, Table 3).

151 The presence of 100% MCR for the Embden-Meyerhof pathway with zero  $Q$ -value in  
152 contrast to 75–80% MCR (0.5–0.85  $Q$ -value) for the Entner-Doudoroff pathway which  
153 occurs mainly in some bacteria, revealed the presence of feasible alternative glycolytic  
154 pathways in *emao* (Table 3). Besides, 100% MCR with zero  $Q$ -value for pectin, galactose, D-  
155 galacturonate, and D-glucuronate degradation pathways are noteworthy, which signifies the  
156 possibility of metabolizing those substrates by the microorganisms associated with *emao*  
157 (Fig. 2). Acyl-CoA is necessary for the synthesis of fatty acids precursor, acetyl-CoA [36,37].  
158 Thus, 100% MCR for both the beta-oxidation module and acyl-CoA synthesis module  
159 suffices the fatty acids and isoprenoid biosynthesis potentiality in *emao*. The presence of  
160 100% MCR for mitochondrial and endoplasmic fatty acid biosynthesis modules and 100%  
161 MCR for lipid biosynthesis modules corroborate the involvement of eukaryotes (mainly  
162 fungi) in biodiesel production.

163

164 **Discussion**

165 We found a reasonable and justifiable community structure in *emao* using ribosomal  
166 protein-based taxonomic binning where the yeasts, moulds, and LAB were seen at a ratio of  
167 9:2:1, respectively. We consider this community structure of *emao* ideal for producing  
168 traditional *zou* or *joubishi* containing 5–17% (w/v) ethanol that might have had garnered  
169 thousand years ago and is still being maintained in its pristine form by the Bodo peoples  
170 through their traditional practices. The findings of higher relative abundance of Firmicutes  
171 than Proteobacteria, and higher fungal species counts than bacteria in *emao* (Fig. 4) differ  
172 from the community structures as reported previously in the traditional beer starters *Xaj-pitha*  
173 [21], *Marcha* and *Thiat* [30] and from the region. Such a deviation is likely due to differences  
174 in methods and approaches followed.

175 The yeasts, moulds, and LAB play unique roles in alcoholic beverage fermentation,  
176 especially when starch is the feedstock. Moulds are mostly aerobic, do the saccharification,  
177 and sensitive to ethanol except for a few species that can produce a low level of ethanol [38].  
178 The presence of a high number of saccharifying and/or lignocellulose degrading  
179 microorganisms is always advantageous and desirable at the beginning of fermentation while  
180 using plant-based substrates. Some non-*Saccharomyces* yeast does both saccharification and  
181 ethanol production simultaneously but is mostly non-tolerant to high ethanol concentrations  
182 [39-42]. Ethanol sensitive microbes are subsequently killed or arrested by increasing ethanol  
183 concentrations at the later stages of ethanol fermentation [43]. Ethanol production and  
184 tolerance level of *Saccharomyces* yeasts also vary from strain to strain, although they are  
185 generally more ethanol tolerant than the others [44-46]. Wild *S. cerevisiae* cannot utilize  
186 starch or other complex carbohydrates directly due to the lack of degrading enzymes for those  
187 substrates [47] for which they are dependent on other saccharifying microbes.

188 A low proportion of LAB is desirable in beer fermentation as they can perform some  
189 necessary functions despite knowing them as spoilage agents [48, 49]. They mainly produce  
190 lactic acids besides producing bacteriocins against some human pathogens, and they are  
191 responsible for maintaining low pH, keeping quality, and taste enhancement in beer [50-53].  
192 We did not find any acetic acid-producing bacteria (Acetobacters) in *emao* – a good sign for  
193 this traditional starter of ancient origin. Acetic acid bacteria are responsible for beer defects  
194 [54,55], which often happens due to contamination of such spoilage agents if hygienic  
195 conditions are compromised during the preparation of starter culture or beer fermentation.

196 Our findings of a good number of saccharifying, lignocellulolytic (Table S3), and  
197 different biofuels producing microorganisms in corroboration with probable metabolic

198 functionomes (Fig. 4, Table 3) in *emao* is noteworthy, and the current community structure as  
199 unraveled in *emao* could help develop an effective lignocellulolytic bio-consortia necessary  
200 for second-generation biofuel production. Many simple carbohydrate degrading  
201 microorganisms do not easily break down the pentose sugars such as D-xylose and L-  
202 arabinose that comprise up to 20% of lignocellulosic biomass [56]. The breaking of  
203 lignocellulose into its subunits and subsequently mobilizing them as energy sources for  
204 biofuel production is complex. It requires various enzymes to catalyze the metabolic  
205 processes, and an organism bearing all the essential enzymes together is rare. However,  
206 further experimentation is required to validate the utility of *emao* as such or in combination  
207 with other lignocellulolytic microbes. As the species diversity and the metabolic potentials of  
208 *emao* as reflected from this study are diverse, a pyramiding of target microorganisms from  
209 such a natural bio-consortium towards achieving a target product from target substrates by  
210 necessary functional potentials could be a new avenue in tapping natural bioresources for  
211 bioprospection. Such an alternative approach can pave the way for bio-consortia formulation  
212 to produce biofuels from the lignocellulosic materials.

213 The Genomale system provides an effective platform to visualize the module  
214 completion ratio (MCR) along with the taxonomic information at Phylum or Class level that  
215 reflects their functional activity in completing different metabolic modules in any  
216 environmental sample considered for an investigation [33,34]. However, it is dependent on  
217 the KEGG database, which includes only the species with complete genome sequence  
218 information. Unfortunately, not a single representative of moulds (Zygomycota) is available  
219 in the KEGG database due to the absence of complete genome information, in contrast to  
220 several draft genome information on this particular group fungus to date. For the same  
221 reason, we cannot specify and segregate the metabolic modules among the moulds and yeasts  
222 in this functional metagenome study on *emao*. Moulds are ubiquitous in distribution and play  
223 critical ecological roles like other fungal groups [57]. Complete genome information on  
224 moulds is needed in the public domain to understand better their roles in natural  
225 environments and brewing.

## 226 **Conclusions**

227 The present study is the first to unravel the comprehensive community structure and  
228 probable metabolic potentials of the microorganisms associated with the traditional starter  
229 culture *emao*. The presence of diverse groups of microorganisms in corroboration with  
230 amylolytic, lignocellulolytic, biofuels producing enzymes as recorded in *emao* is noteworthy.



231 It could be a pathfinder in the field of microbial consortia bioformulation for biofuel  
232 production from otherwise recalcitrant plant biomasses. We found the ribosomal protein-  
233 based community structure enumeration a suitable approach in metagenome study. Complete  
234 genome information on moulds is equally essential in the line of other fungal groups to better  
235 understand their roles in traditional brewing and other natural environments. Some dominant  
236 microbial species recorded in *emao* are familiar to some other traditional starters reported  
237 earlier from the region. Therefore, a comparative study of age-old traditional starters that  
238 carry microbial genetic information could be of paramount significance in understanding the  
239 history of human population migration and civilization in ancient times, like archaeology and  
240 philology.

## 241 **Materials and methods**

### 242 *Sample collection*

243 Six representative *emao* samples traditionally prepared by the Bodo people were  
244 collected from different Bodo-dominated Assam (Table 1). Information on the method of  
245 preparation and herbs used in starter culture were also recorded. We ensured that no beer  
246 defect had been experienced during sample collection in using *emao* from the same stock that  
247 we brought for scientific investigation. Traditionally, more than one-year-old *emao* samples  
248 are generally not used for rice beer fermentation; instead, the starter culture is revived in the  
249 fresh rice-based medium before completing one year. Therefore, only the active samples,  
250 *i.e.*, less than one year from the date of preparation, were considered for this study. (since  
251 starter culture is revived within a month among the active brewers)

### 252 *Total DNA isolation*

253 Two grams of each of six *emao* samples were taken and mixed by grinding in pre-  
254 sterilized mortar and pestle, from which 10 g sample was taken to isolate the total DNA. To  
255 recover quality metagenomic DNA, we modified the method of Zhou *et al.* [58] where the  
256 extraction buffer was supplemented with 1% activated charcoal and 10 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub> as  
257 recommended by Sharma *et al.* [59], and the DNA obtained from the modified method of  
258 Zhou *et al.* [58] was again purified with the MoBio DNA isolation kit (QIAGEN, Cat. No.  
259 12888-100). The steps we followed are described below. Liquid nitrogen was used for  
260 effective sample grinding and the sample was transferred into 18 ml of extraction buffer [100  
261 mM Tris-HCl (pH 8.0), 100 mM sodium EDTA (pH 8.0), 100 mM sodium phosphate (pH  
262 8.0), 1.5 M NaCl, 1% CTAB, 10mM MgCl<sub>2</sub> and 1% activated charcoal] before thawing. A

263 volume of 100  $\mu$ l proteinase K (10 mg/ml) was added to the tube, mixed properly by  
264 vortexing, and incubated at 37°C for 30 minutes in a water bath with gentle end-over-end  
265 inversions every 5 min. After that, 2 ml of 20% SDS was added, mixed by vortexing, and  
266 incubated at 65°C for 2 hours with gentle end-over-end inversions every 30 min. The sample  
267 was allowed to cool up to room temperature (RT), and the supernatant was collected in a  
268 fresh centrifuge tube after centrifugation at 6000  $\times$  g for 10 min at RT. The supernatant was  
269 mixed with an equal volume of chloroform: isoamyl alcohol (24:1, vol/vol) by inverting the  
270 tube gently. The aqueous phase was recovered by centrifugation at 10000  $\times$  g for 10 minutes  
271 at RT and then precipitated with 0.6 volume of pre-chilled isopropanol at RT for one h. The  
272 pellet of crude nucleic acids was obtained by centrifugation at 12,000  $\times$  g for 20 min at RT,  
273 washed with chilled 70% ethanol, and resuspended in sterile deionized water to make the  
274 final volume 700  $\mu$ l. The DNA solution so obtained was purified with MoBio DNA isolation  
275 kit, and the steps from the treatment of C4 solution onwards were followed according to the  
276 procedure of the kit. DNA was stored at -20°C till sending for whole-metagenome  
277 sequencing to the service provider.

#### 278 *Whole-metagenome sequencing*

279 The whole-genome sequencing of our metagenomic DNA was outsourced to the  
280 AgriGenome Labs Pvt. Ltd., Kerala, India, and sequencing was done in Illumina HiSeq 2500  
281 Platform. The quality of the DNA was confirmed in Qubit Fluorometer and agarose gel  
282 electrophoresis before the library preparation. The Genomic DNA was fragmented using  
283 Covaris M220 for 500bp, and the library was prepared using NEBNextUltra DNA Library  
284 Prep Kit. The library quality was checked using Agilent TapeStation 2200. The quantity was  
285 estimated using Qubit 2.0. The libraries were sequenced in the HiSeq 2500 platform for  
286 2x250bp read length generating the required data. The FASTQ files generated by the Illumina  
287 HiSeq platform were trimmed with MetaSPAdes (v 3.10.1) [60] (Version 1.8.1) to remove  
288 the adapters.

#### 289 *Sequence assembly, annotation, and evaluation of potential metabolic modules*

290 The forward and reverse DNA sequences in FASTQ format were submitted to the  
291 MAPLE Submission Data Maker (MSDM) pipeline where the nucleotide sequences with a  
292 minimum base quality score of Q20, minimum 80% of quality bases in each sequence, and  
293 minimum 400 bp in each contig length were set to get high-quality amino acid (AA)  
294 sequences with a minimum cut-off length of 50 AA in FASTA format [35]. The AA sequence  
295 file so obtained was then analyzed in Genomapple ver. 2.3.2 (formerly MAPLE) server opting

296 for the GHOST X search engine with the single-direction best hit annotation for all organisms  
297 in KEGG [33,34]. The module completion ratio (MCR) and  $Q$ -value at the individual  
298 taxonomic rank (ITR) and the whole microbial community (WC) level were retrieved from  
299 MAPLE results, and the KEGG Orthology (KO) genes assigned by Genomapple were used for  
300 subsequent taxonomic binning, CAZyme and BPZyme analyses. The module information  
301 generated by MAPLE was used to create the coarse-grained metabolic maps of KEGG  
302 modules using the KEGG Atlas map as a reference. The metabolic map for carbohydrate and  
303 lipid metabolism was created separately for the modules having less than 0.5  $Q$ -values to  
304 understand the biomass degradation and biofuel production potentiality in *emao*.

#### 305 *Taxonomic binning*

306 The KOs assigned to the ribosomal protein module for all organisms (M91000) was  
307 extracted back from the MAPLE input file using NCBI-blast dbcmd command, which was  
308 then subjected to homology search against the non-redundant NCBI-nr protein database to  
309 assign the taxonomic identity for each sequence in GHOSTX .program [61] using the top hit  
310 option. GHOSTX result was manually curated to parse the species name against each  
311 sequence, which was then meganized and visualized in MEGAN [62] Community Version  
312 (V6.12.5). The identified species names were uploaded to the NCBI Tree Viewer  
313 (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/projects/treeview/>) to generate the circular phylogenetic tree.

#### 314 *CAZyme identification*

315 The AA sequences created by the MSDM pipeline (version 1.0) [35] were used as query  
316 files in HMMR hmmscan program (version 3.2.1) [63] against dbCAN database [64] as a  
317 reference with an E-value threshold of  $1e-5$  to predict CAZymes. The AA sequences detected  
318 as CAZymes [65] were retrieved back from the input file, and the duplicates were removed  
319 using some basic perl and shell commands to get the non-redundant FASTA sequences. Then  
320 the non-redundant sequences so obtained were assigned to different CAZyme categories  
321 using the Hotpep program [66].

#### 322 *BPZyme identification*

323 The AA sequences generated by MSDM in FASTA format were used to identify the  
324 enzymes involved in biofuel production as a query file in the HMMR phmmer program [63]  
325 against BioFuelDB [67] as a reference with an E-value threshold of  $1e-5$ . The sequence  
326 homology and the corresponding EC number of non-redundant AA sequences identified as  
327 the biofuel producing enzymes were reconfirmed using the GHOSTX homology search (top

328 hit only) against the BioFuelDB. All the ECs were then segregated into different biofuel  
329 categories as classified by Chaudhary *et al.* [67], and the total enzyme counts for each  
330 category were obtained.

331

## 332 References

- 333 1. Tamang, J.P. Diversity of fermented beverages and alcoholic drinks in *Fermented*  
334 *Foods and Beverages of the World* (ed Tamang J.P. & Kailasapathy, K.) 85–126  
335 (CRC Press, Taylor & Francis Group 2010).
- 336 2. Cason, E.D. *et al.* Bacterial and fungal dynamics during the fermentation processes of  
337 Sesotho, a traditional beer of Southern Africa. *Frontiers in Microbiology*. **11**, 1451.  
338 <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmicb.2020.01451> (2020).
- 339 3. McLaren, M. R., Willis, A. D. & Callahan, B. J. Consistent and correctable bias in  
340 metagenomic sequencing experiments. *Elife*. **8**, e46923.  
341 <https://doi.org/10.7554/eLife.46923> (2019).
- 342 4. Rausch, P. *et al.* Comparative analysis of amplicon and metagenomic sequencing  
343 methods reveals key features in the evolution of animal metaorganisms. *Microbiome*.  
344 **7**, 133. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40168-019-0743-1> (2019).
- 345 5. Mende, D. R., Sunagawa, S., Zeller, G. & Bork, P. Accurate and universal delineation  
346 of prokaryotic species. *Nat. Methods*. **10**, 881–884.  
347 <https://doi.org/10.1038/nmeth.2575> (2013).
- 348 6. Martiny, C., High proportions of bacteria are culturable across major biomes. *ISME*.  
349 **13**, 2125–2128. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41396-019-0410-3> (2019).
- 350 7. Hodgson, H., Kocch, Bodo and Dhimal Tribes (J. Thomas, Baptist Mission Press,  
351 Calcutta). <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.93469> (1847)
- 352 8. R. G. Latham, *The Natural History of the Varieties of Man* (London: John van Voorst,  
353 Paternoster Row). <https://archive.org/details/naturalhistoryof00lathuoft> (1850)
- 354 9. Zhang, M., Yan, S., Pan, W. & Jin, L. Phylogenetic evidence for Sino-Tibetan origin  
355 in northern China in the Late Neolithic. *Nature*. **569**, 112–115.  
356 <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-019-1153-z> (2019).
- 357 10. Taechavasonyoo, A., Thanivavarn, J., & Yompakdee, C. Identification of the moulds  
358 and yeasts characteristic of a superior *Loogpang*, starter of Thai rice-based alcoholic  
359 beverage Sato. *As. J. Food Ag-Ind.* **6(01)**, 24–38 (2013).
- 360 11. Chen, B., Wu, Q. & Xu, Y. Filamentous fungal diversity and community structure  
361 associated with the solid state fermentation of Chinese Maotai-flavor liquor. *Int. J.*  
362 *Food Microbiol.* **179**, 80–84. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijfoodmicro.2014.03.011>  
363 (2014).
- 364 12. Bhardwaj, K. N., Jain, K. K., Kumar, S. & Kuhad, R. C. Microbiological Analyses of  
365 Traditional Alcoholic Beverage (Chhang) and its Starter (Balma) Prepared by Bhotiya  
366 Tribe of Uttarakhand, India. *Indian J. Microbiol.* **56(1)**, 28–34.  
367 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12088-015-0560-6> (2016)
- 368 13. Lv, X. C., Weng, X., Zhang, W., Rao, P. F. & Ni, L. Microbial diversity of traditional  
369 fermentation starters for Hong Qu glutinous rice wine as determined by PCR-

- 370 mediated DGGE. *Food Control* **28**, 426–434.  
371 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodcont.2012.05.025> (2012)
- 372 14. Ahmadsah, L. S. F., Kim, E., Jung, Y. S. & Kim, H. Y. Identification of LAB and  
373 fungi in Laru, a fermentation starter, by PCR-DGGE, SDS-PAGE, and MALDI-TOF  
374 MS. *J. Microbiol. Biotechnol.* **28**(1), 32–39. <https://doi.org/10.4014/jmb.1705.05044>  
375 (2018)
- 376 15. Pradhan, P. & Tamang, J. P. Phenotypic and Genotypic Identification of Bacteria  
377 Isolated from Traditionally Prepared Dry Starters of the Eastern Himalayas. *Front.*  
378 *Microbiol.* **10**, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmicb.2019.02526> (2019).
- 379 16. Anupma, A. & Tamang, J. P. Diversity of Filamentous Fungi Isolated From Some  
380 Amylase and Alcohol-Producing Starters of India. *Front. Microbiol.* **11**, 1–16.  
381 <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmicb.2020.00905> (2020)
- 382 17. Thanh, V. N., Mai, L. T. & Tuan, D. A. Microbial diversity of traditional Vietnamese  
383 alcohol fermentation starters (banh men) as determined by PCR-mediated DGGE. *Int.*  
384 *J. Food Microbiol.* **128**, 268–273. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijfoodmicro.2008.08.020>  
385 (2008)
- 386 18. Zheng, X. W. *et al.* Complex microbiota of a Chinese ‘Fen’ liquor fermentation  
387 starter (Fen-Daqu), revealed by culture-dependent and culture-independent methods.  
388 *Food Microbiol.* **31**, 293–300. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fm.2012.03.008> (2012).
- 389 19. Lv, X. C. *et al.* Microbial community structure and dynamics during the traditional  
390 brewing of Fuzhou Hong Qu glutinous rice wine as determined by culture-dependent  
391 and culture-independent techniques. *Food Control.* **57**, 216–224.  
392 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodcont.2015.03.054> (2015)
- 393 20. Bal, J., Yun, S. H., Yeo, S. H., Kim, J. M. & Kim, D. H. Metagenomic analysis of  
394 fungal diversity in Korean traditional wheat-based fermentation starter nuruk. *Food*  
395 *Microbiol.* **60**, 73–83. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fm.2016.07.002> (2016).
- 396 21. Bora, S. S., Keot, J., Das, S., Sarma, K. & Barooah, M. Metagenomics analysis of  
397 microbial communities associated with a traditional rice wine starter culture (Xaj-  
398 pitha) of Assam, India. *3 Biotech.* **6**, 153. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13205-016-0471-1>  
399 (2016).
- 400 22. Hui, W. *et al.* Identification of Microbial Profile of Koji Using Single Molecule, Real-  
401 Time Sequencing Technology. *J. Food Sci.* **82**(5), 1193–1199.  
402 <https://doi.org/10.1111/1750-3841.13699> (2017).
- 403 23. Sha, S. P. *et al.* Diversity of yeasts and molds by culture-dependent and culture-  
404 independent methods for mycobiome surveillance of traditionally prepared dried  
405 starters for the production of Indian alcoholic beverages. *Front. Microbiol.* **9**, 2237  
406 <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmicb.2018.02237> (2018).
- 407 24. Buragohain, A. K., Tanti, B., Sarma, H. K., Barman, P. & Das, K. Characterization of  
408 yeast starter cultures used in household alcoholic beverage preparation by a few  
409 ethnic communities of Northeast India. *Ann. Microbiol.* **63**, 863–869.  
410 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13213-012-0537-1> (2013).
- 411 25. Song, S. H. *et al.* Analysis of microflora profile in Korean traditional Nuruk. *J.*  
412 *Microbiol. Biotechnol.* **23**(1), 40–46. <https://doi.org/10.4014/jmb.1210.10001> (2013).

- 413 26. Das, A. J., Miyaji, T. & Deka, S. C. Amylolytic fungi in starter cakes for rice beer  
414 production. *J. Gen. Appl. Microbiol.* **63(4)**, 236–245.  
415 <https://doi.org/10.2323/jgam.2016.11.004> (2017).
- 416 27. Parasar, D. P., Sarma, H. K. & Kotoky, J. Exploring the genealogy and phenomic  
417 divergences of indigenous domesticated yeasts cultivated by six ethnic communities  
418 of Assam, India. *J. Biol. Sci.* **17**, 91–105. <https://doi.org/10.3923/jbs.2017.91.105>  
419 (2017).
- 420 28. Nath, N., Ghosh, S., Rahaman, L., Kaipeng, D. L. & Sharma, B. K. An overview of  
421 traditional rice beer of north-east india: Ethnic preparation, challenges and prospects.  
422 *Indian J. Tradit. Knowl.* **18(4)**, 744–757 (2019).
- 423 29. Kwon S.J. & Sohn J.H., Analysis of microbial diversity in Nuruk using PCR-DGGE.  
424 *Journal of Life Science.* 22(1), 110–116. <https://doi.org/10.5352/jls.2012.22.1.110>  
425 (2012).
- 426 30. Sha, S. P. *et al.* Analysis of bacterial and fungal communities in Marcha and Thiat,  
427 traditionally prepared amyolytic starters of India. *Sci. Rep.* 10.1038/s41598-017-  
428 11609-y. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-017-11609-y> (2017).
- 429 31. Janusz, G. *et al.* Lignin degradation: Microorganisms, enzymes involved, genomes  
430 analysis and evolution. *FEMS Microbiology Reviews.* **41(6)**, 941–962  
431 <https://doi.org/10.1093/femsre/fux049G> (2017).
- 432 32. Bredon, M., Dittmer, J., Noël, C., Moumen, B. & Bouchon, D. Lignocellulose  
433 degradation at the holobiont level: teamwork in a keystone soil invertebrate.  
434 *Microbiome.* **6**, 162. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40168-018-0536-y> (2018).
- 435 33. Takami, H. *et al.* An automated system for evaluation of the potential functionome:  
436 MAPLE version 2.1.0. *DNA Res.* **23**, 467–475. <https://doi.org/10.1093/dnares/dsw030>  
437 (2016).
- 438 34. Arai, W. *et al.* Maple 2.3.0: An improved system for evaluating the functionomes of  
439 genomes and metagenomes. *Biosci. Biotechnol. Biochem.* **82**, 1515–1517.  
440 <https://doi.org/10.1080/09168451.2018.1476122> (2018)
- 441 35. Takami, H. MAPLE enables functional assessment of microbiota in various  
442 environments in *Marine metagenomics-Technological aspects and applications.* (ed  
443 Gojobori, T, Wada, T, Kobayashi, T, Mineta, K.) 85–119 (Springer, Singapore, 2019).
- 444 36. Courchesne, N. M. D., Parisien, A., Wang, B. & Lan, C. Q. Enhancement of lipid  
445 production using biochemical, genetic and transcription factor engineering  
446 approaches. *Journal of Biotechnology* **141**, 31–41.  
447 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbiotec.2009.02.018> (2009).
- 448 37. Phulara, S. C., Chaturvedi, P. & Gupta, P. Isoprenoid-based biofuels: Homologous  
449 expression and heterologous expression in prokaryotes. *Applied and Environmental*  
450 *Microbiology.* **82(19)**, 5730–5740. <https://doi.org/10.1128/AEM.01192-16> (2016).
- 451 38. Dung, N. T. P., Rombouts, F. M. & Nout, M. J. R. Functionality of selected strains of  
452 moulds and yeasts from Vietnamese rice wine starters. *Food Microbiol.* **23(4)**, 331–  
453 340. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fm.2005.05.002> (2006).
- 454 39. Limtong, S., Sintara, S. & Suwannarit, P. Yeast Diversity in Thai Traditional  
455 Alcoholic Starter (Loog-Pang). *Kasetsart J. (Nat. Sci.)* **36**, 149–158 (2002).

- 456 40. Pina, C., Antonio, J. & Hogg, T. Inferring ethanol tolerance of *Saccharomyces* and  
457 non-*Saccharomyces* yeasts by progressive inactivation. *Biotechnol. Lett.* **26**, 1521–  
458 1527. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10529-005-1787-9> (2005).
- 459 41. Pina, C., Santos, C., Couto, J. A. & Hogg, T. Ethanol tolerance of five non-  
460 *Saccharomyces* wine yeasts in comparison with a strain of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*  
461 - Influence of different culture conditions. *Food Microbiol.* **21(4)**, 439–447.  
462 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fm.2003.10.009> (2004).
- 463 42. Jamaï, L., Ettayebi, K., Yamani, J. El & Ettayebi, M. Production of ethanol from  
464 starch by free and immobilized *Candida tropicalis* in the presence of  $\alpha$ -amylase.  
465 *Bioresour. Technol.* **98(14)**, 2765–2770.  
466 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biortech.2006.09.057> (2007).
- 467 43. Steensels, J. & Verstrepen, K. J. Taming wild yeast: Potential of conventional and  
468 nonconventional yeasts in industrial fermentations. *Annual Review of Microbiology*  
469 **68**, 61–80. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-micro-091213-113025> (2014).
- 470 44. Casey, G. P. & Ingledew, W. M. M. Ethanol tolerance in yeasts. *Crit. Rev. Microbiol.*  
471 (1986). **13(3)**, 219–280. <https://doi.org/10.3109/10408418609108739> (1986).
- 472 45. Ghareib, M., Youssef, K. A. & Khalil, A. A. Ethanol tolerance of *Saccharomyces*  
473 *cerevisiae* and its relationship to lipid content and composition. *Folia Microbiol.*  
474 (*Praha*). **33**, 447–452. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02925769> (1988).
- 475 46. Riles, L. & Fay, J. C. Genetic basis of variation in heat and ethanol tolerance in  
476 *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*. *G3 Genes, Genomes, Gene* **9(1)**, 179–188.  
477 <https://doi.org/10.1534/g3.118.200566> (2019).
- 478 47. Yamada, R. *et al.* Direct and efficient ethanol production from high-yielding rice  
479 using a *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* strain that express amylases. *Enzyme Microb.*  
480 *Technol.* <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enzmictec.2011.01.002> (2011)
- 481 48. Hollerová, I. & Kubizniaková, P. Monitoring Gram positive bacterial contamination  
482 in Czech breweries. *J. Inst. Brew.* **107**, 355–358. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2050-0416.2001.tb00104.x> (2001).
- 484 49. Bokulich, N. A. & Bamforth, C. W. The Microbiology of Malting and Brewing.  
485 *Microbiol. Mol. Biol. Rev.* **77(2)**, 157–172. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-809633-8.13014-6> (2013).
- 487 50. Ennahar, S., Sonomoto, K. & Ishizaki, A. Class IIa bacteriocins from lactic acid  
488 bacteria: Antibacterial activity and food preservation. *Journal of Bioscience and*  
489 *Bioengineering* **87**, 705–716. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1389-1723\(99\)80142-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1389-1723(99)80142-X)  
490 (1999).
- 491 51. Mokoena, M. P. Lactic acid bacteria and their bacteriocins: Classification,  
492 biosynthesis and applications against uropathogens: A mini-review. *Molecules* **22(8)**,  
493 1255. <https://doi.org/10.3390/molecules22081255> (2017)
- 494 52. Ghosh, S. *et al.* Community-wise evaluation of rice beer prepared by some ethnic  
495 tribes of Tripura. *J. Ethn. Foods.* <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jef.2016.12.001> (2016).
- 496 53. M. Miller, *Monitoring acids and pH in wine making.* eBook.  
497 <http://www.gencowinmakers.com/docs/Acids%20Presentation.pdf> (2019)



- 498 54. Sakamoto, K. & Konings, W. N. Beer spoilage bacteria and hop resistance. *Int. J.*  
499 *Food Microbiol.* **89**(2), 105–124. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0168-1605\(03\)00153-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0168-1605(03)00153-3)  
500 (2003).
- 501 55. Vriesekoop, F., Krahl, M., Hucker, B. & Menz, G. 125th Anniversary review:  
502 Bacteria in brewing: The good, the bad and the ugly. *J. Inst. Brew.* **118**, 335–345.  
503 <https://doi.org/10.1002/jib.49> (2012).
- 504 56. Cadete, R. M. & Rosa, C. A. The yeasts of the genus *Spathaspora*: potential  
505 candidates for second-generation biofuel production. *Yeast* **35**, 191–199.  
506 <https://doi.org/10.1002/yea.3279> (2018).
- 507 57. Gryganskyi, A. P. & Muszewska, A. Whole genome sequencing and the  
508 Zygomycota. *Fungal Genom. Biol.* **4**, 1. <https://doi.org/10.4172/2165-8056.1000e116>  
509 (2014).
- 510 58. Zhou, J., Bruns M. A & Tiedje, J. M. DNA recovery from soils of diverse  
511 composition. *Appl. Environ. Microbiol.* **62**, 316–322.  
512 <https://doi.org/10.1128/aem.62.2.316-322.1996> (1996)
- 513 59. Sharma, S., Sharma K. K., & Kuhad, R. C. An efficient and economical method for  
514 extraction of DNA amenable to biotechnological manipulations, from diverse soils  
515 and sediments. *J. Appl. Microbiol.* **116**, 923–933. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jam.12420>  
516 (2013)
- 517 60. Nurk, S., Meleshko, D., Korobeynikov, A. & Pevzner, P.A. metaSPAdes: a new  
518 versatile metagenomic assembler. *Genome Research.* **27**(5), 824–834.  
519 <https://doi.org/10.1101/gr.213959.116> (2017).
- 520 61. Suzuki, S., Kakuta, M. T. Ishida & Y. Akiyama, GHOSTX: An Improved Sequence  
521 Homology Search Algorithm Using a Query Suffix Array and a Database Suffix  
522 Array. *PLoS ONE* **9**(8), e103833. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0103833>  
523 (2014).
- 524 62. Huson, D.H. *et al.* MEGAN Community Edition - Interactive Exploration and  
525 Analysis of Large-Scale Microbiome Sequencing Data, *PLoS Comput. Biol.*  
526 <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pcbi.1004957> (2016).
- 527 63. Mistry, J., Finn, R. D., Eddy, S. R., Bateman, A. & Punta, M. Challenges in  
528 homology search: HMMER3 and convergent evolution of coiled-coil regions. *Nucleic*  
529 *Acids Res.* **41**(12), e121. <https://doi.org/10.1093/nar/gkt263> (2013).
- 530 64. Yin, Y. *et al.* DbCAN: A web resource for automated carbohydrate-active enzyme  
531 annotation, *Nucleic Acids Res.* <https://doi.org/10.1093/nar/gks479> (2012).
- 532 65. Lombard, V., Golaconda Ramulu, H., Drula, E., Coutinho, P. M. & Henrissat, B. The  
533 carbohydrate-active enzymes database (CAZy) in 2013. *Nucleic Acids Res.* **42**, D490–  
534 D495. <https://doi.org/10.1093/nar/gkt1178> (2014).
- 535 66. Busk, P. K., Pilgaard, B., Lezyk, M. J., Meyer, A. S. & Lange, L. Homology to  
536 peptide pattern for annotation of carbohydrate-active enzymes and prediction of  
537 function. *BMC Bioinformatics* **18**, 214. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12859-017-1625-9>  
538 (2017).
- 539 67. Chaudhary, N., Gupta, A., Gupta, S. & Sharma, V. K. BioFuelDB: A database and  
540 prediction server of enzymes involved in biofuels production. *PeerJ* **5**, e3497.  
541 <https://doi.org/10.7717/peerj.3497> (2017).



542 **Acknowledgments**

543 The authors thank T.S. Ran and J.S. Chandrani for their valuable feedback and suggestions.  
544 This research was supported by the DST, Govt of India under the SERB scheme (SB/EMEQ-  
545 443/2014) to D.N. We thank the Department of Botany, Gauhati University, Guwahati and  
546 the Yokohama Institute (JAMSTEC), Japan for research facilities. DN is also thankful to the  
547 DBT, Govt of India for financial support to set up a sophisticated research laboratory under  
548 the Unit of Excellence scheme (BT/408/NE/U-Excel/2013), and also for overseas fellowship  
549 to visit JAMSTEC for data analysis under the DBT-Associateship program. The authors are  
550 thankful to the local Bodo women who shared their traditional material and information for  
551 our research.

552

553 **Authors' contributions**

554 D.N. conceived and designed experiments. N.B. and A.B. contributed to sample collection  
555 and DNA isolation. H.T. directed metagenomic data analysis. D.N. and O.T. performed  
556 computational work. D.N. wrote and H.T. revised the manuscript.

557

558 **Competing interests** The authors declare no competing interests.

559

560 **Supplementary data**

561 Table S1: Species diversity and comparison of *emao* to other traditional starters

562 Table S2: Metabolic modules predicted from *emao* metagenome in MAPLE system

563 Table S3: List of potential lignocellulose/pentose metabolizing microbial species identified in  
564 *emao* as inferred from cross-references

565 Fig. S1: CAZyme sub-families as recorded in *emao*

566 Fig. S2: BPZymes as recorded in '*emao*'

567

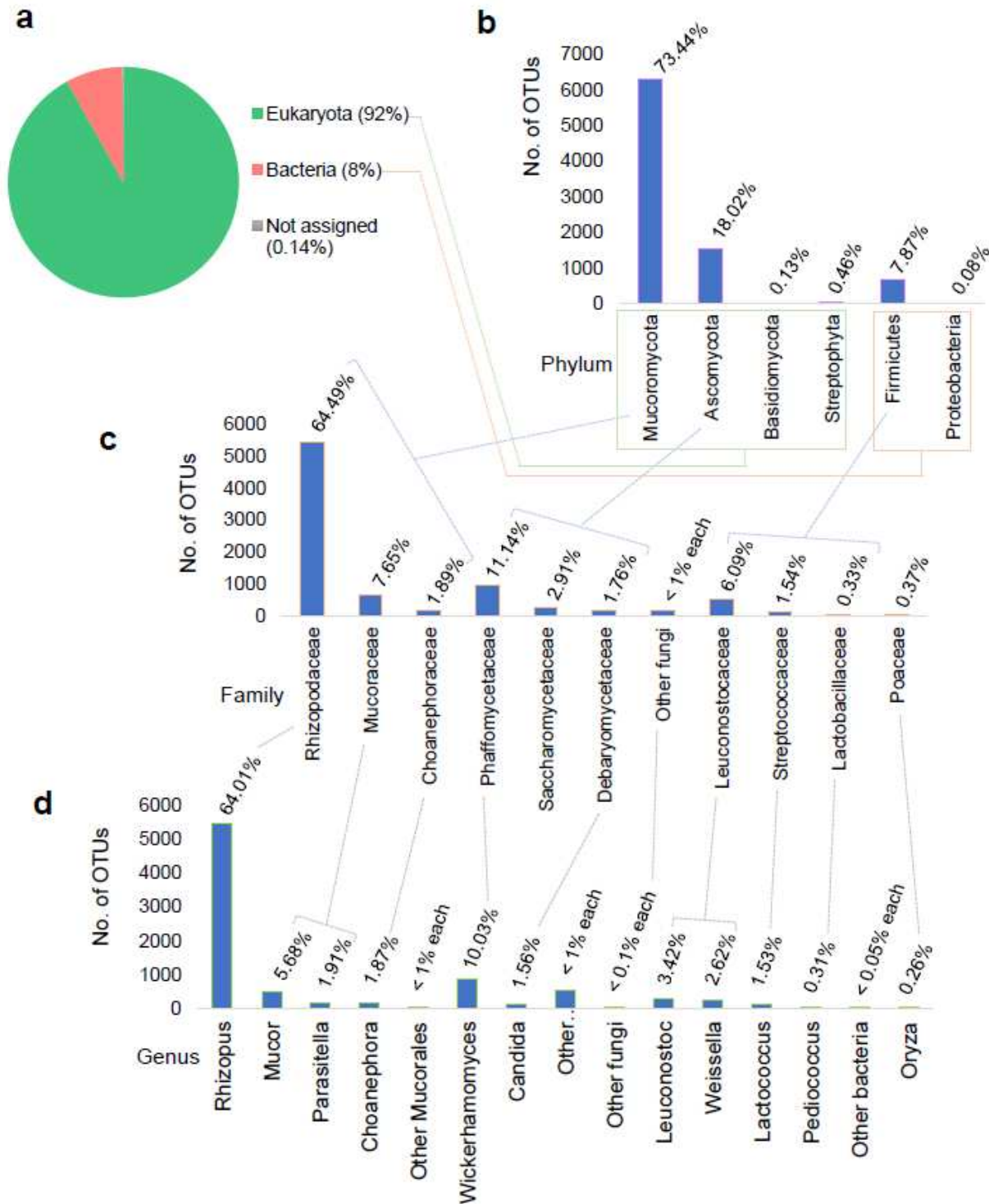
568 **Data availability**

569 Whole-metagenome amino acid sequence data (DNS1), MAPLE assigned KOs (DNS2),  
570 KEGG metabolic modules (DNS3), and ribosomal protein-based community structure  
571 information in RMA format (DNS4) are available through figshare (DOI:  
572 10.6084/m9.figshare.8868689). Any other relevant data are available from the corresponding  
573 author upon reasonable request.

574

575

# Figures



**Figure 1**

Community structure estimation in emao based on ribosomal protein sequence analysis. The ratio of molds, yeasts and bacteria was 9.2:2:1. a, At Domain level; b, At Phylum level; c, At Family level; d, At Genus level

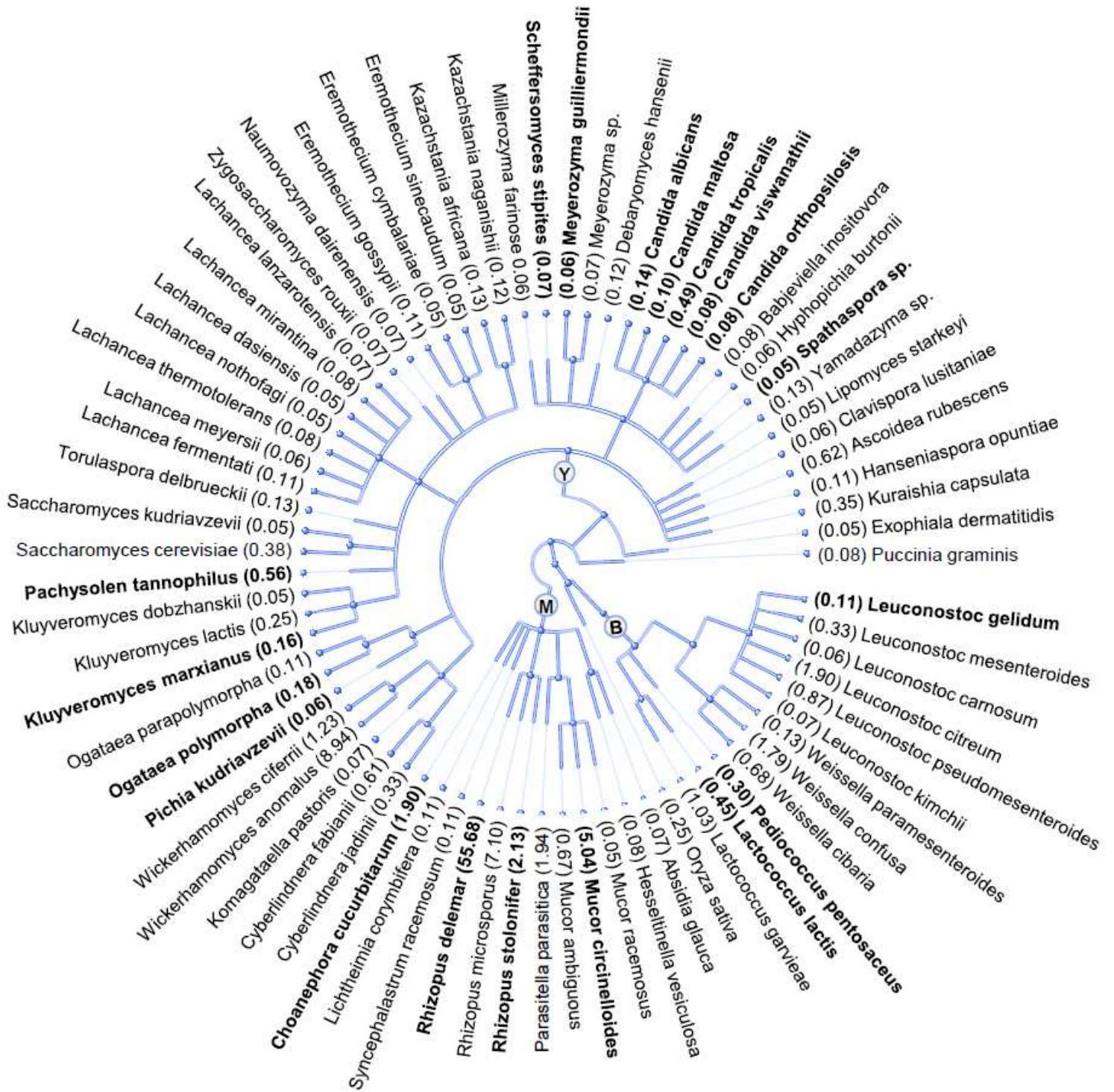
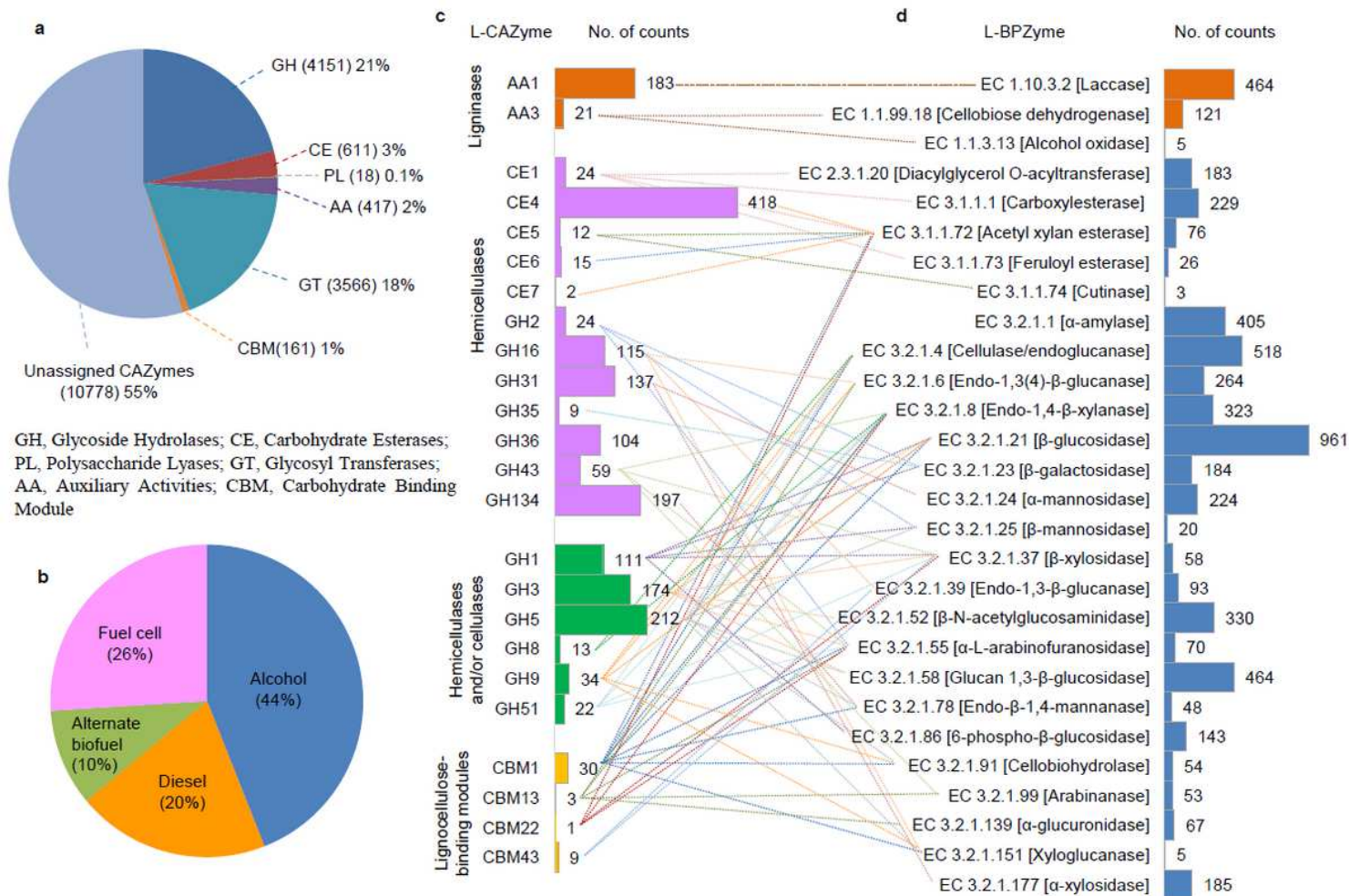


Figure 2

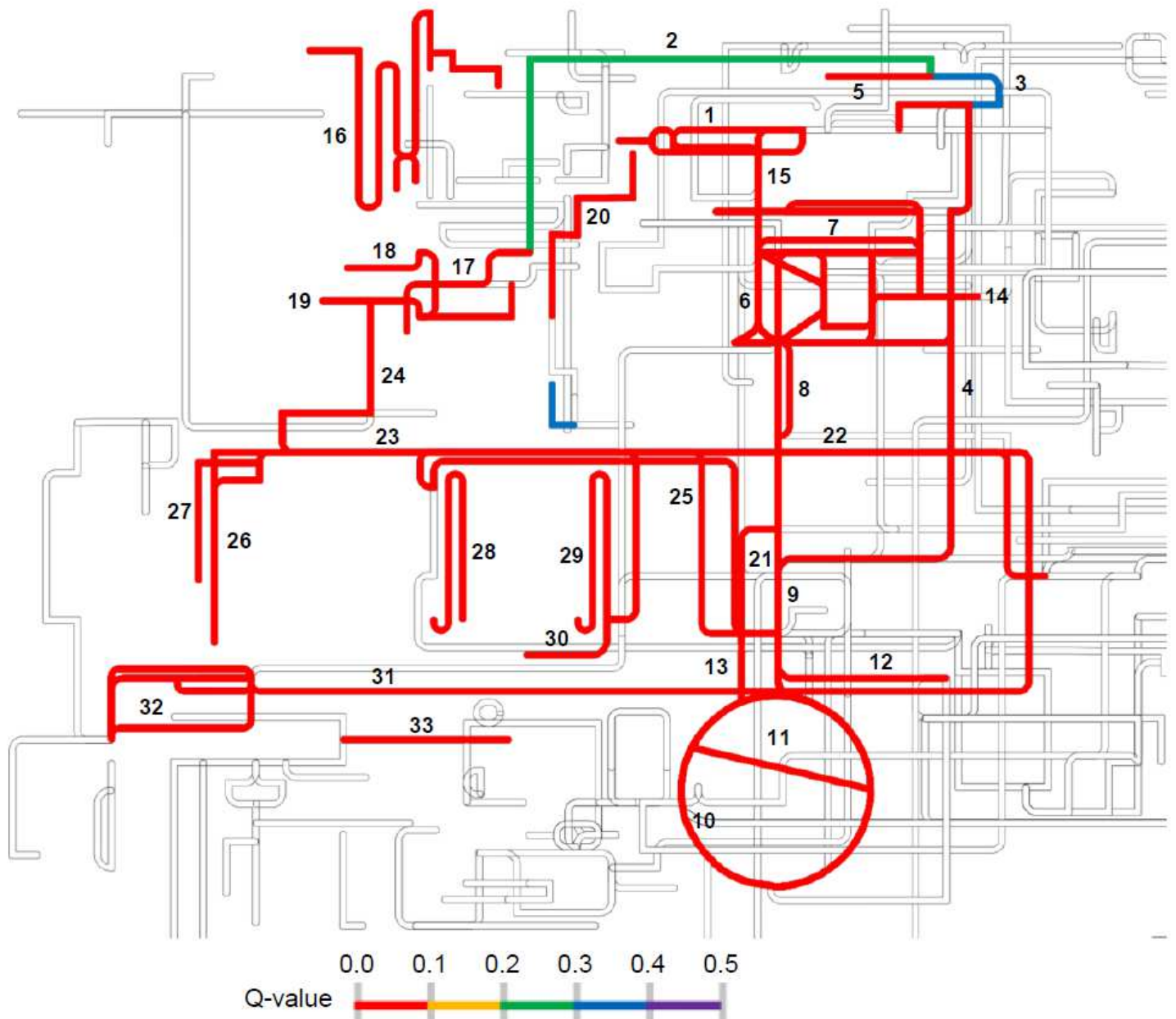
Phylogenetic tree of species as recorded in emao. Total 74 microbial species and 1 rice species were identified based on ribosomal protein sequence homology search against NCBI-nr database. Values within bracket indicate relative abundance in percent. Bold-faced species (total 19) indicate lignocellulose/pentose metabolizer (for cross references see Extended Data Table S3). B, Bacteria; M, Molds; Y, Yeasts.





**Figure 3**

Carbohydrate active enzymes (CAZymes) and biofuel producing enzymes (BPZymes) predicted in emao. Complete list of CAZymes and BPZymes recorded in emao is available in Extended Data Fig. S1 & S2 respectively. a, Pie chart indicating percentage of CAZyme families assigned by Hotpep. Value within brackets is total count. b, Relative percentage of BPZyme categories as classified in BioFuelDB. c, Lignocellulolytic CAZyme sub-families segregated activity-wise. d, Lignocellulolytic BPZymes with Enzyme Commission (EC) number extracted from b and correlated to c (dotted lines).



**Figure 4**

Carbohydrate and lipid metabolic maps predicted in emao. Metabolic modules with Q-value less than 0.5 for whole microbial communities (WC) were shown in the map (Extended Data Table 3). The probability of occurrence of a metabolic module increases with decreasing Q-value as the latter is zero if all the genes necessary for a module is complete<sup>19</sup>. This coarse-grained map was created using the KEGG Atlas map. 1, Galactose degradation; 2, D-galacturonate degradation (fungi); 3, D-galacturonate degradation (bacteria); 4, D-glucuronate degradation; 5, Pectin degradation; 6, Embden-Meyerhof Pathway (glycolysis); 7, Pentose phosphate pathway; 8, Glycolysis core module; 9, Pyruvate oxidation; 10, Citrate cycle; 11, Glyoxylate cycle; 12, Melanoate semialdehyde pathway; 13, Gluconeogenesis; 14, PRPP biosynthesis; 15, Nucleotide sugar biosynthesis; 16, N-glycan metabolism; 17, Acyl glycerol degradation; 18, Phosphatidylcholine biosynthesis; 19, Phosphatidylethanolamine biosynthesis; 20, GPI-anchor

biosynthesis, core oligosaccharide; 21, Inositol phosphate metabolism; 22, Ceramide biosynthesis; 23, Sphingosine biosynthesis; 24, Sphingosine degradation; 25, Fatty acid biosynthesis, initiation; 26, Fatty acid biosynthesis, elongation; 27, Fatty acid biosynthesis, elongation (ER); 28, Fatty acid biosynthesis, elongation (mitochondria); 29, Beta-oxidation; 30, Beta-oxidation acyl-CoA synthesis; 31, C5 isoprenoid biosynthesis (Mevalonate); 32, C10-20 isoprenoid biosynthesis; 33, Ergocalciferol biosynthesis.

## Supplementary Files

This is a list of supplementary files associated with this preprint. Click to download.

- [Table1Narzaryetal..pdf](#)
- [Table2Narzaryetal..pdf](#)
- [Table3Narzaryetal..pdf](#)
- [SupplementaryDataFig.S1Narzaryetal..pdf](#)
- [SupplementaryDataFig.S2Narzaryetal..pdf](#)
- [SupplementaryDataTableS1Narzaryetal..xlsx](#)
- [SupplementaryDataTableS2Narzaryetal..xls](#)
- [SupplementaryDataTableS3Narzaryetal..pdf](#)
- [SupplementaryDataFig.S1Narzaryetal..pdf](#)
- [SupplementaryDataFig.S2Narzaryetal..pdf](#)
- [SupplementaryDataTableS1Narzaryetal..xlsx](#)
- [SupplementaryDataTableS2Narzaryetal..xls](#)
- [SupplementaryDataTableS3Narzaryetal..pdf](#)