



CURRICULLUM VITAE

Updated April 2023

Professor Saif Nasser Mohamed Al-Bahry

College of Science, Sultan Qaboos University,
P.O.Box 36 AlKhodh, Muscat, P.C.123,
Tel: (968) 24141401, (968) 24146868
Fax: (968) 24413415
email: snbahry@squ.edu.om



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Scholarly Achievements and Related Activities

Research Experience and Research Interest

1. **Microbiology**

One of my research interests is focused on the emergence of multiple resistant antibiotic bacteria and the transfer of antibiotic resistant genes from human and domestic animals and their impact on environment and wildlife such as sea turtles and fish. My recent interest is the identification of the most dominant resistant determinants among antibiotic resistant bacteria.

2. **Molecular biology**

I collaborated with members of Biology Department and other members from different departments in several projects related to nucleic acids and proteins using fungi, the use of metagenomics for identification of bacteria and its genes, animals and plants as models.

3. **Electron microscopy**

My background in microscopy and image analysis has widened the scope of my research interest, using scanning electron microscopy, X-ray microanalysis and image mapping from various biological specimens. We have established a strong research team in this field. Our group has done a comprehensive study on the ultrastructure of eggshells and microbial penetration in turtles and chicken eggs.

4. **Sea turtle conservation**

I have been conducting research on different aspects of sea turtle biology such as microbial survey and resistance of microbial flora to antibiotics in the nesting green turtles. In addition, I have also been involved in several projects related to stress physiology, heavy metal pollution, emergence behavior and conservation strategy of the green and loggerhead turtles which constitute one of the largest nesting populations in the world. Our turtle research team is well recognized internationally.



5. Heavy metal pollution

My recent research interest is the heavy metal pollution in the environment caused by sewage effluents. We have presented our work in several regional and international conferences. Our research group have isolated several bacteria resistant to toxic heavy metals.

6. Biotechnology

a. Microbial Biotechnology and microbial enhanced oil recovery.

a.1 I am involved in research with a group of scientists in the Department of Petroleum and Chemical Engineering, College of Engineering, SQU, and Petroleum Development of Oman to study the possibility of microbial use for the enhancement of oil recovery from oil wells. The three phases of this project have already been implemented successfully, with valuable data obtained. The first phase of the project was from His Majesty and the Petroleum Development of Oman grants. Our ultimate goal for this project is filed application. We have established a capacity building with well-equipped laboratory and personnel. We have identified and fully characterized five types biosurfactants and two types of biopolymers. Some of biosurfactants reduce heavy oil viscosity to minimum making easing it transportation in pipelines with less energy requirements.

a.2 Many oil fields in Oman produce heavy oil. Microbes which biotransformation heavy oil to light oil have been isolated in our labs. The bioproducts of this study may play a major role in recovery of heavy to light oil in the future. Similar microbes were experimented for bioremediation of oil pollutions.

a.3 Our team is also involved in reservoir souring mitigation and sulfur reducing bacteria. We are at the initial stages where we have analyzed and screened several oil wells from northern and southern fields in Oman to characterize and isolate sulfur-reducing microbes in oil fields. Our ultimate objective is to find means to mitigate the effected oil wells.

b. The other interest is to investigate microbial metabolites and their use in environment and industry. These studies include microbial enzymes such as cellulases, bacteriocins, biopolymers and bio-surfactants.

c. Bioactive metabolites: I have been collaborating with a phytochemistry group from the Department of Biology to investigate the antimicrobial activity of medicinal plants extracts. Several bioactive compounds have been identified and characterized.

d. Bio-control: The other interest is the use of nematophagous fungi to control the spread of nematodes infecting plants.

Publications

1. Full text publications

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Scientific findings with significant importance

1. ***Navicella costaricaensis*** Etymology: after Costa Rica. We have isolated this fungus from rainforest soil and plant debris in Costa Rica. Until the publication of this work, there are only five described species, two from North America, and two from Europe and one from Oman.

2. **Isolates from Microbial Oil Recovery project**

Our MEOR team has isolated several halotolerants, aerobic and anaerobic facultative anaerobic spore forming and non-spore forming bacteria from oil fields and oil contaminated soils. All isolates were tested at reservoir conditions (temperature and pressure) using various carbon sources. Isolation and characterization of microbial enhanced oil recovery aerobic/anaerobic bacteria using 16S rRNA (DGGE) and gene sequencer (Some have been submitted to NCBI GenBank, Bethesda, Maryland, USA). Metagenomics and bioinformatics have been used to identify microbial populations and their abundance from oil field, deep oil wells, and produced water. According to the literature search, different categories of microbial isolates were from the deep oil wells. Some were first records in Oman some strains were second World record and others were first World record from oil wells.

Several microbes from the family Bacillaceae were isolated from oil contaminated environment were registered to NCBI. Many of the isolates have shown evidence of biosurfactant production by reduction in surface and interfacial tensions. The 16S rRNA of the



isolates have been sequenced. Most have been registered to the International Genebank, NCBI.

A new strain of *Aureobasidium mangrovei* was isolated from our lab to produce biopolymer to be used for enhancement of oil recovery.

3. **Isolates for heavy oil treatment**

Bacillus strains of specific interest to heavy oil have been isolated in our labs. The strains have been found to biotransform heavy oil into light oil. The 16s rRNA of the isolates has been sequenced and submitted to the NCBI.

4. **Cellulolytic thermophilic *Bacillus*** strains have also been submitted to the NCBI. The microbes have been isolated from compost were able degrade Carboxymethylcellulose (CMC), cellulose, xylan and cellobiose and at 50°C. The strains have several industrial applications in biotechnology including biofuel.