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ISOLATION AND PURIFICATION OF MARINE CYANOBACTERIA IN LABORATORY CONDITIONS

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ABSTRACT: Twenty four species of cyanobacteria were isolated from a variety of marine habitats collected from Karachi coast and open ocean waters. The species of cyanobacteria were isolated from mix culture using serial dilution techniques at room temperature under constant illumination. The isolated species consist of six unicellular and eighteen filamentous non-heterocystous cyanobacterial species. Heterocystous forms were not obtained during these studies. Isolates were maintained in Marine Biology Culture Collection (MBCC).

KEYWORDS: Buleji, cyanobacteria, isolation, marine habitat.

INTRODUCTION

Cyanobacteria are found abundantly in marine habitats (Caroppo *et al.*, 2012; Ohki, *et al.*, 2008). Due to their ability to tolerate high salt concentrations and preference for alkaline conditions they grow well in seawater. Many species also show resistance towards osmotic shock and extremes of temperature thus making their existence suitable in a diversity of intertidal habitats (Chauhan and Abraham, 2011). Isolation and purification of uni-algal species of cyanobacteria from ecosystems is required to obtain cultures of cyanobacteria (Nagle *et al.*, 2010; Moore *et al.*, 2007) which can be of use for laboratory studies in basic and applied research, and to advance the acquaintance about micro biota of the specified ecological unit (Rajeshwari and Rajashekhar, 2011; Sarchizian and Ardelean, 2010; Thajuddin and Subramanian, 2005). They produce several bioactive compounds and recognized as a good source for many useful products (Carmichael, 2001; Codd, 1997). In the 1990s, cyanobacteria were reported to be a significant source for vitamins, fuels, fine chemicals and several pharmaceutical products (Chacon-de-Popioici, 1994; De Vries *et al.*, 1993; Miura *et al.*, 1993; Pesando and Bouicha, 1991).

Isolation and purification of cyanobacteria is often very difficult to isolate and in some cases it is impossible to isolate an individual from rest of the community in which it normally live (Palinska *et al.*, 1999; Ferris and Hirsch, 1991). Therefore, isolation and purification procedures have been revised for different strains isolated from different habitats, for example, thermophilic, epilithic, endolithic and planktonic, epiphytic, marine, freshwater and hypersaline environments (Olsson-Francis *et al.*, 2010; Michael *et al.*, 1991; Castenholtz, 1981; Walsby, 1981; Waterbury and Stainer, 1981 and Rippka *et al.*, 1981; Newton and Herman, 1979).

The isolation method of cyanobacteria is quite different from traditional bacteriological procedures. Several attempts have been made by different workers, and they encountered various difficulties in obtaining axenic cyanobacterial cultures (Fujishiro *et al.*, 2004; Sena *et al.*, 2011). The requirements of various constituents, like vitamins, organic carbon sources, combined nitrogen and inorganic constituents differ in different cyanobacterial species cultivation (Van Baalen, 1962), as well as the physico-chemical parameters, such as pH, salt concentration, temperature, light, aeration etc. (Geider 1987; Rippka *et al.*, 1979; Brock, 1973; Allen and Stainer, 1968; Allen and Arnon, 1955). Marine cyanobacteria for optimal growth also require Na^+ , Cl^- , Mg^+ and Ca^+ ions (McLeod, 1965; Rippka *et al.*, 1979).

Both liquid and solid enrichment media have been developed and employed for the rapid culture, isolation, purification and maintenance of marine and freshwater cyanobacteria (Allen, 1968; Waterbury and Stainer, 1981). The liquid media such ASN-III, MN and BG-11 (Shirai *et al.*, 1989; Rippka *et al.*, 1979), ASP-2 (Provasoli *et al.*, 1957; Van Baalen, 1962) and SAG1 (Schlösser, 1982) etc have been modified to be used for the propagation of marine and freshwater spp. Many techniques have been used to obtain axenic cyanobacterial culture. These procedures including variation in the media nutrients, variations in the isolation techniques, application of antibiotics for the purification of culture etc., (Leach *et al.*, 1947; Obrig *et al.*, 1971; Whitton, 1968). The cyanobacteria have been isolated from different aquatic habitat and characterized morphologically (Rippka *et al.*, 1979; Anagnostidis and Komarek, 1985, 88 and Komarek and Anagnostidis, 1986, 89) as well as with respect to their salt tolerance, mode of cell division, pigment composition, optimal growth requirements and their ability to fix nitrogen (Rippka *et al.*, 1979; Kao *et al.*, 1973).

The objective of this study was to isolate and identify cyanobacteria species from various habitats and ability to culture in laboratory conditions.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Sample collection:

The marine cyanobacterial samples were collected from different habitats near Karachi coast. The samples were collected in sterile polythene bags and were immediately brought to the laboratory. For the isolation of cyanobacterial species serial dilution technique and streaking plate method were employed (Thronsen, 1969; Rippka, 1988). The dilution was made in sterilized Miquel's medium contained in test tubes. One millilitre of homogenized sample was diluted ten folds up to a level of 10^{-25} . Test tubes were thoroughly mixed before each transfer. In some cases more dilutions were required for the isolation of a single species. Dilution tubes were incubated under constant light at room temperature. As soon as uni-algal culture of cyanobacteria was obtained, they were maintained in liquid medium (e.g., ASNIII, MN, and Miquel's medium (Rippka *et al.*, 1979; Imai, 1977). For the long term storage the culture were streaked on prewashed agar slants (ASNIII medium) (Kantz and Bold, 1969; Carmichael and Gorham, 1974). Stock cultures were maintained at room temperature under diffused light. The isolated species were identified according to botanical code of classification (Rippka *et al.*, 1979; Desikachary, 1959; Anagnostidis and Komarek, 1985, 88 and Komarek and

Anagnostidis, 1986, 89). Each isolates were given a number under Marine Biology Culture Collection (MBCC) series.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Results:

The cyanobacterial species from different study sites were isolated and characterized by morphological characters. The serial dilution techniques resulted in the isolation of twenty four species including six unicellular and eighteen non-heterocystous filamentous cyanobacteria (Plate1 & Table1). Isolated species were belong to sixteen genera. No heterocystous species was isolated in this study. The isolate were characterized and numbered in the MBCC series. Micrograph of each species were shown in plate I.

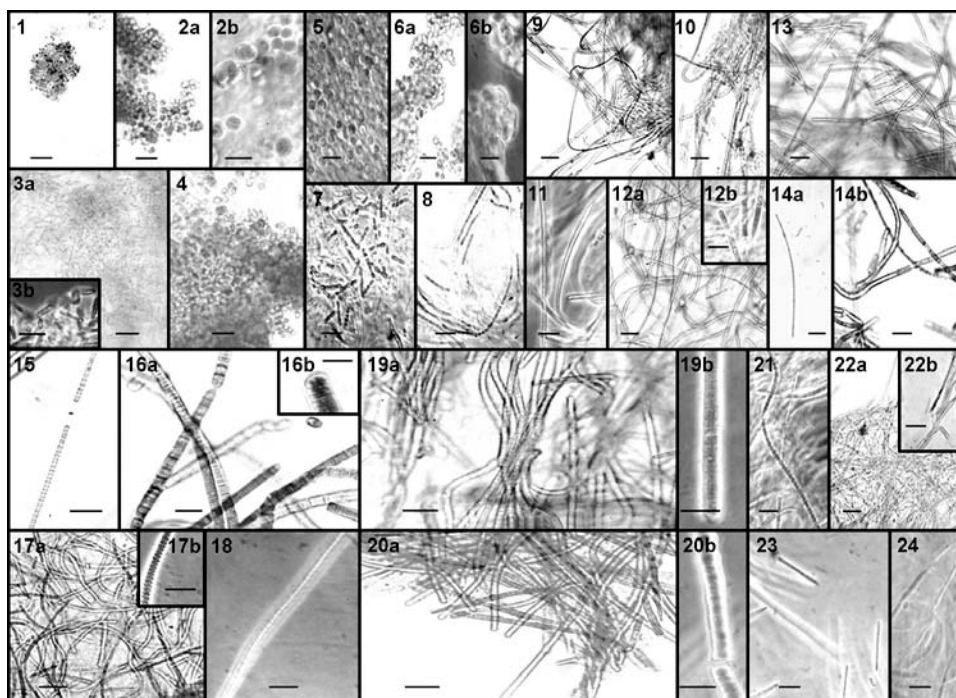


Fig. 1. *Synechocystis aquatilis*: 1. *Gloeocapsa cripidinum*: 2a, 2b. *Chlorogleopsis microcystoides*: 3a, 3b. *Myxosarcina burmensis*: 4. *Xenococcus keneri*: 5. *X. acervatus*: 6a, 6b. *Komvophoron minutum*: 7. *K. epiphyticum*: 8. *Psuedoanabaena galeata*: 9. *P. limnetica*: 10. *P. lonchoides*: 11. *Limnothrix amphigranulata*: 12a, 12b. *Lyngbea contorta*: 13. *Hormosilla pringsheimii*: 14a, 14b. *Oscillatoria psuedogaminata*: 15. *Katagnymen accurata*: 16a, 16b. *Spirulina major*: 17a, 17b. *Planktothrix clathrata*: 18. *P. agardhii*: 19a, 19b. *Phormidium breve*: 20a, 20b. *P. amphigranulata*: 21. *P. ambiguum*: 22a, 22b. *P. africanum*: 23. *Pseudoscytonema malayense*: 24. (Scale bar represents: a = 20 μ m, b = 10 μ m).

Table 1. Data presented on the unicellular and filamentous non-heterocystous species of cyanobacteria isolated during the study.

No. of Isolates	Name of the species	Habitats
MBCC0001	<i>Synechocystis aquatilis</i>	rock pool water
MBCC0002	<i>Gloeocapsa cripidinum</i>	epiphytic on <i>Colpomenia</i> thallus
MBCC0003	<i>Chlorogleopsis microcystoides</i>	edaphic
MBCC0004	<i>Myxosarcina burmensis</i>	rock pool water
MBCC0005	<i>Xenococcus keneri</i>	epizoic on fish scale
MBCC0006	<i>X. acervatus</i>	edaphic.
MBCC0007	<i>Komvophoron minutum</i>	epiphytic on <i>Codium iyengarii</i>
MBCC0008	<i>K. epiphyticum</i>	edaphic at low tide
MBCC0009	<i>Psuedoanabaena galeata</i>	edaphic (Mangrove soil)
MBCC0010	<i>P. limnetica</i>	pool water
MBCC0011	<i>P. lonchoides</i>	epilithic at high tide
MBCC0012	<i>Limnothrix amphigranulata</i>	edaphic
MBCC0013	<i>Lyngbea contorta</i>	rock pool water
MBCC0014	<i>Hormosilla pringsheimii</i>	rock pool water
MBCC0015	<i>Oscillatoria psuedogaminata</i>	open ocean
MBCC0016	<i>Katagnymen accurata</i>	open ocean (Manora channel).
MBCC0017	<i>Spirulina major</i>	edaphic
MBCC0018	<i>Planktothrix clathrata</i>	rock pool water
MBCC0019	<i>P. agardhii</i>	rock pool water
MBCC0020	<i>Phormidium breve</i>	rock pool water
MBCC0021	<i>P. amphigranulata</i>	edaphic
MBCC0022	<i>P. ambiguum</i>	open oceans
MBCC0023	<i>P. africanum</i>	epiphytic on <i>Galaxaura oblongata</i>
MBCC0024	<i>Pseudoscytonema malayense</i>	epizoic on sponges

Description of Isolates:***Synechocystis aquatilis* Sauv (MBCC0001)**

Bull.Soc. bot.France, 39; 121, fig. 2, 1892; Forti in De Toni, Sylloge, Algarum, 5: 26, 1907; GEITLER, Kryptogamenflora, 270, 1932. Desikachary 1959; pp. 144.

Single spherical cell, colour is yellowish green, cell content homogenous, sheath absent; cell size 2.6 μm , rotatory movement.

Habitat: Isolated from rock pool water.

***Gloeocapsa cripidinum* Thuret (MBCC0002)**

In Bornet and Thuret, Algologiques, 1:1, pl. fig. 1-3, 1876; Forti in De Toni Sylloge Algarum, 5: 44, 1907; Geitler, Kryptogamenflora, 190, fig. 85, 86, 1932; Fremy, Cyano. Cotes d' Eur., 26, pl. 5, fig. 12, 1933. Desikachary 1959; pp. 117.

Cells closely arranged in colony, bright green in colour, colony oval; sheath not present; cell size 3.9 μm , colony size 32.5 μm , non-motile.

Habitat: epiphytic on *Colpomenia* thallus.

***Chlorogleopsis microcystoides* Geitler (MBCC0003)**

Neue Cyano. Gruppe. Chamaesiphon., Arch. Protistenk., 51:359, fig. U, 1925; Kryptogamenflora, 310, fig. 155, 1932. Desikachary 1959; pp. 163

Cells as long as broad, dark green in colour, constricted at the cross walls; sheath absent. Cell width and length 1.3 μm , apical cell non-capitate, non-motile.

Habitat: edaphic.

***Myxosarcina burmensis* Skuja (MBCC0004)**

Zur Susswasseralgenflora Burmas 21, pl. 1, fig. 12, 1949. Desikachary 1959; pp. 178.

Cells are spherical or sub spherical, closely arranged in colony, dark green or olive green in colour, cell content homogenous; sheath present, colorless; cell size 3.9 μm , colony size 22.1 μm , non-motile

Habitat: rock pool water.

***Xenococcus kernerii* Hansg. (MBCC0005)**

Physiol. Algal. Stud., 111, pl. 1 fig. 19, 1887; Forti in De Toni Sylloge Algarum, 5: 134, 1907; Femy, Myxo. D' Afri. Equat. Franc., 61 fig. 67, Geitler, Kryptogamenflora, 330, fig. 163, 1932; Fremy, Cyano. Cotes d' Eur., 26, pl. 9, fig. 2, 1933. Desikachary 1959; pp. 181.

Cells yellowish green in colour, loosely arranged in colony; cell width 5.2 μm , cell length 6.5 μm , non-motile

Habitat: epizoic on fish scale.

***X. acervatus* Setchell et Gardner. (MBCC0006)**

In Gardner, New Pacific coast Algae, III, Uni, Calif. Publi. Bot., 6: 459, pl. 39 fig. 1918. Geitler, Kryptogamenflora, 33, fig. 168, 1932. Desikachary 1959; pp. 182.

Cell oblong or oval in shape, 2-4 together in common mucilage, yellowish green; sheath colourless; cell width 3.9 μm , cell length 6.5 μm ; colony size 13 μm .

Habitat: edaphic.

***Komvophoron minutum* (MBCC0007)**

(SKUJA) comb. N. basionym: *Psuedoanabaena minuta* SKUJA Symb. Bot. Upsal. 9(3) 59, 1948]; type species; SKUJA 1956, KOMAREK 1974 (special species?) Anagnostidis & Komarek 1988; pp. 373, fig. 17(2)

Filament large, solitary, somewhat coiled green in colour, slightly constricted at the cross the walls, apical cell non-capitate; sheath not present; width 5.2 μm , length 2.6 μm , gliding movement.

Habitat: epiphytic on *Codium iyengarii*

***K. epiphyticum* (MBCC0008)**

(after SUJA 1948). Nomen novum [diagn. *Phormidium mucicola* f. *crassum* SKUJA Symb. Bot. Upsal. 9(3): 52, 1948 icnotype] Anagnostidis & Komarek 1988; pp. 373.

Cell longer than broad; constricted at the cross walls; apical cell non-capitate; bright green in colour; cell width and length 1.3 μm ; two granules present on either side of cross walls, non-motile.

Habitat: edaphic at low tide

***Psuedoanabaena galeata* (MBCC0009)**

(after BOCHER from STARMACH 1966) Anagnostidis & Komarek 1988; pp. 384, Fig. 22(6)

Filamentous bright green in colour; distinctly constricted at the cross walls; apical cell non-capitate, round; sheath not present; width and length 1.3 μm , non-motile.

Habitat: edaphic (Mangrove soil).

***P. limnetica* (MBCC0010)**

(after KOMAREK 1958); Anagnostidis & Komarek 1988; pp. 384, fig. 22(3)

Cells green in colour; sheath not present; distinctly constricted at the cross walls; apical cell non-capitate, round width 1.3 μm , length 3.9 μm ; non-motile.

Habitat: isolated from rock pool water.

***P. lonchoides* (MBCC0011)**

(after Anagnostidis 1961) Anagnostidis & Komarek 1988; pp. 384, fig. 22(10)

Cells dark green in colour; sheath not present; distinctly constricted at the cross walls; apical cell non-capitate, rounded; width 2.6 μm , length 3.9 μm ., non-capitate.

Habitat: epilithic at high tide

***Limnothrix amphigranulata* (MBCC0012)**

(VAN GOOR). MEFFERT 1987 [sym. *Oscillatoria amphigranulata* VAN GOOR [1918] Anagnostidis & Komarek 1988; pp. 386.

Cells longer, slightly constricted at the cross walls, apical cell non-capitate; two granules present on either side of cross walls; cell width 2.6 μm , cell length 5.2 μm ; bright green in colour; sheath not present; gliding movement.

Habitat: edaphic.

***Lyngbea contorta* Lemm. (MBCC0013)**

Phytoplant. Sachteiche. In Ploner Forscher., 6: 202, pl. Figs. 10-13. 1898; Forti De Toni, Sylloge Algarum, 5: 288, 1907: Frey, Myxo. D' Afr. Equat. Frac., 202, fig. Fig. 172, 1929; Kryptogamenflora, 1043, figs. 660a, b, 1932 Frey, Cyano. Cotesd' Eur., 109, pl. 29 fig. 2, 1933. Desikachary 1959; pp. 290.

Filamentous straight or regularly coiled, slightly constricted at the cross walls apical cell non-capitate, rounded; cell width 2.6 μm cell length 3.9 μm , bright green in colour; sheath absent, gliding and oscillating movement.

Habitat: isolated from rock pool water.

***Hormosilla pringsheimii* (MBCC0014)**

spec. nova (PRINGHEIM Arch. Microbiol. 63: 331-335, 1968); Anagnostidis *et al.* 1983; iconotype: Fig. 32e. Anagnostidis & Komarek 1988; pp. 425, fig. 32c.

Cell dark brown or violet in colour; filament solitary; broader than long; slightly constricted at the cross walls; apical cell non-capitate, rounded; sheath present, colourless; width 3.9 μm length 2.6 μm ., non-motile.

Habitat: rock pool water.

***Oscillatoria psuedogaminata* G. Schmid (MBCC0015)**

Ber. Dtsch. Bot. Ges., 32: 124, fig.4, 1914; Geitler, Kryptogamenflora, 966, fig. 616, 1932. Desikachary 1959; pp. 228.

Filament dark green in colour; distinctly constricted at the cross walls; apical cell non-capitate, round; sheath not present; width 1.3 μm length 2.6 μm , non-motile.

Habitat: open ocean.

***Katagnymen accurata* (MBCC0016)**

(after Geitler 1982) Anagnostidis & Komarek 1988; pp. 427.

Cell wider, not constricted at the cross walls; apical cell non-capitate, rounded; sheath colourless; width 9.1 μm , length 3.9 μm ; gliding movement.

Habitat: open ocean (Manora channel).

***Spirulina major* Kutz ex Gomont (MBCC0017)**

Kutzing, Phyc. Gene., 183, 1843; Gomont. Monogr. Oscillariees, 251, pl. 7, fig. 29, 1892; ; Forti De Toni, Sylloge Algarum, 5: 210, 1907; Fremy, Myxo. d' Afr. Equat. Franc., 234, fig. 208, 1929; Kryptogamenflora, 930, figs. 595, b, 1932. Desikachary 1959; pp. 196.

Colour bright green; spiral very close to each other; spirals width 1.3 μm to 2 μm , oscillating movement.

Habitat: edaphic.

***Planktothrix clathrata* (MBCC0018)**

(SKUJA) comb.n.[basionym:*Oscillatoria mougeotii* var. *clathrata* SKUJA Nova Acta Reg. Soc. Sci. Upsal. Ser. 4, 16(3): 58, 1956]. (after SKUJA 1956). Anagnostidis & Komarek 1988; pp. 414, fig. 28(6).

Filament dark green, cell broader than long; slightly constricted at the cross walls; apical cell non-capitate, rounded; sheath not present; cell width 5.2, μm length 3.9 μm , gliding movement

Habitat: rock pool water.

***P. agardhii* (MBCC0019)**

(GOM) comb. [basionym:*Oscillatoria agardhii* GOM. Ann. Sci. Nat., VII. Bot., 16: 205, [1892]; type species; SKULBERG & 1985 UTKILEN *et al.* 1985b. (After Komarek 1958-a, Geitler 1932-b, WISLOUCH from GEITLER-c, KOMAREK 1984,). Anagnostidis & Komarek 1988; pp. 416, fig. 28(1).

Filament green in colour, cell broader than long; sheath not present; constricted at the cross walls; apical cell non-capitate, rounded; cell width 3.9 μm , length 2.6 μm , non-motile.

Habitat: rock pool water.

***Phormidium breve* (MBCC0020)**

(KUTZ., ex GOM) comb. [basionym: *Oscillatoria brevis* KUTZ., ex GOM. Ann. Sci. Nat., VII. Bot., 16: 229, 1892]. (after GOMONT and KOSINSSKAJA). Anagnostidis & Komarek 1988; pp. 397. fig. 25(1).

Filament green in colour, cell longer than broad; slightly constricted at the cross walls; apical cell non-capitate, tapering to a conical end; sheath not present; width 3.9 μm , length 2.6 μm ., gliding movement.

Habitat: rock pool water.

***P. amphigranulata* (MBCC0021)**

(after HOLLEERBACH). Anagnostidis & Komarek 1988; pp. 397. fig. 25(25).

Filament dark green in colour, more or less coiled, cell content homogenous; not constricted at the cross walls; apical cell non-capitate, round; sheath present colourless, unlamellated; cell width 2.6 μm , length 3 μm ., non-motile.

Habitat: edaphic.

***P. ambiguum* Gomont (MBCC0022)**

Monogr. Oscillariees, 178, pl., figs. 10, 1892; Forti De Toni, Sylloge Algarum, 5: 240, 1907; Fremy, Myxo. D' Afr. Equat. Franc., 156, fig. 137, 1929; Geitler, Kryptogamenflora, 1015, fig. 647e, 1932. Fremy, Cyano. Cotes d' Eur., 91, pl. 24, fig. 1, 1933. Desikachary 1959; pp. 266.

Cell wider, filament green in colour; slightly constricted at cross walls; apical cell non-capitate; gradually tapering to a pointed end; sheath present, colourless; cell width 4.5 μm , length 2.6 μm ; gliding movement.

Habitat: open oceans.

***P. africanum* Lemm. (MBCC0023)**

Deutsch. Zentr. Afr. Exped., 2: 89, 1911; Fremy, Myxo. D' Afr. Equat. Franc., 138, fig. 1929; Geitler, Kryptogamenflora, 999, 1932. Desikachary 1959; pp. 254.

Filamentous green in colour; not constricted at the cross walls; apical cell non-capitate, gradually tapering to a pointed end; sheath not present; cell width 1.3 μm , 3.9 μm , slow gliding movement. Habitat: epiphytic on *Galaxaura oblongata*.

***Pseudoscytonema malayense* (MBCC0024)**

(after Biiswas from Desikachary 1959) *P. malayense* (BISW.) ELENK. 1949; type species Anagnostidis & Komarek 1988; pp. 433.

Cell as long as broad, slightly constricted at cross walls; colour purple, violet or green; sheath absent; apical cell non-capitate, rounded; terminal cell swallowed; size 2.6 μm , cell width and length 1.3 μm ; non-motile.

Habitat: epizoic on sponges.

Discussion

Cyanobacteria are considered as the rich source for many valuable products and bioactive compounds (Carmichael, 2001; Codd, 1997). A potentially significant source of vitamins and many other pharmaceutical products (Chacon-de-Popioici, 1994; DeVries *et al.*, 1993; Miura *et al.*, 1993; Pesando and Bouicha, 1991).

Uni-algal culture of cyanobacteria is essential for studying many aspect of the biology of organisms. All species were isolated through serial dilution technique. Agar slant and plates were used but cyanobacteria failed to grow on them probably due to the

toxicity of agar to algal species (Kantz and Bold, 1969; Carmichael and Gorham, 1974). Later pre-washed agar was used to make slants for long term storage of isolates. Although a large number of species were recorded from different habitat, the number of isolates obtained during present study was low. The serial dilution technique takes long time for growth of a single cell and therefore, only twenty four species were isolated during this research.

The inability of a particular cyanobacterial species to grow in uni-algal culture may also be as there is difference between laboratory environment and natural marine habitat (Castenholtz, 1981; Walsby, 1981; Waterbury and Stainer, 1981 and Rippka *et al.*, 1981). The biotic interactions that can exist among species may be highly important for the survival of cyanobacterial species. The heterocystous species were not isolated through serial dilution technique used in this study. Similar paucity of heterocystous forms has been observed and attributed to the sulphide content in marine environment which may be more toxic to the heterocystous species than to the non-heterocystous species (Howseley and Pearson, 1979).

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