

1 **Biosynthesis of microcystin hepatotoxins in the cyanobacterial genus *Fischerella***

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26 **ABSTRACT**

27 Microcystins (MCs) are serine/threonine phosphatase inhibitors synthesized by several members of
28 the phylum Cyanobacteria. Mining the draft genome sequence of the nostocalean MC-producing
29 *Fischerella* sp. strain CENA161 led to the identification of three contigs containing *mcy* genes.
30 Subsequent PCR and Sanger sequencing allowed the assembling of its complete biosynthetic *mcy*
31 gene cluster with 55,016 bases in length. The cluster encoding ten genes (*mcyA-J*) with a central
32 bidirectional promoter was organized in a similar manner as found in other genera of nostocalean
33 cyanobacteria. However, the nucleotide sequence of the *mcy* gene cluster of *Fischerella* sp.
34 CENA161 showed significant differences from all the other MC-producing cyanobacterial genera,
35 sharing only 85.2 to 78.2% identities. Potential MC variants produced by *Fischerella* sp. CENA161
36 were predicted by the analysis of the adenylation domain binding pockets and further investigated
37 by LC-MS/MS analysis. To our knowledge, this study presents the first complete *mcy* cluster
38 characterization from a strain of the genus *Fischerella*, providing new insight into the distribution
39 and evolution of MCs in the phylum Cyanobacteria.

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41 Keywords: cyanotoxins, phosphatase inhibitors, genome mining, Nostocales

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51 **1. Introduction**

52 Microcystins (MCs) are small cyclic heptapeptides synthesized by several members of the
53 phylum Cyanobacteria with global significance due to their toxicity to humans and other animals
54 (Jochimsen et al., 1998; Sivonen and Jones, 1999). Their toxicity is exerted through inhibition of
55 members of the protein phosphatase families PP1 and PP2A (MacKintosh et al. 1990; Gullede et
56 al., 2002). Despite best known for their acute hepatotoxicity, MCs are of interest as possible anti-
57 cancer drug development targets (Niedermeyer et al., 2014; Kounnis et al., 2015). The general
58 structure of MCs can be summarized as cyclo-D-Ala¹-X²-D-MeAsp³-Z⁴-Adda⁵-D-Glu⁶-Mdha⁷ (see
59 Figure 1) (Botes et al., 1985), where X and Z are variable L-amino acids, while D-MeAsp
60 corresponds to D-erythro-β-methyl-aspartic acid, Mdha to N-methyl-α-β-dehydroalanine and Adda
61 to (2S,3S,8S,9S)-3-amino-9-methoxy-2,6,8-trimethyl-10-phenyldeca-(4E,6E)-dienoic acid. The
62 latter is exclusive to these toxins and nodularins and contributes to the molecule toxicity (Gullede
63 et al., 2002; Kounnis et al., 2015).

64 MCs are synthesized through enzymatic modification of short precursor peptides in the
65 nonribosomal pathway. This process is driven by a multifunctional modular enzyme complex
66 consisted of a combination of nonribosomal peptide synthetases (NRPS), type I polyketide
67 synthases (PKS-I), hybrid NRPS/PKS-I and tailoring enzymes (Nishizawa et al., 2000; Tillett et al.,
68 2000; Christiansen et al., 2003; Rouhiainen et al., 2004; Fewer et al., 2013). The microcystin gene
69 cluster (*mcy*) is composed of nine to ten genes depending on taxa and the involvement of several
70 *mcy* genes in MC biosynthesis was established by gene inactivation studies (Dittmann et al., 1997;
71 Pearson et al., 2004; Christiansen et al., 2008; Fewer et al., 2008). The closely related nodularin
72 (*nda*) synthetase gene cluster from *Nodularia* was also elucidated, indicating that it derived from
73 MC synthetase genes through a deletion event and a change in substrate specificity (Moffitt and
74 Neilan, 2004; Rantala et al., 2004). The biological role of cyanobacterial MC is not currently
75 understood, but several hypotheses have been suggested such as contributing in photosynthesis,

76 environmental adaptation, protection against oxidative stress, nutrient metabolism and storage,
77 quorum sensing, colony formation, defense against zooplanktonic grazers, iron uptake or transfer
78 and allelopathy (Omidi et al., 2017). These authors stated that conflicting results, unstandardized
79 experimental design, strain-specific behavior and differences between conditions in laboratory and
80 nature hinder generalizations on microcystin functions.

81 Despite several MC-producing strains have been found in the genera *Microcystis*, *Anabaena*,
82 *Nostoc*, *Fischerella*, *Hapalosiphon*, *Oscillatoria/Planktothrix*, and *Phormidium* (Bishop et al.,
83 1959; Botes et al., 1984; Krishnamurthy et al., 1986; Eriksson et al., 1988; Meriluoto et al., 1989;
84 Sivonen et al., 1990; Harada et al., 1991; Prinsep et al., 1992; Izaguirre et al., 2007; Fiore et al.,
85 2009), the MC biosynthetic pathway was only characterized in few strains of the genera
86 *Microcystis*, *Anabaena*, *Planktothrix* and *Nostoc* (Tillett et al., 2000; Christiansen et al., 2003;
87 Rouhiainen et al., 2004; Rounge et al., 2009; Fewer et al., 2013). The *mcy* gene clusters of these
88 distantly related cyanobacterial genera have revealed a highly conserved set of multidomain
89 proteins depicting the same basic reaction steps. Differences among these clusters have been
90 observed in gene arrangements, localization and orientation of promoter regions, and in genes
91 coding for tailoring enzymes. Interestingly, a cyanobacterium containing one *mcy* gene cluster can
92 produce more than one MC variant mainly due to the relaxed specificity of adenylation (A) domains
93 of McyB-A₁ and McyC-A (amino acid positions **2** and **4**, Figure 1). Therefore, the description of
94 novel MC gene clusters from different cyanobacterial taxa offers high potential for isolating
95 variants with unique properties.

96 Although MC production and fragments of biosynthetic genes have already been identified in
97 strains of the genus *Fischerella* (Fiore et al., 2009; Cirés et al., 2014) and even prediction of an
98 incomplete gene cluster has been reported (Shih et al., 2013), the entire gene cluster remains
99 unsolved. Here we used a genomics-based approach to characterize the complete biosynthetic gene
100 cluster in the MC-producing strain *Fischerella* sp. CENA161. Prediction analysis based on the

101 amino acid residues lining the substrate-binding pockets in NRPS A domains were performed and
102 potential structural variants investigated by high performance liquid chromatography coupled to
103 tandem mass spectrometry (LC–MS/MS).

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105 **2. Method**

106 *2.1. Cyanobacterial strain*

107 The cyanobacterium *Fischerella* sp. CENA161 was isolated from a water sample collected
108 from a small concrete dam of spring water in the municipality of Piracicaba, São Paulo state, Brazil,
109 as previously described (Fiore et al., 2009). This strain is maintained under culture in CENA/USP,
110 located in Piracicaba, SP, Brazil, in BG–11 (Allen, 1968) liquid medium without inorganic nitrogen
111 (BG–11₀), at 25±1 °C, with a 14:10 h light/dark photoperiod, and photon flux density of 40 μmol
112 photons/m²/s.

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114 *2.2. DNA extraction, PCR amplification and Sanger sequencing*

115 Cells from the cyanobacterial culture were collected and processed as previously described
116 (Heck et al., 2016). Total genomic DNA was extracted using the AxyPrep™ Bacterial Genomic
117 DNA Miniprep Kit (Axygen Biosciences) according to manufacturer instructions. The integrity of
118 the total genomic DNA extracted was verified using 1% agarose gel electrophoresis. The extracted
119 DNA was purified with Axyprep™ PCR Clean-up Kit (Axygen) according to manufacturer
120 instructions. Microcystin codifying genes (*mcy*) were amplified by polymerase chain reaction using
121 a combination of primer sets previously described in literature and designed for this work (Table 1).
122 PCR products were ligated to pGEM®-T Easy Vector Systems (Promega) and inserted into
123 chemically competent *Escherichia coli* DH5α cells. Plasmids that received the PCR products were
124 extracted from cells by alkaline hydrolysis (Birnboim and Doly, 1979). Sequencing reactions were
125 performed using the BigDye Terminator Cycle Sequencing Kit (GE Healthcare), with vector

126 primers M13F/M13R in a Techne TC-412 thermocycler (Bibby Scientific Limited) for 25 cycles at
127 95 °C for 20 s, 52 °C for 15 s, and 60 °C for 1 min. Purified reactions were analyzed in an ABI
128 PRISM 3500 genetic analyzer (Life Technologies). The sequenced reads had their base quality
129 analyzed and consensus sequences were generated with the Phred/Phrap/Consed software package
130 (Ewing and Green, 1998; Ewing et al., 1998; Gordon et al., 1998). Sequences were aligned and
131 compared to other sequences available in NCBI GenBank (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>) using
132 BLASTn (Altschul et al., 1997).

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134 *2.3. Whole genome sequencing and assembly*

135 Genomic DNA extracted from the cells was quantified using Qubit dsDNA Broad BR Assay kit
136 and Qubit®2.0 Fluorometer (Thermo Fisher Scientific). Paired-ends libraries were prepared with the
137 Nextera XT Sample Prep Kit (Illumina), which were sequenced in the MiSeq (Illumina) platform
138 using the MiSeq 600 cycle Reagent Kit v3 (Illumina) according to manufacturer instructions. The
139 quality of the raw Illumina sequence reads were initially assessed using FastQC v0.10.1 (Andrews,
140 2010). Bases with quality indices lower than Phred 20 and sequences shorter than 50 bp were
141 removed using the program SeqyClean 1.8.10 (Zhbannikov et al., 2015). Overlapping read pairs
142 were merged with PEAR 0.9.6 (Zhang et al., 2014) and genome assembly was performed using
143 SPAdes 3.1.1 (Bankevich et al., 2012).

144 The complete nucleotide sequence of the *mcy* gene cluster of *Fischerella* sp. CENA161 was
145 deposited in GenBank under accession number KX891213.

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147 *2.4. Microcystin gene cluster annotation and phylogenetic analysis*

148 The MC synthetase gene cluster was identified by using BLASTn alignments between the 10
149 *mcy* gene sequences obtained in Sanger sequencing and the assembled genome file. Manual
150 annotation was performed using Artemis 15.1.10 (Rutherford et al., 2000). The identification of

151 motifs and adenylation domains was performed using NRPS Predictor2 (Rausch et al., 2005; Röttig
152 et al., 2011). Amino acid sequences from the McyB₂ and McyC adenylation domains and for the 10
153 genes found in complete microcystin gene clusters available in the NCBI GenBank database were
154 independently aligned with MUSCLE 3.8.31 (Edgar, 2004) and evolutionary models were estimated
155 with ProtTest 3.2 (Darriba et al., 2011). Phylogenetic trees were reconstructed from alignments by
156 Bayesian inference with MrBayes 3.2.5 (Ronquist and Huelsenbeck, 2003) using 5,000,000
157 generations, four chains and two independent runs.

158 159 *2.5. Liquid chromatography coupled to tandem mass spectrometry (LC-MS/MS)*

160 The intracellular content of 60 mg of freeze-dried cells from the culture sample was extracted
161 with MeOH:H₂O 70/30 (v/v) at ultrasound probe (Sonic Ruptor 400, Omni) during 1 min on ice.
162 The supernatant was collected after centrifugation (10.000 × g for 10 min) and the extract diluted to
163 10% MeOH with ultrapure water. The sample was applied to a solid phase extraction cartridge
164 (Sep-Pak 500 mg, Waters Corp.), previously conditioned by the sequential passage of 5 ml of
165 MeOH and 5 ml of MeOH:H₂O 10/90 (v/v). After a washing step with 5 ml of MeOH:H₂O 10/90
166 (v/v), elution proceeded with 5 ml of MeOH:H₂O 90/10 (v/v). The solvent was evaporated under a
167 stream of nitrogen and the concentrate reconstituted in 500 µl of MeOH:H₂O 50/50 (v/v), filtered
168 (0.45 µm, PVDF, Millipore) and transferred to appropriate vials. Chromatography was performed in
169 a Prominence HPLC (Shimadzu) employing a Fusion-RP column (150 x 2 mm, 4 µm;
170 Phenomenex) with a gradient of (A) 2 mM ammonium formate containing 0.1% formic acid and
171 (B) acetonitrile:water 90/10 (v/v) with the same additives, at a flow rate of 0.2 ml/min. Gradient
172 elution proceeded as follows: 35 to 60% B in 10 min; 60 to 100% B in 6 min; 100% B in 2 min; 100
173 to 35% B in 0.5 min and finally kept in 25% B for 6.5 min. Collision-induced dissociation
174 experiments for MC detection and characterization were performed in an Esquire HCT ion trap
175 mass spectrometer (Bruker Daltonics) equipped with an electrospray ion source.

176 UPLC-QTOF analyses were performed with Acquity I-Class UPLC - Synapt G2-Si HDMS
177 (Waters Corp.) system. Two μ l filtered cyanobacterial methanol extract were injected into a Kinetex
178 C8 column (50 x 2.1 mm, 1.7 μ m, Phenomenex) which was eluted at 40 °C with a flow rate of 0.3
179 ml/min using (A) 0.1% formic acid and (B) acetonitrile/isopropanol 50/50 (v/v) containing 0.1%
180 formic acid. Gradient elution proceeded as follows: 25 to 65% B in 5 min; 65 to 100% B in 0.01
181 min; 100% B in 1.99 min; 100 to 20% B in 0.5 min and finally kept in 25% B for 2.5 min. The mass
182 spectrometer was calibrated with sodium formate giving a calibrated mass range from m/z 91.055 to
183 1921.759. Leucine enkephalin was used at 10 s interval as a lock mass reference compound. Mass
184 spectral data was accumulated in positive electrospray ionization at a scan range from m/z 50 to
185 2000.

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187 **3. Results and Discussion**

188 The search for conserved regions from *mcy* genes in the *Fischerella* sp. CENA161 genomic
189 DNA by PCR amplification and Sanger sequencing returned positive for all 10 genes. High-
190 throughput sequencing with Illumina MiSeq resulted in approximately 24 million raw reads. The
191 raw data was assembled into 443 contigs, which constituted a draft genome size of 7,210,502 bp
192 with ca. 220 \times coverage and GC content at 40.18%. Both genome size and GC content were in
193 agreement with other recently sequenced cyanobacterial members of the genus *Fischerella* (Dagan
194 et al., 2012; Shih et al., 2013; Hirose et al., 2016).

195 With the draft genome data in hand, we searched for contig(s) that coharbor *mcy* genes using
196 the *mcy* PCR fragments as *in silico* probes. This effort led to the identification of three contigs
197 (45,504 bp, 5,557 bp and 2,626 bp). Bioinformatics analyses identified that the two gaps separating
198 the three contigs were located within the *mcyB* and *mcyC* genes, which were closed using PCR
199 amplification and Sanger sequencing. The three contigs were assembled into a 55,137 kb
200 contiguous region that contained the 55,016 bp *mcy* gene cluster.

201 The CENA161 *mcy* gene cluster encompasses ten genes (*mcyA-J*) with a central bidirectional
202 promoter (Figure 2, Table 2). The genes encoding the McyG, D, E, A, B and C enzymes are
203 responsible for the stepwise assembly and cyclization of peptide intermediates to form MC, while
204 McyF, I and J are tailoring enzymes and McyH is an ABC transporter hypothetically involved in the
205 efflux of the toxin (Tillett et al., 2000; Christiansen et al., 2003; Rouhiainen et al., 2004; Fewer et
206 al., 2013). MC biosynthesis by *Fischerella* sp. CENA161 follows the collinearity rule, i.e., the order
207 of genes is the same as the order of the single enzymatic steps (Marahiel et al., 1997; von Döhren et
208 al., 1997) as occurs in other nostocalean cyanobacteria, such as *Anabaena* sp. 90 and *Nostoc* sp.
209 152, and NOD in *Nodularia spumigena* NSOR10. In these cyanobacteria, MC assembly is believed
210 to initiate with the A-PCP domains of the hybrid NRPS/PKS-I enzyme McyG loading phenyllactate
211 (Hicks et al., 2006). Then, the four PKS-I modules of McyG, D and E complete the formation of the
212 Adda skeleton, and the *O*-methyltransferase McyJ (Christiansen et al., 2003) and the
213 aminotransferase domain of McyE (Tillett et al., 2000) incorporate Adda side chain modifications.
214 The NRPS modules of McyG, A, B, and C incorporate the six remaining amino acids (Tillett et al.,
215 2000). The enzymes 2-hydroxy acid dehydrogenase McyI (Pearson et al., 2007) and the aspartate
216 racemase McyF (Sielaff et al., 2003) are involved in the biosynthesis of D-erythro- β -methyl-
217 aspartate. Finally, the elongated peptide is released from the enzyme complex by the thioesterase
218 domain of McyC.

219 The nucleotide sequence of the *Fischerella* sp. CENA161 *mcy* gene cluster showed significant
220 differences from clusters thus far characterized. Hits from the BLAST analyses in descending order
221 of identity were *Anabaena* sp. 90 (coverage 95%, identity 85.2%), *Nostoc* sp. 152 (coverage 89%,
222 identity 83.0%), *Nodularia spumigena* NSOR10 (coverage 78%, identity 80.8%), *Planktothrix*
223 *rubescens* NIVA-CYA 98 (coverage 71%, identity 78.2%) and *Microcystis aeruginosa* NIES-843
224 (coverage 71%, identity 74.1%). Similarly, for amino acid sequences, top BLAST hits observed
225 were with other nostocalean strains (Table 2). Comparisons of the *mcy* gene cluster from

226 *Fischerella* sp. CENA161 with other nostocalean genera (*Anabaena*, *Nostoc* and *Nodularia*)
227 revealed, in general, the same structural organization with differences in the arrangement of certain
228 genes coding for tailoring enzymes (Figure 2). On the other hand, major differences were observed
229 in comparisons with distinct cyanobacterial orders (*Planktothrix* and *Microcystis*). These results
230 reinforce previous observations that *mcy* gene arrangements are almost identical among
231 cyanobacteria according to their taxonomic position (Rantala et al., 2004; Jungblut and Neilan,
232 2006; Kurmayer et al., 2006). In fact, the phylogenetic tree reconstruction based on concatenated
233 amino acid sequences of all complete *mcy* gene clusters so far known (Figure 3) supported a
234 correlation between cyanobacterial taxonomy and MC acquisition in these strains. Taking into
235 account the still low number of available sequences, the Bayesian inference sustained the
236 hypothesis that *mcy* genes might have evolved from a common ancestor and their irregular
237 distribution in phylogenetically related taxa is due to repeated loss processes rather than horizontal
238 transfer (Kurmayer et al., 2004; Rantala et al., 2004).

239 Multiple alignments of the amino acid residues surrounding the substrate-binding pockets in the
240 NRPS adenylation domains observed in the MC gene cluster of CENA161 with other cyanobacteria
241 are shown in Table 3. Adenylation domains in NRPS modules contain ten highly conserved core
242 motifs, named A1 to A10. Lining the binding pocket, ten conserved amino acid residues are
243 believed to recognize a specific substrate, allowing the prediction of the amino acid likely to be
244 selected for activation (Marahiel et al., 1997; Stachelhaus et al., 1999; Challis et al., 2000; Mikalsen
245 et al., 2003). In the case of *Fischerella* sp. CENA161, the amino acid sequences of the McyG and
246 McyE A domains are highly conserved, containing identical residues as observed in all the MC
247 gene clusters so far known (Table 3). These two modules are responsible for the partial formation of
248 Adda in position **5** and the incorporation of glutamic acid in position **6** of the MC molecule,
249 respectively. In a similar way, the McyA-A₁ and McyA-A₂ modules, responsible for the
250 incorporation of amino acids in positions **7** (serine/MdhA) and **1** (alanine), respectively, are highly

251 conserved. Likewise, McyB-A₂ binding pocket, responsible for the incorporation of amino acids in
252 position **3** (MeAsp), was shown be conserved. On the other hand, McyB-A₁ and McyC-A sequences
253 showed high diversity in the strain analyzed. These two modules are responsible for incorporating
254 amino acids into positions **X**² and **Z**⁴, respectively. Indeed, it is well known that positions **X**² and **Z**⁴
255 show the highest degree of structural variation when compared to other positions in the molecule
256 (Fewer at al., 2007). Such fluctuations in McyB-A₁ and McyC-A sequences are the major
257 contributors for the diversity in MC biosynthesis in different species. Currently, over a hundred MC
258 structural variants are known, differing in the type of amino acids incorporated or modifications to
259 the peptide backbone (Dittmann et al., 2015).

260 The LC-MS/MS analysis of the strain CENA161 cell extract allowed the identification of seven
261 MC variants: MC-LR (*m/z* 995, [M+H]⁺), MC-FR (*m/z* 1029), MC-LA (*m/z* 910), MC-LAba (*m/z*
262 923), MC-LM (*m/z* 970), MC-LV (*m/z* 938) and MC-LL (*m/z* 952) (Supplementary Information
263 Figures S1 and S2). The identification of MC *m/z* 938 was challenging as the product ion spectrum
264 of *m/z* 938 can be well fitted to three isobaric variants. After thorough comparison of the product
265 ion assignments and intensities it seems that variant MC-LV best explained the high resolution
266 spectrum data (Supplementary Table S1). Exact ion masses, accuracies and intensities of MC
267 isoforms are presented in Supplementary Table S2. MC-LR, MC-LV and MC-LL were found to be
268 the major variants produced by strain CENA161, while the remaining variants were produced in
269 trace amounts. The most studied and common variant MC-LR has been previously reported in the
270 extract of *Fischerella* sp. CENA161 (Fiore et al., 2009) and *Fischerella* sp. NQAIF311 (Cirés et al.,
271 2014), whereas the latter also produces the MC-LA and MC-FR variants. The other four variants
272 were previously found in *Microcystis* strains (Craig et al., 1993; Sivonen and Jones, 1999; Diehnelt
273 et al., 2006).

274 The origin of MC diversity within species has been attributed to recombination events in the
275 *mcy* genes, to the activity of specific tailoring enzymes and to the low substrate specificity of NRPS

276 modules McyB₁ and McyC (Kurmayer and Gumpenberger, 2006; Fewer et al., 2007; Fewer et al.,
277 2008; Tooming-Klunderud et al., 2008; Kaasalainen et al., 2012; Fewer et al., 2013; Calteau et al.,
278 2014). As a consequence of this relaxed substrate specificity, different amino acids can be
279 incorporated in positions **X**² and **Z**⁴, allowing a cyanobacterial strain to simultaneously produce
280 several microcystin variants. In this regard, amino acid availability has been associated to the
281 production of different MCs (Tonk et al., 2008; Van de Waal, 2010; Liu et al., 2016). These authors
282 suggested that environmental factors affect the intracellular free amino acid levels which,
283 ultimately, result in changes in the biosynthesis of MCs. Whether such correlations apply to the
284 nitrogen-fixing strain CENA161 remains to be further investigated. Nevertheless, the MC
285 production profile of CENA161 cultivated without inorganic nitrogen was dominated by
286 hydrophobic variants with high C:N ratios. Considering the frequencies of amino acids incorporated
287 in position **X**², leucine was found in six of the seven variants described. These results are in line
288 with the substrate prediction for McyB-A₁ (Table 3). However, McyC-A demonstrated a greater
289 flexibility in terms of substrate selection, loading distantly related amino acids in position **Z**⁴, from
290 hydrophilic arginine (MC-LR and MC-FR) to hydrophobic leucine (MC-LL).

291 The toxicity of MCs can be associated with the hydrophobicity of their constitutional amino
292 acids. This probably occurs due to the increased ability of hydrophobic variants to get into cells by
293 OATP-mediated transport or due to membrane interactions (Vesterkvist and Meriluoto, 2003;
294 Feurstein et al., 2009; Faassen and Lürling, 2013). More toxic variants may harm cell membranes,
295 damage mitochondrial dehydrogenases, and cause lactate dehydrogenase leakage (Monks et al.,
296 2007; Fischer et al., 2010; Vesterkvist et al., 2012). Therefore, new variants of MC and the
297 elucidation of their respective biosynthetic genes are considered of high interest for public health
298 and pharmaceutical development since peptide structural diversities are reflected in different
299 biological activities (Gupta et al., 2003; Zurawell et al., 2005; Monks et al., 2007; Feurstein et al.,
300 2009; Fischer et al., 2010; Vesterkvist et al., 2012).

301

302 **4. Conclusions**

303 Identifying and annotating gene clusters responsible by the production of harmful toxic
304 molecules that also have potential pharmacological application is important to the understanding of
305 the process of their synthesis and the rules that govern their evolution, and to exploit their
306 capabilities. The finding that MCs are also produced by subaerophytic cyanobacteria and not only
307 by planktonic species may contribute to bring new insights into the cellular function of these
308 heptapeptides, and as more gene clusters from different cyanobacteria are described it will facilitate
309 the identification of amenable genus to genetic manipulation in order to advance our knowledge of
310 genetic and biology of this toxin.

311

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323

324 **Conflict of Interest**

325 The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

326

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562 **Table 1.** Thermal cycling programs used to amplify microcystin synthetase gene fragments.

Gene	Program	Primers	Reference
<i>mcyA</i>	94 °C/4 min; 30x 94°C/20 s; 55 °C/30 s; 72 °C/1 min; 72 °C/7 min	OMET-F, OMET-R MSF, MSR	Tillet et al., 2000
<i>mcyB</i>	95 °C/3 min; 30x 94 °C/30 s; 52 °C/30 s; 72°C/1 min; 72°C/10 min	PB3F, pB9R	Fewer et al., 2007
<i>mcyB</i> (gap)	95 °C/3 min; 30x 94°C/30 s; 52 °C/30 s; 72 °C/1 min; 72 °C/10 min		This work
<i>mcyC</i>	95 °C/3 min; 30x 94 °C/30 s; 52 °C/30 s; 72 °C/1 min; 72 °C/10 min	pC1F, pC13R	Fewer et al., 2007
<i>mcyC</i> (gap)	95 °C/3 min; 30x 94 °C/30 s; 52 °C/30 s; 72 °C/1 min; 72 °C/10 min		This work
<i>mcyD</i>	95 °C/3 min; 30x 94 °C/30 s; 56 °C/30 s; 72 °C/1 min; 72 °C/10 min	mcyDF, mcyDR	Rantala et al., 2004
<i>mcyE</i>	95 °C/3 min; 30x 94 °C/30 s; 56 °C/30 s; 72 °C/1 min; 72 °C/10 min	mcyEF2, mcyER4	Rantala et al., 2004
<i>mcyF</i>	95 °C/3 min; 30x 94 °C/30 s; 50 °C/30 s; 72 °C/1 min; 72 °C/10 min	mcyFKF, mcyFKR	This work
<i>mcyG</i>	95 °C/3 min; 30x 94 °C/30 s; 56 °C/30 s; 72 °C/1 min; 72 °C/10 min.	mcyGF, mcyGR	Fewer et al., 2007
<i>mcyH</i>	95 °C/3 min; 30x 94 °C/30 s; 56°C/30 s; 72 °C/1 min; 72 °C/10 min.	mcyHKF, mcyHKR	This work
<i>mcyI</i>	95 °C/3 min; 30x 94 °C/30 s; 56 °C/30 s; 72 °C/1 min; 72 °C/10 min	mcyIdgenF, mcyIdgenR	Pearson et al., 2007
<i>mcyJ</i>	95 °C/3 min; 30x 94 °C/30 s; 56 °C/30 s; 72 °C/1 min; 72 °C/10 min	mcyJKF, mcyJKR	This work

563

564 **Table 2.** Functions of proteins encoded in the microcystin biosynthetic gene cluster.

Protein	Lengths (amino acids)	Functions	Top BLAST Hit		
			Organism	Identity (%)	Accession Number
McyH	590	ABC transporter	<i>Anabaena</i> sp. 90	81.8	AAO62579
McyI	342	putative dehydrogenase	<i>N. spumigena</i> NSOR10	86.1	AAO62580
McyF	262	amino acid racemase	<i>Nostoc</i> sp. 152	81.6	AGZ05271
McyE	3,511	NRPS-PKS (KS-AT-PCP-AMT-C-A-PCP-C)	<i>Nostoc</i> sp. 152	80.1	AGZ05272
McyD	3,872	PKS (KS-DH-CM-KR-PCP-KS-AT-DH-KR-PCP)	<i>Anabaena</i> sp. 90	79.2	AAO62584
McyG	2,639	NRPS-PKS (A-PCP-KS-AT-CM-KR-PCP)	<i>Anabaena</i> sp. 90	79.9	AAO62585
McyA	2,787	NRPS (A-NMT-PCP-C-A-PCP-E)	<i>Anabaena</i> sp. 90	81.5	AAO62586
McyB	2,136	NRPS (C-A-PCP-C-A-PCP)	<i>Anabaena</i> sp. 90	83.1	AAO62587
McyC	1,283	NRPS (C-A-PCP-Te)	<i>Anabaena</i> sp. 90	83.3	AAO62588
McyJ	313	<i>O</i> -acetyltransferase	<i>N. spumigena</i> NSOR10	84.8	AAO64406

565 **Table 3.** Conservation of the seven adenylation domain binding pockets of Mcy of *Fischerella* sp. CENA161 and other cyanobacteria.

Strain/Binding pocket	McyA ₁	McyA ₂	McyB ₁	McyB ₂	McyC	McyE	McyG
<i>Fischerella</i> sp. CENA161	DVWHISLIDK Ser 100%	DLFNNALTYK Ala 100%	DVLIFGLIYK Leu 70%	DARHVGIFVK Tyr 60%	DVWFFGLVVK Ser 80%	DPRHSGVVVK Glu 100%	**LWVAASG* Tcl 50%
<i>Anabaena</i> sp. 90	----- Ser 100%	----- Ala 100%	--WF--VD- Leu 80%	----- Tyr 60%	---C----- Ser 80%	DPRHSGVVVK Glu 100%	**LWVAASGK Tcl 60%
<i>Nostoc</i> sp. 152	----- Ser 100%	----- Ala 100%	-A-F----- Leu 80%	----- Tyr 60%	---N-FI--- Gln 70%	DPRHSGVVVK Glu 100%	**LWVAASGK Tcl 60%
<i>Planktothrix agardhii</i> NIVA-CYA 126/8	----- Ser 100%	-----S-- Ala 90%	-A-F--VD- Leu 70%	----- Glu 60%	-P-G----- Gln 70%	DPRHSGVVVK Glu 100%	AILWVAASG* Tcl 60%
<i>Planktothrix rubescens</i> NIVA-CYA 98	-F-N-GMVH- Thr 100%	----- Ala 100%	-A-F--VD- Leu 100%	-P-----I- Glu 60%	-P-G----- Gln 70%	DPRHSGVVVK Glu 100%	AILWVAASG* Tcl 60%
<i>Microcystis aeruginosa</i> SPC777	----F----- Ser 100%	----- Ala 100%	-GWTI-AVE- Arg 90%	----- Tyr 60%	---TI-A--- Arg 100%	#	#
<i>Microcystis aeruginosa</i> NIES-843	----F----- Ser 100%	----- Ala 100%	-GWTI-AVE- Arg 90%	----- Tyr 60%	---TI-A--- Arg 100%	DPRHSGVVVK Glu 100%	**LWVAASG* Tcl 50%
<i>Microcystis aeruginosa</i> PCC 7806	----F----- Ser 100%	----- Ala 100%	-AWFL-NVV- Arg 90%	----- Tyr 60%	---TI-A--- Arg 100%	DPRHSGVVVK Glu 100%	**LWVAASG* Tcl 50%
<i>Microcystis aeruginosa</i> DIANCHI 905	----F----- Ser 100%	----- Ala 100%	-AWFL-NVV- Leu 100%	----- Tyr 60%	---TI-A--- Arg 100%	DPRHSGVVVK Glu 100%	**LWVAASG* Tcl 50%
<i>Microcystis aeruginosa</i> K-139	----F----- Ser 100%	----- Ala 100%	-AWFL-NVV- Leu 100%	----- Tyr 60%	---TI-A--- Arg 100%	DPRHSGVVVK Glu 100%	**LWVAASG* Tcl 50%
<i>Microcystis aeruginosa</i> PCC7941	----F----- Ser 100%	----- Ala 100%	-AWFL-NVV- Leu 100%	----- Tyr 60%	---TI-A--- Arg 100%	DPRHSGVVVK Glu 100%	**LWVAASG* Tcl 50%
<i>Microcystis aeruginosa</i> PCC9807	----F----- Ser 100%	----- Ala 100%	-AWFL-NVV- Leu 100%	----- Tyr 60%	---TI-A--- Arg 90%	DPRHSGVVVK Glu 100%	**LWVAASG* Tcl 50%
<i>Nodularia spumigena</i> NSOR10 ¹	-F-N-GMVH- Thr 100%	-	-	----- Tyr 60%	---N--F--- Glu 70%	DPRHSGVVVK Glu 100%	--LWVAASGK Tcl 60%

566 The adenylation domain is responsible for recognition and activation of amino acids in the microcystins. The probability of incorporation for each amino acid is shown.

567 # There is no available information about that sequence; * Unknown amino acid; - There is no homologue gene; ¹ Nodularin-producing strain.

568 **Figure Legends**

569

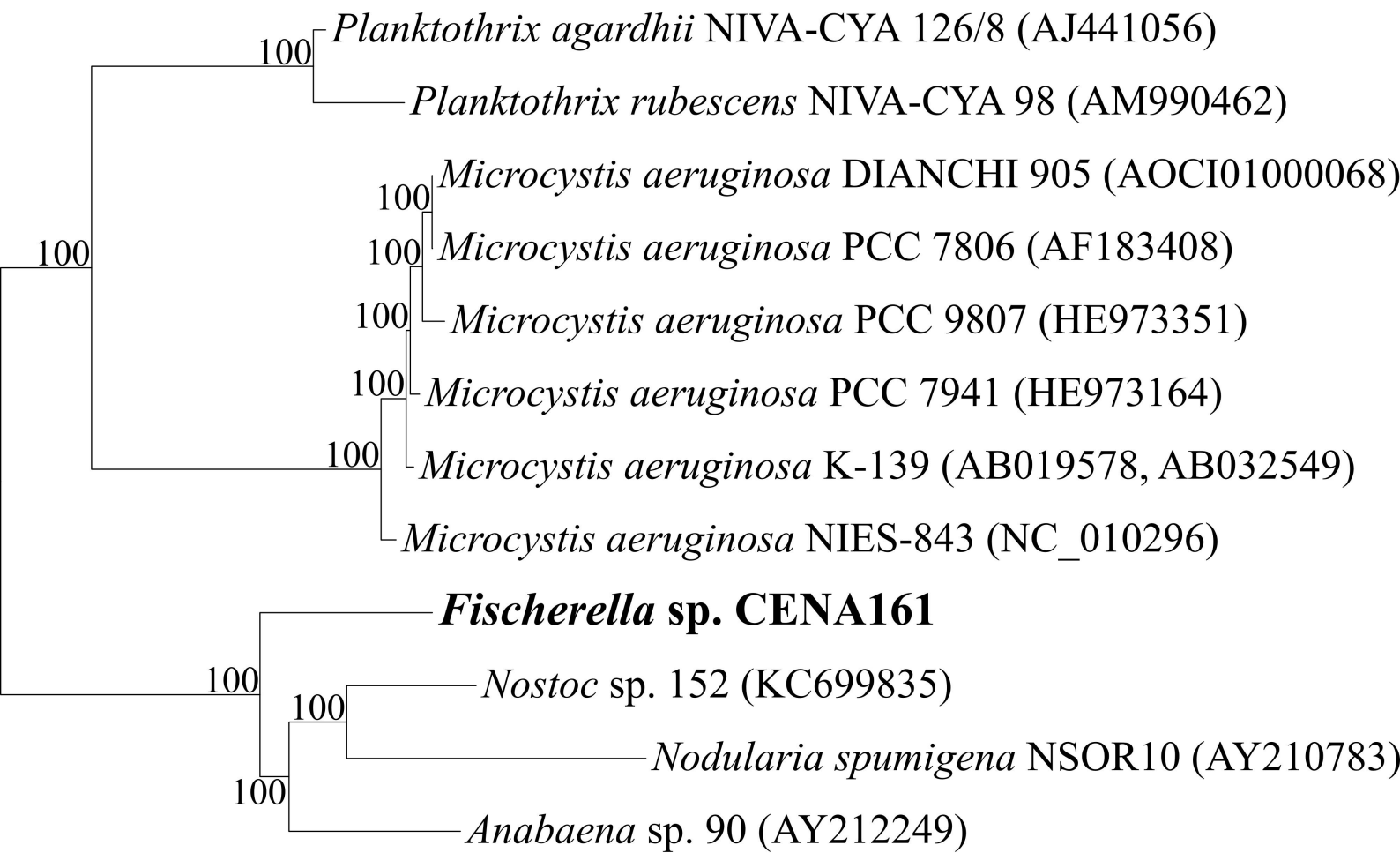
570 **Figure 1.** Structure of MC-LR. The *Fischerella* sp. CENA161 MC variations encountered are
571 shown schematically according to their position. Abbreviations: Adda, (2S,3S,8S,9S)-3-amino-9-
572 methoxy-2,6,8-trimethyl-10-phenyldeca-(4E,6E)-dienoic acid; D-Glu, glutamic acid; Mdha, N-
573 methyl- α - β -dehydroalanine; Ala, alanine, Leu, leucine, Phe, phenylalanine, D-MeAsp, D-erythro- β -
574 methyl-aspartic acid, Aba, Aminoisobutyric acid, Arg, arginine, Val, valine and Met, methionine.

575

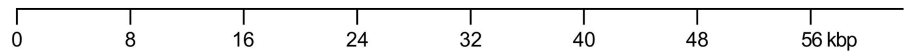
576 **Figure 2.** Arrangement of gene clusters coding for the biosynthesis of microcystin in *Fischerella* sp.
577 CENA161, *Nostoc* (Fewer et al., 2013), *Anabaena* (Rouhiainen et al., 2004), *Microcystis*
578 (Nishizawa et al., 2000; Tillett et al., 2000), *Planktothrix* (Christiansen et al., 2003; Rounge et al.,
579 2009), and of nodularin in *Nodularia* (Moffitt and Neilan, 2004). Arrows indicate the transcriptional
580 start sites from the putative promoter regions.

581

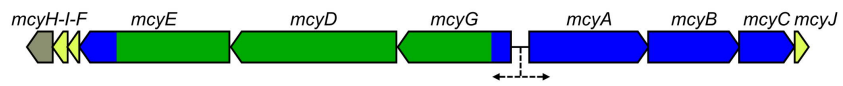
582 **Figure 3.** Bayesian inference phylogenetic tree reconstructed from concatenated Mcy and Nda
583 amino acid sequences from strains presenting the microcystin gene cluster or nodularin gene cluster.
584 Posterior probabilities are shown in the nodes.



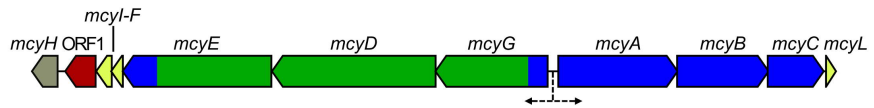
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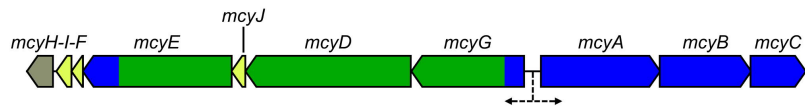
Fischerella sp. CENA161



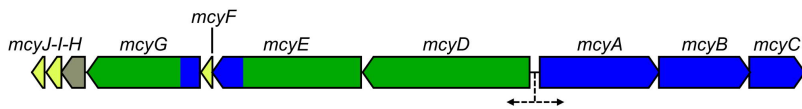
Nostoc sp. 152



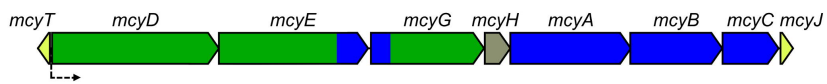
Anabaena sp. 90



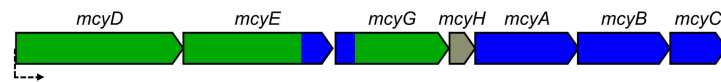
Microcystis aeruginosa PCC 7806



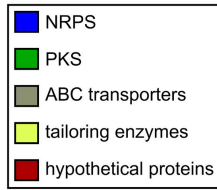
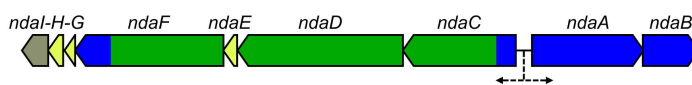
Planktothrix agardhii NIVA-CYA 126/8



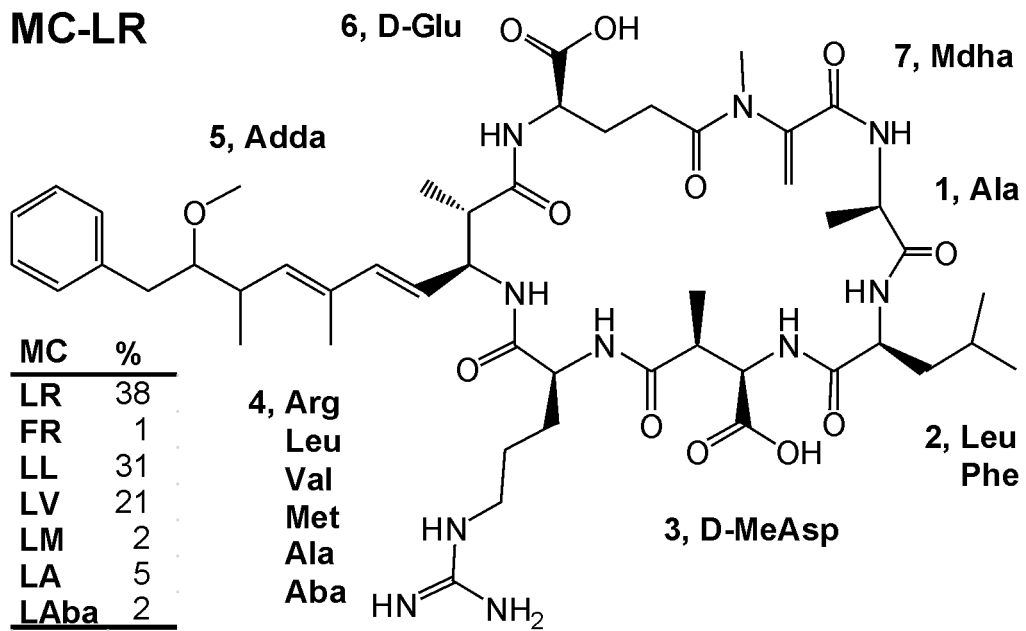
Planktothrix agardhii NIVA-CYA 98



Nodularia spumigena NSOR10



MC-LR



MC	%
LR	38
FR	1
LL	31
LV	21
LM	2
LA	5
<u>LAba</u>	<u>2</u>

Supplementary Information

Biosynthesis of Microcystin Hepatotoxins in the Cyanobacterial Genus

Fischerella

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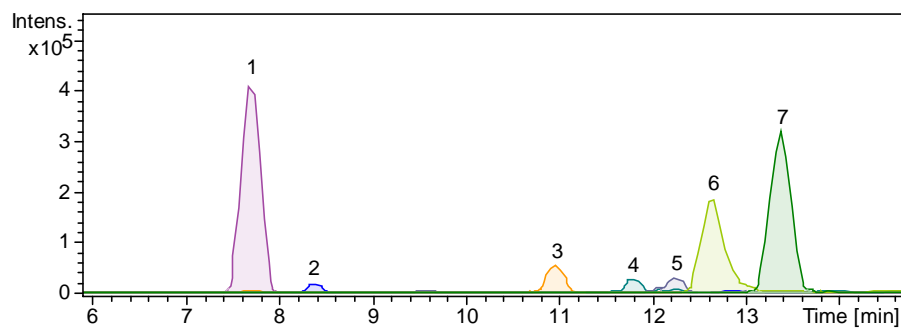


Figure S1. LC-MS representative extracted ion chromatograms for MC isoforms detected in *Fischerella* sp. CENA161 after negative mode electrospray ionization. $[M-H]^-$ ions were extracted for MC-LR at m/z 993 (1); MC-FR at m/z 1027 (2); MC-LA at m/z 908 (3); MC-LAba at m/z 922 (4); MC-LM at m/z 968 (5); (6) MC-LV at m/z 936 and (7) MC-LL at m/z 950. Relative amounts of each isoform were determined by peak area.

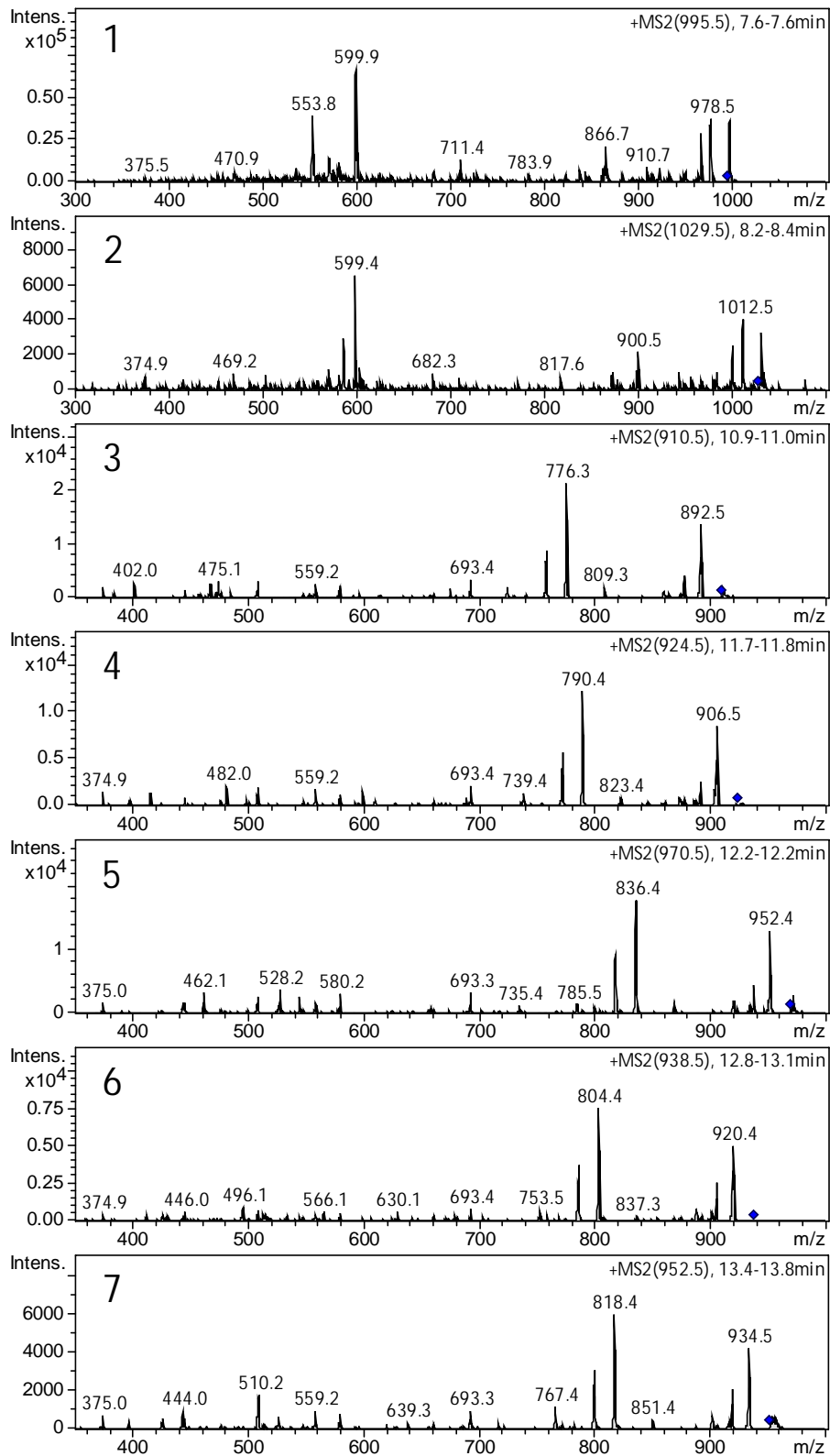


Figure S2. Characteristic ion trap collision-induced dissociation (CID) spectra for MC isoforms identified in *Fischerella* sp. CENA161 after positive mode electrospray ionization. (1) MC-LR at m/z 995; (2) MC-FR at m/z 1029; (3) MC-LA at m/z 910; (4) MC-LAba at m/z 924; (5) MC-LM at m/z 970; (6) MC-LV at m/z 938 and (7) MC-LL at m/z 952.

Supplementary Table S1. Ion assignments, accuracies (Δ , ppm) and intensities (I, %) of UPLC-ESI-QTOF product ion spectra of protonated MCs detected in *Fischerella* sp. CENA161. Blue bars show the relative intensities of product ions. Isomeric variants MC-LV, MC-VL and [D-Asp³]MC-LL were fitted to spectral data from protonated MC ion at m/z 938 and abbreviations from the presence (or intensity) of product ions are marked with orange cells showing that ion data from m/z 938 is best explained by MC-LV structure.

Supplementary Table S1. Ion assignments, accuracies (Δ , ppm) and intensities (I, %) of UPLC-ESI-QTOF product ion spectra of protonated MCs detected in *Fischerella* sp. CENA161. Blue bars show the relative intensities of product ions. Isomeric variants MC-LV, MC-VL and [D-Asp³]MC-LL were fitted to spectral data from protonated MC ion at m/z 938 and abbreviations from the presence (or intensity) of product ions are marked with orange cells showing that ion data from m/z 938 is best explained by MC-LV structure.

Product ion assignment Aa ^X -Aa ^X ... (X = 1 - 7) Neutral losses		MC-LL		MC-LM		MC-LA		MC-Laba		MC-LV		MC-VL		[Asp ³ IMC-LL	
		Δ	I	Δ	I	Δ	I	Δ	I	Δ	I	Δ	I	Δ	I
		ppm	(%)	ppm	(%)	ppm	(%)	ppm	(%)	ppm	(%)	ppm	(%)	ppm	(%)
1-2-3-4-5-6-7	H ₂ O	-3,2	24	-0,7	24	-3,2	24	-0,3	21	-2,8	26	-2,8	26	-2,8	26
1-2-3-4-5-6-7	NH ₃	0,9	25	5,5	22	-0,2	24	0,0	22	0,2	25	0,2	25	0,2	25
1-2-3-4-5-6-7	CH ₃ OH	-2,0	10	-11,2	10	-0,3	13	-10,6	8	-9,2	11	-9,2	11	-9,2	11
1-2-3-4	-	-1,9	19	-0,1	17	1,1	16	-1,0	12	-2,2	21	-2,2	21	-2,2	21
1-2-3-4-NH ₂	-	-1,7	31	-3,4	37	0,7	35	-4,3	20	-4,6	32	-4,6	32	-4,6	32
1-2-3-4	CO	-2,7	15	-	-	-26,0	5	-5,1	5	-4,1	11	-4,1	11	-4,1	11
1-2-3	CO, H ₂ O	-3,6	17	0,5	14	1,2	26	-9,9	14	-5,7	19	-	-	-	-
1-2	CO	1,0	4	-	-	6,4	5	2,9	3	-2,5	6	-	-	-2,5	6
2-3-4	-	0,6	10	2,6	9	4,6	13	-14,6	7	-2,0	12	-2,0	12	-2,0	12
2-3-4-NH ₂	-	-0,9	12	-5,5	15	1,8	21	-8,0	8	-5,4	13	-5,4	13	-5,4	13
2-3-4	CO	-3,3	5	-	-	7,6	3	-1,3	2	2,0	10	2,0	10	2,0	10
2-3-4	CO, H ₂ O	-2,3	8	2,3	2	1,2	26	7,4	22	-	-	-6,1	9	-6,1	9
2-3	-	-1,0	27	0,5	8	-2,6	5	13,8	4	-6,9	7	-4,9	22	-4,9	22
2-3-NH ₂	-	-2,2	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,4	44	7,4	44	7,4	44
2-3	CO	-0,6	45	-	-	5,5	11	-	-	-3,6	50	-3,6	50	-3,6	50
2-3	CO, H ₂ O	-1,3	9	-	-	12,9	2	-	-	-7,6	2	-1,4	7	-1,4	7
2	CO	5,5	32	-0,3	17	3,2	30	-	-	-2,0	24	-2,0	24	-2,0	24
3-4	-	-1,0	27	-3,7	19	-3,4	25	5,4	15	-4,9	22	-6,9	7	-4,9	22
3-4-NH ₂	-	-2,2	15	-5,4	22	1,2	27	0,1	14	7,4	44	7,4	44	7,4	44
3-4	CO	-0,6	45	-4,5	26	6,5	41	1,0	26	-3,6	50	-3,6	50	-3,6	50
3-4	CO, H ₂ O	-1,3	9	-	-	1,3	36	26,3	5	-1,4	7	-7,6	2	-1,4	7
3	CO, H ₂ O	7,3	5	3,7	13	15,6	6	-15,4	7	-1,7	6	-	-	-	-
4-5-6-7-1	NH ₃	-1,3	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-5,3	17	-5,3	17	-5,3	17
4	CO	5,5	32	7,2	5	-	-	-2,2	2	-8,7	8	-2,0	24	-2,0	24
5-6-7-1-2	NH ₃	-1,3	14	1,7	12	9,2	14	0,9	9	-5,3	17	-	-	-5,3	17
5-6-7-1	NH ₃	-0,4	20	-3,0	15	-	-	1,5	10	-2,7	24	-2,7	24	-2,7	24
5-6-7-1	H ₂ O, NH ₃	1,7	2	-8,8	2	-	-	-4,6	2	-3,0	3	-3,0	3	-3,0	3
5-6-7	NH ₃	-1,4	29	-2,8	26	-2,2	31	-3,4	17	-4,4	30	-4,4	30	-4,4	30
5	-	-4,5	4	-2,6	4	0,6	5	0,6	5	-10,8	10	-10,8	10	-10,8	10
5	NH ₃	-0,7	5	-1,7	5	5,7	6	-20,5	3	-6,9	6	-6,9	6	-6,9	6
6-7-1-2-3-4	-	-0,2	13	-0,1	10	1,6	11	-13,6	11	-2,6	15	-2,6	15	-2,6	15
6-7-1-2-3-4	H ₂ O	-3,9	5	-8,3	5	9,0	6	-3,1	4	-2,1	6	-2,1	6	-2,1	6
6-7-1-2-3-4-NH ₂	-	-2,2	2	-3,2	3	-7,0	3	5,9	2	-1,7	3	-1,7	3	-1,7	3
6-7-1-2-3-4	CO	-3,1	2	-	-	4,8	3	-	-	-6,9	2	-6,9	2	-6,9	2
6-7-1-2-3-4	CO, H ₂ O	3,0	4	0,6	4	-3,4	2	-2,9	4	-2,7	4	-2,7	4	-2,7	4
6-7-1-2-3	H ₂ O	-2,3	9	-	-	1,4	5	10,4	6	-5,6	9	-	-	-	-
6-7-1-2	-	-1,9	60	-3,7	41	1,6	26	-4,4	23	-4,4	56	-	-	-4,8	56
6-7-1-2	CO, H ₂ O	-6,8	4	-5,1	4	-0,7	4	5,7	2	-8,9	4	-8,9	4	-8,9	4
6-7	-	1,0	74	-0,4	66	1,5	81	-3,7	59	-2,5	82	-2,5	82	-2,5	82
6-7	H ₂ O	-0,6	26	-0,6	21	-2,7	33	5,5	17	-3,4	27	-3,4	27	-3,4	27
6-7	CO	6,1	1	2,3	24	-	-	16,9	2	11,8	2	11,8	2	11,8	2

Product ion assignment Aa ^X -Aa ^X ... (X = 1 - 7) Neutral losses		MC-LL		MC-LM		MC-LA		MC-Laba		MC-LV		MC-VL		[Asp ³ IMC-LL	
		Δ	I	Δ	I	Δ	I	Δ	I	Δ	I	Δ	I	Δ	I
		ppm	(%)	ppm	(%)	ppm	(%)	ppm	(%)	ppm	(%)	ppm	(%)	ppm	(%)
6-7	CO, H ₂ O	1,2	14	6,0	16	6,6	15	-15,0	16	-0,3	16	-0,3	16	-0,3	16
6	CO, H ₂ O	7,3	5	3,7	13	15,6	6	-15,4	7	-1,7	6	-1,7	6	-1,7	6
7-1-2-3-4	-	-2,2	61	-2,0	49	1,1	51	-2,3	32	-2,9	62	-2,9	62	-2,9	62
7-1-2-3-4-NH ₂	-	-1,3	15	2,9	19	-4,6	21	6,5	8	-0,5	18	-0,5	18	-0,5	18
7-1-2-3-4	CO	-4,8	11	-5,3	4	-	-	-2,7	5	-4,7	10	-4,7	10	-4,7	10
7-1-2-3-4	CO, H ₂ O	-5,9	4	-4,3	2	-3,8	2	-	-	-6,8	5	-6,8	5	-6,8	5
7-1-2-3	-	-1,9	60	-3,7	41	1,6	26	-4,4	23	-4,8	56	-	-	-	-
7-1-2-3	CO, H ₂ O	-6,8	4	-5,1	4	-0,7	4	5,7	2	-8,9	4	-	-	-	-
7-1-2	-	-3,6	17	0,5	14	1,2	26	-9,9	14	-5,7	19	-	-	-5,7	19
7-1	-	4,5	27	3,2	23	1,3	36	16,1	14	-2,3	28	-2,3	28	-2,3	28
7-1	CO	2,4	23	0,9	19	0,1	33	0,9	16	-1,1	29	-1,1	29	-1,1	29
7-1	NH ₃	3,9	5	9,7	2	2,5	5	3,9	4	-3,7	6	-3,7	6	-3,7	6
7	-	7,3	5	3,7	13	15,6	6	-15,4	7	-1,7	6	-1,7	6	-1,7	6
1-2-3-4-5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6	H ₂ O	-0,1	5	-3,5	6	4,1	8	-8,9	4	-3,3	6	-3,3	6	-3,3	6
3-4-5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1	-	-7,3	3	-	-	-7,7	2	-	-	-0,7	2	-0,7	2	-0,7	2
3-4-5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1	H ₂ O	-4,4	4	-	-	-1,8	1	-	-	-4,9	4	-4,9	4	-4,9	4
3-4-5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1	NH ₃	-1,5	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-4,0	6	-4,0	6	-4,0	6
3-4-5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1	H ₂ O, NH ₃	-1,9	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-4,6	2	-4,6	2	-4,6	2
4-5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1	NH ₃	-2,4	19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-4,4	21	-4,4	21	-4,4	21
4-5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1	H ₂ O, NH ₃	-4,4	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-5,6	3	-5,6	3	-5,6	3
5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3-4-	-	-2,5	77	-5,8	61	-4,6	80	-2,4	44	-5,3	78	-5,3	78	-5,3	78
5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3-4 H ₂ O	-	-2,7	28	-4,5	27	-3,1	29	-3,1	17	-1,2	29	-1,2	29	-1,2	29
5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3-4 CO	-	-7,1	2	-	-	-27,9	1	8,2	2	-4,7	2	-4,7	2	-4,7	2
5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3-4 CO, H ₂ O	-	-6,4	4	0,7	4	-5,1	4	-	-	-1,0	4	-1,0	4	-1,0	4
5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3-4 NH ₃	-	-0,7	43	4,5	32	5,2	41	2,5	20	-0,2	43	-0,2	43	-0,2	43
5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3-4 H ₂ O, NH ₃	-	-2,3	8	5,6	5	-3,1	6	-6,9	7	-4,4	9	-4,4	9	-4,4	9
5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3	-	-7,3	3	-	-	-14,0	1	13,5	2	-0,7	2	-0,7	2	-0,7	2
5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3 H ₂ O	-	-4,4	4	0,9	4	-1,9	7	15,0	5	-4,9	4	-4,9	4	-4,9	4
5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3 NH ₃	-	-1,5	7	-2,1	6	2,9	4	-	-	-4,0	6	-4,0	6	-4,0	6
5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3 H ₂ O, NH ₃	-	-1,9	3	5,7	3	-7,4	2	-	-	-4,6	2	-4,6	2	-4,6	2
5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2	NH ₃	-2,4	19	-	-	0,3	20	1,2	12	-4,4	21	-4,4	21	-4,4	21
5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2 H ₂ O, NH ₃	-	-4,4	3	-	-	2,7	4	-	-	-5,6	3	-5,6	3	-5,6	3
5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1	-	2,3	4	-	-	6,7	4	5,8	3	-3,4	4	-3,4	4	-3,4	4
5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1	NH ₃	-2,2	34	-1,0	37	-3,1	39	4,3	21	-3,4	39	-3,4	39	-3,4	39
5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7	NH ₃	-0,7	90	-4,9	84	-0,7	95	-0,4	61	-2,9	100	-2,9	100	-2,9	100
5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)	NH ₃	0,4	49	-0,3	43	2,2	57	2,2	35	-3,0	56	-3,0	56	-3,0	56
5-6	C ₉ H ₁₀ O, H ₂ O, NH ₃	-4,6	4	-4,3	3	-12,3	6	-5,4	2	-4,1	5	-4,1	5	-4,1	5
5-6	C ₉ H ₁₀ O, CO ₂ , NH ₃	-1,9	20	1,4	20	-1,0	24	-1,9	16	-9,0	44	-9,0	44	-9,0	44
5	CH ₃ OH	-2,6	15	-2,6	14	2,3	22	-6,9	22	-6,3	19	-6,3	19	-6,3	19
5	CH ₃ OH, NH ₃	-2,6	15	1,5	13	0,0	19	-10,2	14	-6,6	20	-6,6	20	-6,6	20
C ₉ H ₁₀ O	Adda	-1,7	24	2,6	23	-2,5	30	4,1	12	-5,8	29	-5,8	29	-5,8	29

Supplementary Table S2. Exact ion masses (Calc, m/z), accuracies (Δ , ppm) and intensities (I, %) of UPLC-ESI-QTOF product ion spectra of protonated MCs identified in *Fischerella* sp. CENA161. Blue bars show the relative intensities of the product ions of MC isoforms.

Product ion assignment		MC-LL			MC-LM			MC-LA			MC-Laba			MC-LV		
		Calc (m/z)	Δ ppm	I (%)	Calc (m/z)	Δ ppm	I (%)	Calc (m/z)	Δ ppm	I (%)	Calc (m/z)	Δ ppm	I (%)	Calc (m/z)	Δ ppm	I (%)
No Aa ^X -Aa ^X ... (X = 1 - 7)	Neutral losses															
1 1-2-3-4-5-6-7	H ₂ O	934,5284	-3.2	24	952,4849	-0.7	24	892,4815	-3.2	24	906,4971	-0.3	21	920,5128	-2.8	26
2 1-2-3-4-5-6-7	NH ₃	935,5126	0.9	25	953,4690	5.5	22	893,4656	-0.2	24	907,4813	0.0	22	921,4969	0.2	25
3 1-2-3-4-5-6-7	CH ₃ OH	920,5128	-2.0	10	938,4692	###	10	878,4658	-0.3	13	892,4815	###	8	906,4971	-9.2	11
4 1-2-3-4	-	427,2551	-1.9	19	445,2115	-0.1	17	385,2082	1.1	16	399,2238	-1.0	12	413,2395	-2.2	21
5 1-2-3-4-NH ₂	-	444,2817	-1.7	31	462,2381	-3.4	37	402,2347	0.7	35	416,2504	-4.3	20	430,2660	-4.6	32
6 1-2-3-4	CO	399,2602	-2.7	15	417,2166			357,2132	###	5	371,2289	-5.1	5	385,2445	-4.1	11
7 1-2-3	CO, H ₂ O	268,1656	-3.6	17	268,1656	0.5	14	268,1656	1.2	26	268,1656	-9.9	14	268,1656	-5.7	19
8 1-2	CO	157,1335	1.0	4	157,1335			157,1335	6.4	5	157,1335	2.9	3	157,1335	-2.5	6
9 2-3-4	-	356,2180	0.6	10	374,1744	2.6	9	314,1710	4.6	13	328,1867	###	7	342,2023	-2.0	12
10 2-3-4-NH ₂	-	373,2445	-0.9	12	391,2010	-5.5	15	331,1976	1.8	21	345,2132	-8.0	8	359,2289	-5.4	13
11 2-3-4	CO	328,2231	-3.3	5	346,1795			286,1761	7.6	3	300,1918	-1.3	2	314,2074	2.0	10
12 2-3-4	CO, H ₂ O	310,2125	-2.3	8	328,1689	2.3	2	268,1656	1.2	26	282,1812	7.4	22	296,1969		
13 2-3	-	243,1339	-1.0	27	243,1339	0.5	8	243,1339	-2.6	5	243,1339	13.8	4	243,1339	-6.9	7
14 2-3-NH ₂	-	260,1605	-2.2	15	260,1605			260,1605			260,1605			260,1605		
15 2-3	CO	215,1390	-0.6	45	215,1390			215,1390	5.5	11	215,1390			215,1390		
16 2-3	CO, H ₂ O	197,1285	-1.3	9	197,1285			197,1285	12.9	2	197,1285			197,1285	-7.6	2
17 2	CO	86,0964	5.5	32	86,0964	-0.3	17	86,0964	3.2	30	86,0964			86,0964	-2.0	24
18 3-4	-	243,1339	-1.0	27	261,0904	-3.7	19	201,0870	-3.4	25	215,1026	5.4	15	229,1183	-4.9	22
19 3-4-NH ₂	-	260,1605	-2.2	15	278,1169	-5.4	22	218,1135	1.2	27	232,1292	0.1	14	246,1448	7.4	44
20 3-4	CO	215,1390	-0.6	45	233,0954	-4.5	26	173,0921	6.5	41	187,1077	1.0	26	201,1234	-3.6	50
21 3-4	CO, H ₂ O	197,1285	-1.3	9	215,0849			155,0815	1.3	36	169,0972	26.3	5	183,1128	-1.4	7
22 3	CO, H ₂ O	84,0444	7.3	5	84,0444	3.7	13	84,0444	15.6	6	84,0444	###	7	84,0444	-1.7	6
23 4-5-6-7-1	NH ₃	693,3858	-1.3	14	711,3422			651,3388			665,3545			679,3701		
24 4	CO	86,0964	5.5	32	104,0528	7.2	5	44,0495			58,0651	-2.2	2	72,0808	-8.7	8
25 5-6-7-1-2	NH ₃	693,3858	-1.3	14	693,3858	1.7	12	693,3858	9.2	14	693,3858	0.9	9	693,3858	-5.3	17
26 5-6-7-1	NH ₃	580,3017	-0.4	20	580,3017	-3.0	15	580,3017			580,3017	1.5	10	580,3017	-2.7	24
27 5-6-7-1	H ₂ O, NH ₃	562,2912	1.7	2	562,2912	-8.8	2	562,2912			562,2912	4.6	2	562,2912	-3.0	3
28 5-6-7	NH ₃	509,2646	-1.4	29	509,2646	-2.8	26	509,2646	-2.2	31	509,2646	-3.4	17	509,2646	-4.4	30
29 5	-	314,2115	-4.5	4	314,2115	-2.6	4	314,2115	0.6	5	314,2115	0.6	5	314,2115	###	10
30 5	NH ₃	297,1849	-0.7	5	297,1849	-1.7	5	297,1849	5.7	6	297,1849	###	3	297,1849	-6.9	6
31 6-7-1-2-3-4	-	639,3348	-0.2	13	657,2912	-0.1	10	597,2879	1.6	11	611,3035	###	11	625,3192	-2.6	15
32 6-7-1-2-3-4	H ₂ O	621,3243	-3.9	5	639,2807	-8.3	5	597,2879	9.0	6	593,2930	-1.6	1	607,3086	-2.1	6
33 6-7-1-2-3-4-NH ₂	-	656,3614	-2.2	2	674,3178	-3.2	3	614,3144	-7.0	3	628,3301	5.9	2	642,3457	-1.7	3
34 6-7-1-2-3-4	CO	611,3399	-3.1	2	629,2963			569,2930	4.8	3	583,3086			597,3243	-6.9	2
35 6-7-1-2-3-4	CO, H ₂ O	593,3293	3.0	4	611,2858	0.6	4	551,2824	-3.4	2	565,2980	-2.9	4	579,3137	-2.7	4
36 6-7-1-2-3	H ₂ O	508,2402	-2.3	9	508,2402			508,2402	1.4	5	508,2402	10.4	6	508,2402	-5.6	9
37 6-7-1-2	-	397,2082	-1.9	60	397,2082	-3.7	41	397,2082	1.6	26	397,2082	-4.4	23	397,2082	-4.8	56
38 6-7-1-2	CO, H ₂ O	351,2027	-6.8	4	351,2027	-5.1	4	351,2027	-0.7	4	351,2027	5.7	2	351,2027	-8.9	4
39 6-7	-	213,0870	1.0	74	213,0870	-0.4	66	213,0870	1.5	81	213,0870	-3.7	59	213,0870	-2.5	82
40 6-7	H ₂ O	195,0764	-0.6	26	195,0764	-0.6	21	195,0764	-2.7	33	195,0764	5.5	17	195,0764	-3.4	27
41 6-7	CO	185,0921	6.1	11	185,0921	2.3	24	185,0921			185,0921	16.9	2	185,0921	11.8	2

Product ion assignment		MC-LL			MC-LM			MC-LA			MC-Laba			MC-LV		
		Calc (m/z)	Δ ppm	I (%)	Calc (m/z)	Δ ppm	I (%)	Calc (m/z)	Δ ppm	I (%)	Calc (m/z)	Δ ppm	I (%)	Calc (m/z)	Δ ppm	I (%)
No Aa ^X -Aa ^X ... (X = 1 - 7)	Neutral losses															
42 6-7	CO, H ₂ O	167,0815	1.2	14	167,0815	6.0	16	167,0815	6.6	15	167,0815	###	16	167,0815	-0.3	16
43 6	CO, H ₂ O	84,0444	7.3	5	84,0444	3.7	13	84,0444	15.6	6	84,0444	###	7	84,0444	-1.7	6
44 7-1-2-3-4	-	510,2922	-2.2	61	528,2486	-2.0	49	468,2453	1.1	51	482,2609	-2.3	32	496,2766	-2.9	62
45 7-1-2-3-4-NH ₂	-	527,3188	-1.3	15	545,2752	2.9	19	485,2718	-4.6	21	499,2875	6.5	8	513,3031	-0.5	18
46 7-1-2-3-4	CO	482,2973	-4.8	11	500,2537	-5.3	4	440,2504			454,2660	-2.7	5	468,2817	-4.7	10
47 7-1-2-3-4	CO, H ₂ O	464,2867	-5.9	4	482,2432	-4.3	2	422,2398	-3.8	2	436,2554			450,2711	-6.8	5
48 7-1-2-3	-	397,2082	-1.9	60	397,2082	-3.7	41	397,2082	1.6	26	397,2082	-4.4	23	397,2082	-4.8	56
49 7-1-2-3	CO, H ₂ O	351,2027	-6.8	4	351,2027	-5.1	4	351,2027	-0.7	4	351,2027	5.7	2	351,2027	-8.9	4
50 7-1-2	-	268,1656	-3.6	17	268,1656	0.5	14	268,1656	1.2	26	268,1656	-9.9	14	268,1656	-5.7	19
51 7-1	-	155,0815	4.5	27	155,0815	3.2	23	155,0815	1.3	36	155,0815	16.1	14	155,0815	-2.3	28
52 7-1	CO	127,0866	2.4	23	127,0866	0.9	19	127,0866	0.1	33	127,0866	0.9	16	127,0866	-1.1	29
53 7-1	NH ₃	138,0550	3.9	5	138,0550	9.7	2	138,0550	2.5	5	138,0550	3.9	4	138,0550	-3.7	6
54 7	-	84,0444	7.3	5	84,0444	3.7	13	84,0444	15.6	6	84,0444	###	7	84,0444	-1.7	6
55 1-2-3-4-5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6	H ₂ O	717,4182	-0.1	5	735,3746	-3.5	6	675,3712	4.1	8	689,3869	-8.9	4	703,4025	-3.3	6
56 3-4-5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1	-	705,3818	-7.3	3	723,3382			663,3348	-7.7	2	677,3505			691,3661		
57 3-4-5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1	H ₂ O	687,3712	-4.4	4	705,3276			645,3243	-1.8	1	659,3399			673,3556		
58 3-4-5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1	NH ₃	688,3552	-1.5	7	706,3116			646,3083			660,3239			674,3396		
59 3-4-5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1	H ₂ O, NH ₃	670,3447	-1.9	3	688,3011			628,2977			642,3134			656,3290		
60 4-5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1	NH ₃	559,3126	-2.4	19	577,2690			517,2657			531,2813			545,2970		
61 4-5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1	H ₂ O, NH ₃	541,3021	-4.4	3	559,2585			499,2551			513,2708			527,2864		
62 5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3-4	-	818,4658	-2.5	77	836,4223	-5.8	61	776,4189	-4.6	80	790,4345	-2.4	44	804,4502	-5.3	78
63 5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3-4	H ₂ O	800,4553	-2.7	28	818,4117	-4.5	27	758,4083	-3.1	29	772,4240	-3.1	17	786,4396	-1.2	29
64 5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3-4	CO	790,4709	-7.1	2	808,4273			748,4240	###	1	762,4396	8.2	2	776,4553	-4.7	2
65 5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3-4	CO, H ₂ O	772,4604	-6.4	4	790,4168	0.7	4	730,4134	-5.1	4	744,4291			758,4447	-1.0	4
66 5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3-4	NH ₃	801,4393	-0.7	43	819,3957	4.5	32	759,3923	5.2	41	773,4080	2.5	20	787,4236	-0.2	43
67 5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3-4	H ₂ O, NH ₃	783,4287	-2.3	8	801,3851	5.6	5	741,3818	-3.1	6	755,3974	-6.9	7	769,4131	-4.4	9
68 5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3	-	705,3818	-7.3	3	705,3818			705,3818	###	1	705,3818	13.5	2	705,3818	-0.7	2
69 5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3	H ₂ O	687,3712	-4.4	4	687,3712	0.9	4	687,3712	-1.9	7	687,3712	15.0	5	687,3712	-4.9	4
70 5(?C ₉ H ₁₀ O)-6-7-1-2-3	NH ₃	688,3552	-1.5	7	688,3552	-2.1	6	688,3552	2.9	4	688,3552			688,3552	-4.0	6