Report of the 1st and 2nd Mystery of Reactive Oxygen Species Conferences

Tanabe, Shihori

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Meeting Report

Report of the 1st and 2nd Mystery of Reactive Oxygen Species Conferences

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Introduction

To reduce or replace animal experimentation, approaches are needed where computational networking of tissue and cellular biological events addresses disease mechanisms. One important tool for this is the adverse outcome pathway (AOP) framework, which describes how molecular and cellular events cause adverse health effects. The AOP framework is compiled by the scientific community in the Adverse Outcome Pathway Knowledge Base (AOP-KB) as part of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) projects[1].

AOPs begin with a molecular initiating event (MIE), which is the starting point describing how stressors interact with specific molecules in cells. AOPs then progress through a series of key events (KEs) to an adverse outcome (AO), via key event relationships (KERs). KERs describe the causal linkages between each KE using biological knowledge, empirical evidence, and quantitative understanding. This modular framework increases efficiency in AOP development and facilitates the development of AOP networks, the ultimate tool for AOP application. A central tenet of AOP development is sharing KEs across pathways. This enables an enhanced understanding of cross-talk across pathways to represent the complexity of biology.

Reactive oxygen species (ROS) play crucial roles in a variety of diseases and physiological conditions. ROS are produced by various stressors such as chemicals, particles or radiation energy, and endogenous peptides or the enzymatic machinery. Transient ROS play an important role in the defense mechanism of immune cells and redox signaling, whereas prolonged ROS elevation is involved in disease development and progression.

With global progress in the AOP development field, multiple, slightly nuanced KEs related to ROS have been created in the AOP-Wiki[2]. Many of these KEs are highly similar and largely redundant, which has catalyzed a need to create harmonized consensus KEs on ROS that can be shared in a modular fashion between closely related pathways and networks.

To address this need, a consortium of ROS and AOP experts has been formed to discuss the "Mystery of ROS" and develop consensus KEs for this field. This meeting report summarizes initial efforts of the "Mystery of ROS" consortium to harmonize the ROS-related KEs currently available in the AOP-Wiki. The two new modular KEs reflect discussion from the group relating to the effects of ROS presenting a "double-edged sword" by describing the concepts of "up-regulation of ROS" and "diminished protective response."

Summary of the discussions in the consortium

The international online conferences on the Mystery of ROS took place on May 31, 2021 and October 8, 2021. At the first conference on Mystery of ROS (I), a brief introduction of the ROS collaboration was followed by eight presentations, which are listed in Table 1.

Tab. 1: Outline of Mystery of ROS (I)

	Content	Presenter
1	Introduction	Dr Shihori Tanabe
2	Overall purpose of the collaboration	Dr Jason O'Brien
3	KE1632 (Increase in RONS) in AOP293&294	Dr Jessica Helm / Dr Rudel's group
4	KE257 (Increase, ROS production) in AOP299, 327-330, 386, 387, and NEA etc.	Dr Knut Erik Tollefsen
5	KE1115 (Increased, ROS) in AOP382-384	Dr Young-Jun Kim
6	KE1753 (chronic ROS) in AOP298 & KE1869 (oxidative stress response) in AOP379	Dr Shihori Tanabe
7	DNA damage and ROS	Dr Carole Yauk
8	Nanomaterial-related oxidative stress	Dr Sabina Halappanavar
9	Radiation-related ROS	Dr Vinita Chauhan and Dr Danielle Beaton

[1] https://aopkb.oecd.org/

[2] https://aopwiki.org/

Tab. 2: Outline of Mystery of ROS (II)

	Content	Presenter
1	Introduction	Dr Shihori Tanabe
2	Overall purpose of the collaboration	Dr Jason O'Brien
3	Inflammation KE coordination	Dr Dan Villeneuve
4	ROS as mediators in disease	Prof. Pietro Ghezzi
5	Response to ROS and coagulation	Dr Shihori Tanabe
6	DNA damage and ROS	Dr Carole Yauk
7	Nanomaterial-related oxidative stress	Dr Sabina Halappanavar

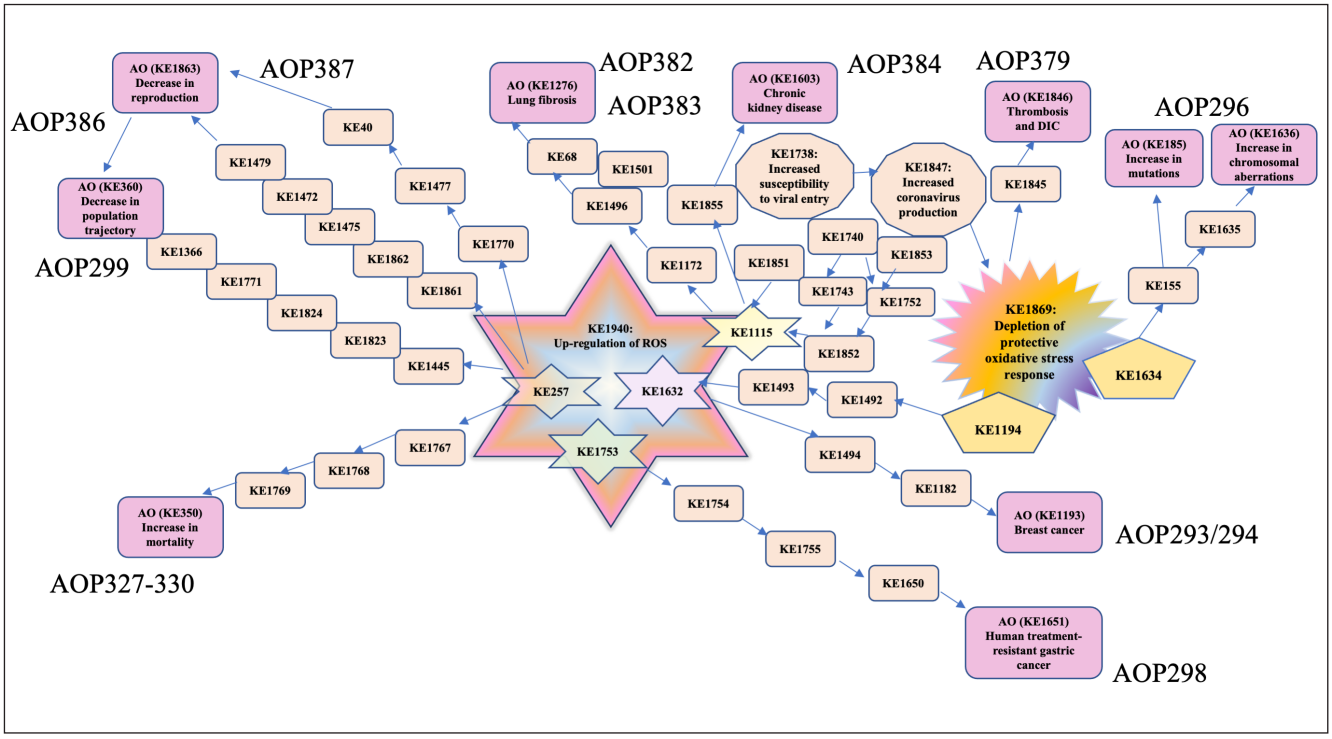

Fig. 1: Adverse outcome pathway (AOP) story coordination with a group of harmonized key events (KEs)
AOPs discussed by the Mystery of ROS consortium are linked with ROS-related KEs. Hexagram star shapes indicate the ROS-related KEs; pentagon shapes indicate DNA damage-related KEs; dodecagon shapes indicate coronavirus-related KEs. Adverse outcomes (AOs) are colored in pink. DIC, disseminated intravascular coagulation

The Mystery of ROS consortium carefully considered many critical aspects of the creation of ROS-related KEs. It was identified that ROS are needed for critical cellular functions at optimal levels; however, excessively high levels of ROS production over prolonged durations lead to adverse effects. Thus, the cellular balance between ROS production and scavenging to maintain homeostasis needs to be represented within the KEs.

The second conference on the Mystery of ROS (II) included four presentations and panel discussions on DNA damage and ROS and on nanomaterial-related oxidative stress (Tab. 2). The initial concept for a ROS-related KE group was introduced, which led to the creation of harmonized KE1940[3] "Up-regulation of ROS" in a collaborative effort of conference attendees (Fig. 1). The Mystery of ROS collaboration discussed the harmonization of the existing ROS-related KEs and associated AOPs in the AOP-Wiki (Fig. 1; Tab. S1[4]).

A similar discussion on inflammation-related KEs has resulted in a consensus around a hub of three modular events, which was presented at the Mystery of ROS (II) as a model (Villeneuve et al., 2018).

[3] https://aopwiki.org/events/1940
[4] doi:10.14573/altex.2203011s

Plans of the consortium

Members of the consortium agreed to work toward harmonization of the molecular-level KEs focused on up-regulation of ROS production under the umbrella of KE1940[3] "Up-regulation of ROS". KE1940 focuses on the production of ROS *per se*, while the reduction of protective enzyme activity that also results in ROS increase will be the focus of the KE1869[5] "Depletion of protective oxidative stress response" (Short name "Depleted Protective Response to ROS") at "molecular" and "cellular" level KEs for ROS.

Conclusion

The consortium had fruitful discussions on harmonizing ROS-related AOPs. Although no definitive consensus on the KEs was reached, there was agreement that further conversations are needed to elucidate how best to represent the complexity of oxidative stress. Since oxidative stress is caused by excessive ROS production and depletion of scavenging machinery, all aspects of ROS should be considered for harmonizing AOPs. These discussions of the Mystery of ROS consortium will strengthen AOPs and facilitate the development of AOP networks to support the design and justification of new approach methodologies.

Reference

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Conflict of interest

Karsta Luettich and Hasmik Yepiskoposyan are employed by Philip Morris International (PMI).

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Shihori Tanabe[1], Danielle Beaton[2], Vinita Chauhan[3], Ian Choi[4], Pernille Høgh Danielsen[5], Nathalie Delrue[6], Maranda Esterhuizen[7], Julija Filipovska[8], Rex FitzGerald[9], Ellen Fritsche[10], Timothy W. Gant[11], Natalia Garcia-Reyero[12], Jessica S. Helm[13], Elizabeth Huliganga[14], Nicklas Raun Jacobsen[5], Jennifer E. Kay[13], Young-Jun Kim[4], Jördis Klose[10], Cinzia La Rocca[15], Karsta Luettich[16], Angela Mally[17], Jason O'Brien[18], Sarah Søs Poulsen[5], Ruthann A. Rudel[13], Iva Sovadinova[19], Knut Erik Tollefsen[20,21,22], Ulla Vogel[5], Hasmik Yepiskoposyan[16] and Carole Yauk[14]

[1]Division of Risk Assessment, Center for Biological Safety and Research, National Institute of Health Sciences, Kawasaki, Japan; [2]Canadian Nuclear Laboratories, Chalk River, Ontario, Canada; [3]Health Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada; [4]Korea Institute of Science and Technology (KIST) Europe, Saarbrücken, Germany; [5]National Research Centre for the Working Environment, Copenhagen, Denmark; [6]Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Paris, France; [7]University of Helsinki, Ecosystems and Environment Research Programme, Faculty of Biological and Environmental Sciences, Lahti, Finland; and Helsinki Institute of Sustainability Science (HELSUS), Helsinki, Finland; [8]Independent, Ohrid, North Macedonia; [9]Universities of Basel and Geneva, Basel, Switzerland; [10]IUF – Leibniz Research Institute for Environmental Medicine, Duesseldorf, Germany; [11]UK Health Security Agency, Public Health England, London, United Kingdom; [12]U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC), Vicksburg, MS, USA; [13]Silent Spring Institute, Newton, MA, USA; [14]University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada; [15]Center for Gender-specific Medicine, Italian National Institute of Health, Rome, Italy; [16]Philip Morris International R&D, Philip Morris Products SA, Neuchâtel, Switzerland; [17]Department of Toxicology, University of Würzburg, Würzburg, Germany; [18]Wildlife Toxicology Research Section, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Toronto, Ontario, Canada; [19]RECETOX, Faculty of Science, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic; [20]Norwegian Institute for Water Research (NIVA), Oslo, Norway; [21]Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU), Ås, Norway; [22]Centre for Environmental Radioactivity, Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU), Ås, Norway

Shihori Tanabe, PhD
stanabe@nihs.go.jp

[5] https://aopwiki.org/events/1869