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## Species-specific chloroplast DNA polymorphism in the *trnV-rbcL* region in *Pinus sylvestris* and *P. mugo*

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**Abstract:** Four *cpDNA* regions were analyzed with the use of PCR-RFLP technique and nucleotide sequences of two *mtDNA* regions were characterized in order to find *P. sylvestris* and *P. mugo* species specific markers useful for studies of the species hybridization. The difference in the restriction fragment patterns of *trnV-rbcL* region after digestion with *MvaI* endonuclease was detected. The analyses of the species representatives from various geographic regions revealed that the observed polymorphism is species specific. No differences have been disclosed in the analyzed *trnS-trnT*, *trnK1-trnK2*, *trnC-trnD* *cpDNA* regions. The *P. sylvestris* and *P. mugo* *mtDNA* sequences of *orf25* and *coxI* regions proved to be identical.

**Additional key words:** Scots pine, dwarf pine, hybridisation, DNA markers, *mtDNA*,

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### Introduction

The mechanism of uniparental inheritance of organelle genomes may be applied in the studies on hybridisation and introgression between closely related forest tree species. In conifers, the plastid genome is transmitted paternally whereas the mitochondrial genome in the maternal line (Neale et al. 1986; Neale and Sederoff 1988). The use of species specific chloroplast (*cpDNA*) and mitochondrial (*mtDNA*) markers allows for identification of hybrids displaying the genomes from different species. These studies

also enable to define the direction and intensity of hybridisation and its influence on the genetic structure of the species sympatric populations. The markers of organelle genomes have been applied in the analyses of hybridisation processes among the species of *Abies* (Isoda et al. 2000), *Picea* (Bobola et al. 1996; Perron and Bousquet 1997; Germano and Klein 1999) or *Pinus* (Wagner et al. 1987; Wang and Szmidi 1990).

Biometric and biochemical (isozymes) analyses of the individuals from Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) and dwarf pine (*P. mugo*) sympatric stands have not resulted in formulating one coherent hypothesis about

the postulated processes of the species hybridisation (Prus-Głowacki and Szweykowski 1983; Staszkiwicz 1993; Siedlewska and Prus-Głowacki 1994). The estimation of the hybridisation intensity vary from rare formation of hybrids (Neet-Sarqueda et al. 1988; Christensen and Dar 1997) to the formation of hybrid swarms, consisting of F1 hybrids, hybrids of subsequent generations and introgressants (Staszkiwicz and Tyszkiewicz 1969; Bobowicz 1990; Vievegh and Cambalowa 1993). These different opinions result from the absence of diagnostic features for particular species, which would allow for certain hybrids identification. Considering the absence of biometrical and biochemical diagnostic traits the application of *cpDNA* and *mtDNA* markers specific to the analyzed species seems to be a good approach aimed at verifying the hypotheses about the frequency and the direction of the species hybridization.

So far there have been described species specific for *P. sylvestris* and *P. mugo* *cpDNA* markers in the *trnF-trnL* region (Wachowiak et al. 2000). The present study is the continuation of the analyses aiming at *mtDNA* markers development and detecting additional differences in the *cpDNA* regions which would be useful to prove the gene exchange among the species.

## Methods

The *P. sylvestris* and *P. mugo* representatives used in this study have been derived from different geographical regions (Table 1). *P. sylvestris* S1-S20 individuals (apart from S9) come from the Scots pine 1982 provenience trail in the Institute of Dendrology, Polish Academy of Science in Zwierzyniec near Kórnik, coordinated by IUFRO (International Union of Forest Research Organization). The trial consists of 20 populations representing the European range of *P. sylvestris* (Boratyński 1991). The S9 *P. sylvestris* individual was collected in Uścikuwec. The M1-M14 *P. mugo* was derived from the populations in the Botanical Garden of the Polish Academy of Science, in Warsaw – Powsin and they originate from the natural stands in the Tatra Mts. (Marczewski 1993). The plant material from the remaining *P. mugo* individuals were collected in their natural populations (Table 1).

The needles from trees (ca. 100 mg of fresh material) undergone DNA extraction using the method described by Dumolin et al. (1995). Four *cpDNA* and two *mtDNA* regions were amplified with the use of the primers described in Table 2. PCR was run in a Personal Cyler (PTC-200, MJ Research, USA). PCR-amplification was carried out in a total volume of 25  $\mu$ l containing about 20 ng of template DNA, 2.5 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 100  $\mu$ M of each dNTP, 0.2  $\mu$ M of each primer and 0.25 U of *Taq* polymerase with the respective 1 $\times$  PCR buffer (*Taq* polymerase and 10 $\times$  PCR buffer were purchased from Fermentas, Lithuania).

Preliminary denaturation of DNA for 5 min at 95°C was followed by 30 cycles of denaturation at 93°C for 30 sec, primer annealing for 45 sec at 57.5° (for *trnV-rbcL*, *trnC-trnD* regions) or 53°C (for *trnS-trnT*, *trnK1-trnK2*, *orf25* and *coxI* regions), DNA synthesis at 72°C for 2 min for *cpDNA* and 1 min for *mtDNA* primers. The reaction was terminated with 10 min incubation at 72°C.

PCR-RFLP analyses of the amplified *cpDNA* regions were performed with the use of restriction enzymes described in Table 3. The enzymes applied for digestion of each region were derived in a random selection. Two *P. sylvestris* and two *P. mugo* individuals were chosen for the restriction analyses. In case of detecting the interspecies specific differences of the investigated regions the remaining individuals used in the study were also analysed. 10  $\mu$ l of PCR product underwent digestion, following the reaction conditions recommended by the enzyme provider (Fermentas, Lithuania). After digestion, the samples were separated in 8 % polyacrylamide gel (Sambrook et al. 1989), stained with ethidium bromide and analysed by UV light.

The PCR product of *orf25* and *cox1* *mtDNA* were purified with the use of QIAquick™PCR Purification Kit (Qiagen) and sequence characterized in one *P. sylvestris* (S12) and one *P. mugo* (M8) individuals. Sequencing was performed through automatic sequencer (PerkinElmer) with the use of Big Dye Terminator DNA Sequencing Kit (Applied Biosystems) according to a protocol by Liepelt et al. (2001).

## Results

The PCR products of *orf25* and *cox1* *mtDNA* regions have a length of about 500 bp and 700 bp, respectively. The sequences of *orf25* *mtDNA* region were submitted to Gene Bank database (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>) and they have the following accession numbers: AF361058 for *P. mugo* and AF361059 for *P. sylvestris*. The *P. sylvestris* sequences of *coxI* and *orf25* regions have proved no difference comparing to the corresponding sequence of *P. mugo*. The *coxI* sequences of both species were identical with the *coxI* sequence of *P. sylvestris* from Gene Bank database (AJ000354).

The amplification products of *trnV-rbcL*, *trnS-trnT*, *trnK1-trnK2*, *trnC-trnD* *cpDNA* regions have the length of about 4000 bp, 1700 bp, 2200 bp and 2000 bp, respectively. The PCR-RFLP analyses of *trnV-rbcL* *cpDNA* region digested with the use *MvaI* endonuclease indicated the length differences of the obtained DNA fragments between *P. sylvestris* and *P. mugo*. The length of fragments differentiating both species is about 400bp and 500bp for *P. sylvestris*, and 440bp and 460bp for *P. mugo*. All the analysed *P. sylvestris* individuals (Table 1) have displayed type S

Table 1. The origin and number of the analysed *P. sylvestris* and *P. mugo* individuals

No.	The origin	Country	Latitude	Longitude	Meters above sea level	Number of analysed trees
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>						
S 1	Roshchinskaya Dacha	Russia	60°15'	29°54'	80	1
S 2	Kondezhskoe	Russia	59°58'	33°30'	70	1
S 3	Serebryanskoe	Russia	58°50'	29°07'	80	1
S 4	Silene	Latvia	55°45'	26°40'	165	1
S 5	Miłomłyn	Poland	53°34'	20°00'	110	1
S 6	Supraśl	Poland	53°12'	23°22'	160	1
S 7	Spała	Poland	51°37'	20°12'	160	1
S 8	Rychtal	Poland	51°08'	17°55'	190	1
S 9	Uścikowiec	Poland	52°40'	16°50'	90	1
S 10	Neuhaus	Germany	52°24'	13°54'	40	1
S 11	Betzhorn	Germany	53°02'	10°30'	650	1
S 12	Lampertheim	Germany	52°30'	10°00'	95–100	1
S 13	Ardennes	Belgium	50°46'	4°26'	110	1
S 14	Haguenau	France	48°49'	7°47'	130–180	1
S 15	Sumpberget	Sweden	60°11'	15°52'	185	1
S 16	Zahorie	Slovenia	48°46'	17°03'	160	1
S 17	Pornoapati	Hungary	47°20'	16°28'	400	1
S 18	Maocnica	Serbia	43°10'	19°30'	1200	1
S 19	Prusacka Rijeka	Bosnia	44°05'	17°21'	800–970	1
S 20	Catacik	Turkey	40°00'	31°10'	1380–1420	1
<i>Pinus mugo</i>						
M1-M14	Tatra Mts.	Poland	58°35'	14°45'	1700	14
Śn 1–3	Sudet Mts.	Poland	50°49'	15°46'	1500	3
U 1–2 <sup>1</sup>	Urlea	Romania	24°80'	45°70'	2470	2

Table 2. The PCR primer sequences of the analyzed *cpDNA* and *mtDNA* regions

<i>cpDNA</i> region	5'–3' sequence of primer 1	5'–3' sequence of primer 2	References
<i>trnV-rbcL</i>	cga acc gta gac ctt ctc gg	gct tta gtc tct gtt tgt gg	Dumolin et al. 1997
<i>trnS-trnT</i>	cga ggg ttc gaa tcc ctc tc	aga gca tcg cat ttg taa tg	Demesure et al. 1995
<i>trnK1-trnK2</i>	ggg ttg ccc ggg act cga ac	caa cgg tag agt act cgg ctt tta	Demesure et al. 1995
<i>trnC-trnD</i>	cca gtt caa atc tgg gtg tc	ggg att gta gtt caa ttg gt	Demesure et al. 1995
<i>mtDNA</i> region	5'–3' sequence of primer 1	5'–3' sequence of primer 2	References
<i>orf25</i>	atg cta ttt gct gct att cc	agg act atc aag cct tct cg	Wang et al. 1996
<i>coxI</i>	tta tta tca ctt ccg gta ct	agc atc tgg ata atc tgg	Glaubitz and Carlson 1992

haplotype, whereas all the *P. mugo* individuals have possessed type M haplotype (Fig. 1). PCR-RFLP analysis of *trnV-rbcL* region, which applied the other restriction enzymes, as well as the analysis of the *trnS-trnT*, *trnK1-trnK2*, *trnC-trnD* *cpDNA* regions presented in Table 3, have not shown any differences of the restriction patterns between *P. sylvestris* and *P. mugo*.

## Discussion

The high homology of the plastid genome of higher plants, which has been supported by the comparative

analyses of the complete *cpDNA* sequences of several species, has enabled to describe some universal PCR primers allowing the amplification of the corresponding DNA regions even in the group of phylogenetically distinct taxa (Taberlet et al. 1991; Demesure et al. 1995). The four previously described pairs of PCR primers designed for the amplification of non-coding regions between *tRNA* genes have been applied in the presented study. Since the level of mutation observable in these regions is significantly higher than in conservative coding sequences, these regions have been regarded as particularly useful ones in the analyses of species variability (Dumolin-Lapegue et al. 1997).

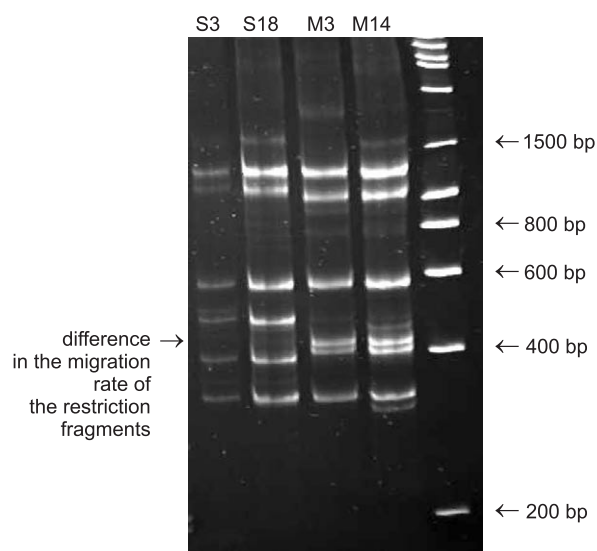


Fig. 1. 8.0 % polyacrylamide gel of PCR products as amplified from the chloroplast DNA region *trnV-rbcL* and digested with the restriction enzyme *MvaI*. *P. sylvestris* individuals (S3, S18) exhibit a distinct different banding pattern (haplotype S) as compared with the *P. mugo* individuals (M3, M14) (haplotype M). Right line of the gel – molecular size standard (Smart-Ladder, Eurogentec, Germany)

The PCR-RFLP analyses conducted with the application of different restriction enzymes have resulted in detecting the polymorphism of *trnV-rbcL* region differentiating *P. sylvestris* and *P. mugo*. The observable differences in the electrophoresis migration rate of the obtained DNA fragments may be correlated with the presence of point mutations in two sites of the species sequences which cause the loss/gain of the restriction site for *MvaI* enzyme. The existence of the restriction sites in different parts of the amplified regions of both species leads to DNA fragment length polymorphism and does not influence the number of obtained fragments.

The identical restriction patterns for the other analysed *cpDNA* regions indicate the absence of deletion/insertion differences which could be detected by the applied DNA electrophoresis in polyacrylamide gel. In these regions, however, there can still occur

nucleotide substitution that have not been discovered. The comparative analyses of *cpDNA* sequences of numerous *Pinaceae* representatives indicate the relatively high rate of nucleotide substitution in the inter genic regions in relation to the parts of coding regions subjected to stronger selective effects (Ziegenhagen and Fladung 1997; Wang et al. 1999).

In spite of the conservative character of genes and a relatively low level of the sequence polymorphism in the group of even phylogenetically distinct taxa, the cases of intra-species variability of *cpDNA* regions have been detected, among others, for *Abies alba* (Ziegenhagen et al. 1995), *Quercus robur* (Dumolin et al. 1995), *Fagus sylvatica* (Demesure et al. 1996) or *Nothofagus nervosa* (Marchelli et al. 1998). In the present study, the restriction analysis of the *trnV-rbcL* region carried out with the use of *MvaI* enzyme for individuals from different geographical regions has proved the presence of S haplotype in all *P. sylvestris* individuals and M haplotype in all *P. mugo* individuals. This result indicates that the observed differences are species-specific and allow for distinguishing *P. sylvestris* from *P. mugo* based on plastid DNA.

In spite of the highly conserved character of the *mtDNA* sequences in higher plant, the examples of nucleotide substitutions in the coding regions were indicated. Due to the observable mechanism of RNA editing these differences do not effect the changes of the peptide amino acids component and do not undergo the high selection influences (Glaubitz and Carlson 1992; Wang and Szmidi 2001). Therefore, the PCR-RFLP analyses of the *orf25* and *coxI* *mtDNA* regions conducted before, which have not indicated the sequence differences between *P. sylvestris* and *P. mugo*, have not excluded the existence of undetected point mutations (Wachowiak et al. 2000). Nevertheless, the presented results indicate that the *P. sylvestris* sequences of these regions are identical with the corresponding sequences of *P. mugo*. Thus, these regions are not useful for developing the species specific *mtDNA* markers.

The differences in the *trnV-rbcL* region detected in this study together with previously described for *P. sylvestris* and *P. mugo* *cpDNA* species-specific markers proved to be useful in the hybridisation analyses of both species. Paternally transmitted *cpDNA* markers particularly allow indicating the present episodes of hybridisations in case of the detected inconsistency of the species-specific *cpDNA* haplotypes of the parental tree and its F1 progeny. Nevertheless, it is still necessary to develop species specific *mtDNA* markers, which would allow for more precise analyses of the species hybridisation and identification of hybrid trees.

Table 3. *cpDNA* regions conducted to the PCR-RFLP analyses

The amplified <i>cpDNA</i> regions	The applied restriction enzymes
<i>trnV-rbcL</i>	<i>MboI</i> , <i>MspI</i> , <i>MvaI</i> , <i>PstI</i> , <i>SmaI</i>
<i>trnS-trnT</i>	<i>AluI</i> , <i>Bsh1236I</i> , <i>BsuRI</i> , <i>DraI</i> , <i>HinfI</i> , <i>Hin6I</i> , <i>RsaI</i> , <i>Sau3A</i>
<i>trnK1-trnK2</i>	<i>Bsp120I</i> , <i>Eco32I</i> , <i>HindIII</i> , <i>MboI</i> , <i>MspI</i> , <i>MvaI</i> , <i>PstI</i>
<i>trnC-trnD</i>	<i>AluI</i> , <i>ApaI</i> , <i>Bsp120I</i> , <i>BsuRI</i> , <i>DraI</i> , <i>EcoRI</i> , <i>Eco32I</i> , <i>Eco47I</i> , <i>HaeIII</i> , <i>Hin6I</i> , <i>HindIII</i> , <i>HinfI</i> , <i>KpuI</i> , <i>MboI</i> , <i>MspI</i> , <i>PstI</i> , <i>RsaI</i> , <i>SacI</i> , <i>SmaI</i>



## Conclusions

- 1) The PCR-RFLP analyses allow indicating the differences between *P. sylvestris* and *P. mugo* in the *trnV-rbcL* cpDNA region digested with the use of *MvaI* restriction enzyme
- 2) The analyses of the species representatives from different geographical regions have proved that the observed differences in the *trnV-rbcL* region are species-specific and useful in the studies of hybridisation between *P. sylvestris* and *P. mugo*
- 3) No deletion/insertion or nucleotide substitutions were detected in the *trnS-trnT*, *trnK1-trnK2* and *trnC-trnD* cpDNA regions of *P. sylvestris* and *P. mugo*
- 4) No differences were detected in the corresponding sequence of *orf25* and *coxI* mtDNA of *P. sylvestris* and *P. mugo*

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