



**SDI Review Form 1.6**

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| Journal Name:            | <a href="#">British Biotechnology Journal</a>   |
| Manuscript Number:       | Ms_BBJ_29582  |
| Title of the Manuscript: | Characterization of Bacillus cereus symbiotic to hemi-parasitic plant Santalum album L. |
| Type of the Article      | Original research paper   |

**General guideline for Peer Review process:**

This journal's peer review policy states that **NO** manuscript should be rejected only on the basis of '**lack of Novelty**', provided the manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound.

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(<http://www.sciencedomain.org/page.php?id=sdi-general-editorial-policy#Peer-Review-Guideline>)



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**PART 1: Review Comments**

|                                     | Reviewer's comment  | Author's comment (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)   |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Compulsory</b> REVISION comments | This is an interesting article on the characterization of bacteria from the rhizosphere of a commercially important plant. The aims are correctly stated, the methods are adequate and the results are clear and concise. I only do not agree with the conclusion on the <u>clear</u> positive role of the <i>B. cereus</i> strain on the growth and development of <i>Santalum album</i> L. This positive role can be suggested but no experiments were done to prove it.  | Present study is an attempt to isolate and characterize the rhizospheric soil bacteria of <i>Santalum album</i> L. It has already been reported that different strains of <i>Bacillus</i> act as plant growth promoters for <i>Saccharum officinerum</i> sugarcane, by Nakade Dhanraj , 2013) and <i>Triticum aestivum</i> (wheat, by Rawat et al., 2011) belonging to the family Poaceae, and <i>B. cereus</i> has been proved to be growth promoting rhizobacteria of some plants viz.. <i>Brassica juncea</i> (Aziz et al., 2012), <i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i> (Niu et al., 2011), <i>Sophora alopecuroides</i> (Zhao et al., 2011) and <i>Allium ascalonicum</i> (Aziz et al., 2012), belonging to the families Brassicaceae, Fabaceae and Lilliaaceae respectively.(line 154-159). Further studies may elucidate the positive role of the symbiotic association of <i>Bacillus cereus</i> (SW1) with the root of <i>S. album</i> as a key factor for the better growth and development of this economically important plant occurring in Bankura district, West Bengal, India. |
| <b>Minor</b> REVISION comments      | <b>Title:</b> there is an abbreviation in the title. The complete scientific name of the plant should be written here.<br>. Key words: FAME and 16S rDNA seq are not relevant enough to be included as key words. Instead <i>Santallum album</i> and <i>Bacillus cereus</i> should be included.<br>. Lines 18-19 and 37: Population diversity but no dynamics was studied in this work (there are no results at different times or conditions). This should be changed also in the key words.<br>. Line 126: " <i>B cereus</i> was isolated from all 4 rhizosphere soils studied" | All the corrections have been done as per the instructions.<br><i>B cereus</i> was isolated from the spore –enriched media. Soil suspensions were heated at 60° C ± 0.1°C for 30 minutes for enrichment culture of the spore formers.(line 79-80)   |



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|  | <p>Comment: It is not clear if these isolates came from total bacteria or from spore-enriched samples. If isolates come from heat-treated samples, we do not know if a heat-sensitive bacterium could also be present in all samples tested and could have a role in the development of the plant as well.</p> <p>. Lines 152-158: The growth-promoting function of the <i>B. cereus</i> strain was not proven in this work. This must not be stated as it is. Why is growth promoting function abbreviated as PGP?</p> <p><b>References:</b></p> <p>. Punctuation at the authors names and the position of year, volume etc. are not uniform. This should be corrected.</p> <p>. References in the text should be indicated only with numbers in brackets; authors use both the authors names and numbers. Please change this to agree with the Journal indications.</p> <p>. Rao is cited in two different forms. Please check the correct one.</p> <p>. Janssen 1994 is not cited in the text</p> <p><b>Figures and tables:</b></p> <p>. Figure 1 has no good quality. Please improve it.</p> <p>. Figure 2: Indicating the position peaks corresponding to the products that permitted the assignation of the isolate as <i>Bacillus cereus</i> would help to understand the figure.</p> <p>. Figures 3 and 4 are not necessary</p> <p>. Fig. 5 ...relationship of <i>Bacillus cereus</i> SW1 (KT626448) with other <b><u>Bacillus strains</u></b> should be a better title for the figure.</p> | <p>Present study is to isolate and characterize the rhizospheric soil bacteria of <i>Santalum album</i> L. It has already been reported that different strains of <i>Bacillus</i> act as plant growth promoters for some economically important plants(line 154-159). Further studies may elucidate the positive role of the symbiotic association of <i>Bacillus cereus</i> (SW1) with the root of <i>S. album</i> as a key factor for the better growth and development of this economically important plant occurring in Bankura district, West Bengal, India.</p> |
| <p><b><u>Optional/General</u></b><br/>comments</p> |   |   |