



Bacterial Abiotic Stress and Survival Improvement Network

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EcoEngineering is a Croatian SME which has been performing R&D of novel bioprocesses for complex municipal and industrial wastewater treatment for about 20 years.

CALL DETAILS:

KBBE-2007-3.3-02: Improved Microbes for the Environment
Microbial gene expression under condition of stress

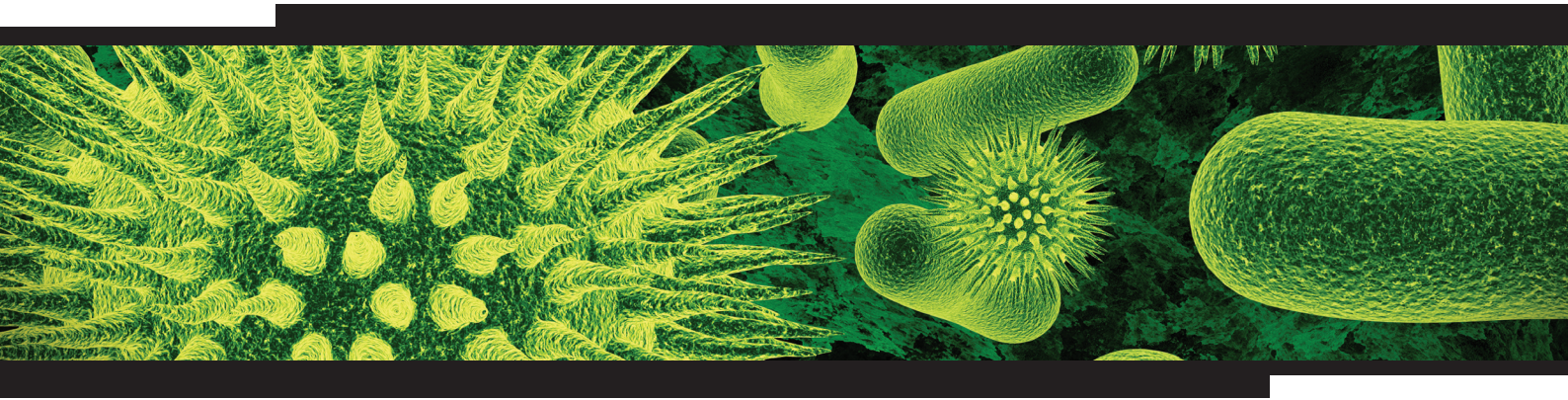
Project duration: 48 months

Total cost: 7.35 million Euros

Instrument: Collaborative project

Project coordinator: Dr. Jan Roelof van der Meer
Université de Lausanne, Switzerland

<http://www.unil.ch/bacsin/>



ABSTRACT:

BACSIN is an international EU funded research project comprising of 16 European Institutions. It aims at improving the exploitation of the catalytic properties of bacteria for treatment of environmental pollution. Current environmental application of bacteria is hindered by the lack of knowledge on the effects of stresses on cellular activity, especially abiotic stresses prevailing on site (e.g., desiccation, nutrient starvation or toxicity), and those during strain preparation and formulation. BACSIN performs research and uses technology to overcome this hindrance for subsequent improved usage. Key cellular factors and regulatory networks determining the inter-play between stress-survival and pollutant catabolism will be unveiled, and faithful predictive models for cell behaviour will be produced.

DR. VICE ŠOLJAN EXPLAINS:

How did you get involved in FP7 and in the project?

EcoEngineering Ltd. cooperates with Swiss institutions since 2002 and was awarded the Lynx and Lillehammer awards together with EPFL, Lausanne. Based on these awards the University of Lausanne invited the company to participate in the FP7 BACSIN project. EcoEngineering is an SME partner in this project.

How did you experience the proposal stage?

FP7 projects are complex and usually involve a large number of participants. In the writing stage, the coordinator has a crucial role. The most complex part is being multidisciplinary since it is necessary to be familiar with the scientific expertise of each partner. The NCP can always provide great help since during the writing phase there are always open questions.

Any advice for other partners/newcomers from your experience?

Participating and writing EU proposals is a tough work, mostly sleepless, and the chances to pass are relatively small. However the hard work has its advantages, such as partnering, knowledge exchange, and opening other forms of cooperation. When a project is accepted there is a lot of added

value for the partner and the whole consortium.

What are your expectations from the project?

I expect to learn new research techniques, deepen the knowledge on the project's scientific themes, gain experience from participating in this type of project and partner with other R&D institutions.

What makes this a special story?

EcoEngineering didn't start its cooperation with EU research funds from day one. However the long time experience that started in 2002, with the participation in the EUREKA "BIOMAC" project, allowed for further expansion. For our outstanding research, the company was awarded in 2006 the Lynx and Lillehammer Awards. The support from the EU community and the local NCP pushed us forward when EcoEngineering started participating in more complex research projects within FP7, such as "BACSIN". Finally we applied as coordinators for the "STREAM" project. In the near future, EcoEngineering hopes to participate in other FP7 projects and expand its research in other biotechnology fields.