



Molecular evolution of the *ent*-kaurenoic acid oxidase gene in Oryzeae

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Abstract

We surveyed the substitution patterns in the *ent*-kaurenoic acid oxidase (KAO) gene in 11 species of Oryzeae with an outgroup in the Ehrhartoidae. The synonymous and non-synonymous substitution rates showed a high positive correlation with each other, but were negatively correlated with codon usage bias and GC content at third codon positions. The substitution rate was heterogeneous among lineages. Likelihood-ratio tests showed that the non-synonymous/synonymous rate ratio changed significantly among lineages. Site-specific models provided no evidence for positive selection of particular amino acid sites in any codon of the KAO gene. This finding suggested that the significant rate heterogeneity among some lineages may have been caused by variability in the relaxation of the selective constraint among lineages or by neutral processes.

Key words: codon usage bias, *ent*-kaurenoic acid oxidase (KAO), positive selection, rate heterogeneity, substitution rate.

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Introduction

Gibberellins (GAs) are an important class of plant hormones involved in the regulation of various growth and developmental processes in higher plants (Appleford *et al.*, 2006). The absence of GAs results in dwarfism in some plant species. *ent*-kaurenoic acid oxidase (KAO), a member of the CYP88A subfamily of cytochrome P450 enzymes, catalyzes a three-step reaction in the gibberellin biosynthetic pathway from *ent*-kaurenoic acid to GA₁₂ (Helliwell *et al.*, 2001). A primary goal of molecular evolutionary studies is to estimate the rate of DNA mutation and elucidate the mechanisms of molecular evolution. Such studies frequently involve a comparison of orthologous DNA fragments among species to determine evolutionary rates and an assessment of the evolutionary processes involved, *e.g.*, natural selection, rate heterogeneity of lineages and mutational biases. Analysis of the molecular evolutionary patterns of different genes provides understanding of the evolutionary processes and pressures experienced by particular lineages.

The tribe Oryzeae (Poaceae) includes approximately 12 genera and more than 70 species distributed throughout tropical and temperate regions of the world (Clayton and Renvoize, 1986; Vaughan, 1994). In the genus *Oryza*, the Asian cultivated rice (*Oryza sativa* L.) is one of the world's most important crops and a primary food source for more

than one-half of the world's population (Chandler and Wessler, 2001). This species has become a model monocotyledon in scientific research and its entire genome has been sequenced. Other members of the Oryzeae are also of economic importance, including wild species of *Oryza* that can be used in the genetic improvement of rice.

Analysis of the substitution patterns in the KAO gene can provide insights into the driving forces that have led to evolutionary change in this gene in Oryzeae. In addition, the identification of patterns of molecular evolution in the KAO gene can improve our understanding of the evolutionary history of some Oryzeae species. In this work, we examined the heterogeneity of the substitution rate in the KAO gene among various genera and species of Oryzeae and sought to identify the possible causes of such heterogeneity. We also sought for evidence of natural selection in the exon regions of the KAO gene.

Materials and Methods

Plant material

A portion of the KAO gene was isolated and sequenced from members of the rice tribe (Oryzeae) (Table 1). Eleven diploid species were selected to represent the major phylogenetic lineages of Oryzeae (Figure S1, Supplementary Material) (Guo and Ge, 2005). These consisted of seven *Oryza* species representing six diploid genome types, namely, *Oryza sativa* (AA), *O. meridionalis* (AA), *O. punctata* (BB), *O. officinalis* (CC), *O. australiensis* (EE), *O. brachyantha* (FF), *O. granulata* (GG), and one

Table 1 - Species used in this study.

Species	Genome	Accession ^a	Country
<i>Oryza sativa</i>	A	<i>japonica</i>	GenBank
<i>O. meridionalis</i>	A	105282	Australia
<i>O. punctata</i>	B	103903	Tanzania
<i>O. officinalis</i>	C	104972	China
<i>O. australiensis</i>	E	105263	Australia-PNAS
<i>O. brachyantha</i>	F	105151	Sierra Leone-PNAS
<i>O. granulata</i>	G	M8-15	Ledong, Hainan
<i>Leersia tisserantii</i>	—	105610	Cameroon
<i>Chikusichloa aquatica</i>	—	106186	Japan
<i>Rhynchoryza subulata</i>	—	100913	Argentina
<i>Luziola leiocarpa</i>	—	82043	Argentina
<i>Ehrharta erecta</i>	—	218290	South Africa

^aAll accessions were obtained from the International Rice Research Institute at Los Banos, Philippines.

species from each of four other genera in the tribe Oryzeae (*Leersia tisserantii*, *Chikusichloa aquatica*, *Luziola leiocarpa*, and *Rhynchoryza subulata*) (Table 1). *Ehrharta erecta*, a species in the tribe Ehrhartoideae, which is a sister tribe to the Oryzeae, was used as an outgroup (GPWG, 2001; Guo and Ge, 2005). Plastid, mitochondrial and nuclear gene sequences have been used to establish the phylogeny of the Oryzeae (Ge *et al.*, 1999; Guo and Ge, 2005; Tang *et al.*, 2010) and have provided an important framework for the study of molecular evolution in this group (Figure S1, Supplementary Material).

DNA extraction, amplification and sequencing

Total DNA was isolated from silica-gel dried or fresh leaves as described by Ge *et al.* (1999). A 1-2 kb fragment of the *KAO* gene containing several exons and introns was obtained by using the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) in conjunction with the forward primer KAOF (5'-CAGGACGTTTCATGTTTCAGCAG-3') and the reverse primers KAOR1 (5'-TCGTCGCCAAGCAGTTGTC-3') and KAOR2 (5'-GCCAAGCAGTTGTCCAC-3') (Figure 1). The PCR was done in a total volume of 25 μ L that contained 5-50 ng of template DNA, 0.2 μ M of each primer, 200 μ M of each dNTP, 10 mM Tris-HCl (pH 8.3), 50 mM KCl, 1.5 mM MgCl₂ and 0.75 U of ExTaq DNA polymer-

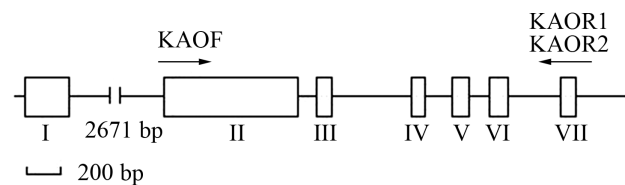


Figure 1 - Schematic diagram of the *KAO* gene and the regions sequenced in this study. Boxes and lines indicate exons and introns, respectively. Exon numbers are labeled with the roman numbers. Locations of primers are shown above the diagram.

ase (TaKaRa, Shiga, Japan). Amplifications were done in a T gradient 96 U thermocycler (Biometra, Göttingen, Germany) as follows: 3 min at 94 °C, followed by 33 cycles of 30 s at 94 °C, 30 s at 56 °C, 2.5 min at 72 °C and a final extension at 72 °C for 10 min. Further internal primers used for sequencing were: KAO707F 5'-ACCGTCTTCCTCCAGGAGAAC-3' (T_m = 61.9 °C), KAO931F 5'-GATGCACTTCCTCTCACAG-3' (T_m = 57.6 °C) and KAO1478F 5'-CGTCAACATCTCCTTCGTGTC-3' (T_m = 60 °C) (Yang *et al.*, 2009). All of the sequences were deposited in GenBank under accession numbers EF577665-EF577670 and EU179429-EU179435 (Table 2).

Sequence analysis

Sequences were aligned using ClustalX v.1.81 (Thompson *et al.*, 1997) and refined by manual adjustment based on the predicted amino acid sequence. The amino acid sequences (excluding introns) were sufficiently conserved across the 12 species to provide unambiguous alignments. We examined the possibility of sequence saturation using DAMBE v.4.5.45 (Xia and Xie, 2001). Pairwise synonymous and non-synonymous substitutions per site (d_s and d_n) among the 11 species were estimated for the coding regions of the *KAO* gene.

The extent of codon usage bias often reflects the degree of selective constraint in a gene (Sharp, 1991; Sharp *et al.*, 1986). To measure the extent of codon usage bias, we estimated the effective number of codons (ENC) and codon bias index (CBI) using DnaSP v.4.10.9 (Rozas and Rozas, 1999). The ENC values range from 20 (only one codon is used for each amino acid, *i.e.*, the codon bias is maximal) to 61 (all synonymous codons for each amino acid are equally used, *i.e.*, there is no codon bias) (Wright, 1990). The CBI values range from 0 (uniform use of synonymous codons) to 1 (maximum codon bias) (Morton, 1993). Variation in the rate of synonymous substitution among genes may be related to codon use (Sharp, 1991). Therefore, several parameters related to codon usage bias, such as the GC content at the first and second codon positions (GC1, 2), as well as third codon positions (GC3), were also estimated using DnaSP v.4.10.9 (Rozas and Rozas, 1999).

Detecting rate heterogeneity among lineages

The relative-rate test based on the method of Muse and Gaut (1994), as implemented in Hyphy (Pond *et al.*, 2005), was used to detect variation in the synonymous and non-synonymous substitution rates along different lineages, with *Ehrharta erecta* as the reference sequence. This method examines substitution rates between two lineages with reference to a third outgroup lineage. In the first model, the two related taxa from the most recent common ancestor are constrained to have the same substitution rate. In the second model, the two lineages may have different substitution rates. A likelihood ratio test is used to test

Table 2 - Information for the *KAO* gene sampled in this study.

Species	Length sequenced (bp)		Coding			Noncoding			Accession number
	Total	Coding	ENC ^a	CBI	GC	GC1,2	GC3	GC	
<i>Oryza sativa</i>	2231	1053	35.02	0.693	0.600	0.492	0.818	0.307	AP004572 ^b
<i>O. meridionalis</i>	1819	1053	35.60	0.678	0.598	0.492	0.818	0.334	EU179429
<i>O. punctata</i>	1833	1053	35.13	0.685	0.597	0.486	0.820	0.333	EF577665
<i>O. officinalis</i>	1844	1053	39.10	0.641	0.600	0.493	0.815	0.328	EF577666
<i>O. australiensis</i>	1867	1053	39.27	0.637	0.602	0.495	0.818	0.334	EF577667
<i>O. brachyantha</i>	2626	1053	39.20	0.642	0.606	0.498	0.823	0.334	EF577668
<i>O. granulata</i>	1808	1053	37.72	0.662	0.612	0.501	0.832	0.336	EF577669
<i>Leersia tisserantii</i>	1775	1053	48.56	0.405	0.565	0.489	0.718	0.327	EF577670
<i>Luziola leiocarpa</i>	1826	1050	38.67	0.636	0.612	0.503	0.831	0.336	EU179408
<i>Chikusichloa aquatica</i>	1772	1047	42.48	0.568	0.598	0.490	0.814	0.338	EU179409
<i>Rhynchosyza subulata</i>	1790	1047	42.02	0.569	0.595	0.490	0.805	0.328	EU179410
<i>Ehrharta erecta</i>	2363	1026	53.65	0.390	0.541	0.451	0.723	0.324	EU179411
Mean ± SE ^c	1962.83 ± 81.51	1049.50 ± 2.24	40.54 ± 1.61	0.601 ± 0.030	0.594 ± 0.006	0.490 ± 0.004	0.803 ± 0.011	0.330 ± 0.002	

^aENC – effective number of codons (Wright, 1990), CBI – codon bias index, GC1, 2 is G+C content at the first and second codon positions. ^bSequences downloaded from GenBank. ^cAverage for 11 species of Oryzae.

which of the models best explains the data (Muse and Gaut, 1994).

Detection of positive selection

The ratio ω (d_N/d_S) provides an effective means of detecting selection or selective pressure on a gene or gene region, with $\omega < 1$, $= 1$ and > 1 indicating negative selection, neutral evolution and positive selection, respectively (Yang, 2006). We ran likelihood-based analyses using the CODEML program of PAML 4 (Yang, 2007) to explore the selective processes acting on the *KAO* gene. First, we used the branch models to examine whether the evolutionary rates differed among lineages within the gene tree. The one ratio model (M0) assumes a single ω for all branches and all sites. However, the free ratio model (Mf) postulates an independent ω ratio for each branch of the tree. A likelihood ratio test (LRT) was used to decide whether there was a significant difference between M0 and Mf. The model with the higher likelihood value was assumed to be the better model (Bielawski and Yang, 2003; Yang and Nielsen, 1998).

We next used site-specific models to detect whether particular amino acid residues were subject to positive selection (Yang, 2006). The neutral model (M1a) classifies all of the sites into two categories, *i.e.*, strict constraint ($0 < \omega < 1$) (purifying selection) and neutral ($\omega = 1$). Based on M1a, the positive selection model (M2a) assumes a third category under positive selection ($\omega > 1$). The beta model (M7) assumes a beta distribution for the ω ratios over sites, and the beta and ω model (M8) increases the independent ratio estimated by the data. M8 and M2a assume positive selection and are compared with M7 and M1a, respectively. If the LRT is significant and there is a site with $\omega > 1$ then positive selection is invoked for the gene (Bielawski and Yang, 2003; Yang, 2006).

Results and Discussion

Previous studies showed that the *KAO* gene was a single-copy gene (Helliwell *et al.*, 2001; Sakamoto *et al.*, 2004; Yamaguchi, 2008) and the loss-of-function mutant exhibits a typical phenotype, indicating the functional importance of this enzyme in GA biosynthesis (Sakamoto *et al.*, 2004). In view of the importance of comparing orthologous rather than paralogous genes when estimating substitution rates, we initially examined this issue and found that the *KAO* gene was orthologous in all of the species analyzed. The similarity of the aligned coding regions ranged from 87.5% to 99.5% (Figure S2, Supplementary Material). Sequences of the *KAO* gene were isolated from all of the Oryzae species and from the outgroup, *Ehrharta erecta*. The sequenced regions ranged in size from 1772 bp to 2626 bp and their aligned coding regions varied from 1047 bp to 1053 bp (Table 2). The total GC content and the GC content of the third position of the codons (GC3) were

similar across species. Table 2 summarizes the sequence data for this gene.

Codon usage bias and its correlation with GC3 and substitution rates

Codon usage bias has been important in studies of molecular evolution because it provides examples of weak selection at the molecular level. CBI and ENC were calculated to measure the degree of codon usage bias. CBI showed a marked negative correlation with ENC ($r^2 = 0.958$, $p < 0.0001$) (Figure 2A) such that both CBI and ENC could be used to measure the degree of codon usage bias. In this study, ENC was used to measure the degree of codon usage bias.

To determine the relative effects of mutation pressure versus natural selection on codon composition, we examined the relationship between the GC content at third codon positions (GC3) and the GC content at the first and second codon positions (GC1,2). The GC content of GC1,2 ranged from 48.9% to 50.3%, which there was a tendency of positive correlation with GC3 ($r^2 = 0.227$) but this was not significant ($p = 0.139$) (Figure 2F). This pattern of base composition suggests that the GC content is most likely the result of mutation pressure since natural selection acts differently on different codon positions (Shackelton *et al.*, 2006). Interestingly, after excluding *L. tisserantii*, GC1,2 showed a significant positive correlation with GC3 ($r^2 = 0.604$, $p < 0.05$) (data not shown), which further confirmed that these changes were most likely the result of mutation pressure. d_s was positively correlated with d_n ($r^2 = 0.498$, $p < 0.05$) (Figure 2D), as also observed in other organisms (Bielawski *et al.*, 2000; Dunn *et al.*, 2001; Hurst and Williams, 2000; Kusumi *et al.*, 2002), and negatively correlated with codon bias ($r^2 = 0.713$, $p < 0.05$) (Figure 2B) and GC3 ($r^2 = 0.796$, $p < 0.001$) (Figure 2E). The negative correlation between d_s and codon usage bias may be explained by natural selection (Bielawski *et al.*, 2000; Smith and Eyre-Walker, 2001; Urrutia and Hurst, 2001) since codon usage bias is a primary factor in d_s variation among genes and is thought to be under natural selection, perhaps because of the need to maintain accuracy or speed in translation (Yang and Gaut, 2011). There was also a tendency for d_n being negatively correlated with codon usage bias ($r^2 = 0.348$) but this was not significant ($p = 0.056$) (Figure 2C). The latter would be consistent with sites that are functionally constrained and consequently conserved at the amino acid level. Such sites are also likely to experience stronger selection for translation accuracy and hence have a higher codon bias (Akashi, 2003). This might explain the negative correlation between d_n and codon bias observed here (though not significant), and by others in enteric bacteria (Rocha, 2004; Sharp, 1991), *Drosophila* (Betancourt and Presgraves, 2002), yeast (Drummond *et al.*, 2005), and viruses (Duffy *et al.*, 2008). The fact that d_n is correlated to codon bias suggests that codon bias might be used as a mea-

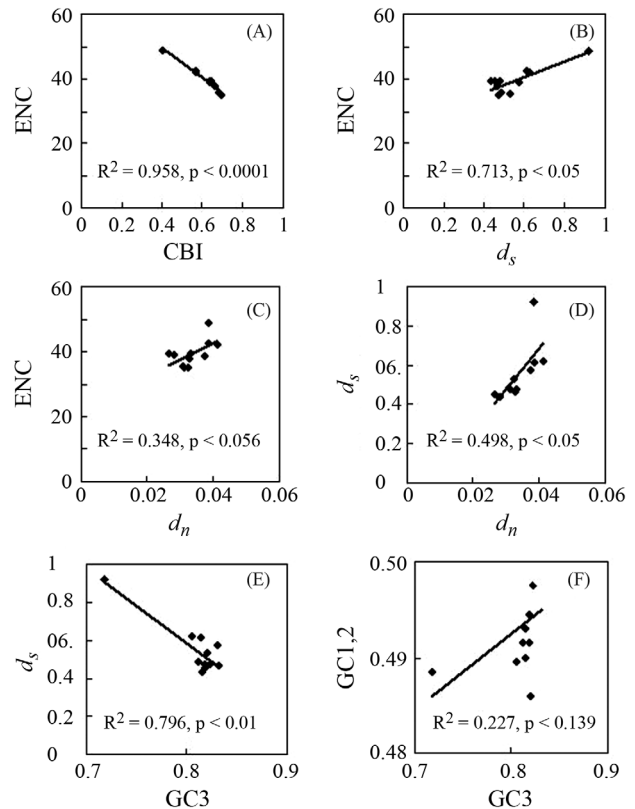


Figure 2 - The relationships between effective number of codons (ENC) and codon bias index (CBI) (A), synonymous substitution rates (d_s) (B), and non-synonymous substitution rates (d_n) (C), between d_s and d_n (D) and third codon positions (GC3) (E), and between the first and second codon positions (GC1, 2) and GC3 (F).

sure of the level of constraint upon a site or gene (Plotkin *et al.*, 2004, 2006; Stoletzki and Eyre-Walker, 2007).

The driving forces governing evolution of the *KAO* gene in *Oryzaeae*

A codon-based approach showed that the free ratio model (Mf) had significantly higher likelihood scores ($\ln 4103.38$) than the one ratio model (M0) ($\ln 4124.44$) ($p < 0.001$) (Table 3). Although the d_n/d_s ratios varied across lineages from 0.0001 to 0.358 (with one of the 21 lineages showing no predicted synonymous substitutions, *i.e.*, the d_n/d_s ratio was equal to 999.000), the estimated d_n/d_s ratio for each lineage was less than 1. The ω values were estimated to be 0.079 under the M0 model, suggesting that purifying selection or selection constraint best explained the molecular evolution of the *KAO* gene, in agreement with the studies on anthocyanin pathway genes (Lu and Rausher, 2003; Rausher *et al.*, 2008).

The branch model test is a very conservative test of positive selection because it averages the ratio across all sites. We therefore used site-specific codon models to examine whether there was positive selection on codon sites. The M2a and M8 models, which assume positive selection, were not significantly better than the null models M1a and

Table 3 - Log likelihood values, ω ratios and parameter estimates for the *KAO* gene in models with variable ω ratios among codon sites.

Model	p^a	ln	Parameter estimates ^b	Models compared	2 Δ L	p-value
Mf	31	-4103.38	$\omega = 0.0001 \sim 999.000$, tree length ^c = 2.140, kappa(ts/tv) = 1.103	M0-Mf	42.12	< 0.001
M0	23	-4124.44	$\omega = 0.079$, tree length = 2.181, kappa (ts/tv) = 1.082			
M1a	24	-4067.60	$\omega_0 = 0.049$, $p_0 = 0.921$; $\omega_1 = 1.000$, $p_1 = 0.079$	M1a-M2a	0	1
M2a	26	-4067.60	$p_0 = 0.921$, $p_1 = 0.053$, $p_2 = 0.026$, $\omega_2 = 1.000$			
M7	24	-4061.19	$p = 0.282$, $q = 2.548$	M7-M8	0	1
M8	26	-4061.19	$p_0 = 1.000$, $p = 0.282$, $q = 2.548$; $p_1 = 0.000$, $\omega = 8.931$			

^ap – number of parameters, ln – log-likelihood values of the data in each model. ^bParameter estimates in different models.

^cTree length is the sum of branch lengths.

M7 (for M1a vs. M2a, $2\Delta L = 0$, $p = 1.0$; for M7 vs. M8, $2\Delta L = 0$, $p = 1.0$) (Table 3). These results indicate that the *KAO* gene is under strong selective constraint, thus ruling out the possibility of past episodes of positive selection on this gene. Previous studies have shown that variation in the evolutionary rate among nucleotide sites may be attributed to differences in the frequency of positive selection (Yang *et al.*, 2000; Gaut *et al.*, 2011) or in the magnitude of selective constraints (Li, 1997; Rausher *et al.*, 1999, 2008).

In this study, the branch and codon models failed to detect any sign of positive selection for any lineage and codon of the *KAO* gene, suggesting that the significant heterogeneity of some lineages was attributable mainly to the relaxed constraint among lineages or neutral processes rather than positive selection. However, the power to detect positive selection using the methods mentioned above may be low, especially when adaptive substitutions are spread across many amino acid sites (Pond *et al.*, 2005; Rausher *et al.*, 2008). Further investigations with alternative tests on intraspecific changes (Olsen *et al.*, 2002; Whitt *et al.*, 2002;

Flowers *et al.*, 2007; Rausher *et al.*, 2008) would be necessary to detect evidence of positive selection.

Rate variation among lineages

There was significant heterogeneity in the synonymous and non-synonymous substitution rates of the *KAO* gene among lineages of the rice tribe (Table 4), especially in *C. aquatica* and *L. leiocarpa*. Among 55 relative-rate tests for synonymous substitutions, 11 comparisons were significant at the 5% or 1% level. At the same time, among 55 relative-rate tests for non-synonymous substitutions, the null hypothesis of rate homogeneity was rejected for 18 comparisons. In *C. aquatica* and *L. leiocarpa* d_N appeared to be decelerated, and did d_S in *C. aquatica*. The significant slowdown in the rate of synonymous and non-synonymous substitutions in *C. aquatica* and *L. leiocarpa* lineages may reflect differences in the intensity of selection, *i.e.*, the *KAO* gene may be under different functional constraints in different lineages.

Several mechanisms could explain the observed rate heterogeneity, including life history traits such as genera-

Table 4 - Results of 110 relative-rate tests for d_S (lower triangle) and d_N (upper triangle). Rejection of rate equality is indicated by * at the 0.05 level, ** at the 0.01 level, or *** at the 0.001 level. *Ehrharta erecta* was used as the outgroup in all comparisons. Species names that were inferred to have evolved more quickly in each pairwise comparison are indicated in the table by the first letter of the genus name and the first three letters of the species name.

	Osat	Omer	Opun	Ooff	Oaus	Obra	Ogra	Ltis	Llei	Caqu	Rsub
Osat	-								***Osat	**Osat	
Omer		-				*Omer	*Ogra		***Omer	***Omer	
Opun			-			*Opun			***Opun	**Opun	
Ooff				-					**Ooff	**Ooff	
Oaus					-				**Oaus	*Oaus	
Obra						-			*Obra		
Ogra							-		*Ogra		
Ltis								-	**Ltis	*Ltis	
Llei									-		
Caqu	***Osat	***Omer	***Opun	**Ooff	**Oaus	**Obra	***Ogra	***Ltis	**Llei	-	* Rsub
Rsub							*Ogra			*Rsub	-

Caqu – *Chikusichloa aquatica*, Llei – *Luziola leiocarpa*, Ltis – *Leersia tisserantii*, Oaus – *O. australiensis*, Obra – *O. brachyantha*, Ogra – *O. granulata*, Omer – *O. meridionalis*, Ooff – *O. officinalis*, Opun – *O. punctata*, Osat – *O. sativa* and Rsub – *Rhynchoriza subulata*.

tion time, biochemical features such as efficiency of DNA repair machinery, and environmental variables such as energy and temperature (Eyre-Walker and Gaut, 1997; Li, 1997; Brown *et al.*, 2005; Soria-Hernanz *et al.*, 2008). Rate heterogeneity may also result from differences in population size since variation in population size can alter evolutionary rates within a lineage (Eyre-Walker and Gaut, 1997; Lynch and Conery, 2003) and vice versa. Variation in the nucleotide substitution rates of the *KAO* gene significantly changed the ω ratios of the respective lineages. These features of the *KAO* gene in *Oryzae* resulted from the influence of various factors that affected the evolution of these species and their ancestors. A detailed knowledge of these factors will help us to understand the evolutionary history of *Oryzae* species.

Conclusions

The results of this study showed that codon usage bias was negatively correlated with synonymous and non-synonymous substitution rates, a finding consistent with the importance of codon usage. CBI was positively correlated with ENC, thus confirming the similarity of CBI and ENC as parameters for measuring the degree of codon usage bias. There was considerable heterogeneity in the nucleotide substitution rates of the *KAO* gene and this significantly affected the ω ratios of the respective lineages. There was no positive selection and no positively selected codons in this gene, a finding indicative of substantial selective constraint. These features of nucleotide substitutions in the *KAO* gene reflected the influence of various factors on the evolution of many *Oryzae* species and their ancestors.

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Supplementary Material

The following online material is available for this article:

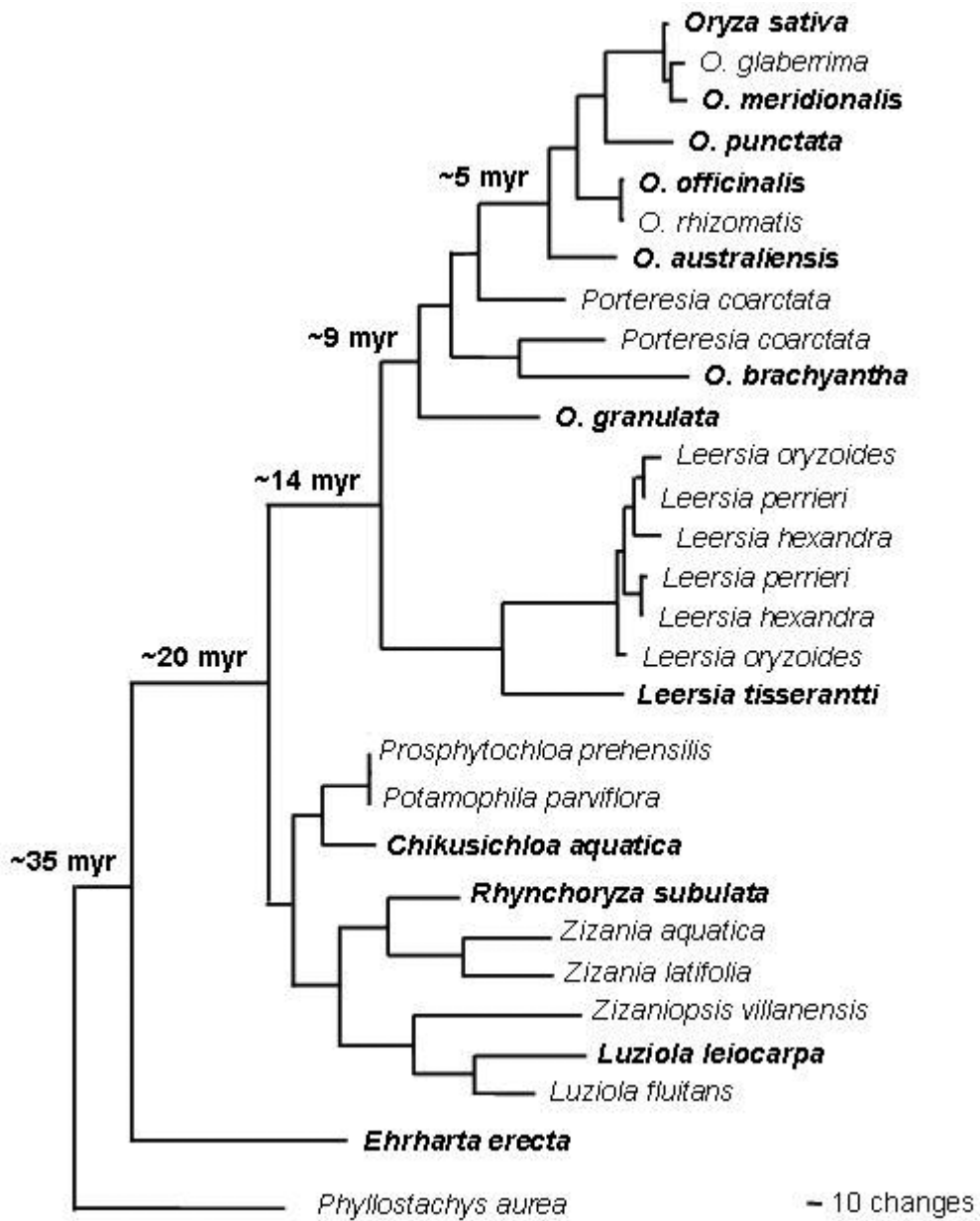
Figure S1 - Phylogeny of the rice tribe (Oryzaceae) obtained from the combined *Adh2* and *GPA1* sequences by Bayesian inference using the TrN+G model (Guo and Ge, 2005).

Figure S2 - Alignment of coding sequences of the *KAO* gene in 12 species.

This material is available as part of the online article from <http://www.scielo.br/gmb>.

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GAGCCAGCCGCCGAGGTCGAGTTCCTCACCGAGCTGCGCCGGATGACCTTCAAGATC
ATC

O.granulata_kao

CCCGGCCGAGGTCGAGTTCCTCACCGAGCTCCGCCGCATGACGTTCAAGATC
ATC

L.tisserantti_kao TCC---

TCCGGCGAGATCAAATTCCTCACCGAGCTCCGCCGCATGACGTTCAAGATCATC

C.aquatica_kao -----

GCCGGCGAGGTGGAGTTCCTCACGGAGCTGCGGCCGGATGACCTTCAAGATCATT

R.subulata_kao -----

GCCGGCGAGGTGGAGTTCCTCACCGAGCTGCGGCCGGATGACGTTCAAGATCATC

L.leiocarpa_kao ----

GGCGCCGGCGAGGTCGAGTTCCTCACCGAGCTCCGCCGCATGACCTTCAAGATCATC

E.erecta_kao

GGGGGAAGGAGATGGAGTTGATCCTCACGGAGATGCGGCCGGATGAACTTCAAGGTC
ATC

Clustal Consensus * * ***** ** * ** * ** * ** * ** * ** *

250 260 270 280 290 300
.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|

O.sativa_kao

GTCCAGATCTTCATGAGCGGCGCCGACGACGCCACCATGGAGGCCCTGGAGCGGAGC
TAC

O.meridionalis_kao

GTCCAGATCTTCATGAGCGGCGCCGACGACGCCACCATGGAGGCCCTGGAGCGGAGC
TAC

O.punctata_kao

GTCCAGATCTTCATGAGCGGCGCCGACGACGCCACCATGGAGGCCCTCGAGCGGAGC
TAC

O.officinalis_kao

GTCCAGATCTTCATGAGCGGCGCCGACGACGCCACCATGGAGGCCCTGGAGCGGAGC
TAC

O.australiensis_kao

GTCCAGATCTTCATGAGCGGCGCCGACGATGCCACCATGGAGGCGCTGGAGCGGAGC
TAC

O.brachyantha_kao

GTCCAGATCTTCATGAGCGGCGCCGACGACCGCACCATGGAGGCCCTCGAGCGGAGC
TAC

O.granulata_kao

GTCCAGATCTTCATGAGCGGCGCCGACGACCGCACCATGGAGGCGCTGGAGCGGAGC
TAC

L.tisserantti_kao

GTCCAGATCTTCATGAGCGGCGCCGACGATCGAACCAATGGAGGCATTGGAGAGGAGCT
AC

C.aquatica_kao

GTCCAGATCTTCATGAGCGGCGCCGACGACCGCACCATGGAGGCGCTGGAGAGGAGC

AC

E. erecta_kao

ACCGAGCTCAACTATGGCCTGCGCGCCATGGCTATCAACCTCCCCGGGTTGCGCTACC

AC

Clustal Consensus *** ***** ** ***** ***** ***** ***** ** ***** *

 370 380 390 400 410 420
 ...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|

O. sativa_kao

CGCGCGCTCAGGGCTCGCCGGAAGCTCGTGTCCGTGCTGCAGGGTGTGCTCGACGGC
CGG

O. meridionalis_kao

CGCGCGCTCAGGGCTCGCCGGAAGCTCGTGTCCGTGCTGCAGGGTGTGCTCGACGGT
CGG

O. punctata_kao

CGCGCCCTCAGGGCTCGCCGGAAGCTCGTCTCCGTCCCTGCAGGGGGTGCTCCACGCC
AGG

O. officinalis_kao

CGCGCGCTCAGGGCTCGCCGGAAGCTGGTGTCCGTGCTGCAGGGGGTGCTCGACGG
CAGG

O. australiensis_kao

CGCGCGCTCAGAGCTCGCCGGAAGCTGGTGTCCGTGCTGCAGGGGGTGCTCGACGG
CAGG

O. brachyantha_kao

AGGGCGCTCCGGGCTCGCCGGAAGCTGGTGTCCGTGCTGCAGGGCGTGCTCGACGG
CAGG

O. granulata_kao

AGGGCGCTCAGGGCTCGCCGGCGGGTGGTGTCCGTGCTGCAGGGCGTGCTCGACAG
CAGG

L. tisserantii_kao

CGCGCTCTCAGGGCTCGCCGGAAGCTCGTCGCCGTTCTGCAGGGAGTTCTCGACGGC
AGG

C. aquatica_kao

AGGGCCCTCAAGGCTCGCCGGAAGCTGGTGTCCGTGCTGCAGGGCGTGCTGGACAGC
AGG

R. subulata_kao

AGGGCCCTCAAGGCTCGCCGGAAGCTGGTGTCCGTGCTGCAGGGTGTGCTGGACAGC
AGG

L. leiocarpa_kao

CGGGCGCTCAGGGCTCGCCGGAGGCTGGTTCGCCGTGCTGCAGGGCGGTGCTCAACGG
CCGG

E. erecta_kao

CGAGCTTGAAATCTCGCAAGAAGCTAGTGTCTGCCATGCAGGCAATGCTGGACGGGA
GG

Clustal Consensus * * * * ***** * * * * * * * * ***** * * * * * * * **

430 440 450 460 470 480

...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|

O.sativa_kao AGGGCCGCCGCCGCC--
AAGGGCTTCAAACGCTCCGGGGCCATGGACATGATGGACCGC
O.meridionalis_kao AGGGCCGCCGCCGCC--
AAGGGCTTCAAACGCTCCGGGGCCATGGACATGATGGACCGT
O.punctata_kao AGGGCCGCCGCCGCC--
AAGGGCTTCAACGCTCCACCGCCATGGACATGATGGACCGC
O.officinalis_kao AGGGCCGCCGCCGCC--
AATGGCTTCAACGCTCCGGGGCCATGGACATGATGGACCGC
O.australiensis_kao AGGGCCGCCGCCGCC--
AAGGGCTTCAACCGCTCCGGGGCCATGGACATGATGGACCGC
O.brachyantha_kao AGGGCCGCCGCCGCC--
AAAGGCTTCAACCGCCGACCACCATGGACATGATGGACCGC
O.granulata_kao AGGGCCGCCGCCGCC--
AAGGGCTTCAACCGCTCCAGCGCCATGGACATGATGGACCGC
L.tisserantii_kao
AGGGCCGCGGGCGGGCGAAAGGGTTTAAAGATCCGGCGCCATGGACATGATGGAT
AGG
C.aquatica_kao AGGGCCGCGACGGGG--
AAAGGGTTCAACCGGTCTAGCAGCATGGACATGATGGACCGG
R.subulata_kao AGGGCCGCGACGGCC--
AAAGGGTTCAACCGGTTCGAGCAGCAGGGACATGATGGACCGG
L.leiocarpa_kao AGGGCCGCGACGGCC--
AAGGGCTTCAACCGGTCCAGCAGGATGGACATGATGGACCGG
E.erecta_kao AGGACGGCGACGGCG--
AAAGGATTCACCAAGTTCGTCCGGCCATGGACATGATGGACAGG
Clustal Consensus *** ** * ** ** * * * ***** *

490 500 510 520 530 540

...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|

O.sativa_kao
CTCATCGAGGCCGAGGACGAACGCGGCCGCCCTCGCCGACGACGAGATCGTCGAC
GTC
O.meridionalis_kao
CTCATCGAGGCCGAGGACGAACGCGGCCGCCCTCGCCGACGACGAGATCGTCGAC
GTC
O.punctata_kao
CTCATCGAAGCCGAGGACGACCGCGGCCGCCACCTCGCCGACGACGAGATCATCGAC
GTC
O.officinalis_kao
CTCATCGACGCCGAGGACGAGCGCGGCCGCCCTCGCCGACGACGAGATCATCGAC
GTC
O.australiensis_kao
CTCATCGAGGCCGAGGACGAGCGCGGCCGCCCTCGCCGACGACGAGATCATCGAC
GTC

O.brachyantha_kao

CTCATCGAGGCCAGGACGAGCGCGGCCGCCGGCTCGCCGACGACGAGATCATCGAC
GTC

O.granulata_kao

CTCATCGAGGCCAGGACGACCGCGGCCGCCGCCCTCGCCGACGACGAGATCATCGAC
GTC

L.tisserantii_kao

CTTATCGAGGCTGAGGATGAGCGTGGACGGCGGCTCGCCGACGACGAGATCATCGAT
GTG

C.aquatica_kao

CTGATCGAGGCCGAGGACGAGCGCGGCCGCCGGCTGGCCGACGACGAGATCATCGA
CGTC

R.subulata_kao

CTGATCGAGGCCGAGGACGAGCGCGGCCGCCGGCTCGGCGACGACGAGATCATCGA
CGTC

L.leiocarpa_kao

CTGATCGAGGCCGAGGACGAGCGCGGCCGCCGCCCTCGCCGACGACGAGATCATCGA
CGTC

E.erecta_kao

TTGATCGAGGTGGAGGATGAGCATGGGCGGCCGGCTTAGAGACGATGAGATCATCGACA
TC

Clustal Consensus *

550 560 570 580 590 600
...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|

O.sativa_kao

CTCATCATGTACCTCAACGCCGGCCACGAGTCCTCCGGCCACATCACCATGTGGGCCA
CC

O.meridionalis_kao

CTCATCATGTACCTCAACGCCGGCCACGAGTCCTCCGGCCACATCACCATGTGGGCCA
CC

O.punctata_kao

CTCATCATGTACCTCAACGCCGGCCACGAGTCCTCCGGCCACATCACCATGTGGGCCA
CC

O.officinalis_kao

CTCATCATGTACCTCAACGCCGGCCACGAGTCCTCCGGCCACATCACCATGTGGGCCA
CC

O.australiensis_kao

CTCATCATGTACCTCAACGCCGGCCACGAGTCCTCCGGCCACATCACCATGTGGGCCA
CC

O.brachyantha_kao

CTCATCATGTACCTCAACGCCGGCCACGAGTCCTCCGGCCACATCACCATGTGGGCCA
CC

O.granulata_kao

CTCATCATGTACCTCAACGCCGGCCACGAGTCCTCCGGCCACATCACCATGTGGGCCA
CC

R.subulata_kao

GTCTTCCTCCAGGAGAACCCCGAAATCTTCGCAAGGGCAAAGGCCGAGCAAGAGGAAATC

L.leiocarpa_kao

GTCTTCCTGCAGGAGAACCCCGACATCTTCGCGAGGGCAAAGGCCGAGCAAGAAGAGATC

E.erecta_kao

TTTTTCCTGCAAGAGAACCCGGACGTATTAGCAAGGGCAAAGGCCGGGCAAGAGGAGATC

Clustal Consensus * ***** ** ***** ** ** *

670 680 690 700 710 720
.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|

O.sativa_kao

ATGAGAAGCATTCAGCAACGCAGAACGGATTAACCCCTCAGGGACTTCAAGAAGATGCAC

O.meridionalis_kao

ATGAGAAGCATTCAGCAACGCAGAACGGATTAACCCCTCAGGGACTTCAAGAAGATGCAC

O.punctata_kao

ATGAGAAGCATACCAGCAACGCAGAAGGGATTAACGCTCAGGGACTTCAAGAAGATGCAT

O.officinalis_kao

ATGAGAAGCATACCAGCAACGCAGAAGGGATTAACGCTCAGGGACTTCAAGAAGATGCAC

O.australiensis_kao

ATGAGAAGCATACCAGCAACGCAGAAGGGATTAACCCCTCAGGGACTTCAAGAAGATGCAC

O.brachyantha_kao

ATGAGAAGCATACCCGCAACGCAGAAGGGACTGACACTCAGGGACTTCAAGAAGATGCAG

O.granulata_kao

ATGAGAAGCATACCACCAACGCAGAAGGGACTCAACCTCAGGGACTTCAAGAAGATGCAG

L.tisserantii_kao

ATGAGAAGCATACCACCAACGCAGAAGGGACTTACCCTTAGGGACTTCAAGAAGATGCAC

C.aquatica_kao

ATGAGAAGCATACCACCAACACAGAAGGGACTGAACCTCAGGGACTTCAAGAAGATGCAG

R.subulata_kao

ATGAGAAACATACCATCAACACAGAAGGGACTGAACCTCAGGGACTTCAAGAAGATGCAT

L.leiocarpa_kao

ATGAGAAGCATACCACCAACACAGAAGGGGCTGAGCCTCAGGGACTTCAAGAAGATGCAG

O.meridionalis_kao

CGTCAGGCCACAAGAGACATCTATGTGAACGGTTATCTGATCCCCAAGGGGTGGAAGG
TT

O.punctata_kao

CGTCAGGCCACAAGAGACATCTATGTGAACGGCTATCTGATCCCCAAGGGGTGGAAGG
TC

O.officinalis_kao

CGTCAGGCCACAAGAGACATCTATGTGAACGGCTATCTGATCCCCAAGGGGTGGAAGG
TT

O.australiensis_kao

CGCCAGGCCACAAGAGACATCTATGTGAACGGCTATCTGATACCCAAGGGCTGGAAGG
TT

O.brachyantha_kao

CGTCAGGCGACCAGAGACGTCTATGTGAACGGCTATCTGATACCCAAGGGCTGGAAGG
TT

O.granulata_kao

CGTCGGGCGACAAGAGACGTCTATGTGAACGGTTATCTGATACCCAAGGGTTGGAAGG
TT

L.tisserantii_kao

CGTCAGGCGACAAAAGACGTCTATGTGAACGGCTATCTGATACCCAAGGGCTGGAAGG
TT

C.aquatica_kao

CGCCAAGCGACACGAGACGTCTTTGTGAACGGCTATCTGATACCAAAGGGCTGGAAGG
TT

R.subulata_kao

CGTCAGGCGACCCGAGACGCCTTCGTGAACGGCTATCTGATACCAAAGGGCTGGAAG
GTT

L.leiocarpa_kao

CGTCAGGCAACACGCGACGTCTATGTGAACGGTTATCTGATACCAAAGGGCTGGAAGG
TT

E.erecta_kao

CGCCAGGCAACAAAAGACGTCTTTGTGAATGGCTATCTGATACCAAAGGGTTGGAAGGT
G

Clustal Consensus *** ** ** *** ** ***** ** ***** ** ***** ** ***** *****

 850 860 870 880 890 900
 ...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|

O.sativa_kao

CAGCTGTGGTACAGAAGTGTGCACATGGATGACCAAGTTTATCCTGACCCCAAAATGTT
C

O.meridionalis_kao

CAGCTGTGGTACAGAAGTGTGCACATGGATGACCAAGTTTATCCTGACCCCAAAATGTT
C

O.punctata_kao

CAGCTGTGGTACAGAAGTGTGCACATGGATGACCAAGTTTATCCTGACCCCAAAATGTT
T

O. officinalis_kao

CAGCTGTGGTACAGAAGTGTGCACATGGATGACCAAGTTTATCCTGACCCCAAATGTT
C

O. australiensis_kao

CAGCTGTGGTATAGAAGTGTTCACATGGATGACCAAGTTTATCCTGACCCCAAATGTT
C

O. brachyantha_kao

CAGCTGTGGTACAGAAGTGTACACATGGATGACCAAGTTTATCCTGACCCCAAATGTT
C

O. granulata_kao

CAGCTGTGGTACAGAAGCGTGCACATGGATGACCAAGTTTATCCTGACCCCAAAGTATT
C

L. tisserantii_kao

CAGTTGTGGTACAGAAGTGTGCACATGGATGACCAAGTTTATCCTGACCCCAAACGTT
C

C. aquatica_kao

CAGCTGTGGTACAGAAGTGTGCACATGGATCCTCAAGTTTACCCTGACCCCAACAAGTT
C

R. subulata_kao

CAGCTGTGGTACAGAAGCGTGCACATGGATTCTCAAGTTTACCCTGATCCCAAAAAGTT
C

L. leiocarpa_kao

CAGCTGTGGTACAGAAGTGTGCACATGGATCCTCAAGTTTATCCTGACCCCTACAAGTT
C

E. erecta_kao

CAGCTGTGGTTCAGAAATGTGCATATGGATCCTCAGGTTTATTCAGATCCCAGCAAGTT
C

Clustal Consensus *** ***** **** ** * ***** ** ***** * * * * * **

 910 920 930 940 950 960
 ...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|...|

O. sativa_kao

AACCCTTCAAGATGGGAGGGACCCCTCCGAAAGCCGGAACATTCCTTCCATTTGGAC
TG

O. meridionalis_kao

AACCCTTCAAGATGGGAGGGACCCCTCCGAAAGCCGGAACATTCCTTCCATTTGGAC
TG

O. punctata_kao

AACCCTTCAAGATGGGAGGGCCCCCTCCGAAAGCCGGAACATTCCTTCCATTTGGAC
TG

O. officinalis_kao

AACCCTTCAAGATGGGAGGGGCCCCCTCCGAAAGCCGGAACATTCCTTCCATTTGGAC
TG

O. australiensis_kao

AACCCTTCAAGATGGGAGGGTCCCCCTCCGAAAGCCGGAACATTCCTTCCATTTGGACT
G

L.tisserantii_kao
GGATCGAGACTGTGCCCTGGAAATGATC TTGCAAAGCTCGAGATCTCTGTCTTCCTCCA
T

C.aquatica_kao
GGAGCGAGACTCTGCCCTGGAAATGATC TTGCAAAGCTGGAGATCTCTGTCTTCCTCCA
T

R.subulata_kao
GGATCGAGACTCTGCCCTGGAAATGATC TTGCAAAGTTGGAGATCTCTGTCTTCCTCCA
T

L.leiocarpa_kao
GGAGCAAGGCTCTGCCCTGGAAATGATC TTGCAAAGCTGGAGATCTCTGTCTTCCTCCA
T

E.erecta_kao
GGTGCAAGACTGTGCCCTGGAAATGATC TTGCAAAGCTGGAGATCTCTGTCTTCCTCCA
C

Clustal Consensus ** * ** * ***** * ***** *****

 1030 1040 1050
 |....|....|....|....|....|....|

O.sativa_kao C A T T T T C T C C T G G G T T A C A A G C T G A A G A G G G C A A A T
O.meridionalis_kao C A T T T T C T C C T G G G T T A C A A G C T G A A G A G G G C A A A T
O.punctata_kao C A T T T T C T C C T A G G T T A C A A G C T G A C G A G G A C A A A T
O.officinalis_kao C A T T T T C T C C T A G G T T A C A A G C T G A C G A G G A C A A A T
O.australiensis_kao C A T T T T C T C C T A G G T T A C A A G C T G A C G A G G A C A A A T
O.brachyantha_kao C A T T T T C T C C T A G G T T A C A A G C T G A C G A G G A C A A A T
O.granulata_kao C A T T T T C T C C T A G G T T A C A A G C T G A C G A G G A C A A A T
L.tisserantii_kao C A T T T T C T C C T G G G T T A C A A G C T G A C G A G G A C A A A T
C.aquatica_kao C A T T T T C T C C T A G G T T A C A A G C T G A C G A G G A C A A A T
R.subulata_kao C A T T T T C T C C T A G G T T A C A A G C T G A C G A G G A C A A A T
L.leiocarpa_kao C A C T T T C T C C T A G G T T A C A A G C T G A C G A G G A C A A A T
E.erecta_kao C A T T T C A T C C T A G G T T A C A A G C T T A C A A G G A C A A A T
Clustal Consensus *** ** ***** * ** *****

Figure S2 Alignment of coding sequences of *KAO* gene in twelve species. Highly conserved sites are indicated with asterisks in the bottom.