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Suite of novel vectors for ectopic insertion of GFP, CFP and IYFP transcriptional fusions in single copy at the *amyE* and *bglS* loci in *Bacillus subtilis*

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1 Suite of novel vectors for ectopic insertion of GFP, CFP and IYFP transcriptional
2 fusions in single copy at the *amyE* and *bglS* loci in *Bacillus subtilis*

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1 Abstract

2 We report the development of a suite of six integrative vectors for construction of
3 single copy transcriptional fusions with the *gfpmut3*, *cfp* and *iyfp* reporter genes in *B.*
4 *subtilis*. The promoter fusions are constructed using the highly efficient ligation-
5 independent cloning (LIC) technique making them suitable for high-throughput
6 applications. The plasmids insert into the chromosome by a double cross-over event at
7 the *amyE* and *bgIS* loci and integration at each site can be verified by a plate-based
8 screening assay. The vectors allow expression of two different promoters to be
9 determined in the same strain using the *cfp* and *iyfp* reporter genes since CFP and iYFP
10 are spectrally distinct and have comparable half-lives of approximately 2 hours in
11 exponentially growing *B. subtilis* cells. We demonstrate the versatility of these vectors
12 by measuring expression of the *tuaA* and *phoA* operons singularly and in combination,
13 during growth in phosphate limiting conditions.

14
15 **Keywords:** Transcriptional fusions; Fluorescent proteins; Dual labelling; *Bacillus subtilis*.

31 1. Introduction

1 The use of transcriptional fusions between promoters and reporter genes is a
2 powerful and proven tool in prokaryotic gene expression studies. While a variety of
3 reporter genes have been utilized, the gene encoding the green fluorescent protein (GFP)
4 from *Aequorea victoria* [1] has emerged as the reporter of choice for many applications.
5 Its widespread usage stems from the fact that GFP detection only requires irradiation with
6 blue light and development of fast-folding GFP variants allow detection within minutes
7 of expression [2, 3]. These features allow continuous real time monitoring of
8 transcriptional activity in living bacterial cells with a temporal resolution of minutes [4, 5,
9 6]. A number of GFP variants engineered for improved brightness and shifted excitation
10 and emission spectra have been developed [3, 7, 8]: among those are the distinguishable
11 cyan (CFP) and yellow (YFP) fluorescent proteins, which have been employed to
12 visualize differential expression of two genes or localization of two proteins in the same
13 cell [7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13]. Conveniently, CFP and YFP variants optimized for use in the
14 Gram-positive bacterium *Bacillus subtilis* have been obtained [10, 13, 14, 15].

15 In this work, we describe a suite of novel vectors designed to generate transcriptional
16 fusions between *B. subtilis* promoters and the *gfpmut3*, *cfp* and *iyfp* reporter genes, using
17 the highly efficient ligation-independent cloning (LIC) technique [16, 17, 18]. Each
18 fusion can be integrated into the *B. subtilis* chromosome in single copy at either the *amyE*
19 or the *bglS* locus and correct insertion can be verified using a plate assay. We
20 demonstrate the use and versatility of these vectors by determining the expression profile
21 of the *tuaA* and *phoA* promoters singularly and in combination in cells grown under
22 phosphate limiting conditions.

23

24 **2. Materials and methods**

25

26 *2.1. Bacterial strains, plasmids and growth conditions*

27 The bacterial strains and plasmids used in this study are listed in Table 1. Strain TG1
28 was used for routine cloning in *Escherichia coli* [19]. Bacterial transformation was carried
29 out by standard procedures: *E. coli* TG1 was transformed by the calcium chloride method
30 [20] and *B. subtilis* strains were transformed as described by Leskela *et al.*, [21]. *E. coli*
31 strains were grown in Luria-Bertani (LB) medium [22], and *B. subtilis* strains were grown
32 in low phosphate defined medium (LPDM) and high phosphate defined

1 medium(HPDM)[23]. Antibiotics were added to cultures when needed at the following
2 concentrations per ml: ampicillin 100 µg; kanamycin 10 µg; chloramphenicol 3µg.

3 4 2.2. DNA manipulation and oligonucleotides

5 DNA manipulations were carried out according to standard procedures as described
6 by Sambrook *et al.* [20]. The oligonucleotides used in this study are listed in Table 2.

7 8 2.3. Plasmid construction

9 Plasmid pBPbglS was constructed by inserting a fragment upstream of *bglS*
10 (amplified with primers oBP231 and oBP232) and a fragment overlapping the 3'-end of
11 *bglS* (amplified with primers oBP233 and oBP234) either side of the *kan^r* cassette in
12 pDG780 [24]. Plasmids pGFPbglS, pCFPbglS and pYFPbglS are derived from pBPbglS
13 by inserting the *gfp*, *cfp* and *iyfp* genes into the unique *EcoRI* site. Specifically, plasmid
14 pGFPbglS contains the LIC-*gfpmut3* cassette that was amplified from plasmid
15 pBaSysBioII [25] with primers oBP237 and oBP238. Plasmid pCFPbglS contains a LIC-
16 *cfp* cassette that was amplified from plasmid pDR200[15] using primers oBP354
17 (contains the LIC sequence) and oBP355. Plasmid pYFPbglS contains a LIC-*iyfp* cassette
18 amplified from plasmid pIYFP[13] using primers oBP262 (contains the LIC sequence) and
19 oBP279.

20 Plasmid pBPamy is derived from pAC5, generated by amplifying the plasmid
21 backbone using primers oBP275 and oBP276, which excludes the *lacZ* gene
22 reporter [26]. Plasmids pGFPamy, pCFPamy and pYFPamy are derived from plasmid
23 pBPamy, constructed by inserting the LIC-*gfp*, LIC-*cfp* and LIC-*iyfp* cassettes (detailed
24 above) into the unique *EcoRI* site.

25 These plasmids allow ectopic integration of promoter fusion either at the *bglS* locus,
26 through double homologous recombination at the *bglS* front (427 bp) and *bglS* back (398
27 bp) sites, or at the *amyE* locus, through recombination at the *amyE* front (537 bp) and
28 *amyE* back sites (1037 bp). A schematic diagram of these plasmids is presented in Figure
29 1, and the complete sequences are available in the GenBank database, under the
30 following accession numbers: HM204934, pGFPbglS; HM204935, pGFPamy;
31 HM204936, pYFPbglS; HM204937, pYFPamy; HM204938, pCFPbglS; HM204939,
32 pCFPamy.

1

2 2.4. Cloning of promoter-containing fragments using the LIC site

3 To construct plasmids with promoter fusions to the *gfpmut3*, *cfp* or *iyfp* reporter
4 genes, DNA fragments carrying the promoter regions of the genes of interest, flanked by
5 LIC sequences allowing ligation-independent cloning, were generated by PCR generated
6 and cloned into one of the six newly generated vectors as described by Botella *et al*[25].
7 Briefly, the LIC sequence in each vector is TTTTACCGCGGGCTTTCCC
8 **GGGAAGGAGGA**ACT. Each plasmid is linearized with *Sma*I (sequence in bold above)
9 and treated with T4 polymerase in the presence of dATP for 20 minutes at 22°C followed
10 by 30 minutes at 75°C to inactivate the enzyme - specifically 4 picomoles of vector were
11 treated with 20 units of T4 DNA polymerase in the presence of 1X T4 DNA polymerase
12 buffer and 2.5mM dATP. This generates single-stranded overhangs on either side of the
13 restriction site extending to the underlined A bases. Promoter containing fragments were
14 amplified using oligonucleotides with a 5' CCGCGGGCTTTCCCAGC 3' tail sequence
15 added to the forward primer and a 5' GTTCCTCCTTCCCACC 3' tail sequence added to
16 the reverse primer. Fragments were then treated with T4 polymerase in the presence of
17 dTTP for 20 minutes at 22°C followed by 30 minutes at 75°C to inactivate the enzyme -
18 specifically 0.2 picomoles of insert were treated with 0.4 units of T4 DNA polymerase in
19 the presence of 1X T4 DNA polymerase buffer and 2.5mM dTTP. This generates inserts
20 with single-stranded ends that are complementary to those of the treated vectors.
21 Treated plasmids (5 ng) and inserts (15 ng) were mixed with and annealed at room
22 temperature for 10 minutes and transformed into *E. coli*. This procedure results in
23 directional cloning of promoters into the vectors to generate transcriptional fusions.

24 Promoter regions of *tuaA* and *phoA* (400bp and 514 bp respectively) were amplified
25 using primers pair *tuaAF* - *tuaAR* and *phoAF* - *phoAR* respectively. Plasmids pBP128
26 and pBP231 were generated by inserting the *tuaA* promoter region into plasmids
27 pGFPbglS and pCFPbglS respectively. Plasmids pBP186 and pBP192 were generated by
28 inserting the *phoA* promoter region into plasmids pGFPamy and pYFPamy respectively.
29 All constructs were confirmed by DNA sequencing.

30

31 2.5. Construction of *B. subtilis* strains

1 *B. subtilis* strains, listed in Table 1, were obtained by transforming linearized
2 plasmids into recipient strains, giving ectopic insertion at the *amyE* locus or at the *bglS*
3 locus by a double cross-over recombination event. Recombinant plasmids derived from
4 pGFP**bglS**, pCFG**bglS** or pYFP**bglS** were linearized by digesting with *Bam*HI;
5 derivatives of plasmids pGFP**amy** and pCFP**amy** were linearized with *Pst*I, while vectors
6 derived from pYFP**amy** were digested with *Sca*I.

8 2.6. Verification of integration position

9 Correct integration at the *amyE* site was tested by patching transformants onto LB
10 agar plates containing 1% (w/v) starch. Strains were grown overnight at 37°C and stained
11 with a solution containing 0.1% (w/v) potassium iodide and 0.1% (w/v) iodine dissolved
12 in 1N HCl. Lack of amylase activity, indicating correct insertion at the *amyE* site, was
13 visualized as a lack of halo surrounding the colony (wild type strain 168 was used as a
14 positive control for amylase activity). A similar method was used to test correct insertion
15 at the newly developed *bglS* integration site: lack of β -glucanase activity was visualized
16 as a lack of halo surrounding colonies grown on LB agar plates containing 0.4 % (W/V)
17 lichenan (Sigma) and stained with a 0.1% (W/V) Congo red solution [27].

19 2.7. Measurement of growth rate and gene expression

20 *B. subtilis* strains were grown overnight in HPDM medium at 37°C and 220 rpm; these
21 cultures were used to inoculate LPDM cultures at a starting OD₆₀₀ of 0.02 in a 96-well
22 plate with optical bottom (Nunc), at a final volume of 100 μ l per well. Plates were
23 covered with lids to prevent evaporation and incubated in a Synergy™ 2 multimode
24 microplate reader (Biotek) at 37°C, set with constant slow shaking for 7 hours. Growth
25 was monitored turbidimetrically by measuring absorbance at 600 nm. Fluorescence
26 readings were taken by using the following filters: excitation 485/20 nm, emission
27 528/20 for GFP; excitation 500/27 nm, emission 540/25 for IYFP; excitation 420/50 nm,
28 emission 485/20 for CFP. Readings were taken from the bottom of the plate, with the
29 exception of CFP readings, which were taken from the top using a 455 nm dichroic
30 mirror. Measurements were taken at 15 minutes intervals. To calculate expression levels,
31 the natural fluorescence of three cultures of wild type *B. Subtilis* strain 168 (containing no
32 reporter gene) were averaged and subtracted from the raw fluorescence value of each

1 reported strain at the same OD₆₀₀ value. Gene expression was then calculated as
2 fluorescence value divided by the OD₆₀₀ at the same time point.

3 4 2.8. Measurement of CFP and IYFP half-life

5 The half-lives of CFP and IYFP were calculated as described by Botella *et al* [25].
6

7 **3. Results and discussion**

8 9 3.1 Characteristics of the new vectors

10 We have constructed a suite of six vectors for generating transcriptional fusions in *B.*
11 *subtilis*. A schematic diagram of these plasmids is shown in Figure 1. The plasmids
12 combine several features that make them especially useful for high-throughput
13 determination of real-time expression profiles in *B. subtilis*. (1) DNA fragments are
14 cloned into all six plasmids by the same LIC mechanism allowing a choice of both
15 reporter gene (*gfp*, *cfp* and *yfp*) and integration site (*amyE*, *bglS*) for each promoter
16 fusion. The LIC cloning system is highly efficient and amenable to automated cloning
17 technology. (2) Integration occurs by a double cross-over event, ensuring that only one
18 copy of the promoter fusion is present on the chromosome (a promoter fusion integrated
19 by a Campbell-type event can be sometimes present in multiple copies on the
20 chromosome due to amplification or to integration of a dimeric plasmid). Promoter
21 fusions are also stably integrated into the *amyE* and *bglS* chromosomal sites since
22 repeated sequences are not generated during the integration event. (3) These plasmids
23 allow *B. subtilis* to be used as a model system to study heterologous promoters since the
24 required sequences for homologous integration are plasmid encoded. (4) Three
25 fluorescent proteins, GFP, CFP and IYFP are used as reporters of gene expression. A
26 particular advantage is that CFP and IYFP are spectrally distinct and can be used to
27 monitor expression of two different promoters in the same strain. (5) Integration of each
28 reporter fusion can be made at both the *amyE* and *bglS* loci, from which several
29 advantages accrue: (a) correct integration can be verified by an easy plate screening
30 assay; (b) our development of the *bglS* locus as a site of integration allows these plasmids
31 to be used in conjunction with the multitude of existing plasmids that integrate at the
32 widely used *amyE* locus and (c) expression of two different promoters can be determined

1 in the same strain using the spectrally distinct CFP and IYFP reporters, integrating one
2 fusion at the *amyE* locus and the second at the *bglS* locus. These characteristics confer
3 considerable versatility on the usage of this plasmid suite in expression studies, especially
4 to monitor promoter activity of genes in growing cultures in a high-throughput and
5 automated way with a temporal resolution of minutes.

7 3.2 Measurement of CFP and IYFP protein half-life in *B. subtilis*.

8 Knowledge of the half-life of each reporter protein is required when different
9 reporters are used to compare the expression profiles of individual promoters. This is
10 especially important when expression of two different promoters is being determined in
11 the same cell, as is possible using the *cfp*- and *iyfp*-containing plasmids reported here. We
12 have previously reported the half-life of GFPmut3 in exponentially growing *B. subtilis* to
13 be approximately 9 hours [25]. Using a similar approach we have determined the half-lives
14 of CFP and IYFP to be approximately 2 hours (two hours and 30 minutes for CFP and
15 two hours and 15 minutes for IYFP,) in exponentially growing *B. subtilis* cells. This
16 makes GFP the reporter of choice in determining promoter activity as described in
17 Botella *et al* [25] since its decay is negligible during short time intervals. However, here
18 we show that CFP and IYFP can both be used to accurately determine the expression
19 profile of different promoters in the same strain since they have comparable half-lives.

21 3.3 Measurement of the expression profiles of the P_{tuaA} and P_{phoA} promoters using the 22 *pGFPbglS* and *pGFPamy* vectors

23 The expression profile of two *B. subtilis* promoters was established during growth in
24 phosphate limiting conditions. The *phoA* gene encodes an alkaline phosphatase while the
25 *tuaA* operon encodes teichuronic acid biosynthetic genes and both operons are induced
26 upon phosphate limitation. Plasmids *pGFPbglS* and *pGFPamy* were utilized to construct
27 strains BP349 and BP158, which carry the $P_{phoA}gfpmut3$ and $P_{tuaA}gfpmut3$ transcriptional
28 fusions integrated at the *amyE* and *bglS* locus respectively. These strains were grown in
29 low phosphate defined medium (LPDM), and expression profiles were determined as
30 outlined in Materials and Methods. Results are shown in Figure 2. Neither fusion is
31 expressed during exponential growth while both are induced at the onset of phosphate
32 limitation, activated by the PhoPR two-component system [28, 29, 30]. Importantly,

1 control strains BP370 and BP381 that have pGFPbglS and pGFPamy without promoters
2 inserted into the chromosome had only background fluorescence levels throughout the
3 growth curve (data not shown). We compared expression of the $P_{phoAgfpmut3}$
4 and $P_{tuaAgfpmut3}$ transcriptional fusions at their homologous chromosomal loci with those
5 inserted into the *amyE* ($P_{phoAgfpmut3}$) and *bglS* ($P_{tuaAgfpmut3}$) loci by a double crossover
6 event. Results showed that the profile and level of $P_{tuaAgfpmut3}$ expression was almost
7 identical at both chromosomal sites (data not shown). However while the profile of
8 $P_{phoAgfpmut3}$ expression was similar at both sites, expression at the homologous site was
9 approximately 3-fold higher than that at the *amyE* site. Differential expression of a
10 particular fusion located at separate chromosomal locations has been previously observed
11 in several studies [31 and references therein]. Thus chromosomal context is important for
12 expression of some transcriptional fusions and must be considered when comparisons of
13 expression profiles are being made.

14

15 *3.4 Measurement of the expression profile of two different B. subtilis promoters in the* 16 *same strain using the pCFPamy and pYFPbglS vectors*

17 The use of two different integration sites and the spectrally distinguishable cyan
18 (CFP) and yellow (YFP) fluorescent reporter proteins in this vector suite
19 allow expression of two different promoters to be monitored in the same strain.
20 Plasmid pYFPamy was used to construct strain BP355 that has $P_{phoAiypf}$ integrated at the
21 *amyE* locus and plasmid pCFPbglS was used to construct strain BP477 that has $P_{tuaAcfp}$
22 inserted at the *bglS* locus. In addition strain BP543 was generated that has both
23 transcriptional fusions, $P_{phoAiypf}$ integrated at the *amyE* locus and $P_{tuaAcfp}$ inserted at the
24 *bglS* locus. Expression of these fusions was measured in the three strains grown in
25 LPDM medium. Results are shown in Figure 3. Only background levels of fluorescence
26 were observed in strains BP371 and BP482 into which the plasmids pCFPbglS and
27 pYFPamy without promoters were inserted (data not shown). The expression profiles of
28 both fusions were similar to that obtained using the GFP reporter protein, although the
29 CFP and YFP signals are less. This could be due to decreased sensitivity or to the
30 increased turnover of both protein when compared to GFP. Importantly the expression
31 profiles of both fusions determined in strain BP543 are virtually identical to those
32 obtained in the strain that harboured each of the single fusions (Figure 3 A, B). This

1 confirms that the presence of both IYFP and CFP proteins in cells does not interfere with
2 fluorescence measurements of either protein.

3 Exponentially growing and phosphate limited cells of strains singly carrying the
4 promoter fusions were analyzed by fluorescence microscopy. Only background
5 fluorescence was observed in exponentially growing cells, while a homogeneous
6 population of cells with comparable fluorescence levels was observed in phosphate
7 limited cells (data not shown).

8

9 **4. Conclusions**

10 We have developed a new suite of vectors for analysis of gene expression using the
11 *gfpmut3*, *iyfp* and *cfp* reporter genes in *B. subtilis*. Promoter-containing fragments are
12 cloned using the highly efficient LIC system that is amenable to high-throughput
13 automated procedures and the plasmids can integrate at two separate chromosomal loci.
14 We establish that CFP and IYFP proteins have comparable half-lives of approximately 2
15 hours in exponentially growing cells and demonstrate the versatility of these plasmids by
16 monitoring expression of two different promoters in the same strain.

17

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22

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Table 1. Bacterial strains and plasmids.

<i>Strain or plasmid</i>	<i>Genotype</i>	<i>Source or reference</i>
<u><i>E. coli</i> strains</u>		
TG-1	<i>supE hsd 5 thi (lac-proAB) F'(traD36 proAB lacI^qlacZ M15)</i>	Gibson (1984)
<u><i>B. subtilis</i> strains</u>		
168	<i>trpC2</i>	Laboratory stock
BP158	<i>trpC2 bglS::tuaA-gfpmut3 Kan^r</i>	pBP128→168
BP349	<i>trpC2 amyE::phoA- gfpmut3Cm^r</i>	pBP186→168
BP355	<i>trpC2 amyE::phoA- iyfp Cm^r</i>	pBP192→168
BP370	<i>trpC2 bglS::gfpmut3 Kan^r</i>	pGFPbglS→168
BP371	<i>trpC2 bglS::iyfpKan^r</i>	pYFPbglS→168
BP372	<i>trpC2 amyE::iyfp Cm^r</i>	pYFPamy→168

BP381	<i>trpC2 amyE::gfpmut3 Cm^r</i>	pGFPamy→168
BP477	<i>trpC2 bglS::tuaA-cfp Kan^r</i>	pBP231→168
BP482	<i>trpC2 amyE::cfp Cm^r</i>	pCFPamy→168
BP483	<i>trpC2 bglS::cfpKan^r</i>	pCFPbglS→168
BP543	<i>trpC2 amyE::phoA-iyfp Cm^r, bglS::tuaA-cfpKan^r</i>	pBP192→BP477
pBPbglS	Integrative vector for ectopic integration of DNA contracts by double crossover at the <i>bglS</i> locus (Ap ^r Kan ^r).	This work
pGFPbglS	Integrative vector for the introduction of single copy transcriptional fusions to <i>gfp</i> by double crossover at the <i>bglS</i> locus (Ap ^r Kan ^r).	This work
pCFPbglS	Integrative vector for the introduction of single copy transcriptional fusions to <i>cfp</i> by double crossover at the <i>bglS</i> locus (Ap ^r Kan ^r).	This work
pYFPbglS	Integrative vector for the introduction of single copy transcriptional fusions to <i>iyfp</i> by double crossover at the <i>bglS</i> locus (Ap ^r Kan ^r).	This work
pBPamy	Integrative vector for ectopic integration of DNA contracts by double crossover at the <i>amyE</i> locus (Ap ^r Cm ^r).	This work
pGFPamy	Integrative vector for the introduction of single copy transcriptional fusions to <i>gfp</i> by double crossover at the <i>amyE</i> locus (Ap ^r Cm ^r).	This work
pCFPamy	Integrative vector for the introduction of single copy transcriptional fusions to <i>cfp</i> by double crossover at the <i>amyE</i> locus (Ap ^r Cm ^r).	This work
pYFPamy	Integrative vector for the introduction of single copy transcriptional fusions to <i>iyfp</i> by double crossover at the <i>amyE</i> locus (Ap ^r Cm ^r).	This work
pBP128	pGFPbglS derivative containing the <i>tuaA</i> promoter region (Ap ^r Kan ^r)	This work
pBP186	pGFPamy derivative containing the <i>phoA</i> promoter region (Ap ^r Cm ^r)	This work
pBP192	pYFPamy derivative containing the <i>phoA</i> promoter region (Ap ^r Cm ^r)	This work
pBP231	pCFPbglS derivative containing the <i>tuaA</i> promoter region (Ap ^r Kan ^r)	This work

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Table 2. Oligonucleotides used in this study.

Name	Sequence (5' to 3')
oBP231	CGCGATCCGCTTCACTATTATCGGTTTCGTCACCC
oBP232	AAAAGTGCAGTCTGTAAGTATCATCATCTTCCCTCTG
oBP233	CCGCTCGAGCTTCACTTACACAGGTCCAACAGATGG
oBP234	CCGCTCGAGGCAGCAGGCTCTTTCACATTTGGC
oBP237	CCGGAATTCTTTTACCGCGGGCTTTCC
oBP238	CCGGAATTC GGTTCTGTAGTCGACTTCTCACC
oBP354	CCGGAATTCTTTTACCGCGGGCTTTCCCGGAAGGAGGAAGTATGGTTTCAAAGGCGAAGAAGTCTG
oBP355	CCGGAATTCTTACTTATAAAGTTCGTCATGCC
oBP262	CCGGAATTCTTTTACCGCGGGCTTTCCCGGAAGGAGGAAGTACTACTATGGATTCA ATAGAAAAGGTAAGC
oBP279	CCGGAATTCGGTTTTTCCCAGTCACGACGTTGTAA
oBP275	CCGGAATTCGAAAATTGGATAAAGTGGG
oBP276	CCGGAATTCCTATTATGTACTATCGATCAGACC

tuaAF	CCGCGGGCTTTCCCAGCAATCTTGGAACGAGAGACCG
tuaAR	GTCCTCCTTCCCACCTTTGTTTGGGATGTTATGATG
phoAF	CCGCGGGCTTTCCCAGCATTTTCCTCCCAAATGTTA
phoAB	GTCCTCCTTCCCACCCCGTTTATCATGTTAGGGAA

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5 **Figure legends**

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7 **Figure 1.** Schematic presentation of plasmids for generating GFP, CFP and IYFP
8 transcriptional fusions at the *amyE* and *bglS* loci using the LIC cloning methodology in *B.*
9 *subtilis*. Vector names, antibiotic resistance genes and origins of replication are
10 indicated. The reading frames encoding the GFP, CFP and IYFP fluorescent proteins are
11 shown in green, cyan and yellow respectively. The Ligation-Independent-Cloning (LIC)
12 sites for ligation-free cloning of promoters to the fluorescent protein-encoding genes are
13 shown in red. The restriction site used for plasmid linearization is indicated. Integration
14 into the *B. subtilis* chromosome occurs via a double cross-over event at the *amyE* or the
15 *bglS* locus, resulting in selection for chloramphenicol or kanamycin resistance
16 respectively.

17

18 **Figure 2.** Growth and expression profiles of strains carrying transcriptional *gfpmut3*
19 fusions grown in low phosphate defined medium (LPDM). Growth profiles are shown by
20 open symbols and expression by closed symbols: squares BP349 (*phoA-gfpmut3*);
21 triangles, BP158(*tuaA-gfpmut3*). Time zero indicates the point of transition between the
22 exponential phase and the phosphate-starvation induced stationary phase of growth.

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24 **Figure 3.** Growth and expression profiles of strains carrying transcriptional fusions to the
25 *iyfp* and *cfp* reporter genes, grown in low phosphate defined medium (LPDM). Growth
26 profiles are shown by open symbols and expression profiles by closed symbols. Time
27 zero indicates the point of transition between the exponential phase and the phosphate-
28 starvation induced stationary phase of growth. A: strain BP355 (*phoA-iyfp*, squares)
29 and strain BP477(*tuaA-cfp*, triangles). B: strain BP543 (*phoA-iyfp tuaA-cfp*), carrying both

- 1 *thephoA-iyfp* (squares) and *tuaA-cfp* (triangles) transcriptional fusions. Open circles
- 2 indicate growth.
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