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Microbial Biosensors Using Genetic Circuits for Heavy Metal Detection in Soil and Water

Jeffrey Schwartz*

Department of Radiation Oncology, University of Washington Medical Center, Seattle, USA

***Corresponding author:** Jeffrey L. Schwartz, Department of Radiation Oncology, University of Washington Medical Center, Seattle, USA; E-mail: jschwart@uw.edu

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Description

Microbial biosensors are living cells that have been genetically engineered to detect and respond to specific environmental signals. These biosensors can be used for a wide range of applications, including environmental monitoring, bioremediation and medical diagnostics. One approach to produce microbial biosensors is through the use of genetic circuits [1]. A genetic circuit is a collection of genes that work together to perform a specific function. In the context of microbial biosensors, genetic circuits are designed to respond to specific environmental signals and produce a measurable output [2]. One type of genetic circuit commonly used in microbial biosensors is the two-component system [3]. This system consists of two genes, one encoding a sensor protein that detects the environmental signal and another encoding a response regulator that activates a downstream gene in response to the signal [4]. By combining different sensor and response regulator genes, researchers can produce a variety of biosensors that detect different environmental signals [5]. Another type of genetic circuit used in microbial biosensors is the synthetic gene network. This approach involves designing a network of genes that interact with each other in a specific way to produce a desired output. For example, a synthetic gene network might include genes that sense the presence of a specific chemical and activate a gene that produces a fluorescent protein in response. Microbial biosensors using genetic circuits have many advantages over traditional chemical sensors, including increased sensitivity, specificity, and versatility [6]. They can also be designed to respond to a wide range of environmental signals, making them useful in many different applications. However, there are also some challenges associated with using genetic circuits in living cells, such as maintaining the stability and function of the circuit over time [7].

Microbial biosensors are a type of biosensor that uses microorganisms to detect and report on the presence of specific substances in their environment. Genetic circuits, which are engineered networks of genes that allow for precise control over gene expression, can be used to produce microbial biosensors for heavy metal detection in soil and water. To produce a microbial biosensor for heavy metal detection, a genetic circuit is designed that links the expression of a reporter gene to the presence of the heavy metal of interest. When the heavy metal is present in the environment, it activates the genetic circuit, causing the reporter gene to be expressed and producing a measurable signal that indicates the presence of the heavy metal [8]. One example of a microbial biosensor for heavy metal detection is the use of the bacterium *Escherichia coli*, which has been engineered to produce Green Fluorescent Protein (GFP) in response to the presence of cadmium. The genetic circuit in this biosensor includes a promoter that is activated by cadmium, which then drives the expression of the GFP reporter gene [9]. Another example is the use of the bacterium *Pseudomonas putida*, which has been engineered to produce bioluminescence in response to the presence of mercury. The genetic circuit in this biosensor includes a promoter that is activated by mercury, which then drives the expression of the bioluminescence reporter gene [10]. Microbial biosensors using genetic circuits for heavy metal detection in soil and water have the potential to be highly sensitive, specific, and cost-effective tools for environmental monitoring. They can be deployed in the field to detect heavy metal contamination in real-time and provide valuable information for environmental management and remediation efforts.

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