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Posted Date: 26 October 2023

doi: 10.20944/preprints202310.1689.v1

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Diversity and Biological Activities of Marine-Derived Yeast Strains

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Abstract: Marine yeasts have versatile applications in industrial, medical and environmental fields, but have received little attention compared to terrestrial yeasts and filamentous fungi. In this study, a phylogenetic analysis of 11 marine-derived yeasts was conducted using internal transcribed spacers and nuclear large subunit rDNA, and their bioactivities, such as antioxidant, antibacterial, and tyrosinase inhibition activities, were investigated. The 11 marine-derived yeasts were identified to belong to seven species including *Geotrichum candidum, Metschnikowia bicuspidata, Papiliotrema fonsecae, Rhodotorula mucilaginosa, Vishniacozyma carnescens, Yamadazyma olivae, and Yarrowia lipolytica*, and three strains of these were candidates for new species of the genera *Aureobasidium*, *Rhodotorula*, and *Vishniacozyma*. Most extracts showed antioxidant activity, whereas seven strains exhibited antibacterial activities against *Bacillus subtilis*. Only *Aureobasidium* sp. US-Sd3 among the 11 isolates showed tyrosinase inhibition. *Metschnikowia bicuspidata* BP-Up1 and *Yamadazyma olivae* K2-6 showed notable radical-scavenging activity, which has not been reported previously. Among the isolates, *Aureobasidium* sp. US-Sd3 exhibited the highest antibacterial and tyrosinase inhibitory activities. Overall, our results demonstrate the potential of marine-derived yeasts as a source of bioactive compounds for improving industrial applications.

Keywords: Marine yeast; microbial phylogenetics; bioactivity; antioxidant; biological control; tyrosinase inhibition

1. Introduction

Yeasts include ascomycetous or basidiomycetous fungi [1], and their most common mode of vegetative growth occurs through budding or fission. They are well-known to have many applications in the fermentation, food, agricultural, biofuel, and medical industries [2].

Marine yeasts are defined as those isolated from marine environments, such as sea-water, sediment, marine animals and plants. The first marine yeasts were recorded by Bernhard Fischer in 1894 from Atlantic Ocean seawater, and identified as *Torula* sp. and *Mycoderma* sp. [3]. Marine yeasts survive longer in seawater than in freshwater [4]. Some marine yeasts, known as "facultative marine yeasts", are originated from terrestrial habitats and survive in marine environments. The other marine yeasts, designated as "obligate or indigenous marine yeasts", confine to marine environments [5]. Marine yeasts play important roles in nutrient recycling and biodegradation in marine environments [6].

It has been reported that marine yeasts produce diverse bioactive substances, such as enzymes, biofuels, amino acids, proteins, and vitamins. These products have potential applications in the food, cosmetics, pharmaceutical, and chemical industries. Marine yeasts have several unique features compared to those of terrestrial yeasts, such as tolerance to high salinity and higher chemical productivity, according to recent research [5,7].

In the pharmaceutical industry, marine yeasts, such as *Candida membranifaciens*, *Rhodotorula glutinis*, *Yarrowia lipolytica*, and *Debaryomyces hansenii*, can be used to produce riboflavin, astaxanthin, antimicrobial silver nanoparticles, and anticancer copper-zinc superoxide dismutase, respectively

 doi:10.20944/preprints202310.1689.v1

[5,8–10]. In addition, in the cosmetics industry, astaxanthin produced by several yeasts belonging to the genera, *Rhodotorula*, *Phaffia*, and *Xanthophyllomyces*, can play roles in skin photo-protection and the inhibition of adverse processes induced by solar UV radiation [11].

In the cosmetics industry, few natural products isolated from marine-derived microbes have recently been used [12], and the bioactive compounds produced by marine microorganisms are still relatively unexplored. Because fungi are diverse in marine environments, from coastal to deep sea habitats, based on molecular and metagenomic analyses, their diversity has been studied from these habitats and fungal sequences from the known fungal taxa were added [11,13].

In the present study, we investigated the diversity of yeasts isolated from marine environments using morphological and molecular analyses. In addition, marine yeasts were evaluated as prospective bioresource agents by investigating the antioxidant, antimicrobial, and tyrosinase activities of extracts derived from them.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Fungal Isolation

The marine-derived yeasts used in this study were isolated from marine environments using the following procedure. A list of yeast strains with general and sample collection information is presented in Figure 1 and Table 1. Samples were collected from marine sediments, seawater, a clam (*Venerupis philippinarum*), the gut of a fish (*Pagrus major*), and sea algae (*Rumex crispus* and *Ulva australis*). The marine sediments were diluted with sterilized saline. Seawater was filtered using a 0.45 μm sterile membrane filter (Hyundai Micro Co., Seoul, Korea). The clam was crushed, homogenized and diluted in sterilized saline. Fish gut tissues were homogenized and diluted in sterilized saline. Sea algae were washed three times with sterile distilled water, and cut into 0.5- or 1-cm pieces. Samples diluted in sterilized saline were spread, and the filters of seawater samples and pieces of sea algae were placed on potato dextrose agar (PDA, BD, Franklin Lakes, NJ, USA) supplemented with 0.01% (w/v) ampicillin (Sigma-Aldrich, St. Louis, MO, USA) and 0.01% (w/v) streptomycin (Sigma-Aldrich) to prevent bacterial growth, and incubated at 25°C for seven days. During this period, individual yeast colonies were picked and transferred to fresh PDA to isolate pure cultures. After isolation, yeast strains were cultured on yeast extract-peptone-dextrose (YPD) agar (BD) at 25°C, unless described otherwise. Yeast strains were suspended in 20% glycerol (v/v) and stored at -80°C.

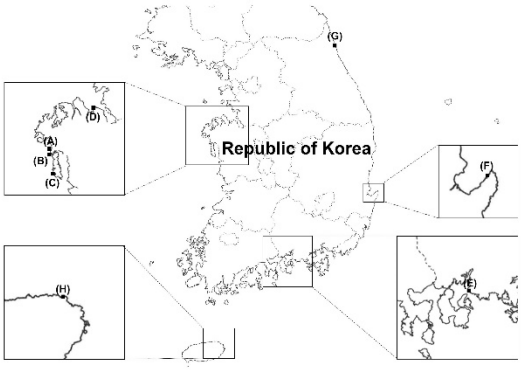

Figure 1. The map of sampling sites. (A) Mudflat, and (B) seaside in Nam-myeon, and (C) Anmyeon-eup, Taean-gun; and (D) Seokmun-myeon, Dangjeon-si, Chungcheongnam-do; (E) Daebang-dong, Sacheon-si, Gyeongsangnam-do; (F) East sea of South Korea; (G) Toseong-myeon, Goseong-gun, Gangwon-do; (H) Gujwa-eup, Jeju-si, Jeju-do, Korea.

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Table 1. General information of 11 marine-derived yeasts.

Identity	ID	Sampling site	Isolation Source	Culture ID in MMBB of MABIK
Aureobasidium sp.	US-Sd3	Nam-myeon, Taean-gun, Chungcheongnam-do[A]	Sediment	MABIK FU00001121
Geotrichum candidum	GH-W2	Daebang-dong, Sacheon-si, Gyeongsangnam-do[E]	Seawater	MABIK FU00001254
Metschnikowia bicuspidata	BP-Up1	Toseong-myeon, Goseong-gun, Gangwon-do[G]	*Ulva australis*	MABIK FU00001255
	US-Sd4	Nam-myeon, Taean-gun, Chungcheongnam-do[A]	Sediment	MABIK FU00001256
Papiliotrema fonsecae	HW-W2	Gujwa-eup, Jeju-si, Jeju-do[H]	Seawater	MABIK FU00001257
Rhodotorula sp.	TS1-6	Anmyeon-eup, Taean-gun, Chungcheongnam-do[C]	Seawater	MABIK FU00001258
Rhodotorula mucilaginosa	GSU-CS3	Nam-myeon, Taean-gun, Chungcheongnam-do[B]	*Venerupis philippinarum*	MABIK FU00001259
Vishniacozyma carnescens	US-Sd1	Nam-myeon, Taean-gun, Chungcheongnam-do[A]	Sediment	MABIK FU00001260
Vishniacozyma sp.	SM-Rc3	Seokmun-myeon, Dangjeon-si, Chungcheongnam-do[D]	*Rumex crispus*	MABIK FU00001179
Yamadazyma olivae	K2-6	East sea of South Korea[F]	guts of *Pagrus major*	MABIK FU00001261
Yarrowia lipolytica	HW-W3	Gujwa-eup, Jeju-si, Jeju-do[H]	Seawater	MABIK FU00001262

* The sampling sites in Figure 1 were presented by A-H.

2.2. DNA Extraction, PCR, and Identification

Genomic DNA was extracted from yeast cultures grown in YPD broth at 25°C for three days on a 150 rpm rotary shaker. Yeast cells were collected by centrifugation at 10,000 x *g* for 10 min, frozen, ground using liquid nitrogen, and suspended in lysis buffer, following previously established protocols [14]. PCR reactions were performed with two primer sets: ITS1F (5′-CTTGGTCATTTAGAGGAAGTAA-3′) and ITS4 (5′-TCCTCCGCTTATTGATATGC-3′) were used to amplify the internal transcribed spacer (ITS) region [15] and LROR (5′-ACCCGCTGAACTTAAGC-3′) and LR5 (5′-TCCTGAGGGAAACTTCG-3′) used to amplify the partial D1/D2 domain of a large subunit (LSU, 28S) of rDNA [16]. PCR conditions included an initial denaturation at 95°C for 4 min, followed by 30 cycles of denaturation at 95°C for 30 s, annealing at 55°C for 30 s, and extension at 72°C for 30 s, and an elongation step of 72°C for 5 min for the amplification of ITS and LSU regions. PCR products were purified using a Gel Extraction Kit (Qiagen, Hilden, Germany). DNA sequencing was conducted in both the forward and reverse directions with the two primer sets by Macrogen Inc. (Seoul, Korea) using the Sanger method.

To obtain full-length gene sequences, the sequences generated in the forward and reverse directions were aligned and assembled using MEGA version 11 software [17]. The gene sequences of closely related taxa were searched in the GenBank database. Phylogenetic analyses based on the concatenated sequences of the ITS regions and D1/D2 domains of the LSU rRNA gene were constructed using neighbor joining (NJ) and maximum likelihood (ML) methods. Kimura-2 parameter and general time reversible models were used for the NJ and ML methods, respectively, followed by 1,000 bootstrap replicates in MEGA 11. The strains isolated in this study were deposited in the Marine Microbial BioBank (MMBB) culture collection of the National Biodiversity Institute of Korea (MABIK) (Table 1).

2.3. Culture Conditions

Growth of marine yeasts in different media and concentrations of NaCl was evaluated by inoculating 10 μL of cell suspensions (optical density of 0.5 measured at a wavelength of 600 nm) in

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center of Petri dishes. Morphological characteristics of the yeast strains were studied on PDA, malt extract agar (MEA, BD), and YPD agar plates with different NaCl concentrations (0, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 16 and 20 % [w/v]). Three replicates were performed for each plate. Plates with inoculated with yeasts were incubated for seven days at 25°C

2.4. Microscopic Observation

For morphological characterization, isolates from marine environments were cultured on YPD agar (BD) at 25°C for three days. Microscopic observations were examined under a Leica CTR6000 microscope (Leica, Wetzlar, Germany). The microscopes are equipped with a Leica DMC2900 camera and LAS V4.5 software for image acquisition.

2.5. Preparation of Fungal Extracts

All yeast isolates were cultured on 50 mL PDA at 25°C for a week in the dark. After cultivation, the cultures were extracted with 200 mL of methanol (Sigma-Aldrich) for 24 h, followed by filtration with Whatman No. 1 filter paper. The filtrates were evaporated at 32°C under a vacuum, and the condensed extracts were dissolved in 20 mL distilled water and 20 mL ethyl acetate (Sigma-Aldrich). After 6 h, the partitioned ethyl acetate fraction was collected and evaporated under the same conditions described above. The extracts were dissolved in dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO; Sigma-Aldrich) to a concentration of 10 mg/mL and stored at 4°C. All fungal cultures and extracts were prepared in triplicates.

2.6. Antioxidant Assays

2.6.1. ABTS Radical-scavenging Assay

A 7 mM 2,2′-azino-bis-3-ethylbenzothiazoline-6-sulfonic acid (ABTS; Sigma-Aldrich) solution dissolved in phosphate-buffered saline (PBS; pH 7.4) was mixed with potassium persulfate solution dissolved in PBS to 2.45 mM. The mixture was stored in the dark at room temperature for 24 h to form the $ABTS^{\bullet+}$. The solution was diluted with PBS to an absorbance of 0.70 (±0.02) at a wavelength of 734 nm. Then, 198 µL $ABTS^{\bullet+}$ solution and 2 µL fungal extract (10 mg/mL in DMSO) were mixed in a 96-well plate. Absorbance was measured at 734 nm after 6 min using a spectrophotometer (Hidex, Turku, Finland). Ascorbic acid (Sigma-Aldrich) was used as the positive control.

2.6.2. DPPH Radical-scavenging Assay

2,2-dephenyl-1-picrylhydrazyl (DPPH; Sigma-Aldrich) was dissolved in 80% methanol at 150 µM. Then, 200 µL DPPH solution was mixed with 22 µL fungal extract (10 mg/mL in DMSO) in a 96-well plate. The mixture was stored in the dark at room temperature for 30 min, and the absorbance was measured at 540 nm using a spectrophotometer. Ascorbic acid was used as the positive control.

2.7. Antimicrobial Activity

A microplate-based growth assay using the microtiter broth dilution method was conducted to determine antimicrobial activity [18]. The target species were *Bacillus subtilis* (KCTC 3135/ATCC 6051), *Escherichia coli* (KCTC 2441/ATCC 11775), *Candida albicans* (KCCM 12555/ATCC 42266), *Aspergillus flavus* (KCCM 60330/ATCC 22546) and *A. niger* (KCCM 60332/ATCC 16888) purchased from Korean Collection for Type Cultures (KCTC; Jeongeup, Korea) and the Korean Culture Center of Microorganisms (KCCM; Seoul, Korea). Fifty microliters of microbial suspensions (1×10^6 cells/mL for bacteria, 5×10^3 cells/mL for yeast, and 4×10^5 conidia/mL spore suspensions for molds) were added to each well containing media (Mueller Hinton broth [BD] for bacteria and potato dextrose broth [BD] for yeast and molds). The yeast extracts were added to each well at a final concentration of 100 µg/mL. The 96-well plates were incubated at 25°C for 2-3 days (two days for bacteria and three days for fungi). The extracts with lower concentrations (50, 25, and 12.5 µg/mL) were tested to determine the minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC).

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2.8. Tyrosinase Inhibition Assay

Tyrosinase inhibitory activity was determined using modified method described by Lai et al. [19]. An amount of 70 µL of 0.1 M potassium phosphate buffer (pH 6.8), 40 µL yeast extract (2.5 mg/mL diluted in 50% DMSO), and 30 µL of 0.02 mg/mL tyrosinase from mushroom (Sigma-Aldrich) were mixed in each well of the 96-well plates. The mixtures were heated in a waterbath at 30°C for five minutes, and 100 µL of 2.5 mM L-DOPA (Sigma-Aldrich) was added and mixed. After 30 min, the plates were put in ice to complete the reaction, and absorbance was measured at 492 nm using a spectrophotometer. Kojic acid (Sigma-Aldrich) was used as the positive control and each mixture except L-DOPA were regard as a blank.

2.9. Statistical analysis

Experimental data were analyzed using one-way ANOVA followed by Tukey's multiple comparison test (GraphPad Prism software 5.0). All experiments were conducted in biological triplicates unless otherwise described.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Identification and Phylogeny

Yeast identification through molecular analysis is generally conducted based on both ITS and the D1/D2 domain [20]. In this study, 11 strains of marine yeasts were identified via sequencing of the ITS region and the D1/D2 domain of the LSU rRNA gene. Sequence information of the ITS regions and D1/D2 domains of the LSU rRNA gene were deposited in GenBank (accession numbers are represented in phylogenetic trees). The phylogenetic placement of the strains is shown in Figure 2 (Ascomycota) and Figure 3 (Basidiomycota). From these phylogenetic analyses, the trees derived from the NJ and ML method exhibited similar. The marine-derived yeasts were represented seven species and three new candidate species. The yeasts were distributed into four fungal lineages: Ascomycota, Saccharomycotina (five strains); Ascomycota, Pezizomycotina (one strain); Basidiomycota, Agricomycotina (three strains); and Basidiomycota, Pucciniomycotina (two strains) (Figure 2 and 3).

A phylogenetic analysis conducted using combined ITS and D1/D2 domain sequences assigned the Ascomycota species to five genera (Figure 2). GH-W2 was closely related to *Geotrichum candidum* CBS 11628 (100% identity) and 11616 (100%). GH-W2 was identified as *G. candidum* with relatively high support (bootstrap value: NJ, 84%; ML, 82%). HW-W3 formed a monophyletic clade with *Yarrowia lipolytica* (bootstrap value: 100%). As BP-Up1 and US-Sd4 were grouped with *Metschnikowia bicuspidata*, both strains were identified as *M. bicuspidata*. K2-6 was placed in the *Yamadazyma olivae* clade as it was closely related to *Y. olivae* FMCC Y-1^T and CBS 1171, with high bootstrap values (NJ, 98%; ML, 100%). US-Sd3 in the *Aureobasidium* clade was not assigned to a clade with close references. Comparison of the ITS regions and D1/D2 domains of strain US-Sd3 with its related species showed that this strain was not grouped with a distinct species; *A. namibiae* CBS 147.97^T (96.68% identity in ITS regions and 99.43% identity in D1/D2 domains), *A. subglaciale* CBS 123387^T (99.45% in ITS regions and 98.87% in D1/D2 domains), and *A. leucospermi* CBS 130593^T (97.78% in ITS regions and 98.68% in D1/D2 domains). Therefore, it was regarded as a new candidate species.

Basidiomycota species were assigned to three genera: *Papiliotrema*, *Vishniacozyma*, and *Rhodotorula* (Figure 3). A BLAST search conducted using the ITS and D1/D2 domain sequences revealed that HW-W2 showed a high degree of similarity with *Papiliotrema fonsecae* KF921 (100% identity), ZM13F84 (100%) and EXF-4087^T (100%). HW-W2 belonged to the same clade as the three strains with a 100% degree of confidence. US-Sd1 was identified as *Vishniacozyma carnescens* with a high degree of similarity to *V. carnescens* CBS 973^T (100% identity). Although SM-Rc3 was placed in the *Vishniacozyma* clade, it was not assigned to a clade through close references. Therefore, it was regarded as a new candidate species and designated as *Vishniacozyma* sp. SM-Rc3. GSU-CS3 and TS1-6 were grouped with *Rhodotorula* spp. GSU-CS3 was placed in a monophyletic clade with *R.*

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mucilaginosa (bootstrap value: NJ, 99%; ML, 100%). As TS1-6 was grouped with the three distinct species, *R. glutinis* CBS 20^{T} (99.49% identity in ITS regions and 99.87% identity in D1/D2 domain), *R. graminis* CBS 2826^{T} (99.15% in ITS regions and 100% in D1/D2 domain), and *R. babjevae* CBS 7808^{T} (99.66% in ITS regions and 99.82% in D1/D2 domain), it was not identified at the species level and thus designated as *Rhodotorula* sp. TS1-6.

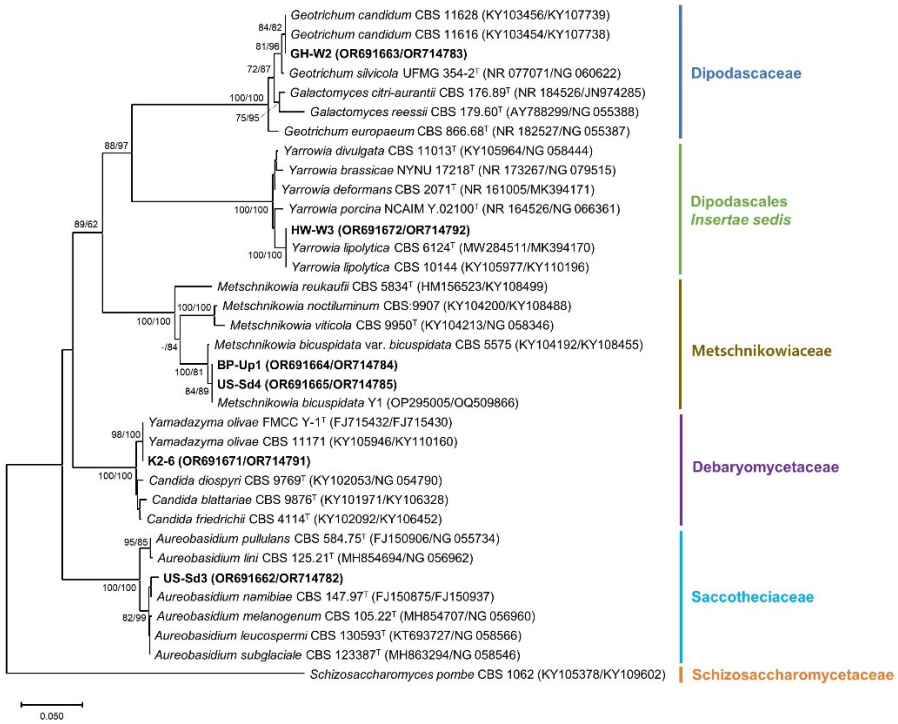

Figure 2. Phylogenetic tree of ascomycetous yeasts (Phylum Ascomycota) based on the concatenated sequences of the ITS regions and the D1/D2 domains of the LSU rRNA gene. The tree backbone was constructed with the NJ method. Numbers on the branches represent percentages of bootstrap values of NJ and ML analyses, derived from 1000 random replicates. Bootstrap values lower than 70 are not shown. Our strains are shown in bold. GenBank accession numbers of the ITS and LSU regions are in parentheses.

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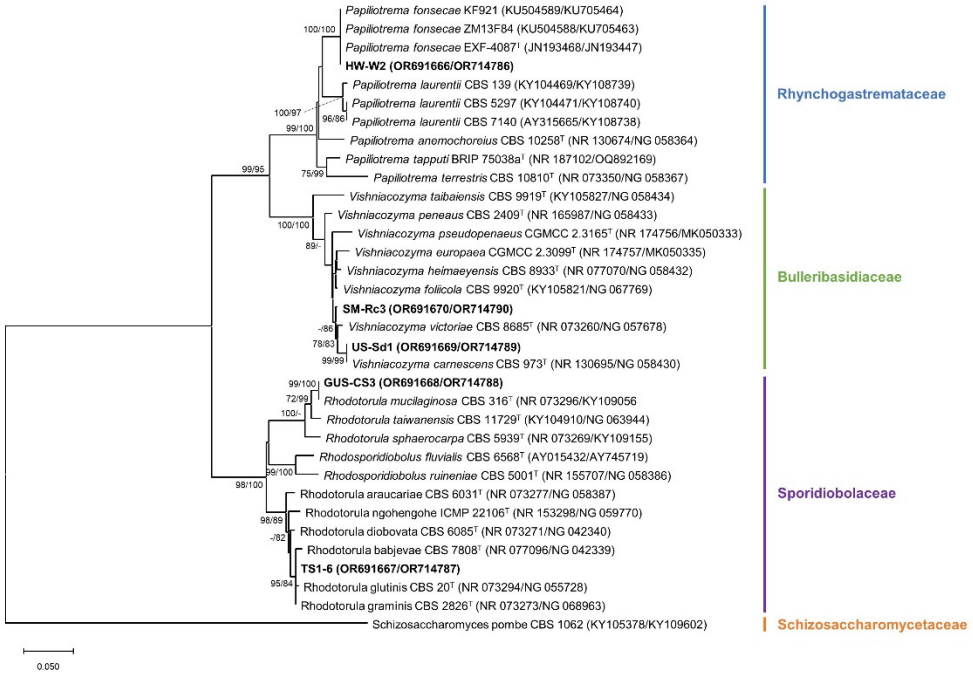

Figure 3. Phylogenetic tree of basidiomycetous yeasts (Phylum Basidiomycota) based on the concatenated sequences of the ITS regions and the D1/D2 domains of the LSU rRNA gene. The tree backbone was constructed with the NJ method. Numbers on the branches represent percentages of bootstrap values of NJ and ML analyses, derived from 1000 random replicates. Bootstrap values lower than 70 are not shown. Our strains are shown in bold. GenBank accession numbers of the ITS and LSU regions are in parentheses.

3.2. Morphology observation

Colonies of US-Sd3 on PDA were smooth and black with white fimbriate margins. Colonies on MEA were felty and brown with white fimbriate margins. On PDA and MEA, the colonies initially appeared cream, and later became blackish or brownish. Colonies on YPD were raised, smooth, and light pink (Figure 4). Colonies of *Aureobasidium* species appeared cream, yellow, light brown, and light pink at the beginning of cultivation and became blackish owing to the production of a dark pigment, which was a melanin-like compounds [21]. Conidia were hyaline, aseptate, smooth-walled, ellipsoidal-to-ovoid, and often had polar buds (Figure 5A).

Strain GH-W2, identified as *G. candidum*, was characterized by an intermediate morphology of mold- and yeast-like, white-felted, and non-greasy colonies (Figure 4) with abundant production of arthrospores (Figure 5B). As *G. candidum* is a filamentous yeast-like fungus, its strains exhibit phenotypic variability as yeast-like, intermediate, or mold-like morphotypes [22].

Strains BP-Up1 and US-Sd4 (identified as *M. bicuspidata*) formed smooth, entire mar-gins, and cream-colored colonies on PDA. Colonies grown on MEA and YPD media were smooth and white. BP-Up1 and US-Sd4 showed slower growth on MEA than PDA and YPD agar (Figure 4). The cells of these two strains were globose or subglobose under microscopic observation. Polar buds were observed (Figure 5C and 5D). Differences between the two strains in terms of cell morphology were in cell size and salt tolerance (described below). The size of BP-Up1 was approximately 2.5–5.5 μm in width × 4.0–8.0 μm in length (N = 10). The size of US-Sd4 was approximately 2.0–4.0 μm in width × 2.2–4.5 μm in length (N = 10).

Colonies of HW-W2, identified as *P. fonsecae*, were cream-beige in color, with smooth surfaces and entire margins (Figure 4). Cells were globose to oval (3.0–4.6 × 3.0–5.8 μm, N = 10) with bud formation (Figure 5E).

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Strain TS1-6, identified as *Rhodotorula* sp., formed orange-coral colonies that sere soft, smooth, and moist (Figure 4). Under the microscope, the cells were subglobose or elliptical in shape and formed buds (Figure 5F). Strain GSU-CS3, identified as *R. mucilaginosa*, produced coral-colored, smooth, and wet colonies (Figure 4). The cells were globose or subglobose in shape (Figure 5G). *Rhodotorula* species are typically pink-to-orange in color owing to the production of carotenoids as intracellular lipid droplets [23].

Colonies of strain US-Sd1, identified as *V. carnescens*, were smooth, moist, cream-colored, with entire margins (Figure 4). Under microscopic observation, the cells were subglobose and ellipsoidal in shape, with budding (Figure 5H). Strain SM-Rc3, identified as *Vishniacozyma* sp., formed beige-colored, smooth, flat colonies on PDA and MEA, whereas they formed raised on YPD media (Figure 4). Cells were oval or tear-shaped (3.0–4.2 × 4.6–6.2 μm, N = 10), and bud formation was observed (Figure 5I).

Colonies of strain K2-6, identified as *Y. olivae*, were cream-colored, and moderately raised. The cells were ellipsoid and occurred either singly or in mother-bud pairs. Short chains of elongated cells and pseudohyphae were observed (Figure 5J and 5K).

Strain HW-W3, identified as *Y. lipolytica*, produced colonies with wrinkles, ridged surfaces, and fimbriate margins on PDA and YPD agar. On MEA, the colonies were flat with spreading edges (Figure 4). It did not typically produce radical and smooth colonies, unlike most other Saccharomycetes yeasts. Cells at the microscopic level were globose or subglobose with bud formation (Figure 5L). Hyphae were also observed (Figure 5M). The yeast *Y. lipolytica* is a model for dimorphism, meaning that it can undergo a yeast-to-hyphal transition [24].

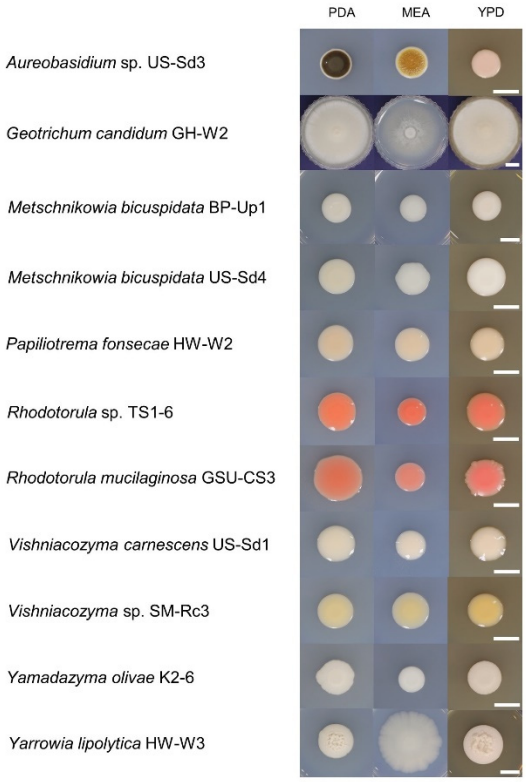

Figure 4. Growth and macro-morphological characteristics of marine-derived yeasts. Isolates were inoculated in center positions on PDA, MEA, and YPD plates. Inoculated plates were incubated at 25°C for 7 days. Scale bars = 1 cm.

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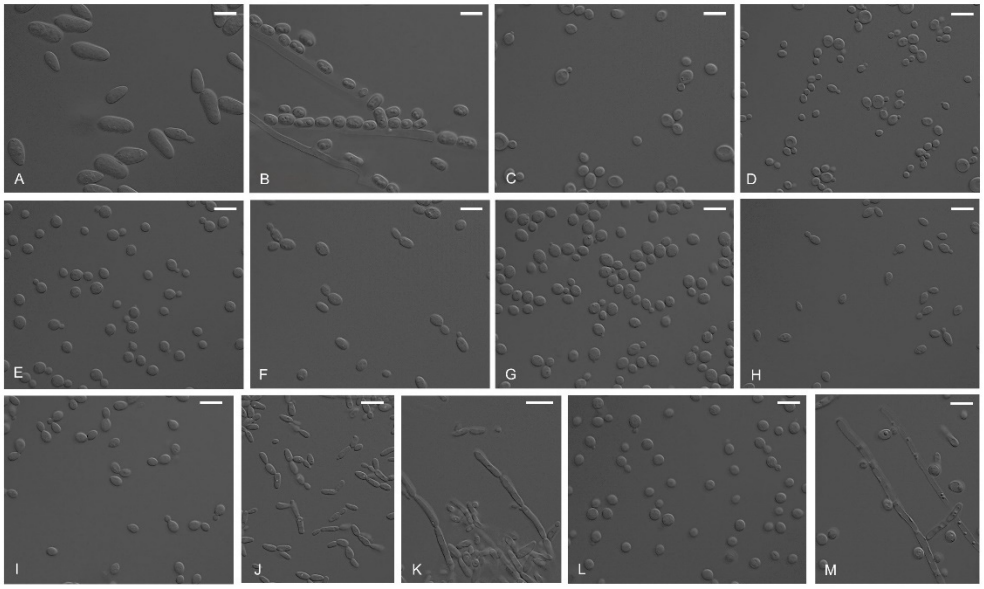

Figure 5. Microscopic images of isolates. (A) Conidia of *Aureobasidium* sp. US-Sd3; (B) Hyphae and arthrospores of *G. candidum* GH-W2; Budding yeast cells of (C) *M. bicuspidata* BP-Up1, (D) *M. bicuspidata* US-Sd4, (E) *P. fonsecae* HW-W2, (F) *Rhodotorula* sp. TS1-6, (G) *R. mucilaginosa* GSU-CS3, (H) *V. carnescens* US-Sd1, and (I) *Vishniacozyma* sp. SM-Rc3; (J) Short chains of cells, and (K) Pseudohyphae of *Y. olivae* K2-6; (L) Budding cells, and (M) Hyphae of *Y. lipolytica* HW-W3. Scale bars = 10 μm.

3.3. Salt-tolerant Ability

As the isolates were derived from marine environments, the effects that NaCl concentration in YPD media has on them were investigated. Different strains showed different growth and responses to NaCl concentration. All tested marine-derived yeast strains in this study could grow with NaCl up to 8% (w/v), whereas no growth was observed at 20% NaCl. Unlike the other strains, GH-W2 growth did not occur at 10% NaCl concentration. Two strains (US-Sd3 and TS1-6) could not grow completely at 12% of salt exposure. Five strains (HW-W2, GSU-CS3, US-Sd1, SM-Rc3, and HW-W3) growth were completely inhibited at 16% NaCl. Three strains (BP-Up1, US-Sd4, and HW-W3) did not exhibit growth at 20 % NaCl. Growth of the GH-W2, HW-W2, TS1-6, GSU-CS3, US-Sd1, SM-Rc3, and K2-6 strains, was inhibited by the addition of NaCl to the medium. The colonies of BP-Up1 and HW-W3 became bigger by 6% and 2% NaCl, respectively.

M. bicuspidata and *Y. lipolytica* were reported that they were isolated hypersaline waters such as salt lakes and ponds [25]. *Y. lipolytica*, as generally recognized as safe status, is considered an excellent microorganism with multiple biotechnological applications [26]. Recently, halophiles and halotolerants have shown promise because fermentation processes are free under non-sterile conditions [27].

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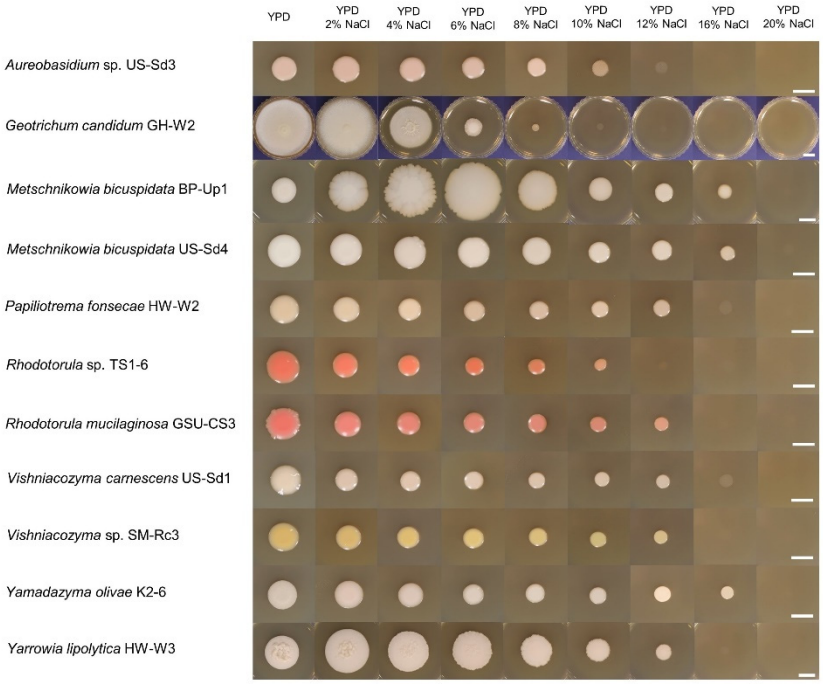

Figure 6. Spot plate assay for growth of isolates on YPD medium was supplemented with 0, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 16, and 20 % (w/v) NaCl for 7 days at 25°C. Scale bars = 1 cm.

3.4. Antioxidant Activity

Reactive oxygen species and free radical-mediated reactions can cause damage effects to biomolecules, such as proteins, lipids, and nucleic acids, and contribute to aging, cancer, and various diseases [28]. Molecules of microbial origin showing antioxidant and radical-scavenging activities contain carbohydrates, phenolic compounds, carotenoids, anthraquinone, xanthones, indole derivatives, and alkaloids [11,29].

In this study, the antioxidant activities of crude fungal extracts of marine yeasts were evaluated using ABTS and DPPH radical-scavenging assays. The extracts of *G. candidum* GH-W2, *M. bicuspidata* BP-Up1, US-Sd4, *R. mucilaginosa* GSU-CS3, and *Y. olivae* K2-6 showed over 60% inhibition rates, whereas the other extracts exhibited lower inhibition rates from 9.78%-50.94% ABTS radical-scavenging activity (Table 2). These strains exhibited high ABTS radical-scavenging activity against DPPH radicals. All 11 marine yeast extracts showed under 40% DPPH radical-scavenging activity. Because ABTS and DPPH reaction buffers (PBS buffer and 80% methanol, respectively) are different, the solubility of antioxidant compounds in each buffer affects the results [30].

Many antioxidants have been discovered, and marine fungi are one of their promising sources [11]. Carotenoids are one of the molecules shown to exert antioxidant and scavenging activities and play a key role in protecting cells by scavenging oxygen and peroxyl radicals [31]. Heterotrophic bacteria and fungi, especially pigmented yeasts, as well as photosynthetic organisms, are potentially important sources of carotenoids [32]. Several yeast species isolated from marine environments belonging to the genera, *Xanthophyllomyces*, *Rhodotorula* and *Phaffia*, have been used to synthesize astaxanthin [33]. In the case of the marine yeast, *R. mucilaginosa*, isolated from sea weed, production of the carotenoids, lycopene, ß-carotene, and astaxanthin was reported [34]. Additionally, the marine yeast, *R. glutinis*, produces astaxanthin [29]. The *G. candidum* isolated from roots of the genus *Sophora* has been reported to produce matrine. Martrine, a tetracyclic quinolizine alkaloid, has anticancer, antiviral, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant effects [35]. How-ever, there are no reports of marine-derived *G. candidum*. There are no reports of antioxidants from *M. bicuspidata* and *Y. olivae* that exhibit high radical-scavenging activity as that shown in our results. In particular, the crude extract of *M. bicuspidata* BP-Up1 isolated from *Ulva australis* of green algae exhibited the highest ABTS radical-

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scavenging activity (85.88%). The *M. bicuspidata* yeast is an opportunistic pathogen that causes diseases in many aquatic animal species in freshwater and marine environments [36]. Therefore, transmission experiments and genomic analyses of its pathogenicity have been conducted [36,37]. However, only a few of its bioactive compounds and their bioactivities have been studied. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first report of the radical-scavenging activity of *M. bicuspidata* and *Y. olivae*.

Table 2. Biological activities of the marine-derived yeast extracts.

Fungal Name	ID	Radical-Scavenging Activity (%)		Antibacterial Activity (MIC[3], μg/mL)	Tyrosinase Inhibition (%)
		ABTS[1]	DPPH[2]	*B. subtilis*	
Aureobasidium sp.	US-Sd3	9.78 ± 0.40^{a,A}	20.90 ± 1.65^{ab,B}	100^{a}	27.65 ± 0.26
Geotrichum candidum	GH-W2	67.89 ± 1.93^{d,A}	22.34 ± 2.72^{ab,B}	>100^{b}	N.D.
Metschnikowia bicuspidata	BP-Up1	85.88 ± 0.42^{e,A}	27.28 ± 1.61^{bc,B}	N.D.	N.D.
	US-Sd4	65.26 ± 3.74^{d,A}	27.47 ± 0.74^{bc,B}	N.D.	N.D.
Papiliotrema fonsecae	HW-W2	37.44 ± 0.84^{b,A}	36.04 ± 0.83^{c,A}	N.D.	N.D.
Rhodotorula sp.	TS1-6	17.23 ± 0.89^{a,A}	15.14 ± 1.62^{a,A}	N.D.	N.D.
Rhodotorula mucilaginosa	GSU-CS3	63.67 ± 1.86^{d,A}	25.23 ± 2.98^{b,B}	>100^{b}	N.D.
Vishniacozyma carnescens	US-Sd1	45.15 ± 3.61^{bc,A}	17.30 ± 1.43^{a,B}	>100^{b}	N.D.
Vishniacozyma sp.	SM-Rc3	50.94 ± 0.63^{c,A}	28.65 ± 1.43^{bc,B}	>100^{c}	N.D.
Yamadazyma olivae	K2-6	79.19 ± 1.68^{e,A}	26.31 ± 0.62^{b,B}	>100^{d}	N.D.
Yarrowia lipolytica	HW-W3	40.10 ± 1.11^{bc,A}	26.85 ± 2.18^{b,B}	>100^{b}	N.D.
Ascorbic acid †		13.70 ± 0.06*	6.80 ± 0.27*		
Kojic acid †					49.32 ± 0.35*

*Biological activities were represented as mean values ± standard deviation for three biological replicates. Significant differences between strains and radical-scavenging methods are indicated by different letters (One-way ANOVA, Tukey's test, $p < 0.05$). The lowercase letters indicate difference among the tested strains at ABTS and DPPH radical-scavenging assays. The uppercase letters indicate difference between ABTS and DPPH radical-scavenging assays for each strain. For antibacterial activity data analysis, optical density at 600 nm for bacterial growth at yeast extracts 100 μg/mL concentration were used. Significant differences between strains are indicated by different letters (One-way ANOVA, Tukey's test, $p < 0.05$). [1] 2.2'-azino-bis-3-ethylbenzothiazoline-6-sulfonic acid; [2] 2,2-diphenyl-1-picrylhydrazyl; [3] minimum inhibitory concentration; [5] not detected; † positive control; * half maximal inhibitory concentration (IC50, μg/mL)

3.5. Antibacterial Activity

Antimicrobial experiments were conducted using the marine yeast extracts on bacteria (*B. subtilis* and *E. coli*) and fungi (*C. albicans*, *A. flavus*, and *A. niger*). In this study, antagonistic activity against *B. subtilis* was demonstrated (Table 2). However, no antimicrobial activity against *E. coli*, *C. albicans*, *A. flavus*, and *A. niger* was detected. Some strains of *B. subtilis* are known to cause foodborne diseases, such as spoilage of canned vegetables, seafoods, and bakery products. Endospore-forming *Bacillus* species are difficult to manage because they are resistant to heat, desiccation, and UV light [38].

Seven strains exhibited remarkable activity against *B. subtilis*: *Aureobasidium* sp. US-Sd3, *G. candidum* GH-W2, *R. mucilaginosa* GSU-CS3, *V. carnescens* US-Sd1, *Vishniacozyma* sp. SM-Rc3, *Y. olivae* K2-6, and *Y. lipolytica* HW-W3 (Table 2). In particular, *Aureobasidium* sp. US-Sd3 extracts had the highest inhibitory activity among all the marine yeast extracts tested, as they could inhibit the growth of *B. subtilis* at 100 μg/mL. The antifouling compound aureobasidin isolated from the marine-derived *Aureobasidium* sp. has previously been reported to have antibacterial activity against *B. subtilis*, *E. coli*, and *Staphylococcus aureus* [39].

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Antimicrobial activity has been reported in yeast and yeast-like fungi. It has been reported that the liamocin oil produced by *A. pullulans* is selective with antibacterial activity against *Streptococcus* species [40]. The antibacterial activity of ethyl acetate extracts of *G. candidum* isolated from the root biome of date palm trees has previously been reported [41]. Dieuleveux et al. described the purification and characterization of anti-*Listeria* compounds from *G. candidum* [42]. Pigments from *R. mucilaginosa* exhibit antibacterial activity against *S. aureus* and antibiotic-resistant bacteria [43,44]. The *V. victoriae* yeast isolated from pear fruits during cold postharvest storage has shown biocontrol effects against *Penicillium expansum* and *Botrytis cinerea*, which are the most important causes of postharvest pear disease [45]. The biotechnologically important yeast, *Y. lipolytica*, synthesizes silver nanoparticles, which are kwon antimicrobial agents [9]. Organic acids, including succinate, kynurenic acid, and α-ketoglutarate, were synthesized by *Y. lipolytica* in beverage-like substrates. Succinate is used with multiple applications in the food industry as an antimicrobial agent, flavor enhancer, and acidifier [46]. There are no reports on the antimicrobial compounds or activities of *Y. olivae*.

In addition, fungal endophytes support plant defense systems related to symbiotic associations [47] and are responsible for host plant adaptation to abiotic and biotic stress-es [48]. Endophytes have been known to promote plant growth and enhance nutrient uptake in plant rhizospheres. Fungal endophytes produce compounds with antifungal activity. Bioactive compounds synthesized by endophytes can be used as biocontrol agents against plant diseases [49]. In this study, the antibacterial activity results suggested that the antibacterial compounds from marine-derived yeasts could also support a symbiotic relationship with marine algae, similar to the action of plants.

3.6. Tyrosinase inhibition Activity

Among the marine-derived yeast extracts, one (*Aureobasidium* sp. US-Sd3) showed tyrosinase inhibitory activity (Table 2). Although several tyrosinase inhibitory activities in yeasts have been reported [50], they were rarely detected in the isolates tested in the current study. Tyrosinase oxidizes tyrosine to dihydroxyphenylalanine (DOPA) and then dopaquinone through a series of oxidative reactions. Dopaquinone is eventually converted to pheomelanin. Tyrosinase plays an important role in mammalian melanogenesis and enzymatic browning of fruits and fungi. Although melanin protects the human skin from UV radiation, darkening of the skin tone caused by melanin biosynthesis is an esthetic problem [50,51]. Tyrosinase inhibitors can prevent melanogenesis in the skin; therefore, interest in them is increasing owing to their skin-whitening effects. Currently, arbutin, hydroquinone, gentisic acid, deoxyarbutin, aloesin, 4-n-butylresorcinol, ascorbic acid, kojic acid, and azelaic acid are used in the cosmetics industry [51]. In particular, kojic acid, a well-known tyrosinase inhibitor, was identified from acetone extracts through a screening study of 600 marine fungi [52]. Apart from kojic acid which is produced by a variety of *Aspergillus* and *Penicillium* spp., there are diverse compounds with anti-tyrosinase activity, such as metallothioneins from *A. niger* [53], homothallin II from *Trichoderma viride* [54], and 6-n-pentyl-α-pyrone and myrothenone A isolated from the marine-derived fungi, *Myrothecium* sp. [55].

There are no reports of single tyrosinase inhibitors from the genus *Aureobasidium*, but there have been reports that exopolymers from *A. pullulans* reduce melanin production in melanoma cells and mushroom tyrosinase activity [56]. Some antioxidants inhibit tyrosinase by scavenging quinone products [51]. In present study, the *Aureobasidium* sp. US-Sd3 extract, showed tyrosinase inhibition activity and exhibited low radical-scavenging activity (9.78% ABTS and 20.90% DPPH radical-scavenging activity). These results indicated that strain US-Sd3 may have other functional mechanisms. For instance, suicide inactivators can inhibit tyrosinase by inducing the conformational changes in the enzyme, or competitive inhibitors, such as copper chelators, can inhibit tyrosinase, which is a metalloenzyme [57].

Recently, tyrosinase inhibitors have also been reported to have antibacterial activity, and some of them have more potent antibacterial activity than that of antibiotics such as ampicillin. However, tyrosinase inhibition may not always be associated with antibacterial activity [58]. The crude extract of strain US-Sd3 exhibited antibacterial activity against *B. subtilis*. This result indicates that

Aureobasidium species can likely produce tyrosinase inhibitors that regulates melanin biosynthesis, and it is possible that tyrosinase inhibitors are related to antibacterial activity.

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, this study provided information on the identification of marine-derived yeasts and their exploitable biological activities. Phylogenetic analysis and morphological observations revealed that 11 marine yeasts isolated from various marine sources were classified into 10 taxa, including three new candidate species. Isolates were subject to salt-tolerant ability from 0%-20% NaCl concentrations. The *M. bicuspidata* and *Y. olivae* strains could grow with inhibited at 16% NaCl and adapt to conditions of higher salt stress than that observed for the other strains. Among these, three species (*Aureobasidium* sp., *M. bicuspidata* and *Y. olivae*) showed notable bioactivities. Overall, the results of this study suggest that marine-derived yeasts are good sources of potential bioactive compounds. To enable further applications, potent bioactive compounds of these strains should be studied.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, W.-J.Y. and D.C.; Experiments, W.-J.Y. and D.C., methodology and investigation: S.S.B. and Y.M.K.; fugal identification, W.-J.Y. and E.-S.C.; writing, W.-J.Y.; review and editing: D.C. and G.C.; Supervision and project administration, G.C. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research was supported by an in-house grant from the National Marine Biodiversity Institute of Korea (grant number MABIK 2023M00600).

Data Availability Statement: Data presented in this study are available on request.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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