

a precipitant solution containing CaCl_2 , PEG 4000 and a pH 7.5. We have collected X-ray datasets up to 2.1 Å resolution, revealing an orthorhombic crystal system with the unit cell parameters: $a=46.18$ Å, $b=80.82$ Å, $c=104.5$ Å, $\alpha=\beta=\gamma=90^\circ$. Space group is $P2_12_12_1$ and there is one molecule per asymmetric unit. The phasing method used to solve this structure was molecular replacement. The three-dimensional structure shows the general fold for this protein and presents valuable information about its function.

Keywords: macromolecules, mechanism, structure

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The structure of a novel bifunctional dehydratase/isomerase from fungal secondary metabolism

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Several fungi contain a dehydratase/isomerase that converts metabolites from lignin degradation into small compounds that show anti-tumor and antimicrobial effects against both Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacteria. The reaction occurs in two steps, a dehydratase reaction resulting in a relatively stable reaction intermediate followed by a unique isomerase step that leads to the final product. The enzyme is a dimer of 200 kDa, and the enzyme subunit (900 amino acids) does not show significant overall sequence homology to any protein of known structure. The X-ray structure of this enzyme has been solved using SAD to 2.0 Å resolution. The enzyme belongs to the all beta class of proteins and consists of three domains. Anomalous diffraction experiments revealed the presence of three Zn^{2+} ions and removal of zinc resulted in the loss of catalytic activity. Complexes with substrate and a reaction intermediate allowed the identification of the two active sites and suggest that two of the zinc ions participate in catalysis. The two active sites are about 20 Å apart, which requires that the reaction product of the first step has to diffuse from the enzyme in order to reach the second active site. This observation is consistent with NMR data that show release of this intermediate into the bulk solution. The crystal structures of the enzyme-ligand complexes allow some mechanistic conclusions that can be probed by other biochemical methods.

Keywords: macromolecular crystallography, bifunctional enzyme, dehydratase/isomerase

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Structures of $\text{exo-}\beta\text{-D-glucosaminidase}$, a chitosan degrading enzyme from *Trichoderma reesei*

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The 93-kDa extracellular protein composed of 892 amino acids from *Trichoderma reesei*, named Gls93, is an $\text{exo-}\beta\text{-D-glucosaminidase}$ (GlcNase), belonging to glycoside hydrolase family 2. Gls93 catalyzes the degradation of chitosan into $\beta\text{-D-glucosamine}$ (GlcN) monomers. For crystallographic studies, Gls93 was overexpressed in *Pichia pastoris* cells. The recombinant Gls93 had two molecular forms of

approximately 105 kDa (Gls93-F1) and approximately 100 kDa (Gls93-F2), with the difference between them being caused by N-glycosylation pattern.

Initial crystal screenings for Gls93-F1 and Gls93-F2 produced several microcrystals in a week. Trials to improve the crystallization conditions were performed by varying the pH, the buffer system and the precipitant concentration. As a result, rectangular parallelepiped-shaped crystals were obtained from different conditions. Both crystal forms of Gls93-F1 and Gls93-F2 were suitable for X-ray structure analysis[1]. Initial phase determination for the Gls93-F1 crystal was performed by the molecular-replacement (MR) technique using the coordinate set of a bacterial GHF2 GlcNase, *A. orientalis* CsxA (PDB ID 2VZS; van Bueren *et al.*, 2009), which has approximately 37% amino-acid sequence identity to Gls93, as a search model. Initial phase determination for the Gls93-F2 crystal was performed by the MR method with coordinate set of Gls93-F1. We have also successfully determined the crystal structure of Gls93 complexed with glucosamine. The crystal structures of Gls93-F1, Gls93-F2, and Gls93-F1/glucosamine were refined at 1.8, 2.4, and 2.6 Å resolutions, respectively. In addition, affinities of oligo sugars to the Gls93 enzyme were examined by surface plasmon resonance (SPR). The present crystal structure analyses and SPR measurements provide useful information for the substrate recognition mechanism of Gls93.

[1] Y. Sakamoto, M. Ike, N. Tanaka, Y. Suzuki, W. Ogasawara, H. Okada, Y. Morikawa, K.T. Nakamura, *Acta Crystallogr F* **2010**, *66*, 309-312.

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One residue substitution in PcyA leads to unexpected changes in tetrapyrrole substrate binding

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Phycocyanobilin:ferredoxin oxidoreductase (PcyA) catalyzes the sequential reduction of the vinyl group of the D-ring and A-ring of biliverdin IX α (BV), using reducing equivalents provided by ferredoxin. This reaction produces phycocyanobilin, a pigment used for light-harvesting and light-sensing in red algae and cyanobacteria. The crystal structure of PcyA-BV reveals that BV is specifically bound in the PcyA active pocket through extensive hydrophobic and hydrophilic interactions. During the course of a mutational study of PcyA, we observed that mutation of the V225 position, apart from the processing sites, conferred an unusual property on PcyA; V225D mutant protein could bind BV and its analog BV13, but these complexes showed a distinct UV-vis absorption spectrum from that of the wild-type PcyA-BV complex (Fig. 1). In order to gain a better understanding of this non-canonical spectrum, we have determined the crystal structures of V225D mutant protein in complex with BV and with BV13.

The crystal structures of BV- and BV13-bound forms of V225D protein revealed that gross structural changes occurred near the substrate-binding pocket, and that the BV/BV13 binding manner in the pocket was dramatically altered (Fig. 2). That is, the orientation of the bound BV in the V225D protein was inverted relative to the PcyA-BV complex along the axis connecting the γ -position and the mid-point of the A- and D-rings. Furthermore, the BV in the V225D protein was translated by approximately 3 Å from the corresponding position in PcyA-BV. Protein folding in V225D-BV/BV13 was more similar to that of substrate-free PcyA than that in PcyA-BV; the "induced-fit" did not occur when BV/BV13 was bound to the V225D protein. The