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Identification of Thiotetronic Acid Antibiotic Biosynthetic Pathways by Target-directed Genome Mining

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Supporting Information

ABSTRACT: Recent genome sequencing efforts have led to the rapid accumulation of uncharacterized or “orphan” secondary metabolic biosynthesis gene clusters (BGCs) in public databases. This increase in DNA-sequenced big data has given rise to significant challenges in the applied field of natural product genome mining, including (i) how to prioritize the characterization of orphan BGCs and (ii) how to rapidly connect genes to biosynthesized small molecules. Here, we show that by correlating putative antibiotic resistance genes that encode target-modified proteins with orphan BGCs, we predict the biological function of pathway specific small molecules before they have been revealed in a process we call target-directed genome mining. By querying the pan-genome of 86 Salinispora bacterial genomes for duplicated house-keeping genes colocalized with natural product BGCs, we prioritized an orphan polyketide synthase-norribosomal peptide synthetase hybrid BGC (tlm) with a putative fatty acid synthase resistance gene. We employed a new synthetic double-stranded DNA-mediated cloning strategy based on transformation-associated recombination to efficiently capture tlm and the related ttm BGCs directly from genomic DNA and to heterologously express them in Streptomyces hosts. We show the production of a group of unusual thiotetronic acid natural products, including the well-known fatty acid synthase inhibitor thiolactomycin that was first described over 30 years ago, yet never at the genetic level in regards to biosynthesis and autoresistance. This finding not only validates the target-directed genome mining strategy for the discovery of antibiotic producing gene clusters without a priori knowledge of the molecule synthesized but also paves the way for the investigation of novel enzymology involved in thiotetronic acid natural product biosynthesis.

Microbial natural products are of paramount biomedical importance, serving as antibiotics against a variety of pathogenic bacteria.1,2 The profound emergence of bacterial resistance over the past several decades has marginalized many important antibiotics, thereby necessitating the need for new antibiotic discovery.3 Antibiotics from microbes are directly linked to clusters of genes that code for proteins associated with biosynthesis, resistance, regulation, and transport. The ability to connect natural antibiotics to gene clusters and vice versa, along with ever-increasing knowledge of biosynthetic machineries, has spawned a new field of natural product genome mining for the rational discovery of new chemical entities.4–6 At the same time, DNA sequence data from a great variety of microbial genomes and environmental metagenomes has rapidly accumulated in public databases through sophisticated sequencing technologies, with more than 4000 complete and 35 000 draft sequences of prokaryotic genomes in the NCBI database as of August 2015. Recently, an in silico bioinformatic analysis of 1154 prokaryotic genome sequences predicted a total of 33 351 putative natural product biosynthetic gene clusters (BGCs),7 of which the vast majority could be considered “orphan” in that they could not be bioinformatically linked to the small molecules they produce. Thus, there is now considerable interest in prioritizing and developing new methods to study the products of these orphan BGCs, especially those with antibiotic activity.5

One of the significant challenges in the field of natural product genome mining is how to prioritize BGCs when mining for desired bioactivity, without prior knowledge of the biological targets of the compounds produced.3 Current genome mining strategies are often based on established biosynthetic information for known microbial metabolites,9–12 limiting the potential for linking chemistry with biology. Once
potential orphan BGCs are prioritized for further investigation, rapidly connecting genes to molecules becomes another challenging task. Current strategies fall into two categories: (i) metabolic profiling coupled with mutagenesis of orphan genes and (ii) heterologous expression of whole biosynthetic pathways in a well-established host. The first approach relies heavily on the ability to genetically manipulate individual microbial genera and is often not applicable to genera without amenable genetic approaches or in microbes that presently cannot be cultured. In contrast, the heterologous expression of gene clusters, usually in a well-investigated and genetically amenable host, is often more facile and practical. However, this demands cloning of the entire BGC into suitable expression vectors by laborious traditional cloning methods.

Genes encoding self-resistance mechanisms are a characteristic trait associated with antibiotic-producing bacteria. Self-resistance features are generally less favorable for host growth and survival and are thus only expressed concurrently with antibiotic biosynthesis. The most efficient way for bacteria to link these partners, and to ensure efficient horizontal gene transfer, is to include the resistance gene within or adjacent to the corresponding antibiotic BGC. Host bacteria have evolved several resistance strategies to avoid self-toxicity, including product modification, binding and export, and target modification. Of these mechanisms, target modification uniquely correlates an antibiotic to its mode of action. The antibiotics novobiocin (gyrase B), platensin (FabB/F), and griselimycin (DnaN), for instance, represent a few examples in which target-duplicated resistance genes are coclustered with BGCs (Supporting Information Figure S1). With the notion in mind that antibiotic-producing bacteria often duplicate and mutate genes encoding targeted proteins to confer resistance, we reasoned that identifying putative resistance genes within BGCs would provide insight into the molecular targets of BGC chemical products prior to their isolation and structure elucidation.

The marine actinomycete genus Salinispora has proven to be a remarkably prolific source of structurally diverse and biologically active secondary metabolites. These compounds span virtually all known biosynthetic classes, including the beta-lactone proteasome inhibitor salinosporamide A and the polyketide cytotoxin lomaiviticin A. Recently, high quality draft genomes of 75 Salinispora strains revealed 124 discrete nonribosomal peptide synthetase (NRPS) and polyketide synthase (PKS) BGCs that unmasked fundamental information about the evolution and distribution of secondary metabolite

Figure 1. Bioinformatic identification of candidate resistance genes. (a) The workflow for identification of duplicated orthologous groups (OGs) associated with biosynthetic gene cluster (BGC) from 86 Salinispora strains: (1) Application of OrthoMCL to 86 Salinispora genomes resulted in the identification of 12 372 OGs, representing the pan-genome of the strains in the present study. (2) From the 12 372 OGs, application of custom python scripts identified 2707 OGs that are shared among all 86 strains (core genome). The core genome is comprised of 1390 unique COG numbers. Python scripts matched these unique COG numbers to identical COG numbers in the pan-genome, identifying a total of 2393 OGs (duplicate OGs). (3) Application of PHP scripts for identifying duplicated OGs associated with predicted BGCs resulted in the identification of 912 OGs from 20 COG categories being associated with BGCs. (4) 103 of the 912 OGs were affiliated with COG category “I” (lipid transport and metabolism). These OGs were annotated by BlastP searches, identifying one OG with homology to FabB/F, a known platensimycin and platencin resistance gene. This OG is located within the BGC PKS44 (itm). (b) Distribution of the total number of duplicated OGs (yellow) and the OGs located within predicted BGC boundaries (green) among the COG categories.
gene clusters in bacteria.\textsuperscript{27} Here, we use \textit{Salinispora} as a model organism to showcase target-directed genome mining for prioritizing orphan antibiotic BGCs, allowing us, for the first time, to systematically link two unusual PKS-NRPS hybrid BGCs to a series of structurally rare thiotetronic acid fatty acid synthase inhibitors.

\section*{RESULTS AND DISCUSSION}

\section{Mining \textit{Salinispora} BGCs for Putative Antibiotic Resistance Genes.} We queried the genomes of 86 \textit{Salinispora} strains (10 \textit{S. tropica}, 43 \textit{S. arenicola}, and 33 \textit{S. pacifica}) for putative target modifying resistance genes associated with natural product BGCs. First, we identified groups of related protein coding genes, or orthologous groups (OGs), using the program OrthoMCL,\textsuperscript{28} which revealed a total of 12,372 OGs within the \textit{Salinispora} pan-genome (Figure 1a). Of these, 2,707 OGs were conserved across all \textit{Salinispora} strains analyzed and thus comprise the \textit{Salinispora} core genome. These core (housekeeping) genes could be further delineated into 1,390 unique clusters of orthologous groups (COGs), each of which could be assigned a generalized function. We next searched the pan-genome for additional OGs with the same COG numbers as those found in the core genome, which suggests they have been duplicated or were acquired by horizontal gene transfer. We detected 2,393 duplicate OGs, and among these, 912 (\textasciitilde38\%) were associated with BGCs previously identified in the \textit{Salinispora} strains.\textsuperscript{27} These OGs were sorted based on COG categories to assess their potential role in resistance and to identify BGCs that may encode small molecules that act on specific targets of interest (Figure 1b and Supporting Information Methods). As proof of principle, this approach correctly identified the duplicated 20S proteasome \(\beta\)-subunit gene within the \textit{sal} BGC, which confers resistance to the anticancer agent salinosporamide A in \textit{S. tropica}.\textsuperscript{29} Among the COG categories assigned to the duplicate OGs, we were particularly focused on identifying BGCs with the potential to produce compound(s) that inhibit bacterial fatty acid synthesis. The bacterial fatty acid synthase (FASII) is considered an attractive target for antibacterial drug discovery,\textsuperscript{30−32} as bacterial FASs are significantly distinct from the large, multifunctional type I synthases of mammals. Thus, we focused our attention on analyzing the BGCs linked to duplicate OGs assigned to COG category “I” of lipid transport and metabolism. BLAST analysis of the 103 “I” category OGs identified 44 related to core enzymes involved in bacterial fatty acid synthesis, including 18 similar to \textit{fabG} (ketone reduction), 12 similar to \textit{fabB/F} (elongation), six similar to \textit{fabI} (ene reduction), five similar to \textit{fabH} (chain initiation), and three similar to \textit{fabD} (malonyl transacylation; Supporting Information Table S1). We reasoned that while many of these genes likely encode biosynthetic enzymes important for the construction of lipid components to natural products, others could be associated with antibiotic resistance. In particular, \textit{Salin8269} (from \textit{S. pacifica} CNS-863), a homologue of \textit{FabB/F}, notably showed very high amino acid sequence similarity to the characterized self-resistant proteins PttnP3 (65%/79%, identity/similarity) and PttnP3 (65%/79%, similarity/similarity) from BGCs associated with the hybrid diterpenoid FASII inhibitors platensimycin and platencin,\textsuperscript{22} respectively (Supporting Information Figure S2). Thus, we suspected that \textit{Salin8269} could serve a role in antibiotic resistance rather than natural product biosynthesis. The associated BGC, PKS44, is classified as a noncanonical hybrid PKS-NRPS and not linked to diterpenoid production, as is the case for platensimycin and platencin,\textsuperscript{33} which prompted us to investigate this orphan BGC.

\section*{Discovery of the Thiolactomycin (\textit{tlm}) Gene Cluster by Direct Cloning and Heterologous Expression.} The PKS44 gene cluster was detected in four \textit{S. pacifica} strains

Figure 2. Identification of orphan BGCs with an extra copy of the \textit{fabB/F} housekeeping gene and their metabolites. (a) Orphan gene cluster annotation. (b) HPLC profile of extracts from (i) \textit{S. coelicolor} M1152, (ii) \textit{S. coelicolor} M1152/pMXT13 (\textit{tlm}), and (iii) \textit{S. coelicolor} M1152/pMXT16 (\textit{ttm}). Detection at 239 nm. (c) Structures of thiolactomycin (TLM, 1) and analogues identified in this work.
isolated from Fiji (CNS-863, CNS-996, CNS-045, and CNS-860; Supporting Information Figure S3a). Closer inspection of the gene cluster (renamed tlm) from S. pacifica CNS-863 revealed a ~22 kb PKS-NRPS hybrid gene cluster of 10 open reading frames (Figure 2a). In addition to the Salin269 FabB/F homologue TlmF, the putative resistance gene, the core region of the tlm gene cluster codes for three PKS-NRPS proteins collectively containing 11 enzymatic domains (TlmG−TlmI) and a cytochrome P450 oxidoreductase (TlmF; Figure 2a and Supporting Information Table S2). We additionally annotated five genes upstream of the tlmE−I operon encoding a type II thioesterase (TE; TlmA), two enzymes for generating ethylmalonyl-CoA (TlmB and TlmC), and two transcriptional regulators (TlmD and TlmJ; Figure 2a and Supporting Information Table S2). Surprisingly, we also identified two additional S. pacifica strains (CNS-084 and CNS-609) in which tlmF−I were specifically lost from the tlm locus (Supporting Information Figure S3), suggesting these strains do not produce the tlm product but maintain the resistance phenotype putatively conferred by tlmE.

In order to identify the product(s) of the tlm gene cluster, we directly cloned an encompassing 26 kb genomic region using a synthetic double-stranded DNA-mediated (dsDNA-mediated) cloning strategy based on transformation-associated recombination (TAR) in the yeast Saccharomyces cerevisiae. Although we previously developed a TAR-based platform for the direct capture of natural product BGCs from genomic DNA for targeted expression,15 the original protocol demands construction of a cluster-specific capture vector by laborious traditional cloning methods. Furthermore, we observed high levels of plasmid recirculation due to nonhomologous end joining (NHEJ), repeatedly resulting in capture rates below 2%. This inefficiency necessitated extensive screening of hundreds of colonies. To overcome these drawbacks, we revised the approach to eliminate the need for PCR for capture vector construction while introducing a counter-selectable marker to improve efficiency. We first introduced the URA3 gene under the strong promoter of the Schizosaccharomyces pombe ADH1 gene (pADH1) into pCAP01 as a counter selectable marker, to produce pCAP03 (Supporting Information Figure S4), pADH1 can tolerate an insertion of up to 130 bp between the TATA box and the transcription initiation site.5 This method allows the use of shorter capture arms and conveniently selects against NHEJ in the presence of 5-fluoroorotic acid (5-FOA).5 We then designed a synthetic dsDNA fragment that could be directly inserted into the ready-to-use pCAP03 (RTU-pCAP03, Figure 3a and Supporting Information Figure S4) using Gibson Assembly (GA).5 The 144 bp dsDNA contained two 18 bp overlapping fragments with the vector backbone for GA, two 50 bp capture hooks for recombination, and an 8 bp PmeI blunt end restriction site for linearization (Figure 3a). This approach not only greatly simplifies the procedure for constructing the capture vector but also significantly increased the percentage of positive yeast transformants. In the capture of the tlm gene cluster, we identified eight positive clones after the screening of 12 transformants by colony PCR, and four of them were transferred into E. coli and further confirmed by restriction digestion (Figure 3b, Supporting Information Figures 5 and 6).

We introduced the resulting plasmid pMXT13 into S. coelicolor M1152 by triparental intergeneric conjugation and selected three kanamycin resistant clones. The transformed strains were cultured and extracted for HPLC analyses. The results showed that all of the S. coelicolor M1152/pMXT13 strains produced at least four new UV absorbent peaks in comparison with the untransformed S. coelicolor M1152 host (Figure 2b). These molecules were purified via preparative isolation and characterized.
HPLC (Supporting Information Methods). Structural characterization by high-resolution mass spectrometry and extensive NMR spectroscopy identified the compounds as a group of previously described FASII inhibitors, including thiola
tomycin (TLM, 1) and three analogues (2–4), with 3 being isolated as a new natural product (Supporting Information Table S4 and Supporting Information Figures 7, 12, and 14–29). The production of 1–4 was additionally identified in the native producer S. pacifica CNS-863, which was aided with the results from the heterologous expression experiments (Supporting Information Figure S8).

TLM and its analogues share an unusual thiotetronic acid unit that is rare among natural products. The biosynthetic origin of TLM was previously reported to derive from a polypeptide pathway involving acetate and three propionate building blocks and the sulfur atom from cysteine. Inspection of the tlm locus suggests several unconventional biosynthetic features to account for these observed metabolic substrates. An AT-independent KS-ACP (TlmG) didomain appears to initiate polypeptide chain priming with acetate, and a potential iterative PKS module TlmH (KS-AT-DH-KR-ACP-C) may elongate with three branched chain malonates to construct the carbon backbone of TLM. The incorporation of sulfur from cysteine appears to originate from the NRPS Tlm1 (A-PCP-TE) by an unknown mechanism. Recently, Shen and co-workers established cysteine as the precursor of the sulfur atom in leinamycin and characterized two new and unrelated PKS domains involved in the transformation. We thus assume that the sulfur atom of the TlmH-activated cysteine residue is oxidatively removed and added to the TlmH polypeptide intermediate to construct the thiotetronic acid pharmacophore.

Discovery of the Thiotetramide (ttm) Gene Cluster by PCR-independent Cloning and Heterologous Expression. Following the successful capture and heterologous expression of the tlm gene cluster, we identified a related gene cluster (ttm) from Streptomyces afghanensis that contained two FabB/F homologues by BLAST search (Figure 2a and Supporting Information Table S3). Like the thiolactomycin TlmE, these two proteins were similarly related to PtnP3 (TtmE, 65%/78%, identity/similarity; TtmJ, 85%/91%, identity/similarity) and PtnP3 (TtmE, 66%/78%, identity/similarity; TtmJ, 83%/91%, identity/similarity). The detection of two copies of the putative resistance gene led to the hypothesis that the homologous S. afghanensis pathway may produce a more potent series of FASII antibiotics. The ttm locus is similar to the tlm gene cluster in the core structure, except that the NPRS Ttm1 lacks the terminal thioesterase (TE) domain in comparison to Tlm1 (Figure 2a and Supporting Information Table S3). Furthermore, the 17 open reading frame ttm gene cluster contains five additional biosynthetic enzymes, including a short-chain dehydrogenase (TtmK), an aminotransferase (TtmN), a ferredoxin (TtmO), an additional cytochrome p450 oxidoreductase (TtmP), and a ketoacyl–acyl carrier protein synthase III (TtmQ; Figure 2a and Supporting Information Table S3).

In order to identify the product(s) of the homologous ttm gene cluster, we cloned a 33 kb genomic region containing the 29 kb gene cluster using the PCR-independent cloning approach, resulting in two positive colonies out of 10 transformants (Figure 3b). The resulting vector pMXT16 was verified (Supporting Information Figure S6) and heterologously expressed in S. coelicolor M1152. HPLC analysis of the heterologous expression system led to the isolation and identification of a new series of TLM analogues (5–8; Figure 2b, Supporting Information Table S5 and Supporting Information Figures 7, 13, and 30–45). Among this series, 6 and 7 are new compounds, while 8 was previously reported as Tu 301045 and 5 was generated through alkaline hydrolysis of 8 (Figure 2c). Compounds 6–8 each contain a terminal amide functionality presumably derived from the pathway specific tailoring enzymes TtmK, TtmP, and TtmN and were accorded the trivial names thiotetramides (TTM) A–C. In contrast, 5 contains a carboxylic acid group and is proposed as an intermediate before terminal amination; hence it was assigned the name prethiotetramide C.

Confirmation of ttmE and ttmJ as Self-Resistance Elements. In order to test the hypothesis that the tlm and ttm-associated FabB/F homologues are associated with TLM/TTM resistance and not biosynthesis, we focused on the ttm gene cluster since it contained two FabB/F encoding genes—one shared with the tlm locus (ttmE and ttmE) and the second being unique (ttmJ). We first evaluated common Streptomyces heterologous host strains and found that S. coelicolor M1152 was susceptible to TTM C (8) with a minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) of 12 μg/mL (Supporting Information Figure S9). S. coelicolor M1152 harboring the complete ttm BGC (S. coelicolor M1152/pMXT16), however, was resistant to 300 μg of TTM C on agar diffusion assays (Figure 4 and Supporting Information Figure S10).

We generated three mutants in which the FabB/F homologous genes were individually (S. coelicolor M1152/ pMXT16ΔttmEscar and S. coelicolor M1152/pMXT16ΔttmJ) and collectively (S. coelicolor M1152/pMXT16ΔttmEscarΔttmJ) inactivated. All three mutants retained the ability to heterologously produce the TTM compounds in the same

Figure 4. Representative disk diffusion assay plates for TTM C (300 μg) against S. coelicolor M1152 integrated with (a) the ttm gene cluster (designated as M1152/pMXT16) and (b–d) three mutants: (b) the ttmE deleted mutant S. coelicolor M1152/pMXT16ΔttmEscar, (c) the ttmJ deleted mutant S. coelicolor M1152/pMXT16ΔttmJ, and (d) the ttmE–ttmJ double mutant S. coelicolor M1152/pMXT16ΔttmEscarΔttmJ.
distribution (Supporting Information Figure S11), thereby establishing that the FabB/F genes ttmE and ttmf are not required for biosynthesis. We also observed that deletion of the resistance genes did not compromise the production of TTM.s. This may be attributed to the low yield of TTM C in the heterologous host (around 0.5 μg/mL), which is much lower than the MIC (12 μg/mL). The susceptibility of these recombinant S. coelicolor strains to TTM C was next determined using a disk diffusion assay. When a high concentration of TTM C (300 μg/mL) was tested, the ttmE deletion strain S. coelicolor M1152/pMXT16AttmEscar, the ttmf knockout strain S. coelicolor M1152/pMXT16Attmf, and the ttmE and ttmf double-deletion strain S. coelicolor M1152/pMXT16AttmEscar-ΔttmE showed inhibition zones of the sizes 0.9 ± 0.08 cm, 3.2 ± 0.3 cm, and 4.4 ± 0.2 cm (Figure 4), respectively. Smaller inhibition zones were observed when lower concentrations of TTM C (50–200 μg) were applied to the ttmf deletion strains, while the ttmE deletion strain showed complete resistance at these concentrations (Supporting Information Figure S10). These data confirm that ttmE and ttmf provide inherent resistance to TTM C, the major compound produced by the ttm BGC. Since deletion of ttmE did not compromise resistance of the strain at these concentrations, we suggest that TtmE plays a relatively minor role in resistance. Rather, the deletion experiments indicate that ttmf is the major resistance element for TTM biosynthesis, as all ttmf deletion mutants exhibited high susceptibility to TTM C. In line with our hypothesis, previously reported antibacterial activity tests showed that the MIC of TMM C is 16–32-fold lower than TLM and its analogues, supporting the molecular logic that the tm pathway requires a second resistance gene. Previous studies have shown various resistance mechanisms against TLM in pathogenic bacteria, including the emrAB encoded multidrug-resistant efflux pump in E. coli35 FabB point mutation in E. coli,47 and FabH point mutations in Staphylococcus aureus.37 Our findings reveal a distinct resistance mechanism associated with TLM/TTM producing strains.

Conclusion. We report here a new strategy for mining orphan biosynthetic pathways, which we refer to as target-directed genome mining. By using Salinispora as a model, the present study demonstrates a systematic approach to identify BGCs with duplicated housekeeping genes that may be candidates for conferring resistance against the product of the BGCs. Combined with the synthetic dsDNA-mediated cloning method, we showed that putative fabB/F resistance genes associated with orphan BGCs in Salinispora and Streptomyces bacteria are associated with FAS inhibitors of the thioesterase acid family, antibiotics that were first described over 30 years ago yet never at the genetic level. Our work also paves the way for investigating the biosynthesis of the structurally unique thioesteric acid natural products, a topic that we are actively pursuing and will report elsewhere. Significantly, this work shows the first demonstration of target-directed genome mining strategy for the discovery of antibiotic producing gene clusters, without a priori knowledge of the molecule synthesized. Our comparative genomic analysis provides an indication of the frequency that housekeeping genes are involved in secondary metabolic processes. Based on the rapid increase in genome sequence data in public databases, we envision that this strategy may be widely applicable to genomics-driven natural product discovery and innovate the manner in which antibiotics are discovered, offering an efficient, hypothesis-driven genome mining platform for the development of new antibacterial drug candidates.

METHODS

Cultivation of the Strains. Seventy-five Salinispora genome sequences were obtained as previously described. A highly transposable S. cerevisiae strain VT64–48N (MAT a, his3-d200, trp1-d1, ura3-d1, lys2, ade2–101, met14, psi+/cu+)15 was used as a host for gene cluster direct cloning experiments. The yeast were grown in liquid YPD medium (Yeast extract Peptone Dextrose medium; 2% glucose, 1% yeast extract, and 2% peptone (w/v)) supplemented with 100 mg/L adenine and used for spheroplasting to transformation-associated recombination (TAR). Yeast transformants were selected on synthetic tryptophan drop-out agar (SD-Trp-g agar) containing 5-Fluoroorotic acid (5-FOA; SD-Trp-5-FOA agar) consisting of 0.17% yeast nitrogen base without amino acids and ammonium sulfate (Sigma), 0.19% yeast synthetic drop-out medium supplements without tryptophan (Sigma), 1 M sorbitol, 2% glucose, 0.5% ammonium sulfate, 100 mg/L adenine, 2% agar, and 0.001% 5-FOA (w/v) (Zymo Research). S. coelicolor M1152 (SCP1—, SCP2—, Δact, Δred, Δdpk, Δlda, and rpoBΔC129873)48 and their respective derivatives were maintained and grown on MS agar (2% soy flour, 2% mannitol, 2% agar (w/v for all) components purchased from BD Biosciences) or Tryptic Soy Broth (TSB) medium (BD Biosciences). Salinispora pacifica CNS-863 was maintained on A1 agar as previously reported, and Streptomyces afghanicus NRRL S621 (accession no. NZ_AOPY01000000) was maintained on MS agar. E. coli strains were cultivated in LB medium (components purchased from BD Biosciences or Fisher Scientific) supplemented with the appropriate antibiotics. DNA isolation and manipulations were carried out according to standard methods for E. coli and Streptomyces.

Construction of the Counter-selectable Capture Vector pcPACP03. pADH and URA3 were amplified from pARS-VN by using the primer pairs ADH-fw/ADH-rev and URA3-fw/URA3-rev (Table S6), respectively. The two PCR amplified fragments were then combined and assembled into a single piece by PCR with primers ADH-fw and URA3-rev. The assembled fragment was digested with Spel and KpnI and introduced into the same sites of pcPACP01 to obtain pcPACP03. In order to easily linearize pcPACP03, the 1369 bp apramycin resistance cassette (acc3(JIV)) was amplified from pJl7735 by using the primers acc3(JIV)-pCAP03-fw and acc3(JIV)-pCAP03-rev (Supporting Information Table S6). The resulting PCR product was digested by XhoI and NdeI and cloned into the same restriction sites of pcPACP03 to obtain pcPACP03-acc3(JIV). The circular construct pcPACP03-acc3(JIV) was digested with NdeI and XhoI and agarose gel purified, as ready-to-use pcPACP03 (RTU-pCAP03) for assembly of cluster-specific capture vectors.

Construction of Specific Capture Vectors. The 144 bp dsDNA fragments were designed as shown in Figure 3 and synthesized by Integrated DNA Technologies, Incorporation, La Jolla, US. The 100 ng tlm-hooks and ttm-hooks (Supporting Information Table S6) were assembled with 50 ng of the RTU-pCAP03 following the instructions for the Gibson Assembly Kit (New England BioLabs Inc.) to generate the capture vectors pMTZ01 and pMTZ02, respectively. Prior to direct TAR cloning, the capture vectors were digested by Pmwl.

Preparation of Genomic DNA Fragments for TAR Capturing. Genomic DNA was isolated from mid log phase cells by standard procedures. Approximately 200 μg of genomic DNA was digested with appropriate restriction enzymes (Figure 3b), in an overnight reaction at 37 °C. The digested genomic DNA fragments were precipitated with isopropanol and washed with 70% ethanol. The resulting DNA pellet was dissolved in 100 μL of Tris buffer (10 mM Tris-Cl, pH 8.0).

Direct Capture of the ttm and ttm Gene Clusters. Direct TAR cloning of the tlm and ttm gene clusters from genomic DNA was carried out using a previously reported protocol with minor modifications.16,52 S. cerevisiae strain VL6–48N was grown in 50 mL of YPD medium supplemented with adenine (100 mg/L) at 30 °C with shaking until an OD600 of 0.7–1.0 was reached. The cells were
harvested and washed with ice-cold water and osmotically stabilized in 1 M sorbitol at 4 °C overnight prior to spheroplasting. Preparation of spheroplast cells was carried out using a lytic enzyme (Zymolyase-20T, MP Biomedicals, US) at a final concentration of 0.1 mg mL⁻¹, with 30–40 min incubation. A total of 2.5 to 3 μg of genomic DNA fragments and 0.5 μg linearized specific capture vector were added to spheroplast cells, and the transformation was mediated by PEG8000 (Sigma, US). The transformed spheroplasts were mixed with 8 mL of synthetic tryptophan drop-out (SD-Trp) top agar (containing 3% agar) at 55 °C and overlaid on SD-Trp-5-FOA agar. The plates were incubated at 30 °C for 4–5 days. Normally, around 10–20 transformants appeared per plate and were picked and transferred onto new SD-Trp agar plates and incubated for 2 days at 30 °C. Cells were lysed using Zymolyase-20T at 37 °C for 2 h and subsequently boiled at 98 °C for 5 min. The captured tlm and ttm gene clusters were screened by the primer pairs of tlm-test-fw/tml-test-rev and ttm-test-fw/ttm-test-rv, respectively (Supporting Information Table S6). Plasmids were extracted from PCR positive clones and then transferred into E. coli Top10 cells by electroporation. The plasmids were purified from kanamycin resistant E. coli cells, and the resulting constructs were confirmed by restriction analysis. The vector containing tlm gene cluster and ttm gene cluster were designated as pMXT13 and pMXT16, respectively.

**Heterologous Expression of the tlm and ttm Gene Clusters.** pMXT13 and pMXT16 were transferred into E. coli ET12567 and introduced into S. coelicolor M1152 by triparenteral intergeneric conjugation with the help of E. coli ET12567/pUB307 and ET12567/pUB307. Kanamycin resistant clones were selected, confirmed by PCR, and designated as S. coelicolor M1152/pMXT13 and S. coelicolor M1152/pMXT16. Three milliliters of TSB medium were inoculated with a spore suspension of S. coelicolor M1152 or a derivative thereof. The cultures were incubated for 2 days at 30 °C at 220 rpm. For the production of the compounds, 1 mL of preculture was inoculated into 50 mL of the production medium containing 1% soytone, 1% soluble starch, and 2% D-maltose (w/v) adjusted to pH 6.7 (components purchased from BD Biosciences, US). The cultures were incubated for 7 days at 30 °C with 220 rpm shaking. The culture supernatant was adjusted to pH 4 with acetic acid and subsequently extracted with an equal volume of ethyl acetate. The organic phase was evaporated, and extracts were dissolved in 1 mL of methanol. Each extract was monitored at 239 nm during separation by HPLC using a Luna 100A-C18 column (5 μm, 250 × 4.6 mm; Phenomenex, US) as follows: 0–23 min, 35%–70% B; 24–28 min, 70%–100% B; 29–33 min, 100% B; 34–35 min, 100%– 35% B; 36–40 min, 35% B (solvent A, water/triﬂuoroacetic acid (99:1); solvent B, acetonitrile/triﬂuoroacetic acid (99:1)).

**Other Methods.** Other methods, including the identiﬁcation of orthologous groups, BGC annotation, disk diffusion assays, isolation, and structural elucidation of thiolaclomycins and thiotetroamides, are described in the Supporting Information Methods.

**ASSOCIATED CONTENT**

* Supporting Information The Supporting Information is available free of charge on the ACS Publications website at DOI: 10.1021/acscem-bio.5b00658.

Supporting materials and methods, NMR methods and general instrumentation for structural characterization, Tables S1–S6, and Figures S1–S45 (PDF).

**Accession Codes**

Eleven genome sequences reported in this paper have been deposited in the Joint Genome Institute’s Integrated Microbial Genomes (IMG) database, http://img.jgi.doe.gov/ (accession nos. 2540341193, 2524614530, 2540341192, 2528311034, 2524614561, 2524023246, 2526164509, 2528311033, 2524614529, 2524614515, 2521172655). The nucleotide sequences of the thiolactomycin gene cluster from *Salinispora pacifica* CNS-863 and the thiotetroamide gene cluster from *Streptomyces afghaniensis* NRRL 5621 have been deposited in the GenBank database (accession nos. KT282100 and KT282101, respectively).

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**Notes** The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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**ABBREVIATIONS:** PKS, polyketide synthase; NRPS, nonribosomal peptide synthetase; TAR, transformation-associated recombination; dsDNA, double-stranded DNA; NHEJ, nonhomologous end joining

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