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Saccharothriolides A–C, novel phenyl-substituted 10-membered macrolides isolated from a rare actinomycete *Saccharothrix* sp.[†]

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Three new 10-membered macrolides, saccharothriolides A–C (1–3), were discovered from a rare actinomycete *Saccharothrix* sp. A1506. All of the sp³ carbons in the 10-membered ring had chirality, which was determined by extensive spectroscopic analysis and TDDFT-calculation of ECD spectra. Saccharothriolide B (2) exhibited cytotoxicity against human tumor cell lines HeLa and HT1080.

Rare actinomycetes (or non-streptomycete actinomycetes) are regarded as the actinomycete strains whose isolation frequency determined by conventional methods is much lower than that of the streptomycete strains. These under-explored microorganisms are expected to be a rich source of natural products with novel chemical structures and biological activities.^{1,2} *Saccharothrix* sp., one of the rare actinomycetes, was first obtained from a soil sample collected in Australia in 1984.³ Dozens of bioactive natural products with a structural and biological diversity have been isolated from this genus: for example, a naphthoquinone derivative saccharthridine A which was reported as a prostaglandin release inhibitor,⁴ 16-membered macrolides tianchimycins A and B,⁵ cytotoxic 20-membered macrolides ammocidins A–D,^{6,7} antibacterial galacardins A and B,⁸ and antitumor rebeccamycin.⁹ In the course of our chemical screening for novel microbe metabolites, we discovered new 10-membered macrolides from a rare actinomycete *Saccharothrix* sp. A1506, designated as saccharothriolides A–C (1–3) (Fig. 1). Here we report their isolation, structure elucidation, and biological activities.

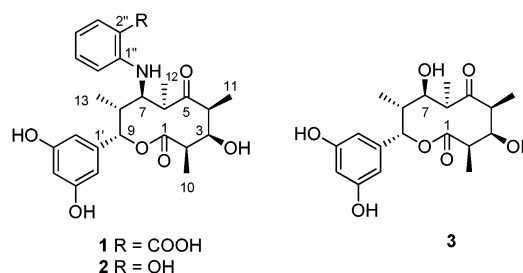


Fig. 1 Chemical structures of saccharothriolides A–C (1–3).

We surveyed more than 30 000 microbe cultures by LC-MS analysis to identify a novel metabolite from a culture broth of a rare actinomycete *Saccharothrix* sp. A1506. This metabolite, named saccharothriolide A (1), exhibited an MS signal (m/z 486.2134 $[M + H]^+$) which was not found in metabolites database and a UV absorption at 345 nm characteristic to anthranilic acid. Further analysis of the LC-MS data revealed the presence of two congeners, saccharothriolides B (2) and C (3). By LC-MS-guided isolation, we purified metabolites 1 (24.7 mg), 2 (5.4 mg), and 3 (17.8 mg) from a 6 L-culture.

Saccharothriolide A (1) was obtained as a light yellow oil with $[\alpha]_D^{20} + 18.0$ ($c = 0.74$, MeOH). The molecular formula was determined to be C₂₆H₃₁NO₈ by HR-ESI-MS (m/z 486.2134 $[M + H]^+$, calcd 486.2128), indicating the presence of 12 degrees of unsaturation. The IR spectrum showed absorptions corresponding to hydroxyl (3327 cm⁻¹), ester carbonyl (1732 cm⁻¹), and ketone (1679 cm⁻¹) groups. The ¹H NMR spectrum of 1 displayed seven aromatic protons (δ_H 7.95, 7.31, 6.66, 6.57, 6.06, 5.87 \times 2 ppm) and two oxymethine protons (δ_H 5.50, 3.79 ppm) in addition to four aliphatic methyl signals (δ_H 1.09, 1.20, 1.35, 1.46 ppm) and five methine protons (δ_H 2.19, 2.88, 3.28, 3.43, 3.66 ppm) (Table 1). The ¹³C NMR spectrum included 26 carbon signals, corresponding to four aliphatic methyls (δ_C 10.7, 14.1, 18.4, 20.3), seven aliphatic methines including two carbons adjacent to an oxygen atom (δ_C 74.3 and 81.4) and one carbon adjacent to a nitrogen atom (δ_C 62.2), twelve aromatic carbons and three carbonyl carbons (δ_C 173.8 \times 2, 224.6).

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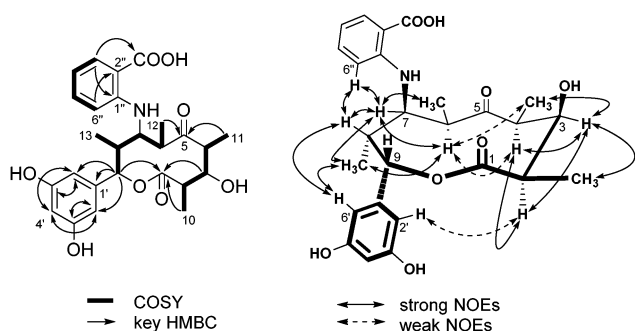
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Table 1 ^1H and ^{13}C NMR data of saccharothriolide A (**1**) in methanol- d_4

No.	δ_{H} , m, J (Hz)	δ_{C}
1	—	173.8, C
2	2.88, qd, 6.9, 3.4	46.3, CH
3	3.79, brs	81.4, CH
4	3.28, q, 7.5	50.8, CH
5	—	224.6, C
6	3.43, q, 6.9	43.7, CH
7	3.66, brs	62.2, CH
8	2.19, qd, 6.9, 5.2	43.1, CH
9	5.50, brs	74.3, CH
10	1.20, d, 6.9	14.1, CH_3
11	1.46, d, 7.5	18.4, CH_3
12	1.35, d, 6.9	20.3, CH_3
13	1.09, d, 6.9	10.7, CH_3
1'	—	144.9, C
2',6'	5.87, s	104.7, CH
3',5'	—	159.5, C
4'	6.06, s	102.3, CH
1''	—	151.7, C
2''	—	113.7, C
3''	7.95, brs	134.1, CH
4''	6.57, t, 5.7	115.6, CH
5''	7.31, t, 7.5	135.6, CH
6''	6.66, d, 8.6	111.8, CH
2''-COOH	—	173.8, C

**Fig. 2** ^1H - ^1H COSY (left, bold) correlations and selected HMBC (left, arrow) and NOESY (right) correlations in saccharothriolide A (**1**).

The ^1H - ^1H COSY experiment revealed the presence of three spin systems: CH_3 -10/H-2/H-3/H-4/ CH_3 -11, CH_3 -12/H-6/H-7/H-8/ CH_3 -13/H-9, and H-3''/H-4''/H-5''/H-6'' (Fig. 2). HMBC correlations from CH_3 -11 to C-5, and from CH_3 -12 to C-5 connected C-4 and C-6 through a ketone group. HMBC correlations from both H-3 and H-9 to carbonyl C-1 connected C-2 and C-9 through an ester bond, leading to the formation of the 10-membered lactone ring (Fig. 2). The formation of the lactone ring was further supported by the observation of the down-field shifted chemical shift for H-9 (δ_{H} 5.50). The *meta*-disubstituted benzene ring was determined on the basis of the HMBC correlations from H-4' to C-2'/C-6', and from H-2'/H-6' to C-3'/C-5'. This benzene ring was connected to C-9 due to the HMBC correlations from H-9 to aromatic carbons C-1' and C-2'/6'. The presence of anthranilic acid suggested by the characteristic UV absorption (Fig. S6, ESI†)¹⁰ was confirmed by HMBC correlations from H-6'' (δ_{H} 6.66) to C-2'' (δ_{C} 113.7), and from H-3'' (δ_{H} 7.95) to C-1'' (δ_{C} 151.7) and 2''-COOH (δ_{C} 173.8), along with the ^1H - ^1H COSY

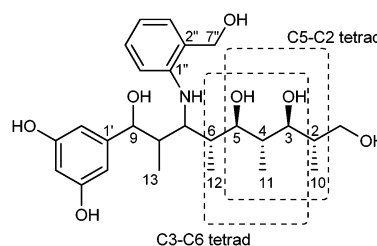
correlations from H-3'' to H-6'' (Fig. 2). The anthranilic acid was connected to the lactone ring at C-7 through an NH group, which was deduced by the up-field shifted chemical shift for C-7 (δ_{C} 62.2) and the presence of a free carboxylic acid (δ_{C} 173.8). This connection was further confirmed by the mutual NOESY correlations among H-6'', H-7, and H-8 (Fig. 2).

The relative stereochemistry of metabolite **1** was deduced from the NOESY data (Fig. 2). NOESY cross peaks between H-2 and H-4 indicated that they are placed in the same α face, whereas NOESY correlations between H-3 and H-2, H-4, CH_3 -10, and CH_3 -11 suggested α configuration for H-3. NOESY correlations between H-6 and H-4(weak), CH_3 -11(weak), and CH_3 -13 indicated an α configuration for these protons. A β configuration for H-8 was then determined. Correlations between H-7 and H-6, H-8, CH_3 -12, and CH_3 -13 suggested that H-7 has an α configuration. Finally, NOESY correlations between the aromatic proton H-6' and H-8, and CH_3 -13, together with a weak correlation from the aromatic proton H-2' to H-2, revealed the β orientation of H-9. Thus, the relative configurations were deduced to be $2R^*$, $3R^*$, $4S^*$, $6R^*$, $7R^*$, $8R^*$, $9S^*$.

Macrolides can exist in several conformations, which can be a potential cause of mis-interpretation of the NOESY data. We next analyzed the relative stereochemistry of **1** by the advanced statistical Universal NMR Database (UDB) approach, originally developed by Kishi and co-workers.^{11–13} Reductive opening of the lactone ring of **1** using LiAlH_4 furnished a linear product **4** (Fig. 3). The ^{13}C NMR data of the two tetrad segments, C3–C6 and C5–C2, were subjected to the statistical UDB analysis. The difference between the adjusted NMR data of the tetrad segments in **4** and Kishi's database was calculated to reveal that both sequences have an *anti-anti-anti* configuration (Table S2–S5, ESI†), which was in good agreement with the NOESY data in **1**.

The absolute stereochemistry was determined by the modified Mosher's method (Fig. 4).¹⁴ Phenolic hydroxy groups and carboxylic acid of **1** were first protected by methylation using CH_3I to yield a tri-methyl derivative **5**. The methylated derivative **5** was treated with (*R*)- and (*S*)-MTPA chloride to afford (*S*)- and (*R*)-MTPA esters of **5**, respectively. The $\Delta\delta$ ($\delta_{\text{S}} - \delta_{\text{R}}$) values of the protons flanking the C-3 chiral center revealed the $3R$ absolute configuration, which in turn concluded the absolute configurations of **1** as $2R$, $3R$, $4S$, $6R$, $7R$, $8R$, $9S$.

The modified Mosher's method is sometimes not applicable to axial hydroxyl groups.¹⁵ In order to confirm the above results,

**Fig. 3** Analysis of the stereochemistry of compound **4** (C3–C6 and C5–C2 tetrads) by the statistical UDB approach.

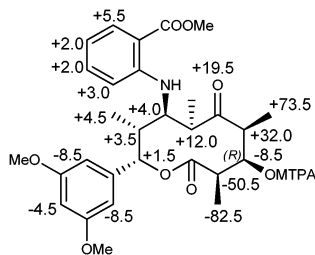


Fig. 4 $\Delta\delta$ ($\delta_S - \delta_R$) values (in Hz) for the MTPA esters of **5**.

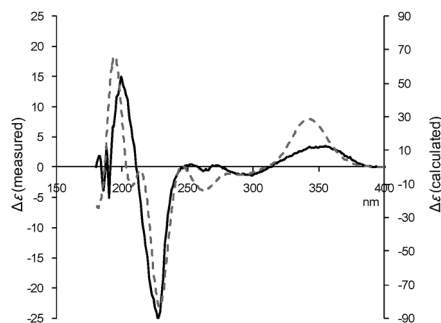


Fig. 5 Experimental CD (solid line) and calculated ECD (dotted line) spectra of saccharothriolide A (**1**). ECD was calculated for 2R, 3R, 4S, 6R, 7R, 8R, 9S.

we finally measured the CD spectrum of **1**, which was compared with the electronic circular dichroism (ECD) spectrum calculated by the time-dependent density functional theory (TDDFT).¹⁶ As shown in Fig. 5, the experimental CD spectrum showed a Cotton effect at 199 ($\Delta\epsilon$, +15.0), 227 ($\Delta\epsilon$, -25.0) and 355 ($\Delta\epsilon$, +3.46) nm, all of which were observed in the ECD spectrum calculated for the stereochemistry of 2R, 3R, 4S, 6R, 7R, 8R, 9S. Thus, the absolute configuration of **1** was unambiguously established by two independent methods.

To find congeners of saccharothriolide A (**1**), we investigated the LC-MS data of the crude broth extract. We detected a metabolite whose ion peak was observed at m/z 458.2162 ($[M + H]^+$), revealing the molecular formula of $C_{25}H_{31}NO_7$. This metabolite, designated as saccharothriolide B (**2**), contained one nitrogen atom similar to **1**, but its molecular size was 28 Da smaller than **1**. Metabolite **2** was obtained as a light yellow oil with $[\alpha]_D^{20}$ -81.2 (c = 0.36, MeOH).

The 1H and ^{13}C NMR data of **2** were very similar to those of **1** (Table S1, ESI[†]), with the exception of the disappearance of the carboxylic acid. The obvious downfield shift of C-2'' (δ_C 113.7 in **1**, δ_C 146.0 in **2**) and an upfield shift of C-1'' and C-3'' (δ_C 151.7 in **1**, δ_C 138.2 in **2** and δ_C 134.1 in **1**, δ_C 115.2 in **2**, respectively) were observed, accompanied by a marked upfield shift of H-3'' and H-5'' (δ_H 7.95 in **1**, δ_H 6.73 in **2** and δ_H 7.31 in **1**, δ_H 6.70 in **2**, respectively), which suggested that **2** possessed a phenolic hydroxyl group instead of a carboxylic acid at C-2''. This was in agreement with the fact that **2** was 28 Da smaller than **1**. The planar structure was deduced by the COSY, HMQC and HMBC data (Fig. S1, ESI[†]). Detailed analysis of the NOESY spectrum of **2** revealed that the relative stereochemistry was the same as that of **1** (Fig. S1, ESI[†]): 2R*, 3R*, 4S*, 6R*, 7R*, 8R*, 9S*.

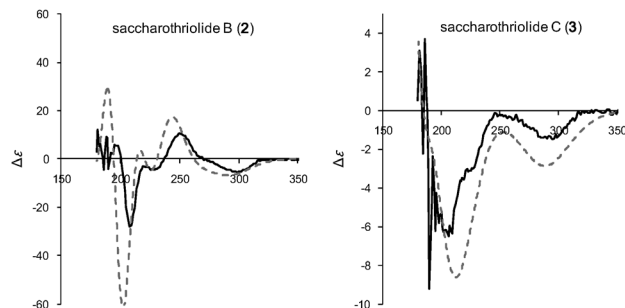


Fig. 6 Experimental CD (solid line) and calculated ECD (dotted line) spectra for saccharothriolides B (**2**) and C (**3**). Both ECD spectra were calculated for 2R, 3R, 4S, 6R, 7R, 8R, 9S.

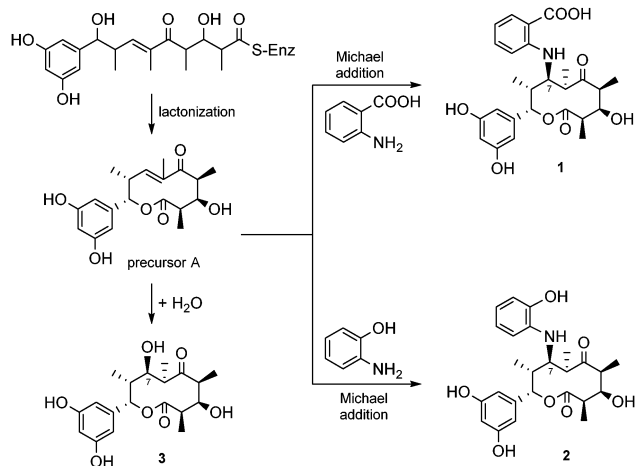
The absolute stereochemistry of **2** was determined by measurement and calculation of ECD. The ECD calculation of **2** revealed that the absolute stereochemistry was the same as that of **1**. The calculated ECD spectrum overlapped well with the experimental CD spectrum (Fig. 6), concluding that the absolute stereochemistry of **2** was 2R, 3R, 4S, 6R, 7R, 8R, 9S.

Saccharothriolides A (**1**) and B (**2**) have an aminoaryl substitution at C-7, suggesting the presence of a common precursor for them, *i.e.*, Michael addition of nucleophilic amines to the corresponding precursor can afford metabolites **1** and **2**. For investigating this possibility, we surveyed the LC-MS data of the culture broth to identify saccharothriolide C (**3**). Metabolite C (**3**) was obtained as a light yellow oil with $[\alpha]_D^{20}$ -111.8 (c = 0.58, MeOH). The HR-ESI-MS data indicated an $[M + Na]^+$ ion peak at m/z 389.1586 ($[M + Na]^+$, calcd 389.1576), revealing a molecular formula of $C_{19}H_{26}O_7$. The 1H and ^{13}C NMR data of **3** were similar to those of **1** and **2** (Table S1, ESI[†]), except for the absence of a set of aromatic protons and carbon signals corresponding to the amino aryl groups substituted at C-7. Instead, metabolite **3** possessed a hydroxyl group at C-7, supported by the downfield shift of the carbon signal of C-7 (δ_C 80.1). The planar structure was elucidated by detailed analysis of the 2D NMR data, while the NOESY data indicated the same relative configuration as those of **1** and **2** (Fig. S2, ESI[†]). As expected, the absolute stereochemistry of **3** was the same as those of **1** and **2**, because the calculated ECD spectrum for the stereochemistry of 2R, 3R, 4S, 6R, 7R, 8R, 9S showed a high similarity to that of the measured one (Fig. 6).

Metabolite **2** exhibited moderate cytotoxicity against cancer cells including HeLa and HT1080 cell lines with IC_{50} values of 17.9 and 13.9 μM , respectively. Other saccharothriolides **1** and **3** were inactive even at 100 μM . Additionally, only metabolite **2** showed weak antibacterial activity at 50 μg per disc against *Staphylococcus aureus* in a paper disc assay. These results indicate that saccharothriolides are capable of regulating their biological activities by modifying the functional group at the C-7 position.

Saccharothriolides are 10-membered macrolides. As in the case of other macrolides, saccharothriolides seem to be synthesized *via* the polyketide biosynthetic pathway (Scheme 1). An aryl starter unit and four units of methyl-malonyl-CoA seem to be conjugated followed by cyclization to yield the precursor





Scheme 1 Plausible biosynthetic pathway of saccharothriolides A–C (**1–3**).

metabolite A. The aromatic unit-priming polyketide system has been found only in a limited number of metabolites, *i.e.* soraphen A from *Sorangium cellulosum*,¹⁷ rifamycins from *Amiclatopsis rifamycinica*¹⁸ and enterocin from *Streptomyces maritimus*.¹⁹ The precursor A is likely attacked by an aminoaryl group to furnish metabolites **1** and **2**, or by a water molecule to furnish metabolite **3** (Scheme 1). In fact, the culture broth included a significant amount of anthranilic acid (23.5 mg) and 2-hydroxyacetanilide (120.9 mg).²⁰ Although we explored the presence of precursor A using the LC-MS data, ion peaks corresponding to the precursor were not found, probably due to the high reactivity of the α,β -unsaturated ketone.

In conclusion, we discovered three novel 10-membered macrocyclics from a rare actinomycete *Saccharothrix* sp. A1506. Structural analysis implied their common biosynthetic origin, whereas we predict the presence of precursor A possessing α,β -unsaturated ketone. It should be noted that only saccharothriolide B (**2**) showed moderate biological activities. Detailed studies on the biosynthetic mechanism and modes of action are currently being undertaken in our laboratory.

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