

38 species of the Amazon basin, being found in South American countries, such as Brazil, Peru, Colombia,
39 Ecuador, Bolivia and Guyana [3,4]. In recent years, *A. gigas* has also received prominence in
40 aquaculture due to its fast growth, high fillet yield, mild-flavored white meat, and great market
41 acceptance, both domestically and abroad [5].

42 *A. gigas* is listed in Annex II of the International Convention on the Trade in Endangered Species
43 (CITES) and in the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List of Endangered
44 Species, within the category "data deficient", meaning that there is no proper information to make a
45 direct or indirect assessment of its extinction risk based on its distribution and/or population status.
46 Furthermore, in Brazil, arapaima were not included in the national list of endangered species due to lack
47 of data [6].

48 Many reasons have contributed to the aggravation of the threat to *A. gigas*, including (i) the
49 exploitation background of wild individuals, coupled with poor management strategies to comply with
50 current fishing legislation; (ii) the current poorly refined genetic data on taxonomic structure and status;
51 and (iii) the lack of management in certain areas, as well as the lack of accurate tools for evaluating the
52 effectiveness on current management programs [7,8,9,10,11].

53 In Brazil, the predatory fishing of *A. gigas* – a practice which was intensified in the 1970s, impacted
54 its population distribution in most parts of the Amazon basin. Consequently, strategies for management
55 of the species were adopted by government agencies, such as the establishment of a minimum size for
56 capture, the determination of reproductive season, and the annual fishing prohibition in the states of
57 Amazonas, Pará, Amapá, Rondônia, Roraima, Tocantins and Acre [12,13,14]. However, the supervision
58 of these strategies is deficient due to the lack of financial and human resources, as well as the lack of
59 well-defined methods to identify the origins of the *A. gigas*'s derived products, hindering the actions of
60 the management system. For instance, recent data shows that 77% of *A. gigas* meat marketed in
61 Santarém-PA comes from illegal fishing [15]. Furthermore, a substantial amount of *A. gigas* fresh or
62 salty-conserved meat is exported illegally to Brazilian markets by middlemen, through the Guayaramerín
63 border, in Bolivia [16].

64 The population structure of *A. gigas* is still undefined, and there are evidences showing the
65 existence of more than one species of the genus Arapaima. On the other hand, the translocation of
66 individuals is also an imminent threat [17], which can lead to loss of genetic diversity, decreased fitness
67 and increased risk of extinction [18], since young individuals have often been translocated among

68 different parts of the Amazon basin – and among this basin and others, mainly to attend aquaculture
69 demand [19]. Therefore, the collection of molecular data is essential for monitoring and defining
70 adequate strategies for the management actions.

71 It is a consensus that *A. gigas* populations are following a declining trend, where the main threat is
72 overfishing [20,15], and the majority of communities do not practice sustainable management – with few
73 exceptions, such as the Mamirauá Reserve, in Brazil. However, even in communities where sustainable
74 management is done, there is no consistent, available data concerning the current conservation status
75 of the species, much less concerning the population trends within these communities [10].

76 Due to the history of disorderly exploitation and the risk of extinction of the Amazonian's symbol
77 fish *Arapaima gigas*, specialists emphasize the need of using molecular markers to support
78 management strategies and the evaluation of the effectiveness of the *A. gigas*'s conservation programs,
79 highlighting the importance of using these markers for the identification and genetic tracing of marketed
80 specimens [21].

81 Microsatellite markers, also known as short tandem repeats (STR) or simple sequence repeats
82 (SSR), are DNA sequences consisting of tandemly repeating mononucleotide, dinucleotide,
83 trinucleotide, tetranucleotide and pentanucleotide units, arranged throughout the genomes of most
84 eukaryotic species [22]. They present features such as broad distribution in eukaryotic genomes, which
85 can easily be detected by polymerase chain reaction (PCR), locus-specific nature, co-dominant
86 inheritance, and high mutation rate, being highly polymorphic and hyper-variable [23,24,25]. All these
87 features contribute to the advantages of using microsatellite markers in several research areas – as
88 forensic and population genetics, conservation biology, and for genome mapping in evolutionary and
89 biological scenarios, since these biomarkers allow two or more loci amplifications in a single multiplex
90 PCR reaction.

91 The multiplex PCR system consists of the simultaneous amplification of various loci, tagged by a
92 distinct fluorescent label, and posterior analysis by capillary electrophoresis in an automated sequencing
93 machine. It is considered a trustworthy technique since the use of capillary electrophoresis with
94 fluorescently labeled primers provides high detection sensibility of the amplified DNA fragments [26].
95 Several methods are used in microsatellite markers design. However, the majority of these are
96 longstanding and more laborious. With the advances in Next Generation Sequencing (NGS)

97 technologies, increased data became available, allowing a faster, cost-effective, large-scale mining of
98 molecular markers [27,28].

99 It is urgent to develop new, more accurate and numerous *A. gigas* molecular markers, not only to
100 be applied as a tool for genetic studies, but also to improve the management system, refining the
101 effectiveness of conservation programs, as well as to be used as a tool for the genetic tracing of wild
102 and marketed individuals.

103 Thus, in order to contribute to the preservation and sustainable management, we developed a
104 broad genomic panel of microsatellite loci potentially amplifiable. Based on this broad panel, we
105 designed an unprecedented multiplex system containing 12 tetranucleotide microsatellite markers,
106 which can be used in populational genetics, conservation biology, and forensic studies of the *A. gigas*.

107

108 **2. Results**

109 *2.1. Broad panel*

110 A broad amplifiable panel of microsatellites was designed (available at Figshare online data
111 repository – Supplementary Table 1), based on the *A. gigas*' genome published by Vialle *et al.* (2018),
112 who obtained a total of 76.91 Gb of high-quality filtered data, such as assembled genome size of
113 661,278,939 bp, 5,301 scaffolds, scaffold N50 = 668 kb, contig N50 = 51.23 kb, largest scaffold of
114 5,332,704 (bp), and GC content of 43.18% [29].

115 We found a set of 95,098 single loci of perfect microsatellites with simple repeat sequences, from
116 the dinucleotide to hexanucleotide classes, in the genome of the *A. gigas* (as observed in the
117 supplementary table 1). The set contained information about the microsatellite motif, the repeat copy
118 number, the initial and final positions, the scaffold and size, the forward and reverse primers, and the
119 expected Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) products. The average size of the estimated PCR products
120 was 207 bp. However, we could not design primers for 647 loci, since these sequences were rich in TA
121 repeats, and because the TA motif were at the beginning or at end of the scaffold.

122 Table 1 presents the abundance of the motifs categorized by class. Here, the dinucleotide class is
123 the most frequent, representing more than 70% of the total microsatellites found in *A. gigas*'s genome.
124 In this class, the TG-repeat motif was the most frequent (15,8). Additionally, we characterized the
125 minisatellites present in 387 loci (Supplementary Table 2).

126

127 **Table 1. Absolute and relative frequency (percentage) of different perfect microsatellite motifs found in the**
128 **genome of *Arapaima gigas*.**

Motif class	Count	%
Dinucleotides	71,269	74.94
Trinucleotides	13,026	13.70
Tetranucleotides	8,785	9.24
Pentanucleotides	1,107	1.16
Hexanucleotides	911	0.96
Total	95,098	100

129

130 The number of repeats in microsatellites present in the genome of *A. gigas* was quite variable
131 among the 6 classes, presenting an inverse relationship with the size of the motif. The dinucleotide
132 class, for example, presented the largest number of repeats, whereas the class of hexanucleotides
133 presented fewer repeats (Figure 1).

134

135

136 **Fig1.** Distribution of the classes of *Arapaima gigas* microsatellites how much to number of repetitions.

137

138 The majority of the identified microsatellites were located out of exon and intron sequences,
139 referred here as genomic regions: 68.1% of these were dinucleotides (71,269), 67.8% were
140 trinucleotides (13,026), 67.6% were tetranucleotides (8,785), 67.4 % were pentanucleotides (1,107),
141 and 69.9% were hexanucleotides (911). We observed a few microsatellites located within gene coding
142 regions, 8.3% of which were dinucleotides (5,915), 8.1% were trinucleotides (1,054), 8.3% were
143 tetranucleotides (725), 8.2% were pentanucleotides (91) and 7.8% were hexanucleotides (71) (Figure
144 2).

145

146

147 **Fig2:** Distribution of microsatellites in genic, intergenic and genome regions in *Arapaima gigas*.

148

149 2.2. Multiplex system

150 The broad panel generated in our study allowed the fast selection and validation of 12
151 tetranucleotide microsatellite loci on a multiplex system (Agig13519, Agig50571, Agig58115,
152 Agig08356, Agig67103, Agig93614, Agig33291, Agig90836, Agig05001, Agig70664, Agig08912 and

153 Agig06409). The multiplex system presented a high resolution, with no overlap between the
154 microsatellite alleles and no artifact peaks (Figure 3). Moreover, we did not detect any genotyping errors
155 attributed to stutter bands, large allele dropouts or null alleles, which are frequent in dinucleotide
156 microsatellites.

157

158

159 **Fig3.** Multiplex PCR panel electrophoretogram for *Arapaima gigas* showing the allele size range obtained
160 using the ABI 3130 Genetic Analyzer (Applied Biosystems) and the GeneMapper 3.7 (Applied
161 Biosystems) software and discrimination power per locus. Colors were assigned to microsatellite primers
162 labeled with 6-FAM (blue), HEX (green), NED (black), and PET (red) fluorescent dyes.

163

164 The panel was used to evaluate a wild population of *A. gigas* from Santarem (n=30). The obtained
165 data revealed a total of 73 alleles. The average rate of alleles per locus (NA) is 6.08. The observed (HO)
166 and expected (HE) heterozygosity rates range from 0.867 (Agig 33291) to 0.100 (Agig 05001), with an
167 average of 0.59 and 0.64, respectively (Table 2).

168 **Table 2. PCR multiplex panel characteristics of 12 microsatellite markers of *Arapaima gigas*, which was used to genotype 30 individuals from Santarém, a city in the**
169 **Brazilian Amazon.**

Locus (GenBank)	Primer (5'→3')	Repeat Motif	Dye	Proportion in primer #	N _A (Size Range)	H _O	H _E	F _{IS}	PIC	PD	PE
Agig13519 (MN190311)	F:* GTGGAGAAATGGAGAATTGCAT R: CATGGTTTTTCCTCAAAACAGC	(ATAG) ₁₆	6 – FAM	0.25	9 (153-201)	0.667	0.782	0.15	0.736	0.915	0.378
Agig50571* (MN190312)	F: *GATCTCACACATACTGGCTTG R: AGTTGACTGTTACACGCAGGA	(GATA) ₁₆		0.5	10 (233-273)	0.667	0.849	0.217	0.815	0.927	0.379
Agig58115 (MN190313)	F:*ATATCACACCCTACATCCTCCTAAA R: GAAGCTGAAATGCAAGAACTCA	(AGAT) ₁₆		0.5	5 (311-343)	0.5	0.486	-0.03	0.446	0.667	0.187
Agig08356 (MN190314)	F: *ACCTCTACCCAAGTCAAGAAA R: GAAATGGGATACACAACACTACACA	(ATCT) ₁₅	HEX	0.5	5 (165-189)	0.6	0.589	-0.02	0.546	0.782	0.291
Agig67103 (MN190315)	F: *TCAGACTCAATACCTCCGTCCT R: CCTTGTTCCCCTTATCTTACA	(ATCT) ₁₆		0.6	5 (283-311)	0.633	0.563	- 0.128	0.471	0.689	0.333
Agig93614 (MN190316)	F: *CAGGAAAGGGGTAGAACTCGTA R: GAGAGAGACAGTGGCATTCAA	(ATCT) ₁₇		0.6	6 (373-393)	0.7	0.698	- 0.003	0.651	0.851	0.428
Agig33291 (MN190317)	F: *GGGGTAGTCTTTTGATGTTAAGGA R: ATGACCAGGAGCAATACAAACC	(ATCT) ₁₆	NED	0.5	8 (181-209)	0.867	0.842	- 0.029	0.808	0.915	0.728
Agig90836 (MN190318)	F: *CAGTCAGCAGTTGGTATGGAGTT R: GGCCTCAGCTTCTCTAAAATGAC	(GATG) ₁₈		0.6	10 (308-352)	0.833	0.854	0.025	0.822	0.935	0.662
Agig05001 (MN190319)	F: *AGTGACCTGCATTGGACAGAT R: TGCACCATTGTTTTGCCTAA	(GATG) ₁₆	PET	0.6	2 (180-184)	0.1	0.097	- 0.036	0.09	0.180	0.008
Agig70664	F: *TGCAGGTAGTTTCATAGCCTGA			0.6	4 (252-272)	0.5	0.65	0.234	0.58	0.798	0.187

(MN190321)	R: AGAGCGGGATTTGAACATAAGA	(TGGA) ₁₆									
Agig08912	F: *CCCTGGTTCTAGTGACAGTTCAG		0.6	4 (330-342)	0.5	0.585	0.147	0.485	0.722	0.187	
(MN190320)	R: GGATGCGTTTTGTATCAGGAA	(ATCT) ₁₅									
Agig06409	F: *CGGTCCTCAAATATGCATTACA		0.6	5 (364-380)	0.533	0.655	0.188	0.601	0.818	0.218	
(MN190322)	R: GATGCAAGCAAAGAACAGACAC	(TGGA) ₁₆									
Average				6.08	0.59	0.64	0.06	0.59	0.77	0.33	
CPD											>0.999
CPE											>0.999

170
171
172
173
174

Abbreviations: F, forward primer; R, reverse primer; NA, allele number per locus; HO, observed heterozygosity; HE, expected heterozygosity; FIS, inbreeding coefficient; PIC, polymorphism information content; PD, power of discrimination; PE, power of exclusion; CPD, combined power of discrimination; CPE, combined power of exclusion.

*Fluorescent dye added in the forward primer

#Relative proportion in primer mix, made up from 100 μM solutions

175 There was no significant deviation from Hardy-Weinberg equilibrium (HWE) after Bonferroni
176 correction ($p < 0.0041$). Loci pairs in linkage disequilibrium (LD) were not registered. The average
177 inbreeding coefficient value (FIS) was 0.06.

178 Forensic parameters investigated for this multiplex system presented average polymorphic
179 informative content (PIC) value of 0.53. The average power of discrimination (PD) was 0.77 and the
180 power of exclusion (PE) was 0.33. The average combined power of discrimination (CPD) and the
181 combined power of exclusion (CPE) for the 12 microsatellite markers investigated was 0.999 and 0.999,
182 respectively (Table 2).

183

184 3. Discussion

185 The rapid development of sequencing technologies allowed the obtention of complete genome
186 sequences from an increasing number of species [30], which is an excellent source for identification of
187 microsatellite markers already used in several species [30,31,32,33,34].

188 In this study, we identified a total of 95,098 microsatellites based on sequences of the complete
189 genome of *A. gigas*, a value close to that found for *Monopterus albus* (99,293) [32] and much larger
190 than what was found for *Brycon orbignyanus* (81,241) [31]. These differences probably are due to the
191 size of the databases, search criteria and bioinformatics tools used to identify the microsatellites [35].
192 The dinucleotide class was the most abundant, following the same pattern observed for the species
193 mentioned above.

194 Microsatellite markers with number of repeats among 15-20 tend to be highly polymorphic [36],
195 being the most indicated for population genetic studies. The panel of microsatellite markers developed
196 for *A. gigas* included the dinucleotide, trinucleotide and tetranucleotide classes presenting motifs with
197 repeats within this range (figure 1), however the tetranucleotides markers produced weaker stutter
198 bands and had no artificial multiband patterns [37].

199 Microsatellite markers are observed in almost all known eukaryotic and prokaryotic genomes, both
200 in coding and noncoding regions [38]. In the *A. gigas* genome, microsatellite markers are more abundant
201 in non-coding sequences, here called genomic regions (figure 2). This corroborates data available in
202 the literature towards the distribution of these markers – which may be explained by the fact that, in
203 promoter regions, the length of microsatellites may influence the transcription activity [39].

204 It is suggested that microsatellite polymorphisms are associated with the number of loci replications
205 [40]. Microsatellites with higher number of repeats are more prone to mutation/expansion than those
206 with fewer replicates. The correlation between repeat length and microsatellite variability is
207 comprehensible according to replication slippage model, which is a widely accepted mutation
208 mechanism [41]. Another variable could be the microsatellite classification, and their results indicate
209 that tetranucleotide microsatellites have the highest polymorphism rate, while the dinucleotide
210 microsatellites are the least polymorphic [40]. Hence, we emphasize the importance considering the
211 number of repeats and the class of the microsatellite while selecting markers for the accomplishment of
212 scientific studies.

213 In the last years, several studies aiming to elucidate population genetics and conservation biology
214 of the *A. gigas* have used dinucleotide microsatellites as molecular markers, as reported by Farias *et*
215 *al.*, 2003 [42], among other studies [43,44,45,46, 47,48]. However, the differences in quantity and types
216 of microsatellite markers adopted by each study complicate the evaluation of the analyzed indexes
217 among the examined populations, thus the use of a common system for all studies would facilitate the
218 integration of the data for decision making management.

219 To validate our findings, we developed a multiplex system using the panel of 12 microsatellite
220 markers to evaluate the conservation status of an *A. gigas* population. This tetranucleotide microsatellite
221 markers of the multiplex system have the advantage of being highly polymorphic, more stable and
222 presenting clearer bands than the dinucleotide markers described in literature. Thus, overall, they are
223 becoming the predominant type of microsatellite markers in use [49].

224 It is important to emphasize that the history of fierce fishing exploitation of the *A. gigas* is a
225 determinant factor for the findings of this study in the population of Santarem. The reduction of natural
226 populations and the decrease in average volume and length of the specimens landed in the Amazon
227 due to overfishing soon lead to the fishing collapse in 1970 [50], occasioning a population bottleneck
228 effect, consequently causing loss of genetic variability, as observed in the values of HE, HO, FIS and
229 NA.

230 Among the investigated forensic parameters, the values of PIC were considered satisfying
231 accordingly to the scale reported by Botstein *et al.*, 1980 [51]. The CPD and CPE values of this panel
232 allow the distinction of one individual in one billion, which is similar to other multiplex genotyping

233 systems. For instance, the system reported by Hamoy *et al.*, 2012 [52] was used in conservation studies
234 and in the aquaculture support.

235 Population genetics data are undoubtedly the most important component of the baseline of any
236 conservation and management plan [53]. The broad microsatellite panel developed for *A. gigas* opens
237 perspectives for studies in as many fields as bioinformatics, ecology, genetics, evolution, and
238 comparative studies among species [31]. And the multiplex system designed for *A. gigas* allows an
239 accurate, faster, cost-effective, and affordable genotyping for low-income laboratories and conservation
240 studies focusing on this species.

241 The set of 12 loci was able to measure the genetic variability of the investigated population,
242 providing high statistic power data, sufficient for determining kinship patterns for population attribution
243 tests. Therefore, this multiplex system can represent a valuable and powerful tool for small and large-
244 scale studies in the areas of forensic/conservation biology and population genetics, furthermore, it can
245 also be used as a tool for the management of wild and cultivated populations of *A. gigas*.

246

247

248 **4. Materials and Methods**

249 *4.1. Data mining*

250

251 The development of this study was based on the complete genome of *Arapaima gigas*, published
252 by Vialle *et al.*, 2018 [29], available from the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI)
253 database (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/assembly>), ID: 12404.

254 *4.2. Bioinformatics analysis*

255 Simple Sequence Repeat Identification Tool (SSRIT) [36] was used to find all simple sequence
256 repeats (SSRs). We changed the default parameters related to motif-repeat in the source code of
257 SSRIT, which was made in Perl, to specify motif length and the minimum number of repeats (Table 3).
258 The other attributes remained with their default values.

259

260 **Table 3. Parameters Modified in SSRIT Analysis.**

Motif Length	Minimum Number of Repeats
2	10
3	8
4	6
5	5
6 – 12	4

261

262 Microsatellites sequences counted from all samples generated by the SSRIT were processed by
263 in-house scripts in Python (v. 3.7.2) to insert the flanking regions in the 5' and 3' portions of DNA
264 sequence, and transform them in a fasta file. After, the sequences which exhibited microsatellites were
265 submitted to Primer 3 (v. 4.1.0), whose premise is design PCR primers from DNA sequences. In Primer
266 3, the default parameters of primer length, (|Primer Opt Size = 20|, |Primer Min Size = 18|, and |Primer
267 Max Size = 23|) were modified to 24, 20, and 28, respectively. The parameters of primer product size
268 range was modified for 50-1200 nucleotides.

269 The microsatellites were individually filtered by abundance and number of repetitions per class,
270 and subsequently mapped in regions of intron (intergenic region) and regions of exon (exonic regions).
271 The ones which are not present in any of the previous regions were classified as belonging to the
272 genome. The development of all figures was made using Matplotlib (v. 3.0.1), which is a Python 2D
273 plotting library.

274

275 *4.3. Validation of the multiplex microsatellite system*

- 276 • Sample Collection and DNA Extraction

277 This research was approved by the Ethics Committee on Animal Use (CEUA) of the Federal Rural
278 University of Amazon - UFRA, protocol number 055/2017 (CEUA) – 23084.017501/2017-02 (UFRA).

279 We collected 2 g of muscle tissue of 30 specimens of *A. gigas* from a fishing vessel landed at the
280 city of Santarem, localized in the Low Amazon mesoregion, Brazil. The samples were preserved in 70%
281 ethanol and posteriorly stored in -20 °C.

282 Total genomic DNA was extracted from the digested tissue in proteinase K solution/ Sodium
283 Dodecyl Sulfate (SDS) and purified in Phenol/Chloroform, followed by precipitation in Isopropanol [54].
284 The DNA concentration was measured in the NanoDrop ND1000 spectrophotometer (Thermo
285 Scientific).

286

287 • Selection of Microsatellites and Polymorphism Testing

288 After assembling the broad microsatellite panel for *A. gigas*, a total of 12 microsatellite markers
289 were selected to compose the multiplex system, according to the following criteria: tetranucleotide
290 microsatellites, with at least 15 repeats and at maximum 20 repeats, outside of coding regions. The
291 polymorphisms of the 12 selected loci were tested in 7% polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis, stained
292 with silver nitrate.

293

294 • Primer Testing and Genotyping

295 The possibility of formation of secondary structures among the primers was tested in AutoDimer
296 Software [55]. A PCR reaction consisting of the simultaneous amplification of 12 markers was
297 standardized to a final volume of 9.5 μ L, using 5.0 μ L 2X Qiagen Multiplex PCR Master Mix (Qiagen),
298 1.0 μ L of Q-Solution (Qiagen), 2.0 μ L of H₂O, 0.5 μ L of primer mix, and 1.0 μ L of genomic DNA. The
299 relative proportion of each primer in the primer mix (made up of 100 μ M solutions) is listed in Table 1.
300 The reactions were optimized to amplify 5 ng of genomic DNA.

301 Amplification reactions were performed in a Veriti thermocycler (Applied Biosystems). The
302 thermocycling conditions were: initial denaturation at 95°C for 15 min, followed by 10 cycles at 94°C for
303 30 s, 60°C for 90 s, and 72°C for 60 s; 20 cycles at 94°C for 30 s, 58°C for 90 s, and 72°C for 60 s, and
304 a final extension at 72°C for 60 min, 10° for min. One microliter of amplification was mixed with 8.5 μ L
305 Hi-Di deionized formamide (Applied Biosystems), and 0.5 μ L GeneScan 500 LIZ (Applied Biosystems)
306 as a molecular weight standard. The final product was analyzed using an ABI 3130 Genetic Analyzer
307 (Applied Biosystems). The determination of fragment size and allele designation was done with the
308 GeneMapper 3.7 software (Applied Biosystems).

309

310 4.4. Statistical Analysis

311 The dataset was checked for genotyping errors and null alleles using Micro-Checker [56]. We
312 analyzed the genetic variability using the allele number per locus (N_A), the observed (H_O) and expected
313 (H_E) heterozygosity indexes, and the deviation from Hardy-Weinberg equilibrium (HWE), using Arlequin
314 3.5.1.257, followed by Bonferroni's correction [58]. The same program was used to determine the
315 proportion of locus pairs in linkage disequilibrium (LD).

316 The inbreeding coefficient (F_{IS}) was calculated in GENEPOP [59]. The polymorphism information
317 content (PIC), the power of discrimination (PD), and the power of exclusion (PE) for all markers using
318 the forensic statistic tool FORSTAT [60].

319

320

321 **Supplementary Materials:** Supplementary materials can be found Supplementary Table 1 -
322 <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.8088533>) and Supplementary Table 02 -
323 <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.8088629>).

324

325 **Author Contributions:** Conceptualization, P.F.-G. and J.A.; methodology, P.F.-G., D.M., H.P., F.M.,
326 R.C., J.S. and C.S.; software, H.P., F.M., R.C., J.S.; validation, P.F.-G. and C.S.; formal analysis, P.F.-
327 G., R.C. and J.S.; investigation, P.F.-G. and J.A.; resources, M.R.; I.H. and S.S.; data curation, P.F.-G.,
328 J.A., D.M. and G.C.; writing—original draft preparation, P.F.-G.; writing—review and editing, P.F.-G., J.A.
329 and G.C.; visualization, S.S., M.R. and I.H.; supervision, S.S.; project administration, S.S. and I.H.;
330 funding acquisition, M.R.; I.H. and S.S.; All authors have read and agreed to the published version of
331 the manuscript.

332

333 **Funding:** This research was funded by Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e
334 Tecnológico (CNPq), grant number 165498/2015-3, and L'Oréal Brazil – 2017/01 edital Mulheres na
335 Ciência 2017.

336

337 **Acknowledgments:** We thank the Federal University of Pará and Rural Federal University of the
338 Amazon for all the support.

339

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

341

342 Abbreviations

343 CITES International Convention on the Trade in Endangered Species

344 IUCN International Union for Conservation of Nature's

345 STR Short Tandem Repeats

346 SSR Simple Sequence Repeats

347 PCR Polymerase Chain Reaction

348 NGS Next Generation Sequencing

349

350 References

- 351 1. Ferraris Jr, C.J. Family Arapaimatidae. In *Check List of the Freshwater Fishes of South and Central America*;
352 Reis, R. E., Kullander, S. O., Ferraris Jr., C. J., Eds.; Edipucrs: Porto Alegre, Brasil, 2003; pp. 30-31.
- 353 2. Bezerra, R.F.; Soares, M.C.F.; Carvalho, E.V.M.M.; Coelho, L.C B.B. *The Amazonian Giant Fish is Briefly*
354 *Reviewed*; Nova Science: New York, EUA, 2013; pp. 9-10.
- 355 3. Pereira-Filho, M.; Roubach, R. Pirarucu (*Arapaima gigas*). In *Espécies Nativas para a Piscicultura no Brasil*,
356 2nd ed.; Baldisserotto, B., Gomes, L. C., Eds.; UFSM: Santa Maria, Brasil, 2010; pp. 27-56.
- 357 4. Froese, R.; Pauly, D. FishBase. World Wide Web electronic publication. www.fishbase.org (2019).
- 358 5. Imbiriba, E.P. Potencial de criação de Pirarucu, *Arapaima gigas*, em cativeiro. *Acta Amaz.* **2001**, 31, 299–
359 299.
- 360 6. Castello, L.; Arantes, C.C.; McGrath, D.G.; Stewart, D.J.; Sousa, F.S. Understanding fishing-induced
361 extinctions in the Amazon. *Aquat. Conserv.* **2014**, 25(5), 447-458.
- 362 7. Isaac, V.J.; Rocha, V.L.C; Mota, S. Considerações sobre a legislação da “piracema” e outras restrições da
363 pesca da região do Médio Amazonas. In *Povos das Águas: Realidade e Perspectiva na Amazônia*, 1nd ed;
364 Furtado, L.G., Mello, A.F., Leitão, W., Eds.; Museu Paraense Emilio Goeldi: Belém, Brasil, 1993; pp. 187-211.
- 365 8. Isaac, V.J., Ruffino, M.L.; Milstein, A. Fisheries ecology in the Lower Amazon: A typical artisanal practice in
366 the tropics. *Ecotropica*. **1998**, 4, 99-114.
- 367 9. Miyaki, C. Filogeografia e a descrição da diversidade genética da fauna brasileira. *Megadiversidade*. **2009**, 5,
368 96-100.
- 369 10. Castello, L.; Stewart, D.; Arantes, C.C. O que sabemos e precisamos fazer a respeito da conservação de
370 pirarucu (*Arapaima spp.*) na Amazônia. In *Biologia, Conservação e Manejo Participativo de Pirarucus na Pan-*
371 *Amazônia*, Figueiredo, E.S.A., Eds.; IDSM: Tefé, Brasil, 2013; pp. 17-31.
- 372 11. Oviedo, A.F.P.; Bursztyn, M.; Drummond, J.A. Agora sob nova administração: Acordos de Pesca nas Várzeas
373 da Amazônia Brasileira. *Ambient. soc.* **2015**, 18(4), 119-138.
- 374 12. BRASIL. Instrução Normativa 34/2004. Estabelecer normas gerais para o exercício da pesca do pirarucu
375 (*Arapaima gigas*), na bacia hidrográfica do rio Amazonas. Brasília: Congresso Nacional, 2004.
- 376 13. BRASIL. Instrução Normativa 24/2005. Proíbe a captura, o transporte, a comercialização e a armazenagem
377 do pirarucu (*Arapaima gigas*) na bacia hidrográfica dos rios Araguaia-Tocantins, no período que especifica.
378 Brasília: Congresso Nacional, 2005.
- 379 14. BRASIL . Instrução Normativa 1/2008. Proíbe de 1º de junho a 30 de novembro a captura, o transporte, a
380 armazenagem e a comercialização do pirarucu (*Arapaima gigas*) no estado do Acre. Brasília: Congresso
381 Nacional, 2008.
- 382 15. Cavole, L.M.; Arantes, C.C.; Castello, L. How illegal are tropical small-scale fisheries? An estimate for
383 arapaima in the Amazon. *Fish. Res.* **2015**, 168, 1-5.
- 384 16. Macnaughton, A.E.; Carvajal-Vallejos, F.M.; Argote, A.; Rainville, T.K.; Van Damme, P.A.; Carolsfeld, J.
385 “Paiche Reigns!” Species Introduction and Indigenous Fisheries in the Bolivian Amazon”. *Marit. Stud.* **2015**,
386 14, 17.
- 387 17. Castello, L.; Stewart, D.J. Assessing CITES non-detriment finding procedures for Arapaima in Brazil. *Appl.*
388 *Ichthyol.* **2010**, 26, 49–56.
- 389 18. Weeks, A.R. *et al.* Assessing the benefits and risks of translocations in changing environments: a genetic
390 perspective. *Evol. Appl.* **2011**, 4, 709-725.
- 391 19. Wright, D.J. *et al.* The impact of translocations on neutral and functional genetic diversity within and among
392 populations of the Seychelles warbler. *Mol. Ecol.* **2014**, 23(9), 2165–2177.
- 393 20. Queiroz, H.L.; Sardinha, A.D. A preservação e o uso sustentado dos pirarucus (*Arapaima gigas*,
394 Osteoglossidae) em Mamirauá. In *Estratégias para Manejo dos Recursos Pesqueiros em Mamirauá*; Queiroz,
395 H.L., Crampton, W. G. R, Eds.; CNPq/MCT: Brasília, Brasil, 1999; 208 p.
- 396 21. Torati, L.S; Taggart, J.B.; Varela, E.S.; Araripe, Wehner, J.; Migaud, H. Genetic diversity and structure in
397 *Arapaima gigas* populations from Amazon and Araguaia-Tocantins river basins. *BMC Genet.* **2019**, 20, 13.
- 398 22. Pokhriyal, B.; Thorat, K.; Limaye, D.A.; Joshi, Y.M.; Kadam, V.J. Microsatellite markers – a novel tool in
399 molecular genetics. *Int. J. Res. Pharm. Chem.* **2012**, 2, 397-412.

- 400 23. Sakai, H. et al. Distinct Evolutionary Patterns of *Oryza Glaberrima* Deciphered by Genome Sequencing and
401 Comparative Analysis. *Plant J.* **2011**, 66, 796-805.
- 402 24. Wang, Y.Z.; Li-Jun, C.; Jia-Ying, Z.; Shu-Jun, W. Development and Characterization of Novel Microsatellite
403 Markers for the Peach Fruit Moth *Carposina Sasakii* (Lepidoptera: Carposinidae) Using Next-Generation
404 Sequencing. *Int. J. Mol. Sci.* **2016**, 17, 362.
- 405 25. Jan, C.; Fumagalli, L. Polymorphic DNA Microsatellite Markers for Forensic Individual Identification and
406 Parentage Analyses of Seven Threatened Species of Parrots (Family Psittacidae). *PeerJ.* **2016**, 4, 7.
- 407 26. Li, D.; Wang, S.; Shen, Y.; Meng, X.; Xu, X.; Wang, R.; Li, J. A Multiplex Microsatellite PCR Method for
408 Evaluating Genetic Diversity in Grass Carp (*Ctenopharyngodon Idellus*). *Aquacult. Fish.* **2018**, 3(6), 238-45.
- 409 27. Ismail, S.; Vineesh, N.; Peter, R.; Vijayagopal, P.; Gopalakrishnan, A. Identification of microsatellite loci, gene
410 ontology and functional gene annotations in Indian salmon (*Eleutheronema tetradactylum*) through next-
411 generation sequencing technology using illumina platform. *Ecol. Genet. Genomics.* **2019**, 11, 100038.
- 412 28. Duan, X. et al. De novo transcriptome analysis and microsatellite marker development for population genetic
413 study of a serious insect pest, *Rhopalosiphum padi* (L.) (Hemiptera: Aphididae). *PLoS One.* **2017**, 12,
414 e0172513.
- 415 29. Vialle, R. A. et al. Whole Genome Sequencing of the Pirarucu (*Arapaima gigas*) Supports Independent
416 Emergence of Major Teleost Clades. *Genome Biol. Evol.* **2018**, 10(9), 2366-2379.
- 417 30. Zhu, H. et al. Genome wide characterization of simple sequence repeats in watermelon genome and their
418 application in comparative mapping and genetic diversity analysis. *BMC Genomics.* **2016**, 17, 557.
- 419 31. Yazbeck, G.M. et al. A broad genomic panel of microsatellite loci from *Brycon orbignyanus* (Characiformes:
420 Bryconidae) an endangered migratory Neotropical fish. *Sci. Rep.* **2018**, 8, 8511.
- 421 32. Li, Z. et al. Genome-wide mapping and characterization of microsatellites in the swamp eel genome. *Sci. Rep.*
422 **2017**, 7, 3157.
- 423 33. Wang, Y. et al. Genome-wide distribution comparative and composition analysis of the SSRs in Poaceae.
424 *BMC Genet.* **2015**, 16, 18.
- 425 34. Sarika, A. V.; Iquebal, M. A.; Rai, A.; Kumar, D. In silico mining of putative microsatellite markers from whole
426 genome sequence of water buffalo (*Bubalus bubalis*) and development of first BuffSatDB. *BMC Genomics.*
427 **2013**, 14, 43.
- 428 35. Hancock, J. M. Simple sequences and the expanding genome. *BioEssays.* **1996**, 18, 421–425.
- 429 36. Temnykh et al. Computational and experimental analysis of microsatellites in rice (*Oryza sativa* L.): frequency,
430 length variation, transposon associations, and genetic marker potential. *Genome Res.* **2001**, 11, 1441-1452.
- 431 37. Yu, L. et al. New tetranucleotide STRP markers for detecting the 22q11.2 deletion. *Mol. Cell. Probes.* **20(6)**,
432 359-65 (2006).
- 433 38. Ellegren, H. Microsatellites: simple sequences with complex evolution. *Nat. Rev. Genet.* **2004**, 5(6), 435-45.
- 434 39. Li, Y.C.; Korol, A.B.; Fahima, T.; Beiles, A.; Nevo E. Microsatellites: genomic distribution, putative functions
435 and mutational mechanisms: a review. *Mol. Ecol.* **2002**, 11, 2453-2465.
- 436 40. Xu, Z. et al. Distribution of Polymorphic and Non-Polymorphic Microsatellite Repeats in *Xenopus tropicalis*.
437 *Bioinform. Biol. Insights.* **2008**, 2, 157–169.
- 438 41. Levinson, G.; Gutman, G. A. High frequency of short frameshifts in poly-CA/GT tandem repeats borne by
439 bacteriophage M13 in *Escherichia coli*. *Nucleic. Acids. Res.* **1987**, 15, 5323-5338.
- 440 42. Farias, I.P.; Hrbek, T.; Brinkmann, H.; Sampaio, I.; Meyer, A. Characterization and isolation of DNA
441 microsatellite primers for *Arapaima gigas*, an economically important but severely over-exploited fish species
442 of the Amazon basin. *Mol. Ecol. Notes.* **2003**, 3, 128–130.
- 443 43. Farias, I.P. et al. The largest fish in the world's biggest river: Genetic connectivity and conservation of
444 *Arapaima gigas* in the Amazon and Araguaia-Tocantins drainages. *PLoS One.* **2019**, 14, e0220882.
- 445 44. Vitorino, C. A.; Nogueira, F.; Souza, I. L.; Araripe, J.; Venere, P. C. Low Genetic Diversity and Structuring of
446 the Arapaima (*Osteoglossiformes*, Arapaimidae) Population of the Araguaia-Tocantins Basin. *Front. Genet.*
447 **2017**, 8, 159.
- 448 45. Araripe, J.; do Rêgo, P. S.; Queiroz, H.; Sampaio, I.; Schneider, H. Dispersal capacity and genetic structure
449 of *Arapaima gigas* on different geographic scales using microsatellite markers. *PLoS One.* **2013**, 8, e54470.
- 450 46. Fazzi-Gomes, P.F. et al. Genetic diversity and differentiation in natural populations of *Arapaima gigas* from
451 lower Amazon revealed by microsatellites. *Genet. Mol. Res.* **2017**, 16 (1), gmr16019552 .

- 452 47. Farias, I.P. *et al.* Evidence of polygamy in the socially monogamous Amazonian fish *Arapaima gigas* (Schinz,
453 1822) (Osteoglossiformes, Arapaimidae). *Neotrop. Ichthyol.* **2015**, 13, 195-204.
- 454 48. Hamoy, I.G.; Santos, E.J.M.; Santos, S.E.B. Rapid and inexpensive analysis of genetic variability in *Arapaima*
455 *gigas* by PCR multiplex panel of eight microsatellites. *Genet. Mol. Res.* **2008**, 7, 29-32.
- 456 49. Zheng, X.H. *et al.* A set of polymorphic trinucleotide and tetranucleotide microsatellite markers for silver
457 crucian carp (*Carassius auratus gibelio*) and cross-amplification in crucian carp. *Biochem. Genet.* **2010**, 48,
458 624-635.
- 459 50. Isaac, V.J.; Milstein, A.; Ruffino, M.L. A pesca artesanal no Baixo Amazonas: Análise multivariada da captura
460 por espécie. *Acta Amaz.* **1996**, 26, 185-208.
- 461 51. Botstein, D.; White, R. L.; Skolnick, M.; Davis, R. W. Construction of a genetic linkage map in man using
462 restriction fragment length polymorphisms. *Am. J. Hum. Genet.* **1980**, 32, 314-331.
- 463 52. Hamoy, I.G.; Santos, S. Multiplex PCR panel of microsatellite markers for the tambaqui, *Colossoma*
464 *macropomum*, developed as a tool for use in conservation and broodstock management. *Genet. Mol. Res.*
465 **2012**, 11, 141-146.
- 466 53. Frankham, R.; Ballou, J. D.; Briscoe, D. A. *Introduction to conservation genetics*, 2nd ed.; Cambridge University
467 Press: Cambridge, Inglaterra, 2004; pp. 221–223.
- 468 54. Sambrook, J.F.; Russell, D.W. *Molecular Cloning: A Laboratory Manual*. 3rd ed. Cold Spring Harbor
469 Laboratory Press, New York (2001).
- 470 55. Vallone, P. M.; Butler, J.M. AutoDimer: a screening tool for primer-dimer and hairpin structures.
471 *BioTechniques.* **2004**, 37, 226-231.
- 472 56. Oosterhout, C. V.; Hutchinson, W. F.; Wills, D.P.M.; Shipley, P. Micro-Checker: Software for identifying and
473 correcting genotyping errors in microsatellite data. *Mol. Ecol. Notes.* **2004**, 4, 535-538.
- 474 57. Excoffier, L.; Lischer, H. E. L. Arlequin suite ver 3.5: A new series of programs to perform population genetics
475 analyses under Linux and Windows. *Mol. Ecol. Resour.* **2010**, 10, 564-567.
- 476 58. Rice, W.R. Analyzing Tables of Statistical Tests. *Evolution.* **1989**, 43, 223-225.
- 477 59. Rousset, F. Genepop'007: A complete re-implementation of the genepop software for Windows and Linux.
478 *Mol. Ecol. Resour.* **2008**, 8, 103–106.
- 479 60. Ristow, P.G.; D'Amato, M.E. Forensic statistics analysis toolbox (FORSTAT): A streamlined workflow for
480 forensic statistics. *Forensic Sci. Int. Genet. Suppl. Ser.* **2017**, 6, e52–e54 .

481

482

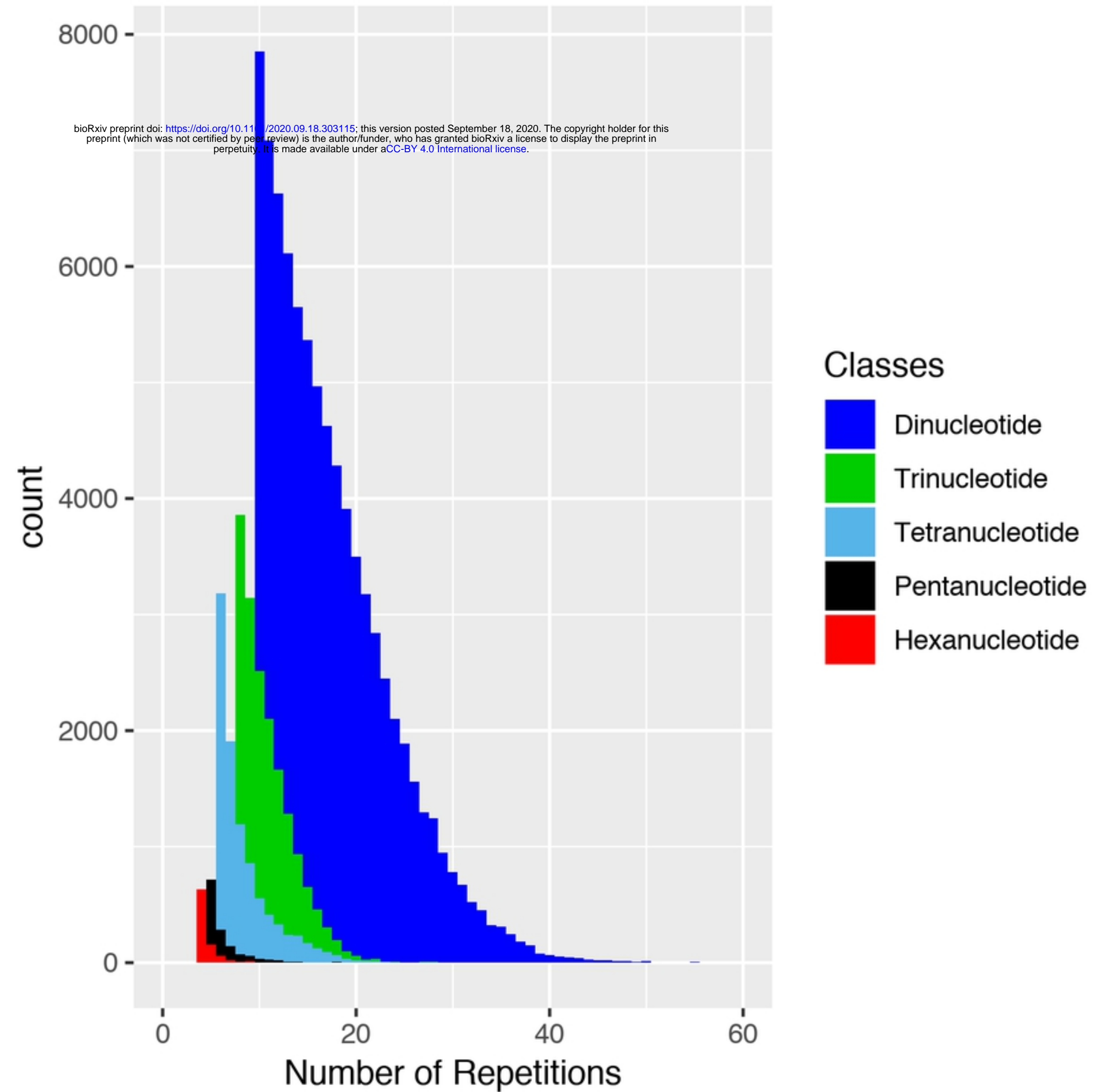


Figure 1

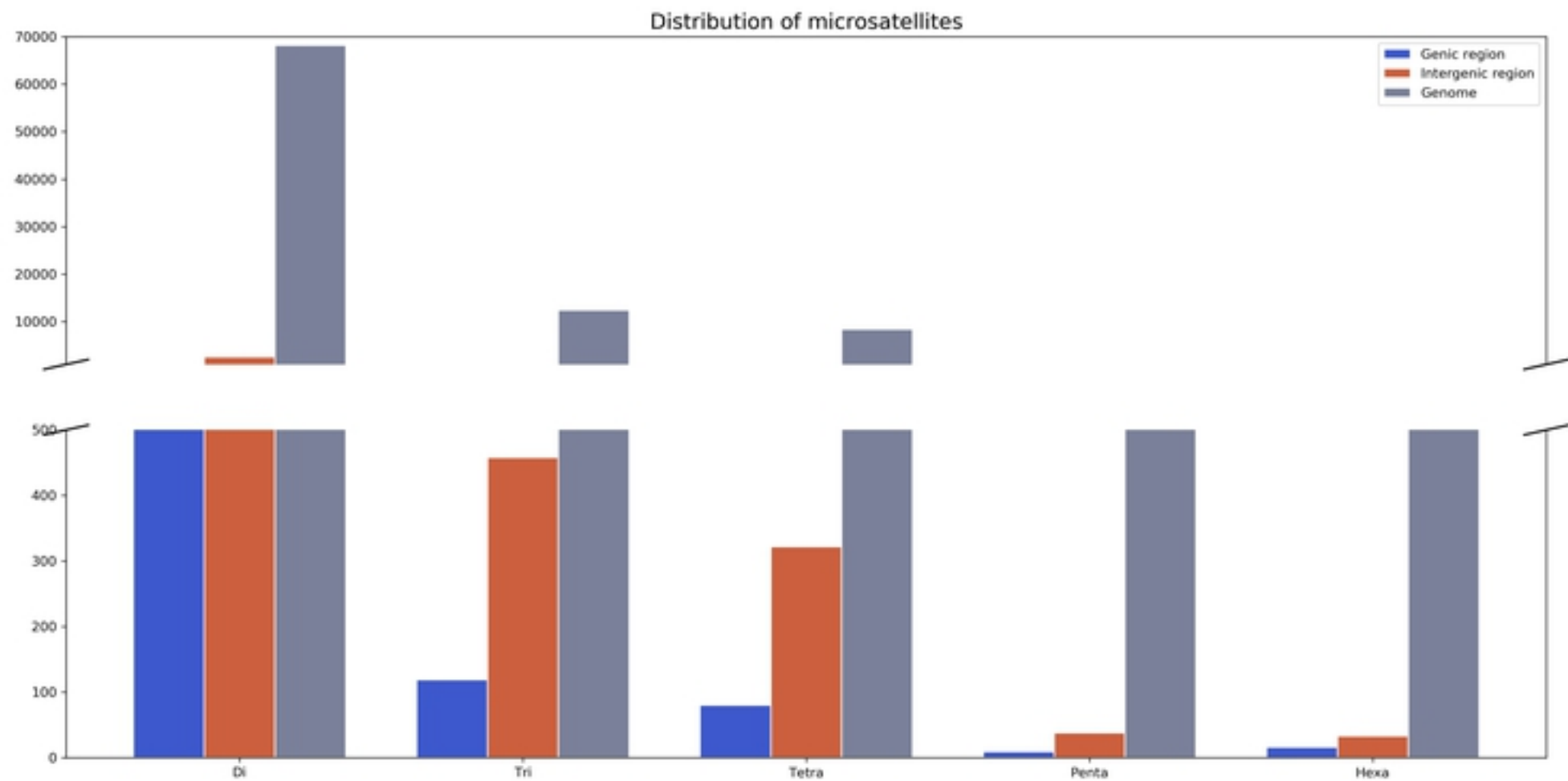


Figure 2

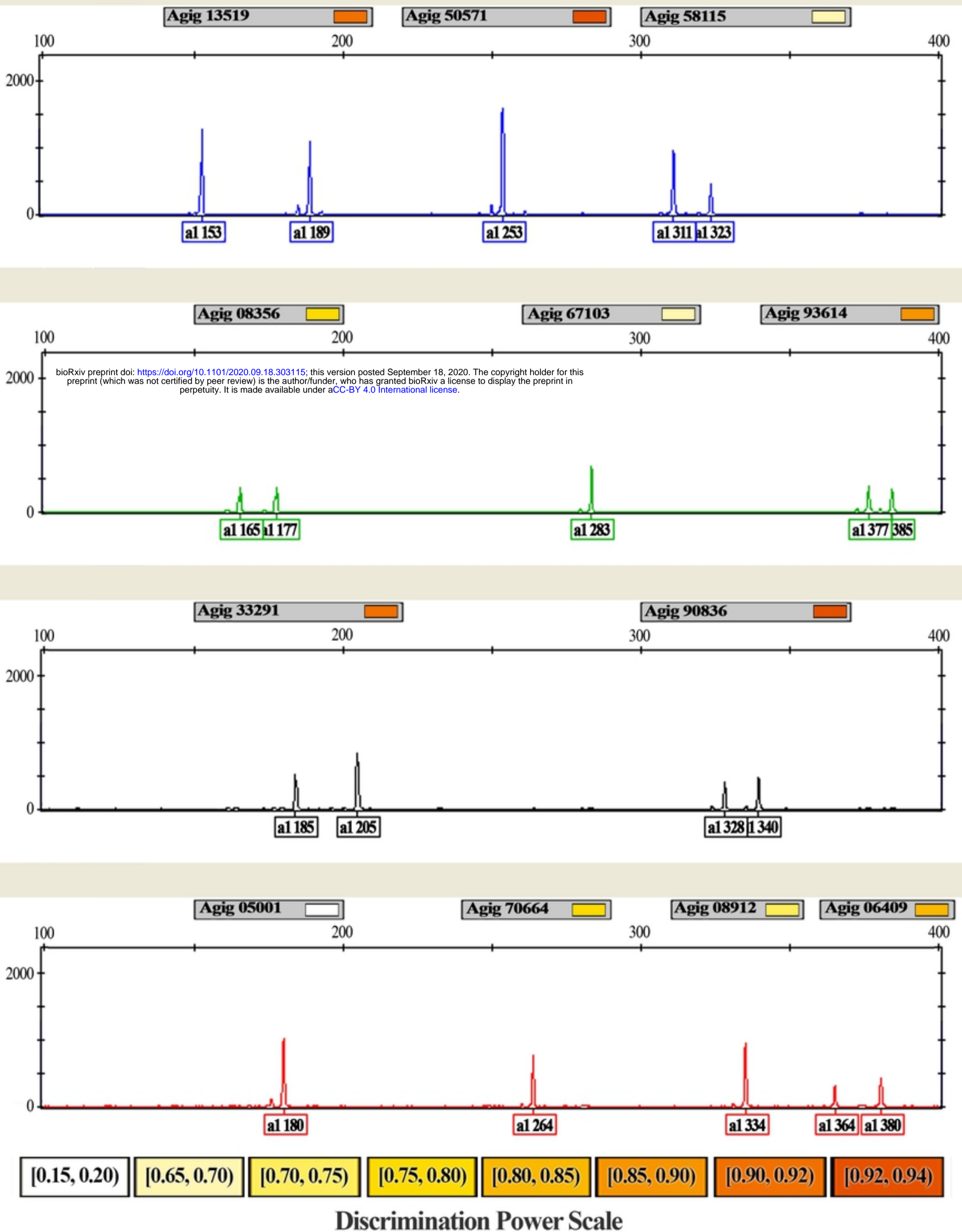


Figure 3