Genomic Resources in South American Camelids: Opportunities and Challenges

Michael W Bruford







2002: Conference of Parties in Gothenburg.

Signatories agreed to 'halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010'



2010 was the international year of biodiversity

http://www.biodiversityislife.net/

The targets were mostly missed....



Policy



The unit of conservation

A critical first step in the design of AnGR conservation programmes is to decide what is to be conserved. At the molecular genetic level, the

Assessing the likely genetic diversity present in a set of breeds may be based on a variety of criteria, including:

- trait diversity, which is diversity in the recognizable combinations of phenotypic characteristics that define breed identity;
- molecular genetic diversity, based on objective measurements of genetic relationships among breeds at the DNA level; and
- evidence for past genetic isolation as a result of either geographical isolation or of breeding policies and cultural preferences applied in the communities where the breeds were developed.

SoWAnGR report produced by the FAO in 2007: outlines status, policy and best practice for livestock conservation, including genetics

Conservation Biology 论

Neglect of Genetic Diversity in Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity

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AICHI 2020 targets

Target 13: By 2020, the genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives, including other socio-economically as well as culturally valuable species, is maintained, and strategies have been developed and implemented for *minimizing genetic erosion* and *safeguarding their genetic diversity*.

THEMATIC BACKGROUND STUDY Indicators of Genetic Diversity, Genetic **Erosion and Genetic Vulnerability** for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture Anthony H D Brown Honorary Research Fellow, CSIRO Plant Industry, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia and Honorary Research Fellow, Bioversity International, Rome, Italy Maxted and Guarino (2006): "Genetic erosion is the *permanent reduction in richness (or evenness) of* common local alleles, or the loss of combinations of alleles over time in a defined area"

A concept developed BY plant breeders FOR plant breeders: does it apply to animals, though....?

Genetic Erosion



LOSS of genetic diversity: demographic isolation leads to genetic drift / mating among relatives leads to inbreeding...



Ill-advised translocations or release of stock can 'swamp' local gene-pools, initially INCREASING but ultimately LOSING diversity if inappropriate genotypes are used...



Ill-advised translocations, designed to improve adaptability, can work in the *opposite* way if genetics is not taken into consideration...



- Two domestic forms (encompassing different varieties)
- Two wild ancestors

Process	Genetic effect	Increase or decrease in genetic diversity	Possible consequence	Solution
Translocation	Admixture	Increase initially followed by a decrease	Loss of local adaptation	DNA profiling of individuals and removal of hybrids
Indiscriminate hunting leading to low population size	Genetic drift and eventual inbreeding	Decrease	Possible loss of fitness, increase in juvenile mortality, fixation of deleterious traits	Cessation and reinforcement with genetically appropriate individuals
Trophy hunting	Selection against larger males	Likely increase due to lower reproductive skew	Loss of reproductive fitness in males	Cessation or implementation of sustainable harvesting strategy
Fibre and/or meat production	Directional selection, domestication, hybridization	Decrease in genome-wide diversity, strong linkage disequilibrium	Loss of adaptation to the wild	Manage existing SAC domestic genetic resources more effectively (alpaca, llama)



Vicuña – almost eradicated under Shining Path terrorism – recovered to 300,000 in Peru

MUCH rarer elsewhere

Guanaco – on brink of extinction in Peru (<1,000)

Molecular analysis of wild SAC populations

Marin et al (in review)

Genetic Erosion: wild camelids



Management units for vicuña in Peru based on nuclear microsatellite markers

Marin et al (in review)



Tinco Cancha resembles Central Peruvian group, especially Pampa Galeras

Transfers from Pampa Galeras to:	Number of animals & Date
Cañaguas (Parque Nacional Aguada Blanca- Arequipa)	40 in 1979
Atoxaico (Junín)	395 in 1980; 617 in 1981
Yanganuco (Parque Nacional Huascarán- Ancash)	108 in 1980; 100 in 1997 community outside park

What will the long-term effect of the Pampa Galeras – Junin translocation?? Ongoing process...

Genetic Erosion: wild camelids



Process	Genetic effect	Increase or decrease in genetic diversity	Possible consequence	Solution
Intensification	Loss of adaptation to the natural environment	Decrease if not studbook managed	Loss of local adaptation, limited use	Accurate studbooks, genetic management to maintain <i>N</i> e
Line breeding / assisted reproductive technology (in <i>some</i> cases)	Loss of male effective population size	Decrease	Predominance of a few genotypes, loss of flexibility to environmental change	Careful management of genetic material – gene-drop analysis
Hybridization among domestic camelids	Possible outbreeding depression, increase in trait variance	Increase initially but uncertain in the medium term	Gross and unpredictable phenotypic modification	Molecular testing – identification of nucleus herds
Hybridization with wild camelids	Possible outbreeding depression, increase in trait variance	Increase initially but uncertain in the medium term	Wild camelids: loss of Ne Domestic camelids: need for intensive selection	Establish high trait value and genetically 'pure' domestic populations for further careful selection

84 alpaca from Peru-Chile-Argentina (suri and huacaya)

54 llama from Peru-Chile-Argentina

10 known hybrid (3 wari, 7 pacovicuna)

21 guanaco (Peru, Chile, Bolivia)

42 vicuna (Peru, Chile, Argentina)



Mitochondrial DNA is reciprocally monophyletic between vicuña and guanaco but NOT between alpaca and llama...

Kadwell et al (2001) Proc R Soc Lond B 268: 2575-2584



Nuclear DNA confirms the distinctiveness of the wild forms but highlights extensive gene-flow between domestic forms...

Kadwell et al (2001) Proc R Soc Lond B 268: 2575-2584

Hybridization is rife in domestic camelids - in 80% of ALPACA (mainly mitochondrial) and 40% of LLAMA (mainly nuclear)



It is not possible to determine if an alpaca or llama is a hybrid on the basis of physical appearance alone.



DNA testing is needed to determine the genetic integrity of alpacas and llamas, especially for animals included in registries.





2002 - 2006

Genetically evaluate Peruvian alpacas

Assess stock and evaluate the characters of economic importance relative to hybrids (Fibre, diseases and parasites)

Vision: Scientific management strategies for non-hybrid stock with the breeders

Vision: Establish a gene conservation programme

Identify and rescue of non-hybrid alpacas threatened with extinction



Sampling, records and analysis

Animals	Percentage
Non-hybrid alpacas	6
Not determined	2
Hybrid alpacas	92



Fibre diameter in non-hybrid alpacas, Canchis Province, Cusco



Diameter (µm)	%
16 – 18	9
19 – 21	20
22 – 24	26
25 – 27	34
28 – 30	9
> 30	2

Alpacas tested as 'non-hybrid' in Canchis have higher fibre diameters than fine fibred animals typically used for export





Age correlates with fibre diameter

	fibre (um)	Cancl	nis	Pacoma	arca
		n	%	n	%
	13 - 15				
	16 - 18	3	8.6		
	19 - 21	7	20	8	29.6
	22 - 24	9	25.7	9	33.4
ا ِ مَارِيلَ مَارَيلَ مَارَيلَ مَارَيلَ مَارَيلَ مَارَيلَ مَارَيلَ مَارَيلَ مَارَيلَ مَارَيلَ مَارَيلًا مَارَيلًا مَارَيلًا مَارَيلًا مَارَيلًا مَارَيلًا مَارَيلًا مَارَيلًا مَارَيلًا مُورَكًا مُورَكًا مَارَيلًا مُورَكًا مُورًا م	25 - 26	12	34.3	1	3.7
N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N	27 - 29	3	8.6	3	11.1
	> 30	1	2.8	6	22.2
	Total	35 / 600	100	27 / 248	100

Highly selected fine fibre animals at Pacomarca have a higher percentage of non-hybrid genotypes and finer fibre (> 7 years old)

camelids domestic erosion: Genetic



CAMELIDOS EN GENERAL

Los camélidos silvestres sudamericanos son las vicuñas y los guanacos, las alpacas y las llamas son animales domésticos. La llama y la alpaca fueron domesticadas, hace aproximadamente 6000 años, por las culturas que estaban afincadas en la hoy Puna peruana. Según los "Estudio del ADN de camélidos sudamericanos", derivan del guanaco y la vicuña y comparten con sus antecesores silvestres y sus "hibridos" la particularidad de ser "pastoreadores" de bajo impacto ambiental; en otras palabras, varias adaptaciones corporales, únicas de este grupo de animales, les permiten transformar con la mayor eficiencia los alimentos que les ofrece el medio y causarle el mínimo trastorno. Los camélidos silvestres sudamericanos, por su pelo que proporciona fibras de my alta calidad y precio, han sido seleccionados por la oficina regional de la FAO como dos de las siete especies dave para el desarrollo rural de la América latina.

VICUÑA

Se calcula que durante el Imperio Incaico existian entre de dos y tres millones de vicuñas en los Andes peruanos, se estima que sólo quedaban 5000 animales en 1960 y actualmente, hay alrededor de 150.000 Es el más gráci de los cameidos y llega a pesar unos 35 kg. Es de cortor canela en el dorso y blanco en la parte ventral, con un mechón de

pelos largos y blancos en el pecho. Vive en la puna encima de los 3500 msnm en el Perú, Bolivia, Argentina y Chile. El Perú es el primer productor mundial de fibra de vicuña y comercializa entre 2500 a 3000 Kg. por año. Cada 24 de junio se hace el chaku en Pampa Galeras, reviviendo la tradición Inca.

Una vicuña produce 200 g de fibra cada tres años, pero la fibra no sólo es muy fina (entre 10 y 15 micrones de diámetro) y de alto poder calorífico, sino que es también la más cara del mundo.

En el año 2002 el Kg. se vendió a U.S.\$ 385,00, equivalente a 1900 Kg. de lana de ovino andino, o 38 kilos de fibra de alpaca. Hoy en el 2006 la fibra de la vicuña llega a U.S. \$600.00

ALPACAS

La alpaca es un animal domestico, de colores variados y por selección se a logrado hacer predominar el blanco, vive encima de los 3500

Una alpaca produce alrededor de 1.5 kilos de fibra por año, que una vez lavada y cardada llega a tener un precio de U.5.\$ 10.00

PACOVICUÑA

El pacovicuña es el hibrido fértil, de la vicuña y la alpaca. Es un animal grácil que llega a pesar unos 40 Kg. Es de color canela en el dorso y blanco en la parte ventral, con un mechón de pelos largos y blancos en el pecho, muy parecido a una vicuña. Puede vivir en la puna encima de los 3500 msnm. La gestación dura 11 meses y por cada parto nace una sola cría entre los meses de febrero a marzo. Vive en grupos familiares de 12 hembras de alpaca y una macho de vicuña (jaiñachu).

El Pacovicuña es una especie de la puna y ha desarrollado una serie de adaptaciones a las condiciones ambientales imperantes, como las

- Una fibra tupida y muy fina, con alta capacidad para retener el calor
- En el pecho posee un mechón de pelos largos, que le sirven para cubrir las patas delanteras al dormir echadas en el suelo.
 La concentración de las pariciones se da en un 80% en horas de la mañana, y en los dias soleados de febrero y marzo, lo que favorece el
- secado de las crias, pues la vicuña, como los otros camélidos, no puede lamer a sus crias y éstas deben secarse al aire. Es importante anotar que en estos meses no se presentan las heladas de Junio, Julio y Agosto que traen consigo muertes por neumonia.
- Como adaptación al menor contenido de oxigeno en el aire (hipoxia) por la altura, la sangre del pacovicuña posee cerca de 14 millones de glóbulos rojos o hematocitos por mm3. Los glóbulos rojos contienen la hemoglobina, que transporta el oxígeno de los pulmones a
- las células, y a mayor contenido de hemoglobina hay mayor eficiencia de captación y transporte de oxígen
- Los pastos de la puna son duros y con contenido de silice, que aceleran el desgaste de los incisivos. La forma de pastoreo del pacovicuña no es arrancarlos, como las especies introducidas (vacunos, equinos, ovinos), sino cortarlos con los incisivos. Para contrarrestar el desgaste, estos son de crecimiento continuo hasta cerca de los 5 años de edad, y luego cesa y los incisivos se gastan hasta tal punto que los animales vieios no pueden pastar, se debilitan y mueren.
- También se sabe que los camélidos andinos aprovechan los magros pastos alto andinos con mayor eficiencia que las especies foráneas, para el caso de la alpaca la digestibilidad es un 22% superior a la del ovino
- La puna es un espacio abierto, donde no es fácil ocultarse de los enemigos (puma y zorro), el pacovicuña tiene un color acanelado (color vicuña), que la confunde en el pajonal, y posee un cuello largo, que le permite ver a distancia y detectar a sus enemigos.

Produccion

uña se obtiene al año entre 700 y 800 granos de fibra, de una calidad y precio parecidos a la de la vicuña, en la actualidad pasa los US\$400.00

El pacolicuña tiene un muy alto potencial, ya que produce; fibra más fina que la alpaca, llegando a costar 30 veces mas que la de la alpaca, y más larga que la de la vicuña, llegando a producir 10 veces mas fibra que la vicuña. Tiene como ventaja adicional sobre la vicuña el no ser un animal silvestre (la vicuña es silvestre como un venado), en cambio el pacovicuña es un animal domestico que se le puede manejar como a una alpaca.

El pacovicuña no es un animal protegido, en consecuencia se pueden comercializar internacionalmente sus productos y derivados sin ninguna restricción. El pacovicuña es la solución al problema de pobreza de los ganaderos de la zona alto andina, para graficarlo diremos que se requiere de; 5 vicuñas, 5 alpacas, y 5 carneros andinos, para igualar los ingresos que generaria un (1) pacovicuña

	FIBRA (por especie)	DIAMETRO(micrones)	LONGITUD (mm.)
	Vicuña	10 a 15	15 a 40
	Angora	11 a 15	25 a 50
	Pacovicuña	13 a 17	35 a 50
IDDAC TENTUES	Cashemere	15 a 19	25 a 90
BRAS TEXTILES	Llama (dos tipos de fibra)	16 a 100	40 a 120
ESPECIALES DEL MUNDO	Alpaca	18 a 40	75 a 400
	Ovino fino	17 a 22	50 a 60
	Guanaco	18 a 24	30 a 60
	Camello	18 a 26	29 a 120
	Tak	19 a 21	30 a 50
	Mohair	24 a 40	75 a 100

Pacovicuña rearing was advocated by APRA in 2007 with immediate uptake but compromises both wild and domestic forms



Bactrian camels serve as an important means of transportation in the cold desert regions of China and Mongolia. Here we present a 2.01 Gb draft genome sequence from both a wild and a domestic bactrian camel. We estimate the camel genome to be 2.38 Gb, containing 20,821 protein-coding genes. Our phylogenomics analysis reveals that camels shared common ancestors with other even-toed ungulates about 55-60 million years ago. Rapidly evolving genes in the camel lineage are significantly enriched in metabolic pathways, and these changes may underlie the insulin resistance typically observed in these animals. We estimate the genome-wide heterozygosity rates in both wild and domestic camels to be 1.0×10^{-3} . However, genomic regions with significantly lower heterozygosity are found in the domestic camel, and olfactory receptors are enriched in these regions. Our comparative genomics analyses may also shed light on the genetic basis of the camel's remarkable salt tolerance and unusual immune system.



LETTERS

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DOI: 10.1038/ncomms2192



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Alpaca (vicPac1) V



Alpaca assembly and gene annotation

Assembly

This is the first release of the low-coverage 2.51X assembly of the alpaca (Vicugna pacos). The genome sequencing is provided by the Human Genome Sequencing Center, Baylor College of Medicine and assembly is provided by the Broad Institute.

The N50 size is the length such that 50% of the assembled genome lies in blocks of the N50 size or longer. The N50 length for supercontigs is 178.39 kb and is 3.91 kb for contigs. The total number of bases in supercontigs is 2.93 Gb and in contigs is 1.92 Gb.

Gene annotation

Owing to the fragmentary nature of this preliminary assembly, it was necessary to arrange some scaffolds into "gene-scaffold" super-structures, in order to present complete genes. There are 3711 such gene-scaffolds, with identifiers of the form "GeneScaffold_1".

Details of the gene-scaffold construction and subsequent gene-build

Mammalian Genome Project

Vicugna pacos is one of 24 mammals that will be sequenced as part of the Mammalian Genome Project, funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). A group of species were chosen to maximise the branch length of the evolutionary tree while representing the diversity of mammalian species. Low-coverage 2X assemblies will be produced for these mammals and used in alignments for cross-species comparison. The aim is to increase our understanding of functional elements, especially in the human genome.

More information

General information about this species can be found in Wikipedia.

Statistics

Summary

Genscan gene predictions 93,309

Assembly	vicPac1, Jul 2008	
Database version	75.1	
Base Pairs	1,922,927,087	
Golden Path Length	2,967,746,133	
Genebuild by	Ensembl	
Genebuild method	Projection build	
Genebuild started	Nov 2008	
Genebuild released	Feb 2009	
Genebuild last updated/patched	Apr 2013	
Gene counts		
Coding genes	11,765	
Short non coding genes	2,532	
Pseudogenes	898	
Gene transcripts	15,236	
Other		

The 'purity' of this individual is unknown...



Joint project: Shanxi Agricultural, Cardiff, San Marcos (Peru), Bio Bio (Chile) Universities, CAS, BGI,

Thanks!!









