

Phylogenetics and environmental distribution of nitric oxide forming nitrite reductases reveals their distinct functional and ecological roles

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Supplementary Materials and Methods

Naming clades:

Major clades in each tree were first delineated based on groupings identified in previous literature [1,2], reserving clade 1 in each protein for the “canonical clade”, and letters were used within each larger clade to delineate sub clades. Primarily structural features and secondarily taxonomy and ecological traits were used to refine clade delineation. Clades were defined as deeply as possible on the phylogeny within these constraints, leading to statistically supported clades of variable phylogenetic depth. In some instances this meant generating new clades from previously proposed clades that were not well-supported in the present phylogeny. Thus, clades with similar naming number-letter hierarchy level do not necessarily originate at similar depths on the phylogeny, and we refer to these well-supported groups of sequences in the phylogeny as clades independent of number-letter hierarchy.

Exclusion of halophilic archaea and *Pyrobaculum* NirS

Functional NirS has also been demonstrated in *Pyrobaculum* species (Thermoproteota [3,4]. Despite carrying all the conserved motifs, we excluded these *Pyrobaculum* sequences from our phylogeny because the haem d₁ and *cyt c* domains are encoded in opposite directions in

the genome, which led to an unresolvable long branch upon re-orienting and concatenating them.

Halobacteriota NirS-like proteins were included as an outgroup and excluded from *nirS* counts in the metagenome survey because they lack the first two characteristic motifs corresponding to the *cyt_c* domain. Using the previously described search for genes encoding enzymes involved in NirS assembly combined with genome viewer in NCBI to look for potential alternative heme assembly proteins [3] and *cyt_c* domain-containing motifs, we confirmed the absence of the evidence that these proteins are *cyt_{cd}*NirS. An additional reason for excluding this clade from *nirS* gene fragments counts is that absence of the *cyt_c* domain led to strange behaviour of the search and place algorithm. An excess of *nirS* reads were placed in this gapped region of the alignment and subsequently annotated as haloarchaeal, despite being derived from habitats such as forest soils where Halobacteriota are rare, and where Halobacteriota *nirK* reads were below detection. Furthermore, BLAST of a subset (n=20) of the reads annotated as haloarchaeal *nirS* but mapped in their entirety to this 75aa gap in the beginning of the alignment against the UniProt database indicated that none of them most closely matched archaea; instead, most (18; 90%) mapped as non-nitrite reductase bacterial cytochrome C or cytochrome C oxidase, often with at least 60% identity (13; 65%). By contrast, short reads from this N-terminal region which GraftM placed in the canonical *nirS* portion of the tree correctly mapped to proteobacterial nitrite reductase or cytochrome C.

Structural features and nitrite reductase helper genes

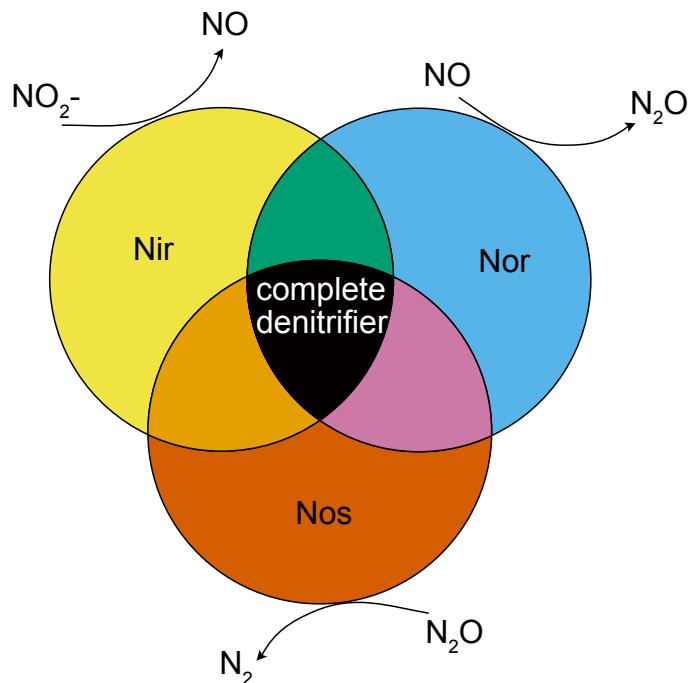
We searched for *nirF*, *nirN*, *nirJ*, *nirE*, *nirB* and *nirT* in assemblies carrying *nirS*, and *nirV* in assemblies carrying *nirK*. The seed alignments for NirJ (TIGR04051, TIGR04055, TIGR04054) and NirE (cd11642) were derived from the NCBI's Conserved Domains Database. Seed alignments for NirF and NirN were derived from the original NirS search,

and were readily differentiated from NirS using a phylogenetic approach. The HMMs for NirB (UniProt P24037), NirT (UniProt P24038) and NirV (NCBI AAK08123.1) were generated using protein BLAST searches with the aforementioned reference sequences against NCBI's ClusteredNR database [5]. We stochastically selected a subset of the 1000 top hits to be aligned and exported using the multiple alignment function accessible from the BLAST outputs, and then checked if the sequences were aligned at the important ligands and catalytic residues in ARB [6]. We searched for the structural features TAT, lipobox, and Sec-type signal peptides using the online version of SignalP 6.0 [7] and transmembrane domains using DeepTMHMM [8], both with default settings. Clade-specific insertions and deletions[9], and cytochrome C (-CX₂CHX₅₀M-) and cupredoxin (CX₂₋₄HX₂₋₄M) motifs in the C and N termini of the proteins were identified in ARB [6].

Inferring redox traits from protein-coding gene composition

We looked for nitric oxide reductases within the heme-copper oxidase (HCO) superfamily using the same method used for identifying NirK and NirS, but used the database generated by Murali and colleagues as a starting seed for our hmmsearch [10,11]. Genes were categorized into classes of *nor* also following Murali *et al.* [10,11]. We identified nitrous oxide reductases (*nosZ*) similarly, but used the reference database from Graf *et al.* 2014 as our seed; hydrogenases associated with hydrogen oxidation (group 1, 2a) and reduction (group 4 b,c,e) using the alignment in [12]; nitrite oxidation using the alignment and structural information provided by [13]; ammonium (*amoA*) and methane (*pmoA*) oxidation against the database provided by [14]; and sulfur compound oxidation (*sox*, *ox-apr*, *ox-dsr*, *sat*, *shdr*, or *sor*) and reduction (APS sulfate reduction: *aprAB*, *qmoABC*; sulfite reduction: *dsrABCDNTMK*, *mccABCD*, *AsrABC*; tetrathionate reduction: *TtrABC*) using HMMs and gene neighborhood information provided in [15]. The capacity for anammox (*hzA*,*hzsA*),

methane oxidation (*mmoB/dmpM*, *pmoABC*), iron (*fmnA/dmkA/fmnB/pplA/ndh2/eetAB/dmkB*, *mtrABC*), selenate (*ygfKMN*), nitrate (*napAB*, *narGH*) and dissimilatory arsenate reduction (*arrA*), and iron (*cyc123; foxABCXYZ*), nitrite (*nxrAB*) and manganese oxidation (*mnxG*) were predicted using HMMs and gene neighborhood information from FeGenie and Lithogenie [16]. *nxrA/napA* and *amoA/pmoA/hcoA* were further checked by assessing the alignment and constructing a phylogeny using FastTree, and additional taxonomy-based verification. The capacity for reductive dehalogenation was evaluated using HMMs built from the Reductive Dehalogenase Database [17]; sequences lying within known reductive dehalogenase diversity in a combined FastTree phylogeny were kept. The complete denitrification trait was defined as having *nir*, *nor*, and *nosZ* genes as depicted below.



Supplementary methods figure 1: complete denitrification refers to the potential to transform nitrite into dinitrogen via NO (completed by Nir), N₂O (Nor) and finally N₂ (Nos). Incomplete denitrification in organisms encoding NirK and/or NirS refers to the presence of Nir+Nor (green), Nir+Nos (orange), or the presence of just Nir (yellow).

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GDTV D **L** I I R **N** HEDNSMV **H** NVD **F** H ACRPGGAEATNV **V** AP **G** EERQLR **F** K **V** TY P **GAF** V **YHCA**
GDV V **K** M T L T I PAGEVTG **H** GND **M** H ASQMSA . GNFES **V** NP **G** ET SQY C **Y** I **A** EAAG **GVF** V **YHCA**
GNI V **R** M E I S **N** SGD .. VM **H** GAS I **H** AAYT QTSK HVGH **I** LP **G** QT KSI T **F** R **A** ATT P **GVF** V **YHCA**
GDKFK I **T** I K N EGS .. MA **H** SID **F** H AGEVSPDENMKS **I** Q P **G** EELTY E **F** T **A** N RA **GIW** N **YHCS**
GDRV R **L** S M T N RSDEPM **H** SMD **F** H AAAMVSPTDKYRS **I** AP **G** QT MHL E **F** TP **NYP** **GVF** N **YRCG**
GDTV NFTLIGHKDNAF **H** SMD **F** H AAELDFLKNYKT **V** GP **G** EETHKF **S** F **V** A **K** K P **GVF** V **YHCG**
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GDTV E **F** HLK N APDSKME **H** NID **L** H GT PGGGAASSF T AP **G** HESQFT **F** K A L N Q **GIY** V **YHCA**
GDTV E **V** EFSN NPSSTVE **H** NVD **F** H ATQGGAAATF T AP **G** RTSTFS **F** K A L Q P **GLY** V **YHCA**
GDTV T **L** NL T N ELD SNH I **H** SID **L** H AVTPGGGAAVTQ **A** AP **G** QTRSFT **F** K A L Q P **GLY** V **YHCA**
GDYV E **L** TLIN PETNTLQ **H** NID **F** H STALGGGALTIV **V** NP **G** EKTILR **F** K A T K A **GVF** V **YHCA**
GDTV V **I** NL S N DSKNTRAY **A** ID MP AELPNRDTVVTNL **L** MP **G** ETATLT **F** S AAKS **GAY** A **Y YGA**
GDWI D **L** TFIN PNTSLHE **H** SVDF **F** H SMTLDGGAASLR **I** NP **G** ERARTV **W** Q **A** II IP **GMF** V **YHCA**
GDMQ V **NYL** N LDETGM **H** NID **F** H CVTPGGGAEMLL **A** EKDEEKTGF **F** K L TS **GLF** V **YHCA**
GDVV E **L** TL T N KDPAGN **H** NID **C** H AFTP GGGAAVTT **V** EEN ESKTAR **F** K L LY P **GLY** V **YHCA**
DLVR R **I** HF IN GS .. K **H** TIHF **F** H GIHAEMDGFEIV **V** GAG **G** QFTY E **F** V A G P V **GVH** V **YHCH**
GDR I **R** V LFLN NAG .. HS **H** S L H F **H** GVHPAEMDGIRP **I** SNGSATIYE **F** DA E PY **G** VH I **YHCH**

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GCA_014843455.1_2_Fusarium_oxysporum
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GCA_003113895.1_outgroup2

135 140 145 150 155 160 165 170
 ANI **V**I SAG **G**M **F**GI **I**LVE **P**EE EGL PEVDH**E**FY**L**GQHE**E**LY**Y**TNGKGQKGHH EFD FTR MAME D P
 VKM **M**D **H**VL SG **G**MY GLT **I**IVDP**P**ID GYNADALE**E**FT**L**QYNQQL**Y**L . . . TPEGNYDAGKMF GHQN
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 APVGM **H**IANG **G**MY **G**LILVE **P**EGGLPAVD**E**YY**I**MQGD**D****F**Y**Y**TKGKG DQGLQAF DMDKAVKEQP
 PSPIPH **H**IANG **G**MY **G**AI **L**IVE **P**VGG LKKVDK**E**FY**V**VQSE**E**FY**Y**TKDGKKGD TLEFSFENG LAEH P
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 PMVAC **H**ITNG **G**MY **G**LILVE **P**EGGLAPV**D**H**E**FY**V**MQGE**E**LY**Y**TASPGERGLHEFSL DMLL RETP
 PGVPW **H**VTSGM **N**GAMMVL**P**RDGLK VYDK**V**YY**V**GEQ**D****F**Y**Y**VPKDTAGDAYQDVLQVMRTLT P
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 GWASI **H**IAK **G**MY **G**AI **I**IVE **P**YNGLPYS**D****V**Y**I**IQSE**E**I**Y**MHYPTPNLHNTFDDIKERYEMS
 GPVPS **H**ISNG **G**MY **G**LM LVE **P**EEGLPKVD**E**FY**V**MQSE**E**FY**Y**CEPS DDPKLMEHSYANGLDEKP
 APVPU **H**IANG **G**MY **G**LM YV**Q****P**eed LPPV**D**K**E**YY**V**MQSE**E**FY**Y**HEP PRRSDTVEFSYPNGLREEP
 MPLEB **H**ISH **G**LY **G**VF **I**VD**P**KIPRP . QADE**E**MV**M**VLNG**F**DT D FDTE N
 EPVTH **H**IAK **G**LY **G**MF **I**ID**P**PT . ARPPA**E**MV**L**VMG**G****Y**D VNDDSHN

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190
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Globobulimina_pacifica
GCA_000004985.1_Naegleria_gruberi
GCA_014843455.1_2_Fusarium_oxysporum
GCA_000204585.1_4_outgroup1

Fig. S1 Representative NirS alignment. Yellow boxes represent >70% conserved residues and red boxes represent identical residues. Numbered red boxes mark characteristic conserved motifs (I, III, IV, V, VII and IV distinguish NirS from NirN and NirF) and blue boxes mark functionally important residues, and asterisks beneath alignment mark specific residues where nirS can be differentiated from NirF and NirN. Notably, motif I on the *cyt_c* domain was generally characterised by -CaGCHg- in NirS, motif VI by -LHD- (vs. -PyD- in NirF and -LDD- in NirN), and motif VII at the *cyt_{d1}* domain is identified by the universal absence of a proline in the third position in NirN and NirF (i.e. -PHpGpG- vs. PH!PgeG). Clade 1c: *Hydrogenophilales* sp.; clade 3: *Sulfurimonas paralvinellae*; clade 4: *Calidifontibacillus erzurumensis*; clade 1d: *Brocadia* sp. WS118; clade 1e: *c. Magnetaquicoccus inordinatus*; clade 1a: *Stutzerimonas stutzeri*; clade 1f: *Delta proteobacteria bact. GWA2_43_19*; clade 5: *Levilinea saccharolytica*; clade 1h: *Scalindua brodae*; clade 1j: *Thermus oshimai*; clade 1b: *Thauera linaloolentis*; clade 2: *Methylomicrobium album*; clade 6: candidatus *Methylomirabilis oxyfera*; clade 1g: *Roseiflexus castenholzii*; clade 1k: *Colwellia psychrerythraea*; halophilic archaea NirS-like: *Natrinema pellirubrum*. The Fig. was prepared in ESPscript/ENDscript.

Sequence logo showing the conservation of amino acids at each position of the NirF protein across various bacterial genomes. The x-axis shows positions 7.0, 8.0, 9.0, 10.0, 11.0, 12.0, and 13.0. The y-axis lists bacterial species and NirF/NirN genes.

Position	7.0	8.0	9.0	10.0	11.0	12.0	13.0
GCA_013703155	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
GCA_014905135	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
GCA_013303125	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
GCA_007618135	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
GCA_004217665	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
GCA_002339675	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
GCA_001797355	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
GCA_001050255	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
GCA_000786775	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
GCA_000373145	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
GCA_000310205	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
GCA_000214275	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
GCA_000091165	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
GCA_000017805	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
GCA_000012325	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
GCA_000230735	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
NirF	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
NirN	R	R	R	R	R	R	R

Sequence alignment of NirF and NirN proteins. The alignment shows conservation of amino acids across the sequence. A scale bar at the bottom indicates positions 140, 150, 160, 170, 180, and 190. A green box highlights a conserved motif in the NirF sequence.

Sequence	140	150	160	170	180	190							
GCA_016703155 Hydrogenophilales sp.	VLK.	TGFAVHI	SR.FSK	S.	GRYLYT	TGRDGLINL	IDLW	METP.TT	VATIR	TGS	DARSIDT	SKYK.	GYDDK
GCA_014905135 Sulfurimonas paralvinellae	KHP.	AGFAVHV	TVTNKRO	O.	PRYAYSI	ISRSGLVTM	FDLASKGO.	OKIAO	CVGSESRGLAV	SP.	DHHTILDG	DRFEPPIA	DGK

The figure displays a multiple sequence alignment of NirF and NirN proteins from various bacterial species. The sequences are color-coded by amino acid type. Two regions are highlighted: Region IV (positions 200-220) and Region V (positions 230-250). A green box highlights a conserved motif in Region IV, and a blue box highlights a conserved motif in Region V.

Species	Region IV Motif	Region V Motif
GCA_001050255 Levilinea saccharolytica	ASYRAHGYS	MGRDGWFK
GCA_000786775 Scalindua brodae	SGYAVHI	GRYVY
GCA_000373145 Thermus oshimai	TGFATHILR	GRYFMA
GCA_000310205 Thauera linaloolentis	SGYAVHIS	GRYVY
GCA_000214275 Methylomicrobium album	TNAAAHI	PRWAY
GCA_000091165 C. Methylomirabilis oxyfera	IDYNPAN	KNDTAEI
GCA_00017805 Roseiflexus castenholzii	TGFAVHSR	GRYMY
GCA_00012325 Colwellia psychrerythraea	SGYAVHITR	GRYAY
GCA_000230735 Natrinema pellirubrum*	MSAT	IGRDGKLA
NirF		IDLW
NirN		IDLW

VI

	280	290	300	310	320
GCA_000214275 Methylomicrobium album	I	LHDG	W	S	KLAA
GCA_000091165 C. Methyloirabilis oxyfera	R	Y	Y	VVD	NV
GCA_000017805 Roseiflexus castenholzii	P	W	Y	VVD	SLVA
GCA_000012325 Colwellia psychrerythraea	P	W	Y	VVD	QMV
GCA_000230735 Natrinema pellirubrum*	P	W	Y	VVD	QMV
NirF					
NirN					
GCA_016703155 Hydrogenophilales sp.	.	NLKTTE	I	NT	NT
GCA_014905135 Sulfurimonas paralvinellae	.	YPIVGD	R	RYFLVAAN	MGVVD
GCA_013303125 Calidifontibacillus erzurumensis	.	AEKGFP	I	RYLMQASQ	VKE
GCA_007618135 Brocadia sp. WS118	.	PIIHD	Y	GYDNT	KLVSQM
GCA_004217665 c. Magnetaquicoccus inordinatus	.	GGVGR	H	TKPSLLKLDG	IVAVD
GCA_002339675 Stutzerimonas stutzeri	.	LHDG	F	MAVVD	KLAAIV
GCA_001797355 Deltaproteobacteria bact. GWA2_43_19	.	AFFDD	SG	VKE	KLVKNI
GCA_001050255 Levilinea saccharolytica	.	DAF	SK	IVAVD	QV

Sequence logo showing conservation across 12 bacterial species. The top part shows a sequence alignment with color-coded conservation (green for conserved, red for variable). A green box highlights a motif from position 330 to 380. Below the alignment, positions 330 through 380 are labeled. The bottom part shows a sequence logo for positions 330-380, with vertical bars indicating conservation probability for each amino acid at each position. Domains VII and VIII are indicated above the logo.

Sequence alignment of NirF and NirN proteins. The top part shows the full alignment with a red box highlighting a conserved motif: P-H-P-G-P-G-A-N-W. An asterisk (*) marks a position in the NirF sequence where a stop codon is present. The bottom part shows a secondary alignment from residue 390 to 440, with a red box highlighting a motif: I-W-V-D.

IX

	450	460	470	480	490
GCA_016703155 Hydrogenophilales sp.	EYNKA G DE VWFSVW GPK.....NGESA LVVMD DK T RKLKAV I KDKR L V TPTGKFN				
GCA_014905135 Sulfurimonas paralvinellae	EPAH G HWTM ISEW NA.....GRIGIYEAK T GKFVKY I K..GLT TPTFTYS				
GCA_013303125 Calidifontibacillus erzurumensis	EFTKD G KF VYVALW EG.....NCVLVYTPDGN.LVKK I E..GT TPTGIFS				
GCA_007618135 Brocadia sp. WS118	EYNKD G DE VWISVW DK.....QGE IIVFD DK T LTEKAR I NDQR L V TPTGKFN				
GCA_004217665 c. Magnetaquicoccus inordinatus	EYNKE G DE MWLSLW DK.....EGE IVIDD DK T HQEKAR I T..GLN TPTGKFN				
GCA_002339675 Stutzerimonas stutzeri	EYNEA G DE VWFSVW SGQ.....EEPSA IVVVD DK T LKLKKV I KDKR L I TPTGKFN				
GCA_001797355 Deltaproteobacteria bact. GWA2_43_19	EYNKA G TE VWVAVW DK.....AGE LVIYD DK T TLKEKSR I KGDW L V TPTGHFN				
GCA_001050255 Levilinea saccharolytica	EFTAD G KF VYIADW DG.....DIVRVYNAET T FEKVAE I T..GIH TPTGIFN				
GCA_000786775 Scalindua brodae	EYNKA G DE VWVSVW GNLGDADKGQAGE IIVYD DK T LTEKTRIK..NL L TPTGKFN				
GCA_000373145 Thermus oshimai	EFNKGG G TE IWVSAW GSK.....DTPTF IVVYD AL T LKKEKARI I TGDW V R TPTGKFN				
GCA_000310205 Thauera linaloolentis	EYNKA G DE VWISLW GGK.....ADQSA IIVYD DK T LKVQVITDPE V I TPTGKFN				
GCA_000214275 Methylomicrobium album	EYSAD G KY LYVSAG YN.....GDEVAVFDSTSLEKVAAP...ME SPAGIFS				
GCA_000091165 C. Methylomirabilis oxyfera	EFNKAG G DE VWISVW GGK.....DGKSE IVVYD DK T LQEKARI I DDPR I I TPTGKFN				
GCA_000017805 Roseiflexus castenholzii	EYNAAG G TE VWVSIW GDAS..KPGTGE IVVYD DA T LTEKARI I P..NL V TPTGKFN				
GCA_000012325 Colwellia psychrerythraea	EFNND G SE VWVSVW NRKD..AKNPTGE IVVYD AK T LKELHRIK..GLT TPTGKFN				

Fig. S2 Representative NirK alignment. Yellow boxes represent >70% conserved residues and red boxes represent identical residues. Green boxes mark characteristic conserved motifs differentiating NirK from other MCOs (**HniDfH-** (or **-HniSfH-** in clade 5; [91]) rather than **HtiHFH-** in motif I; **YHCap-** instead of **-YHCHvm-** in motif II; **-trpHvIG-** instead of **-insfHlHG-** in motif IV; and **-GiYAydH-** instead of **GkYmFHAH-** in motif V), and blue boxes mark functionally important residues. From top to bottom, the sequences represent: clade 1c: *Haloferax denitrificans*; clade 4: *Nitrosoarcheum sp.*; clade 5: *Thioalkalivibrio thiocyanoxidans*; clade 4: *Nitrososphaera viennensis*; Clade 7: *Nitrospira nitrificans*; clade 1g: *Fusarium oxysporum*; cladeless anammox: *Scalindua rubra*; clade 8: *Paenibacillus amylolyticus*; clade 3: *Propionibacterium australiense*; clade 11: *Burkholderia mallei*; clade 1a: *Nitrosomonas oligotropha*; clade 9: *Rhodanobacter glycinis*. The Fig. was prepared in ESPscript/ENDscript.

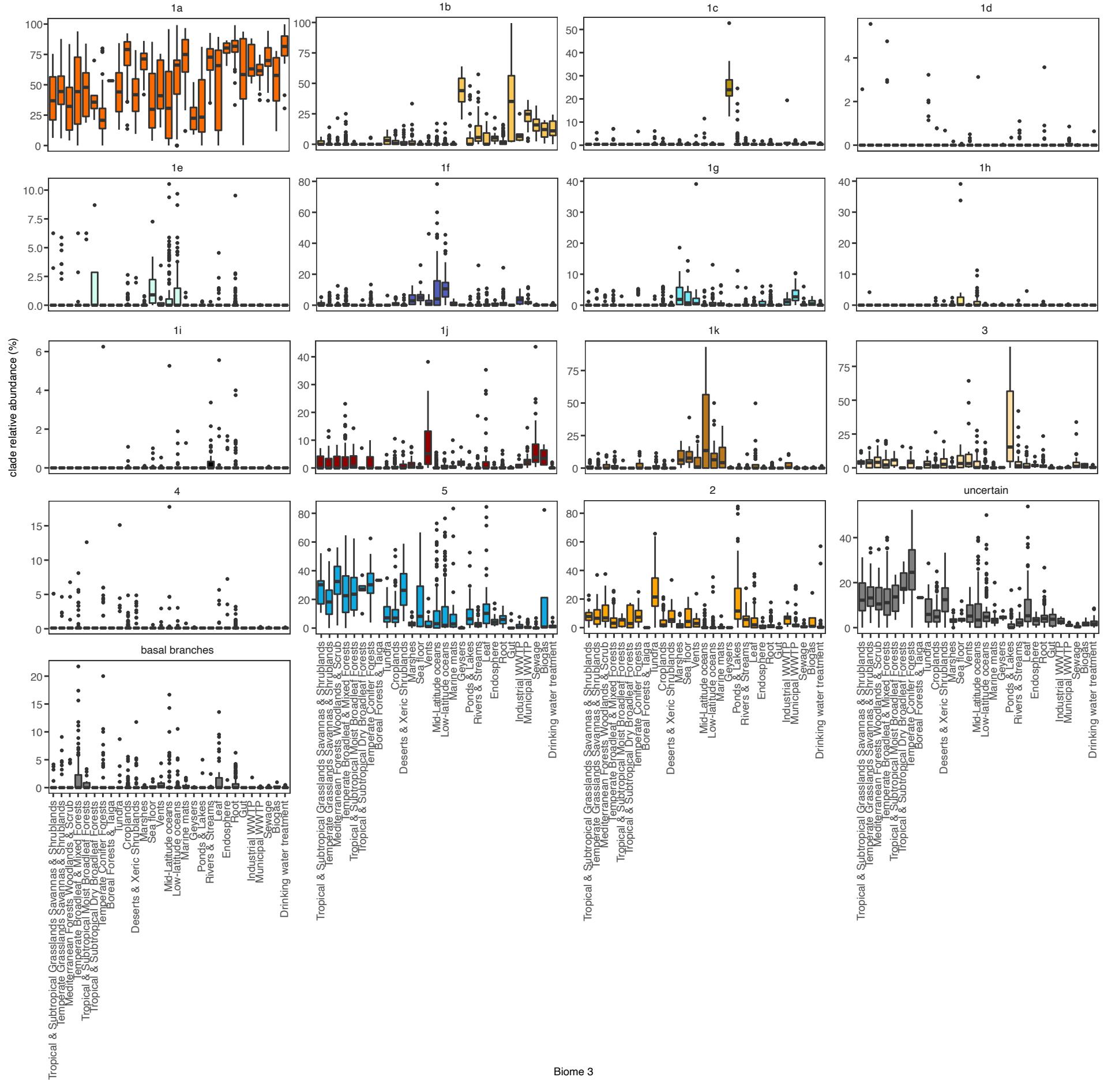


Fig. S3 Relative abundance of *nirS* clades in metagenomes from various biomes. Basal branches indicate the best placement for a read occurred in regions of the phylogeny not belonging to a specific clade. Unknown indicates best placements was distributed across multiple clades. Remaining clades follow Fig. 2. Boxplots show median and quartiles, and whiskers show 95 percentiles, and values outside 95 percentiles are shown as points. Please note differences in y-axis scale across plots.

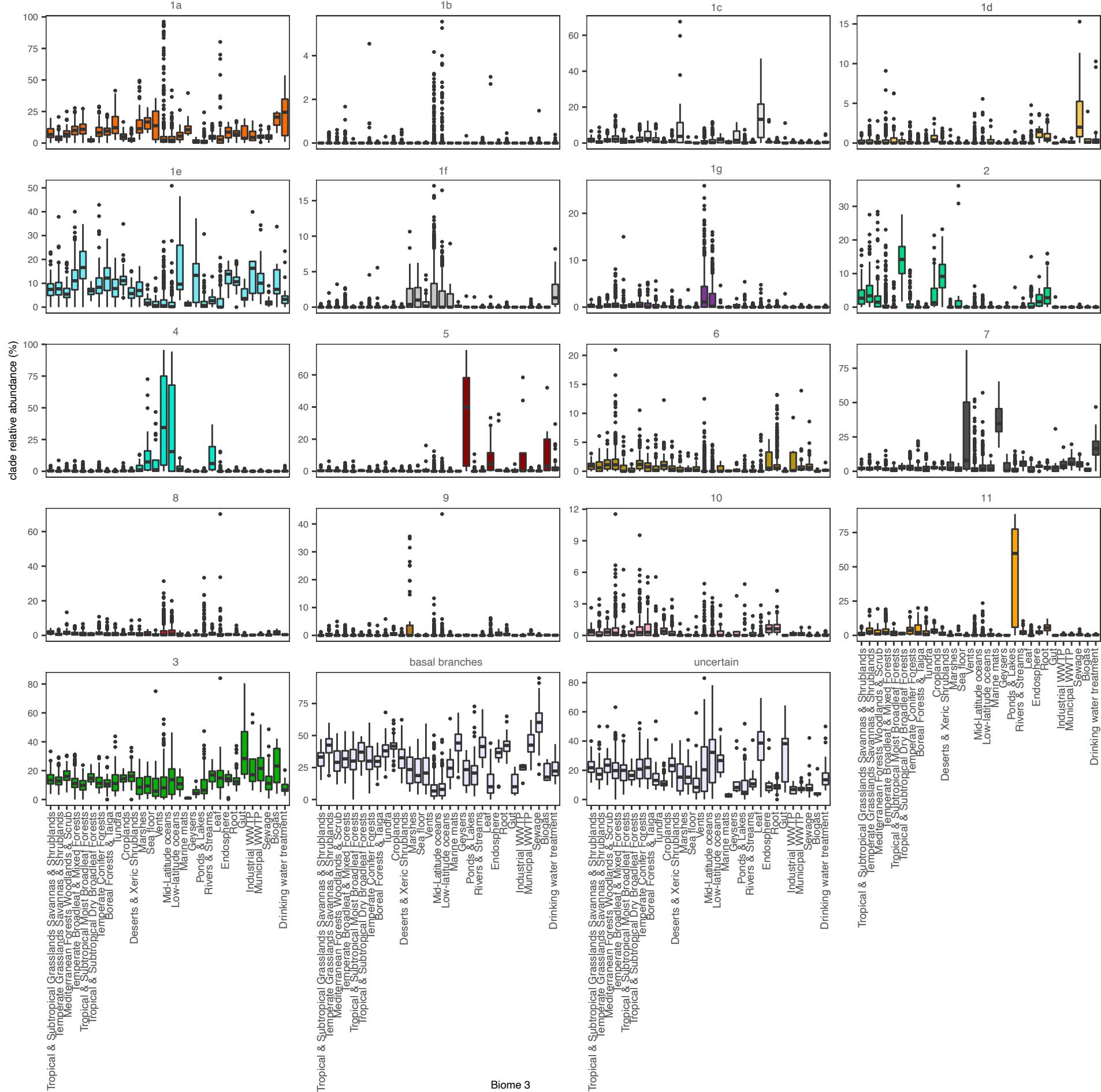


Fig. S4 Relative abundance of *nirK* clades in metagenomes from various biomes. Basal branches indicate the best placement for a read occurred in regions of the phylogeny not belonging to a specific clade. Unknown indicates best placements was distributed across multiple clades. Remaining clades follow Fig. 1. Boxplots show median and quartiles, and whiskers show 95 percentiles, and values outside 95 percentiles are shown as points. Please note differences in y-axis scale across plots.