

## Supplementary Information

### **CD25890, a conserved protein that modulates sporulation initiation in *Clostridioides difficile***

Diogo Martins<sup>1</sup>, Michael A. DiCandia<sup>2</sup>, Aristides L. Mendes<sup>1</sup>, Daniela Wetzel<sup>2</sup>, Shonna M. McBride<sup>2</sup>, Adriano O. Henriques<sup>1</sup> and Mónica Serrano<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Instituto de Tecnologia Química e Biológica António Xavier, Avenida da República, 2780-157 Oeiras, Portugal

<sup>2</sup>Department of Microbiology and Immunology, Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, Georgia, USA

**\*Corresponding author:** Telf. +351-21-4469524; Fax. +351-21-4411277; e-mail address: [serrano@itqb.unl.pt](mailto:serrano@itqb.unl.pt)

**Running title:** Modulation of sporulation initiation in *C. difficile*

**Key words:** Sporulation; *Clostridioides difficile*; Spo0A; YicC-family protein

## Supplementary Information

Figure S5 to S7 correspond to full-length Coomassie-stained gels and full-length blots displayed in Figures 3 to 4.

### Supplementary figures legends

**Figure S1. Genomic signature of sporulation. A:** The inner circle contains the signature defined as those genes present in 90% of sporulating bacteria and in no more than 10% of the remaining bacterial species <sup>1</sup>. The outer circle has the remaining genes identified in a genomic signature of sporulation within the human intestinal microbiome <sup>2</sup>. Both signatures are enriched with known sporulation-associated genes involved in spore morphogenesis and germination. Genes not specifically associated with a sporulation stage or uncharacterized genes are shown inside the circles. The positions of the genes are shown in degrees in the *C. difficile* 630 chromosome. The *CD25890* gene is a signature gene not previously characterized (blue arrow). **B:** Neighbourhood analysis of genes surrounding *CD25890* in the genomes of the indicated sporulating bacteria. Genes are colour coded to indicate conservation in the various genomes. Grey genes are not conserved with other genomes in the *CD25890* neighbourhood.

**Figure S2. Construction of the  $\Delta CD25890$  in-frame deletion mutant using allele-coupled exchange (ACE). A:** PCR fragments A, B and C were obtained with primers pairs P2/P3, P1/P4 and P3/P4, respectively. PCR fragments D and E were obtained with primers P5/P6. Note that following the initial single reciprocal cross-over, only the integration represented first (of the two possible orientations represented) was obtained. The shorter *CD25890* gene (in yellow) represents the allele with an in-frame deletion of codons 5 to 291 of the 293-codon open reading frame. **B:** PCR analysis of the parental 630 $\Delta erm$  strain in comparison

with the *CD25890* deletion mutant ( $\Delta CD25890$ ) and the *CD25890* in trans complementation strain ( $CD25890^C$ , with a copy of the *CD25890* gene at the *pyrE* locus). PCR analysis was performed using the primer pair P3/P4 (for *CD25890* locus verification) and P5/P6 (for *pyrE* locus verification). The position and sizes of the expected products is shown on the right side of the panel (red arrows). The position on molecular size markers (M, in bp) is shown on the left side of the panel.

**C:** Quantification of the expression of the indicated genes (*dapF*, *CD25890* and *gmk*) by qRT-PCR in the WT,  $\Delta CD25890$  mutant and the complemented strain. The graph shows the fold change of the differential expression of *dapF*, *CD25890* and *gmk* between the  $\Delta CD25890$  or the complemented strain and the WT.

**Figure S3. Disruption of the  $\Delta CD25890$  gene has no effect on growth, biofilm formation or toxin production.** **A:** Mean values of the OD<sub>600</sub> measured after crystal violet staining of the mass of biofilm obtained after 24 h in the absence or in the presence of DOC (final concentration of 240  $\mu$ m). One-way ANOVA was performed to determine statistically significant differences. The data represent the mean  $\pm$  SD of at least three independent experiments performed in triplicate. **B:** The WT and the  $\Delta CD25890$  and  $\Delta tcdAB$  mutants were grown in TY and samples were collected 8, 10, 12 and 14 hours after inoculation. Extracts were prepared and proteins (15  $\mu$ g) resolved by SDS-PAGE and subjected to immunoblotting using an anti-TcdA antibody (upper panel). In the bottom panel the same extracts were loaded in a SDS-PAGE and subjected to Coomassie blue staining, as a loading control. The position of molecular weight markers (in kDa) is indicated on the left side of the panels and the arrow on the right indicates the position of TcdA. The parenthesis indicates possible degradation products. **C:** Samples of an SM liquid culture of the wild type strain (WT, 630  $\Delta erm$ ), the  $\Delta CD25890$  mutant and the complementation strain ( $CD25890^C$ ) were collected at 14 hours after inoculation,

stained with the membrane dye FM4-64 and examined by phase contrast and fluorescent microscopy. The numbers in the panels are the percentage of sporulating cells. Data shown are from one representative experiment in which at least 100 cells were analysed for each strain. Scale bar, 1  $\mu\text{m}$ . Images were acquired by Metamorph<sup>TM</sup> (version 5.8; Molecular Devices) **D**: The optical density of cultures of the WT and the  $\Delta CD25890$  strains was measured at 600nm in intervals of 2 hours until 20 hours hour after inoculation. The data represent the mean  $\pm$  standard deviation (SD) of three independent experiments.

**Figure S4. The  $\Delta CD25890$  phenotype in 70:30 sporulation medium. A:** Cells were grown in 70:30 sporulation medium plates and the titer of heat resistant spores and total viable cells measured 12 hours following inoculation. The data in the graph represent the mean and standard deviation of two independent experiments. **B:** Quantitative analysis of the fluorescence intensity (FI.) of *C. difficile* cells carrying a  $P_{spoOA}$ -SNAP<sup>Cd</sup> transcriptional fusion in the WT and congenic  $\Delta CD25890$  mutant. Only cells with no signs of sporulation were quantified. Cells that The cells were collected after 10 h of growth in liquid SM (left) or in plates of 70:30 sporulation medium (right) , stained with TMR-Star, and examined by fluorescence microscopy to monitor SNAP production. Data shown are from one experiment, and are representative of at least three independent experiments. The numbers in the legend represent the mean and the SD of fluorescence intensity. Images were analysed by Metamorph<sup>TM</sup> (version 5.8; Molecular Devices).

**Figure S5. Accumulation of CD25890 during growth.** Full-length Coomassie-stained gels (left) and full-length blots (right) for the panels A and B of Figure 3. The wild type strain (WT), the  $\Delta CD25890$  mutant, the complementation strain ( $CD25890^C$ ) (**A**) and the *spo0A* mutant (**B**) were grown in SM and samples

were collected at 6, 8, 10 and 12 hours after inoculation for western blot analysis using anti-CD25890 antibody (The parenthesis indicates the position of cross-reactive species).

**Figure S6. Increased expression of *spo0A* in the  $\Delta$ CD25890 mutant.**

Full-length Coomassie-stained gels (left) and full-length blots (right) for the panel C of Figure 4. **A and B:** Samples were collected from the wild type strain (WT), the  $\Delta$ CD25890 mutant and the complementation strain (*CD25890<sup>C</sup>*) grown in liquid SM, at the indicated times after inoculation. Extracts were prepared and proteins (15  $\mu$ g) resolved by SDS-PAGE and subjected to immunoblotting using an anti-Spo0A antibody (The parenthesis indicates the position of cross-reactive species, \* degradation products).

**Figure S7. Phosphorylation of Spo0A in the  $\Delta$ CD25890 mutant.**

Full-length blots for the panels A and C of Figure 5. **A:** Samples were collected from the WT and the  $\Delta$ CD25890 mutant grown in liquid SM, at the indicated times after inoculation. Extracts were prepared and proteins (15  $\mu$ g) resolved by Phos-tag SDS-PAGE and subjected to immunoblotting using an anti-Spo0A antibody. In panel B the same extracts were loaded in a SDS-PAGE and subjected to immunoblotting using an anti-FliC antibody, as a loading control. **C:** Extracts were prepared from liquid SM cultures of the *P<sub>tet</sub>-spo0A* and  $\Delta$ CD25890 *P<sub>tet</sub>-spo0A* strains grown in the presence (50 nM) or in the absence of anhydrotetracycline, 8 hours after inoculation. Proteins (15  $\mu$ g) were resolved by Phos-tag SDS-PAGE and subject to immunoblotting using an anti-Spo0A antibody. In **A** and **C:** The faster migrating bands (black arrows) show the unphosphorylated form of Spo0A (Spo0A), and the slower migrating bands indicate the phosphorylated form of Spo0A (Spo0A~P). The samples heated at 100°C for 5 min were loaded as a control for the position of unphosphorylated Spo0A.

## **Supplementary Tables**

**Table S1 – Sporulation efficiency of the  $\Delta CD25890$  mutant.** The total viable cell count and the spore titer was determined 12, 24, 48 and 72 hours following inoculation into SM sporulation medium. The heat resistant spore counts were determined by assessing the CFU/ml before and after incubation at 70°C for 10 min. The results shown are averages and standard deviations for three biological replicates.

	12h		24h		48h		72h	
	Total viable cells	Spore titer	Total viable cells	Spore titer	Total viable cells	Spore titer	Total viable cells	Spore titer
WT	$1.6 \times 10^8 \pm 7.4 \times 10^7$	$7.5 \times 10^3 \pm 9.8 \times 10^2$	$1.7 \times 10^8 \pm 8.7 \times 10^7$	$1.0 \times 10^4 \pm 1.2 \times 10^3$	$8.5 \times 10^7 \pm 1.1 \times 10^7$	$1.3 \times 10^5 \pm 5.1 \times 10^4$	$1.0 \times 10^7 \pm 1.3 \times 10^6$	$1.7 \times 10^5 \pm 5.8 \times 10^4$
$\Delta CD25890$	$1.6 \times 10^8 \pm 2.8 \times 10^7$	$3.1 \times 10^4 \pm 5.3 \times 10^3$	$1.3 \times 10^8 \pm 6.5 \times 10^7$	$8.5 \times 10^4 \pm 6.2 \times 10^4$	$3.0 \times 10^7 \pm 2.1 \times 10^7$	$1.5 \times 10^6 \pm 1.0 \times 10^5$	$3.0 \times 10^7 \pm 9.8 \times 10^6$	$2.2 \times 10^6 \pm 1.2 \times 10^6$
$CD25890^C$	$1.6 \times 10^8 \pm 7.1 \times 10^6$	$1.8 \times 10^4 \pm 7.8 \times 10^3$	$2.3 \times 10^8 \pm 1.4 \times 10^8$	$1.5 \times 10^4 \pm 6.8 \times 10^3$	$3.0 \times 10^7 \pm 1.7 \times 10^7$	$7.8 \times 10^4 \pm 2.0 \times 10^4$	$1.0 \times 10^7 \pm 5.3 \times 10^6$	$6.0 \times 10^4 \pm 2.0 \times 10^4$

**Table S2– Sporulation efficiency of the *P<sub>tet</sub>-spo0A* alleles in the wild-type and the  $\Delta CD25890$  mutant.** The total viable cell count and the spore titer was determined 24 hours following inoculation into SM sporulation medium supplemented with 50 nM of anhydrotetracycline. The heat resistant spore count by determining the cfu/mL obtained after treatment at 70°C. The results shown are averages and standard deviations for three biological replicates.

	Total viable cells	Spore titer <sup>141</sup>
WT <i>P<sub>tet</sub>-spo0A</i>	$2.1 \times 10^7 \pm 1.3 \times 10^6$	$6.8 \times 10^6 \pm 1.3 \times 10^5$
$\Delta CD25890$ <i>P<sub>tet</sub>-spo0A</i>	$2.2 \times 10^7 \pm 1.6 \times 10^6$	$7.6 \times 10^6 \pm 1.7 \times 10^5$









GeneID	Base mean	log2 (FC)	StdErr	Wald-Stats	p-value	p-adj	Gene ID	Counts-y1	Counts-y2	Counts-wt1	Counts-wt2	GeneID	
CD630_20541	3388,689	2,4491154	0,328855	7,447397	9,52E-14	9,42E-12	CD630_205	985,2646	973,1704	5167,241	6429,08	CD630_205	hypothetical protein
EBG0000117568	961,005	2,7381324	0,386394	7,086382	1,38E-12	9,72E-11	EBG000011	284,592	162,4099	2010,694	1386,325	EBG00001175680	
CD630_33790	495,9061	2,3011964	0,359443	6,402122	1,53E-10	7,12E-09	CD630_337	143,1966	165,6323	922,9811	751,8145	CD630_337	conjugative transposon protein
CD630_33830	950,2159	2,1386087	0,34484	6,201741	5,58E-10	2,37E-08	CD630_338	364,746	294,5291	1700,611	1440,978	CD630_338	ATPase
CD630_06052	5175,903	2,0030469	0,335211	5,975476	2,29E-09	8,12E-08	CD630_060	2224,501	1684,68	9098,995	7695,435	CD630_060	hypothetical protein
EBG0000117567	719268,1	2,0929505	0,352718	5,933782	2,96E-09	1,00E-07	EBG000011	274987,9	236343,8	1468729	897011,4	EBG00001175675	
CD630_00370	820,193	2,0215244	0,345894	5,844355	5,09E-09	1,66E-07	CD630_003	267,4804	342,2209	1368,725	1302,345	CD630_003	acetoin dehydrogenase E1 component subunit beta
CD630_33911	1006,281	2,0876129	0,369923	5,643375	1,67E-08	4,73E-07	CD630_339	368,3485	342,8653	2088,214	1225,698	CD630_339	hypothetical protein
CD630_33800	329,6459	2,1228161	0,378394	5,610072	2,02E-08	5,49E-07	CD630_338	120,6814	106,3398	625,0108	466,5516	CD630_338	cell wall hydrolase
CD630_28720	185,5775	2,2579327	0,405231	5,57196	2,52E-08	6,43E-07	CD630_287	53,13584	62,51492	336,7306	289,9285	CD630_287	uxaA-D-galactate dehydratase/altronate hydrolase
CD630_11031	562,9563	2,1024641	0,380489	5,525683	3,28E-08	7,96E-07	CD630_110	169,3142	222,3469	1141,008	719,1559	CD630_110	Transposon protein
CD630_01721	78572,74	2,0393905	0,37383	5,455399	4,89E-08	1,16E-06	CD630_017	37355,4	19806,27	144699,7	112429,6	CD630_017	ferredoxin
CD630_33810	774,1556	2,0296647	0,373064	5,440521	5,31E-08	1,25E-06	CD630_338	261,1762	304,1963	1579,485	951,7652	CD630_338	pseudogene
CD630_31001	297,999	2,1744729	0,403365	5,390838	7,01E-08	1,59E-06	CD630_310	111,6753	84,42737	615,3207	380,5728	CD630_310	hypothetical protein
CD630_26000	5442,931	2,2008025	0,416131	5,28872	1,23E-07	2,62E-06	CD630_260	2106,521	1402,397	5278,677	12984,13	CD630_260	cstA Carbon starvation IID
CD630_14150	246,4029	2,7815404	0,537831	5,171777	2,32E-07	4,52E-06	CD630_141	40,52734	54,13663	750,982	139,9655	CD630_141	membrane protein
CD630_33350	146,735	2,1940253	0,458296	4,787356	1,69E-06	2,61E-05	CD630_333	33,32248	58,00354	307,6604	187,9536	CD630_333	conjugative transposon protein
CD630_28700	103,0117	2,1143094	0,45109	4,687115	2,77E-06	4,03E-05	CD630_287	32,42187	36,09109	169,5766	173,9571	CD630_287	2-keto-3-deoxygluconate permease
CD630_33780	52,93474	2,3099151	0,566148	4,080057	4,50E-05	0,00044	CD630_337	9,006075	18,04554	118,7036	65,98372	CD630_337	conjugative transposon protein
CD630_03700	58,67486	2,0357824	0,523691	3,887375	0,000101	0,000857	CD630_037	22,51519	16,75658	84,78829	110,6394	CD630_037	HTH-type transcriptional regulator
CD630_20451	55,0322	2,2873115	0,646369	3,538706	0,000402	0,002697	CD630_204	5,403645	19,33451	164,7315	30,6591	CD630_204	hypothetical protein

**Table S3. Summary of RNA-Seq data analysis.**

**Table S4– Sporulation efficiency of the *P<sub>tet</sub>-sinRR'* alleles in wild type and  $\Delta CD25890$  mutant.** The total viable cell count and the spore titer were determined 24 hours following inoculation into sporulation medium supplemented with 50 nM of anhydrotetracycline. The heat resistant spore count by determining the cfu/mL obtained after treatment at 70°C. The results shown are averages and standard deviations for three biological replicates.

	Total viable cells	Spore titer
WT vector	$1.2 \times 10^8 \pm 5.8 \times 10^6$	$5.1 \times 10^5 \pm 2.0 \times 10^5$
$\Delta CD25890$ vector	$1.2 \times 10^8 \pm 2.5 \times 10^7$	$1.8 \times 10^6 \pm 2.5 \times 10^5$
WT <i>P<sub>tet</sub>-sinRR'</i>	$1.0 \times 10^8 \pm 2.0 \times 10^7$	$1.7 \times 10^6 \pm 2.1 \times 10^5$
$\Delta CD25890$ <i>P<sub>tet</sub>-sinRR'</i>	$1.2 \times 10^8 \pm 1.0 \times 10^7$	$2.2 \times 10^6 \pm 1.5 \times 10^5$

**Table S5. Bacterial strains used in this study.**

Strain	Genotype and phenotype	Origin/Construction
<b><i>E. coli</i></b>		
BL21	<i>ompT gal dcm lon hsdS<sub>B</sub>(r<sub>B</sub><sup>-</sup>m<sub>B</sub><sup>-</sup>) λ(DE3 [lacI lacUV5-T7p07 ind1 sam7 nin5]) [malB<sup>+</sup>]<sub>K-12</sub>(λ<sup>S</sup>)</i>	Laboratory Stock
DH5α	<i>fhuA2 lac(del)U169 phoA glnV44 Φ80' lacZ(del)M15 gyrA96 recA1 relA1 endA1 thi-1 hsdR17</i>	Laboratory Stock
HB101 (RP4)	<i>supE44 aa14 galk2 lacY1 Δ (gpt-proA) 62 rpsL20 (Str<sup>R</sup>)xyl-5 mtl-1 recA13 Δ (mcrC-mrr) hsdS<sub>B</sub>(r<sub>B</sub><sup>-</sup>m<sub>B</sub><sup>-</sup>) RP4 (Tra<sup>+</sup> IncP Ap<sup>R</sup> Km<sup>R</sup> Tc<sup>R</sup>)</i>	Laboratory Stock
<b><i>C. difficile</i></b>		
AHCD 536	630Δ <i>erm</i> Δ <i>spo0A</i>	3
AHCD591	630Δ <i>erm</i> <i>tcdAB::ermB</i>	4
AHCD607	630Δ <i>erm</i> P <sub><i>spo0A</i></sub> -SNAP <sup>Cd</sup>	This work
AHCD772	630Δ <i>erm</i> Δ <i>pyrE</i>	5
AHCD1014	630Δ <i>erm</i> Δ <i>pyrE</i> Δ <i>CD25890</i>	This work
AHCD1055	630Δ <i>erm</i> Δ <i>CD25890 pyrE::CD25890</i>	"
AHCD1077	630Δ <i>erm</i> Δ <i>CD25890</i>	"
AHCD1142	630Δ <i>erm</i> Δ <i>CD25890</i> P <sub><i>spo0A</i></sub> -SNAP <sup>Cd</sup>	"
AHCD1190	630Δ <i>erm</i>	"
AHCD1263	630Δ <i>erm</i> Δ <i>CD25890</i> P <sub><i>tet</i></sub> - <i>gusA</i>	"
AHCD1272	630Δ <i>erm</i> P <sub><i>tet</i></sub> - <i>gusA</i>	"
AHCD1274	630Δ <i>erm</i> Δ <i>CD25890</i> <i>spo0A::P<sub>tet</sub>-spo0A</i>	"
AHCD1279	630Δ <i>erm</i> <i>spo0A::P<sub>tet</sub>-spo0A</i>	"
AHCD1484	630Δ <i>erm</i> P <sub><i>tet</i></sub> - <i>sinRR'</i>	"
AHCD1590	630Δ <i>erm</i> Δ <i>CD25890</i> P <sub><i>tet</i></sub> - <i>sinRR'</i>	"

**Table S6. Oligonucleotide primers used in this study.**

Name	Sequence (5' to 3')
CD25890_AscI_Fwd	ACAGGCGCGCCATAGAAGATTTTCTGTAGGAG
CD25890_LHA_Rev	ATTCTTACTCTATACTTATAGCCATTAATTAACCTCC
CD25890_RHA_Fwd	ATAGAGTAAGAATACAATATTAGAAGGGG
CD25890_SbfI_Rev	CTTCCTGCAGGCTCTTTGAAACAGTCCCTAC
CD25890_Fwd_BamHI	GAAGGATCCG TAGATACATTAGATGG
CD25890_Rev_XhoI	CAACTCGAGCTTTTCCTGCACCTGATGG
P1	TTCTTTCTATTCAGCACTGTTATGC
P2	CATCAAGAAGAGCGACTTCG
P3	GCAATAGATGGAAGATTCGACC
P4	GCTACACATACAGGCTTTTCC
P5	CAATAATTTTATAACATTAACATGG
P6	ATTTACATTTTTTAAGTAACAC
CD25890_Fw	<u>CGGAATTC</u> GATATAAAAAATAAATCCTTACC
CD25890_Rev	<u>CACAATCTTTATCCATTAATTAACCTCCAAAATACC</u>
SNAP_SOE_Fw	ATGGATAAAGATTGTGAAATGAAGAGAACC
XhoI_SNAP_Rev	<u>CCGCTCGAGTTACCCAAGTCCTGGTTTCCCAAACG</u>
CDspo0A_598D	<u>GCTAGGATCCTTAATGGGTAATTC</u>
CDspo0A_SNAP_Rev	CCCCATTA AAAA <u>ACTCGAGTCTTATTACAGA</u>
CD25890 970D	<u>GGAATTC</u> CATATGTGAAGGTATTTTGGAGG
CD25890 1920R	ATAAGAAT <u>GCGGCCGCC</u> CACAAACATTTAAGCATTCCCC
CD25890_BamHI_Fw	<u>CGGGATCCGATGGCTATAAGTATGACTGG</u>
CD25890_NotI_Rev	<u>GCGGCCGCTTACTCTATATTTTGTATTTGTTC</u>
IMV503	<u>CCC</u> GAGCTCTAATCTAAAGTGGAGGGATA
IMV505	<u>C</u> CGGATCCTACTCATTAGCACTATAAGACAAT

Underlined sequences represent introduced restriction sites.

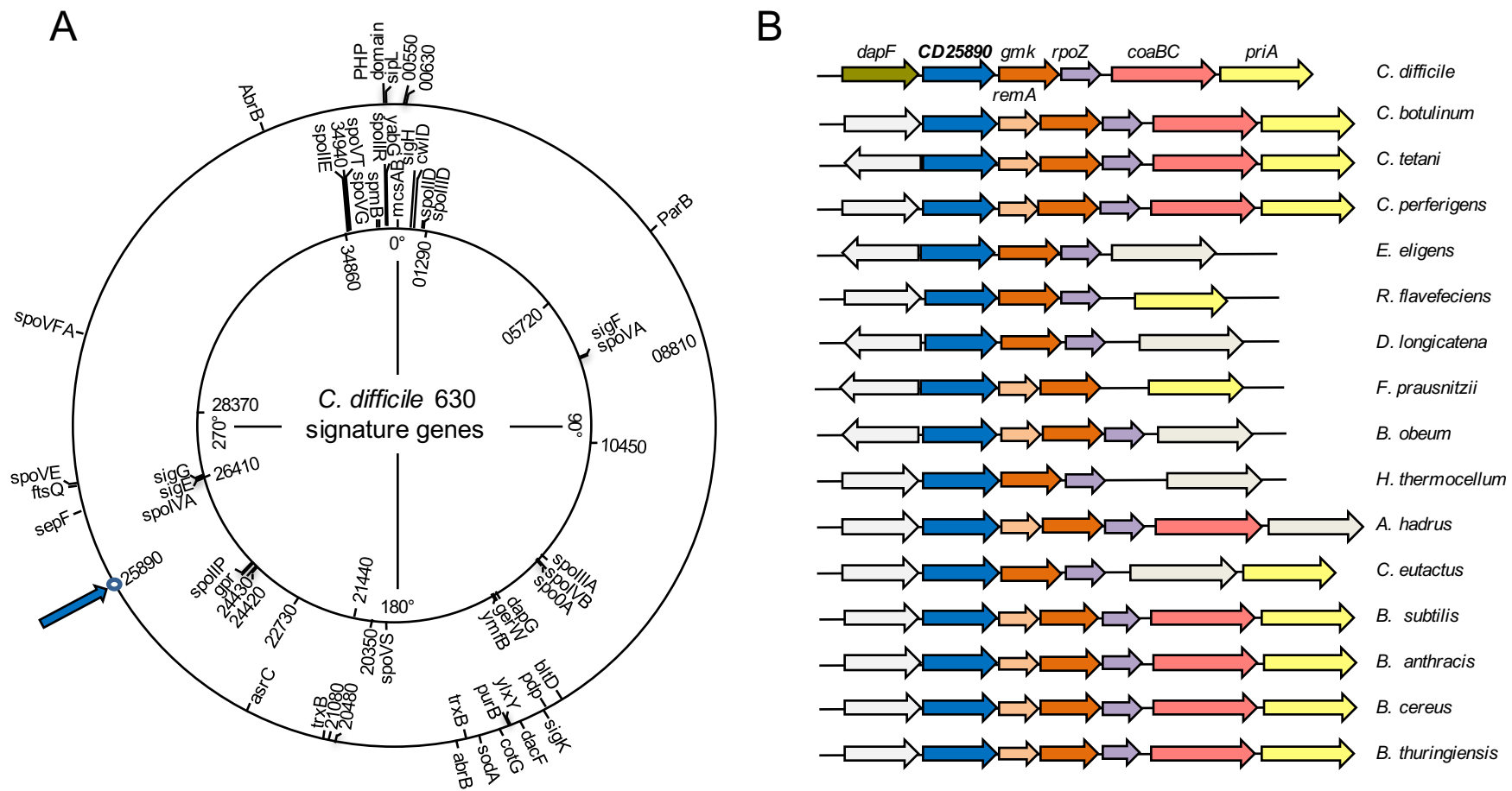
**Table S7. Plasmids used in this study.**

Plasmid	Relevant genotype	Origin
pFT47	pMTL84121- <i>SNAP<sup>Cd</sup></i> (Cm <sup>R</sup> /Tm <sup>R</sup> )	6
pMTL84121	<i>Clostridia</i> modular plasmid; <i>catP</i> (Cm <sup>R</sup> /Tm <sup>R</sup> )	7
pMTL-YN3	Plasmid for mutant construction through ACE methodology (Cm <sup>R</sup> /Tm <sup>R</sup> )	5
pMTL-YN1	Plasmid for $\Delta$ <i>pyrE</i> reversion through ACE methodology (Cm <sup>R</sup> /Tm <sup>R</sup> )	5
pMTL-YN1C	Plasmid for <i>in trans</i> complementation of mutants (Cm <sup>R</sup> /Tm <sup>R</sup> )	5
pMLD138	pMTL-YN3- <i>P<sub>tet</sub></i> - <i>spo0A</i>	8
pRPF185	Plasmid with the tetracycline-inducible promoter <i>P<sub>tet</sub></i>	9
pAM25	pMTL84121 - <i>P<sub>tet</sub></i>	This work
pAM37	pMTL-YN3 containing homology regions for $\Delta$ <i>CD25890</i> construction (Cm <sup>R</sup> /Tm <sup>R</sup> )	"
pAM38	pMTL-YN1C containing <i>CD25890</i> (Cm <sup>R</sup> /Tm <sup>R</sup> )	"
pDIA5972	pRPF185 containing <i>sinRR'</i> (Cm <sup>R</sup> /Tm <sup>R</sup> )	"
pDM35	pETDuet-1- <i>CD25890</i> (Amp <sup>R</sup> )	"
pMS463	pFT47- <i>P<sub>spo0A</sub></i> - <i>SNAP<sup>Cd</sup></i> (Cm <sup>R</sup> /Tm <sup>R</sup> )	"

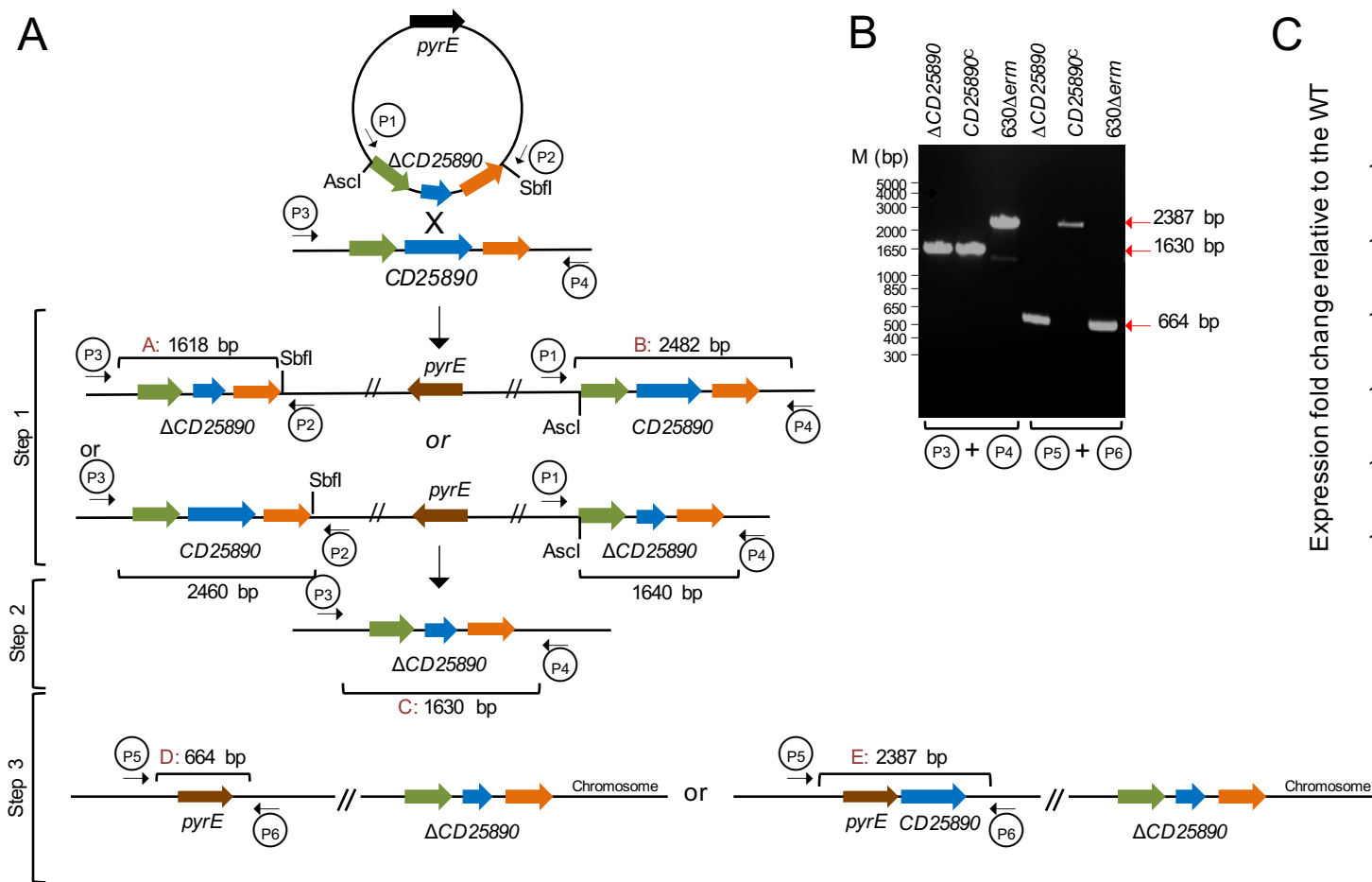


## Supplementary References

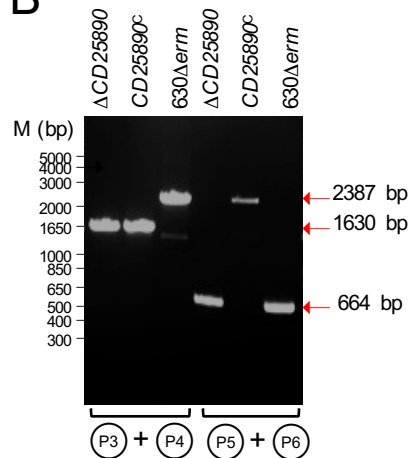
- 1 Abecasis, A. B. *et al.* A genomic signature and the identification of new sporulation genes. *J Bacteriol* **195**, 2101-2115, doi:JB.02110-12 [pii] 10.1128/JB.02110-12 (2013).
- 2 Browne, H. P. *et al.* Culturing of 'unculturable' human microbiota reveals novel taxa and extensive sporulation. *Nature* **533**, 543-546, doi:10.1038/nature17645 (2016).
- 3 Saujet, L., Monot, M., Dupuy, B., Soutourina, O. & Martin-Verstraete, I. The key sigma factor of transition phase, SigH, controls sporulation, metabolism, and virulence factor expression in *Clostridium difficile*. *J Bacteriol* **193**, 3186-3196, doi:JB.00272-11 [pii] 10.1128/JB.00272-11 (2011).
- 4 Kuehne, S. A. *et al.* The role of toxin A and toxin B in *Clostridium difficile* infection. *Nature* **467**, 711-713, doi:nature09397 [pii] 10.1038/nature09397 (2010).
- 5 Ng, Y. K. *et al.* Expanding the repertoire of gene tools for precise manipulation of the *Clostridium difficile* genome: allelic exchange using pyrE alleles. *PLoS One* **8**, e56051, doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0056051 PONE-D-12-24523 [pii] (2013).
- 6 Pereira, F. C. *et al.* The spore differentiation pathway in the enteric pathogen *Clostridium difficile*. *PLoS Genet* (2013).
- 7 Heap, J. T., Pennington, O. J., Cartman, S. T. & Minton, N. P. A modular system for *Clostridium* shuttle plasmids. *J Microbiol Methods* **78**, 79-85, doi:10.1016/j.mimet.2009.05.004 (2009).
- 8 Dembek, M. *et al.* Inducible Expression of spo0A as a Universal Tool for Studying Sporulation in *Clostridium difficile*. *Front Microbiol* **8**, 1793, doi:10.3389/fmicb.2017.01793 (2017).
- 9 Fagan, R. P. & Fairweather, N. F. *Clostridium difficile* has two parallel and essential Sec secretion systems. *J Biol Chem* **286**, 27483-27493, doi:10.1074/jbc.M111.263889 (2011).



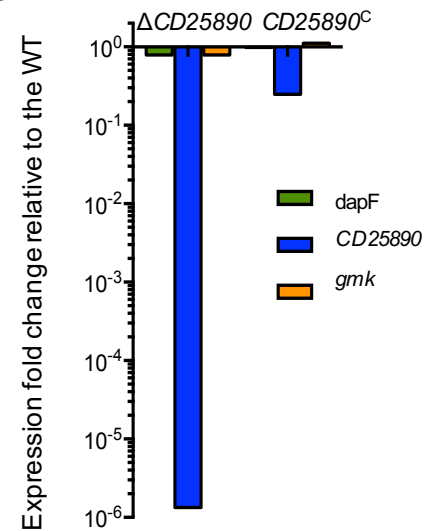
**A**

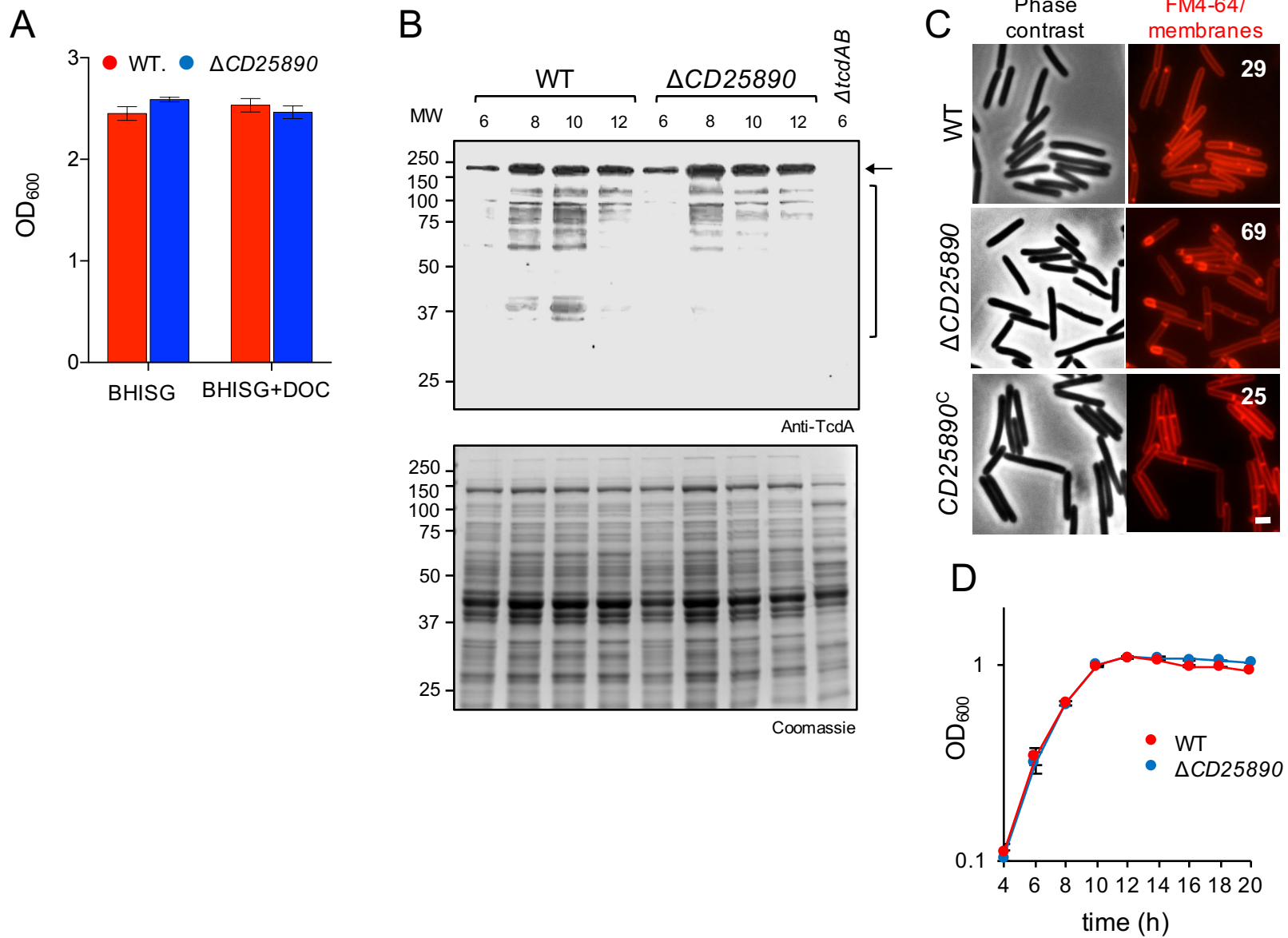


**B**



**C**





Martins *et al.* – Figure S4

