

IN SILICO APPROACH TO STUDY SEQUENCE ALIGNMENT, PREDICTION OF PRIMER AND HOMOLOGY MODELLING

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ABSTRACT

The aim of present study is to check the relationship between different nucleotide sequences of viruses belongs to Flaviviridae family retrieved from NCBI Database. The studied parameters include Sequence alignment, prediction of condensed primers and Homology modeling construction. The Clustal series of programs are widely used in molecular biology for the multiple sequence alignment and for constructing phylogenetic trees from nucleotide sequences. Choosing appropriate primers is probably the single most important factor affecting the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) process. Primer-BLAST offers adaptable choices to change the specificity threshold and other properties. This tool is useful to predict conserved primers in

nucleotide query sequence. Three-dimensional structure of protein predicted by using Homology modeling study. This homology modeling prediction performed by a webtool Swiss model that uses amino acid sequences as an input query in workspace. This modeling study provides valuable information about 3D structure of models and their target template sequence alignment as well model coordination. In this pursuit, all the prediction studied parameters proceeds in silico.

KEYWORDS: Homology modeling, NCBI database, Primer-BLAST, Sequence alignment.

INTRODUCTION

The genus of Flaviviridae family, Flavivirus possesses Single-stranded +ve sense RNA. This genus is arthropod-borne and often link between arthropod vectors () and vertebral animal hosts.^[1] The genus Flavivirus comprises many important viruses such as Yellow fever virus, tick-borne encephalitis, zika virus, West Nile virus, apoi virus, palm creek virus, Dengue

virus, and Parramatta river virus.^[2,3] Among them, yellow fever virus, Zika virus, Edge hill virus and apovirus are targeted for this present focus, these flaviviruses transmitted by the bite of the infection of female mosquitoes *Aedes aegypti*. Common symptoms associated with the infection of this virus include headache, fever, nausea vomiting, fatal, heart, liver and kidney disease, rash, joint pain, and red eyes, fatigue, loss of appetite etc.^[4]

Sequence alignment is the best way to assess the relationship between query sequences. This process is helpful to count the percentage of nucleotide, identical and similar nucleotides in terms of % of sequence identity & sequence similarity.^[5] Among them, many tools or software are useful to study sequence alignment such as Clustal Omega, Kalign, MAFFT, MUSCLE, MView, T-Coffee, etc. Among them, Clustal Omega is one of the useful additions to the Clustal family. It is a multiple sequence alignment program that uses techniques to generate alignments between three or more sequences. It helps to study biologically important multiple sequence alignments of divergent sequences. The phylogenetic relationships can be view in the form of Cladograms or Phylograms.^[6,7]

Including different types of sequence alignment, MSA is the technique with the advantages of carrying alignment between multiple nucleotide sequences.^[8] Primer is the sequence of RNA where DNA polymerase can bind and initiated its replication. Due to prime importance of primer in PCR reaction or amplification process, selection of best suitable and template specific primer is the first step in need. Here in this study, Primer-BLAST is helped to predict available primer in searched queries.^[9]

PCR is a common method for DNA multiplication or DNA amplification applicable in many fields such as genetic diagnosis, biomedical testing, molecular research as and forensic study, etc. The PCR product affected by many other conditions such as components of PCR mixtures, DNA template, reaction conditions, concentration of enzymes as well as template specific primer. Among them, Primer designing is one of the critical factors.^[10,11]

Homology modeling is the method to generate a reliable, accurate and precise three-dimensional structure of protein.^[12,13] Protein characterization prediction, shared region of homology modeling^[14], determination of consequence, prediction of secondary and tertiary structures of new query sequence, molecular evolution study, phylogenetic study^[8] and construction of cluster hierarchy by this techniques.^[15] The output of homology modeling display 3D structure of model and their target template sequence alignment. It also shows the

model coordination details and sequence features/scoring schemes for better understanding of 3D molecular view.^[16,17]

The objective of the present study is to check the sequence similarities between targeted nucleotide sequences by multiple sequence alignment. Primer prediction study carried out by using primer BLAST. And further, selected nucleotide sequences converted into amino acid sequences by using EMBOSS Transeq. And lastly, homology modeling study carried out by using amino acid sequences as a query in SWISS Model.

SEQUENCE RETRIEVAL FROM NCBI

A total of 4 different Flavivirus have selected from NCBI (National Center for Biotechnology Information) database for this study. The accession id of this Selected query are S71025.1 (Yellow fever virus envelope protein (E) gene, partial cds), KX893855.1 (Zika virus/Homo sapiens/VEN/UF-2/2016), AF275877 (Edge Hill virus strain P1553 NS5 protein gene, partial cds) and NC_003676 (Apoi Virus). After query searched in nucleotide database, FASTA tool can be observed in the obtained output (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/nucleotide/?term=>). The nucleotide sequences were obtained in the FASTA file format by entering accession id as an input in FASTA software.^[18]

SEQUENCE ALIGNMENT

A sequence alignment study carried out by using BLAST. BLAST (Basic Local Alignment Searching Tool) is an algorithm-based tool for finding out the regions of similarities or differences. The functional and evolutionary relationship between targeted sequences and to find member of gene families can be done by BLAST. The alignment study of DNA, RNA or protein sequence can be carried out by using different web BLAST such as Blastn, tblastn, Protein BLAST respectively. Among them, Blastn (nucleotide BLAST) that is used to compare four nucleotide sequence with each other. Blastn can be accessed on <https://blast.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/Blast.cgi>. Here selected nucleotide sequence or downloaded FASTA sequence file used as an input to complete alignment study prediction.^[19,20]

PRIMER PREDICTION

Nowadays, there are many tools useful for this purpose such as Primer-BLAST, Quant Prime, NetPrimer, AutoPrime, SFOLD, RF-Cloning, etc. In which, the Primer-BLAST program is run on a farm of machines at the NCBI to provide faster and more reliable service to users. In order to expand the chance of discovering specific primer pairs, at least one primer (for a

given primer pair) ought to be situated in regions where the PCR template. The Primer-BLAST program is useful to check the target specificity of the generated primer pairs. It is a combination of Primer3 and BLAST. The former one is used to generating the candidate primer pairs for a given template sequence. And the latter one is used to check specificity of matches between the primers and targets. Primer-BLAST is a tool to find specific primers to PCR template. Same as BLAST selected nucleotide sequence or downloaded FASTA sequence used as an input in this tool. This tool can be accessed on <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/tools/primer-blast/>.^[21]

HOMOLOGY MODELLING STUDY

Homology modelling requires amino acid or peptide sequence as a query input. EMBOSS (European Molecular Biology Open Software Suite) is a huge collection of tools for molecular biology. Among all the tools, EMBOSS Transeq is a helpful program to translate nucleotide sequences into their corresponding peptide sequences.^[22]

This homology modeling prediction was performed on the webserver SWISS-MODEL (<https://swissmodel.expasy.org/>). Protein homology modeling can be prepared at different levels of complexity, tools for template selection, model construction, and build structure quality evaluation.^[23] Different parameters such as Oligo state, Ligands, GMQE, QMEAN, C β , Solvation, Torsion, Template, Sequence identity, Protein description used to build homology modeling of searched sequence.^[24,25]

SEQUENCE ALIGNMENT STUDY

In this study, selected nucleotide sequences for different viruses downloaded from nucleotide database NCBI. This sequences with its accession id and no. of total base pairs tabulated in table no. 1. In alignment study, the output of Clustal W showed multiple sequence alignment between sequence no. 1 to 4. Predicted alignment score between each pair tabulated in table no. 2. The maximum alignment score was 63% found between sequences 2 and 4(2:4) and the minimum score was 4% found between sequences 2 and 3(2:3). Whereas the total alignment score was 33185 that predicted by ClustalW.

PRIMER PREDICTION

Primer BLAST predicts basic characteristics such as Length of total base sequence, start and stop (initiation and termination) number of frame, melting temperature (T_m), GC content, self complementarity, etc. The outcome for searched query sequences tabulated in table no. 3-

6.

HOMOLOGY MODELLING

A comparative modelling study of proteins was carried out by using web server tool Swiss Model. In this study, it requires amino acid sequence or peptide sequence as an input. This query sequence obtained by translating nucleotide sequence of selected virus strains by using EMBOSS Transeq web tool. In model evaluation, output revealed different parameters such as GMQE, QMEAN, Oligo state, Ligands, and comparison plot. This model also expressed data about Global quality estimate and local quality estimate that recorded in table no. 7. Homology modeling prediction for all targeted sequences reported in model no. 1-4.

GMQE also is known as Global Model Quality Estimation, is quality estimation that Combines properties of the target-template alignment and the template search method. Out of 4 sequences, 3rd sequence showed higher scoring value compared to others. Composite estimator QMEAN worked on the basis of different geometrical properties and provides both global and local absolute quality estimation on the basis of one single model. QMEAN Z-score provides an estimate of the degree of nativeness in the model on a global scale. QMEAN Score for sequence 3rd found -1.56, which showed good agreement between model structure and experimental structures of similar size.

In the model output, the white area in the bar plots indicates a numerical value close to zero that indicates the property is similar with experimental structure of similar size. The individual Z-scores interaction potential between c β atoms only, all atoms, the solvation potential, and the torsion angle potential. The found estimation represented in figure no. 1-4.

In local quality plot, each residue of the model reported on x-axis and the expected similarity to the native structure reported on the y-axis. In the output sequence number 1, 2 and 4 indicated the residues showed a score value below 0.6, that expected to be of low quality whereas, in case of sequence 3, most of the residues showed scoring value above 0.6 that suggest being of good quality. In the comparison plot, model quality scores of individual models are related to scores obtained for experimental structures of similar size. The x-axis shows protein length (number of residues). The y-axis is the normalized QMEAN score. Experimental protein structure represented by every dot. The obtained data was recorded in figure no. 5-8. In the output, red star represented the actual model. Sequence 2 & 4 found light grey that shows experimental structure is even further from the mean. Whereas sequence

1 & 3 found grey that indicates experimental structures with a |Z-score| between 1 and 2.

The finding of the present study would help in broadening understanding of different Flaviviruses such as Zika virus, Yellow fever virus, Edge Hill virus, and Apoi Virus, in particular, understanding the sequence homology study, evolutionary relationship study, as well as protein prediction by homology modeling for further research perspectives and purposes, which is as yet not an established phenomenon. This study reflects expected accuracy and reliability of the quality estimation as well as better quality estimation of entire structure and per residue. Recently, new features of the ClustalW and Swiss model are also being uploaded which can be used for further research prediction analysis.

Table 1: Selected Nucleotide Sequences from NCBI Database.

Sequence No.	Nucleotide sequences	Accession ID	No. of Base Pairs
01	Apoi Virus	NC_003676	10166
02	Edge Hill virus strain P1553 NS5 protein gene, partial cds	AF275877	986
03	Yellow fever virus envelope protein (E) gene, partial cds	S71025.1	348
04	Zika virus/Homo sapiens/VEN/UF-2/2016	KX893855.1	10808

Table 2: Multiple Sequence Alignment Study.

Selected nucleotide sequences for alignment CLUSTAL 2.1 Multiple Sequence Alignments, Sequence format: Pearson	
Sequence 1: NC_003676.1 10116 bp	
Sequence 2: AF275877.1 986 bp	
Sequence 3: S71025.1 348 bp	
Sequence 4: KX893855.1 10808 bp	
Alignment score for different pair of sequence	
Sequences (1:2) Aligned. Score: 46	There are 3 groups Group 1: Sequences: 2 Score:4125 Group 2: Sequences: 2 Score:12049 Group 3: Sequences: 4 Score:14123 Alignment Score 33185
Sequences (1:3) Aligned. Score: 33	
Sequences (1:4) Aligned. Score: 31	
Sequences (2:3) Aligned. Score: 4	
Sequences (2:4) Aligned. Score: 63	
Sequences (3:4) Aligned. Score: 52	

Table 3: Output of Primer-Blast for Sequence 4 (NC_003676).

No	Accession No	Number of primers	No	Length	Start	Stop	Tm	GC%	Self complementarity	Self 3' complementarity
1	NC_003676.1	10	1	20	7886	7905	59.97	55.00	6.00	2.00
			2	20	8172	8153	60.03	55.00	4.00	2.00
			1	20	6859	6878	59.97	55.00	6.00	2.00
			2	20	7128	7109	59.97	50.00	3.00	0.00
			1	20	7840	7859	59.97	55.00	4.00	0.00
			2	20	8386	8367	59.96	55.00	4.00	1.00
			1	20	5502	5521	59.97	50.00	5.00	1.00
			2	20	6177	6158	59.97	55.00	2.00	2.00
			1	20	2901	2920	59.96	55.00	3.00	2.00
			2	20	3464	3445	59.97	55.00	3.00	0.00
			1	20	8859	8878	60.03	55.00	4.00	2.00
			2	20	9013	8994	60.04	55.00	3.00	1.00
			1	20	478	497	59.96	50.00	4.00	0.00
			2	20	1127	1108	60.03	55.00	3.00	0.00
			1	20	6158	6177	59.97	55.00	2.00	1.00
			2	20	7013	6994	59.96	60.00	7.00	3.00
			1	20	7835	7854	59.97	55.00	4.00	2.00
			2	20	8808	8789	60.04	55.00	2.00	1.00
			1	20	6996	7015	59.96	60.00	4.00	1.00
			2	20	7854	7835	59.97	55.00	4.00	0.00

Table 4: Output of Primer-Blast for Sequence 3 (AF275877).

No	Accession No	Number of primers	No	Length	Start	Stop	Tm	GC%	Self complementarity	Self 3' complementarity
2	AF275877	10	1	20	187	206	59.97	50.00	4.00	0.00
			2	20	943	924	59.97	55.00	2.00	1.00
			1	20	3633	3652	59.97	55.00	3.00	2.00
			2	20	3717	3698	60.03	55.00	4.00	3.00
			1	20	3257	3276	60.04	55.00	6.00	2.00
			2	20	3652	3633	59.97	55.00	3.00	2.00
			1	20	649	668	59.97	55.00	5.00	2.00
			2	20	821	802	60.03	55.00	5.00	2.00
			1	20	7368	7387	60.03	55.00	4.00	1.00

Hill Virus			2	20	7651	7632	60.03	55.00	3.00	3.00
			1	20	10111	10130	59.96	55.00	6.00	2.00
			2	20	10954	10935	60.03	55.00	3.00	3.00
			1	20	5334	5353	59.96	60.00	4.00	1.00
			2	20	5917	5898	60.04	55.00	4.00	0.00
			1	20	26	45	60.04	50.00	7.00	1.00
			2	20	397	378	60.03	55.00	4.00	2.00
			1	20	1451	1470	60.04	55.00	6.00	0.00
			2	20	2370	2351	60.03	55.00	3.00	2.00
			1	20	7790	4509	59.96	50.00	3.00	2.00
			2	20	5353	5334	59.96	60.00	4.00	3.00

Table 5: Output of Primer-Blast for Sequence 1 (S71025.1).

No	Accession No	Number of primers	No	Length	Start	Stop	Tm	GC%	Self complementarity	Self 3' complementarity
3	S71025	10	1	20	1701	1720	59.97	55.00	5.00	2.00
			2	20	2523	2504	59.97	55.00	5.00	3.00
			1	20	1929	1948	60.03	55.00	3.00	1.00
			2	20	2662	2643	60.03	55.00	6.00	3.00
			1	20	7353	7372	59.97	55.00	4.00	2.00
			2	20	8099	8080	60.03	55.00	4.00	2.00
			1	20	5771	5790	57.90	55.00	6.00	1.00
			2	20	6112	6093	60.03	60.00	5.00	2.00
			1	20	7692	7711	60.03	55.00	4.00	3.00
			2	20	8559	8540	59.97	55.00	6.00	2.00
			1	20	2753	2772	59.97	55.00	3.00	0.00
			2	20	3105	3086	60.03	55.00	6.00	1.00
			1	20	4200	4219	60.03	60.00	5.00	0.00
			2	20	4893	4874	60.03	55.00	5.00	3.00
			1	20	5775	5794	59.97	55.00	3.00	1.00
			2	20	6606	6587	59.96	60.00	6.00	2.00
			1	20	138	157	59.96	55.00	3.00	0.00
			2	20	295	276	60.03	55.00	2.00	0.00
			1	20	9899	9918	60.04	55.00	4.00	3.00
			2	20	10040	10021	60.04	55.00	3.00	3.00

Table 6: Output of Primer-Blast for Sequence 2 (KX893855.1).

No	Accession No	Number of primers	No	Length	Start	Stop	Tm	GC%	Self complementarity	Self 3' complementarity
4	KX893855.1	10	1	20	409	428	59.97	55.00	2.00	0.00
			2	20	690	671	59.97	60.00	4.00	2.00
			1	20	7824	7843	59.97	55.00	4.00	3.00
			2	20	8653	8634	59.97	55.00	3.00	2.00
			1	20	3562	3581	59.97	50.00	3.00	0.00
			2	20	4273	4254	60.04	55.00	4.00	1.00
			1	20	1463	1482	59.97	55.00	8.00	2.00
			2	20	2146	2127	60.04	50.00	3.00	2.00
			1	20	671	690	59.97	60.00	4.00	2.00
			2	20	1513	1494	59.97	55.00	5.00	0.00
			1	20	2127	2146	60.04	55.00	3.00	0.00
			2	20	2494	2475	59.97	50.00	4.00	0.00
			1	20	5431	5450	59.96	55.00	3.00	0.00
			2	20	5505	5486	60.04	55.00	4.00	0.00
			1	20	7326	7345	59.96	50.00	3.00	3.00
			2	20	7785	7766	59.97	50.00	4.00	0.00
			1	20	7326	7345	59.96	50.00	3.00	3.00
			2	20	7785	7766	59.97	50.00	4.00	0.00
			1	20	1034	1053	60.04	55.00	5.00	3.00
			2	20	1901	1882	60.04	60.00	4.00	0.00

Table 7: Comparison of Homology Modeling Prediction For Four Query Sequences.

NO.	ACCESSION ID.	OLIGO STATE	LIGANDS	GMQE	QMEAN	C β	SOLAVTION	TORSION	TEMPLATE	SEQUENCE IDENTITY	PROTEIN DESCRIPTION
1	NC_003676	MONOMER	2 X ZN	0.19	-1.84	1.42	-0.17	-1.50	6qsn.2.A	55.29%	GENOME POLYPROTEIN
2	AF275877	MONOMER	1 X ZN	0.81	-3.30	0.70	-2.53	-2.35	6qsn.2.A	69.91%	GENOME POLYPROTEIN
3	S71025.1	MONOMER	NONE	0.96	-1.52	0.90	-2.38	-0.34	2jqm.1.A	99.07%	ENVELOPE PROTEIN E
4	KX893855.1	MONOMER	NONE	0.02	-4.25	1.85	-2.00	-3.24	6fv0.1.A	17.19	Kinesin light chain 1, Torsion-1A

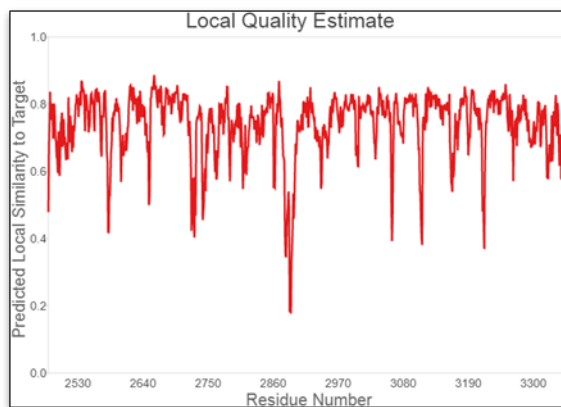


Fig. 1: Local quality estimation for sequence 1.

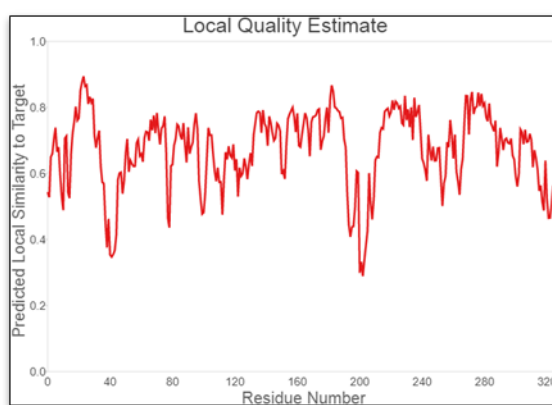


Fig. 2: Local quality estimation for sequence 2.

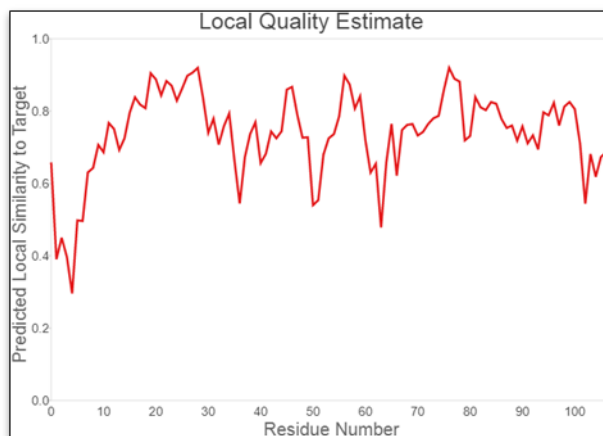


Fig. 3: Local quality estimation for sequence 3.

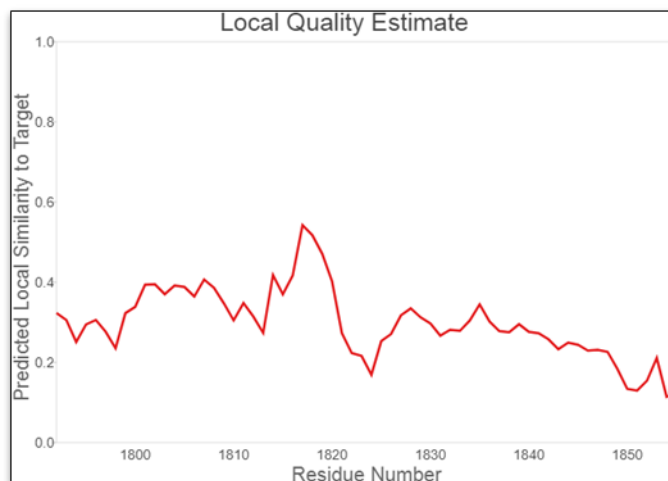


Fig. 4: Local quality estimation for sequence 4.



Fig. 5: Comparison chart for sequence 1.

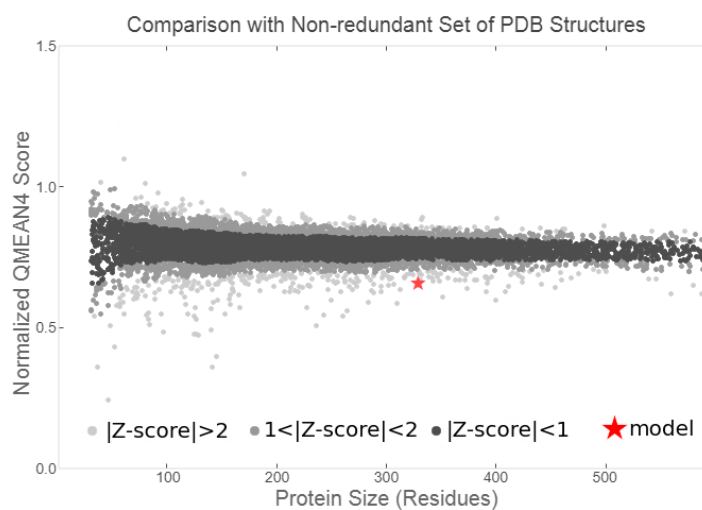


Fig. 6: Comparison chart for sequence 2.



Fig. 7: Comparison chart for sequence 3.

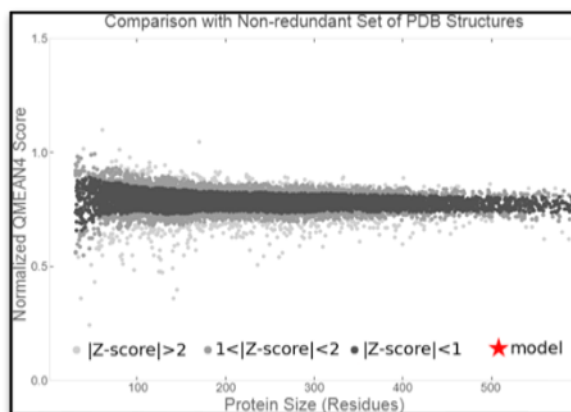
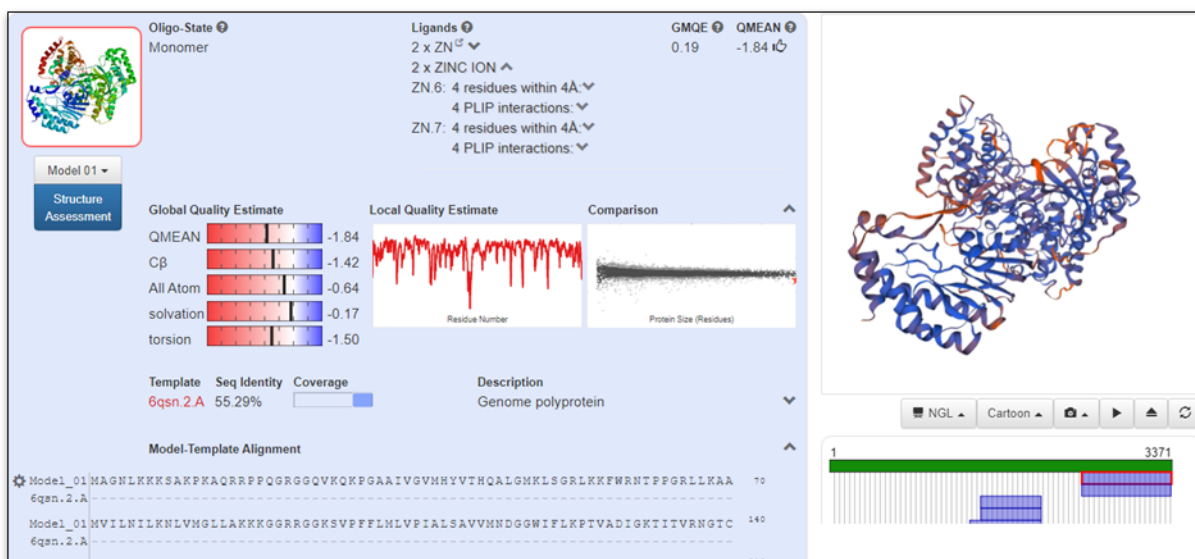
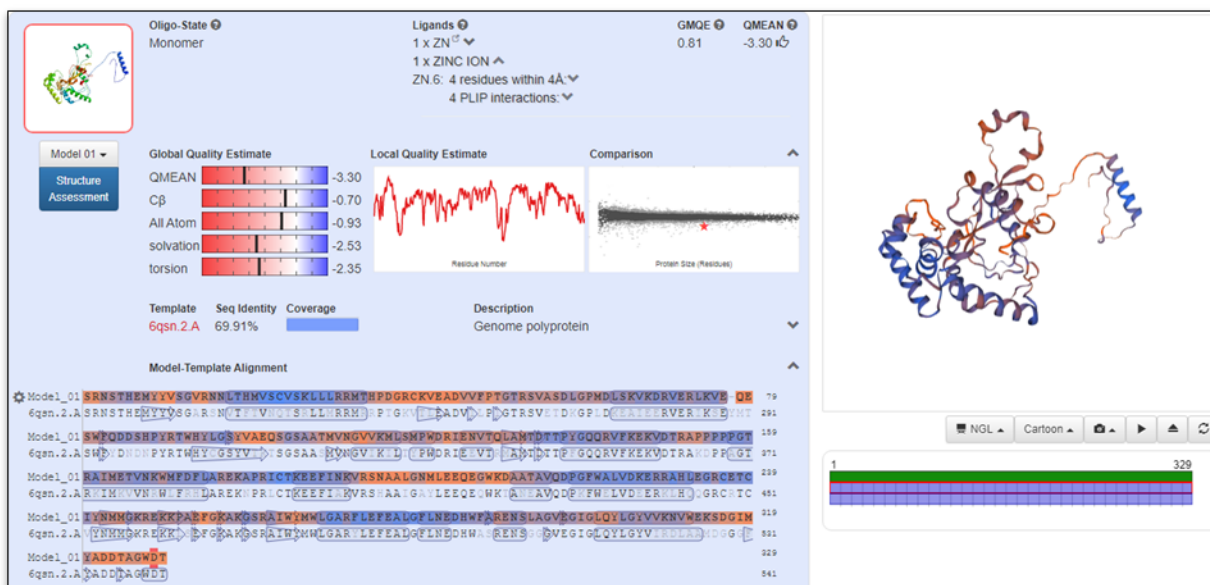


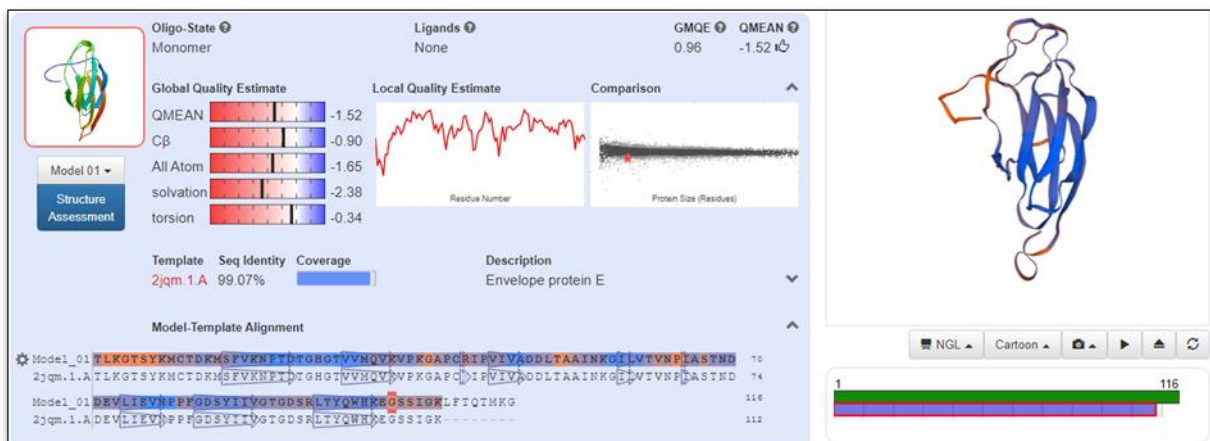
Fig. 8: Comparison chart for sequence 4.



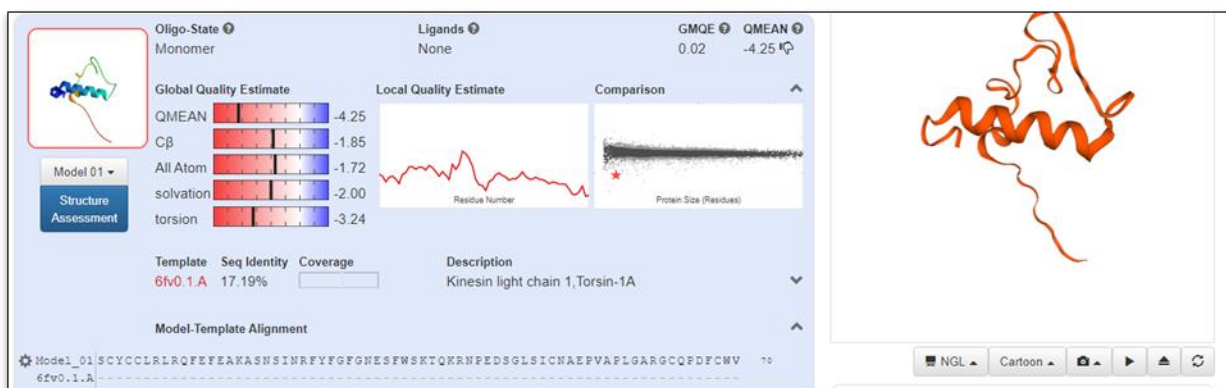
Model 1: Homology modelling prediction report for NC_003676.



Model 2: Homology modelling prediction report For AF275877.



Model 3: Homology modelling prediction report for S71025.1.



Model 4: Homology modelling prediction report for KX893855.1.

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