

## TRENDS IN BACTERIAL DIVERSITY STUDY AND ITS PROSPECTS

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*Bacteria are the most abundant and species-rich groups of organisms, and they mediate many critical ecosystem processes. In spite of the ecological importance of bacteria, past practical and theoretical limitations have limited our ability to study the patterns of bacterial diversity and to understand the processes that determine these patterns. Recent advances in molecular techniques have focused on multi-locus approaches and on combined analysis of molecular and ecological data. In this article we outline some molecular techniques used to document bacterial diversity in the environment.*

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