

Bacterial diversity associated with tungtap, an ethnic traditionally fermented fish product of Meghalaya

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Abstract: Fermentation process for preparing tungtap- a traditionally fermented fish product consumed by the ethnic tribes of Meghalaya, is carried out at room temperature for a period of 3-6 months under slightly acidic condition and the end product is consumed along with regular meals. Pre-salted fish (*Puntius* spp. or *Danio* spp.) is mixed with fish fats and packed in earthen pots and left for traditional fermentation for a period of six months. Bacterial diversity associated with this fermented fish product contained *Lactobacillus* sp., *Enterococcus faecalis*, *Enterococcus* sp., *Streptococcus* sp., *Micrococcus* sp., *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Staphylococcus saprophyticus*, spores forming *Bacillus* sp, *Bacillus subtilis*, *Bacillus cereus*, *Bacillus thuringiensis* and halophilic bacilli. Yeasts characterized from the samples belong to *Candida* and *Saccharomycopsis* species.

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