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***Mesonía oceanica* sp. nov., isolated from oceans during the *Tara* Oceans Expedition, with a preference for mesopelagic waters**

1.1 Author names

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1.4 Keyword

Mesonía, *Mesonía oceanica*, *Flavobacteriaceae*, marine bacteria, taxogenomics, mesopelagic zone

1.5 Repositories:

The accession number of *Mesonía oceanica* ISS653^T 16S rRNA gene sequence and draft genome are MH732189 and CABVMM01, respectively. The accession number of *Mesonía oceanica* ISS1889 16S rRNA gene is MN836382.

ABSTRACT

Strain ISS653^T, isolated from Atlantic seawater, is a yellow pigmented, non-motile, Gram-negative rod-shaped bacterium, strictly aerobic and chemoorganotrophic, slightly halophilic (1-15% NaCl) and mesophilic (4-37 °C), oxidase and catalase positive and proteolytic. Its major cellular fatty acids are iso-C_{15:0}, iso-C_{15:0} 2-OH, and iso-C_{17:0} 3-OH; the major identified phospholipid is phosphatidylethanolamine and the major respiratory quinone is MK6. Genome size is 4.28 Mbp and DNA G+C content is 34.9 mol%. 16S rRNA gene sequence similarity places the strain among members of *Flavobacteriaceae*, with the types of *Mesonía phycicola* (93.2 %), *Salegentibacter mishustinae* (93.1 %) and *Mesonía mobilis* (92.9 %) as

40 closest relatives. Average Amino acid Identity (AAI) and Average Nucleotide Identity (ANI)
41 indexes show highest figures with *M. mobilis* (81% AAI; 78.9% ANI), *M. phycicola* (76% AAI;
42 76.3% ANI), *M. maritima* (72 % AAI, 74.9 % ANI), *M. hippocampi* (64 % AAI, 70.8 % ANI) and
43 *M. algae* (68% AAI; 72.2 % ANI). Phylogenomic analysis using the Up-to-date-Bacterial Core
44 Gene set (UBCG) merges strain ISS653^T in a clade with species of the genus *Mesonía*. We
45 conclude that strain ISS653^T represents a novel species in the genus *Mesonía* for which we
46 propose the name *Mesonía oceanica* sp. nov., and strain ISS653^T (= CECT 9532^T = LMG
47 31236^T) as the type strain. A second strain of the species, ISS1889 (= CECT 30008) was
48 isolated from Pacific Ocean seawater. Data obtained throughout the *Tara* Oceans expedition
49 indicate that the species is more abundant in the mesopelagic dark ocean than in the photic
50 layer and it is more frequent in the South Pacific, Indian and Atlantic oceans.

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53 The genus *Mesonía* belongs to the *Flavobacteriaceae* [1], the bacterial family which includes
54 the largest number of genera to date, 153 according to LPSN [2]. Marine members of the
55 family *Flavobacteriaceae* play fundamental roles as complex organic matter degraders and
56 in the nutrient turnover in oceans, where many of them are found in association with
57 marine phytoplankton and algal live or detritic material [1, 3] and some display
58 proteorodopsin-based photoheterotrophy [3]. The genus *Mesonía* was established in 2003
59 to accommodate a group of algal-associated marine bacteria that were different from
60 *Salagentibacter* and other halophilic flavobacteria [4]. It currently contains eight species
61 with validly published names, all of them isolated from marine environments and
62 organisms: *Mesonía algae*, the type species [4], *M. mobilis* [5], *M. phycicola* [6], *M. ostreae*
63 [7], *M. aquimarina* [8], *M. hippocampi* [9], *M. sediminis* [10] and *M. maritima* [11]. The
64 genus is one of the many included in a recent phylogenomic study of the phylum
65 *Bacteroidetes* [12] and has not been affected by the reclassifications therein proposed.
66 From *Tara* Oceans expedition (2009–2013) [13] we have isolated in culture a large collection
67 of marine bacteria from different oceanographic regions and depths [14]. Based on such
68 isolation effort, here we present the description of a novel species in this family, based on
69 the phenotypic, genomic and phylogenetic study of the strains ISS653^T and ISS1889.

70

71 **Isolation**

72

73 Strain ISS653^T was isolated in September 2012 from surface seawater at the North Atlantic
74 Ocean (36°10'10.2"N 29°01'13.8"W). Sampling strategy and methodology have been
75 described previously [13]. Briefly, the isolate was obtained by plating 100 µl of undiluted
76 and 10x diluted seawater (pre-filtered by 200 µm and 20 µm meshes to remove large
77 plankton) in Marine Agar 2216 plates (BD Diagnostics). Plates were incubated at room
78 temperature (approximately 20°C) in the dark until no more colonies appeared (10-30 days).
79 Colonies that grew were streaked on agar plates in duplicate to ensure their purity and
80 avoid contamination. The isolates were stored in the broth medium used with glycerol (25%
81 v/v) in cryovials at -80°C. The culture was regrown on Marine Agar 2216 (BD Diagnostics) at
82 room temperature for 3 days. The strain has been maintained by lyophilisation at the
83 Spanish Type Culture Collection (CECT) as CECT 9532^T (= LMG 31236^T) where part of the
84 characterization was also conducted. A second strain of the species, ISS1889 (= CECT 30008),
85 was isolated during the same expedition from surface seawater of the Eastern Pacific Ocean

86 (5°15'36.0"S 85°10'04.1"W). A study, including phenotypic, genomic and phylogenetic
87 characterization of the strains was undertaken in order to define their taxonomic position.

88

89 16S RNA phylogeny

90

91 A partial (1328 bp) 16S rRNA gene sequence of strain ISS653^T was obtained after DNA
92 extraction as reported previously [15] and deposited under the accession number
93 MH732189. A BLAST search for the closely related taxa, based on this sequence, related the
94 strain to the family *Flavobacteriaceae* and revealed species of the genera *Salagentibacter*,
95 *Mesonía*, *Zunongwangia* and *Gramella* species as its closest neighbours, with sequence
96 similarities always lower than 93%. These values suggested that the strain represented a
97 novel taxon. At a different stage, the nearly complete 16S rRNA gene sequence of strain
98 ISS1889 (1425 bp) was obtained through already reported methods [15] and deposited
99 under accession number MN836382. It was found to be identical to that of ISS653^T,
100 suggesting that both strains could represent the same species.

101 The sequence (1530 bp) obtained from the genome draft of strain ISS653^T, described under
102 the next heading, was subsequently used for determining similarity values with the type
103 strains of closely related species [16] and also to reconstruct phylogenetic trees [17, 18]
104 using ARB. Closest neighbours based on 16S rRNA sequence similarity, as determined by the
105 Identifier tool of EzBiocloud [16] were: *Mesonía phycicola* (93.2 %), *Salagentibacter*
106 *mishustinae* (93.1 %), *Mesonía mobilis* (92.9 %), *Mesonía marítima* (92.9 %),
107 *Salagentibacter. salarii* (92.9 %) and *Mesonía aquimarina* (92.6 %). A phylogenetic tree
108 based on 16S rRNA gene sequences is shown in Fig. 1. It places strains ISS653^T and ISS1889
109 in the clade formed by species of the genus *Mesonía*, as a sister clade. The low 16S rRNA
110 gene similarities found and the position of the branch in the tree support the taxonomic
111 novelty of the strains at the species level and even suggest that they might represent a
112 novel genus in the family. However, genus boundaries are not defined as clearly as species
113 on genomic and phylogenetic grounds and a careful evaluation of all genomic and
114 phenotypic evidence is required for definition of a genus. We thus, explored some other
115 indexes and phylogenetic approaches to decide whether strains ISS653^T and ISS1889 should
116 be classified as representing a novel species of the genus *Mesonía* or as a novel genus in the
117 family *Flavobacteriaceae*.

118

119 Genome Features

120

121 A draft genome of strain ISS653^T was obtained through whole genome sequencing at Centre
122 Nacional d'Anàlisi Genòmica (CNAG) (<https://www.cnag.crg.eu/>) following procedures
123 described previously [15]. The libraries were sequenced on HiSeq 2500 (HiSeq Rapid SBS Kit
124 V2, Illumina) in paired-end mode 2×251+8+8 bp. Primary data analysis, image analysis, base
125 calling and quality scoring of the run were processed using the manufacturer's software Real
126 Time Analysis (RTA 1.18.66.3), followed by generation FASTQ sequence files. The reads were
127 analysed for quality control using FASTQC, a common quality control tool developed by
128 Babraham Bioinformatics to check raw sequencing data. After filtering, the remaining reads
129 were assembled using SPAdes 3.9.0 software [19]. A plot, coverage versus length of the
130 contigs, was performed to help in the choice of the parameters for contigs filtering. After

131 the filtration of contigs (minimal length 500 bp and coverage 10-50× kmer), evaluation of
132 the final assembly against a reference genome was done with the software QUAST v4.3 [20].
133 The bioinformatic tool CheckM v1.0.7 [21] was used to assess the genome quality prior to
134 annotation using Prokka v1.12 [22] and RAST v2.0 (Rapid Annotation using Subsystem
135 Technology) [23]. The process of quality assessment of reads, read-processing, assembly
136 and annotation with Prokka was carried out in Linux OS, other tools were accessed online.
137 The minimal standards for the quality of genome sequences and how they can be applied
138 for taxonomic purposes have been observed in this study [24].
139 The available genomes of type strains of genera of the family *Flavobacteriaceae* closely
140 related to the novel taxon were retrieved from public databases. Table 1 shows their
141 accession numbers and main characteristics.
142 The draft genome of strain ISS653^T has an estimated size of 4.28 Mbp. It is composed of 72
143 contigs with a N50 value of 251,300 nucleotides and final assembly coverage of 452×.
144 CheckM results of contamination and completeness were 0.53 and 99.6 %, respectively. The
145 assembly contains 4030 protein coding sequences and 45 RNA genes. Only one ribosomal
146 RNA operon is detected and its 16S rRNA gene sequence is complete and 100% coincident
147 with the partial sequence previously amplified (Sanger). The G+C molar content is 34.9 %.
148 This genome is the largest one of all available genomes of members of the genus *Mesonia*,
149 in fact, is about 1.0 Mbp larger than the one of *M. phycicola* (which had the maximum
150 genome size recorded until now).
151 The presence of four copies of a CTnDOT-like transposon [25] is predicted from the four *Tra*
152 regions (containing *TraJ*, *K*, *M*, *N*, *I* and *G* genes) identified as part of this Bacteroidetes-
153 specific transposon. It is also present in the genomes of *M. maritima* (two copies) and *M.*
154 *phycicola* (one copy).
155 Further exploration of annotated genome of strain ISS653^T allowed the prediction of some
156 potential abilities of the strain, such as multiple degradative polysaccharide capabilities, a
157 trait characteristic of several taxa in the family. Among them, carbohydrate active enzymes
158 (CAZymes) predicted from the genome of strain ISS653^T account for pectate lyase (EC
159 4.2.2.2., two copies), polygalacturonase (EC 3.2.1.15), xylan β-1-4 xylosidase (EC 3.2.1.37),
160 endo 1-4 β-xylanase, pectin esterase (EC 3.1.1.11), a pectin degradation protein, KdgF,
161 rhamnogalacturonate acetyl esterase, endoglucanase, β-glucosidase (five copies), mucin
162 desulfating sulfatase (two copies), phytase, glucan 1-4 α-glucosidase (two copies), a
163 polysaccharide deacetylase, glycogen synthase, laminarinase, β-1-4 glucanase, hyaluronan
164 synthase, oligogalacturonate lyase and neopullulanase (Table S2, available in the online
165 version of the article).
166 Apart from these, it is also interesting to note the presence of genes coding for
167 phosphatidylserine decarboxylase (in agreement with the presence of PE as major identified
168 polar lipid) but also of cardiolipin synthase (although no DPG was detected among the
169 identified polar lipids). A large CRISPR region and several Cas proteins are also encoded, as
170 well as a type III restriction-modification system, and various gliding motility-associated ABC
171 transporter permeases. Enzymes involved in carotene metabolism, as phytoene synthase,
172 phytoene dehydrogenase, lycopene β-cyclase and β-carotene hydroxylase are also found.
173 No rhodopsin-related enzymes are predicted.
174 The similarity between genomes was assessed using several indexes useful for species and
175 genus delineation. Average Amino acid Identity (AAI) was calculated with the online server
176 ANI/AAI-Matrix [26]. DNA-DNA hybridization (DDH) was estimated *in silico* with the
177 Genome-to-Genome Distance Calculator (GGDC 2.1), using the BLAST method and

178 recommended formula 2 [27]; Average Nucleotide Identities, according to BLAST (ANIb)
179 were determined in JSpeciesWS [28]. AAI and ANIb values among referenced genomes are
180 presented in Table 2. ANI values confirm, as expected from 16S rRNA gene data, that strain
181 ISS653^T does not belong to any of the compared species, since the figures obtained are
182 always lower than 95 % (in fact, lower than 91 %). In silico DDH values for strain ISS653^T
183 genome against *M. algae*, *M. hippocampi*, *M. maritima*, *M. mobilis*, and *M. phycicola* type
184 strain genomes are 18.0 to 22.4 %, confirming that the strain does not belong to any of the
185 mentioned species. AAI values to other *Mesonia* spp. are mostly over 70 %, but they range
186 from 64 to 81 %, with 68% to the type species of the genus, *M. algae*. Finally, phylogenomic
187 relationships among strain ISS653^T, members of *Mesonia* and other representatives of the
188 family *Flavobacteriaceae* were explored with UBCG, based on the analysis of 92 universal
189 bacterial core gene sequences [29]. The resulting trees, based on amino acid and nucleotide
190 sequences are shown in Fig. 2 and Fig. S1, respectively. In both trees, ISS653^T forms a branch
191 deeply embedded within the *Mesonia* clade; this branch shows the highest possible gene
192 support index (GSI) value on the immediate nodes relating strain ISS653^T to *M. mobilis* and
193 *M. phycicola*.

195 Ecology

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198 Additionally, we explored the biogeography distribution of strain ISS653^T across oceans and
199 depths by comparing the amplicon sequencing of the V4-V5 region of the 16S rRNA gene
200 (16S iTAGs, primers 515F-Y and 926R [30]; sequenced by Illumina MiSeq platform (iTAGs)
201 datasets from *Tara* Oceans [31]. We have been able to compare at 100% similarity the 16S
202 rRNA gene sequences of ISS653^T and ISS1889 with zOTUs (zero-radius OYUs, i.e. Operational
203 Taxonomic Units defined at 100% sequence similarity) denoted from high-throughput
204 sequencing of the 16S rRNA of surface and mesopelagic samples (Fig. 3). The two strains
205 were identical to one zOTU that based on rank abundance analysis (Fig. 4) belongs to the
206 rare biosphere in the surface layer (0.0045% of the total reads) but to the mid-abundant
207 biosphere (0.31%) in the mesopelagic. In addition, if we look the average of reads that were
208 100% identical to the mentioned strains per oceanographic region, the higher abundances
209 were found in the mesopelagic samples of the South Pacific Ocean (Fig. 4) where ISS1889
210 was isolated. Interestingly, higher abundances were found in the mesopelagic layer,
211 indicating probably a higher preference of these strains for aphotic layers.

213 Physiology and Chemotaxonomy

214
215 Phenotypic characterization included morphological, cultural, biochemical, physiological and
216 nutritional screening and was performed by methods described previously [32]. *Mesonia*
217 *algae* CECT 9441^T, *Salegentibacter salegens* CECT 9443^T, *Gramella echinicola* CECT 9439^T and
218 *Zunongwangia profunda* CECT 9445^T were characterized in parallel for comparative
219 purposes.
220 Flexirubin type pigmentation was tested according to the methods of Bernardet *et al.* (2002)
221 [33]. In addition, analyses of cellulose degradation, nitrate reduction acid production from
222

223 carbohydrates in API 50CH/E, APIZYM and API 20NE profile were performed as described
224 previously [15]. Transmission Electron Microscopy (TEM) and Scanning Electron Microscopy
225 (SEM) observations of the morphology and ultrastructure also followed previously described
226 procedures [15].
227 ISS653^T and ISS1889 were Gram-reaction negative, rod-shaped and non-motile, strictly
228 aerobic and chemoorganoheterotrophic, oxidase and catalase positive. They were unable to
229 grow anaerobically, either by carbohydrate fermentation or through nitrate reduction. The
230 strains grew well on Marine Agar and Marine Broth 2216 (BD Diagnostics). Colonies on
231 Marine Agar were yellow, round, with regular borders, with no indication of swarming or
232 gliding. Temperature range for growth was 4 to 37 °C (30 °C for ISS1889), with optimum at
233 26-30 °C. No growth was obtained at 40°C. pH range was 5 to 8, with optimum at 6-8, very
234 weak growth at 9 and 10 and no growth at 4 and below. The strains grew at total salinities
235 of 1 to 15 %, optimally at 2-4 %, they did not grow at 0.5 % or less nor 18 % or higher
236 salinities. The growth was strictly Na⁺-dependent. They are, thus, mesophilic, neutrophilic
237 and slightly halophilic. They were able to hydrolyse gelatine and casein but the hydrolyses of
238 Tween 80 (negative for ISS1889) and DNA were weak. Alginate, starch, cellulose and agar
239 were not hydrolysed. Good growth was obtained on Baumann's Basal Medium with yeast
240 extract (positive control of the carbon source screening) but it was negative with all the
241 substrates used (D-ribose, L-arabinose, D-xylose, D-glucose, D-fructose, D-galactose, D-
242 trehalose, D-mannose, L-rhamnose, maltose, D-cellobiose, lactose, sucrose, D-melibiose,
243 amygdalin, salicin, N-acetyl-D-glucosamine, D-gluconate, D-glucuronate, D-galacturonate, D-
244 saccharate, D-glycerol, D-mannitol, D-sorbitol, *myo*-inositol, acetate, pyruvate, propionate,
245 butyrate, citrate, *t*-aconitate, 2 ketoglutarate, succinate, fumarate, malate, lactate, 3-
246 hydroxybutyrate, glycine, L-leucine, L-alanine, L-glutamate, L-serine, L-arginine, L-tyrosine,
247 L-treonine, L-aspartate, L-citrulline, L-ornithine, L-histidine, L-lysine, L-sarcosine and
248 putrescine) suggesting that ISS653^T may have a growth factor requirement. ISS1889 was not
249 tested for carbon source utilization in this medium. On the assimilation tests of API 20NE,
250 both strains grew well with malate and, less conspicuously, on glucose, mannose, maltose,
251 arabinose, mannitol, N-acetyl D-glucosamine, gluconate and adipate, but not on caprate or
252 citrate; phenylacetate grow was positive only for ISS653^T. Both strains were positive for
253 PNPG test (β -galactosidase activity) and esculin and gelatin hydrolysis, but negative for
254 indole, arginine dihydrolase and urease. On APIZYM, both strains were positive for alkaline
255 and acid phosphatases, leucine and valine arylamidases, and α - and β -glucosidases and were
256 negative for other tests. Acid production from carbohydrates on API50CH/E strips was very
257 scarce, with positive reaction only for aesculin hydrolysis and a slight acidification in D-
258 glucose, D-mannose, amygdalin, salicin, D-cellobiose and maltose wells after 48 h incubation.
259 Strain ISS1889 was almost identical except for the acid production from arbutin and 2-
260 ketoglutarate (weak). They also showed slight differences in minor fatty acids (Table S1).
261 Fig. 3 displays SEM and TEM images of strain ISS653^T cells: they are regular straight rods
262 with rounded ends, 0.5-0.6 \times 0.9-1.5 μ m in size, appearing singly or in pairs and showing the
263 profile typical for a Gram-negative bacterium in TEM images. No appendages or internal
264 structures were seen. Additional images are included in Fig. S2.
265 Fatty acid methyl esters were extracted from ISS653^T and ISS1889 biomass grown in Marine
266 Agar at 26 °C after 72 h incubation. Extracts were prepared according to standard protocols
267 as described for the MIDI Microbial Identification System [34] at the CECT. Cellular fatty acid
268 content was analysed by gas chromatography with an Agilent 6850 chromatographic unit,
269 with the MIDI Microbial Identification System using the TSBA6 method [35] and identified

270 using the Microbial Identification Sherlock software package. Table S1 shows the cellular
271 fatty acids detected in the two strains, that include iso-C_{15:0}, summed feature 3 and iso-C_{17:0}
272 3-OH as major components, followed by iso-C_{15:1} G, summed feature 9 (C_{16:0} 10-methyl/iso-
273 C_{17:1} ω9c) and iso-C_{15:0} 3-OH. An issue has been reported [36] about the peak names for
274 summed feature 3 in flavobacteria that makes us believe it might correspond to iso-C_{15:0} 2-
275 OH, and so it is reported as such in the species description. The fatty acid profile of the
276 strains closely resembles those of other *Mesonía* species and all the fatty acids present in
277 percentages higher than 5% are found in similar amounts in the six species reported by [11].
278 Analysis of respiratory quinones and major polar lipids of ISS653^T were carried out by the
279 Identification Service and Dr. Brian Tindall, DSMZ, Braunschweig, Germany. Detailed
280 methods for the analyses have been reported previously [15]. MK6 was identified as the
281 major quinone and phosphatidyl ethanolamine (PE) was the only identified polar lipid,
282 among others detected (three unidentified lipids, two glycolipids and three aminolipids, Fig.
283 S3). Both MK6 and PE are typical chemotaxonomic features of the genus *Mesonía*, present
284 in all species so far described.

286
287

288 In summary, phylogenetic, genomic and phenotypic distinctiveness of the strains are
289 indication of them representing, at least, a novel species, a novelty confirmed by 16S rRNA
290 gene sequence similarity (less than 94 %) and ANI values (less than 95 %) exhibited between
291 strain ISS653^T and the rest of the species of the genus *Mesonía* spp. and the neighboring
292 taxa. In fact, the strains initially appeared to represent a novel genus in the family due to the
293 low 16S rRNA gene similarity and to the topology of the 16S rRNA gene-based tree (Fig. 1).
294 However, when considering genomic indexes, such as AAI, and the UBCG phylogenomic
295 analysis, the relationship to their neighbors seems closer than anticipated by the 16S rRNA
296 analysis: instead of representing a marginal and distant branch, ISS653^T merges in the core
297 of the genus *Mesonía*. Its AAI values to other species of the genus *Mesonía* fall in the lower
298 range of AAIs among congeneric species of *Flavobacteriaceae*, as, for example, species of
299 the genus *Psychroflexus* spp. (62-91 % intragenus AAIs, data not shown). AAI has been used
300 to define genus boundaries in the family, and particularly with the genus *Chryseobacterium*
301 and related genera, in a recent paper [40]. These authors propose a cutoff value of 76% AAI
302 for assignment of a novel species to an existing genus and consider that all type strain of
303 congeneric species should present at least a 74% AAI to each other. By following this
304 proposal, the novel species characterized in our study would constitute a novel genus,
305 different from *Mesonía*, and this genus would encompass *M. mobilis* and *M. phycicola*. The
306 species *M. hippocampi* and *M. maritima* should, in turn, be classified in two novel, different
307 genera, while *M. algae* would be the only representative of the genus *Mesonía sensu stricto*.
308 However, such major arrangements should wait until genome sequences for the type strains
309 of all species of the genus *Mesonía* are available. For the time being, we consider the best
310 option is to describe the novel species as a member of the genus *Mesonía*, provided that the
311 genus does not become polyphyletic with this inclusion and that the novel species fits well
312 with the genus description: the presence of iso-C_{15:0} as major fatty acid, a genomic DNA G+C
313 content of 34.9%, PE as the major identified polar lipid, MK-6 as the major respiratory
314 quinone, the pigmentation type, the aerobic chemoorganotrophic metabolism, a positive
315 response for catalase, oxidase and alkaline phosphatase and the strict requirement of
316 sodium for growth are features that qualify the strains as members of the genus *Mesonía*.

317 On the other hand, several traits shown in Table 3 allow to differentiate them
318 phenotypically from any other *Mesonía* species.
319 In consequence, we propose a novel species of the genus *Mesonía*, with the name *Mesonía*
320 *oceanica* and strain ISS653^T = CECT 9532^T = LMG 31236^T as the type strain.

321

322 **Protologue**

323 **DESCRIPTION OF *MESONIA OCEANICA* SP. NOV.**

324 *Mesonía oceanica* (o.ce.a'ni.ca, N.L. fem. adj. *oceanica*, of or pertaining to the ocean).
325 Cells are Gram-reaction negative, rod-shaped, 0.5-0.6 µm × 0.9-1.5 µm and non-motile.
326 Strictly aerobic and chemoorganotrophic; positive for catalase and oxidase. Colonies in
327 Marine Agar medium are regular and yellow pigmented. Flexirubin-type pigments are not
328 produced. Mesophilic, neutrophilic and slightly halophilic, with optima at: 26 °C (range: 4-30
329 °C, 40 °C negative), 6-8 pH (range: 5-8, pH 4, negative, pH 9 and 10, weak) and 2-4 % total
330 salinity (range: 1 to 15 %, 0.5 and 18 % negative). Requires sodium ions for growth. Nitrate is
331 not reduced to nitrite or N₂. Hydrolyses esculin, casein, gelatin, Tween 80 (weakly) and DNA
332 (weakly), but not alginate, cellulose (as filter paper) or agar. Indole production from
333 tryptophan, arginine dihydrolase and urease are negative. PNPG test (β-galactosidase) is
334 positive in API 20NE. Assimilates malate, as well as glucose, mannose, maltose, arabinose,
335 mannitol, N-acetyl D-glucosamine, gluconate and adipate, but not caprate or citrate on API
336 20NE. The type strain was unable to grow in minimal medium (Basal Medium) with any of
337 52 sole carbon and energy sources, but grew with yeast extract. The following
338 carbohydrates are metabolised with weak acid production in aerobic API 50CH/E tubes: D-
339 glucose, D-mannose, amygdalin, salicin, D-cellobiose and maltose. Enzymatic activities
340 displayed on API ZYM are alkaline and acid phosphatases, leucine and valine arylamidases,
341 and α- and β-glucosidases. Naphthol-AS-BI-phosphohydrolase, esterase and esterase
342 lipase are weakly positive; lipase, cystine arylamidase, trypsin, α-chymotrypsin, α-
343 galactosidase, β-galactosidase, β-glucuronidase, N-acetyl-β-glucosaminidase, α-
344 mannosidase and α-fucosidase are negative. Major polar lipids are phosphatidyl
345 ethanolamine (PE), two unidentified glycolipids, three unidentified aminolipids and three
346 unidentified lipids. Major respiratory quinone is MK6. Major cellular fatty acids include iso-
347 C_{15:0}, iso-C_{15:0} 2-OH (although reported as summed feature 3 (C_{16:1} ω7c/ω6c) and iso-C_{17:0} 3-
348 OH.
349 The type strain is ISS653^T (=CECT 9532^T =LMG 31236^T), which was isolated from surface
350 seawater of the Atlantic Ocean during the *Tara* Oceans Expedition. Strain ISS1889 (=CECT
351 30008) is an additional strain of the species. The G+C DNA content of the type strain is 34.9
352 mol% and its genome size is 4.28 Mbp. The GenBank/EMBL/DDBJ accession numbers for the
353 whole genome sequence and 16S rRNA gene of strain ISS653^T are CABVMM01 and
354 MH732189, respectively.

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356

357 **AUTHOR STATEMENTS**

358

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364

365 **1.7 Conflicts of interest**

366 The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

367

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384

385

386 **ABBREVIATIONS**

387

388 CECT, Colección Española de Cultivos Tipo; LMG, Laboratorium voor Microbiologie,
389 Universiteit Gent; ANI, Average Nucleotide Identity; DDH, DNA-DNA hybridization; AAI,
390 Average Amino acid Identity; SCSIE, Servicio Central de Soporte a la Investigación
391 Experimental; RAST, Rapid Annotation using Subsystem Technology; GGDC, Genome-to-
392 Genome-Distance Calculator; BLAST, Basic Local Alignment Search Tool; UBCG, Up-to-date-
393 Bacterial Core Gene; GSI, Gene Support Index; LTP, The All-Species Living Tree Project; NCBI,
394 National Center for Biotechnology Information; PE, Phosphatidylethanolamine.

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514
515

FIGURES AND TABLES

516

517
518 **Fig. 1.** Phylogenetic reconstruction based on the 16S rRNA gene using the Neighbor joining
519 method. Sequence accession numbers are given in parentheses. Bar, number of
520 substitutions per position.

521 **Fig. 2.** Phylogenetic tree generated with UBCG [29] by using amino acid sequences. The
522 numbers at the nodes indicate the gene support index (GSI, maximal value is 92). Genome
523 accession numbers are indicated in parentheses. Bar, 0.05 substitutions per position.

524 **Fig. 3.** Distribution of strains ISS653^T and ISS1889. (A). Rank abundance based on the
525 number of reads per zOTU denoted from the 16S rRNA sequences. Color indicates the layer
526 where the zOTUs come from: light-blue, surface; turquoise, mesopelagic. Orange circle and
527 square indicate the position in the rank of the zOTU 100% identical to the two strains. (B).
528 Heatmap indicating the average of reads 100% identical to the isolates per oceanographic
529 region in surface and mesopelagic (Meso) samples. Lighter colors indicate lower number of
530 reads, while strong indicate higher number of reads.

531 **Fig. 4.** SEM and TEM images of strain ISS653^T. Samples were gold sputter coated in order to
532 visualize them with SEM Zeiss MERLIN Fe. Visualizations were done at the Microscopy
533 service of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
534 (<http://sct.uab.cat/microscopia/en/content/inici>).
535

536 **Table 1.** Genomes used in the study and their main characteristics.

Strain	Accession number	Size (Mbp)	G+C (mol%)	Protein encoding genes	RNA encoding genes
<i>Mesonia oceanica</i> ISS653 ^T	GCF_902499555 (CABVMM01)	4.28	34.9	3854	45
<i>Mesonia algae</i> DSM 15361 ^T	GCF_003253545 (QKYV01)	3.09	33.1	2859	70
<i>Mesonia mobilis</i> DSM 19841 ^T	GCF_000423405 (AUHX01)	3.21	35.2	2875	46
<i>Mesonia phycicola</i> DSM 21425 ^T	GCF_900141885 (FQYY01)	3.23	31.4	2911	47
<i>Mesonia maritima</i> DSM 102814 ^T	jgi.1227497*	3.14	33.7	2946	67
<i>Mesonia hippocampi</i> DSM 29568 ^T	jgi.1220074*	2.59	34.5	2378	45
<i>Salegentibacter salegens</i> ACAM 48 ^T	GCF_900142975 (LT670848.1)	4.01	37.2	3415	58
<i>Gramella echinicola</i> DSM 19838 ^T	GCF_000423065 (AUHG01)	3.51	36.9	3112	50
<i>Zunongwangia profunda</i> SM-A87 ^T	GCF_000023465 (CP001650.1)	5.13	36.2	4270	60

537

538 *These sequence data were produced by the US Department of Energy Joint Genome
 539 Institute (<http://www.jgi.doe.gov/>) in collaboration with the user community and are part of
 540 The One Thousand Microbial Genomes Phase 4 Project (KMG-4) by M. Göker.

541

542 **Table 2.** Average Amino acid Identity (AAI, yellow cells) and Average Nucleotide Identity
 543 (ANIb, blue cells) indexes among genomes of type strains of *Flavobacteriaceae* species
 544 related to ISS653^T. Values relating *Mesonia oceanica* with all other species are shown in bold
 545 type.
 546

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 <i>Mesonia oceanica</i> ISS653 ^T		78.9	76.3	74.9	70.8	72.2	70.0	68.8	72.3
2 <i>Mesonia mobilis</i> DSM 19841 ^T	81		78.4	74.4	70.9	72.4	69.7	68.6	70.7
3 <i>Mesonia phycicola</i> DSM 21425 ^T	76	80		73.4	71.5	73.5	69.6	68.9	70.0
4 <i>Mesonia maritima</i> DSM 102814 ^T	72	72	70		71.3	72.9	70.4	69.0	70.9
5 <i>Mesonia hippocampi</i> DSM 29568 ^T	64	65	65	65		71.0	69.1	68.2	68.9
6 <i>Mesonia algae</i> DSM 15361 ^T	68	70	70	70	65		69.5	68.8	69.6
7 <i>Salegentibacter salegens</i> ACAM 48 ^T	63	64	63	64	61	63		71.1	71.3
8 <i>Gramella echinicola</i> DSM 19838 ^T	62	63	63	63	61	63	70		70.2
9 <i>Zunongwangia profunda</i> SM-A87 ^T	65	64	63	64	60	62	68	67	

547

548

549 **Table 3.** Differential characteristics between strains ISS653^T and ISS1889 and its closest
550 phylogenomic relatives. 1, *Mesonia oceanica* ISS653^T and ISS1889; 2, *M. algae* CECT 9441^T;
551 3, *M. mobilis* [5]; 4, *M. phycicola* [6]; 5, *M. ostreae* [7]; 6, *M. aquimarina* [8]; 7, *M.*
552 *hippocampi* [9]; 8, *M. sediminis* [10]; 9, *M. maritima* [11]; 10, *Salegentibacter salegens* CECT
553 9443^T; 11, *Gramella echinicola* CECT 9439^T; 12, *Zunongwangia profunda* CECT 9445^T. All data
554 from this study unless indicated. +: positive; - negative; nd: not determined; Y: yellow; W:
555 white; Or: orange; G: gliding; Fl: flagellated. All strains were Gram-reaction-negative,
556 aerobic, chemoorganotrophic bacteria, positive for oxidase, catalase, alkaline and acid
557 phosphatases and leucine arylamidase; and negative for cellulose hydrolysis, α -
558 galactosidase, β -glucuronidase, α -mannosidase and α -fucosidase.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Pigment colour	Y	Y	Y	Y	W	Y	Or	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Flexirubin	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	nd	-	-	-	-
Motility	-	-	+, G	-	-	-	-	-	+, Fl	-	+, G	-
Temp. range (°C)	4-30	4-34	10-30	10-30	4-31	10-30	4-36	4-42	10-35	4-28	4-37	15-37
NaCl range (% w/v)	1-15	1-15	0.5-15	0.5-12	0-12	0.5-12	1-10	0.5-7	0.5-11	1-12	1-12	0.5-15
Hydrolysis of:												
Esculin	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	+	+	+
Casein	+	+	+	-	-	+	nd	nd	+	w	+	-
DNA	w	-	+	+	-	-	nd	nd	+	w	+	+
Tween 80	w	+	+	-	-	+	nd	+	+	-	-	+
Enzymatic activity (API ZYM)												
Valine arylamidase	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+ ^a	+ ^b	+ ^c
Trypsin	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	w	-	- ^a	w ^b	+ ^c
β -Galactosidase	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+ ^a	- ^b	+ ^c
α -Glucosidase	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	- ^a	+ ^b	+ ^c
β -Glucosidase	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	nd	w ^b	+ ^c
G+C mol%	34.9	33.1	35.2	31.4	42.1 ^d	41.4 ^d	34.5	40.7 ^d	33.7	37.2	36.9	36.2

559 ^adata from [38]; ^bdata from [39]; ^cdata from [40]; ^ddetermined by HPLC (all other values,
560 from WGS)







