

Molecular docking approaches to suggest the anti-mycobacterial targets of  
natural products

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## Abstract

Tuberculosis (TB) is a major global threat mostly due to the development of antibiotic resistant forms of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, the causal agent of the disease. Driven by the pressing need for new anti-mycobacterial agents, several natural products (NPs) have been shown to have *in vitro* activities against *M. tuberculosis*. The utility of any NP as a drug lead is augmented when the anti-mycobacterial target(s) is unknown. To suggest these, we used a molecular docking approach to predict the interactions of 53 selected anti-mycobacterial NPs against known ‘druggable’ mycobacterial targets ClpP1P2, DprE1, InhA, KasA, PanK, PknB and Pks13. The docking scores / binding free energies were predicted and calculated using AutoDock Vina along with physicochemical and structural properties of the NPs, using PaDEL descriptors. These were compared to the established inhibitor (control) drugs for each mycobacterial target. The specific interactions of the bisbenzylisoquinoline alkaloids 2-nortiliacorinine, tiliacorine and 13’-bromotiliacorinine against the targets PknB and DprE1 (-11.4, -10.9 and -9.8 kcal.mol<sup>-1</sup>; -12.7, -10.9 and -10.3 kcal.mol<sup>-1</sup>, respectively) and the lignan  $\alpha$ -cubebin and Pks13 (-11.0 kcal.mol<sup>-1</sup>) had significantly superior docking scores compared to controls. Our approach can be used to suggest predicted targets for the NP to be validated experimentally but these *in silico* steps are likely to facilitate drug optimisation.

## Introduction

Tuberculosis (TB) is the leading cause of death from infectious diseases with 10 million new cases in 2017. About 1.7 billion people are estimated to have latent TB infection and therefore they are at risk of developing active TB disease during their lifetime<sup>1</sup>. The emergence of multidrug-resistant (MDR) and extremely drug-resistant (XDR) TB is primarily due to the improper use of the first line anti-tubercular drug. The increased prevalence of such strains has become a major obstacle in the treatment of TB and also a serious financial burden on the health care sector. As a result, there is an urgent need for new cost-effective anti-TB drugs with new mechanisms of action and less chance of developing resistances<sup>2</sup>.

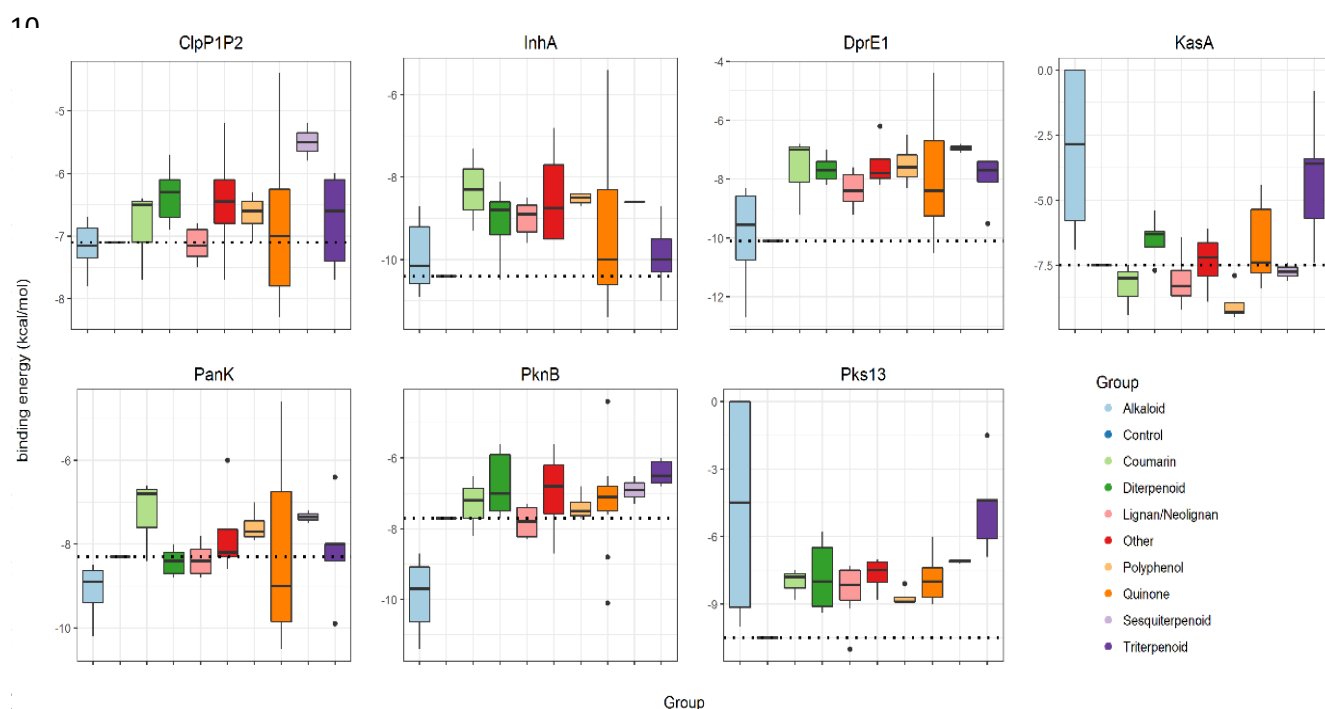
TB drug discovery has been based on the use of combinatorial chemistry and high-throughput screening strategies in drug discovery but recently, there has been an increased interest in plant based NP as drugs<sup>2</sup>. Plants are an important source of secondary metabolites which can have enormous therapeutic potential. They are still used in traditional medicine in such nations as China and in economically developing countries. Often, knowledge of medicinal plants is passed verbally from generation to generation without any proper documentation or scientific validation. However, medicinal plants still represent a resource that can be further explored for potential “hit” compounds with significant biological activity, i.e. drug leads<sup>3</sup>. These hit compounds are typically found in biochemically complex extracts and their identification can be considered to be equivalent to searching for a “needle in a haystack”. This is usually approached through sequential rounds of bioassay informed purification but could be considerably accelerated if candidate chemicals could be screened against known and ‘druggable’ drug targets. Crucially, the identification of these targets facilitates drug optimisation for improved efficacy and such a reduced cytotoxicity<sup>2</sup>.

Molecular docking is widely used to model interactions at the atomic level between a small molecule (ligand) and a known macromolecule<sup>4</sup>. Molecular docking and other bioinformatic tools represent cost-effective approaches to screen potential compounds prior to *in vitro* cell culture-based assays or chemical modifications to accelerate the overall drug discovery process. In this present study, we exploited the existing knowledge of anti-tubercular drug targets to predict the potential modes of action of NPs known to have activity against TB. Seven molecular targets of *M. tuberculosis* - ClpP1P2,

1 DprE1, InhA, KasA, PanK, PknB and Pks13 - were selected as these are essential for bacterial survival  
2 and their inhibition will affect mycobacterial metabolism<sup>5</sup>. We herein predict the binding of the NPs in  
3 comparison with the established inhibitor of the molecular target which was referred to as the control.  
4 We show that the specific interactions of the bisbenzylisoquinoline alkaloids 2-nortiliacorinine,  
5 tiliacorine and 13'-bromotiliacorinine against PknB and DprE1 and the lignan  $\alpha$ -cubebin with Pks13  
6 had significantly superior docking scores. The predicted interactions should facilitate the optimisation  
7 of the NP as a drug lead and beyond this establishes a strategy which could be applied to other NPs with  
8 any bioactivities.

## 1 Results

2 A total of 53 NPs with reported anti-mycobacterial activity ( $\leq 100 \text{ mg.mL}^{-1}$ ) were selected<sup>3,6</sup> (Table 1).  
 3 These were subject to a series of *in silico* predictions to assess their “druggability” and suggest their  
 4 targets. The 53 NPs were organised into chemical classes and then assessed for their individual binding  
 5 energy against established anti-microbial target proteins; ClpP1P2, DprE1, InhA, KasA, PanK, PknB  
 6 and Pks13 which were retrieved from Protein Data Bank (PDB). For ease of comparison, the binding  
 7 energies associated to all groups of studied NPs against each mycobacterial target are given as box-  
 8 plots and compared to the binding of the known anti-TB drug hit for each protein (Figure 1, control  
 9 bindings are shown with a dashed line).



21 **Figure 1** - Binding energies ( $\text{kcal.mol}^{-1}$ ) of groups of selected natural products (alkaloids, coumarins,  
 22 diterpenoids, lignans/neolignans, polyphenols, quinones, sesquiterpenoids, triterpenoids and others) and controls  
 23 (represented with dashed lines) against mycobacterial targets ClpP1P2, InhA, DprE1, KasA, PanK, PknB and  
 24 Pks13. Control inhibitors of each protein are, respectively, ZIL (N-[(benzyloxy)carbonyl]-L-isoleucyl-L-leucine),  
 25 BTZ043 (bedaquiline), isoniazid, TLM (thiolactomycin), ZVT (2-chloro-N-[1-(5-{[2-(4-  
 26 fluorophenoxy)ethyl]sulfanyl}-4-methyl-4H-1,2,4-triazol-3-yl)ethyl]benzamide), MIX (1,4-dihydroxy-5,8-  
 27 bis({2-[(2-hydroxyethyl)amino]ethyl}amino)-9,10-antracenedione) and I28 (ethyl-5-hydroxy-4-[(4-  
 28 methylpiperidin-1-yl)methyl]-2-phenyl-1-benzofuran-3-carboxylate).

29  
 30 Three targets, InhA, Pks13 and DprE1 exhibited poor binding to all of the studied NPs. Only a few  
 31 alkaloids and quinones exhibited lower energies ( $-11.4$  to  $-10.5 \text{ kcal.mol}^{-1}$ ) than the control drug

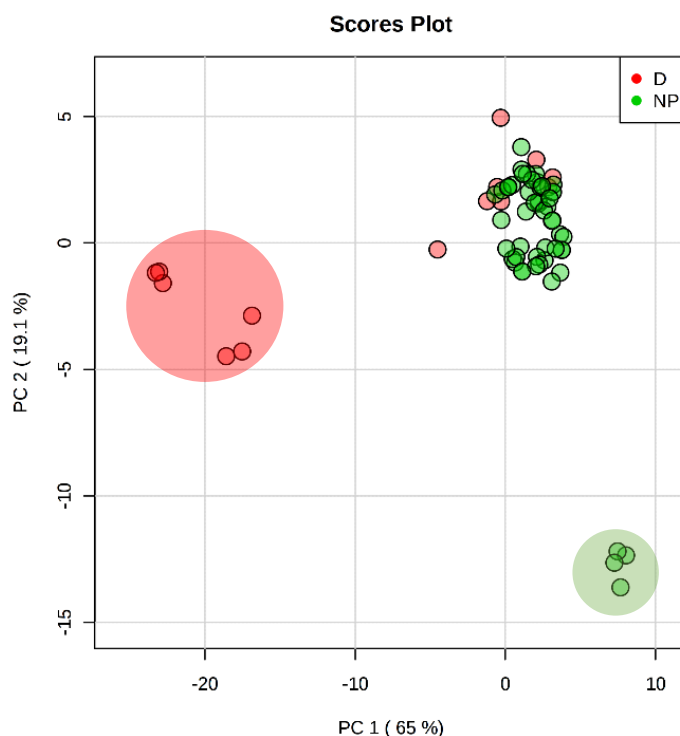
isoniazid ( $-10.4 \text{ kcal.mol}^{-1}$ ) against InhA. Considering Pks13, only one neolignan displayed a lower energy ( $-11.0 \text{ kcal.mol}^{-1}$ ) than the control drug I28 (ethyl 5-hydroxy-4-[(4-methylpiperidin-1-yl)methyl]-2-phenyl-1-benzofuran-3-carboxylate) ( $-10.5 \text{ kcal.mol}^{-1}$ ). Similarly, only alkaloids displayed favourable binding energies ( $-12.7$  to  $-10.2 \text{ kcal.mol}^{-1}$ ), compared to the control, BTZ043 (bedaquiline) ( $-10.1 \text{ kcal.mol}^{-1}$ ) against DprE1. Indeed, it was mostly alkaloids, that exhibited very low binding energies ( $-11.4$  to  $-8.7 \text{ kcal.mol}^{-1}$ ) against PknB, when compared with the control inhibitor MIX (1,4-dihydroxy-5,8-bis({2-[(2-hydroxyethyl)amino]ethyl}amino)-9,10-antracenedione) ( $-7.7 \text{ kcal.mol}^{-1}$ ). In contrast, KasA and ClpP1P2 were shown to have some binding energy to a wide range of natural product classes. For KasA and ClpP1P2, binding was seen with coumarins, lignans/neolignans, polyphenols and quinones. KasA is also bound by sesquiterpanoids and ClpP1P2, by triterpenoids. Although the PanK is predicted to bind to different classes of NPs, the alkaloids and quinones had lower binding energies ( $-10.5$  to  $-8.5 \text{ kcal.mol}^{-1}$ ) compared with the control ZVT (2-chloro-N-[1-(5-{[2-(4-fluorophenoxy) ethyl]sulfanyl}-4-methyl-4H-1,2,4-triazol-3-yl)ethyl]benzamide) ( $-8.3 \text{ kcal.mol}^{-1}$ ).

The average of MW presented by conventional anti-TB drugs<sup>7</sup> ( $358.5 \text{ g.mol}^{-1}$ ) contrasted with our NPs that typically had lower binding energies ( $\text{MW} > 500 \text{ g.mol}^{-1}$ ). However, the number of H-bonds acceptors of the NPs matched those of H-bonds acceptors of conventional anti-TB drugs<sup>7</sup>, the majority of which were below 10 H-bonds acceptors. The same is observed with the number of rotational bonds, since 88% of conventional anti-TB drugs have less than 10 rotational bonds<sup>7</sup>.

PaDEL-Descriptor was used to assess the key physicochemical properties necessary for an optimal binding between the NP with ClpP1P2, DprE1, InhA, KasA, PanK, PknB and Pks13, compared to each respective control drug. PaDEL-Descriptor provided molecular weight (MW), partition coefficient (xLogP), rotatable bonds (nRotB), H-bond donors (nHBDon\_Lipinski), H-bond acceptors (nHBAcc\_Lipinski) and topological polar surface area (TopoPSA) (Supplementary Table 1). For ClpP1P2, InhA and PanK, there was a clear tendency for molecules with a higher topological polar surface area to have more favourable binding energies. This is due, in part, to the low binding energies of quinones against these three protein targets (Supplementary Figure 1). Higher MW appeared to have

1 lower binding energies against ClpP1P2, InhA, DprE1, PanK and PknB. In this higher MW category of  
2 natural product; lower binding energies, usually lower than the control inhibitor were mostly seen with  
3 triterpenoids and sesquiterpenoids (Supplementary Figure 2). When the lipophilicities of the NPs were  
4 analysed compared to binding energies, no particular tendency was observed (Supplementary Figure  
5 3). The NP with more favourable binding energies did not exhibit distinctive partition coefficients as  
6 indicated by xLogP values. For PanK, DrpE1 and PknB, a higher number of H-bond acceptors  
7 (maximum of 8) was associated to lower binding energies. No similar trend was seen for the number  
8 of H-bond donors (Supplementary Figure 4 and 5). NPs with smaller rotation bonds were often linked  
9 to lower binding energies (Supplementary Figure 6).

10  
11 Unsupervised principal component analysis (PCA) was used to provide a multivariate comparison of  
12 the physicochemical parameters of the selected NPs and 14 licensed anti-TB drugs (Figure 2). There  
13 was a large clustering of most NPs and anti-TB drugs suggesting a significant commonality of  
14 properties. However, six anti-TB drugs (isoniazid, ethambutol, streptomycin, kanamycin, amikacin and  
15 levofloxacin, large red circle in Figure 3) do not cluster with the NPs mainly due to their high  
16 hydrophilicity. The three aminoglycosides, streptomycin, kanamycin and amikacin also exhibit a high  
17 number of H-bonds donor ( $n > 10$ ), which does not conform to one of “Lipinski’s rule of five”. Some  
18 NPs (selina-3, 7 (11)-diene, abietane and  $\alpha$ -curcumene), represented in a large green circle in Figure 3,  
19 possessed distinctive chemical properties due to lack of any H-bond acceptors or donors. This would  
20 exclude them from being possible drug candidates without further derivatisation.



**Figure 2** – PCA of the physicochemical parameters of 53 analysed natural products (NP) and 14 anti-TB drugs (D). In one cluster NP and D share similar physical and chemical properties but two other clusters are unique of D (red larger circle) and another for NPs (green larger circle).

Subsequently, a structural study was undertaken with the NPs that exhibited the most favourable anti-mycobacterial profiles i.e. show lower energies than the control inhibitor (Figure 1). Thus, the interaction between the bisbenzylisoquinoline alkaloids 2-nortiliacorinine, tiliacrine and 13'-bromotiliacorinine against the targets PknB and DprE1 were modelled.

The interaction of tiliacrine, nortiliacorinine and 13'-bromotiliacrine with PknB is shown in Figure 3 and exhibited binding energies of -11.4, -10.9 and -9.8 kcal.mol<sup>-1</sup>, respectively. These values are significantly lower from the binding energy found for the control drug, MIX (-7.7 kcal.mol<sup>-1</sup>). The best docking positions of each of the three NPs were compared and these showed considerable overlap (Figure 4). Such commonality of interaction could be related to inhibitory function and could guide drug optimisation. In particular, a key feature here revealed is the interactions of the hydrophobic core



of these NPs with PknB<sup>49</sup> a feature also seen with the planar dihydroxy anthraquinone moiety of the control drug.

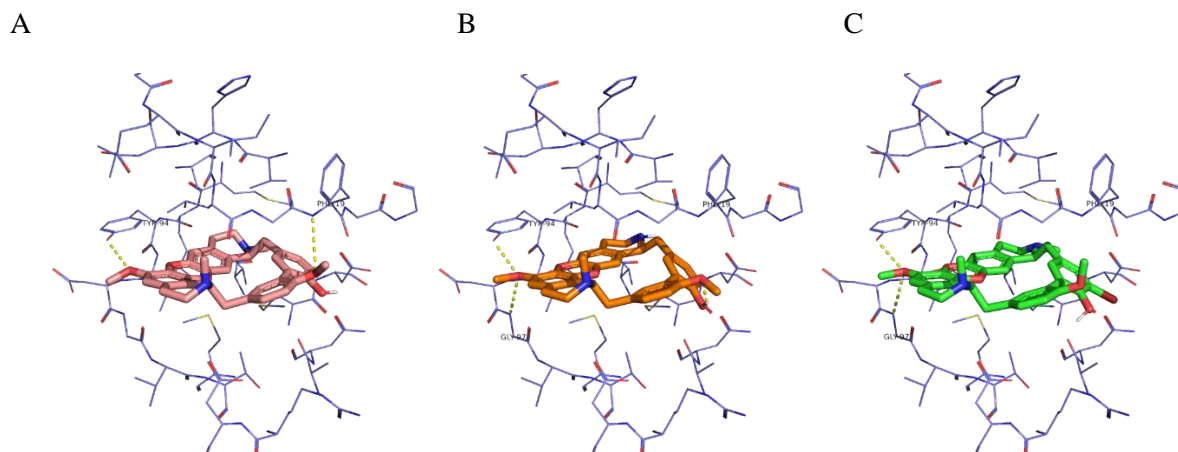


Figure 3 – Molecular interactions of the best docking positions of tiliacrine (A), nortiliacorinine (B) and 13'-bromotiliacrine (C) against PknB. Hydrogen bonds are shown as yellow dashed lines.

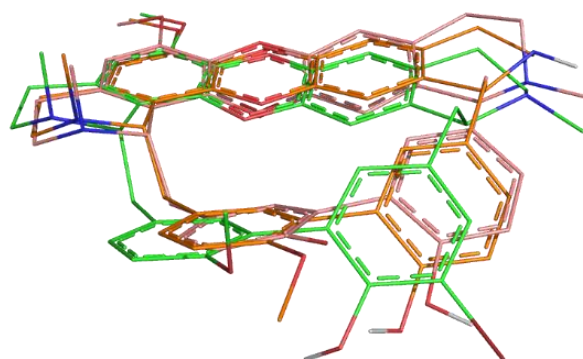


Figure 4 – Superposition of the best docking positions of tiliacrine (pink), nortiliacorinine (orange) and 13'-bromotiliacrine (green) against PknB.

The predicted interactions of tiliacrine, nortiliacorinine and 13'-bromotiliacrine with DprE1 were also visualised (Figure 5). Again, the interactions for all these NPs appeared to nearly superimpose. These showed better binding energies against DprE1, -12.7, -10.9 and -10.3 kcal.mol<sup>-1</sup>, respectively than the benzothiazinethione drug control BTZ043 (-10.1 kcal.mol<sup>-1</sup>). The binding of DprE1 to

tiliacorine, nortiliacorinine and 13'-bromotiliacorine, is stabilised by several non-covalent interactions. The LigPlot+ analysis shows that key van der Waals interactions with the residues Trp230, Val365, Lys367, Lys134, Tyr415, His132, Pro116, Ile131, Ala417, Lys418, Arg58, Thr118, Trp16, Tyr60, Gly117 and Tyr314 are responsible for the low binding energies of these structures with DprE1.

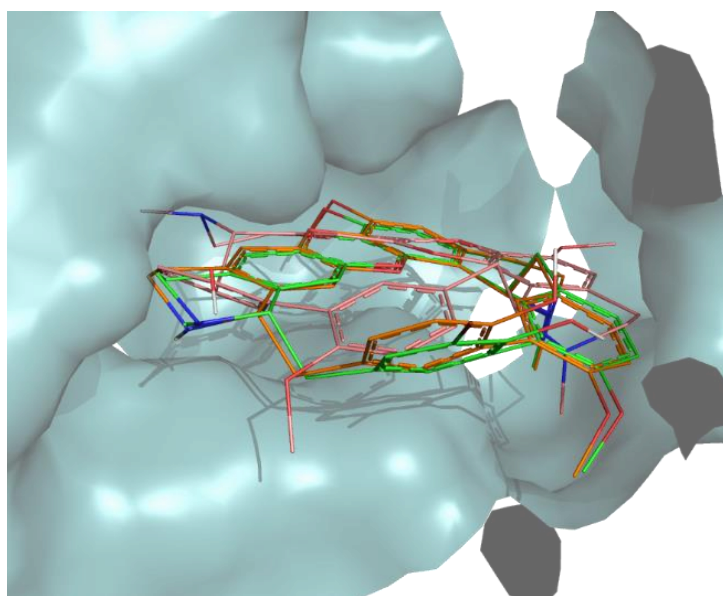


Figure 5 – Superposition of best docking position of tiliacorine (pink), nortiliacorinine (orange) and 13'-bromotiliacorine (green) against DprE1.

The interaction between the lignan  $\alpha$ -cubebin and Pks13 was examined (Figure 6) as it had a lower docking scoring ( $-11.0 \text{ kcal.mol}^{-1}$ ) compared to the control I28 ( $-10.5 \text{ kcal.mol}^{-1}$ ).  $\alpha$ -cubebin interacts with Pks13 via two H-bonds with the residues Asp1644 and Gln1633 and several hydrophobic interactions with the residues Tyr1637, Ser1636, Phe1670, Ile1643, Tyr1663, Tyr1674, Ala1667, Asn1640 and Arg1641. The interaction with the residues Tyr1663, Tyr1674, Asn1640, Asp1644 and Gln1633 are also key features in the binding of the control drug I28 against Pks13<sup>8</sup>.

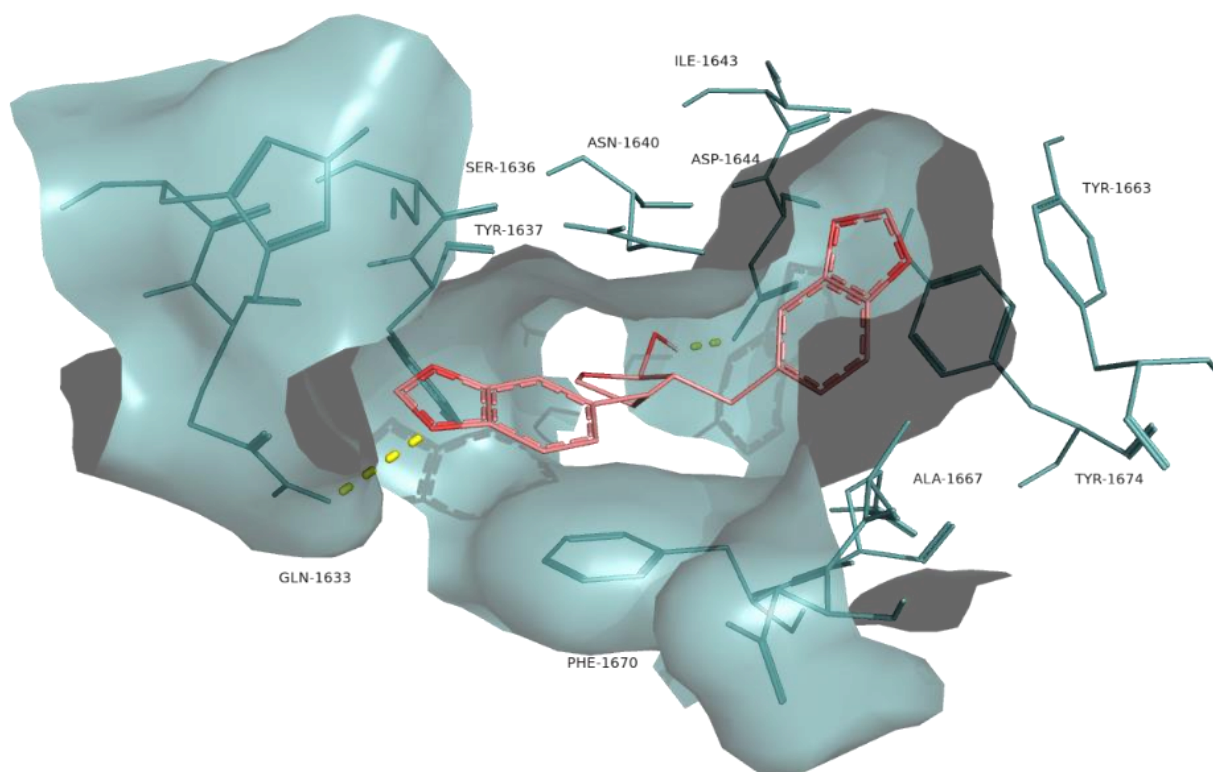


Figure 6 – Molecular interactions of the best docking position of  $\alpha$ -cubebin against Pks13. Hydrogen bonds are evidenced with yellow dashed lines.

## Discussion

Predictions of molecular docking are now well-established when assessing the interactions between ligands and targets. The use of docking approaches has been facilitated by the development of suitable software such as, GOLD, FlexX, FRED, DOCK and particularly, AutoDock Vina<sup>9,10</sup>. Such *in silico* docking provides a numerical estimate the likelihood of interaction of a compound to its target. This approach can be extended to identify the proteins which are likely *in vivo* binding sites, and therefore possible modes of action<sup>11–13</sup>. For example, the target of the anti-bacterial and anti-fungal natural product scytoscalarol was found to dock with EmbC and this was linked with anti-mycobacterial activity. Other compounds such as the  $\beta$ -carboline alkaloids 8-hydroxymanzamine A and manzamine A were found to bind to the oxidoreductase InhA.

We here demonstrate how docking can be used to assess large numbers of anti-mycobacterial NPs to suggest key interactions and imply a mode of action. Our approach was to examine the literature for

1 NPs with anti-mycobacterial activities but whose targets had not been previously characterised. Then,  
2 proteins known to be targeted by established anti-mycobacterial drug leads were screened using the NP  
3 chemical structures. The aim was to identify natural product interactions whose docking energies that  
4 were as good as, or superior to, the established drug lead. The ‘druggable’ mycobacterial targets  
5 ClpP1P2, DprE1, InhA, KasA, PanK, PknB and Pks13 were all known to play important roles in  
6 maintaining mycobacterial viability. ClpP1P2 carries out the energy-dependent degradation of  
7 abnormal proteins within the cells during *in vitro* growth and infection<sup>14</sup>. DprE1 is a  
8 decaprenylphosphoryl-d-ribose oxidase, involved in the biosynthesis of decaprenylphosphoryl-D-  
9 arabinose, an essential component of the mycobacterial cell wall and thus is essential for cell growth  
10 and survival<sup>15,16</sup>. InhA is a known target of isoniazid, a first-line anti-tuberculosis drug, essential for  
11 the synthesis of mycolic acids. KasA is one of the enzyme responsible for elongation of C16-26 fatty  
12 acyl primers in FAS-II system for mycolic acid production of *M. tuberculosis*<sup>17</sup>. Pantothenate kinase  
13 (PanK) is a ubiquitous and essential enzyme that catalyses the first step of the coenzyme A biosynthetic  
14 pathway<sup>18</sup>. PknB is a very well-characterized mycobacterial serine/threonine protein kinase which  
15 determines cell shape, morphology and possibly cell division<sup>19</sup>. Pks13 is a polyketide synthase that  
16 catalyses the final condensation step in mycolic acid biosynthesis and is therefore essential for  
17 mycobacterial growth<sup>20</sup>.

18  
19 A key aspect of our approach was to identify several “drug-like” properties of the NPs to by comparison  
20 conventional anti-TB drugs<sup>7</sup>. Our analyses first assessed the chemical space occupied by the NPs  
21 against ClpP1P2, DprE1, InhA, KasA, PanK, PknB and Pks13 which were compared with the respective  
22 control inhibitor. This identified NPs which occupied the same “chemical space” as most of the anti-  
23 TB drugs. Only isoniazid, ethambutol, streptomycin, kanamycin, amikacin and levofloxacin, exhibited  
24 a higher hydrophilicity compared to the NP. This could indicate that a few NPs have high cytotoxicity,  
25 due to their higher relative lipophilicity. This will have to be directly assessed through experimental  
26 testing.

Our structural study focused on bisbenzylisoquinoline alkaloids 2-nortiliacorinine, tiliacorine and 13'-bromotiliacorinine against the targets PknB and DprE1. These bisbenzylisoquinoline alkaloids isolated from *Tiliacora triandra* roots, which are used in Thai cuisine, were very effective in suppressing 59 isolated MDR-TB strains with MICs in the range of 1.5-6.25  $\mu\text{g.mL}^{-1,21}$ . Structurally, these molecules are similar, but the minor differences resulted in different binding properties. Tiliacorine, with the lowest binding energy, formed two hydrogen bonds with the residues Tyr94 and Phe19 of PknB. However, both nortiliacorinine and 13'-bromotiliacorine only formed one stable hydrogen bond with Gly97 and Tyr94 (Figure 2). The bromide substitution at C-13 of 13'-bromotiliacorine made the molecule less planar and thereby increased the binding energy through steric impedance as seen with the superimposed docked conformations of all three molecules (Figure 3). A key feature here revealed is the interactions of the hydrophobic core of these NPs and the planar dihydroxy anthraquinone moiety of the control in the hydrophobic 'cage' of PknB <sup>22</sup>.

The importance of our modelling approach for drug optimisation was demonstrated by considering the binding of DprE1 to tiliacorine, nortiliacorinine and 13'-bromotiliacorine. The interaction with these NPs is stabilised by several non-covalent interactions but crucially, these were distinctive from the binding simulations with BTZ043, where H-bonding, hydrophobic and ionic interactions are responsible for the stabilisation of the complex<sup>23</sup>. Additionally, the residue Cys387, before identified as critical for covalently binding to Ct325 (3-(hydroxyamino)-N-[(1R)-1-phenylethyl]-5-(trifluoromethyl) benzamide) is not involved in the binding of any of the NPs. Overall, 13'-bromotiliacorinine have shown slightly better anti-mycobacterial activity (and lower cytotoxicity against MRC-5 cell lines) than tiliacorine, nortiliacorinine, despite the higher binding energies here reported. Other biochemical assays are required to understand the how the different chemical properties of these NPs influence bacterial uptake, metabolism and target binding. Nonetheless, the molecular interactions that we have defined can be used to inform chemical derivatisation strategies aiming to increase specificity and decrease toxicity.

$\alpha$ -cubebin, a dibenzylbutyrolactone lignan, has been isolated from several species in various families, such as Aristolochiaceae, Myristicaceae, Rutaceae, and Piperaceae<sup>24</sup>. It is known to act as an insect antifeedant as was noted with *Anticarsia gemmatilis*<sup>25,26</sup> as well as being anti-tubercular<sup>27</sup>. However,  $\alpha$ -cubebin displays only a moderate activity against several mono- and multi-drug resistant isolates of *M. tuberculosis* (MICs ranging 50-100  $\mu\text{g.mL}^{-1}$ ). Interestingly, it does not display cytotoxicity against LLCMK2 fibroblast<sup>28</sup>, suggesting that  $\alpha$ -cubebin could merit derivatisation to make it a better drug lead.  $\alpha$ -cubebin exhibited a low binding energy value when docked to Pks13 and interacts with some of the key residues within Pks13 as the drug inhibitor I28. Additionally, unlike I28,  $\alpha$ -cubebin has been predicted to bind to the Protein Tyrosine Phosphatase B (PtpB) of *M. tuberculosis*<sup>29</sup>. This suggested that  $\alpha$ -cubebin had some unique distinct binding characteristics with the *M. tuberculosis* proteome compared to I28. The information of  $\alpha$ -cubebin's binding site will facilitate the optimisation of this compound towards greater efficacy and selectivity.

In conclusion, we show how four promising NPs - tiliacrine, nortiliacrine, 13'-bromotiliacrine and  $\alpha$ -cubebin - have very lower binding energies than the respective controls against three 'druggable' anti-mycobacterial targets PnkB, DprE1 and Pks13. Due to problems in obtaining the NPs from natural sources or complex total synthesis, the predicted *in silico* activity/binding will greatly facilitate drug optimisation prior to further studies. Even though the direct relation between *in silico* and *in vitro* results is not always correlated, our approach will generate hypotheses that should inform the discovery and synthesis of new and promising anti-TB derivatives based on docking models.

## Materials and Methods

### Selected anti-tubercular Natural Products

Information about the selected anti-mycobacterial NPs and their activity against TB, in minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) is given in Table 1.

1 Table 1 - Plants and their molecules active against different *Mycobacterium* strains.

Plant names	Active phytomolecules	MIC (µg/mL)	References
<i>Andrographis paniculata</i>	Andrographolide	-	30, 31
<i>Aristolochia brevipes</i> Benth.	6α-7-Dehydro-N-formyl-nornantenine	>50 <sup>a,b,d</sup>	32
	N-Formyl-nornantenine	>50 <sup>a,b,d</sup>	
	Aristolactam I	12.5–25 <sup>a,b,d</sup>	
<i>Aristolochia taliscana</i> Hook and Arn.	Licarin A	3.12–25 <sup>a,b,d</sup>	33
	Licarin B	12.5–5 <sup>a,b,d</sup>	
	Eupomatenoid-7	6.25–50 <sup>a,b,d</sup>	
<i>Aristolochia elegans</i> Mast.	Fargesin	12–50 <sup>a,b,d</sup>	27
	(8R,8'R,9R)-Cubebin or α-Cubebin	50–100 <sup>a,b,d</sup>	
<i>Artemisia capillaris</i> Thunb.	Ursolic acid	12.5–50 <sup>a,b,c,d</sup>	34, 35
	Hydroquinone	12.5–25 <sup>a,b,c,d</sup>	35
<i>Azorella compacta</i> Phil., <i>A. madreporica</i> Clos.	Azorellanol	12.5 <sup>b,d</sup>	36
	Mulin-11,13-dien-20-oic acid	25–50 <sup>b,d</sup>	
	Mulinol	12.5–25 <sup>b,d</sup>	
<i>Beilschmiedia tsangii</i> Merr.	Beilschmin A	2.5 <sup>d</sup>	37
<i>Blepharodon nitidum</i> (Vell.) J.F. Macbr.	25-Hydroperoxycycloart-23-en-3β-ol	25 <sup>b</sup>	38
<i>Citrullus colocynthis</i> (L.) Schrad.	Cucurbitacin-E-2- <i>o</i> -β-d-glucopyranoside	25–62.5 <sup>a,b,c,d</sup>	39
<i>Clavija procera</i> B.Stühl	Aegicerin	1.6–3.12 <sup>a,b,d</sup>	40
<i>Curcuma longa</i> L.	Curcumin	100 <sup>d</sup>	41
	Demethoxycurcumin	50 <sup>d</sup>	
	Bisdemethoxycurcumin	25 <sup>d</sup>	
<i>Diospyros anisandra</i> S.F.Blake	Plumbagin	1.5–62.5 <sup>b,c,d</sup>	42, 43
	Maritinone or 8,8'-Biplumbagin	3.12 <sup>b,d</sup>	42
	3,3'-Biplumbagin	3.12 <sup>b,d</sup>	
<i>Diospyros montana</i>	Diospyrin	8–250 <sup>b,c,d</sup>	43, 44
<i>Euclea natalensis</i> A.DC.	7-Methyljuglone	0.5–1.25 <sup>a,b,d</sup>	44
	Mamegakinone	100 <sup>d</sup>	45
	Isodiospyrin	10 <sup>d</sup>	
	Neodiospyrin	10 <sup>d</sup>	
	Shinanolone	100 <sup>d</sup>	
<i>Ferula communis</i> Linn.	Ferulenol	1.25 <sup>c</sup>	46
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> Mill.	5-Hydroxy-furanocoumarin or Bergaptol	100–200 <sup>b</sup>	47
<i>Juniperus communis</i> subsp. <i>communis</i> var. <i>communis</i> L.	Totarol	2–25 <sup>a,c,d</sup>	48
	Ferruginol	5 <sup>c</sup>	49
	Sandaracopimeric acid	30 <sup>c</sup>	
	4-Epiabietol	60 <sup>c</sup>	
<i>Justicia adhatoda</i> L. or <i>Adhatoda vesica</i>	Vasicine	200 <sup>d</sup>	
<i>Kaempferia galangal</i> L.	Ethyl- <i>p</i> -methoxycinnamate	50–100 <sup>b,d</sup>	50
<i>Lantana hispida</i> Kunth	Oleanolic acid	25–100 <sup>a,b,c,d</sup>	34, 51
<i>Larrea tridentata</i> Coville.	Dihydroguaiaretic acid	12–50 <sup>b,d</sup>	52
	4-Epi-larreatricin	25–50 <sup>b,d</sup>	
<i>Plectranthus grandidentatus</i> Gurke	Abietane	3.12–25 <sup>b,d</sup>	53
<i>Plumeria bicolor</i> Ruiz & Pav.	Plumericin	1.5–2 <sup>b,d</sup>	54
	Isoplumericin	2–2.5 <sup>b,d</sup>	
<i>Struthanthus concinnus</i>	Obtusifoliol	50 <sup>d</sup>	55

<i>Tabernaemontana elegans</i> Stapf. or <i>Tiliacora triandra</i>	Tiliacorinine	3.12-6.25 <sup>b,d</sup>	21
	2'-Nortiliacorinine	1.5-6.25 <sup>b,d</sup>	
	13'-Bromotiliacorinine	1.5-6.25 <sup>b,d</sup>	
<i>Ventilago madraspatana</i>	Emodin	4-128 <sup>b,c</sup>	43
<i>Vetiveria zizanioides</i>	α-Curcumene	31.25-125 <sup>a,b,c</sup>	56
	Valencene	62.5-250 <sup>a,b,c</sup>	
	Selina-3,7(11)-diene		

<sup>a</sup>mono-resistant clinical and non-clinical isolates, <sup>b</sup>multidrug resistant (MDR) clinical and non-clinical isolates, <sup>c</sup>mycobacteria other than tuberculosis, <sup>d</sup>*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*

#### Ligand and Protein selection

A total of 53 NPs with reported anti-mycobacterial activity  $\leq 100 \text{ mg.mL}^{-1}$  were selected. All chemical structures were retrieved from the PubChem compound database (NCBI) (<http://www.pubchem.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>). The crystal structures and respective controls of ClpP1P2 (PDB ID: 4U0G) <sup>57</sup>, DprE1 (PDB ID: 6HEZ) <sup>58</sup>, InhA (PDB ID: 1ENY) <sup>59</sup>, KasA (PDB ID: 2WGE) <sup>60</sup>, PanK type 1 (PDB ID: 4BFT) <sup>61</sup>, PknB (PDB ID: 2FUM) <sup>22</sup> and Pks13 (PDB ID: 5V3X) <sup>8</sup> were retrieved from the RCSB Protein Data Bank (PDB) database (<https://www.rcsb.org>).

#### Physicochemical and structural properties

*In silico* prediction of physicochemical and structural properties of the NPs was performed using PaDEL-Descriptor<sup>62</sup> including the descriptors: nHBAcc\_Lipinski (acceptor H-bonds), nHBDdon\_Lipinski (donor H-bonds), nRotB (number of rotation bonds), TopoPSA (topological polar surface area), MW (molecular weight) and XLogP (prediction of logP based on the atom-type method). Chemical space analyses were conducted with the NPs and 14 anti-TB drugs (ethambutol, isoniazid, pyrazinamide, rifampicin, streptomycin, ciprofloxacin, levofloxacin, moxifloxacin, amikacin, kanamycin, linezolid, bedaquiline, clofazimine and delamanid), comparing the descriptors above. Unsupervised principal component analyses (PCA) were generated using the statistical analysis tool of Metaboanalyst 4.0 <sup>63</sup>.

#### Docking

The extended PDB format, PDBQT, was used for coordinate files to include atomic partial charges<sup>64</sup>. All file conversions were performed using the open source chemical toolbox Open Babel 2.3.2 <sup>65</sup>. The



ligand and protein structures were optimised using AutoDock Tools software (AutoDock 1.5.6) which involved adding all hydrogen atoms to the macromolecule, which is a step necessary for correct calculation of partial atomic charges. Gasteiger charges are calculated for each atom of the macromolecule in AutoDock 1.5.6<sup>64</sup>.

NPs were docked against ClpP1P2, DprE1, InhA, KasA, PanK, PknB, and Pks13 along with each respective control inhibitors, ZIL (N-[(benzyloxy)carbonyl]-L-isoleucyl-L-leucine), BTZ043, isoniazid, TLM (thiolactomycin), ZVT, MIX, I28. Molecular docking calculations for all compounds with each of the proteins were performed using AutoDock Vina 1.1.2. Docking calculation was generated with the software free energy binding own scoring function. The binding affinity of the ligand was expressed in kcal.mol<sup>-1</sup>. Nine different poses were calculated for each protein with the parameters num\_modes = 9 and exhaustiveness = 16. The lowest energy conformation was chosen for binding model analysis. Molecular interactions between ligand and protein were generated and analysed by LigPlot<sup>+</sup> and depicted by PyMOL. PyMOL Molecular Graphics System, Version 2.0 Schrödinger (<http://www.pymol.org>) was used to prepare the Figures.

To provide enough space for free movements of the ligands, the grid box was constructed to cover the active sites as defined using AutoDock 1.5.6. The grid points for ClpP1P2 were set to 18 × 20 × 12, at a grid center of (x,y,z) -84.697, -2.336, 38.022 with spacing of 1 Å. For DprE1, the grid points were set to 20 × 20 × 20, at a grid center of (x,y,z) 14.99, -20.507, 37.226 with spacing of 1 Å. For InhA, the grid points were set to 26 × 24 × 22, at a grid center of (x,y,z) -5.111, 33.222, 13.410 with spacing of 1 Å. For KasA, the grid points were set to 20 × 20 × 20, at a grid center of (x,y,z) 38.342, -7.033, 13.410 with spacing of 1 Å. For PanK, the grid points were set to 20 × 20 × 20, at a grid center of (x,y,z) -18.742, 13.919, 11.679 with spacing of 1 Å. For PknB, the grid points were set to 21 × 20 × 20, at a grid center of (x,y,z) 61.518, 2.429, -25.588 with spacing of 1 Å. For Pks13 the grid points were set to 16 × 18 × 14, at a grid center of (x,y,z) 3.954, 27.324, 8.499 with spacing of 1 Å.

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#### 4 **Acknowledgments**

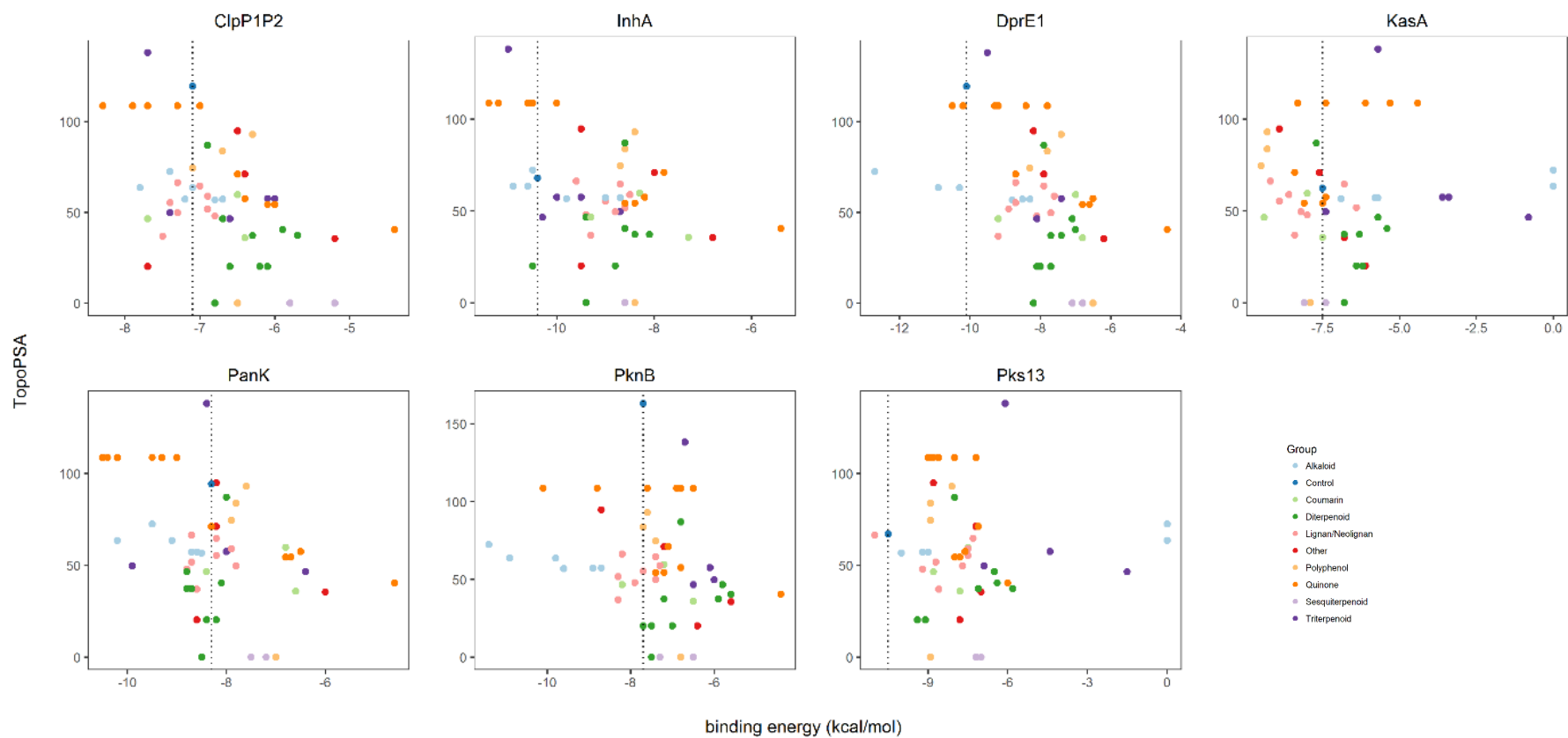
5 R.B. was supported by a Natural Life Sciences Research Network PhD Scholarship. S.B. is thankful to  
6 Aberystwyth University for its AberDoc PhD Scholarship. The authors have no other relevant  
7 affiliations or financial involvement with any organization or entity with a financial interest in or  
8 financial conflict with the subject matter or materials discussed in the manuscript apart from those  
9 disclosed. No writing assistance was utilised in the production of this manuscript.

#### 11 **Author Contributions**

12 R.B., S.B. J.S. and L.A.J.M. conceived and designed the study. R.B. and S.B. performed the  
13 computational studies. R.B. analysed the data and prepared the figures. R.B., S.B. J.S. and L.A.J.M.  
14 wrote the paper. All authors reviewed the manuscript.



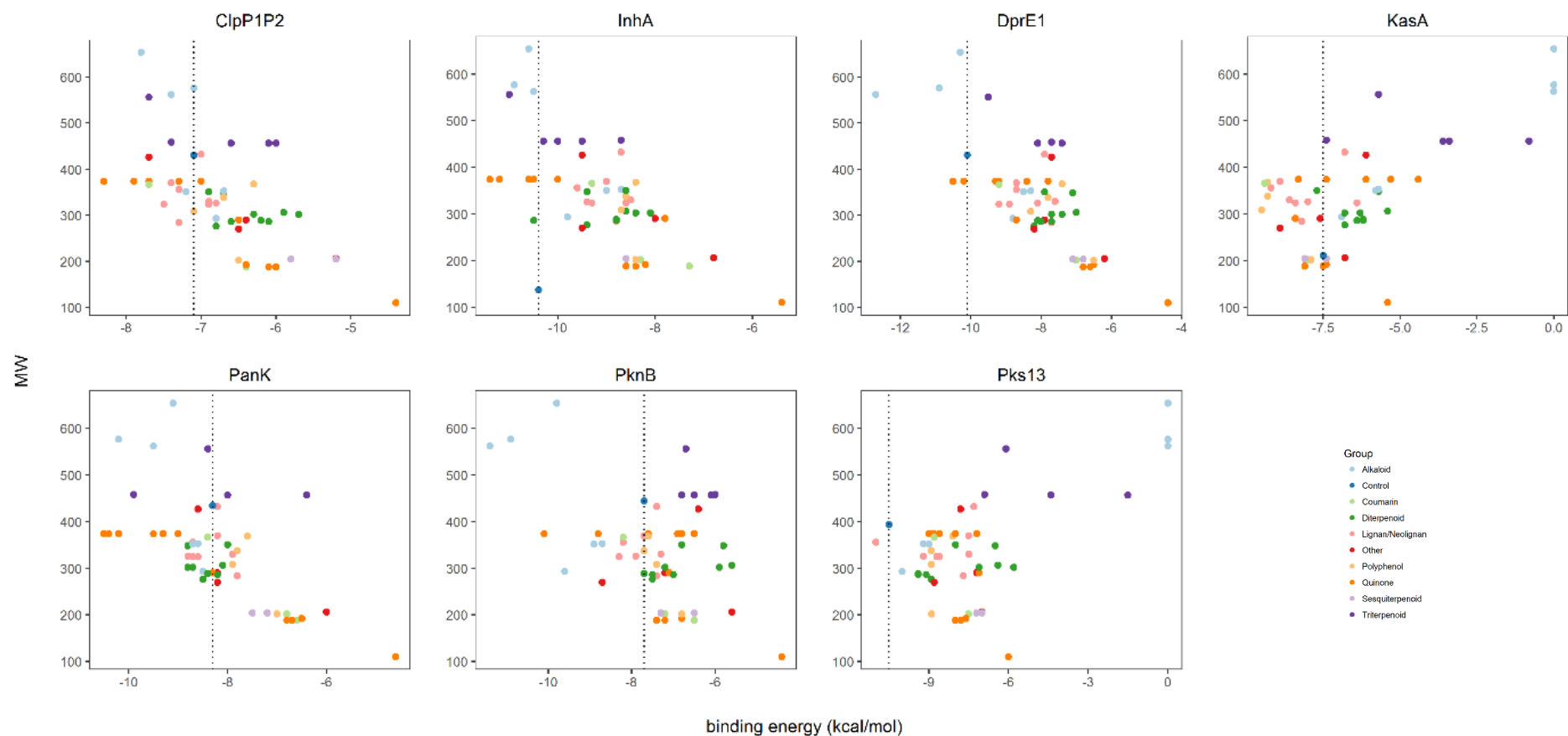
## Supplementary Figures



Supplementary Figure 1 – Topological polar surface (TopoPSA) and binding energy of studied natural products against ClpP1P2, DprE1, InhA, KasA, PanK, PknB and Pks13.

1

2

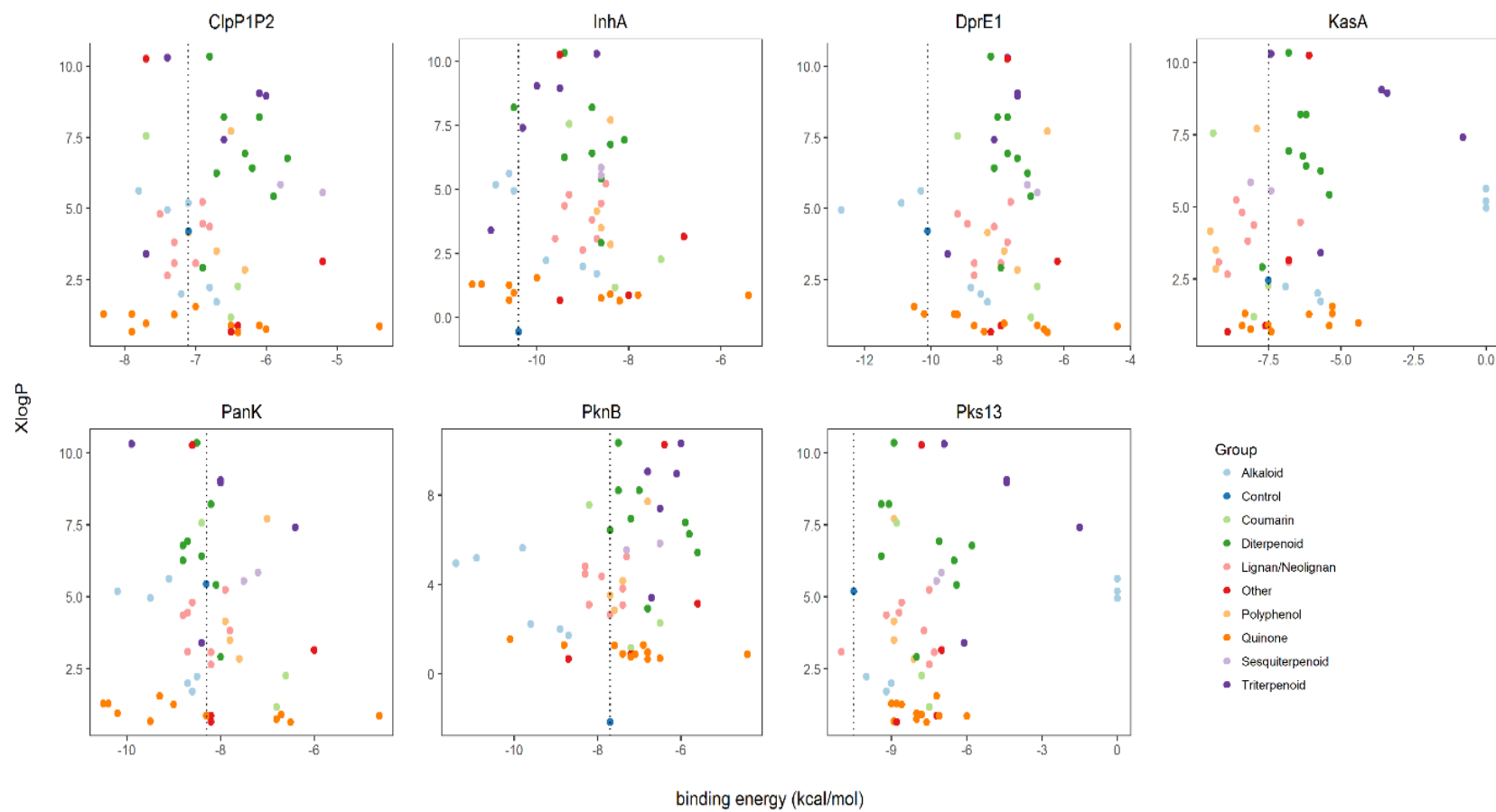


3

4 Supplementary Figure 2 – Molecular weight (MW) and binding energy of studied natural products against ClpP1P2, DprE1, InhA, KasA, PanK, PknB and

5 Pks13.

1



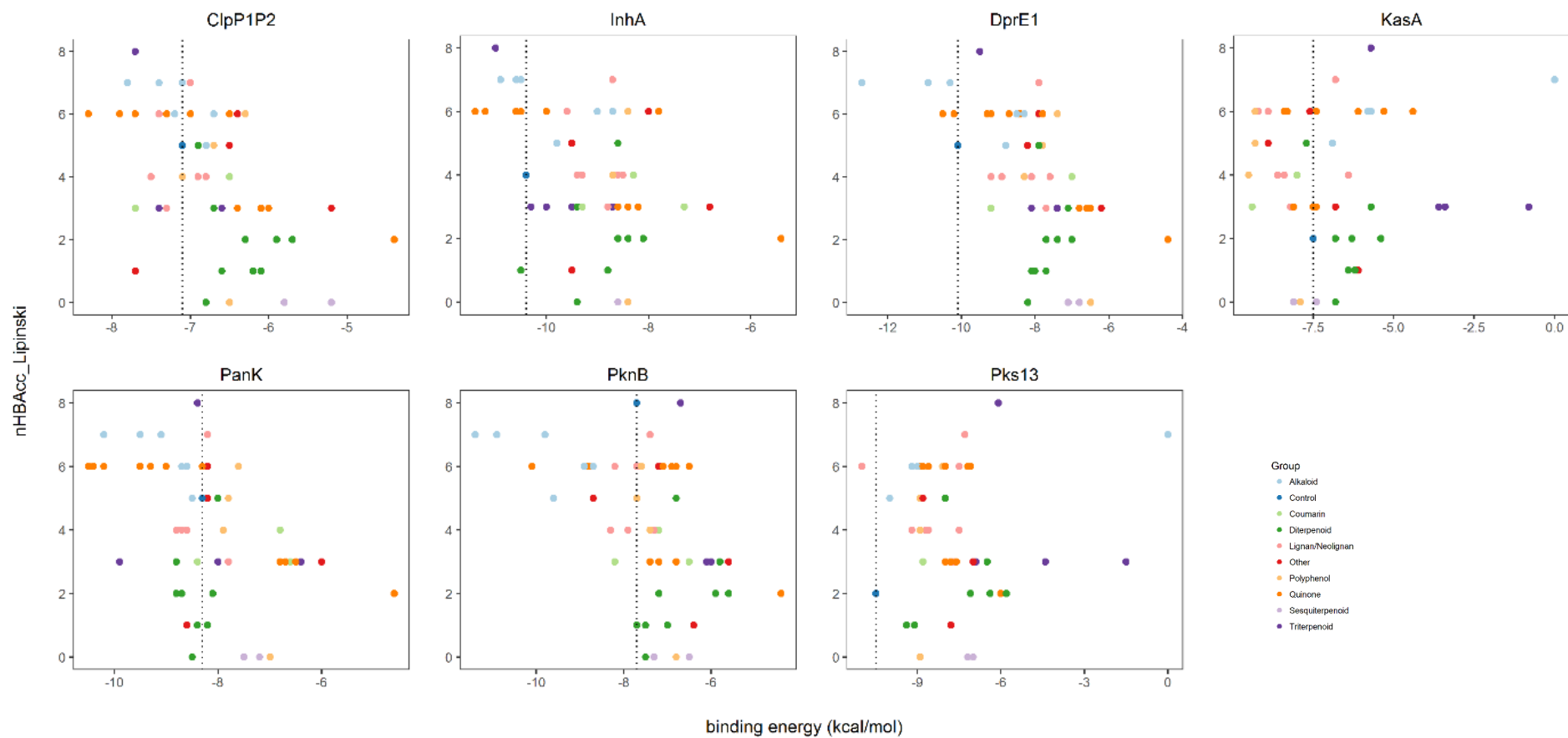
2

3 Supplementary Figure 3 – Partition coefficient (XLogP) and binding energy of studied natural products against ClpP1P2, DprE1, InhA, KasA, PanK, PknB and

4 Pks13.

5

1

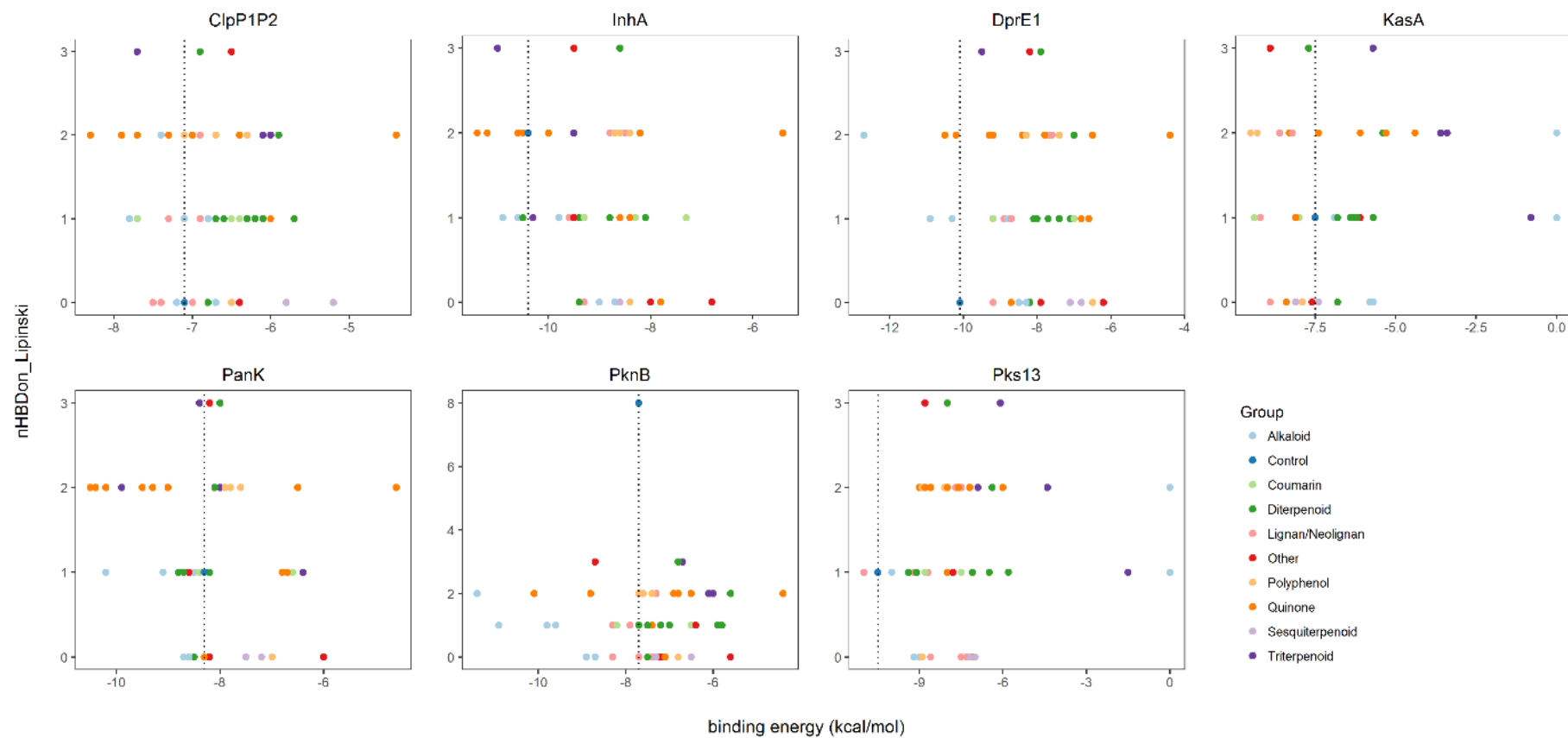


2

3 Supplementary Figure 4 – Number of H-bonds acceptors (nHBAcc\_Lipinski) and binding energy of studied natural products against ClpP1P2, DprE1, InhA,

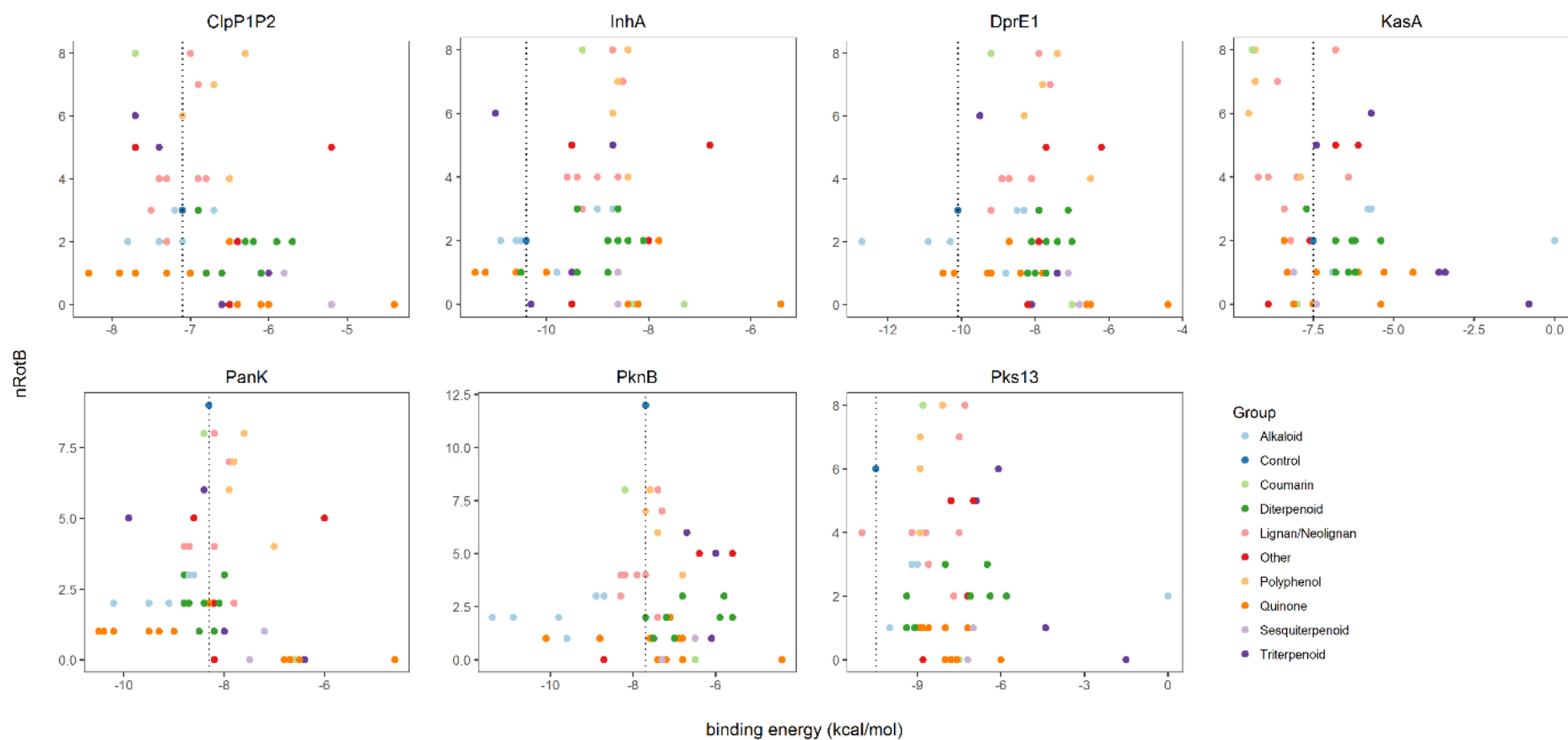
4 KasA, PanK, PknB and Pks13.

5



Supplementary Figure 5 – Number of H-bonds donors (nHBDDon\_Lipinski) and binding energy of studied natural products against ClpP1P2, DprE1, InhA, KasA, PanK, PknB and Pks13.

1



2

3 Supplementary Figure 6 – Number of rotational bonds (nRotB) and binding energy of studied natural products against ClpP1P2, DprE1, InhA, KasA, PanK,  
 4 PknB and Pks13.

5

6

1 Supplementary Table 1

	Group	Name	nHBacc_Lipinski	nHBDdon_Lipinski	nRotB	TopoPSA	MW	XLogP	Pks13	PknB	PanK	KasA	InhA	DprE1	ClpP1P2
Licarin A	Lignan/Neolignan	1	4	1	4	48	326	4.36	-9	-8	-9	-8	-9.4	-8.1	-6.8
Licarin B	Lignan/Neolignan	2	4	0	3	37	324	4.81	-9	-8	-9	-8.4	-9.3	-9.2	-7.5
eupomatenoid-7	Lignan/Neolignan	3	4	1	4	52	324	4.46	-9	-8	-9	-6.4	-8.6	-8.9	-6.9
Aristolactam I	Alkaloid	4	5	1	1	57	293	2.23	-10	-10	-9	-6.9	-9.8	-8.8	-6.8
Fargesin	Neolignan	5	6	0	4	55	370	2.65	-8	-8	-8	-8.9	-9	-8.7	-7.4
alpha-Cubebin	Lignan/Neolignan	6	6	1	4	66	356	3.08	-11	-8	-9	-9.2	-9.6	-8.7	-7.3
Ursolic acid	Triterpenoid	7	3	2	1	58	456	8.95	-4	-6	-8	-3.4	-9.5	-7.4	-6
Hydroquinone	Quinone	8	2	2	0	40	110	0.87	-6	-4	-5	-5.4	-5.4	-4.4	-4.4
azorellanol	Diterpenoid	9	3	1	3	47	348	6.25	-7	-6	-9	-5.7	-9.4	-7.1	-6.7
Beilschmin A	Lignan/Neolignan	10	7	0	8	65	432	3.08	-7	-7	-8	-6.8	-8.7	-7.9	-7
25-Hydroperoxycycloart-23-en-3beta-ol	Triterpenoid	11	3	2	5	50	458	10.3	-7	-6	-10	-7.4	-8.7	-7.7	-7.4
cucurbitacin E	Triterpenoid	12	8	3	6	138	556	3.4	-6	-7	-8	-5.7	-11	-9.5	-7.7
aegicerin	Triterpenoid	13	3	1	0	47	456	7.41	-2	-7	-6	-0.8	-10.3	-8.1	-6.6
Diospyrin	Quinone	14	6	2	1	109	374	1.29	-9	-9	-10	-8.3	-11.2	-9.3	-8.3
5-Hydroxy furanocoumarin or bergaptol	Coumarin	15	4	1	0	60	202	1.17	-8	-7	-7	-8	-8.3	-7	-6.5
vasicine	Coumarin	16	3	1	0	36	188	2.27	-8	-7	-7	-7.5	-7.3	-6.8	-6.4
Ethyl 4-Methoxycinnamate	Other	17	3	0	5	36	206	3.15	-7	-6	-6	-6.8	-6.8	-6.2	-5.2
Oleanolic acid	Triterpenoid	18	3	2	1	58	456	9.05	-4	-7	-8	-3.6	-10	-7.4	-6.1
Dihydroguaiaretic acid	Lignan/Neolignan	19	4	2	7	59	330	5.24	-8	-7	-8	-8.6	-8.5	-7.6	-6.9

4-Epi-larreatricin	Lignan/Neolignan	20	3	2	2	50	284	3.82	-8	-7	-8	-8.2	-8.8	-7.7	-7.3
Abietane	Diterpenoid	21	0	0	1	0	276	10.3	-9	-8	-9	-6.8	-9.4	-8.2	-6.8
Plumericin	Other	22	6	0	2	71	290	0.88	-7	-7	-8	-7.6	-8	-7.9	-6.4
Tiliacoronine	Alkaloid	24	7	2	2	72	562	4.95	3.7	-11	-10	32.7	-10.5	-13	-7.4
2'-Nortiliacoronine	Alkaloid	25	7	1	2	64	576	5.19	1.4	-11	-10	28.3	-10.9	-11	-7.1
Plumbagin	Quinone	26	3	1	0	54	188	0.76	-8	-7	-7	-8.1	-8.6	-6.6	-6
Maritinone or 8,8'-biplumbagin	Quinone	27	6	2	1	109	374	0.68	-9	-7	-10	-7.4	-10.6	-8.4	-7.9
3,3'-biplumbagin	Quinone	28	6	2	1	109	374	1.27	-9	-8	-9	-6.1	-10.6	-9.2	-7.3
6?-7-dehydro-N formyl-nornantenine	Alkaloid	29	6	0	3	57	351	2	-9	-9	-9	-5.8	-9	-8.5	-7.2
N-formylNornantenine	Alkaloid	30	6	0	3	57	353	1.72	-9	-9	-9	-5.7	-8.7	-8.3	-6.7
Mulin-11,13-dien-20-oic acid	Diterpenoid	31	2	1	2	37	302	6.77	-6	-6	-9	-6.3	-8.4	-7.4	-5.7
Mulinol	Diterpenoid	32	2	2	2	40	306	5.42	-6	-6	-8	-5.4	-8.6	-7	-5.9
Curcumin	Polyphenol	35	6	2	8	93	368	2.85	-8	-8	-8	-9.3	-8.4	-7.4	-6.3
demethoxycurcumin	Polyphenol	36	5	2	7	84	338	3.5	-9	-8	-8	-9.3	-8.6	-7.8	-6.7
bisdemethoxycurcumin	Polyphenol	37	4	2	6	75	308	4.16	-9	-7	-8	-9.5	-8.7	-8.3	-7.1
Isodiospyrin	Quinone	38	6	2	1	109	374	0.96	-8	-7	-10	-4.4	-10.5	-7.8	-7.7
Mamegakinone	Quinone	39	6	2	1	109	374	1.55	-7	-10	-9	-5.3	-10	-11	-7
7-methyljuglone	Quinone	40	3	1	0	54	188	0.9	-8	-7	-7	-7.5	-8.4	-6.8	-6.1
Neodiospyrin	Quinone	41	6	2	1	109	374	1.29	-9	-7	-11	-5.3	-11.4	-10	-7.9
Shinanolone	Quinone	42	3	2	0	58	192	0.65	-8	-7	-7	-7.4	-8.2	-6.5	-6.4
isoplumericin	Quinone	46	6	0	2	71	290	0.88	-7	-7	-8	-8.4	-7.8	-8.7	-6.5
13?-bromo-tiliacoronine	Alkaloid	47	7	1	2	64	654	5.63	4.6	-10	-9	52.3	-10.6	-10	-7.8
a-curcumene	Polyphenol	49	0	0	4	0	202	7.71	-9	-7	-7	-7.9	-8.4	-6.5	-6.5
valencene	Sesquiterpenoid	50	0	0	1	0	204	5.85	-7	-7	-7	-8.1	-8.6	-7.1	-5.8
Selina-3,7(11)-diene	Sesquiterpenoid	51	0	0	0	0	204	5.55	-7	-7	-8	-7.4	-8.6	-6.8	-5.2
Emodin	Other	52	5	3	0	95	270	0.66	-9	-9	-8	-8.9	-9.5	-8.2	-6.5
Andrographolide	Diterpenoid	53	5	3	3	87	350	2.91	-8	-7	-8	-7.7	-8.6	-7.9	-6.9
Obtusifoliol	Other	54	1	1	5	20	426	10.3	-8	-6	-9	-6.1	-9.5	-7.7	-7.7
Totarol	Diterpenoid	55	1	1	1	20	286	8.21	-9	-7	-8	-6.2	-10.5	-7.7	-6.1



Ferruginol	Diterpenoid	56	1	1	1	20	286	8.21	-9	-8	-8	-6.4	-8.8	-8	-6.6
sandaracopimeric acid	Diterpenoid	57	2	1	2	37	302	6.94	-7	-7	-9	-6.8	-8.1	-7.7	-6.3
4-Epiabietol	Diterpenoid	58	1	1	2	20	288	6.42	-9	-8	-8	-6.2	-8.8	-8.1	-6.2
ferulenol	Coumarin	59	3	1	8	47	366	7.56	-9	-8	-8	-9.4	-9.3	-9.2	-7.7
	Control	ZIL	7	3	13	105	378	5.05							-7.1
	Control	BTZ043	5	0	3	120	431	4.2						-10	
	Control	I28	2	1	6	67	393	5.19	-11						
	Control	INH	4	2	2	68	137	-0.57					-10.4		
	Control	MIX	8	8	12	163	444	-2.17		-8					
	Control	TLM	2	1	2	63	210	2.46				-7.5			
	Control	ZVT	5	1	9	94	434	5.44			-8				

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