

The “Hide and Seek Game” played by biofilms and bacteriophages

J. Azeredo, D. P. Pires, L. D. R. Melo, D. Vilas Boas, and S. Sillankorva

CEB – Centre of Biological Engineering, LIBRO – Laboratório de Investigação em Biofilmes Rosário Oliveira, University of Minho, 4710-057 Braga, Portugal

Biofilms constitute an important survival strategy for microorganisms, and therefore are ubiquitous in the environment, being involved in many chronic and difficult to treat infections. Bacteriophages (phages), as natural predators of bacteria, have evolved and found routes to successfully reach and kill their hosts within the biofilm structure. On the other hand, the biofilm phenotype confers protection to phage predation. In this talk, the backstage of the “hide and seek game” played by phages and bacteria within biofilms will be shown by providing a description of the biofilm features that hinder phage interaction with the host as well as the mechanisms used by phages to interact with biofilms.

Key words: phage, biofilm, matrix, infection, lysis