

## Review Article

# Diversity of Thermophilic Bacteria Isolated from Extreme Environments in Indonesia: A Perspective in Biotechnology Applications

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### ABSTRACT

Indonesia, located along the Pacific Ring of Fire, hosts abundant geothermal sites and hot springs, creating ideal environments for thermophilic bacteria, which are microorganisms capable of thriving at elevated temperatures. These bacteria are recognized for producing thermostable enzymes, including amylases, proteases, cellulases, xylanases, and lipases, which are highly valuable for various industrial applications. This review compiles and analyses the diversity of thermophilic bacteria isolated from 13 geothermal locations across Indonesia, highlighting their enzymatic capabilities and potential applications in biotechnology. Notable genera include *Bacillus*, *Geobacillus*, *Pseudomonas*, *Anoxybacillus*, and *Thermoanaerobacterium*. These isolates demonstrate promising roles in bioenergy production, waste treatment, environmental bioremediation, food processing, agriculture, and pharmaceuticals. Additionally, several strains exhibit the capacity to produce bioactive compounds such as antimicrobial agents and natural pigments. The review also details standardized screening methods using selective solid media and outlines molecular identification techniques, including 16S rRNA gene sequencing and whole genome sequencing. Furthermore, it explores recombinant enzyme technologies applied to thermophiles, enabling enhanced expression, activity, and thermal stability of enzymes for industrial processes. Despite Indonesia's extensive geothermal resources, its microbial biodiversity remains largely untapped. This review not only serves as a scientific inventory of thermophilic strains but also emphasizes their relevance for biotechnological innovations. It aims to support future research, bioprospecting strategies, and industrial applications based on Indonesia's unique thermophilic microbial diversity, ultimately contributing to sustainable technological advancement and resource utilisation.

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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, an archipelagic country with more than 17,000 islands along the Pacific Ring of Fire, is one of the most geologically active regions in the world. Around 40 % of Indonesia's geothermal energy is in its territory, which opens up great potential for utilizing and exploring geothermal energy sources (Masum & Akbar 2019). With more than 125 active volcanoes, over 250 hot springs, and extensive geothermal sites, Indonesia presents an exceptional opportunity for the exploration of thermophilic microorganisms. These extreme environmental conditions create ideal habitats for thermophilic bacteria, which can adapt to extreme temperatures, acidity, and mineral concentrations (Alam et al. 2013). Several regions in Indonesia, such as Java, Bali, and Sumatra, are known for their geothermal and volcanic activity. The Dieng Plateau in Central Java, for instance, is a well-known hotspot for thermal springs and acidic lakes, making it a prime location for thermophilic bacteria isolation. Similarly, the Kawah Ijen crater in East Java, with its sulfuric hot springs, provides another extreme environment where thermophiles are found in abundance (Ardhi et al. 2020). These extreme environments ranging from high-temperature sulfuric springs to volcanic soils, host diverse thermophilic bacteria capable of producing thermostable enzymes and bioactive compounds with significant industrial value. The Map and Pictures of Indonesian Hotsprings which had been investigated in this study is depicted in the Figure 1 and 2.

Thermophilic bacteria are a group of extremophilic microorganisms that thrive in high-temperature environments, typically ranging from 45 °C to over 80 °C (Benammar et al. 2020). Due to their unique adaptations, thermophilic bacteria produce enzymes known as thermozymes, such as proteases, cellulases, amylases, xylanases, chitinases, and lipases, which maintain catalytic activity under high temperatures (Zeldes et al. 2015; Ovando-Chacon et al. 2020). These enzymes exhibit exceptional thermal stability, resistance to chemical denaturation, and extended shelf life, making them valuable in industrial applications including biofuel production, waste treatment, food processing, biomining, and environmental bioremediation (Mawati et al. 2021). In the pharmaceutical sector, enzymes such as gelatinases derived from thermophiles are used for drug delivery systems and as antimicrobial agents (Mohammad et al. 2017).

The study of thermophilic microbes began in 1953 with the discovery of Taq polymerase from *Thermus aquaticus*, which became essential for the widely used PCR technique in molecular biology (Lischer et al. 2020). Until now, there have been many discoveries of new species of thermophilic microbes isolated from extreme areas, especially geothermal resources areas, generally around volcanoes. Identification and exploration of thermophilic microbes will open an understanding of the mechanism of adaptation of microbes to extreme environments, genetic traits, and potential metabolites produced (Schultz et al. 2022). The discovery of thermophilic microbes is certainly capable of being a new solution and encouragement for the fields of molecular, industrial, environmental, food, agricultural, and other fields related to microbial metabolites.

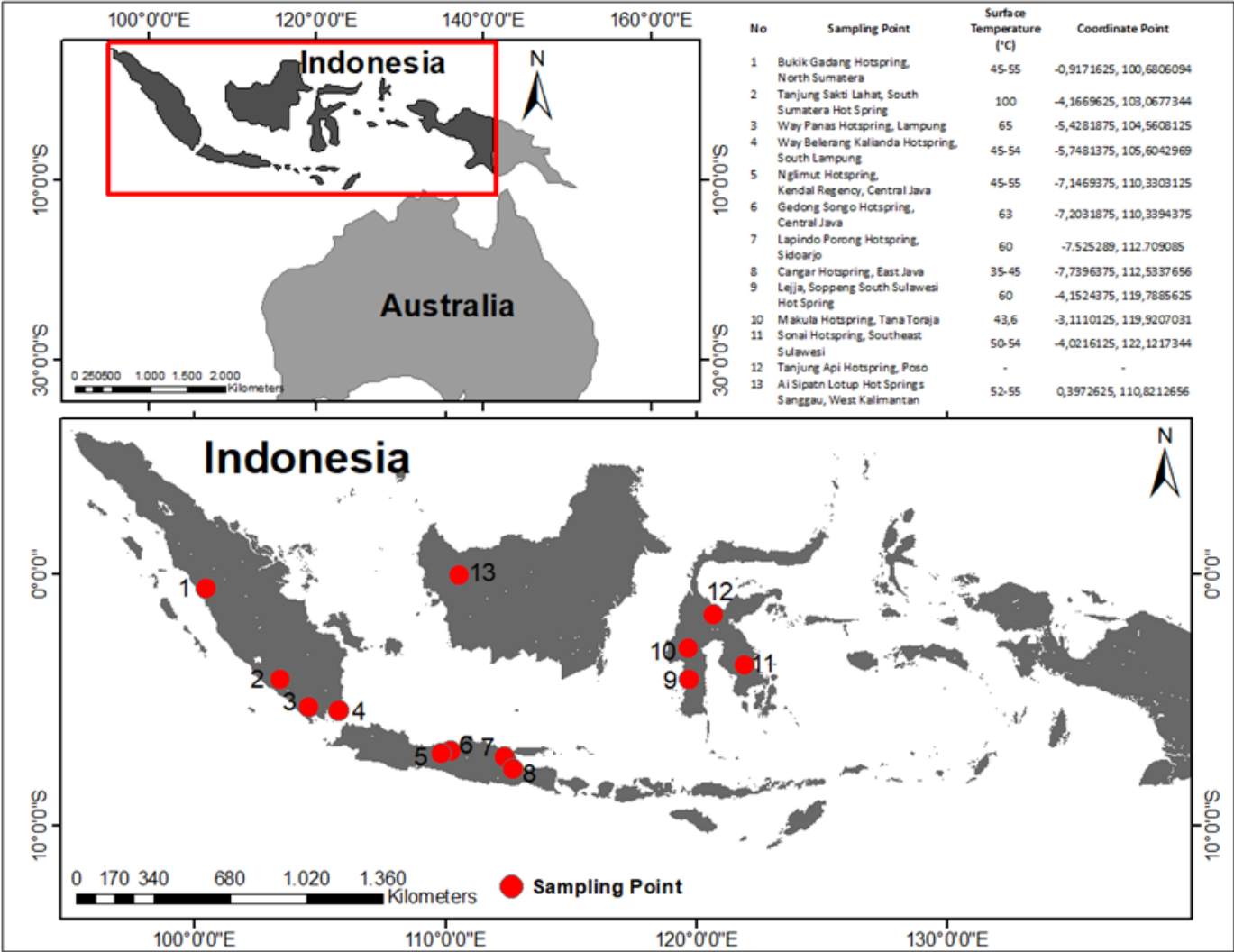
Recent studies have emphasized the importance of exploring thermophilic bacteria as sources of bioactive metabolites, enzymes, pigments, and vitamins with industrial potential (Zhu et al. 2020). Genetic engineering further enhances the potential of these organisms by enabling the optimization of enzyme yields and functionality (Thakur et al. 2022). In Indonesia, the widespread presence of geothermal features offers vast opportunities for the discovery and utilization of novel thermophilic microbes (Ifandi & Alwi 2015). Previous research on thermophilic bacteria has largely focused on well-known global geothermal sites, while studies specific to Indonesia have been sporadic and regionally limited. Despite its rich geothermal diversity, much of Indone-

sia's microbial potential remains underexplored.

The purpose of this review is to comprehensively compile and analyse the diversity of thermophilic bacteria isolated from extreme environments across Indonesia, particularly from volcanic and geothermal sites. This paper also evaluates their enzymatic potential, biotechnological applications, and outlines standardized screening methods. The unique contribution of this manuscript lies in its extensive geographic coverage across 13 Indonesian hot springs and its detailed correlation between bacterial species, enzyme types, and industrial relevance (Figure 3). This review serves not only as a scientific inventory but also as a strategic reference for future bioprospecting and enzyme-based innovation from Indonesian thermophiles.

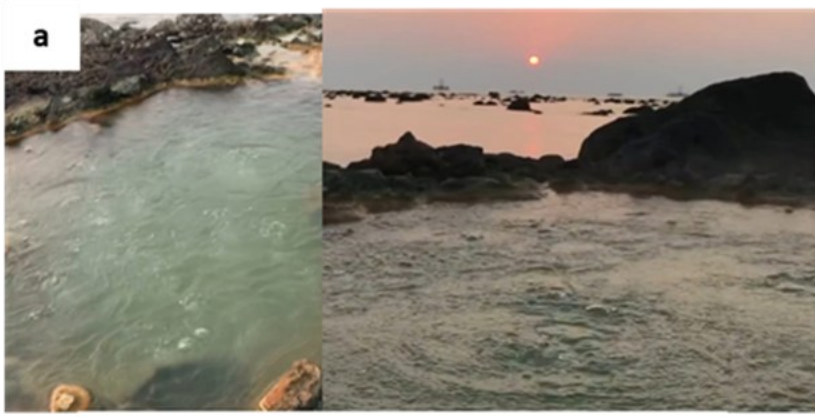
**THERMOPHILIC BACTERIA: CHARACTERISTICS AND IMPORTANCE**

Thermophilic bacteria, thriving in high-temperature environments, play a crucial role in various biotechnological applications. Their ability to withstand extreme temperatures makes them valuable for industrial enzyme production, waste degradation, and biofuel generation (Ching et al. 2022). Ther-

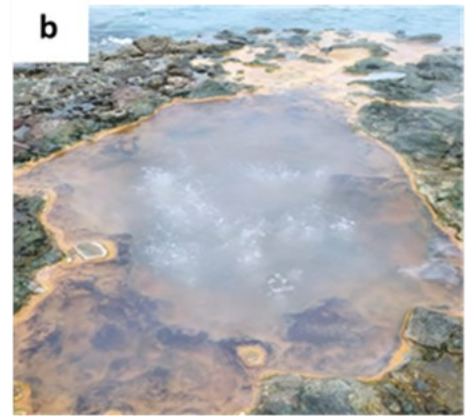


**Figure 1.** The Map of Indonesian Hotspots which had been investigated in this study. Bukit Gadang Hotspring, North Sumatera (1). Tanjung Sakti Lahat, South Sumatera Hot Spring (2). Way Panas Hotspring, Lampung (3). Way Belerang Kalianda Hotspring, South Lampung (4). Nglimut Hotspring, Kendal Regency, Central Java (5). Gedong Songo Hotspring, Central Java (6). Lapindo Porong Hotspring, Sidoarjo (7). Cangar Hotspring, East Java (8). Lejja, Soppeng South Sulawesi Hot Spring (9). Makula Hotspring, Tana Toraja (10). Sonai Hotspring, Southeast Sulawesi (11). Tanjung Api Hotspring, Poso (12). Ai Sipatn Lotup Hot Springs Sanggau, West Kalimantan (13). The range of temperature were around 35-100 °C. Indonesia has more than 250 hotspots, more than 265 geothermal sites and more than 125 active volcanoes. However, most of them still underexplored.





**Way Panas Hotspring, Lampung**



**Way Belerang, Kalianda  
Hotspring, Lampung**



**Bukik Gadang Hotspring,  
North Sumatera**



**Gedongsongo Hotspring, Central Java**



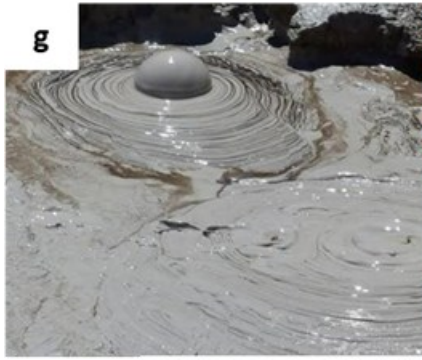
**Cangar Hotspring, East Java**



**Tanjung Api Hotspring, Poso**

**Figure 2.** The pictures of Indonesian Hotsprings which had been investigated in this study (a-m).





**Lapindo Mud Volcano, East Java**



**Sonai Hotspring,  
Southeast Sulawesi**



**Makula Hotspring, Tana Toraja**



**Nglimut Gonoharjo Hotspring,  
Central Java**



**Lejja, Soppeng, South  
Sulawesi Hot Spring**

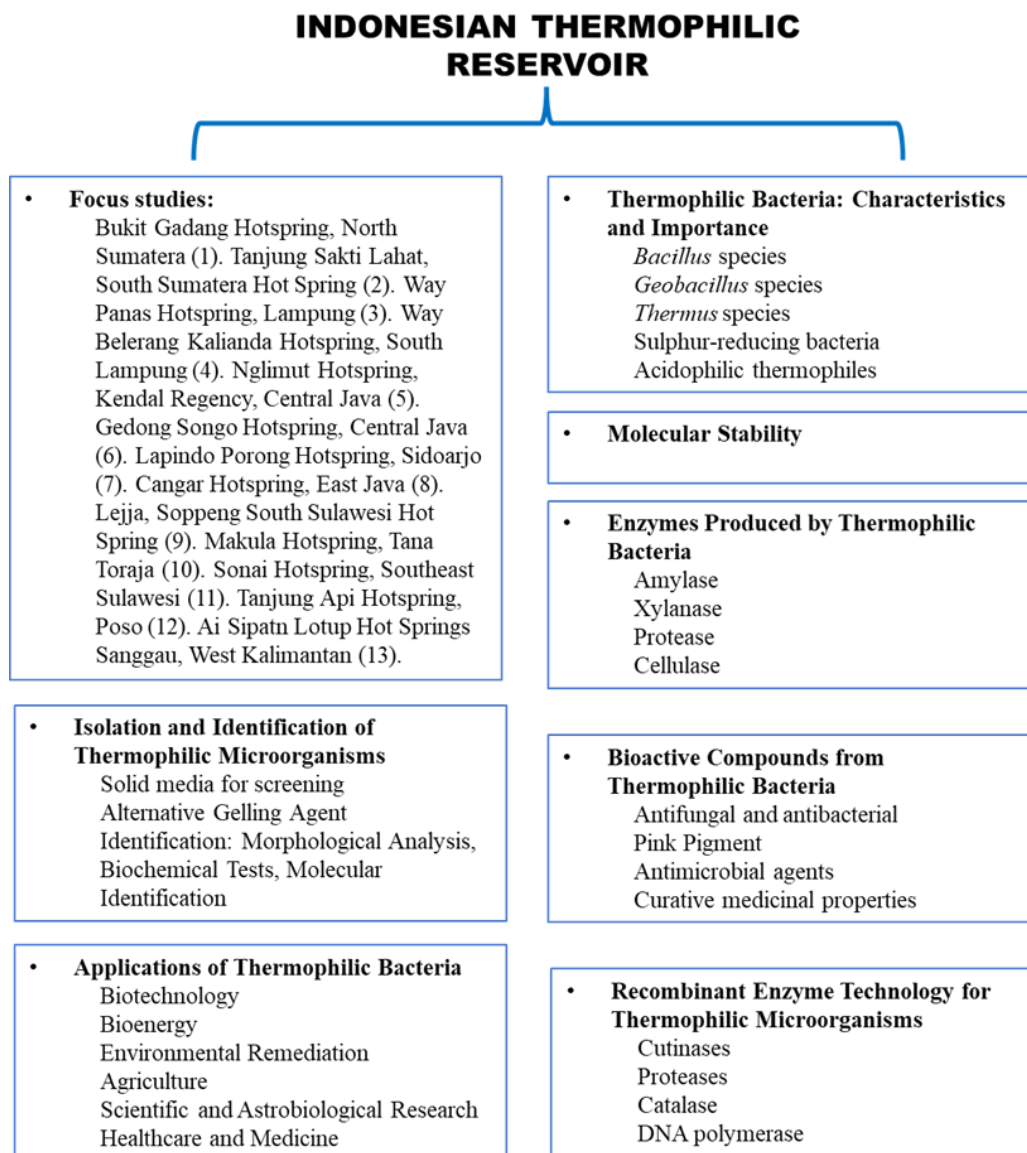


**Tanjung Sakti Lahat, South Sumatera  
Hot Spring**



**Ai Sipatn Lotup Hot Springs Sanggau, West Kalimantan**

**Figure 2. Contd.**



**Figure 3.** Schematic overview of the potential of Indonesian thermophilic reservoirs and their relevance for biotechnology. The left panel represents diverse extreme environments in Indonesia that harbor thermophilic bacteria, while the right panel outlines key application fields discussed in this review, including enzyme discovery, bioenergy, bioremediation, and other industrial uses.

thermophilic bacteria survive and grow at temperatures unfavourable to most organisms by possessing specialized enzymes, proteins, and cellular structures that ensure stability and function at elevated temperatures. Many thermophiles also have unique metabolic pathways that enable them to utilize a wide range of substrates, including complex organic compounds. The significance of thermophilic bacteria extends beyond their ecological roles. They produce thermostable enzymes, such as amylases (Silaban et al. 2021; Soy et al. 2021; Widiana et al. 2022), cellulases (Fachrial et al. 2020; Budiharjo et al. 2024), proteases (Fachrial et al. 2020; Sabaria et al. 2024), lipases (Fang et al. 2021; Sürmeli et al. 2024), and DNA polymerases (Murtiyaningsih et al. 2022; Agustriana et al. 2023), which are valuable in industrial applications.

In addition, thermophilic bacteria have shown promise in the bioremediation of contaminated environments (Rakhmawati et al. 2021; Chen et al. 2021; Peng et al. 2024; Patil et al. 2024), the production of biofuels (Irdawati et al. 2023; Dai et al. 2023; Altinok et al. 2023), and the synthesis of various biochemicals (Özdemir et al. 2022; Marin-Sanhueza et al. 2022; Klein et al. 2023). The ongoing exploration of thermophilic bacteria in extreme environments is expected to yield new strains with novel properties.



Recent studies have revealed a rich diversity of thermophilic bacteria isolated from extreme environments across Indonesia. These bacteria belong to several different groups, including Firmicutes, Actinobacteria, Proteobacteria, and Bacteroidetes. Some notable thermophilic strains found in Indonesia include:

*Bacillus* species: Several strains of *Bacillus* spp. have been isolated from hot springs and geothermal sites in Indonesia. These bacteria are known for producing thermostable enzymes, making them highly valuable for industrial processes. Some *Bacillus* strains from Indonesian geothermal areas have shown the ability to degrade complex organic compounds, such as lignocellulosic materials, which are important for biofuel production.

*Geobacillus* species: *Geobacillus* spp., thermophilic bacteria belonging to the family Bacillaceae, have been isolated from various geothermal habitats in Indonesia. These bacteria thrive at temperatures ranging from 50 °C to 75 °C and are notable for their ability to produce thermostable enzymes involved in carbohydrate and protein hydrolysis.

*Thermus* species: *Thermus* spp., which are members of the order Thermales, are another common group of thermophilic bacteria found in Indonesia. These bacteria are typically found in hot springs and are used in various biotechnological applications, particularly in the development of polymerase chain reaction (PCR) technologies.

Sulphur-reducing bacteria: In highly acidic and sulphur-rich environments, such as the Kawah Ijen crater, sulphur-reducing thermophilic bacteria play a significant role in sulphur metabolism. These bacteria can reduce sulphate to hydrogen sulphide, contributing to the sulphur cycle in these extreme environments.

Acidophilic thermophiles: Indonesia's hot springs, such as those found in the Dieng Plateau, often have highly acidic conditions that are favourable for acidophilic thermophiles. These bacteria can survive in environments with pH levels as low as 2.0-3.0, and some of these strains have demonstrated the ability to solubilize minerals, which can be beneficial for bioleaching processes in mining industries. Moreover, the distinctive features of Indonesian Geothermal environment and their species are described in the Table 1.

## ISOLATION AND IDENTIFICATION OF THERMOPHILIC MICRO-ORGANISMS

The process of isolating thermophilic bacteria from extreme environments typically involves collecting samples from high-temperature habitats such as hot springs, geothermal vents, or volcanic soils. Various growth media are used to isolate a wide range of thermophilic bacteria, including those that may require specific nutrients or conditions for optimal growth. Table 2 shows the requirements of the media for screening the thermophilic bacteria.

The alternative of Gelling Agent for the thermophilic microorganisms including Agar, consists of Linear polysaccharide of agarose and agarpectin. Agar forms a clear gel, that is stable over a wide temperature range and melts at 85 °C, making it suitable for growing mesophiles (McLachlan 1985; Becker et al. 1998). Gellan gum, forms a clear gel and consists of tetrasaccharide of two D-Glucose, L-rhamnose, and D glucuronic acid. Gellan gum can be used for growing thermophiles and it can be melted at 110 °C (Kang et al. 1982; Kuo et al. 2014). Xanthan gum, consists of pentasaccharide of two glucose, two mannose and glucuronic acid. Xanthan gum is stable over a wide range of temperature and pH levels. It can be used for growing various fungi and bacteria and melts at 270 °C (Babbar & Jain 2006; Prajapati et al. 2013). Guar gum, consists of galactomannan (galactose and mannose), forms a cloudy gel and can be used for growing various fungi and bacteria. It can be melted at 220 °C (Shimomura & Kamada 1986; Jain et al. 2005). Isulgol, consists of Xylose, arabinose, galacturonic acid, and traces of rhamnose and galactose. It can

**Table 1.** Comparative Study of Global Thermophilic Microbial Diversity vs. Indonesia.

Country / Region	Geothermal Environment	Dominant Thermophilic Species	Distinctive Features & Recent Findings	References
USA (Yellowstone)	Alkaline geysers, high-temp springs	<i>Thermus aquaticus</i> , <i>Sulfolobus acidocaldarius</i> , <i>Desulfurococcus</i> spp.	Home of Taq polymerase, revolutionized PCR; dominated by archaea; well-characterized enzyme systems.	Brock & Freeze 1969; Stetter 1996; Madigan et al. 1997
Iceland	Sulfuric hot springs, fumaroles	<i>Thermoproteus tenax</i> , <i>Pyrobaculum</i> spp., <i>Thermococcus litoralis</i>	Cold-climate geothermal systems with high microbial activity; emphasis on biohydrogen and biogas pathways.	Kristjánsson & Hreggvidsson 1995; Hreggvidsson et al. 2012
Japan (Kusatsu, Beppu)	Acidic and neutral thermal springs	<i>Thermus thermophilus</i> , <i>Geobacillus kaustophilus</i> , <i>Sulfolobus tokodaii</i>	Applications in polymerase enzymes and thermostable hydrolases; culture collections well curated.	Sako et al. 1996; Atomi et al. 2004
India (Manikaran, Bakreshwar)	Hot springs, volcanic zones Surajkund Hotsprings	<i>Geobacillus thermoleovorans</i> , <i>Bacillus licheniformis</i> , <i>Anoxybacillus flavithermus</i> Cultured & Uncultured (data metagenomic)	Diverse genera with enzyme production capacity, including cellulases and amylases for industrial starch processing. Diverse genera with enzyme production amylase, xylanase, and cellulase.	Pandey et al. 2015; Verma et al. 2020; Soy et al. 2023
Indonesia	Volcanic craters, acidic lakes, sulfur vents Angseri, Banjar, and Batur Hotspring Likupang Marine Hydrothermal, North Sulawesi	<i>Bacillus licheniformis</i> , <i>Geobacillus stearothermophilus</i> , <i>Pseudomonas stutzeri</i> , <i>Thermoanaerobacterium</i> spp., <i>Anoxybacillus</i> spp. undetected thermophilic taxa (data metagenomic) <i>Geobacillus thermoleovorans</i> , <i>Bacillus caldotenax</i>	Rich biodiversity; isolates from >250 hot springs; high potential in amylase, protease, xylanase, and catalase production. Novel strains reported in 2024 from Central Java, Sulawesi, Sumatra, Bali. Amylase producing bacteria	Saksono & Sukmarini 2010; Ifandi & Alwi 2015; Indriati & Megahati 2018; Ardhi et al. 2020; Ginting et al. 2021; Budiharjo et al. 2024; Wirajana et al. 2024
Malaysia	Poring Hot Spring Sabah, Malaysia	<i>Anoxybacillus flavithermus</i>	Potential for amylase-producing bacteria	Fazal et al. 2022
Turkey	Golan hot springs in Karakocan, Elazig.	<i>Bacillus</i> , <i>Geobacillus</i> , and <i>Thermomonas</i>	Heated groundwater, Diverse genera with enzyme production: cellulases and amylases.	Yildiz 2024
Russia	Kuril Island, Kunashir and Iturup Islands	<i>Sulfurihydrogenibium</i> and <i>Hydrogenobacter</i> sp., <i>Acidithiobacillus</i> , <i>Hydrogenobaculum</i> and <i>Thiomonas</i> Chloroflexota, Leptolyngbyaceae, and Oculatellaceae families	Shallow and terrestrial hot springs (pH 5.7–8.5 and temperature 40–79 °C)	Karaseva et al. 2024



**Table 2.** The Solid Media for screening the thermophilic microbes.

Source	Media	Temp (°C)	References
Halophilic Bacteria	Nutrient Agar (NA) (Difco, Sparks, MD, USA), Reasoner's 2A agar (R2A agar) (Difco, Sparks, MD, USA) Tryptic Soy Agar (TSA) (Difco, Sparks, MD, USA). + NaCl (w v <sup>-1</sup> ) concentration at 3-15 %	45-65	Lee et al. 2022
Amylase Production Bacteria	NA/R2A/TSA + 0.2 % (w v <sup>-1</sup> ) soluble starch (Difco, USA)	50-60	Cowan 1994; Marteinsson et al. 1996; Mahestri et al. 2021
Lipase Production Bacteria	NA/R2A/TSA + 1 % (v v <sup>-1</sup> ) Tween 80 (Sigma, St. Louis, MO, USA)	60	Rollof et al. 1987; Mohammad et al. 2017
Protease Production Bacteria	NA/R2A/TSA + 2 % (w v <sup>-1</sup> ) skim milk agar (Difco, Sparks, MD, USA)	60	Burke et al. 1991; Panda et al. 2013; Mahestri et al. 2021
Bacteria	Thermus medium (composition: 0.5 % NaCl, 0.5 % peptone, 0.4 % beef extract, 0.2 % yeast extract, and 2.0 % agar)	45-70	Welday et al. 2014
Cellulase Production Bacteria	NA + 1 % carboxymethyl cellulose	45-55	Mohammad et al. 2017; Budi-harjo et al. 2024
Fungi	Nutrient Agar (NA), (Kenknight and Munaiers Agar, Potato Dextrose Agar (PDA), Tryptone Soya Agar (TSA), Pikovskaya Agar, and King's B Base.	30-80	Verma et al. 2018
Xylanase Production Bacteria	NA + 0.5-1 % Beechwood Xylan	50-60	Ahirwar et al. 2017; Irdawati et al. 2018
Bacteria	Nutrient Agar (NA), Tryptic Soy Agar (TSA), International Streptomyces Project medium No.2 (ISP11) containing glucose at 4 g L <sup>-1</sup> ; yeast extract at 4 g L <sup>-1</sup> ; and malt extract at 10 g L <sup>-1</sup>	45	Rafiee et al. 2024
Thermophilic Fungi	Yeast Extract soluble starch agar (YpSs) medium (composition: starch, 15.0 g L <sup>-1</sup> ; magnesium sulphate, 1.0 g/l; dipotassium hydrogen phosphate, 1.0 g L <sup>-1</sup> and yeast extract 4.0 g L <sup>-1</sup>	45	Ahirwar et al. 2017
Mannanase production Fungi	Agar (YpSs) medium + 0.5 % mannan LBG	50	Ahirwar et al. 2017
Halophilic Archaea	High Salt Medium (composition: Peptone 10 g L <sup>-1</sup> ; MgSO <sub>4</sub> ·7H <sub>2</sub> O 2 g L <sup>-1</sup> ; KC1 2 g L <sup>-1</sup> CaCl <sub>2</sub> 2 g L <sup>-1</sup> FeSO <sub>4</sub> ·7H <sub>2</sub> O 0.005 g L <sup>-1</sup> MnCl <sub>2</sub> ·4H <sub>2</sub> O 0.002 g L <sup>-1</sup> NaCl 250 g L <sup>-1</sup>	70	Hamana & Matsuzaki 1985
Halophilic Archaea	Medium for Halophilic archaea (DFMZ Medium 1184)	35-56	Verma et al. 2020
Haloarchaea	Haloarchaea Phosphate solubilisation Medium (HPS)	25-50	Shirling & Gottlieb 1966; Yadav et al. 2015
Halobacteria	Media for Dead Sea Halobacteria	35-50	Oren 1983
Archaea	Basal Media	20-60	Manikandan et al. 2009
Seawater Archaea	Marine salt (S.W.) containing Basal media	20-60	Manikandan et al. 2009
Archaea	Eimhjellen medium	40	Lizama et al. 2001
Archaea	Sehgal and Gibbons medium	30-50	Payne et al. 1960
Archaea	M.H. medium	30-40	Torreblanca et al. 1986
Archaea	HE medium (Hay extract media)	30-40	Torreblanca et al. 1986
Archaea	Mineral salts medium	40	Mevarech & Werczberger 1985; Cuadros-Orellana et al. 2006
Actinobacteria	International Streptomyces Project (ISP1, ISP2, ISP3) + 0.5-1 % Gellan Gum+MgCl <sub>2</sub> Bennett's medium + 0.5-1 % Gellan Gum+MgCl <sub>2</sub>	45	Jones 1948; Shirling & Gottlieb 1966; Yadav et al. 2015
Deepsea microorganisms	EXP medium + (3.75 % w v <sup>-1</sup> Gelrite (Phytigel, Sigma P8169, Sigma Chemical Corp., St. Louis, Mo.)	65-80	Sari et al. 2020

be melted at  $>100\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$  (Sahay 1999; Jain 2011). Carrageenan consists of d-galactose and 3, 6-anhydro-galactose joined by  $\alpha$ -1, 3 and B-1,4-glycosidic linkage. It can be used for growing the alkaliphiles and can be melted at  $80\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$  (Lines 1977; Das et al. 2015).

Once the thermophilic microbes have isolated from various hot springs and geothermal sites, it can be further assessed and identified by molecular techniques. Molecular techniques, such as polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and 16S rRNA gene sequencing, have revolutionized the identification of thermophilic bacteria. These methods allow for precise identification of bacterial species based on their genetic makeup, providing insight into the phylogenetic diversity of the bacteria found in extreme environments. Additionally, the use of culture-independent techniques like metagenomics has further enhanced our understanding of microbial diversity in such habitats.

The isolation and identification of thermophilic bacteria are vital for harnessing their unique properties for scientific and industrial advancements. Their resilience and versatility offer immense opportunities for innovation across multiple domains. By overcoming current challenges and expanding research, thermophilic bacteria can play a pivotal role in shaping a sustainable and technologically advanced future.

### APPLICATIONS OF THERMOPHILIC BACTERIA

Thermophilic bacteria have garnered significant attention for their diverse applications across industries and scientific research. These microorganisms produce thermostable enzymes and metabolites that function efficiently under extreme conditions, making them indispensable for various biotechnological, industrial, and environmental processes (Habibie et al. 2014). The diverse thermophilic bacteria found in Indonesia have potential applications in several fields:

- a. **Biotechnology:** The enzymes produced by thermophiles, such as amylases, cellulases, proteases, lipases, chitinases, esterases, laccases, polymerases, and other enzymes are highly stable at elevated temperatures. Thermophilic enzymes, especially those produced by *Bacillus* (Zalma et al. 2021; Jeyabalan et al. 2025) and *Geobacillus* (Soy et al. 2021; Widiana et al. 2022; Özdemir et al. 2022; Agustriana et al. 2023; Sürmeli et al. 2024) species, are widely used in industrial processes. For example, thermostable amylases and cellulases are crucial for the production of biofuels from plant biomass. Additionally, thermostable proteases are used in laundry detergents, leather processing, and food industries.
- b. **Bioenergy:** Thermophilic bacteria play a crucial role in the degradation of organic waste materials, which is an important step in the production of biogas, biodiesel, and biofuels (Irdawati et al. 2023; Dai et al. 2023; Altinok et al. 2023; Singh et al. 2025). The enzymatic breakdown of lignocellulose by thermophilic bacteria can help convert plant biomass into renewable energy sources (Silva et al. 2022; Panahi et al. 2022). In anaerobic digesters, thermophilic bacteria enhance the degradation of organic matter to produce methane and other biofuels.
- c. **Environmental Remediation:** Thermophilic bacteria are being studied for their ability to degrade pollutants in high-temperature environments. These bacteria can break down complex organic compounds (Sharma & Leung 2021), including oils (Peng et al. 2024) and pesticides (Yang et al. 2020), in extreme conditions. Furthermore, sulfur-reducing thermophiles are being explored for use in the remediation of sulfur-contaminated environments (Frolov et al. 2018; Allieux et al. 2022), such as those found near industrial sites. Thermophilic bacteria accelerate the decomposition of organic waste into nutrient-rich compost (López et al. 2021; Zhang, J. et al. 2024). They thrive in the heat generated during composting, breaking

- down complex organic compounds into simpler forms (Li et al. 2023). Thermophiles enhance the breakdown of organic pollutants in wastewater at high temperatures, making treatment processes more efficient (Pugazhendi et al. 2017; Baker et al. 2021; Aragaw et al. 2022). Their heat-tolerant nature reduces the risk of contamination by pathogenic microorganisms.
- d. Agriculture: The enzymes produced by thermophilic bacteria can also be used in agricultural processes, such as composting. They accelerate the breakdown of organic matter, leading to more efficient nutrient recycling (Zhu et al. 2021; Zhang, J. et al. 2024). Thermophilic bacteria produce compounds that act as biopesticides, offering eco-friendly alternatives to chemical pesticides. They help fix nitrogen (Nishihara et al. 2018; Kato et al. 2018) and decompose organic matter (Cao et al. 2019; López et al. 2021), enriching soil fertility.
  - e. Scientific and Astrobiological Research: Thermophilic bacteria are valuable models for studying life's adaptability to extreme conditions, offering insights into evolutionary biology (Alexandraki et al. 2019) and the potential for extraterrestrial life (von Hegner 2020). The study of thermophiles reveals how organisms adapt to extreme environments through specialized proteins, enzymes, and membrane structures. Thermophilic bacteria serve as analogs for potential extraterrestrial life forms that might exist on planets or moons with harsh environments, such as Mars or Europa (Carré et al. 2022). Thermophiles are used to engineer novel genetic circuits and metabolic pathways, creating organisms with enhanced functionalities for industrial applications (Finch & Kim 2018; Kong et al. 2022).
  - f. Healthcare and Medicine: Thermophilic bacteria and their products have made ground-breaking contributions to healthcare and diagnostics. They produce thermostable enzymes like Taq polymerase, which is crucial for the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) (Lischer et al. 2020), a widely used technique in genetic testing, medical diagnostics, and forensic science. Thermophilic bacteria are also a rich source of novel bioactive compounds with potential therapeutic applications. Thermophiles produce unique antibiotics that can combat resistant pathogens (Alrumman et al. 2019; Octarya et al. 2022). Some thermophilic bacteria produce secondary metabolites with anticancer properties (Obeidat & Al-Shomali 2023; Satarzadeh et al. 2024). Thermophilic bacteria-derived enzymes are used in vaccine production processes, particularly for stabilizing and enhancing the delivery of vaccines (Liu, H. et al. 2023).

## MOLECULAR STABILITY AND IDENTIFICATION OF THERMOPHILIC BACTERIA

To evaluate their potential in industrial applications, thermophilic microbes require precise and efficient identification methods. Three commonly used approaches for identifying thermophilic bacteria include culture-based and morphological identification, 16S rRNA gene sequencing, and whole genome sequencing. Each of these methods provides unique insights and levels of resolution, and they are often used in a complementary manner.

Initial identification of thermophiles typically begins with bacterial culture and morphological observations, which offer a straightforward and cost-effective screening method (Lischer 2021). This process involves cultivating isolates on nutrient-rich media that imitate their natural high-temperature environmental conditions. Optimizing bacterial growth in a medium can be done by engineering the carbon source, agitation speed, substrate concentration, and substrate stability (Indriati & Megahati 2018). However, designing appropriate solid media for thermophiles poses a challenge. Standard agar solidifies well at temperatures below 65–70 °C, but begin to lose integrity at higher temperatures. To address the challenge, a thermally stable medium



incorporating polypropylene was developed in 1997, enabling bacterial cultivation at 80–84 °C for up to 24 hours. Pre-incubating the media at 35–40 °C further enhances its durability (D'Souza et al. 1997). Furthermore, solid media are essential not only for bacteria isolation, but also for assessing enzyme production (Sharma et al. 2019).

While culture-based methods provide phenotypic information, molecular techniques offer greater resolution. The creation of 3-domain classification of living things in 1977, pioneered by Carl Woese and colleagues, and the development of 16S rRNA gene sequencing has revolutionized microbial taxonomy by allowing phylogenetic relationships to be inferred from conserved genetic sequences (Koonin 2010). The 16S rRNA gene is particularly useful due to its conserved nature interspersed with hypervariable regions that distinguish different species. The unique sequences, relatively constant properties, and the occurrence of small mutations, making it a superior identification strategy. It also circumvents the limitation of only fewer than 1 % of environmental microbes which are culturable under laboratory conditions. Bioinformatic analysis of 16S rRNA sequences allows accurate bacterial classification down to the species level (Suddin et al. 2019).

Recent advancements have extended this approach to community-level analysis through next-generation sequencing (NGS). For example, MiSeq-based 16S amplicon sequencing, as demonstrated in studies of several hot springs in Sri Lanka, accommodated the characterization of the entire microbial communities as well as predicted their metabolic capabilities. These include nitrogen fixation, ammonia oxidation, methanogenesis, dehalogenation, and the degradation of various pollutants such as aromatic compounds, chlorophenols, atrazines, sulphur, and naphthalenes (Sadeepa et al. 2022). This high-throughput method saves significant amount of time and cost while revealing potential functional traits of thermophilic communities. Advances in sequencing using advanced generations have further opened up knowledge and information about microbial interactions and their abiotic environment, which is advantageous in industrial applications.

For deeper insights into microbial function and adaptation, whole genome sequencing (WGS) provides the most comprehensive data about the base sequence of bacterial thermophiles. Although costlier, WGS allows complete genomic analysis and is often used to confirm species identity and explore adaptive mechanisms (Lischer et al. 2020). For instance, *Parageobacillus caldoxylosilyticus* ER48, originally misidentified as *Geobacillus caldoxylosilyticus*, was reclassified based on genome data obtained using the PacBio RSII platform in 2001, which revealed a 3.9 Mbp genome with a GC content of 44.31 % (Ching et al. 2022). Earlier genomic studies of *Geobacillus caldoxylosilyticus* in 2004 also successfully identified genes involved in thermotolerance, such as prokaryotic protamine P1, polyamine synthase, polyamine ABC transporter, and RNA methylase, which were contained in 839 unique genes. The study shed light on the molecular strategies used by thermophiles to form stable nucleic acids at elevated temperatures (Takami et al. 2004). Whole genome sequencing not only enables the identification and verification of thermophilic bacteria, but also enhances the overall efficiency of exploration by saving time and reducing energy consumption.

## ENZYMES PRODUCED BY THERMOPHILIC BACTERIA

Thermophilic microorganisms are attracting great attention in industry because they are difficult to denature, have a longer shelf life, minimize contamination problems, and increase chemical resistance (Drejer et al. 2018). Some microorganisms produce thermostable enzymes such as amylase, cellulase, chitinase, pectinase, xylanase, protease, lipase, and DNA polymerase (Mohammad et al. 2017). Currently, enzymes obtained from microbes are pre-

ferred over plants and animals because the ability to produce in large quantities and the ease of engineering to obtain enzymes are desirable characteristics (Drejer et al. 2018).

### Amylase

Amylase enzyme isolated from thermophilic bacteria possess thermostable properties, making them suitable for industrial applications requiring high temperatures, for example, in gelatinization, liquefaction, and saccharification processes at high (Mehta & Satyanarayana 2016). Thermostable amylase reduces the risk of contamination and external cooling costs and increases the rate of diffusion (Fossi et al. 2014). Thermophilic alpha-amylase is widely applied in sugar production, brewing, and starch processing (Ullah et al. 2021). Several *Bacillus* species, such as *Geobacillus stearothermophilus* (Al-Qodah 2006; Fincan & Enez 2014), *Bacillus subtilis* (Asgher et al. 2007; Al-Johani et al. 2017), *Bacillus licheniformis* (Shukla & Singh 2015), *Anoxybacillus* (Jabeen et al. 2019; Sharif et al. 2023), and *Bacillus amyloliquefaciens* (Devaraj et al. 2019), are known to produce starch hydrolyzing enzymes.

Hot springs have different physical, chemical, and nutritional properties. This allows for microbial biodiversity, including thermostable bacteria (Chan et al. 2017), which have the potential to produce thermostable enzymes important for industry. Exploration of thermophilic amylase enzyme in Way Panas hot spring, South Lampung, identified isolates of A.WP.50.4 had an inhibition zone of 11.83 mm, which was incubated at 50 °C. After morphological, biochemical, and molecular testing, the bacterial isolate A.WP.50.4 was a species of *Bacillus cereus* (Mahestri et al. 2021). In the same place, research conducted by Mawati et al. (2021) found that out of five isolates, isolate A.WB.50.1 had an inhibition zone diameter of 15.44 mm, which was incubated at 50 °C. Based on BLAST analysis obtained from RNA sequences, the isolate A.WB.50.1 was *Pseudomonas stutzeri* bacteria. Exploration of the hot springs of Hangar, East Java, is known to have amylolytic activity. The isolates were incubated at 50 °C, and they showed a clear zone after being added with iodine. The isolate was suspected to be *Bacillus subtilis* subsp. *Inaquosorum*. The subspecies *inaquosorum* also has previously been isolated from the United States, South Korea, and India. The discovery of several stable amylase enzymes at 50 °C can potentially develop as additional enzymes in the manufacture of detergents (Knight et al. 2018).

Simair et al. (2017) proves that strains of *Bacillus* sp. SM 01-05 had the highest enzyme activity in molasses medium for 60 hours at 50 °C and pH 8.0 and showed performance in cleaning-stained fabrics. It has great potential in the detergent industry and saccharification of starchy materials. The search for thermophilic amylase enzymes in Bukit Gadang hot springs, North Sumatra, found that LBKURCC190 isolate produced the largest clear zone ( $2.78 \pm 0.38$ ), which was incubated at 50 °C. The results of 16S rRNA sequencing analysis showed that LBKURCC190 isolates had the highest similarity (>98 %) with *Bacillus licheniformis* found in GenBank (Ardhi et al. 2020). Similar results were carried out by the study of Msarah et al. (2020) on the amylolytic activity of *B. licheniformis* HULUB1 isolated from Dusun Tua Hot Springs, Malaysia. The isolate produced the highest amylase enzyme at pH 6.0, a temperature of 45 °C, after 18 hours of growth. These isolates can be used as bioremediation for food waste treatment because they can hydrolyze organic compounds and decompose food waste.

### Xylanase

Thermostable xylanases are widely used as biocatalysts in the industry because of their ability to withstand extreme conditions without denaturation at high temperatures, alkaline or acid treatment, or solvents. Thermophilic xy-

lanase is in great demand because it reduces costs by extending the life of the biocatalyst. Thermophilic xylanase is needed in the food and feed industry, paper and pulp technology, textile production, and biofuels (Knapik et al. 2019). The *Geobacillus* sp. strain WSUCF1 has attracted attention because it produces highly heat-resistant xylanase with excellent thermostability, having half-lives of 18 days at 60 °C and 12 days at 70 °C (Bhalla et al. 2014). The exploration of thermophilic microbes producing xylanase enzymes conducted by Saksono and Sumarini (2010) in Tanjung Api, South Sumatra, also found *Geobacillus stearothermophilus* T-6 which has been well characterised from the genetic level to the protein structure. The xylanase enzyme produced by these bacteria has thermostability under temperatures up to 70 °C and alkaline stability at pH 7.0.

Exploration of thermophilic microbes taken from the Makula hot spring, Tana Toraja, isolate suspected to be *Bacillus stearothermophilus* SL3S. The crude extract of xylanase enzyme can hydrolyse xylan from corn cobs at optimum pH 7.0 and temperature 45 °C, activated by  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{Mg}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{Ni}^{2+}$  and inhibited by  $\text{CO}_3^{2+}$  ions (Putri et al. 2017). Sonai hot springs, Sulawesi, showed the highest xylanase activity in media containing rice husks, temperature 50 °C, pH 9.0, and agitation speed of 150 rpm. The analysis of the similarity of the 16S rRNA gene sequences of isolate IIA-3 had a 92 % similarity with *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* strain RSB3 (Susilowati et al. 2012). Meanwhile, in the Lapindo hot mud in Porong, Sidoarjo, showed that the maximum activity of the xylanase enzyme from isolate C211 was 3.95 U mL<sup>-1</sup> under incubation at 50 °C. After molecular identification of 16S rRNA was carried out, isolate C211 had a genetic closeness with *Bacillus licheniformis* with a degree of homologous similarity of 99 % for each (Habibie et al. 2014). Similar results were also obtained by Raj et al. (2018) who isolated thermophilic bacteria from paper mill waste contaminated with soil and identified the bacteria as species *B. licheniformis*. Xylanase activity increased to 5.26 mg mL<sup>-1</sup> at 60 °C and pH 9.0. This is because the enzyme activity is stimulated by  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{Fe}^{2+}$ , and  $\text{Mg}^{2+}$  and inhibited by  $\text{Cd}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{Hg}^{2+}$ , and  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$ . GC-MS analysis of filtrate from xylanase-treated pulp showed variations in the presence of derivative organic compounds, which can be applied in paper production by making it a cleaner and environmentally friendly process.

### Protease

Protease is one of the largest and most refined enzymes in the human proteome. Protease enzymes are enzymes that are essential for human life because proteases are important in the synthesis of all proteins and regulate the composition, shape, and size. Protease enzymes function to catalyse the hydrolysis of peptide bonds in proteins. Protease enzymes are important enzymes and have high economic value because of their wide application. Examples of industries that use protease enzymes include the detergent (Mahakhan et al. 2022; Neog et al. 2024), leather processing (Moonnee et al. 2021; Khan et al. 2023), textile (Zhang et al. 2025; Ariaeenejad & Motahar 2025), food (Christensen et al. 2022; Zhang, X. et al. 2024), dairy (Yang et al. 2021; Kaur et al. 2023), pharmaceutical (Pan et al. 2019; Tang et al. 2022), beer (Lin et al. 2022, 2023), and waste industries (Ariaeenejad et al. 2022; Majithiya & Gohel 2025). Sources of protease enzymes that have been known come from a variety of organisms, including animals (Magalhães et al. 2007), plants (Yadav et al. 2006; Akhtaruzzaman et al. 2012), fungi (Sharma et al. 2015; Maitig et al. 2018), and bacteria (Das & Prasad 2010; Uddin et al. 2014), both intracellular and extracellular. Plants are the largest source of protease enzymes (43.85 %), followed by bacteria (18.09 %), fungi (15.08 %), animals (11.15 %), algae (7.42 %) and viruses (4.41 %) (Zafrida et al. 2022). Thermophilic bacteria isolated from the environment at high temperatures are one of the producers of protease



ase enzymes, so they become thermo-protease enzymes. Protease enzymes produced from thermophilic bacteria are known to be more widely used in industry because of their thermostable nature, which allows them to produce more efficient products (Vaidya et al. 2018). Its thermostable nature can also reduce the possibility of microbial contaminants because it is used at high temperatures. In addition, using thermostable protease enzymes reduces the cost of cooling in large-scale fermentation (Johnvesly & Naik 2001; Nascimento & Martins 2004; Liu, D. et al. 2023).

The exploration of thermophilic bacteria that produce protease enzymes has been carried out by several researchers (Table 3), including thermophilic bacteria from the Lejja hot spring in Soppeng, South Sulawesi, by Hafsan et al. (2021). Three isolates of thermophilic bacteria were taken, namely *B. coagulans*, *B. stearoformis*, *B. licheniformis* and their growth was observed based on the optical density (OD) of the production media at certain time intervals. A constant OD value indicates that bacterial cell growth has reached a stationary phase, a phase where cell growth remains and a good time to isolate proteases produced by bacteria. After being observed for some time, it was found that the three thermophilic bacteria achieved optimum activity at the same pH but at different temperature ranges with relatively high activity and potential to be applied for various industrial purposes. Gedong Songo Ungaran hot spring, Central Java, has a pH of 6.0 with a temperature of 68 °C. Isolated thermophilic bacteria *Thermoanaerobacterium* sp. by 78-86 % are anaerobic bacteria, gram-negative rods, and have extracellular enzymes - amylase and proteases (Nuritasari et al. 2017). The hot springs of Sungai Penuh, Jambi, have temperatures between 50-78 °C with a pH of around 8.5. Total of 70 colonies of thermophilic bacteria were isolated, and after proteolytic testing, 39 isolates were obtained which had a proteolytic index between 0.13 - 7.89 mm, which was indicated by the formation of a clear zone around the colonies growing on the media. The MII2.1 isolate had the highest index of 7.89, and it was isolated from a location with a temperature of 77 °C and a pH of 8.71. In the protease enzyme activity test, MI2.3 isolate was found with the highest value of 13,592 U mL<sup>-1</sup>. The character of the MI2.3 bacterial isolate was gram-positive, rod-shaped cells, and non-motile. The optimum growth temperature is 50 °C, and the optimum pH is 9.0 (Wahyuna et al. 2012). Furthermore, from Tanjung Sakti Lahat hot spring, South Sumatra, four isolates of thermophilic bacteria have been isolated, which have protease activity with the highest proteolytic index on isolate TA4, which is 0.77. Microscopically round cells, Gram-positive and lacking endospores, non-motile and biochemical tests, and all isolates showed different physiological properties. Based on these characteristics, all isolates belonged to the genus *Saccharococcus*. *Saccharococcus* can live at a temperature of 78 °C and in natural habitats (Muharni et al. 2013).

### Cellulase

Cellulase is an enzyme that can degrade cellulose into glucose, cellobiose, and cello-oligosaccharides. Cellulase is an inductive enzyme. The production of cellulase enzymes by microbes requires the presence of an inducer in the fermentation medium. The inducer stimulates the production of cellulase enzymes in microbial cells. The amount of enzymes present in the cell is not fixed, depending on the inducer. The amount will increase several times if the medium contains an inducing substrate. The inducer compound required is generally in the form of the enzyme substrate (Wezyah 2013). Cellulases can be applied to pulp refining in the paper industry, fabric brightening in textiles, food quality enhancement, organic matter decomposition, feed improvement, bioconversion of cellulose to valuable chemicals, and reducing environmental pollution. Cellulase enzymes are also used in the fermentation process from biomass into biofuels such as bioethanol. They are also used as a substi-

**Table 3.** Biotechnology Applications of Thermophilic Bacteria: Enzymes.

Produce Enzyme	Collection site	Thermophilic Bacteria	References	Biotechnological Applications
Amylase	Way Panas Hotspring, Lampung	<i>Bacillus cereus</i> WP.50.4.	Mahestri et al. 2021	Thermostable $\alpha$ -amylase is widely used in the starch industry involving gelatinization, liquefaction, and saccharification processes in sugar production, brewing, and starch processing.
	Way Belerang Kalianda Hotspring, South Lampung	<i>Pseudomonas stutzeri</i> A.WB.50.1	Mawati et al. 2021	
	Bukit Gadang Hotspring, North Sumatera	<i>Bacillus licheniformis</i> LBKURCC190	Ardhi et al. 2020	
	Gedong Songo Hotspring, Central Java	<i>Anoxybacillus</i> sp. dan <i>Thermoanaerobacterium</i> sp.	Nuritasari et al. 2017	
	Cangar Hotspring, East Java	<i>Bacillus subtilis</i> subsp. inaquosorum CGR-1	Geraldi et al. 2022	
	Tanjung Api Hotspring, Poso	<i>Geobacillus stearothermophilus</i> T-6	Saksono & Sukmarini 2010	
	Lapindo Porong Hotspring, Sidoarjo	<i>B. licheniformis</i> C211	Habibie et al. 2014	
	Sonai Hotspring, Southeast Sulawesi	<i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> IIA-3	Susilowati et al. 2012	
	Makula Hotspring, Tana Toraja	<i>Bacillus stearothermophilus</i> SL3S	Putri et al. 2017	
	Nglimut Hotspring, Kendal Regency, Central Java	<i>Bacillus amyloliquefaciens</i> <i>Bacillus licheniformis</i>	Budiharjo et al. 2024	
Xylanase	Tanjung Api Hotspring, Poso	<i>Geobacillus stearothermophilus</i> T-6	Saksono & Sukmarini 2010	Thermostable xylanase is applied to enzymatic saccharification of biomass in biofuel production, pulp bioleaching, increasing bread volume and quality, fabric biopolishing, and improving digestibility and quality of animal feed.
	Lapindo Hotspring Porong, Sidoarjo	<i>B. licheniformis</i> C211	Habibie et al. 2014	
	Sonai Hotspring, Sulawesi Tenggara	<i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> IIA-3	Susilowati et al. 2012	
	Makula Hotspring, Tana Toraja	<i>Bacillus stearothermophilus</i> SL3S	Putri et al. 2017	
Protease	Lejja, Soppeng South Sulawesi Hot Spring	<i>Bacillus licheniformis</i> , <i>Bacillus stearoformis</i> , <i>Bacillus coagulans</i>	Hafsan et al. 2021	Protease enzymes are enzymes that are able to hydrolyze proteins into their constituent amino acids. Gelatin as a protein compound in the presence of a protease enzyme (gelatinase) will decompose into its amino acids. Gelatin is a complex protein compound that solidifies in the cooling process. In the presence of proteases, the peptide bonds in gelatin are broken, causing gelatin to degrade. The effect of gelatin degradation is when the gelatin does not solidify during the cooling process.
	Gedong Songo Hotspring, Ungaran, Central Java	<i>Thermoanaerobacterium</i> sp.	Nuritasari et al. 2017	
	Tanjung Sakti Lahat, South Sumatera Hot Spring	<i>Saccharococcus</i> sp.	Muharni et al. 2013	

Table 3. Contd.

Produce Enzyme	Collection site	Thermophilic Bacteria	References	Biotechnological Applications
Cellulase	Agricultural Compost from Desa Bayat, Klaten	Cellulolytic bacteria isolate KB and KK	Alam et al. 2013	Cellulase is applied to refine pulp in the paper industry, keep the color of fabrics bright in the textile industry, improve quality in the food industry, decompose organic materials, improve animal feed nutrition, play an important role in the bioconversion of cellulose into various commodity chemical compounds and can reduce negative impact of waste pollution in the environment.
	Soil from Cowshed, Institut Pertanian Bogor	Isolate KS 0.1, KS 0.7, KS 9.1	Sembiring 2019	
	Agricultural and Plantation Waste, Andalas University	NG2 Bacteria	Ramadhan et al. 2020	
	Nglimut Hotspring, Kendal Regency, Central Java	<i>Bacillus amyloliquefaciens</i> <i>Bacillus licheniformis</i>	Budiharjo et al. 2024	

tute for chemicals in the process of making alcohol from materials containing cellulose. The presence of cellulase enzymes in a reaction can maximize the conversion of cellulose into simple sugars and higher ethanol yields (Nababan et al. 2019). Cellulase enzymes can be isolated from thermophilic cellulolytic bacteria. The advantage is the acquisition of cellulase enzymes with heat-resistant characteristics so that they can be used in industrial fields that use high temperatures. Industrial applications require cellulase enzymes that can be produced in large quantities and with high activity but at an economical cost. Cellulase produced by thermophilic bacteria shows stability at high temperatures, so it is very useful.

Thermostable enzymes can tolerate higher temperatures, so they are advantageous in industrial processes (Prasad et al. 2014). The advantages of bacteria as cellulase producers are high growth rates, expression of multi-enzyme complexes, stability at extreme temperatures and pH, less feedback inhibition, and the ability to withstand environmental stresses (Sharma et al. 2013). In a study by Alam et al. (2013), thermophilic bacteria producing cellulase were isolated from agricultural compost in Bayat Village, Klaten. KB colonies were bone white, large, fused spheres with irregular edges, while KK colonies were clear, small, and spread out with irregular edges.

BIOACTIVE COMPOUNDS OF THERMOPHILIC BACTERIA

Thermophilic bacteria produce bioactive compounds with numerous benefits (Table 4). Hot springs serve as reservoirs for thermophilic microorganisms. Bacteria are an inexhaustible source of chemical compounds, which produce a wide variety of active secondary metabolites. Secondary metabolites these bacteria produce can be antimicrobials, antitumour agents, immunosuppressants, herbicides, pesticides, anti-parasitic agents, and enzymes. In addition, thermophilic bacteria can be used to produce bioethanol and other industrial chemicals (Gurumurthy et al. 2020). Environmental pressures, predators competition, and reproduction cause the production of bioactive compounds. Recently, seven species of thermophilic cyanobacteria isolated from Geno hot springs (Bandar Abbas province, Republic of Iran) were found, namely: *Oscillatoria subbrevis*, *Oscillatoria tenuis*, *Oscillatoria limnetica*, *Oscillatoria angusta*,



**Table 4.** Biotechnology Applications of Thermophilic Bacteria: Bioactive Compounds.

Collection site	Thermophilic Bacteria	References	Biotechnological Applications
Ai Sipatn Lotup Hot Springs Sanggau, West Kalimantan	<i>Thermoactinomyces</i> sp. (H21), <i>Thermoactinomyces</i> sp. (H24), <i>Thermobifida</i> sp. (S311), <i>Streptomyces</i> sp. (S211), <i>Actinomadura</i> sp. (S21(2), and <i>Nocardioopsis</i> sp. (H22*1)	<a href="#">Manalu et al. 2019</a>	Antifungal and antibacterial
Ai Sipatn Lotup Hot Springs, West Kalimantan	<i>Microbispora</i> sp. (S311A) and <i>Streptomyces</i> sp. (H2232)	<a href="#">Manalu et al. 2019</a>	Antifungal
Gedong Songo, Jawa Tengah Hot Spring	<i>Rhodococcus</i> sp. Chr-9.	<a href="#">Kusdiyantini et al. 2017</a>	Pink Pigment
Hot springs in Ayas, Turkey	<i>Synechococcus</i> sp. and <i>Phormidium</i> sp.	<a href="#">Sadettin &amp; Dönmez 2006</a>	Dye bioaccumulation
Geno Hot Spring, Bandar Abbas, Iran	<i>Oscillatoria subbrevis</i> , <i>Oscillatoria tenuis</i> , <i>O. limnetica</i> , <i>O. angusta</i> , <i>O. articulate</i> , <i>Synechocystis aquatilis</i> , <i>S. cerdorum</i>	<a href="#">Heidari et al. 2012</a>	Antimicrobial agents against five Gram-positive bacteria, three Gram-negative bacteria and two fungi
Jakrem hot water spring in West Khasi Hill District, Meghalaya, India	<i>Mastigocladus</i> sp. and <i>Microcoleus</i> sp.	<a href="#">Siangbood &amp; Ramanujam 2011</a>	Curative medicinal properties

Articulated *Oscillatoria*, *Synechocystis aquatilis*, and *Synechococcus cerdorum* ([Heidari et al. 2012](#)). Isolation performed on cyanobacteria obtained methanol extract, which showed high antibacterial activity against *Bacillus subtilis* and *Bacillus pumilus*. This extract was then filtered to determine its antibacterial activity against various microorganisms. It was found to inhibit the growth of gram-positive and gram-negative bacteria and fungal species such as *Candida albicans* and *Cladosporium resinae*. In contrast, the extract was inactive against other cyanobacterial species. Siangbood and Ramanujam (2011) also isolated several thermophilic Cyanophyceae species, namely *Mastigocladus* and *Microcoleus*, from Jakrem hot springs in Bukit Khasi Barat (Meghalaya district, India), which showed curative properties. In addition, different organic solvents and aqueous extracts (including extracellular polysaccharides) from the thermophilic freshwater algae *Cosmarium* sp. isolated from the Aïn-Echeffa hot spring in northern Tunisia, were tested for antibacterial activity, including antioxidant and cytotoxic activity, against gram-positive and gram-negative bacteria. The algal biomass showed a significant antibacterial effect, with the minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) ranging from 28 to 85 g mL<sup>-1</sup>. In contrast, extracellular polysaccharides had a MIC of 50-150 g mL<sup>-1</sup>, and aqueous extracts of extracellular polysaccharides showed moderate antioxidant activity (24.97 %) ([Challouf et al. 2012](#)).

Actinomycetes also have the potential to be antifungal agents. The compounds produced include kasugamycin by members of the *Streptomyces kasugaensis* species ([Umezawa et al. 1965](#)) and polyoxins B and D by members of the *Streptomyces cacaoi* ([Isono et al. 1967](#)). The resulting metabolites inhibit the fungal cell wall synthesis process. The potential of Actinomycetes is also described in studies conducted by several scientists. Deepa et al. (2014) reported as many as 16 isolates isolated in the Indian region as potential antimicrobial agents, four of which have potential as antifungal agents, namely *Streptomyces griseoflavus*, *Streptomyces cyaneus*, *Streptomyces exfoliatus* and *Streptomyces albus*. Based on the results of the isolation carried out by Manalu et al. (2019) at the Ai' Sipatn Lotup hot spring, 11 members of the Actinomycetes bacteria were found. The isolate was suspected of having antifungal potential. Based on the antifungal activity test results, two isolates were able to inhibit

the growth of the test fungus: isolates S311A (*Microbispora* sp.) and H2232 (*Streptomyces* sp.). The inhibition was indicated by the formation of a clear zone around the paper disc. Actinomycetes are also known as antibiotic-producing agents. About 70 % of antibiotics found are produced by Actinomycetes, mainly from members of the genus *Streptomyces*.

The use of natural pigments as dyes has been increasing due to their safety properties. Natural pigments are secondary metabolites produced by plants, animals, and microorganisms. Many natural pigments have commercial potential as antioxidants. Exploration of pigment-producing microorganisms continues to identify potential isolates for industrial applications. One of the pigment-producing microorganisms is bacteria. Extreme environments, such as hot springs, are one place worth exploring for pigmented bacteria (Tkáčová et al. 2015). Some bacteria have great potential to produce various types of pigments; for example, *Vogesella* sp. produces a blue pigment (Cardona-Cardona 2010). In addition, Cyanobacteria produce phycobilin pigments, and *Serratiamarcescens* produce prodigiosin pigments (Vora et al. 2014). In addition to bacteria, some microalgae (*Haematococcus pluvialis*) and yeast (*Phaffiarhodozyma*) produce the pigment astaxanthin (Gramza-Michałowska & Stachowiak 2010).

## RECOMBINANT ENZYME TECHNOLOGY FOR THERMOPHILIC MICROORGANISMS

Recombinant enzyme technology has greatly enhanced the study and application of thermophilic microorganisms in various industrial and biotechnological fields. The recombinant technology enables faster and simpler production of thermostable enzymes by allowing expression on wide range of hosts with faster growth and higher enzymes yield compared to native thermophiles. This approach facilitates protein engineering (e.g., site-directed mutagenesis) to enhance catalytic efficiency or substrate specificity, enables purification and functional studies under controlled conditions, and also permits mass production with consistent quality and performance. This section highlights five specific enzyme categories—cutinase, protease, catalase, and DNA polymerase—chosen for their industrial significance, thermal stability, and prevalence in recombinant research. Although numerous other recombinant thermozymes, such as lipases, xylanases, and cellulases, have been investigated, the enzymes selected here represent distinct functional groups (hydrolases, oxidoreductases, and polymerases) and provide well-documented cases of heterologous expression, purification, and practical use (Table 5).

### Cutinases

Cutinases are enzymes that are mainly obtained from thermophilic actinomycetes, such as *Thermobifida fusca* in 2005. They are categorised into two groups based on their thermostabilities: higher thermostabilities: (>70 °C) and lower thermostabilities: (<70 °C) (Dresler et al. 2006; Oda et al. 2021). Cutinases are members of the serine hydrolase family and share the catalytic triad Ser-His-Asp. They have several unique properties, including metal ion-binding on the enzyme's surface, elevation of melting temperatures, and activation of the enzyme (Kawai et al. 2020; Sui et al. 2023). Cutinases are able to degrade cutin, which is part of the cuticular layer in leaves, or the suberin part of tree bark. They can also hydrolyse polyesters, such as polyethylene terephthalate (PET), aliphatic polyester (PCL), and aliphatic-aromatic co-polyester (PBSA) (Weber et al. 2021). In order to obtain thermostable polyester-degrading enzymes for applications in biodegradable plastic recycling, textile processing, and detergent formulations, recombinant technology is applied to cutinases. This approach will simplify the expression and purification in non-pathogenic hosts, supporting directed evo-

**Table 5.** Recombinant Technology of Thermophilic Bacteria: Enzyme Technology.

Type	Enzyme	Origin	Recombinant Technology	Results	References
Cutinase	Cutinase	<i>Thermobifida cellulolytica</i>	Cloning and expression using pET25b(+) vector in <i>E. coli</i> (DH5 $\alpha$ ) and BL21 strain (DE3) (IPTG Induction)	Protein (29kDa) with highest activity at an optimum pH of 9 and thermal stability up to 60 °C	Usman et al. 2023
	Cutinase (mutantEst1DM)	<i>Thermobifida alba</i>	Cloning and expression using pQE80L-est1 in <i>E. coli</i> cells Rosetta-gami B (DE3) (IPTG Induction)	High yield of recombinant Est1DM, more than 120 mg per liter of <i>E. coli</i> culture	Kitadokoro et al. 2018
Protease	Recombinant protease 1147	<i>Cohnella</i> sp. A01	cloning and expression using pET26b(+) plasmid in <i>E. coli</i> strains DH5 $\alpha$ and BL21 (DE3) (IPTG induction)	Protein (~18 kDa) with excellent tolerance to high temperature and a broad range of pH, highest activity at 60°C and a pH of 7	Tar-rahimofrad et al. 2020
	Serine protease Tcsp	<i>Thermomonospora curvata</i> Henssen ATCC 19,995	Cloning and expression of Tcsp using pET25b(+) vector in <i>E. coli</i> BL21 (DE3) (IPTG induction)	Protein (~40 kDa) with higher stability than commercial protease from <i>B. licheniformis</i> (Blsp) at high temperatures, optimum activity at 70 °C around pH 10	Sittipol et al. 2019
	Subtilisin (serine protease)	<i>Chaetomium thermophilum</i>	Procurement of C. thermophilum gene pro cDNA fragment via RT-PCR; Cloning and expression in <i>E. coli</i> BL21 (DE3) and <i>Pischia pastoris</i>	Recombinant protease with optimum catalytic activity at 60 °C and pH 8	Li & Li 2009
	alkaline serine protease	<i>Geobacillus stearothermophilus</i> B-1172	cloning and expression using pET22b(+) vector in <i>E. coli</i> strains BL21 (DE3)	Thermostable protein (39 kDa) with specific activity of 97.5 U mg <sup>-1</sup> , and a recovery of 23.6 %, optimum activity at 90 °C at pH 9 (73.8 U mg <sup>-1</sup> )	Iqbal et al. 2015
	protease	<i>Bacillus stearothermophilus</i>	Cloning and expression in <i>Bacillus subtilis</i> DB104, under the control of the sacB gene promoter.	Protein (35 kDa) with optimal temperature and pH at 65 °C and 7.5 and specific activity of 16530 U mg <sup>-1</sup> , 80 % activity after 1 h reaction at 65 °C	Zhang M. et al. 2008
	subtilisin (serine protease) TTHA0724	<i>Thermus thermophilus</i> HB8	Cloning and expression in <i>E. coli</i> Transetta (DE3)	Thermostable protein with optimum activity between 65 and 85 °C at pH 7.5, maintaining 50 % activity after 48 h at 75 °C and >78 % activity across the pH range 5.0–9.5, and demonstrated broad substrate specificity	Xie et al. 2019



**Table 5.** Contd.

Type	Enzyme	Origin	Recombinant Technology	Results	References
Catalase	Recombinant Cat-IIGt	<i>Geobacillus thermopaksianensis</i>	Cloning and expression using pTZ57 R/T plasmid in <i>E. coli</i> BL21-CodonPlus (DE3)-RIL cells (IPTG induction)	The enzyme activity increased gradually with increasing temperature up to 70 °C with a half-life of 30 min at 100 °C, highest catalase activity at pH 10.0 with specific activity of 40,529 $\mu\text{mol min}^{-1} \text{mg}^{-1}$ .	<a href="#">Shaeer et al. 2022</a>
	Catalase-peroxidase Tx_CP	<i>Thermobacillus xylanolyticus</i> strain XE	Cloning and expression using pET-28b (+) plasmid in <i>E. coli</i> DH5 $\alpha$ and Tuner DE3	Tx-CP showed the highest stability at pH 7.0 with 100 % of its activity conserved after 24 h , optimum temperature for peroxidase activity 55 °C	<a href="#">Fall et al. 2023</a>
DNA Polymerase	DNA polymerase Tth	<i>Thermus thermophilus</i>	Cloning and expression using pD861-His and pD861-MBP plasmids in <i>E. coli</i> BL21 (DE3) (L-rhamnose induction)	The total protein concentration of His-Tth DNA polymerase is 3.9095 mg mL <sup>-1</sup> while for MBP-Tth DNA polymerase it is 33.541 mg mL <sup>-1</sup> ;	<a href="#">Maksum et al. 2022</a>
	DNA polymerase	<i>Thermus aquaticus</i>	Cloning and expression of recombinant protein using T7-induced promoters, plasmid pD451-SR in <i>E. coli</i> DH5 $\alpha$ (autoinduction)	A high protein yield of approximately 83.5 mg L <sup>-1</sup> culture of active Taq-pol	<a href="#">Laksmi et al. 2025</a>
	DNAP-1	<i>Bacillus licheniformis</i> strain NWMF1	Cloning and expression using PET28a+ vector in <i>E. coli</i> BL21 (DE3)pLysS (IPTG Induction)	Active His-tag purified recombinant DNAP-1 for PCR-amplification of the alkaline protease gene (1140 bp) from <i>B. licheniformis</i> with DNA fragment of expected size	<a href="#">Mudiyanse et al. 2021</a>

lution or mutagenesis to improve the enzyme's activity.

### Proteases

Proteases are enzymes that break down proteins into smaller units, such as peptides or amino acids. They are used in many industrial applications, including detergents, laundry, leather, and pharmaceuticals. Thermophilic bacteria are advantageous for industrial use because they have high growth rates, a reduced risk of microbial contamination, and other benefits ([Kambourova 2018](#); [Mushtaq et al. 2024](#)). The recombinant technology approach is applied to produce heat-stable proteases for use in detergents, food processing, pharmaceuticals, and waste treatment under extreme conditions. This will provide high-yield protease production that is not achievable from native strains, and also facilitate the modification of enzyme properties for specific industrial processes.

For instance, *Streptomyces thermovulgaris* produces a metalloprotease that exhibits stability across a broad range of pH levels and temperatures. The protease was purified using precipitation and affinity chromatography

(Mushtaq et al. 2024). Another example is *Geobacillus thermoglucosidasius* SKF4, which produces a thermostable alkaline serine protease known as SpSKF4. The cloned gene was successfully expressed in *E. coli* (Allison et al. 2023). Additionally, *Aeribacillus pallidus* P18 has had its protease gene cloned into the pET SUMO expression vector, with the target gene's coding sequence amplified via PCR (Saadati et al. 2024). From *Cohnella* sp. A01, a thermostable protease gene was isolated and expressed recombinantly, with subsequent characterization of its biophysical and biochemical properties (Tarrahimofrad et al. 2020). Furthermore, a protease gene was cloned from *Fervidobacterium pennivorans* (Tarrahimofrad et al. 2020), as well as from *Thermoanaerobacter yonseiensis* (Li et al. 2007), exhibiting the extensive implementation of recombinant technology.

### Catalase

Catalase is an enzyme that breaks down hydrogen peroxide into water and oxygen molecules. It has many applications (Jia et al. 2016), including: Food industry: Removes hydrogen peroxide from milk before cheese production and prevents food from oxidising in food wrappers and Textile industry: Removes hydrogen peroxide from fabrics. Catalase cloning enzymes from thermophilic bacteria, including *Geobacillus* sp. CHB1: This thermophilic bacteria's Kat gene was cloned, expressed, purified, and characterised. The recombinant enzyme was stable and active over a wide range of temperatures, from 10 °C to 90 °C (Jia et al. 2016). *Thermus* sp. YS 8-13: A heat-stable catalase was purified from this thermophilic bacterium (Kagawa et al. 1999). *Metallosphaera hakonensis*: An alkali-tolerant catalase was purified from this thermophilic bacterium (Ebara & Shigemori 2008).

### DNA polymerase.

Thermostable DNA polymerases are enzymes that come from thermophilic bacteria or archaea and are used in the polymerase chain reaction (PCR). They can withstand high temperatures that would denature most proteins. The cloning of thermostable DNA polymerase genes can be done by amplifying the gene with specific primers, isolating and purifying the amplified fragment, and ligating it into a cloning vector. The recombinant plasmid can then be transformed into competent cells using a heat shock method (Witasari et al. 2010; Briones 2023). Taq polymerase is extracted from the thermophilic bacterium *Thermus aquaticus*. It was originally isolated in 1976 by Chinese scientists Alice Chien et al. Taq polymerase is often used in PCR to automate repetitive steps and amplify specific DNA sequences. Pfu: This is another thermostable enzyme isolated from thermophilic bacteria. Bst DNAP enzyme is from *Bacillus stearothermophilus* (now categorized as *Geobacillus stearothermophilus*). It is often used in isothermal amplification techniques like loop-mediated isothermal amplification (LAMP) and whole genome amplification (WGA) (Wang et al. 2022; Briones 2023).

### CONCLUSIONS

The diversity of thermophilic bacteria found in Indonesia's extreme environments is a testament to the adaptability of life in harsh conditions. These bacteria play not only vital ecological roles in the sulphur and carbon cycles but also offer numerous practical applications in industries ranging from biotechnology to environmental remediation. As research into thermophilic bacteria continues to expand, it is likely that new species with unique properties will be discovered, offering even greater potential for industrial applications. The ongoing exploration of Indonesia's geothermal and volcanic habitats promises to be a rich source of novel thermophilic bacteria with promising biotechnological uses. Thermophilic microbes have been widely studied for their poten-

tial in biotechnology. The discovery of thermophilic microbes is certainly a new solution for meeting the enzyme needs in the molecular, industrial, environmental, food, and agricultural sectors. The unique thermophilic nature of microbial enzymes allows the catalytic process to proceed rapidly and be biodegradable, adding value for future applications.

#### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

D.W. and A.B. designed the study; D.W., A.A.K.P. and R.H.B.S. wrote the manuscript.

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#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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