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# Plant Adaptation to Abiotic Stress: From Signaling Pathways and Microbiomes to Molecular Mechanisms

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 Springer

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*To my parents, Mohamed Salah and Mongia, whose selfless sacrifices, guidance, and boundless love have always paved the way for me at every stage. To my wife Najeh Ben Jamaa, whose patience, encouragement, and unwavering support have been a constant pillar of strength through all my trials and triumphs. And to my children Chahd, Lina, Maria, and Haroun, whose devotion and unwavering encouragement act as an unstoppable force that drives and sustains my determination and pushes me unstoppably to excel.*

***Radhouane Chaffai***

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## Preface

Plant adaptation to abiotic stress is a complex process influenced by physiological, biochemical, and molecular responses. The impact of abiotic stressors, such as drought, salinity, heavy metals, and extreme temperatures, is exacerbated by climate change and population growth. Addressing these challenges requires an interdisciplinary approach involving plant physiology, genetics, genomics, biochemistry, and microbiology. Combining knowledge from diverse fields can lead to a deeper understanding of the mechanisms that govern plant adaptation to abiotic stress and the development of effective strategies to enhance plant resilience and productivity.

The book titled *Plant Adaptation to Abiotic Stress: From Signaling Pathways and Microbiomes to Molecular Mechanisms* offers a comprehensive exploration of the current understanding of plant adaptation to abiotic stress. It covers a wide range of topics across 18 chapters, aiming to uncover the complex mechanisms underlying stress responses and contribute to the development of more resilient crop varieties. This book is an essential resource for scholars and researchers seeking a comprehensive understanding of plant adaptation to abiotic stress.

The book provides a comprehensive analysis of plant adaptation to abiotic stress, making it an invaluable resource for professionals in the field. This includes plant scientists, agronomists, breeders, and individuals working toward sustainable agricultural practices. By addressing the urgent challenges of global food insecurity and climate change, the book provides valuable insights and perspectives that can inform the creation of effective strategies to improve plant resilience and guarantee food security in difficult environmental conditions. Its interdisciplinary approach and strong scientific foundation make it a valuable reference for both researchers and practitioners.

The Arabidopsis genome sequencing project has significantly advanced our understanding of plant responses to environmental cues, revealing intricate regulatory networks and gene expression patterns. Gene overexpression techniques have played a crucial role in understanding the functional roles of stress-related genes. Manipulating gene expression levels has allowed researchers to identify critical regulatory factors and understand their precise impact on stress tolerance.

This approach has systematically identified candidate genes in stress signaling pathways, providing insights into the upstream regulators and downstream target genes that are regulated by transcription factors. These findings have expanded our understanding of the intricate molecular mechanisms involved in plant stress

responses and provide valuable insights for genetic engineering and strategies to enhance crop improvement.

In plant research, biochemical and molecular genetic methods have been crucial for understanding gene function and regulation. Mutant analysis, in particular, has become a powerful tool for uncovering the specific roles of genes by studying the phenotypic changes that result from mutations.

The emergence of genome editing and RNA interference techniques has greatly enhanced our ability to study gene function and regulation in plants. These innovative methods have facilitated the identification and understanding of the roles of numerous genes and pathways involved in plant stress responses. The insights gained from these studies have significant potential for developing stress-resistant crop varieties and improving agricultural practices to mitigate the detrimental effects of environmental stress.

Plants employ various mechanisms to respond to environmental stress, including stress sensor-mediated signaling pathways. These pathways, which involve calcium sensors and abscisic acid, play a crucial role in controlling gene expression and influencing plant growth and development during stress. Additionally, gene regulation in plants is influenced by complex processes such as DNA methylation, histone deacetylation, transcription factors, DNA sequence variations, and miRNAs.

Understanding these molecular mechanisms is essential for improving plant performance and resilience in challenging environments. Environmental stressors can also regulate gene expression through protein function and complex protein–protein interactions, adding complexity to plant stress response networks.

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# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Abiotic Stress in Plants: Challenges and Strategies for Enhancing Plant Growth and Development</b> . . . . .	<b>1</b>
1.1	Environmental Stressors and Plant Growth Constraints . . . . .	2
1.1.1	Global Threat: Abiotic Stresses and Crop Losses . . . . .	2
1.2	Effects of Abiotic Stresses on Plant Growth . . . . .	2
1.3	Giant Reed ( <i>Arundo Donax</i> ): Adaptability and Benefits . . . . .	3
1.4	Challenges in Sustainable Food Production . . . . .	3
1.4.1	Global Climate Challenges . . . . .	4
1.4.2	Global Food Security and Crop Production Challenges . . . . .	4
1.4.3	Global Trends in Food Insecurity . . . . .	5
1.4.4	Global Population Growth and Its Impact on Food Security . . . . .	8
1.5	Natural Disasters and Water Stress . . . . .	9
1.5.1	Agricultural Water Scarcity . . . . .	10
1.5.2	Impacts of Water Stress on Agriculture . . . . .	11
1.5.3	World Temperature Anomalies . . . . .	11
1.5.4	Acidic Soil Challenges. . . . .	13
1.6	Progress in Crop Research and Plant Breeding . . . . .	13
1.6.1	Crop Research and Phenotyping Techniques. . . . .	15
1.6.2	Adaptation Strategies for Stress-Resistant Crops . . . . .	16
1.7	Biotechnological Tools for Climate-Resilient Crops. . . . .	21
1.7.1	Genetic Modification Techniques for Crop Improvement and Plant Breeding. . . . .	22
1.7.2	The Potential of Robotics and Automation in Agriculture. . . . .	23
1.7.3	Remote Sensing Technologies . . . . .	23
1.8	Molecular Strategies in Plant Adaptation to Abiotic Stressors . . . . .	23
1.8.1	Genotyping-By-Sequencing (GBS) in Plant Breeding . . . . .	24
1.8.2	Microbiome Engineering . . . . .	24
1.8.3	Next-Generation Sequencing (NGS) in Agricultural Molecular Breeding . . . . .	24
1.8.4	Genome-Wide Association Studies (GWAS) and Metabolomics Approaches . . . . .	25
1.9	Conclusion . . . . .	25
	References. . . . .	26

---

<b>2</b>	<b>Plant Response and Tolerance to Environmental Stresses</b> . . . . .	31
2.1	Abiotic Stresses and Their Impact on Plants . . . . .	32
2.2	Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS) in Stress Responses . . . . .	34
2.3	Abiotic Stress Response Mechanisms . . . . .	34
2.3.1	Signaling Pathways in Plant Stress Response . . . . .	35
2.3.2	Signal Transduction in Abiotic Stress Responses . . . . .	37
2.3.3	Antioxidants in Plant Stress Responses . . . . .	40
2.4	Plant Stress Adaptation Mechanisms . . . . .	42
2.4.1	Advancing Plant Stress Tolerance Mechanisms . . . . .	43
2.4.2	Plant Gene Regulation Mechanisms . . . . .	43
2.4.3	Enhancing Plant Resilience to Abiotic Stresses . . . . .	43
2.4.4	Breeding Programs for Abiotic Stress-Resistant Plants . . . . .	44
2.5	Conclusion . . . . .	45
	References . . . . .	46
<b>3</b>	<b>Regulatory Mechanisms in Plant Response to Cold Stress</b> . . . . .	49
3.1	Impacts of Cold Stress and Plant Adaptation . . . . .	49
3.1.1	Processes of Cold Stress Response in Plants . . . . .	50
3.1.2	Cold Acclimation and Regulation in Plants . . . . .	50
3.1.3	Cold Acclimation and Membrane Fluidity . . . . .	51
3.1.4	Role of Hydrogen Peroxide in Cold Stress Resilience . . . . .	51
3.1.5	Function of ICE1 in Cold Stress Response . . . . .	55
3.1.6	TPS11 Gene Overexpression in Enhancing Cold Tolerance . . . . .	55
3.2	Conclusion . . . . .	55
	References . . . . .	56
<b>4</b>	<b>Global Drought Threat: Impact on Food Security</b> . . . . .	61
4.1	Drought Stress Effects on Plant Development . . . . .	62
4.2	Upland Rice: A Water-Efficient Alternative in Rice Farming . . . . .	62
4.3	Drought Escape Adaptation . . . . .	62
4.4	Drought Stress Response in Plants . . . . .	63
4.5	Aquaporins in Plant Water Transport and Drought Stress . . . . .	64
4.6	The Stay-Green Trait in Plant Resilience to Drought and Heat Stress . . . . .	65
4.7	Drought Stress and Tolerance in Plants . . . . .	65
4.7.1	Drought Tolerance Mechanisms in Plants: An Overview . . . . .	66
4.7.2	ABA Regulation of Stomatal Movement . . . . .	69
4.7.3	The Role of miRNAs in Drought Stress Response . . . . .	70
4.7.4	PGPR Potential: Boosting Plant Growth Under Drought Stress . . . . .	70
4.7.5	Melatonin's Role: Stomatal Closure for Drought Tolerance . . . . .	71
4.7.6	Root Architectural Adaptations . . . . .	71
4.7.7	Nitric Oxide Accumulation . . . . .	71

4.8	ABA in Regulating Plant Responses to Drought Stress. . . . .	71
4.8.1	Key Regulators of ABA Signaling in Plants . . . . .	72
4.8.2	Synergistic Role of SnRK2 and ABA Signaling in Drought Responses . . . . .	72
4.8.3	<i>Gossypium Arboreum</i> for Drought-Resistant Cotton Varieties . . . . .	73
4.8.4	CRISPR/Cas9 for Enhancing Plant Drought Tolerance. . . . .	73
4.9	Strategies to Drought-Induced Stress. . . . .	73
4.10	The Role of Rhizosphere Management . . . . .	74
4.11	Conclusion . . . . .	74
	References. . . . .	75
<b>5</b>	<b>Mechanisms of Plant Response to Heat Stress: Recent Insights . . . . .</b>	<b>83</b>
5.1	Impacts of High Temperatures on Plant Growth . . . . .	84
5.2	Heat Stress Response and Tolerance Mechanisms. . . . .	84
5.2.1	Heat Stress Response Processes in Plants . . . . .	85
5.2.2	Plant Heat Stress Tolerance Mechanisms . . . . .	92
5.3	Conclusion . . . . .	99
	References. . . . .	100
<b>6</b>	<b>Mechanisms of Heavy Metal Homeostasis and Resistance in Plants . . . . .</b>	<b>107</b>
6.1	Heavy Metal Contamination, Phytoremediation, and Toxicity in Plants. . . . .	107
6.1.1	Soil Nutrient Imbalances and Heavy Metal's Impact on Plant Growth . . . . .	108
6.1.2	Heavy Metal Toxicity and Tolerance in Contaminated Areas . . . . .	109
6.1.3	Heavy Metal Phytoremediation in Plants . . . . .	112
6.1.4	Role of Silicon in Plant Growth and Stress Mitigation . . . . .	113
6.2	Molecular Mechanisms in Plant Metal Homeostasis. . . . .	113
6.2.1	Metal Transporters in Regulating Plant Heavy Metal Concentrations . . . . .	114
6.2.2	Nicotianamine (NA): Regulating Zn <sup>2+</sup> Homeostasis in Plants . . . . .	114
6.2.3	Metallochaperones in Metal Ion Transport and Regulation . . . . .	115
6.2.4	Heavy Metal Hyperaccumulation in Plants . . . . .	115
6.3	Plant Responses to Heavy Metal Stress and Tolerance Mechanisms . . . . .	116
6.3.1	Heavy Metal Tolerance Mechanisms in Plants in Contaminated Areas. . . . .	116
6.3.2	Metal Detoxification Mechanisms in Plants . . . . .	117
6.4	Conclusion . . . . .	127
	References. . . . .	127

<b>7</b>	<b>Plant Adaptations and Molecular Responses to Salt Stress</b> . . . . .	137
7.1	Soil Salinization: A Global Environmental Concern . . . . .	138
7.2	Soil Salinity Effects on Plant Growth and Crop Yield . . . . .	138
7.3	Plant Responses to Salt Stress . . . . .	140
7.4	Ion Transporters and Osmolytes in Sodium and Potassium Regulation . . . . .	142
7.4.1	Ion Homeostasis in Plants Under Salt Stress . . . . .	146
7.4.2	NHX Antiporter: Mitigating Na <sup>+</sup> Ion Toxicity in Plants . . . . .	146
7.4.3	Role of SOS1 in Sodium Ion Exclusion Under Salt Stress . . . . .	147
7.4.4	Chloride Ion Transport Mechanisms in High Salt Conditions . . . . .	148
7.4.5	Role of Proline Accumulation in Salt Tolerance . . . . .	148
7.5	Salt Stress Responses in Plants: Genetic and Physiological Mechanisms . . . . .	149
7.5.1	Regulation of Plant Responses to Salt Stress . . . . .	149
7.6	Plant Salt Tolerance and Adaptation Mechanisms . . . . .	150
7.6.1	Overview of Salinity Tolerance Mechanisms in Plants . . . . .	151
7.6.2	Plant Adaptation Mechanisms to Salinity . . . . .	151
7.6.3	Antioxidant Defense Under Salinity Stress . . . . .	160
7.6.4	Plant Models for Studying Salt Stress Tolerance . . . . .	162
7.7	Genetic Engineering for Enhanced Crop Salt Tolerance . . . . .	167
7.8	Conclusion . . . . .	167
	References . . . . .	168
<b>8</b>	<b>Biotechnological Advances in Crop Improvement for Abiotic Stress Tolerance</b> . . . . .	177
8.1	Abiotic Stress and Plant Metabolism in Crop Production . . . . .	178
8.2	Genetic Engineering for Stress Tolerance in Plants . . . . .	178
8.2.1	Marker-Assisted Selection (MAS) for Stress Tolerance . . . . .	178
8.2.2	CRISPR-Cas9: Revolutionizing Stress-Resistant Crop Breeding . . . . .	179
8.3	Enhancing Crop Improvement with Omics and Breeding Technologies . . . . .	181
8.3.1	The Omics Revolution in Plant Breeding . . . . .	181
8.3.2	Plant Breeding Technologies for Enhanced Crop Improvement . . . . .	182
8.4	Unraveling Salt Tolerance: Insights from GWAS and Metabolomics . . . . .	183
8.4.1	GWAS and Metabolomics Insights into Maize Salt Tolerance . . . . .	183
8.4.2	GWAS Insights into Saline Resistance Mechanisms in <i>P. euphratica</i> . . . . .	184
8.5	Innovative Strategies for Abiotic Stress Resistance in Crops . . . . .	184
8.5.1	Enhancing Crop Tolerance to Heavy Metal Stress . . . . .	184
8.5.2	Enhancing Crop Tolerance to Salt Stress in Arid Regions . . . . .	185

8.5.3	Enhancing Crop Stress Tolerance Through Genetic Engineering . . . . .	185
8.5.4	Enhancing Crop Tolerance Through Functional Physiological Phenotyping (FFP) . . . . .	185
8.5.5	Enhancing Crop Stress Tolerance with RNA Interference (RNAi) . . . . .	188
8.5.6	Enhancing Crop Stress Tolerance Through Genome-Wide Association Studies (GWAS). . . . .	188
8.5.7	Enhancing Crop Stress Tolerance Through Metabolomics. . . . .	189
8.6	Conclusion . . . . .	190
	References. . . . .	190
<b>9</b>	<b>Nanoparticles for Sustainable Agriculture and Abiotic Stress Resistance</b> . . . . .	<b>195</b>
9.1	The Potential and Applications of Nanoparticles in Sustainable Agriculture . . . . .	196
9.2	Mechanisms of Nanoparticle-Enhanced Plant Stress Tolerance . . . . .	201
9.2.1	PSI-NPs for Stress Resilience . . . . .	202
9.2.2	Silica Nanoparticles (SiO <sub>2</sub> NPs) for Stress Resilience . . . . .	203
9.2.3	Zinc Oxide Nanoparticles (ZnONPs) for Stress Resilience. . . . .	203
9.2.4	Multi-Walled Carbon Nanomaterials for Stress Resilience. . . . .	203
9.2.5	Silver Nanoparticles for Stress Resilience. . . . .	203
9.2.6	Chitosan Nanoparticles for Stress Resilience . . . . .	204
9.3	Conclusion . . . . .	205
	References. . . . .	205
<b>10</b>	<b>Signaling Pathways in Plant Responses to Abiotic Stress</b> . . . . .	<b>209</b>
10.1	Plant Signaling in Abiotic Stress Tolerance. . . . .	210
10.2	Abiotic Stress Transduction Pathways in Plants . . . . .	210
10.2.1	CDPKs in Plant Stress Response and Gene Regulation . . . . .	211
10.2.2	MAPK Signaling in Plant Responses to Environmental Stress . . . . .	216
10.2.3	Protein Phosphatases in Signal Transduction . . . . .	216
10.3	Secondary Messengers and Gaseous Signals in Plant Stress Responses. . . . .	217
10.3.1	Plant Signaling Networks in Abiotic Stress Response. . . . .	217
10.3.2	Calcium (Ca <sup>2+</sup> ) as a Crucial Second Messenger in Plant Processes . . . . .	224
10.3.3	Ca <sup>2+</sup> Sensors in Plants: Classes and Functions . . . . .	224
10.3.4	Role of Calmodulin-Like Proteins (CMLs) in Plant Calcium Signaling . . . . .	225
10.3.5	Role of the CBL-CIPK Complex in Plant Calcium Signaling . . . . .	226

10.4 Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS) Signaling in Plant Stress Responses . . . . . 226

10.4.1 The Dual Role of Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS) in Plants . . . . . 227

10.4.2 Role of ROS Signaling in Plant Stress Responses . . . . . 227

10.4.3 Role of H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> Signaling in Plant Stress Responses . . . . . 228

10.5 Gasotransmitters in Plant Stress Signaling and Physiology . . . . . 228

10.5.1 Nitric Oxide (NO) Signaling in Plants. . . . . 229

10.5.2 Hydrogen Sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S) in Plant Responses to Abiotic Stress . . . . . 230

10.5.3 Ethylene Signaling in Plant Growth, Development, and Stress Responses . . . . . 232

10.6 Glutathione S-Transferases (GSTs) in Stress Signal Modulation. . . . . 232

10.7 Translational and Post-translational Mechanisms in Plant Gene Expression During Abiotic Stress . . . . . 233

10.8 Phospholipids and Their Significance in Plant Stress Responses . . . . . 233

10.8.1 Phospholipase D (PLD) in the Phospholipid Signaling Pathway . . . . . 234

10.8.2 Phosphoinositides in Plant Signaling Pathways . . . . . 235

10.9 5-Aminolevulinic Acid (ALA) and Adaptive Priming in Plant Stress Defense. . . . . 236

10.10 Conclusion . . . . . 236

References. . . . . 237

**11 Plant Hormones and Their Regulatory Roles in Abiotic Stress Response. . . . . 249**

11.1 Plant Hormones and Physiological Processes . . . . . 249

11.2 Hormone Signaling Crosstalk in Stress Responses . . . . . 250

11.3 Plant Hormones in Abiotic Stress Signaling . . . . . 250

11.4 The Versatile Role of ABA in Plant Growth and Stress Responses . . . . . 258

11.4.1 Role of ABA-Responsive Element-Binding Factors in Enhancing Drought Tolerance . . . . . 259

11.4.2 Role of ABA Signaling in Stomatal Closure and Drought Tolerance. . . . . 259

11.4.3 Role of ABA Signaling and PP2C in Stress Response and Stomatal Closure. . . . . 260

11.4.4 Role of ABA Signaling in Plant Response to Osmotic Stress . . . . . 261

11.4.5 Role of ABA Signaling and AP2-Like Transcription Factors in Abiotic Stress Response . . . . . 261

11.4.6	Role of ABA Regulation in Root Response to Drought Stress . . . . .	261
11.5	Strigolactones: Mediators of Plant Development and Abiotic Stress Responses. . . . .	262
11.6	Ethylene Signaling and ERFs in Plant Stress Responses. . . . .	263
11.7	Salicylic Acid: A Multifaceted Regulator of Plant Growth and Stress Responses . . . . .	263
11.8	Brassinosteroids (BRs): Multifaceted Regulators of Plant Physiology and Stress Responses . . . . .	264
11.9	Jasmonate: Master Regulator of Plant Physiology and Stress Responses . . . . .	264
11.10	Gibberellic Acid (GA3): Regulating Plant Growth and Stress Responses . . . . .	265
11.11	Auxin: Master Regulator of Plant Growth and Development . . . . .	266
11.12	Melatonin in Plant Physiology and Stress Responses . . . . .	267
11.13	Conclusion . . . . .	268
	References. . . . .	269
<b>12</b>	<b>Gene Expression Regulation in Plant Abiotic Stress Response . . . . .</b>	<b>275</b>
12.1	Environmental Stresses and Plant Adaptation Mechanisms . . . . .	276
12.2	Hormone Signaling and Transcription Factors Regulation of Gene Expression in Plants . . . . .	276
12.2.1	Interplay of Hormone Signaling and TFs in Gene Expression . . . . .	276
12.2.2	Interplay Between MYB Proteins and Ethylene Signaling in Plant Stress Responses . . . . .	276
12.2.3	Role of WRKY Transcription Factors in Plant Development and Defense . . . . .	277
12.2.4	Role of AP2 Transcription Factors in Plant Metabolism . . . . .	277
12.2.5	Role of MYC2 Transcription Factor in Plant Stress Responses. . . . .	278
12.2.6	Role of Nuclear Factor Y (NF-Y) Transcription Factor in Stress Responses. . . . .	279
12.2.7	Role of MYB Transcription Factors in Plant Growth and Stress Responses . . . . .	279
12.2.8	Role of NAC Transcription Factors in Plants. . . . .	279
12.2.9	Roles of STOP1 and ART1 Transcription Factors in Aluminum Stress Response . . . . .	280
12.3	Aspects of Abiotic Stress Responses and Tolerance Mechanisms in Plants . . . . .	280
12.3.1	Role of Ribosome-Inactivating Proteins (RIPs) in Biotic and Abiotic Stress . . . . .	280
12.3.2	Genome-Wide Genetic Studies in Cotton under Drought Stress . . . . .	281

---

12.3.3	MAP Kinase Cascades in Response to Cadmium (Cd) Stress . . . . .	281
12.3.4	Proteases in Plant Growth, Development, and Stress Responses . . . . .	281
12.3.5	WD40 Domain-Containing Proteins in Abiotic Stress Responses. . . . .	281
12.3.6	Late Embryogenesis Abundant (LEA) Proteins in Plant Adaptation to Abiotic Stresses . . . . .	282
12.3.7	Plant E3 Ligases: Roles in DNA Repair and Abiotic Stress Responses . . . . .	283
12.4	Post-transcriptional Regulation in Abiotic Stress Responses . . . . .	283
12.4.1	Alternative Splicing in Plant Responses to Abiotic Stress . . . . .	283
12.4.2	Serine/Arginine-Rich (SR) Proteins in Plant Growth and Stress Responses . . . . .	285
12.4.3	Autophagy in Plant Responses to Stress . . . . .	285
12.4.4	Alternative Polyadenylation: Regulating Plant Abiotic Stress Responses. . . . .	286
12.5	Protein Post-translational Modifications (PTMs) in Plant Abiotic Stress Response. . . . .	286
12.5.1	SUMOylation: Key Post-translational Modification in Plant Environmental Stress . . . . .	288
12.5.2	Protein Phosphorylation Post-translational Regulation of Cellular Processes . . . . .	289
12.5.3	Protein Phosphorylation in Plant Hormone Signaling and Stress Responses. . . . .	289
12.5.4	Protein Phosphorylation: ABA Signaling in Plant Stress Responses. . . . .	290
12.5.5	Protein Phosphorylation Profiling in Cadmium-Sensitive and Tolerant Rice Lines . . . . .	290
12.5.6	Regulation of Protein Phosphorylation in Plants. . . . .	291
12.5.7	Protein Kinases in Plant Abiotic Stress Responses . . . . .	291
12.6	Role of the Ubiquitin-Proteasome System (UPS) in Plant Abiotic Stress Response. . . . .	294
12.6.1	Functions of Ubiquitin-Specific Protease (UBP) Family Enzymes in Plants . . . . .	294
12.6.2	Role of F-Box Proteins in Ubiquitin-Proteasome System-Mediated Plant Stress Regulation. . . . .	295
12.6.3	Role of Ubiquitin-Proteasome Regulation of STOP1 in Aluminum Resistance. . . . .	296
12.7	Conclusion . . . . .	297
	References. . . . .	297



### 13 Transcriptional Regulation of Gene Expression in Plant

<b>Abiotic Stress Response</b> . . . . .	303
13.1 Role of Transcription Factors in Mediating Gene Regulation . . . . .	303
13.1.1 bZIP Transcription Factors . . . . .	308
13.1.2 APETALA2 (AP2) Transcription Factors . . . . .	312
13.1.3 MYB Transcription Factors . . . . .	316
13.1.4 NAC Transcription Factors . . . . .	321
13.1.5 C2H2 Zinc Finger Transcription Factors . . . . .	324
13.1.6 BHLH Transcription Factors . . . . .	326
13.1.7 WRKY Transcription Factors . . . . .	329
13.1.8 Homeodomain Leucine Zipper Genes (HD-Zip) Transcription Factors . . . . .	332
13.2 Conclusion . . . . .	333
References . . . . .	334

### 14 Cellular Response and Molecular Functions in Plants Under

<b>Abiotic Stress</b> . . . . .	345
14.1 Gene Ontology (GO) Analysis of Response to Stimulus (GO:0050896) in Plants . . . . .	346
14.1.1 The GO Database . . . . .	346
14.1.2 Exploration of Biological Processes in Gene Ontology: Response to Stimulus (GO:0050896) . . . . .	347
14.1.3 Exploration of Molecular Functions in Gene Ontology: Cellular Response to Stimulus (GO:0051716) . . . . .	349
14.1.4 Exploration of Molecular Functions in Gene Ontology: Transcription Regulator Activity (GO:0140110) . . . . .	350
14.1.5 Exploration of PANTHER Families in Gene Ontology: DNA-Binding Transcription Factor Activity (GO:0003700) . . . . .	354
14.1.6 Exploration of Biological Processes in Gene Ontology: Response to Stress (GO:0006950) . . . . .	356
14.2 Gene Ontology (GO) Analysis of Response to Abiotic Stimulus (GO:0009628) in Plants . . . . .	360
14.2.1 Exploration of Gene Ontology: Response to Abiotic Stimulus (GO:0009628) . . . . .	360
14.2.2 Exploration of Gene Ontology: Response to Metal Ion (GO:0010038) . . . . .	369
14.2.3 Exploration of Gene Ontology: Signal transduction (GO:0007165) . . . . .	371
14.3 The Protein Analysis THrough Evolutionary Relationships (PANTHER) Classification Analysis of Response to Abiotic Stimulus (GO:0009628) in <i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i> . . . . .	373
14.3.1 The PANTHER Database . . . . .	373
14.3.2 PANTHER GO-Slim Biological Process Enrichment Analysis in <i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i> . . . . .	376

14.3.3	PANTHER GO-Slim Molecular Function Enrichment Analysis . . . . .	380
14.3.4	PANTHER GO-Slim Protein Class Enrichment Analysis . . . . .	383
14.4	The Kyoto Encyclopedia of Genes and Genomes (KEGG): Exploration of Response to Abiotic Stimulus (GO:0009628) in <i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i> . . . . .	388
14.4.1	The KEGG Database . . . . .	388
14.4.2	KEGG Pathway Enrichment Analysis of Genes Responsive to Abiotic Stress . . . . .	388
14.4.3	KEGG Pathway Enrichment Analysis of Transcription Factor Genes Responsive to Abiotic Stress . . . . .	390
14.4.4	KEGG Pathway Mapping of Genes Responsive to Abiotic Stress . . . . .	391
14.5	Conclusion . . . . .	397
	References. . . . .	398
<b>15</b>	<b>Exploring Plant Transcription Factor Databases and Regulatory Networks.</b> . . . . .	<b>401</b>
15.1	PlantTFDB and PlantRegMap: Unveiling Plant Transcription Factor Insights . . . . .	402
15.1.1	PlantTFDB: A Comprehensive Resource of Plant Transcription Factors . . . . .	402
15.1.2	PlantRegMap: A Portal for Plant Transcriptional Regulation Data . . . . .	402
15.1.3	PlantTFDB: Identifying <i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i> Transcription Factors . . . . .	403
15.1.4	Transcription Factor Enrichment Analysis in <i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i> Using PlantTFDB Tool . . . . .	404
15.1.5	Transcription Factor Enrichment Analysis of Abiotic and Specific Stress Responses . . . . .	404
15.2	<i>Arabidopsis</i> Transcriptional Regulatory Map (ATRM): Unveiling TFs and Regulatory Interactions . . . . .	407
15.2.1	ATRM: <i>Arabidopsis</i> Transcriptional Regulatory Map Overview . . . . .	407
15.2.2	Exploring Gene Regulatory Interactions in Abiotic Stress Response in <i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i> . . . . .	408
15.3	Conclusion . . . . .	416
	References. . . . .	416
<b>16</b>	<b>Noncoding RNA Regulation in Plant Responses to Abiotic Stress</b> . . . .	<b>417</b>
16.1	PncStress: A Database Unraveling Noncoding RNAs in Plant Abiotic Stress Responses . . . . .	417
16.1.1	ncRNAs Classification in the PncStress Database. . . . .	418
16.1.2	ncRNAs Classification in Diverse Plant Species . . . . .	418
16.1.3	ncRNAs Classification Under Diverse Abiotic Stresses . . . . .	419

16.1.4	ncRNAs in Plant Response to Abiotic Stress and Hormone Treatments . . . . .	420
16.2	Plant ncRNAs: Insights and Discoveries . . . . .	425
16.2.1	ncRNAs: Masters of Gene Regulation . . . . .	426
16.2.2	Role of ncRNAs in Plant Abiotic Stress Responses . . . . .	427
16.3	Conclusion . . . . .	450
	References . . . . .	450
<b>17</b>	<b>Plant Growth-Promoting Rhizobacteria (PGPR) and Plant Growth-Promoting Fungi (PGPF) for Alleviating Abiotic Stress in Plants . . . . .</b>	<b>457</b>
17.1	Agilent Literature Search Software: Exploring Gene–Protein Relationships . . . . .	458
17.2	STRING: Exploring Gene–Protein Relationships . . . . .	461
17.2.1	Roles of PGPR in Mitigating Abiotic Stress in Plants . . . . .	462
17.3	Roles of Endophytic Root Fungi in Promoting Plant Growth . . . . .	479
17.4	Roles of Microbe-Assisted Phytoremediation for Heavy Metal Soil Pollution . . . . .	481
17.5	Roles of Rhizobia-Legume Symbiosis in Heavy Metal Tolerance in Soybeans . . . . .	483
17.6	Roles of <i>Bacillus cereus</i> G2 in Salt Tolerance of <i>G. uralensis</i> . . . . .	483
17.7	Roles of Common Mycorrhizal Networks in Heavy Metal Transfer to Hyperaccumulators . . . . .	484
17.8	Roles of Microbial Endophytes in Switchgrass ( <i>Panicum virgatum</i> ) . . . . .	485
17.9	Roles PsJN in Enhancing Plant Growth . . . . .	485
17.10	Roles of Root-Associated Endophytes in Plants . . . . .	485
17.11	Roles of Bioengineering Plant Growth-Promoting Bacteria (PGPB) and Plant Growth-Promoting Fungi (PGPF) in Enhancing Stress Tolerance . . . . .	486
17.12	Conclusion . . . . .	487
	References . . . . .	488
<b>18</b>	<b>Plant–Microbe Interactions for Enhanced Plant Growth and Stress Resilience . . . . .</b>	<b>497</b>
18.1	Plant-Associated Microbes for Enhancing Drought Stress Tolerance . . . . .	498
18.1.1	Roles of Endophytic Bacteria E1 and E3 in Enhancing Drought Tolerance . . . . .	498
18.1.2	Roles of PsJN Strain in Enhancing Drought Tolerance . . . . .	498
18.1.3	Roles of <i>Bacillus subtilis</i> in Enhancing LEA Gene Expression in <i>Brachypodium</i> Under Drought Stress . . . . .	499
18.1.4	Roles of Proton Pumps and Endophytic Bacteria for Drought Tolerance . . . . .	499

18.2	Strategies for Improving Plant Salt Tolerance . . . . .	499
18.2.1	Roles of Rhizobacterium STR1 in Enhancing Salt Tolerance. . . . .	499
18.2.2	Roles of PGPR-Induced Antioxidant Enzymes in Alleviating Salt Stress . . . . .	500
18.2.3	Roles of <i>Bacillus amyloliquefaciens</i> in Salt Stress Mitigation. . . . .	500
18.3	Roles of Growth-Promoting Compounds of Endophytic Bacteria . . . . .	501
18.3.1	Roles of Exopolysaccharide (EPS) Production . . . . .	501
18.3.2	Roles of Polyamines in Abiotic Stress Tolerance . . . . .	501
18.3.3	Roles of ACC Deaminase in Abiotic Stress Tolerance . . . . .	503
18.3.4	Roles of Phytohormone Synthesis in Abiotic Stress Tolerance . . . . .	506
18.3.5	Roles of Root Exudates in Plant–Microbe Rhizosphere Interactions. . . . .	506
18.3.6	Roles of Microbial Volatile Organic Compounds (mVOCs) in Abiotic Stress Tolerance . . . . .	507
18.3.7	Roles of PGPR-Induced NO Production in Plant Growth Promotion . . . . .	509
18.3.8	Roles of Rice–SN13 Interactions in Abiotic Stress Tolerance . . . . .	510
18.3.9	Roles of <i>Bacillus subtilis</i> and SN13 in Tobacco Plants Under Salt Stress. . . . .	511
18.4	Conclusion and Future Perspectives . . . . .	511
	References. . . . .	512

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## List of Figures

Fig. 1.1	Trends in harvested area and production of maize, rice, and wheat from 2000 to 2021. . . . .	6
Fig. 1.2	Number of severely food insecure people (million) (3-year average) by World Bank region, 2014–2016 to 2019–2021 . . . . .	7
Fig. 1.3	Current food insecurity status. Most recently published data for current status of food insecurity. Near-Term Food Insecurity Projection. Source: Resource Watch at <a href="https://resourcewatch.org/">https://resourcewatch.org/</a> . . . . .	8
Fig. 1.4	Projected annual population growth rates by region. . . . .	9
Fig. 1.5	Ongoing disaster events in monitored countries. Points at country centers represent ongoing disasters, including floods, droughts, storms, cyclones, tsunamis, earthquakes, wildfires, cold waves, heat waves, volcanoes, landslides, epidemics, insect infestations, and technological incidents. Source: Resource Watch at <a href="https://resourcewatch.org/">https://resourcewatch.org/</a> . . . . .	10
Fig. 1.6	Baseline water stress in cropland areas. It measures the ratio of total annual water withdrawals to total available annual renewable supply, considering upstream consumptive use. Higher values signify increased competition among users. Source: Resource Watch at <a href="https://resourcewatch.org/">https://resourcewatch.org/</a> . . . . .	11
Fig. 1.7	Temperature anomaly chart for world regions from 1961 to 2021, showing deviations from the average temperature over the period . . . . .	12
Fig. 1.8	Strategies for developing abiotic stress resistant crops. . . . .	14
Fig. 2.1	The impact of abiotic stress on plants. . . . .	33
Fig. 2.2	Plant response mechanisms in plants under biotic and abiotic stress . . . . .	35
Fig. 2.3	Abiotic stress response mechanisms. . . . .	36
Fig. 2.4	Schematic overview of plant stress responses and signaling pathways, <b>a</b> Cellular processes involved in plant responses to external stimuli, <b>b</b> Mechanisms of abiotic stress perception and transduction in plants. . . . .	41
Fig. 2.5	Adaptive mechanisms of plants to abiotic stress . . . . .	44
Fig. 2.6	Breeding programs used for developing abiotic stress resistant plants. . . . .	45

Fig. 3.1	Processes of cold stress response in plants . . . . .	51
Fig. 4.1	Processes of drought stress response in plants . . . . .	64
Fig. 5.1	Processes of heat stress response in plants . . . . .	86
Fig. 6.1	Schematic illustration of how plants respond to cadmium-induced stress and develop tolerance. Cadmium stress activates intracellular signaling pathways such as MAP kinases and specific transcription factors, triggering the expression of genes encoding ion transporters, metallothioneins, and phytochelatin. These downstream molecules mediate the Cd tolerance mechanism, enabling the plant to cope with stress. JA jasmonic acid, MAPK mitogen-activated protein kinase, MAPKk mitogen-activated protein kinase kinase, MAPKkk MAP kinase kinase kinase, MT metallothionein, PC phytochelatin, ROS reactive oxygen species, SA salicylic acid, TFs transcription factors . . . . .	111
Fig. 7.1	Processes of salt stress response in plants. . . . .	141
Fig. 10.1	Integrative signaling pathways in the response of plants to abiotic stress . . . . .	218
Fig. 14.1	Biological process terms associated with the response to stimulus (GO:0050896) in Kingdom Plantae (Viridiplantae). The sizes of the nodes are proportional to the number of genes involved in each process . . . . .	348
Fig. 14.2	Molecular function terms associated with the cellular response to stimulus (GO:0051716) in Kingdom Plantae (Viridiplantae). The sizes of the nodes are scaled according to the number of genes involved in each function . . . . .	350
Fig. 14.3	Molecular function ontologies linked to transcription regulator activity (GO:0140110) and associated with the response to stimulus in Kingdom Plantae (Viridiplantae). The sizes of the nodes are scaled in proportion to the number of genes involved in each activity . . . . .	353
Fig. 14.4	Exploration of the biological process “response to stress (GO:0006950)” using OLSVis interactive visual browser for visualizing GO data. The network graph was exported to Cytoscape and filtered using data retrieved from the AmiGO 2 search tool before visualization . . . . .	358
Fig. 14.5	The alluvial diagram depicting the gene ontology terms linked to “response to stress (GO:0006950)” illustrates interconnected plants (Viridiplantae) in the left panel, GO class terms in the center, and PANTHER Family terms on the right . . . . .	359
Fig. 14.6	Gene Ontology (GO) terms associated with the response to abiotic stimulus (GO:0009628) within the Kingdom Plantae (Viridiplantae), including its closure GO terms . . . . .	361
Fig. 14.7	Exploration of the biological process “response to abiotic stimulus (GO:0009628)” using the OLSVis interactive visual	



	browser for visualizing GO data. The network graph was exported to Cytoscape and filtered using data retrieved from the AmiGO 2 search tool before visualization . . . . .	363
Fig. 14.8	An alluvial diagram of GO terms closely associated with the response to abiotic stimulus (GO:0009628) links the plant species (Viridiplantae) on the left panel, their corresponding GO annotation in the center panel, and their PANTHER families on the right panel . . . . .	364
Fig. 14.9	Gene count of GO terms linked to “response to abiotic stimulus (GO:0009628)” in Viridiplantae and Arabidopsis . . . . .	366
Fig. 14.10	Gene and annotation counts associated with the GO term “response to abiotic stimulus (GO:0009628)” in plant species . . .	367
Fig. 14.11	The PANTHER families associated with the response to abiotic stimulus (GO:0009628) in Kingdom Plantae (Viridiplantae) and <i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i> . . . . .	368
Fig. 14.12	Exploration of the biological process “response to metal ion (GO:0010038)” using the AmiGO 2 Gene Ontology browser tool. Cytoscape software is used for visualization, with node size reflecting the number of genes associated with the GO term “response to metal ion”. . . . .	370
Fig. 14.13	Exploration of the biological process “response to metal ion (GO:0010038)” using GO data visualized in the OLSVis interactive visual browser. The network graph was exported to Cytoscape, filtered using data retrieved from the AmiGO 2 search tool, and subsequently visualized . . . . .	371
Fig. 14.14	An alluvial visualization linking GO terms directly associated with the response to metal ion term (GO:0010038) in plants (Viridiplantae): the plant species on the left panel, their closure GO annotation on the center panel, and their PANTHER families on the right panel. . . . .	372
Fig. 14.15	Exploration of the biological process “signal transduction (GO:0007165)” using OLSVis interactive visual browser for GO data visualization. The network graph was exported to Cytoscape and filtered using data retrieved from the AmiGO 2 search tool, followed by visualization . . . . .	374
Fig. 14.16	An alluvial diagram depicting GO terms related to signal transduction (GO:0007165) connected to the biological process response to stimulus (GO:0050896) in Kingdom Plantae (Viridiplantae). The plant species (left panel), their closure GO terms (center panel), and PANTHER families (right panel). . . . .	375
Fig. 14.17	PANTHER GO-Slim Biological Process enrichment analysis of the biological process response to abiotic stimulus (GO:0009628) using PANTHER Overrepresentation Test (Released 20200728) and <i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i> as the reference plant, applying the binomial test. . . . .	377

- Fig. 14.18 PANTHER GO-Slim Biological Process enrichment analysis of biological processes response to cold (GO:0009409), response to heat (GO:0009408), response to light stimulus (GO:0009416), response to salt stress (GO:0009651), and response to water deprivation (GO:0009414), using PANTHER Overrepresentation Test (Released 20200728), reference plant *Arabidopsis thaliana* and applying the binomial test . . . . . 379
- Fig. 14.19 PANTHER GO-Slim Molecular Function enrichment analysis of biological process response to abiotic stimulus (GO:0009628) using PANTHER Overrepresentation Test (Released 20200728), *Arabidopsis thaliana* reference plant, and applying the binomial test . . . . . 381
- Fig. 14.20 PANTHER GO-Slim Molecular Function enrichment analysis of biological processes response to cold (GO:0009409), response to heat (GO:0009408), response to light stimulus (GO:0009416), response to salt stress (GO:0009651), and response to water deprivation (GO:0009414), using PANTHER Overrepresentation Test (Released 20200728), reference plant *Arabidopsis thaliana* and applying the binomial test. . . . . 382
- Fig. 14.21 PANTHER GO-Slim Protein Class enrichment analysis of biological process response to abiotic stimulus (GO:0009628) using PANTHER Overrepresentation Test (Released 20200728), *Arabidopsis thaliana* reference plant, and applying the binomial test . . . . . 384
- Fig. 14.22 PANTHER GO-Slim Protein Class enrichment analysis of biological processes in response to cold (GO:0009409), response to heat (GO:0009408), response to light stimulus (GO:0009416), response to salt stress (GO:0009651), and response to water deprivation (GO:0009414) using PANTHER Overrepresentation Test (Released 20200728) and *Arabidopsis thaliana* as the reference plant, with the binomial test applied. . . . 385
- Fig. 14.23 PANTHER GO-Slim Protein Class enrichment analysis of DNA-binding transcription factor activity (PC00218) using Overrepresentation Test (Released 20200728), *Arabidopsis thaliana* as the reference plant, with the binomial test applied. . . . 387
- Fig. 14.24 KEGG pathway enrichment analysis of biological processes involved in response to abiotic stimuli (GO:0009628), response to cold (GO:0009409), response to heat (GO:0009408), response to light stimulus (GO:0009416), response to salt stress (GO:0009651), and response to water deprivation (GO:0009414). . . . . 389
- Fig. 14.25 KEGG pathway enrichment analysis of transcription factors associated with biological processes involved in response to abiotic stimuli (GO:0009628), response to cold (GO:0009409), response to heat (GO:0009408), response to light stimulus

	(GO:0009416), response to salt stress (GO:0009651), and response to water deprivation (GO:0009414) . . . . .	390
Fig. 14.26	KEGG plant hormone signal transduction (ath04075) pathway mapping of genes linked to response to abiotic stimulus (GO:0009628) using the KEGG Mapper tool. . . . .	392
Fig. 14.27	Plant hormone signal transduction (ath04075) mapping of genes using the KEGG Mapper tool. <b>a</b> Response to cold (GO:0009409), <b>b</b> Response to light stimulus (GO:0009416), <b>c</b> Response to salt stress (GO:0009651), <b>d</b> Response to water deprivation (GO:0009414). The pink color indicates transcription factors . . . . .	393
Fig. 14.28	KEGG MAPK signaling (ath04016) pathway mapping of genes linked to response to abiotic stimulus (GO:0009628) using the KEGG Mapper tool. . . . .	394
Fig. 14.29	MAPK signaling pathway (ath04016) mapping of genes using the KEGG Mapper tool. <b>a</b> Response to cold (GO:0009409), <b>b</b> Response to light stimulus (GO:0009416), <b>c</b> Response to salt stress (GO:0009651), <b>d</b> Response to water deprivation (GO:0009414). The pink color indicates transcription factors . . . . .	395
Fig. 14.30	KEGG circadian rhythm (ath04712) pathway mapping of genes linked to response to abiotic stimulus (GO:0009628) using the KEGG Mapper tool . . . . .	396
Fig. 14.31	Circadian rhythm (ath04712) mapping of genes using the KEGG Mapper tool. <b>a</b> Response to cold (GO:0009409), <b>b</b> Response to light stimulus (GO:0009416), <b>c</b> Response to water deprivation (GO:0009414). The pink color indicates transcription factors . . . . .	397
Fig. 15.1	Transcription factor enrichment analysis of the whole genome of <i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i> using the TF Enrichment tool in the Plant Transcription Factor Database (PlantTFDB). . . . .	405
Fig. 15.2	Transcription factor enrichment analysis of biological processes response to abiotic stimulus (GO:0009628), response to cold (GO:0009409), response to heat (GO:0009408), response to light stimulus (GO:0009416), response to salt stress (GO:0009651), and response to water deprivation (GO:0009414) using the TF Enrichment tool in the Plant Transcription Factor Database (PlantTFDB) . . . . .	406
Fig. 15.3	A transcriptional regulatory network of genes associated with response to abiotic stimulus (GO:0009628) in <i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i> , constructed from the Arabidopsis Transcriptional Regulatory Map (ATRM) in the Plant Transcription Factor Database (PlantTFDB). The diamond shapes indicate transcription factors, colored nodes represent genes, and red and blue edges represent activation and inhibition of gene expression, respectively . . . . .	409

Fig. 15.4 A transcriptional regulatory network of genes associated with response to cold (GO:0009409) in *Arabidopsis thaliana*, constructed from the Arabidopsis Transcriptional Regulatory Map (ATRM) in the Plant Transcription Factor Database (PlantTFDB). The diamond shapes indicate transcription factors, colored nodes represent genes, and red and blue edges represent activation and inhibition of gene expression, respectively. . . . . 411

Fig. 15.5 A transcriptional regulatory network of genes associated with response to heat (GO:0009408) in *Arabidopsis thaliana*, constructed from the Arabidopsis Transcriptional Regulatory Map (ATRM) in the Plant Transcription Factor Database (PlantTFDB). The diamond shapes indicate transcription factors, colored nodes represent genes, and red and blue edges represent activation and inhibition of gene expression, respectively . . . . . 412

Fig. 15.6 A transcriptional regulatory network of genes associated with response to light stimulus (GO:0009416) in *Arabidopsis thaliana*, constructed from the Arabidopsis Transcriptional Regulatory Map (ATRM) in the Plant Transcription Factor Database (PlantTFDB). The diamond shapes indicate transcription factors, colored nodes represent genes, and red and blue edges represent activation and inhibition of gene expression, respectively . . . . . 413

Fig. 15.7 Transcriptional regulatory network of genes involved in the response to salt stress (GO:0009651) in *Arabidopsis thaliana*, constructed from the Arabidopsis Transcriptional Regulatory Map (ATRM) in the Plant Transcription Factor Database (PlantTFDB). The diamond shapes represent transcription factors, colored nodes represent genes, and red and blue edges represent the activation and inhibition of gene expression. . . . . 414

Fig. 15.8 Transcriptional regulatory network of genes involved in the response to water deprivation (GO:0009414) in *Arabidopsis thaliana*, constructed from the Arabidopsis Transcriptional Regulatory Map (ATRM) in the Plant Transcription Factor Database (PlantTFDB). The diamond shapes represent transcription factors, colored nodes represent genes, and red and blue edges represent the activation and inhibition of gene expression. . . . . 415

Fig. 16.1 Classification of noncoding RNAs (ncRNAs) associated with abiotic and biotic stress in plants in the PncStress database. . . . . 419

Fig. 16.2 Classification of noncoding RNAs across different plant species . . . . . 419

Fig. 16.3 Number of noncoding RNAs associated with abiotic stress in plants. . . . . 420

Fig. 16.4	Linear dendrograms represent agglomerative hierarchical clustering of plant species, miRNAs, and their regulatory type in response to various abiotic stimuli . . . . .	429
Fig. 16.5	Linear dendrograms represent agglomerative hierarchical clustering of <i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i> , miRNAs, and their regulatory type in response to various abiotic stimuli . . . . .	430
Fig. 16.6	A Cytoscape regulatory network of miRNAs involved in drought stress responses and their target genes using the PncStress database . . . . .	431
Fig. 16.7	A Cytoscape regulatory network of miRNAs involved in salinity stress responses and their target genes using the PncStress database . . . . .	432
Fig. 16.8	Process of noncoding RNAs synthesis in plants . . . . .	440
Fig. 16.9	Involvement of long noncoding RNAs in the process of the plant response to abiotic stress . . . . .	441
Fig. 16.10	Cytoscape network of circRNAs and their target genes associated with various stress conditions . . . . .	448
Fig. 17.1	A STRING functional protein association network. Network nodes represent proteins involved in plant interaction with plant growth-promoting rhizobacteria under abiotic stress conditions. Edges represent protein–protein associations, and line thickness indicates the strength of data support. The gray halo around the STRING nodes indicates the input genes . . . . .	462
Fig. 17.2	A hierarchical treemap illustrates functional enrichment terms categorized within the STRING database. These terms signify genes implicated in the interaction between plants and plant growth-promoting rhizobacteria under salinity stress. The size of each rectangle corresponds to the significance of the enriched terms, with larger rectangles denoting the most substantial enrichments . . . . .	463
Fig. 17.3	Enrichment analysis of genes involved in the interaction between plants and plant growth-promoting rhizobacteria under abiotic stress conditions . . . . .	464
Fig. 17.4	Sequential stages of plant–microbe interactions, encompassing microbe recruitment, plant–microbe interaction, promotion of plant growth, and stress tolerance . . . . .	465

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## List of Tables

Table 1.1	Adaptation strategies of transgenic plants to abiotic stress . . . . .	17
Table 3.1	Cold stress tolerance mechanisms in plants . . . . .	52
Table 4.1	Overview of drought tolerance mechanisms in plants. . . . .	66
Table 5.1	Overview of heat stress tolerance mechanisms in plants . . . . .	93
Table 6.1	Mechanisms of heavy metal tolerance in plants . . . . .	118
Table 6.2	Tolerance mechanisms of heavy metals in contaminated areas . . .	124
Table 7.1	Salinity tolerance mechanisms in plants . . . . .	152
Table 8.1	Comparison of breeding technologies for improving plant yields under abiotic stress . . . . .	186
Table 9.1	The effect of nanoparticles on plant growth under abiotic stress conditions . . . . .	198
Table 10.1	Overview of stress transduction pathways in response to abiotic stress in plants . . . . .	212
Table 10.2	Signaling pathways involved in abiotic stress tolerance in plants . . . . .	219
Table 10.3	Gasotransmitter-mediated signaling pathways in plants under abiotic stress . . . . .	230
Table 11.1	Roles of phytohormones in plant signaling under abiotic stress . . .	252
Table 12.1	Protein post-translational modification events in response to abiotic stress in plants and their roles in plant stress response . . .	287
Table 13.1	Transcription factors involved in abiotic stress signaling in plants . . . . .	305
Table 14.1	PANTHER family classes associated with the molecular function DNA-binding transcription factor activity (GO:0003700) and linked to response to abiotic stimulus (GO:0009628) in the Plantae Kingdom (Viridiplantae) . . . . .	354
Table 16.1	Noncoding RNAs (ncRNAs) in plants in response to abiotic stress and hormone treatments . . . . .	421
Table 16.2	The noncoding RNAs and their role in abiotic stress tolerance in plants . . . . .	441