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## 1 TransDetect identifies a new regulatory module controlling phosphate

- 2 accumulation
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- 25 Abstract

27 Identifying transcription factors (TFs) cooperation controlling target gene expression is still an arduous 28 challenge. The accuracy of current methods at genome scale significantly drops with the increase in 29 number of genes, which limits their applicability to more complex genomes, like animals and plants. Here, 30 we developed an algorithm, TransDetect, able to predict TFs combinations controlling the expression 31 level of a given gene. TransDetect was used to identify novel TFs modules regulating the expression of 32 Arabidopsis phosphate transporter PHO1;H3 comprising MYB15, MYB84, bHLH35 and ICE1. These 33 TFs were confirmed to interact between themselves and with the PHO1;H3 promoter. Phenotypic and 34 genetic analyses of TF mutants enable the organization of these four TFs and PHO1;H3 in a new gene 35 regulatory network controlling phosphate accumulation in zinc-dependent manner. This demonstrates the 36 reliability of TransDetect to extract directionality in non-dynamic transcriptomes and to provide blueprint 37 to identify gene regulatory network involved in a given biological process. 38

39 Key words: Computational biology, transcription factor, mineral nutrition, phosphate, zinc

40 Short title: TransDetect reveals key transcription factors involved in Pi homeostasis

41 Summary: TransDetect uses non-dynamic transcriptomes to defining regulatory pathways controlling

- 42 phosphate accumulation in zinc-deficient plants.
- 43

#### 44 Introduction

45 Transcription factors are recognized as important orchestrators of living organisms response to 46 environmental stimuli. Emerging experimental data indicates that a given gene in the eukaryotic genome 47 is controlled by a high number of TFs (e.g. Xu et al., 2013; Kaufmann et al., 2010a). In plants, techniques 48 including Chromatin Immuno-Precipitation (ChIP, Kaufmann et al, 2010b; Nagel et al., 2015), DAP-seq 49 (O'Malley et al., 2016), TARGET (Medici et al., 2015; Para et al., 2014; Bargmann et al., 2013; Doidy et 50 al, 2016), or Y1H (Brady et al., 2011; Gaudinier et al., 2011; Taylor-Teeples et al., 2015) are consistent 51 with this potential high number of regulators, define some of the inner features of Gene Regulatory 52 Networks (GRNs) topology. Knowing for instance that an eukaryotic genome posses ~2500 TFs, this 53 presupposes that ~250,000 regulatory connections are pointing towards 30,000 genes. Thus, in average, 54 a gene is likely to be under the direct influence of  $\sim 6$  to 40 TFs. Hence complex interactions between TFs 55 could determine the amplitude of the responses to different stress conditions. Despite its primary importance, so far our capacity to predict how specific TFs interact and form functional networks to 56 regulate gene expression level is limited. Very few computational tools are able to predict TFs 57 58 combinatorial effects so far. It is worth noting that while the current computational techniques are mainly 59 based on the detection of co-occurrence of cis-regulatory elements in promoters as well as study of 60 protein-protein interaction or Chip-Seq data none of these techniques use gene expression per se to extract 61 such potential cooperation (GuhaThakurta and Stormo, 2001, Nagamine et al., 2005, Chang et al., 2006, 62 Yu et al., 2006, Datta and Zhao, 2008, Qin et al., 2014).

In the last few years, attention has been stepped up to develop and use computational tools to decode complex TFs regulatory network involved in the regulation of complex biological process such as the coordination of nutrient signalling pathways (Rouached and Rhee, 2017). For instance, an intriguing coordination between the homeostasis of an macronutrient (phosphate, Pi) and micronutrient (zinc, Zn) respectively has been recognized in plants: Pi accumulation in the shoots is increased by Zn deficiency (-Zn) (for review, Bouain et al., 2014; Kisko et al., 2015). Nevertheless, despite its fundamental importance 3 the molecular basis of the over-accumulation of Pi in -Zn conditions remains elusive. In Arabidopsis, the Pi transporter *PHO1;H3* was identified as an important player in the coordination of Pi and Zn homeostasis (Khan et al., 2014). *PHO1;H3* transcript abundance specifically increases in roots upon –Zn treatment (Khan et al., 2014). Plants that do not express PHO1;H3 accumulate more Pi in the shoots than wild-type plants. PHO1;H3 is proposed to be a negative regulator of Pi translocation to the shoot in response to –Zn (Khan et al., 2014). With these characteristics, *PHO1;H3* constitutes an entry point to extend our knowledge on the molecular network regulating Pi–Zn signalling crosstalk in plants.

76 In this study, we developed a computational tool, named TransDetect, able to predict TFs 77 combination controlling a given gene. We used it to identify TFs involved in the regulation of the 78 expression of PHO1;H3. A reverse genetic approach was then used to functionally validate the role of the 79 identified TFs in regulating: (i) PHO1;H3 expression (ii) Pi accumulation in shoots in presence or 80 absence of Zn. The interaction between the TF themselves and with PHO1;H3 promoter was assessed 81 using yeast two- and one-hybrid assays, respectively. Overall, this work leads us to validate the 82 TransDetect method, and to provide a backbone for the establishment of a new regulatory network for Pi 83 accumulation under -Zn conditions in plants. The uncovered molecular network defines an independent 84 path from the well-established Pi-starvation signalling pathway (Bari et al., 2006; Lin et al., 2008).

#### 85 Results

#### 86 TransDetect: a new algorithm identifying potential regulating pair of TFs

In this study, we first undertook a computational approach designed to extract, from transcriptomic data, potential information concerning TF interaction in the control of a particular gene. The scheme of the algorithm, written in R (https://www.r-project.org/), is depicted in Figure 1. The whole process starts with the selection by the user of a particular gene (here *PHO1:H3*). Then, the script selects all the TFs having a putative binding site in the target promoter as described in Katari et al., (2010). This step can be easily bypassed in order to infer interactions of TFs that may not interact directly with the target gene or interact

93 with a non-canonical DNA sequence. Following this, the algorithm enters into an iterative process (Figure 94 1). Each pair of TFs expression in a first transcriptomic dataset (named data1) is used to fit the target expression following the equation: Target<sub>data1</sub> =  $\alpha TF1_{data1} + \beta TF2_{data1} + \gamma TF1_{data1} * TF2_{data1} + \varepsilon$ . In this 95 96 equation, Target<sub>data1</sub>, TF1<sub>data1</sub>, TF2<sub>data1</sub> represents the Target, TF1 and TF2 expression in the first dataset 97 respectively TF1<sub>data1</sub>\*TF2<sub>data1</sub> represents the potential combinatorial interaction of TF1 and TF2 98 expressions;  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$  represents the coefficients of the linear modeling and  $\varepsilon$  the non-explained variance. 99 Each model is then evaluated based on two criteria. The first one is that both TF1 and TF2 have to explain 100 the target expression additionally or in combination. This is performed by filtering on p-values < 0.001101 on [the  $\alpha$  and the  $\beta$  coefficients] OR the  $\gamma$  alone. Any model recording the effect of only one TF is 102 discarded since the rationale is that it can be retrieved by simple correlation network studies. The second 103 criterion is the capacity of the fitted model to predict the target expression in a second external dataset 104 (named data2, see Figure 1) that was not used to fit the model.

105 We thus use the fitted model coefficients to predict (without fitting) the Target expression, in the new 106 conditions (data2), following the equation  $Target_{data2} = \alpha TF1_{data2} + \beta TF2_{data2} + \gamma TF1_{data2} * TF2_{data2} + \epsilon$ . It 107 then evaluates the quality of the prediction by generating the R<sup>2</sup> value for a linear regression between 108 observed and predicted values (on the second dataset).

This process is iterated for all the potential TF pairs. This is necessary to find out the "best" pairs of TFs that: (i) fit the training dataset and (ii) predict gene expression in the external dataset. These models are selected if they maximize the sum of the  $R^2$  values (default threshold 15 for the sum of the  $R^2$  0.75 for simple  $R^2$ ) in the fitted and in the predicted dataset. Thus it is possible to detect potential coordination of a gene expression by pairs of TFs. Finally each model (pair of TF) is saved. The TFs are finally ranked based of the number of times they have been found to participate in a model having passed the different criteria.

#### 116 MYB15, MYB84 and bHLH35 regulate PHO1;H3 expression under zinc deficiency

117 TransDetect was used to identify TFs regulating the expression of the Pi transporter PHO1;H3 in 118 Arabidopsis roots. The root transcriptomic dataset used for the learning step (52 data points/Affy Chips) 119 and the root transcriptomic dataset used for the validation (69 data points/Affy Chips) are publicaly 120 available (Brady et al, 2007; Dinneny et al, 2008; Azevedo et al, 2016). Our analysis identified a total of 121 165 TFs organized in pairs (Table S1) as potential regulators of PHO1;H3. The potential TFs network 122 constructed based on TransDetect analysis (Figure 2) illustrates the candidate TFs pairs to regulate 123 PHO1;H3, and show number of TFs are involved in more than one connection. In this study, the candidate 124 TFs were ranked based on the number of appearances in significant models. The top ten TFs were considered for further analyses (Figure 3A) 125

*PHO1*;*H3* transcript abundance is known to increase in response to –Zn condition (Khan et al. 2014). We 126 127 therefore hypothesized that mutations of these TFs would affect the expression of *PHO1;H3* in response 128 to -Zn. For each of the ten selected TFs PHO1:H3 transcript accumulation was assessed by quantitative RT-PCR in roots of WT Col-0 plants and of two different T-DNA insertion mutant lines grown in the 129 130 presence or absence of Zn for 18 days. As expected (Khan et al, 2014), -Zn treatment caused a two-fold 131 increase of PHO1;H3 transcripts in WT Col-0 plants (Figure 3A). Interestingly, among the twenty 132 considered mutant lines the loss of function of members of the MYB15/MYB84 and MYB15/bHLH35 133 TFs pairs affect the PHO1;H3 expression in -Zn conditions. Mutation of the two R2R3-MYB TFs MYB15 134 (At3g23250) or MYB84 (At3g49690) lead to an increase in PHO1;H3 transcript accumulation in -Zn 135 (Figure 3 A). This result suggests that these two TFs are negatively regulating *PHO1;H3* expression in 136 response to a -Zn. In contrast, mutations in bHLH35 (At5g57150) lead to a decrease in PHO1;H3 137 transcript accumulation (Figure 3A), revealing a positive regulatory role of bHLH35 (activator) on PHO1;H3 expression in -Zn condition. PHO1;H3 transcript accumulation was not significantly altered 138 139 in plants harbouring a mutation in any of the other 7 TFs (Figure 3A). It is noteworthy that among these 140 three TFs only MYB15 was significantly induced in WT plants grown for 18 days in -Zn (Figure 3B). 141 We then tested whether MYB15, MYB84 and bHLH35 could interact with the promoter of PHO1;H3

(*pPHO1;H3*), using a yeast one-hybrid assay. Interestingly, MYB15 and MYB84 interacted with *pPHO1;H3* fragments, but bHLH35 did not (Figure 3C). It thus cannot be excluded that MYB15 and
MYB84 regulate *PHO1;H3* expression independently from each other. However, bHLH35 may interact
with *pPHO1;H3* through a partnership with another protein. Indeed, it cannot be ruled out that bHLH35
controls *pPHO1;H3* activity through the activation of an intermediate TF that was not identified using
TransDetect.

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#### 149 MYB15, MYB84 and bHLH35 influence Pi accumulation in the shoot under zinc deficiency

150 *PHO1*;*H3* is known to regulate the accumulation of Pi in the shoot of Zn deficient plants (Khan et al., 151 2014). When grown in Zn-free medium, *pho1;h3* mutant plants display a higher shoot Pi accumulation than wild-type plants, indicating that PHO1;H3 reduces Pi translocation to the shoot in response to -Zn 152 153 (Khan et al, 2014). To check whether changes in PHO1:H3 transcript accumulation in mvb15, mvb84, 154 and bhlh45 mutant backgrounds would result in changes in Pi accumulation under Zn deficiency, we determined the Pi concentration in shoots of WT (Col-0), myb15, myb84, and bhlh35 mutant lines grown 155 in either +Zn or -Zn conditions for 18 days As expected, Pi concentration was increased in the shoots of 156 WT plants grown under -Zn (Figure 3D). Then, while mutations in myb15 and myb84 resulted in reduced 157 158 Pi accumulation in shoots, mutations in *bhlh35* caused an increase in Pi accumulation (Figure 3D). These 159 variations in shoot Pi concentration were consistent with the variations of *PHO1*;*H3* transcript abundance. 160 Our results thus demonstrate the involvement of MYB15, MYB84 and bHLH35 in the regulation of Pi 161 accumulation in the shoot of plants grown in -Zn conditions.

#### 162 MYB15/MYB84 and MYB15/bHLH35 interactions are involved in the plant response to -Zn

163 Since the MYB15/MYB84 and MYB15/bHLH35 TFs pairs were predicted by TransDetect to 164 cooperatively regulate *PHO1;H3* expression (Figure 4A-B), we tested whether the TFs constituting these

165 pairs interact physically. Using a yeast two-hybrid assay, we found that MYB15 has the ability to

physically interact with MYB84 and with bHLH35 (Figure 4C). We then generated myb15/myb84 and 166 167 myb15/bhlh35 double KO mutants in Arabidopsis by crossing single mutant lines. Interestingly, when 168 grown in -Zn, the myb15/myb84 double mutant showed an increase of the PHO1;H3 expression level and 169 a decrease of Pi accumulation in the shoots compared to myb15, myb84 or WT plants (Figure 4D-E). As already mentioned MYB15 and bHLH35 have opposite effects on both PHO1;H3 expression and Pi 170 171 accumulation. When grown in -Zn, the myb15/bhlh35 double mutant showed an accumulation of 172 PHO1;H3 transcript (Figure 4D) and Pi concentration in shoots similar to what was observed in the 173 myb15 single mutant (Figure 4E). These results are indicative that the three TFs likely belong to the same 174 molecular pathway regulating PHO1;H3 in response to -Zn. It is likely that in this pathway MYB15 acts 175 downstream bHLH35 (Figure 4D-E).

#### 176 ICE1 regulates Pi accumulation under Zn deficiency in a MYB15 dependent manner.

177 The role of MYB15 in regulating Pi accumulation is new. However, MYB15 has been shown to physically interact with the MYC-like bHLH TF ICE1 (INDUCER OF CBP EXPRESSION 1) to regulate the plant 178 179 response to cold stress (Miura et al, 2007; Agarwal et al, 2006). Through this interaction, ICE1 suppresses 180 the activity of MYB15 (Miura et al, 2007). It is noteworthy that lowering the stringency of our 181 TransDetect analysis revealed a potential effect of MYB15 and ICE1 as TFs pair on the expression of 182 PHO1;H3 (Figure 5A). We thus tested whether ICE1, individually or cooperatively with MYB15, could 183 be involved in the regulation of PHO1;H3 expression. First ICE1 transcript level was found to be significantly ~2 fold induced under -Zn (Figure 5B). Then a KO mutation of *ice1* lead to a decrease in 184 185 PHO1;H3 transcript accumulation (Figure 5C) and coupled with an increase in shoot Pi concentration 186 under -Zn when compared to WT plants (Figure 5D). The myb15/ice1 double mutant displayed increased 187 PHO1;H3 transcript accumulation (Figure 5C) and a decreased Pi concentration in shoots in response to -Zn, in a similar range as what was observed in the single *mvb15* mutant (Figure 5D). Our results thus 188 189 indicate that MYB15 most probably acts downstream ICE1 to control Pi accumulation under -Zn via

### 191 Discussion.

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Gene expression data is increasing with the use of transcriptomic technologies, requiring the development of methods for their efficient analysis. Combination with functional genomics approaches these computational tools can help to gain new insight on the molecular mechanisms of complex phenomenon such as the regulation of ions homeostasis in plants (Mongon et al, 2017; Rouached and Rhee, 2017). In this context, we developed and used an algorithm, TransDetect, to identify regulators (TFs) and to build a GRNs that control the expression of a Pi transporter, *PHO1;H3*, in response to -Zn conditions.

199 In Arabidopsis, the PHO1;H3 gene was demonstrated to be involved in the coordination of Pi and Zn homeostasis (Khan et al, 2014). The expression of PHO1;3 is induced in response to -Zn treatments in 200 201 roots (Khan et al, 2014). Mutation of *PHO1;H3* causes an overaccumulation of Pi in Arabidopsis shoots 202 (Khan et al, 2014). Therefore, PHO1;H3 gene was proposed to plays a negative regulatory role of Pi 203 transfer from root to shoots in -Zn conditions (Khan et al, 2014). Nevertheless, the GRN that regulates 204 the expression of PHO1;H3 in response to -Zn still unknown. Using TransDetect algorithm, we identified 205 a list of candidate TFs pair for the regulation of the PHO1;H3 expression. Among the top 10 candidates 206 revealed by TransDetect, we tested 20 mutant lines (2 mutant per TFs) among which 3 display interesting 207 phenotypes related to PHO1;H3 expression (Figure 3 A-B). We believe that this relatively high level of 208 success could be explained as follow: in general, algorithms focusing on correlation between genes do 209 not provide any information concerning causality. Say that if 2 genes A and B are highly correlated, it 210 does not imply if  $A \rightarrow B$  or if  $B \rightarrow A$ . Dynamic aspects can sort between the 2 situations (Krouk et al, 2013). 211 Unfortunately, the vast majority of the transcriptome in databases are not kinetics. We would like to 212 mention here that, by the way TransDetect is working, it might extract some directionally information 213 from static data. To clearly explain this, consider the ideal case where 2 TFs (TFA and TFB) control a 214 Target gene following a logic gate (Figure 6). In this particular case,  $\gamma$  coefficient of the linear model will 215 be highly significant because it is the combination of TFA and TFB expression that is necessary to fully

216 explain Target transcript level. On the other hand, it is not possible to infer TFA by a linear combination 217 of Target and TFB, nor to explain TFB by a linear combination of Target and TFA. Thus, the term of the 218 equation yTFA\*TFB intrinsically possess some directionality explanatory power. It is important to note 219 that this directionality will occur only when some interactions between the explanatory variables exist. 220 Since the TransDeTect algorithm favours models having a significant interaction term between TFs, we 221 believe that this particularity might explain its availability to infer actual regulators. Thus, we propose 222 that TransDetect is suitable to discover TFs that coordinate the expression of any gene or set of genes of 223 interest. It worth noting that although microarray data were used in this study, TransDetect algorithm 224 could also use value of mRNA level obtained from RNA-seq experiments. While ICE1 and MYB15 was 225 not detected as TFs pair using our set-up of fitting and predicting dataset, it was detected by lowering the 226 threshold. Therefore, testing different fitting and predicting dataset set-up on one hand, and changing 227 threshold on another had, could help reaching conclusion on possible detection TFs pairs. In the frame of 228 this study, beside PHO1;H3, the use of TransDetect and based on TF ranking (counting the number of 229 times that a particular TF appears in a model), which is a crucial step in the algorithm, known TFs and 230 their targets could be retrieved. For instance, TransDetect retrieved TF and target gene involved in the 231 regulation of root development (e.g. DNA BINDING WITH ONE FINGER 53 (DOF53, At5g60200) its 232 targets REVOLUTA (REV, At5g60690)) (Brady et al, 2011), secondary cell wall synthesis (e.g. ARABIDOPSIS THALIANA HOMOLOG OF E2F C TF (E2Fc, At1g47870) and its target ASCULAR 233 234 RELATED NAC-DOMAIN PROTEIN 7 (VND7, At1g71930) (Taylor-Teeples et al, 2015), and iron 235 transport (POPEYE (PYE, At3g47640) and its target IRON-REGULATED TRANSPORTER 1 (IRT1, 236 At4g19690)) (Long et al, 2010) (Supplementary Figure 1). These data further support the utility of 237 TransDetect to detect TFs. The validation of detected TFs require in planta and biochemical testing, which 238 would include the analysis of expression profiles of the target genes in different plant genetic backgrounds 239 (eg wild-type plants, knock-out mutants /or overexpressing lines). As performed in this work, 240 transcriptionally linked TFs and promoter of target genes could be further tested for their possible direct

241 interaction.

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243 Current understanding of adaptive mechanisms regulating Pi homeostasis in plants comes from investigations conducted mainly in Arabidopsis thaliana under Pi limitation. From twenty years of 244 245 research only a handful of TFs (for review Jain et al, 2012) and only one complete Pi signalling pathway, the "PHR1- miR399-PHO2" pathway (Bari et al, 2006; Lin et al, 2008) have been discovered. 246 247 Nevertheless, as aforementioned, Pi accumulation in shoot is altered when plants are challenged by Zn limitation, and this alteration is not dependent from the "PHR1-miR399-PHO2" regulatory pathway 248 249 (Khan et al, 2014). These observations indicate the existence of specific regulatory pathway(s) underlying 250 this Zn-Pi relationship (Khan et al, 2014). Unfortunately, available tools do not offer the possibility to 251 identify the TF pairs involved in such nutrient homeostasis coordination. Thanks to TransDetect used to 252 search for TFs controlling Pi homeostasis through the examination of the publically available 253 transcriptomic data sets with PHO1:H3 as target gene we identified four new TF (MYB15, MYB84, 254 bHLH35 ICE1) displaying a striking phenotype with regards to both *PHO1;H3* expression and shoot Pi accumulation in plant grown under -Zn. Considering that only a handful of TFs involved in the 255 256 transcriptional control of plant response to Pi or Zn deficiency were described before this study (Assunção et al, 2010; Jain et al, 2012; Khan et al, 2014), one can consider that in this regard the success rate of this 257 258 strategy - combining TransDetect together with functional genomics approaches - is high. More importantly, integration of these data provide blueprint for defining novel regulatory pathway controlling 259 Pi homeostasis in plants. Using the phenotypic data obtained from the characterisation of single and 260 261 double mutant TF mutants effect on the expression of PHO1;H3 it was possible to propose a new 262 regulatory transcriptional module regulating Pi accumulation in shoot of Zn-deficient plants (Figure 7). 263 In this module, MYB15, MYB84 are likely to play a negative regulatory role on the expression of 264 *PHO1;H3*, while ICE1 bHLH35 plays a positive regulatory role upstream MYB15 (Figure 7). This work thus lead to the identification of new key players that act in the -Zn signalling pathways to control the 265

expression of *PHO1;H3* and Pi accumulation in plants, which is indeed independent of the PHR1miR399-PHO2 pathway constituents.

268

269 In conclusion, this work identified four new TFs acting to regulate Pi accumulation in Arabidopsis in response to Zn deficiency. Prediction using TransDetect was validated using three different strategies 270 271 First, molecular and genetic evidences showing the involvement of the selected TFs in modulating 272 *PHO1*;*H3* expression in response to –Zn. Second, yeast-one and two-hybrid experiments shows that these 273 TFs can interact with the *PHO1;H3* promoter, that they are able to form TF pairs. Finally, these TF pairs 274 are involved in the regulation of Pi accumulation in plants under -Zn conditions. The method developed 275 in the frame of this work should benefit to other studies aiming at identifying TFs cooperatively regulating 276 a gene(s) expression, and to dissect regulatory pathway(s) controlling an important biological 277 phenomenon.

278

#### 279 Materials Methods

280 Algorithm

The TransDetect algorithm as been written in R (https://wwwr-projectorg/) and it follows the exact logic 281 282 described in Figure 1. The R available code is at 283 https://sites.google.com/site/gabrielkroukresearch/transdetect. The running time is about 20 minutes per 284 target gene on a desktop Apple Mac Pro computer with parallelized computation on 32 CPUs. The 285 transcriptomic dataset used is from the Benfey lab (Brady et al, 2007; Dinneny et al, 2008; Azevedo et al, 2016) and has been spited arbitrarily into fitting (52 chips) and predicting dataset (69 chips). 286

## 287 Plant materials and growth conditions

The *Arabidopsis thaliana* mutants used in all experiments were in the Columbia (Col-0) genetic background. The previously described *ice1-2* (At3g26744) mutant (Denay et al, 2014) was provided by Dr Gwyneth Ingram (ENS, Lyon, France). T-DNA insertion mutant lines for considered TFs At5g57150 (line1: N516841 and line2: N536664); At3g23250 (line1: N651976 and line2: N491226); At3g49690 292 (line1: N641918 and line2: N612398); At4g37790 (N585964, N2100629); At2g46510 (N587068, 293 N867699); At1g31050 (N595172; N545538); At5g04760 (N2101152, N2104259); At4g31800 294 (N550079, N871514); At4g24060 (N652104, N504243) and At3g50060 (N567655, N555373) were from 295 Nottingham Arabidopsis Stock Centre (Alonso et al, 2003). The presence of a T-DNA insertion within the TF gene and absence of transcripts of the mutated TFs were checked using the appropriate PCR 296 297 strategy using PCR primers listed in Table S2. Double mutant lines myb15/myb84, myb15/bhlh35, and 298 ice1/myb15 were generated through crossing. Homozygosity of the generated double mutants was 299 confirmed through appropriate PCR strategy as performed for the identification of the single mutants. 300 Plants were germinated grown in vertical position on 1% agar-solidified media (A1296, Sigma) The 301 complete nutrient medium contained 05 mM KNO<sub>3</sub>, 1 mM MgSO<sub>4</sub>, 1 mM KH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>, 025 mM Ca(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>, 302 100 µM NaFeEDTA, 30 µM H<sub>3</sub>BO<sub>3</sub>, 10 µM MnCl<sub>2</sub>, 1 µM CuCl<sub>2</sub>, 15 µM ZnSO<sub>4</sub>, 01 µM (NH<sub>4</sub>)6Mo<sub>7</sub>O<sub>24</sub>, 303 50 µM KCl, pH 5.7. Zn-free medium was made by removing the only source of Zn (ZnSO<sub>4</sub>), by washing 304 the agar Seeds were sown on the plates stratified at 4 °C in the dark for 3 d. Plates were then transferred 305 in a growth chamber for 18 d, day 1 of growth being defined as the first day of exposure of stratified seeds 306 to light. Plants were grown under long-day conditions (16/8h light/dark cycle, 250  $\mu$ mol·m<sup>-2</sup>·s<sup>-1</sup>, 24/20°C). 307

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#### 309 **Phosphate quantification**

Shoots and roots were collected separately. Shoots were weighed and ground into powder in liquid nitrogen, then incubated at 70 °C for ½ hour. The determination of Pi concentrations in these tissues was performed using the Ames methods (1996). For every measurement, three to five biological replicates (3 plants per sample) were performed, leading to three to five corresponding samples.

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## 315 Real-time quantitative reverse-transcription PCR

Roots of 18-day-old plants grown on different medium composition in the presence or absence of Zn were
 collected for gene expression analysis. Total RNA was extracted from 100 mg frozen roots using Plant

318 RNeasy extraction kit (Qiagen) and RQ1 RNAse-free DNAse (Promega). Two µg of total RNA were used 319 to synthesize cDNA using poly-A oligos. Real-time quantitative reverse-transcription PCR (RT-qPCR) 320 was performed with a Light Cycler 480 Real-Time PCR System using SYBR green dye technology (Roche) as described previously (Rouached et al, 2011). The PHO1;H3 transcript abundance were 321 322 quantified using quantitative real time PCR using specific primers listed in Table S2, which showed an efficiency (E) of  $100\% \pm 3\%$ . E was determined after the analysis of serial 1:10 dilutions of a plasmidic 323 solution of each target gene by using the equation  $E = [(10^{-1/s}) - 1] \cdot 100$ . In this equation "s" represent the 324 325 slope of the linear regression of the threshold cycle  $(C_T)$  values per the  $\log_{10}$  values of DNA copy numbers 326 used for PCR reactions (Rouached et al, 2008). Relative transcripts levels was quantified using the 327 comparative threshold cycle ( $C_T$ ) method (Livak Schmittgen, 2001). For every data point,  $C_T$  value was 328 the average of the  $C_{\rm T}$  values obtained from the triplicate PCR analysis. For each gene, the relative amount 329 of calculated mRNA was normalized to the level of the control gene Ubiquitin10 (UBQ10: At4g05320) and expressed as relative values against wild-type plants grown in reference treatment (RT: +Zn) medium. 330 331 For example, relative gene expression of the PHO1;H3 genes  $\Delta C_{T,PHO1;H3}$  was expressed following 332 normalization against the average of the  $C_{\rm T}$  values obtained for the gene used for stardization:  $\Delta C_{\rm T,PHOI:H3}$ =  $C_{\text{T.PHO1:H3}} - C_{\text{T.UBO10}}$  (Livak Schmittgen, 2001). For treatment of interest (TOI: -Zn) was compared to 333 334 a reference treatment (RT: +Zn), the relative expression of a PHO1;H3 gene was expressed as a  $\Delta\Delta$ Ct 335 value calculated as follows:  $\Delta\Delta Ct = \Delta C_{T,TOI} - \Delta C_{T,RT}$  (Livak Schmittgen, 2001). The fold change in relative gene expression was determined as  $2^{-\Delta\Delta CT}$ . Using this method, +Zn values were normalized to 1. 336 337 The methodology apply for the analysis of relative expression of the other genes: MYB15, ICE1, BHLH35 338 and MYB84.

## 339 Yeast experiments

All the PCR products were obtained using high-fidelity Phusion DNA polymerase. The constructs were
 sequenced to ensure their integrity. All primers used for yeast one-hybrid (Y1H) and two-hybrid (Y2H)

342 experiments are described in table S2. For Y1H experiments bHLH35 (At5g57150) cDNA was PCR-343 amplified from a pool of Columbia (Col-0) cDNA using the cbHLH35-B1 and cbHLH35-B2 primers, 344 introduced into the pDONR207 vector (BP recombination, Gateway®), and then recombined into the pDEST22 vector (LR recombination, Gateway®) allowing the expression of bHLH35 fused to the GAL4 345 346 activation domain (AD) in yeast pDEST22. Clones containing MYB15 (At3g23250) and MYB84 347 (At3g49690) were obtained from a previous study (Kelemen et al, 2015). In order to assess if bHLH35, 348 MYB15 and MYB84 could interact with the different MYB (seven) and bHLH (one) putative binding site 349 present on the PHO1;3 promoter, each one was separately cloned as hexamers into the pHis-LIC vector 350 (Kelemen et al, 2015). Subsequent interaction assays were carried out as described in (Dubos et al, 2014). 351 For Y2H experiments, bHLH35, MYB15 MYB84 were LR recombined into pDEST32 allowing fusion 352 with the GAL4 DNA binding domain (BD). Each pDEST22 and pDEST32 vector containing either 353 bHLH35, MYB15 or MYB84 were transformed alone or in two-by-two combination into yeast (AH109 354 strain, Clontech). Subsequent steps were carried out accordingly to manufacturer's instructions using the 355 ADE2 HIS3 reporter genes (Clontech).

356

## 357 Statistical analysis

358 Statistical differences between genotypes were calculated using t-test analyses and ANOVA with 359 subsequent post hoc tests using Graphpad Prism (GraphPad Software Inc, San Diego, CA, USA) or 360 Microsoft Excel (Microsoft, USA).

361

## 362 Supplemental Data

- 363 **Table S1** AGI number occurrence in TransDetect analysis for *PHO1;H3* (At1g14040).
- 364
- 365 **Table S2** List of primers used in this work.
- 366 Supplemental Figure 1. TransDetect prediction of regulators for *REVOLUTA*, *ASCULAR RELATED* 367 NAC-DOMAIN PROTEIN 7 and IRON-REGULATED TRANSPORTER 1.

- 368 Acknowledgments. The authors are thankful to Dr Gwyneth Ingram (ENS, Lyon, France) for providing
- 369 seeds of *ice1* mutant. The authors are thankful to Dr Pascal Schläpfer (Carnegie Institution for Science,
- 370 Stanford, CA, USA) for very helpful discussions.

### 372 Figures Legends

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**Figure 1. Scheme of TransDetect algorithm organization.** The algorithm is built on a inference iterative process. First the target gene transcript level is fitted by a linear combination of the transcript levels of two transcription factors (TFs). The resulting model is kept only if the two TFs significantly participate in the fit. The learnt coefficients are then used to predict the transcript levels of the target gene in an independent dataset. If the model is able to properly fit the transcript levels of the target gene in the first dataset and predict them in the second dataset, the corresponding TF pair is kept. A final list of selected TF pairs is generated and TFs are ranked based on the number of times they appear in this list.

Figure 2. TransDetect network potentially influencing *PHO1;H3* gene expression. Each node represent a potential *PHO1;H3* regulator based on the TransDetect criteria defined in the text. If a pair of TF is predicted to explain *PHO1;H3* expression it is linked by an edge. The edge width is proportional to the sum of the  $R^2$  for the fit and predict processes (values are ranging from 16 to 176). The most influential factors are likely to be the most connected.

387 Figure 3. MYB15, MYB84 and bHLH35 regulate both the expression of PHO1;H3 and the 388 accumulation of Pi in the shoot under zinc deficiency. A- Relative PHO1;H3 (At1g14040) transcript 389 accumulation in the roots of wild-type plants (Col-0) and mutant lines harbouring loss-of-function 390 mutations in the following transcription factors: At5g57150 (bHLH35), At3g23250 (MYB15), At3g49690 391 (MYB84), At4g37790 (HAT22), At2g46510 (bHLH17), At1g31050 (bHLH111), At5g04760 (MYB-type), 392 At4g31800 (WRKY18), At4g24060 (Dof46) and At3g50060 (MYB77). Plants were grown for 18 days in 393 the presence (+Zn) or absence (-Zn) of zinc. PHO1;H3 transcript abundance was measured by qRT-PCR 394 normalized against UBO10 (At4g05320). B- MYB15, MYB84 and bHLH35 transcripts accumulation in 395 response to Zn deficiency. Relative MYB15, MYB84 and bHLH35 transcript accumulation was quantified 396 in roots of wild-type plants (Col-0) grown for 18 days in the presence or absence of Zn by qRT-PCR and 397 normalized against UBQ10. C- Yeast one-hybrid assay. Sequences of the Arabidopsis PHO1;H3 17

398 promoter fused to the HIS3 auxotrophic marker were stably transformed into yeast. These different yeast 399 strains were then co-transfected with MYB15, MYB84 or bHLH35. Left panel, growth of the different 400 yeast strains on control media deprived of tryptophan (-W), allowing the selection of yeast cells 401 expressing the selected TFs. Right panel, growth of the different yeast strains on selective media deprived 402 of tryptophan and histidine (-W -H). D- Pi concentrations measured in the shoots of wild type, myb15, 403 myb84, or bhlh35 plants grown for 18 days in the presence or absence of Zn. For A, C and D panels, 404 central lines in the boxes show the medians; box limits indicate the 25th and 75th percentiles; whiskers 405 extend 15 times the interquartile range from the 25th and 75th percentiles Letters a, b and c indicate 406 significantly different values at p < 005 determined by one-way ANOVA and Tukey HSD.

407

408 Figure 4. Interactions between MYB15 and MYB84 and between MYB15 and bHLH35 influence 409 the expression of PHO1;H3 Pi accumulation under zinc deficiency. A, B- TransDetect prediction of 410 correlation between the expression of the MYB15 / MYB84 and MYB15 / bHLH35 TF pairs and the PHO1;H3 transcript level with R<sup>2</sup>=075 and R<sup>2</sup>=084 respectively. C- Yeast two-hybrid assay bHLH35, 411 412 MYB15 and MYB84 were fused with either the GAL4 DNA binding domain (BD) or the GAL4 activation 413 domain (AD) into appropriate expression vectors, which were then transferred into veast. The different 414 yeast strains were plated on non-selective medium (NS) or on selective media deprived of histidine (-415 His), adenine (-Ade) or both simultaneously (-His-Ade). D- Relative PHO1;H3 transcript accumulation in roots of wild type (Col-0), bhlh35, myb15, myb84, myb15/myb84 myb15/bhlh35 mutant plants grown 416 417 for 18 days in the absence of zinc (-Zn) compared to +Zn. PHO1;H3 transcript abundance was measured 418 by qRT-PCR and normalized against UBQ10. E- Shoot Pi concentrations measured in wild-type (Col-0), 419 bhlh35, myb15, myb84, myb15xmyb84 and myb15xbhlh35 mutant plants grown on either +Zn or -Zn for 420 18 days. For D and E panels, Box central lines show the medians; box limits indicate the 25th and 75th 421 percentiles; whiskers extend 15 times the interquartile range from the 25th and 75th percentiles Letters a, 422 b and c indicate significantly different values at p < 005 determined by one-way ANOVA and Tukey HSD.

423 424

#### Figure 5. The ICE1 / MYB15 transcription factor pair regulates both the expression of PHO1;H3

the accumulation Pi under –Zn. A- TransDetect's prediction of the correlation between the expression 425 of the TF pair MYB15 and ICE1 and the PHO1:H3 expression ( $R^2=0.73$ ). B- ICE1 transcript 426 427 accumulation. Expression of ICE1 was quantified in wild-type (Col-0) seedlings grown for 18 days in 428 presence (+Zn) or absence (-Zn) of zinc. ICE1 transcript abundance was measured by qRT-PCR 429 normalized against UBO10. C- PHO1;H3 transcript accumulation. Expression of PHO1;H3 gene was 430 quantified in wild type (Col-0), *ice1*, *myb15* and *myb15/ice1* seedlings grown for 18 days in +Zn or – 431 Zn. PHO1;H3 transcript abundance was measured by qRT-PCR and normalized against UBQ10. D- Pi 432 accumulations. Pi concentrations were measured from shoots of wild type (Col-0), *ice1*, *myb15*, and 433 *mvb15* /*ice1* seedlings grown for 18 days in presence +Zn or –Zn. For B, C and D, Box center lines show 434 the medians; box limits indicate the 25th and 75th percentiles; whiskers extend 15 times the interquartile 435 range from the 25th and 75th percentiles. Letters a, b and c indicate significantly different values at p < 005436 determined by one-way ANOVA and Tukey HSD.

437

438 Figure 6. Idealized model to explain how TransDetect extract directionality in static data. A- Two 439 transcription factors TFA and TFB positively control the expression of a Target gene TA following a 440 AND logic-gate. **B**- TA expression is induced only when TFA and TFB expression are both upregulated. 441 C- Linear modelling of TA expression. Considering the ideal case where 2 transcription factors (TFA and 442 TFB) control a target gene TA following a AND logic-gate. In this particular case,  $\gamma$  coefficient of the 443 linear model will be highly significant because it is the combination of TFA and TFB expression that is 444 necessary to fully explain TA expression. On the other hand, it is not possible to infer TFA by a linear combination of TA and TFB, nor to explain TFB by a linear combination of TA and TFA. Thus the term 445 446 of the equation  $\gamma TFA*TFB$  intrinsically possess some directionality explanatory power in this case where 447 both TFs interact in the control of TA.

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Figure 7. Schematic representation of the MYB15, MYB84, bHLH35 and ICE1 regulatory module controlling *PHO1;H3* gene expression and Pi accumulation in shoots under zinc deficiency. Phosphate increases in the shoots of plants exposed to zinc deficiency. *PHO1;H3* plays a negative regulatory role in this process. Red solid lines indicate connections between MYB15, MYB84, bHLH35 and ICE1. Negative and positive regulatory effects of these transcription factors on *PHO1;H3* expression under zinc deficiency are indicated by flat-ended dashed lines and arrowheads, respectively. a indicates previous knowledge on ICEI and MYB15 physical interaction.

456 Supplementary Figure 1. TransDetect prediction of regulators for REVOLUTA, ASCULAR

457 **RELATED NAC-DOMAIN PROTEIN 7 and IRON-REGULATED TRANSPORTER 1.** TransDetect

458 was used to predict regulators for the following target genes A- REVOLUTA (REV, At5g60690), B-

459 ASCULAR RELATED NAC-DOMAIN PROTEIN 7 (VND7, At1g71930), and C- IRON-REGULATED

- 460 TRANSPORTER 1 (IRT1, At4g19690). Among number of TFs predicted, TransDetect retrieved known
- 461 regulators for theses genes, namely DNA BINDING WITH ONE FINGER 53 (DOF53, At5g60200) for

462 REV, ARABIDOPSIS THALIANA HOMOLOG OF E2F C TF (E2Fc, At1g47870) for VND7, and

- 463 POPEYE (PYE, At3g47640) for *IRT1*.
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**Figure 2. TransDetect network potentially influencing** *PHO1;H3* **gene expression**. Each node represent a potential *PHO1;H3* regulator based on the TransDetect criteria defined in the text. If a pair of TF is predicted to explain *PHO1;H3* expression it is linked by an edge. The edge width is proportional to the sum of the R2 for the fit and predict processes (values are ranging from 16 to 176). The most influential factors are likely to be the most connected.



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**Figure 6. Idealized model to explain how TransDetect extract directionality in static data.** A- Two transcription factors TFA and TFB positively control the expression of a target gene TA following a AND logic-gate. B- TA expression is induced only when TFA and TFB expression are both upregulated. C- Linear modelling of TA expression. Considering the ideal case where 2 transcription factors (TFA and TFB) control a target gene TA following a AND logic gate. In this particular case, γ coefficient of the linear model will be highly significant because it is the combination of TFA and TFB expression that is necessary to fully explain TA expression. On the other hand it is not possible to infer TFA by a linear combination of TA and TFB, nor to explain TFB by a linear combination of TA and TFB. Thus the term of the equation γTFA\*TFB intrinsically possess some directionality explanatory power in this case where both TFs interact in the control of TA.

# Figure 7



**Figure 7. Schematic representation of the MYB15, MYB84, bHLH35 and ICE1 regulatory module controlling** *PHO1;H3* gene expression and Pi accumulation in shoots under zinc deficiency. Phosphate increases in the shoots of plants exposed to zinc deficiency. PHO1;H3 plays a negative regulatory role in this process. Red solid lines indicate connections between MYB15, MYB84, bHLH35 and ICE1. Negative and positive regulatory effects of these transcription factors on PHO1;H3 expression under zinc deficiency are indicated by flat-ended dashed lines and arrowheads, respectively. a indicates previous knowledge on ICEI and MYB15 physical interaction.



Supplementary Figure 1. TransDetect prediction of regulators for *REVOLUTA*, *ASCULAR RELATED NAC-DOMAIN PROTEIN* 7 and *IRON-REGULATED TRANSPORTER* 1. TransDetect was used to predict regulators for the following target genes A-*REVO-LUTA* (*REV*, At5g60690), B- *ASCULAR RELATED NAC-DOMAIN PROTEIN* 7 (*VND7*, At1g71930), and C-*IRON-REGULATED TRANSPORTER* 1 (*IRT1*, At4g19690). Among number of TFs predicted, TransDetect retrieved known regulators for theses genes, namely DNA BINDING WITH ONE FINGER 5.3 (D009):004050(60200):00597827, 2007American Society of Plant Biologists. All rights reserved.

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