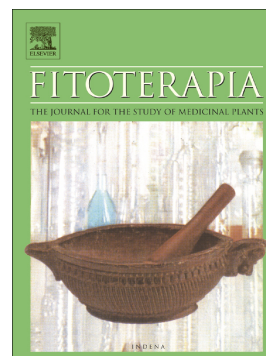


Accepted Manuscript

New cytotoxic cembranolides from an Okinawan soft coral, *Lobophytum* sp.

Prodip K. Roy, Sona Roy, Katsuhiko Ueda



PII: S0367-326X(19)30718-X
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fitote.2019.05.001>
Reference: FITOTE 4162
To appear in: *Fitoterapia*
Received date: 1 April 2019
Revised date: 29 April 2019
Accepted date: 5 May 2019

Please cite this article as: P.K. Roy, S. Roy and K. Ueda, New cytotoxic cembranolides from an Okinawan soft coral, *Lobophytum* sp., *Fitoterapia*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fitote.2019.05.001>

This is a PDF file of an unedited manuscript that has been accepted for publication. As a service to our customers we are providing this early version of the manuscript. The manuscript will undergo copyediting, typesetting, and review of the resulting proof before it is published in its final form. Please note that during the production process errors may be discovered which could affect the content, and all legal disclaimers that apply to the journal pertain.

New cytotoxic cembranolides from an Okinawan soft coral, *Lobophytum* sp.

Prodip K. Roy^{1,*}, Sona Roy² and Katsuhiko Ueda^{1,*}

¹Department of Chemistry, Biology, and Marine Science, University of the Ryukyus, Nishihara-cho, Okinawa 903-2013, Japan.

²Bioinspired Soft Matter Unit, Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology Graduate University, 1919-1 Tancha, Onna-son, Okinawa 904-0495, Japan; sonarroy@gmail.com (S.R.)

* Correspondence: prodipkroy@gmail.com (P.K.R.); kueda@sci.u-ryukyu.ac.jp (K.U.); Tel.: +81-80-3945-4180 (P.K.R.), +81-98-895-8894 (K.U.); Fax: +81-98-895-8565A (K.U.)

Abstract:

Three new cembranolides (**1–3**) were isolated from an Okinawan soft coral, *Lobophytum* sp., together with the known cembranolide diterpenoids (**4–9**). Their structures were determined by extensive analysis of spectroscopic data (1D and 2D NMR, IR, and MS), molecular modeling, and comparison with data reported elsewhere. All compounds contain an α -methylene- γ -lactone ring adjacent to a cembrane, and some of them (**1**, **6–8**) have an epoxide ring as well. The new metabolites were evaluated for cytotoxicity against HeLa, A459, B16-F10, and RAW 264.7 cells and anti-inflammatory effect in LPS-stimulated inflammatory RAW 264.7 macrophage cells.

Key words: Cembranolide; Diterpene; Cytotoxicity; Anti-inflammatory; *Lobophytum*

1. Introduction

Marine organisms are biologically diverse and so are their metabolites, showing a wide spectrum of bioactivities [1]. The soft coral genus, *Lobophytum*, is a good source of cembrane-type metabolites [2] containing a 14-carbon rings that are structurally diverse and show various biological activities. This soft coral is also a source of diterpenoids, lipids, steroids, tocopherols, triterpenoids, and zoanthamine-type alkaloids [3]. Over 250 cembrane-type diterpenoids have been isolated from the genus *Lobophytum* and these exhibit various pharmacological activities, such as cytotoxic [4–11], anti-viral [12, 13], anti-bacterial [14, 15], anti-inflammatory [16–18], HIV-inhibitor [13], and neutrophil elastase-release activity [19–21]. A cembrane-type lactone, lobophytolide, was first isolated from *Lobophytum cristagalli* [22]. The cembrane lactones are generally five-, six-, or seven-membered lactone rings [3]

that occasionally bear either an unsaturation or an exo-double bond. The lactone rings of cembranolides account for most of their bioactivity.

Cembranolide structural diversity and pharmacological potential inspired us to work further on the soft coral (*Lobophytum*) to find novel secondary metabolites. We examined an Okinawan soft coral, *Lobophytum* sp., and isolated three new cembranolides (**1–3**) along with the known cembranolide diterpenoids **4–9** [23–26]. Herein, we report the isolation, structure determination, and cytotoxicities of these new metabolites.

2. Experimental section

2.1. General experimental procedures

Optical rotation was measured using a JASCO P-1010 Polarimeter. Nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectra were recorded on a Bruker Avance III 500 spectrometer in CDCl₃. Chemical shifts and coupling constants were given as δ and Hz, respectively, and ¹H and ¹³C chemical shifts were referenced to the residual solvent peaks ($\delta_{\text{H}} = 7.26$ and $\delta_{\text{C}} = 77.24$). Infrared (IR) spectra were recorded on a JASCO FT/IR-6100 Fourier Transform Infrared Spectrometer. High-resolution mass spectra (HRMS) were obtained on an LTQ Orbitrap hybrid mass spectrometer (Thermo Scientific, Bremen, Germany) equipped with a nanospray ionization (NSI) source. Open column chromatography was performed on Kieselgel 60 (70–230 mesh, Merck). High-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) was performed using a COSMOSIL Si60 HPLC column (5SL, ϕ 10 × 250 mm). Analytical thin-layer chromatography (TLC) was performed using Kieselgel 60 F₂₅₄DC-fertigplatten (Merck). All solvents were reagent grade.

2.2. Animal materials

The soft coral was collected during low tide from the coast of Irabu Island, Okinawa, Japan, in March 2013, and identified as a *Lobophytum* sp. A voucher specimen was deposited at University of the Ryukyus (Specimen no. 13033105).

2.3. Extraction and isolation

The soft coral *Lobophytum* sp. (110.0 g, wet weight) was collected by hand, transported to the lab, and extracted with acetone (500 mL×3). After filtration, extracts were concentrated under reduced pressure to yield a crude acetone extract. The crude extract was partitioned between H₂O/EtOAc (1:1, 200 mL×2). The EtOAc part was evaporated under vacuum to give a crude extract (1.38 g) that inhibited the growth of Gram-positive bacteria (*Staphylococcus*

aureus) and Gram-negative bacteria (*Escherichia coli*). The active crude extract was first chromatographed over silica gel to give seven fractions (Hexane/EtOAc/MeOH gradient). The 2nd (362.7 mg) and 3rd (413.3 mg) fractions were subjected to further purification by considering their ¹H NMR spectra. An aliquot (200 mg) of the 2nd fraction was purified by HPLC (a COSMOSIL Si60 column) using hexane/EtOAc (7:3) to afford a new cembranolide **1** (13.0 mg) and the known cembranolides **4** (11 mg), **5** (44.3 mg), **6** (6.4 mg), and **7** (16.6 mg). An aliquot (86.1 mg) of the 3rd fraction was purified by HPLC using hexane/EtOAc (7:3) to afford new cembranolides **2** (2.9 mg), **3** (2.0 mg), and the known cembranolides **8** (22.4 mg) and **9** (1.8 mg).

2.4. Spectroscopic data

2.4.1. Compound 1

Colorless oil; $[\alpha]_D^{25.5} -31.42$ (c 0.070 CH₃OH); FT/IR ν_{\max} (film) 1769, 1739, 1668, 1455, 1370 and 1231 cm⁻¹; ¹H NMR and ¹³C NMR data are listed in Table 1; HRNSIMS m/z 375.2169 [M+H]⁺ (calcd. for C₂₂H₃₁O₅, 375.2166).

2.4.2. Compound 2

Colorless oil; $[\alpha]_D^{25.6} -7.5$ (c 0.11 CH₃OH); FT/IR ν_{\max} (film) 3453, 1769, 1668, 1455 and 1016 cm⁻¹; ¹H and ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃) data are listed in Table 1; HRNSIMS m/z 3333.2054 [M+H]⁺ (calcd. for C₂₀H₂₇O₄, 333.2060).

2.4.3. Compound 3

Colorless oil; $[\alpha]_D^{25.8} -9.5$ (c 0.12 CH₃OH); FT/IR ν_{\max} (film) 3452, 1769, 1731, 1715, 1651, 1455 and 962 cm⁻¹; ¹H and ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃) data are listed in Table 1; HRNSIMS m/z 375.2161 [M+H]⁺ (calcd. for C₂₂H₃₁O₅, 375.2166).

2.5. Calculation of molecular mechanics

Implementation of the MM2 force field [27] in ChemBioOffice Ultra 12.0 software was used to calculate molecular models.

2.6. Anti-bacterial assay

The paper disc diffusion method [28] was used to evaluate the antibacterial activity of EtOAc crude extracts of the soft coral *Lobophytum* sp. The bacterial strains were provided by the Biological Resource Center (NRBC), Japan and cultured in an agar medium containing polypeptone (10 g/L), yeast (2 g/L), MgSO₄·7H₂O (1 g/L), and agar (15 g/L) prepared in distilled water. The medium was autoclaved and transferred into Petri dishes. The bacterial inoculum was evenly spread on the agar medium. Each methanolic solution of EtOAc crude extracts was perfused (50 µg/25 µL) to a sterilized disc (ϕ 8 mm, Toyo Roshi Kaisha, Ltd.,

Japan). After removal of the solvent, the disc containing EtOAc crude extracts was placed on the seeded bacterial lawn on the agar surface. The plate was incubated for 2 days at 30 °C and then the inhibition zone sizes were measured.

2.7. Chemicals and reagents

All chemicals and reagents used in this study were of analytical grade. DMEM was purchased from Sigma-Aldrich (Saint Louis, Missouri, USA). Casein, Griess reagents, 70% perchloric acid and 3-(4,5-dimethylthiazol-2-yl)-2,5-diphenyl-tetrazolium bromide (MTT) were also purchased from Sigma-Aldrich. DMEM without phenol red was purchased from Thermo Fisher Scientific (Massachusetts, USA). Fetal bovine serum (FBS) was purchased from HyClone, Victoria, Australia. Streptomycin/penicillin was purchased from Funakoshi Co. Ltd. (Tokyo, Japan). All other chemicals mentioned hereafter were obtained from either Wako Pure Chemical Industries Ltd. (Osaka, Japan) or Kanto Chemical Co. Inc. (Tokyo, Japan).

2.8. Cell Culture

HeLa cell, human lung cancer cell (A549), melanoma cell (B16-F10), and murine macrophage cell (RAW 264.7) were cultured in DMEM supplemented with 10% FBS and 1% penicillin/streptomycin (10,000 U/mL and 100 µg/mL). All cells were incubated at 37 °C in a humidified atmosphere containing 5% CO₂. In the bioassay, cells were maintained at 80% confluency.

2.9. Cell viability

The MTT assay was used to examine the cytotoxicity of compounds 1–3. All cells in exponential growth phase (HeLa, A459, B16-F10, and RAW 264.7) were seeded at a density of 10⁵ cells/mL in a 96-well plate. Cells were cultured for 12 h to permit attachment to the wells. Then, the culture medium was removed from the wells and 100 µL fresh culture medium containing different concentrations (5, 10, 25, 50, 100 and 200 µM) of compounds 1–3 was added. After a 48 h incubation, 10 µL MTT solution (0.5 mg/mL in phosphate buffer saline [PBS]) was added to each well followed by incubation at 37 °C for 4 h. To stop the reduction reaction and to dissolve the purple formazan, 100 µL SDS solution (10% in Milli-Q water) was added. A microplate reader (Thermos Scientific Multiskan Go) was used to measure the absorbance of each well at 570 nm. Cytotoxicity results were calculated, compared to the control, and expressed as cell viability (%).

2.10. Nitrite Assay

RAW 264.7 cells were used for the nitrate assay. Cells in exponential growth phase were plated on a 24-well plate in DMEM medium at a density of 5 × 10⁵ cells/500 µL and cultured for 12 h to attach to the wells. Then, the medium was removed and wells were washed with

PBS followed by addition of 500 μL culture medium containing: (i) control: 495 μL DMEM (without phenol red) and 5 μL LPS (Lipopolysaccharide); and (ii) treatment: 490 μL DMEM (without phenol red), 5 μL LPS and 5 μL compounds (**1–3**) solution (0.124, 0.25, 0.5, 1.0 and 2.0 mM). After a 24 h incubation, 100 μL cultured supernatant were transferred from the 24-well plate to a 96-well plate. An equal volume of Griess reagent (0.1% *N*-(1-naphthyl)-ethylenediamine and 1% sulfanilamide in 5% orthophosphoric acid) was added and incubated at room temperature for 10 min. A microplate reader (Thermos Scientific Multiskan Go) was used to measure the absorbance of each well at 540 nm. Nitrite concentration was determined from a standard curve of sodium nitrite.

2.11. Statistical Analysis

Data were expressed as mean \pm SD. Statistical significance ($p < 0.01$) was analyzed by Student's *t*-tests.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Structure elucidation and characterization of compounds **1–3**

The soft coral, *Lobophytum* sp., was collected from Irabu Island, Okinawa, and extracted with acetone. After evaporation of the acetone under reduced pressure (40 $^{\circ}\text{C}$), the thick acetone extract was partitioned between ethyl acetate and water. The ethyl acetate soluble portion (50 $\mu\text{g}/\text{disk}$) inhibited the growth of Gram-negative bacteria (*Escherichia coli*) and Gram-positive bacteria (*Staphylococcus aureus*) with inhibition zones 12 and 18 mm, respectively. Repeated chromatography over SiO_2 followed by normal phase HPLC purification (ethyl acetate/hexane) of the active crude extract resulted in the isolation of new metabolites [(**1**, 0.021%, wet weight), (**2**, 0.012%) and (**3**, 0.008%)] along with known metabolites [(**4**, 0.018%), (**5**, 0.073%), (**6**, 0.01%), (**7**, 0.027%), (**8**, 0.097%) and (**9**, 0.007%)]. The known metabolites were identified by comparison of their NMR data with those reported elsewhere [23–26].

The molecular formula of **1** was determined as $\text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{30}\text{O}_5$ by high-resolution nanospray-ionization mass (HRNSIMS) [m/z 375.2169 ($\text{M}+\text{H}$) $^+$, calcd. for $\text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{31}\text{O}_5$, 375.2166] containing eight degrees of unsaturation. The infrared (IR) absorption bands at 1769, 1739 and 1668 cm^{-1} indicated the presence of carbonyl and olefinic groups in the molecule. The ^1H and ^{13}C nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) data (Table 1 and supplementary materials) suggested that **1** is a cembranolide diterpene derivative. The NMR spectra revealed 22 carbon signals consisting of two ester carbonyls [δ_{C} 169.8 (C-16) and δ_{C} 170.8 (-OAc)], six olefinic carbons [δ_{C} 130.6 (C-4), δ_{C} 129.3 (C-5) (δ_{H} 5.17 t, $J=7.5$ Hz), δ_{C} 124.1 (C-7) (δ_{H} 4.96 d, $J=8.2$ Hz), δ_{C} 136.4 (C-8), δ_{C} 133.6 (C-15), and δ_{C} 125.5 (C-17) (δ_{H} 6.50 s, 5.80 s)] including

a terminal olefine, four oxygenated carbons [δ_C 60.1 (C-12), δ_C 65.7 (C-13) (δ_H 2.73 d, $J=8.9$ Hz), and δ_C 73.0 (C-2) (δ_H 5.11 dt, $J=2.4, 8.9$ Hz), δ_C 80.8 (C-14) (δ_H 4.13 dd, $J=2.4, 8.9$ Hz)] including an epoxide group, one methine [δ_C 41.7 (C-1) (δ_H 3.41 m)], five methylenes [δ_C 39.8 (C-3) (δ_H 2.38 m, 2.25 m), δ_C 24.6 (C-6) (δ_H 2.13 m, 2.30 m), δ_C 39.8 (C-9) (δ_H 2.30 m, 1.91 m), δ_C 24.5 (C-10) (δ_H 2.13 m, 2.30 m), and δ_C 52.4 (C-11) (δ_H 1.26 m, 2.10 m)], an acetylmethyl [δ_C 21.1 (δ_H 2.00 s)], and three methyls [δ_C 17.1 (C-18) (δ_H 1.67 s), δ_C 15.8 (C-19) (δ_H 1.65 s), and δ_C 16.8 (C-20) (δ_H 1.30 s)].

Out of the eight degrees of unsaturation in **1**, five were counted for three π -bonds and two ester carbonyls (Table 1). Thus, the remaining three degrees of unsaturation could be assigned to a tricyclic ring system in **1**. Interpretation of correlation spectroscopy (COSY), three major spin systems were established [**a**: $-\text{CH}(13)-\text{CH}(14)-\text{CH}(1)-\text{CH}(2)-\text{CH}_2(3)$, **b**: $-\text{CH}(5)-\text{CH}_2(6)-\text{CH}(7)$, and **c**: $-\text{CH}_2(9)-\text{CH}_2(10)-\text{CH}_2(11)$] (Figure 2).

The heteronuclear-multiple-bond-connectivity (HMBC) correlations of olefinic methyls (H_3 -18/C-3, -4, -5 and H_3 -19/C-7, -8, -9) and methyl (H_3 -20/C-11, -12, -13) easily completed a 14-membered cembrane ring. Additional HMBC correlations from an oxymethine (H-2/C-16) and exomethylene (H_2 -17/C-1, -15, -16) finally completed a lactone ring attachment in the 14-membered cembrane. The acetoxy group was assigned at C-14 (HMBC H-14/-OAc). To complete the tricyclic ring in **1**, an epoxide ring was assigned between C-12/C13 (HMBC H_3 -20/C-12, -13). Thus, the planar structure of **1** was established as a tricyclic ring having a 14-membered cembrane, an α -methylene- γ -lactone, and a trisubstituted epoxide ring.

Based on relatively upfield δ_C values of CH_3 -18 and CH_3 -19 (< 20 ppm) [29, 30], the two double bonds at C-5 and C-7 were assigned as *E* geometry. Nuclear overhauser enhancement spectroscopy (NOESY) correlation between H-1 and H-2 indicated a *cis*-fused junction of the two rings (α -methylene- γ -lactone and 14-membered rings). In addition, the NOESY correlations among protons H-1/H-13, -14, -17; H-2/H-3, -14; H-14/H-2, -13, -20 and H_3 -20/H-13, -14 implied that these protons reside on the same face of the molecule (Figure 3). Moreover, the coupling constant ($J= 8.9$ Hz) at H-13, H-14 and H-2 supported that the vicinal protons were either in an anticoplanar or eclipse relationship. The relationship should be correct because these signals showed a strong NOESY correlation with each other.

The molecular formula of **2** was established as C₂₀H₂₈O₄ by HRNSIMS [*m/z* 333.2054 (M+H)⁺, calcd. for C₂₀H₂₉O₄, 333.2060] with seven degrees of unsaturation. The IR absorption bands at 1769 and 1668 cm⁻¹ indicated the presence of carbonyl and olefinic groups. The NMR data (Table 1) suggested that **2** was also a cembranolide diterpene derivative having 20 carbon signals: an ester carbonyl [δ_C 170.1 (C-16)], eight olefinic carbons [δ_C 123.2 (C-3) (δ_H 5.13 d, *J*=9.5 Hz), δ_C 144.9 (C-4), δ_C 123.4 (C-7) (δ_H 4.90 t, *J*=7.2 Hz), δ_C 134.4 (C-8), δ_C 129.3 (C-10) (δ_H 5.44 ddd, *J*=16.0, 7.5, 7.5 Hz), δ_C 131.6 (C-11) (δ_H 5.29 d, *J*=16.0 Hz, δ_C 134.6 (C-15), and δ_C 122.7 (C-17) (δ_H 6.42 d, *J*=3.3 Hz, 5.79 d, *J*=3.0 Hz)] including a terminal olefine, three oxygenated carbons [δ_C 76.6 (C-2) (δ_H 5.02 t, *J*=9.5 Hz), δ_C 84.4 (C-12), and δ_C 65.5 (C-14) (δ_H 4.01 t, *J*=6.7 Hz)], one methine [δ_C 54.5 (C-1) (δ_H 2.70 m)], four methylenes [δ_C 39.6 (C-5) (δ_H 2.31 m, 2.09 m), δ_C 24.1 (C-6) (δ_H 2.23 m), δ_C 42.5 (C-9) (δ_H 2.63 m), and δ_C 44.0 (C-13) (δ_H 2.48 dd, *J*=15.2, 6.7 Hz; 1.90 d, *J*=15.2 Hz)], and three methyls [δ_C 15.8 (C-18) (δ_H 1.73 s), δ_C 17.3 (C-19) (δ_H 1.64 s), and δ_C 25.6 (C-20) (δ_H 1.40 s)].

Both **1** and **2** showed comparable NMR data. However, the presence of two additional sp² carbons along with the lack of an oxygenated methine and acetyl carbons were clearly observed in the ¹³C NMR spectrum of **2**. Four π -bonds and one ester carbonyl counted for five degrees of unsaturation. Thus, **2** might be a bicyclic molecule. Interpretation of COSY and HMBC correlations revealed a planer structure of **2** (Figure 2). Unlike **1** ($\Delta^{4,5}$), a strong COSY correlation (H-2/H-3) indicated that the double bond was indeed at C-3 in **2** ($\Delta^{3,4}$). Thus, the planar structure of **2** was established as a bicyclic ring consisting of a 14-membered cembrane and an α -methylene- γ -lactone ring.

Like **1**, *E* geometries of the double bonds at C-3 and C-7 were assigned in **2**, and a *cis*-fused ring junction between α -methylene- γ -lactone and 14-membered ring was assigned by NOESY correlation (H-1 and H-2). The coupling constant (*J*=16.0 Hz) between H-10 and H-11 allowed the *E* geometry of the double bond at C-10. Additional NOESY correlations (H-1/H-2, -13_b, -14, -17; H-2/H-1, -14, -18; H-14/H-1 -2, -13_b, -20 and H₃-20/H-13, -14) implied that these protons exist on the same plane of the molecule (Figure 3). The vicinal coupling (*J*= 9.5 Hz at H-2 and *J*= 6.7 Hz at H-14) are also support the strong NOESY correlations of H-2 and H-14 protons are *cis* orientation.

Compound **3** had the same molecular formula C₂₂H₃₀O₅ as **1** [HRNSIMS, *m/z* 375.2161 (M+H)⁺, calcd. for C₂₂H₃₁O₅, 375.2166] with eight degrees of unsaturation. The IR absorption bands (1769, 1715 and 1668 cm⁻¹) of **3** suggested the presence of an α -methylene- γ -lactone and an ester moiety as in **1**. The ¹H and ¹³C NMR data (Table 1) showed 22 carbon signals as in **1**. The NMR data of **3** compared with those of **1** showed close similarity with

those of **2**. The COSY correlations supported major spin systems [**a**: $-\text{CH}_2(14)-\text{CH}(1)-\text{CH}(2)-\text{CH}(3)$; **b**: $-\text{CH}_2(5)-\text{CH}_2(6)-\text{CH}(7)$, and **c**: $-\text{CH}(9)-\text{CH}(10)-\text{CH}(11)$] (Figure 2). Like **1** and **2**, the HMBC correlations ($\text{H}_3-18/\text{C}-3, -4, -5$; $\text{H}_3-19/\text{C}-7, -8, -9$; $\text{H}_3-20/\text{C}-11, -12, -13$; $\text{H}-7/\text{C}-5$) completed a 14-membered cembrane ring. Further, HMBC cross-peaks from methylenes ($\text{H}_2-13/\text{C}-1, -12$; $\text{H}_2-14/\text{C}-1, -2$), an oxymethine ($\text{H}-2/\text{C}-16$), and an exomethylene ($\text{H}_2-17/\text{C}-1, -15, -16$) finally completed an α -methylene- γ -lactone attachment in the 14-membered ring in **3**. An HMBC correlation ($\text{H}-8/\text{OAc}$) confirmed the acetoxy group attachment at C-8. Thus, the planar structure of **3** was established (Figure 2).

As in **1** and **2**, relatively upfield values of CH_3-18 ($\delta_{\text{C}} 16.3$) and CH_3-19 ($\delta_{\text{C}} 10.4$) indicated *E* geometry of the double bonds at C-3 and C-7 and coupling constant ($J=15.5$ Hz) between H-10 and H-11 allowed the *E* geometry of the double bond at C-10 in **3**. Based on NOESY correlation between H-1 and H-2, a *cis-fused* ring junction between α -methylene- γ -lactone and 14-membered ring was concluded as in **1** and **2**. In addition, NOESY correlations between H-2/H-14a; H-14a/H-1, -2, -9 and H-9/H-20 implied that these protons remain on the same face of the molecule (Figure 3).

The new isolates were evaluated for cytotoxicity against HeLa, A459, B16-F10, and RAW 264.7 cells (Table 2). The new compounds **1–3** exhibited moderate to mild cytotoxicity (Figures 4–6). The anti-inflammatory activity of **1–3** was also evaluated in LPS-stimulated RAW 264.7 macrophage cells at non-cytotoxic concentrations (Figure 7). These compounds suppressed NO production in a dose-dependent manner, indicating that they had an anti-inflammatory effect. NO production inhibition was relatively minor (IC_{50} , at 24 h, for **1–3** were 10.67, 13.92 and 14.02 μM , respectively) compared with alcyonolide congeners (2–8 μM) [31] and carotenoids (6.25–25 μM), such as fucoxanthin and fucoxanthinol [32].

4. Conclusion

Three new cembranolide diterpenoids (**1–3**) and the known diterpenoids (**4–9**) were isolated from the Okinawan soft coral, *Lobophytum* sp. Their structures were established by spectroscopic analysis (NMR, IR, and MS) and compared with those reported previously. The new isolates showed cytotoxicity against HeLa, A459, B16-F10, and RAW 264.7 cells and an anti-inflammatory effect in LPS-stimulated RAW 264.7 macrophage cells. Among them, **1** exhibited moderate cytotoxicity [IC_{50} 5.99–10.83 μM] and anti-inflammatory activity [IC_{50} 7.75 μM]. The epoxide group in **1** might be responsible for its mild bioactivities. Absolute stereochemistry of the asymmetric centers of these compounds remains to be solved.

Decomposition of compound **2** have prevented us to determine its absolute stereochemistry by modified Mosher's method.

Acknowledgments: This study was supported by the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology Graduate University (OIST). The bioassay work was done at OIST and performed by P.K.R. as an OIST researcher. The authors are also thankful to Dr. Michael C. Roy (Research Support Division, OIST) for HRMS analysis and technical assistance and to Dr. Steven D. Arid (OIST) for language editing. We thank the IRC, the University of the Ryukyus, for analytical services.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Supplementary Materials:

Supplementary materials can be assessed at: http://www.***.com/

References

- [1] J.W. Blunt, A.R. Carroll, B.R. Copp, R.A. Davis, R.A. Keyzers, M.R. Prinsep, Marine natural products. *Nat. Prod. Rep.* 35 (2018) 8–53.
- [2] R.Y.R. Burhan, E.M.M. Putri, Y. Zetra, R. Herdhiansyah, M.Y. Putra, Terpenes from soft corals of the genus *Lobophytum* (Alcyoniidae): Chemistry and biological activities. *J. Chem. Pharm. Res.* 6 (2014) 585–595.
- [3] K.-H. Lai, W.-J. You, C.-C. Lin, M. El-Shazly, Z.-J. Liao, J.-H. Su, Anti-inflammatory cembranoids from the soft coral *Lobophytum crassum*. *Mar. Drugs* 15 (2017) 327.
- [4] S.K. Wang, C.-Y. Duh, Y.C. Wu, Y. Wang, M.C. Cheng, K. Soong, L.S. Fang, Studies on Formosan soft corals, II. Cytotoxic cembranolides from the soft coral *Lobophytum michaelae*. *J. Nat. Prod.* 55 (1992) 1430–1435.
- [5] S.K. Wang, C.-Y. Duh, New cytotoxic cembranolides from the soft coral *Lobophytum michaelae*. *Mar. Drugs* 10 (2012) 306–318.
- [6] L.T. Wang, S.K. Wang, K. Soong, C.-Y. Duh, New cytotoxic cembranolides from the soft coral *Lobophytum michaelae*. *Chem. Pharm. Bull.* 55 (2007) 766–770.
- [7] S.J. Coval, R.W. Patton, J.M. Petrin, L. James, M.L. Rothofsky, S. Lin, M. Patel, J.K. Reed, A.T. McPhil, W.R. Bishop, A cembranolide diterpene farnesyl protein transferase inhibitor from the marine soft corals *Lobophytum cristagalli*. *Bioorg. Med. Chem. Lett.* 6 (1996) 909–912.

- [8] R. Higuchi, T. Miyamoto, K. Yamada, T. Komori, Cytotoxic and ichthyotoxic compounds from marine Opisthobranchia and soft coral. *Toxicon* 36 (1998) 1703–1705.
- [9] G.F. Matthée, G.M. König, A.D. Wright, Three new diterpenes from the marine soft coral *Lobophytum crassum*. *J. Nat. Prod.* 61 (1998) 237–240.
- [10] C.-Y. Duh, S.K. Wang, B.T. Huang, C.F. Dai, Cytotoxic cembrenolide diterpenes from the Formosan soft coral *Lobophytum crassum*. *J. Nat. Prod.* 63 (2000) 884–885.
- [11] S.Y. Cheng, S.K. Wang, C.-Y. Duh, Secocrassumol, a seco-cembranoid from the Dongsha Atoll soft coral *Lobophytum crissum*. *Mar. Drugs* 12 (2014) 6028–6037.
- [12] S.-Y. Cheng, P.-W. Chen, H.-P. Chen, S.-K. Wang, C.-Y. Duh, New cembranolides from the Dongsha Atoll soft coral *Lobophytum durum*. *Mar. Drugs* 9 (2011) 1307–1318.
- [13] M.A. Rashid, K.R. Gustafson, M.R. Boyd, Hiv-inhibitory cembrane derivatives from a Philippines collection of the soft coral *Lobophytum species*. *J. Nat. Prod.* 63 (2000) 531–533.
- [14] P. Yan, Z. Deng, L.V. Ofwegen, P. Proksch, W. Lin, Lobophytones O-T, new biscembranoids and cembranoid from soft coral *Lobophytum pauciflorum*. *Mar. Drugs* 8 (2010) 2837–2848.
- [15] P. Yan, Z. Deng, L. Van Ofwegen, P. Proksch, W. Lin, Lobophytones U-Z₁, Biscembranoids from the Chinese soft coral *Lobophytum pauciflorum*. *Chem. Biodivers.* 8 (2011) 1724–1734.
- [16] S.T. Lin, S.K. Wang, S.Y. Cheng, C.-Y. Duh, Lobocrasol, a new diterpenoid from the soft coral *Lobophytum crassum*. *Org. Lett.* 14 (2009) 3012–3014.
- [17] S.Y. Cheng, Z.H. Wen, S.F. Chiou, C.H. Hsu, S.K. Wang, C.F. Dai, M.Y. Chiang, C.-Y. Duh, Durumolides A–E, anti-inflammatory and antibacterial cembranolides from the soft coral *Lobophytum durum*. *Tetrahedron* 64 (2008) 9698–9704.
- [18] S.Y. Cheng, Z.H. Wen, S.K. Wang, S.F. Chiou, C.H. Hsu, C.F. Dai, C.-Y. Duh, Anti-inflammatory cembranolides from the soft coral *Lobophytum durum*. *Bioorg. Med. Chem.* 17 (2009) 3763–3769.
- [19] C.-Y. Kao, J.-H. Su, M.-C. Lu, T.-L. Hwang, W.-H. Wang, J.-J. Chen, J.-H. Sheu, Y.-H. Kuo, C.-F. Weng, L.-S. Fang, Lobocrassins A–E: New cembrane-type diterpenoids from the soft coral *Lobophytum crassum*. *Mar. Drugs* 9 (2011) 1319–1331.

- [20] C.-H. Lee, C.-Y. Kao, S.-Y. Kao, C.-H. Chang, J.-H. Su, T.-L. Hwang, Y.-H. Kuo, Z.-H. Wen, P.-J. Sung, Terpenoids from the octocorals *Menella* sp. (Plexauridae) and *Lobophytum crassum* (Alcyonacea). *Mar. Drugs* 10 (2012) 427–438.
- [21] K. Yamada, K. Ryu, T. Miyamoto, R. Higuchi, Three new cembrane-type diterpenoids from the soft coral *Lobophytum schoedei*. *J. Nat. Prod.* 60 (1997) 798–801.
- [22] B. Tursch, J.C. Braekman, D. Daloz, M. Hérin, R. Karlsson, Chemical studies of marine invertebrates. X. Lobophytolide, a new cembranolide diterpene from the soft coral *Lobophytum cristagalli* (coelenterata, octocorallia, alcyonacea). *Tetrahedron Lett.* 15 (1974) 3769–3772.
- [23] M. Wanzola, T. Furuta, Y. Kohno, S. Fukumitsu, S. Yasukochi, K. Watari, C. Tanaka, R. Higuchi, T. Miyamoto, Four new cembrane diterpenes isolated from an Okinawan soft coral *Lobophytum crassum* with inhibitory effects on nitric oxide production. *Chem. Pharm. Bull.* 58 (2010) 1203–1209.
- [24] Y. Yamada, S. Suzuki, K. Iguchi, K. Hosaka, H. Kikuchi, Y. Tsukitani, H. Horiai, F. Shibayama, Studies on marine natural products. I. 13-membered carbocyclic cembranolide diterpenes from an Okinawan soft coral *Lobophytum pauciflorum* (Ehrenberg). *Chem. Pharm. Bull.* 27 (1979) 2394–2397.
- [25] Y. Yamada, S. Suzuki, K. Iguchi, H. Kikuchi, Y. Tsukitani, H. Horiai, Studies on marine natural products. III.¹⁾ Two new cembranolide diterpenes from the soft coral *Lobophytum pauciflorum* (Ehrenberg). *Chem. Pharm. Bull.* 28 (1980) 2035–2038.
- [26] M. Kobayashi, T. Ishizaki, N. Miura, H. Mitsuhashi, Marine terpenes and terpenoids. III.¹⁾ Isolation and structures of two cembrane diols from the soft coral *Sinularia mayi*. *Chem. Pharm. Bull.* 35 (1987) 2314–2318.
- [27] N.L. Allinger, Conformational analysis. 130. MM2. A hydrocarbon force field utilizing V1 and V2 torsional terms. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* 99 (1977) 8127–8134.
- [28] H. Ericsson, The paper disc method for determination of bacterial sensitivity to antibiotics studies on the accuracy of the technique. *Scand. J. Clin. Lab. Invest* 12 (1960) 408–413.
- [29] E. Breitmaier, W. Voelter, *Carbon-13 NMR Spectroscopy*; VCH: New York, NY, USA, (1987) 192–196.
- [30] S.-K. Wang, C.-Y. Duh, Y.-C. Wu, Y. Wang, M.-C. Cheng, K. Soong, L.-S. Fang, Cytotoxic cembranolides from the soft coral *Lobophytum michaelae*. *J. Nat. Prod.* 55 (1992) 1430–1435.

- [31] J. Taira, E. Tsuchida, M. Uehara, Y. Kinjyo, P.K. Roy, K. Ueda, Dual biological functions of the apoptotic activity and anti-inflammatory effect by alcyonolide congeners from the Okinawan soft coral, *Cespitularia* sp. *Bioorg. Med. Chem. Lett.* 25 (2015) 4496–4499.
- [32] J. Taira, M. Uehara, Anti-inflammatory effect of fucoxanthinol as bioavailable marine carotenoid on LPS- stimulated RAW264.7 macrophages through iNOS suppression and nitrogen radical-scavenging. *World J. Pharm. Sci.* 3 (2015) 1747–1754.

ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

Table 1. ¹H (500 MHz) and ¹³C (125 MHz) NMR data for **1–3** in CDCl₃.

C. No	1		2		3	
	δ_{H} (mult. J/Hz)	δ_{C}	δ_{H} (mult. J/Hz)	δ_{C}	δ_{H} (mult. J/Hz)	δ_{C}
1	3.41 (m)	41.7 (CH)	2.70 (m)	54.5 (CH)	3.31 (m)	39.3 (CH)
2	5.11 (dt, 2.4, 8.9)	73.0 (CH)	5.02 (t, 9.5)	76.6 (CH)	5.50 (m)	77.0 (CH)
3	2.38 (m)	39.8 (CH ₂)	5.13 (d, 9.5)	123.2 (CH)	4.99 (d, 8.5)	120.2 (CH)
	2.25 (m)					
4		130.6 (C)		144.9 (C)		142.6 (C)
5	5.17 (t, 7.5)	129.3 (CH)	2.09 (m)	39.6 (CH ₂)	2.78 (m)	43.4 (CH ₂)
			2.31 (m)			
6	2.30 (m)	24.6 (CH ₂)	2.23 (m)	24.1 (CH ₂)	2.35 (m)	22.7 (CH ₂)
	2.13 (m)				1.96 (m)	
7	4.96 (d, 8.2)	124.1 (CH)	4.90 (t, 7.2)	123.4 (CH)	5.31 (m)	130.7 (CH)
8		136.4 (C)		134.4 (C)		132.1 (C)
9	2.30 (m)	39.8 (CH ₂)	2.63 (m)	42.5 (CH ₂)	5.00 (d, 8.5)	77.0 (CH)
	1.91 (m)					
10	2.30 (m)	24.5 (C)	5.44 (ddd, 16.0, 7.5, 7.5)	129.3 (CH)	5.81 (ddd, 15.5, 8.5, 6.6)	128.9 (CH)
	2.13 (m)					
11	2.10 (m)	52.4 (CH ₂)	5.29 (d, 16.0)	131.6 (CH)	5.46 (d, 15.5)	136.5 (CH)
	1.26 (m)					
12		60.1 (C)		84.4 (C)		84.6 (C)
13	2.73 (d, 8.9)	65.7 (CH)	2.48 (dd, 15.2, 6.7) ^a	44.0 (CH ₂)	1.78 (m)	37.9 (CH ₂)
			1.90 (d, 15.2) ^b		1.72 (m)	
14	4.13 (dd, 2.4, 8.9)	80.8 (CH)	4.01 (t, 6.7)	65.5 (CH)	2.20 (m) ^a	32.8 (CH ₂)
					1.52 (m) ^b	
15		133.6 (C)		134.6 (C)		138.3 (C)
16		169.8 (C)		170.1 (C)		170.3 (C)
17	6.50 (s)	125.5 (CH ₂)	6.42 (d, 3.3)	122.7 (CH ₂)	6.29 (d, 3.5)	121.1 (CH ₂)
	5.80 (s)		5.79 (d, 3.0)		5.52 (d, 3.5)	
18	1.67 (s)	17.1 (CH ₃)	1.73 (s)	15.8 (CH ₃)	1.91 (s)	16.3 (CH ₃)
19	1.65 (s)	15.8 (CH ₃)	1.64 (s)	17.3 (CH ₃)	1.61 (s)	10.4 (CH ₃)
20	1.30 (s)	16.8 (CH ₃)	1.40 (s)	25.6 (CH ₃)	1.42 (s)	20.8 (CH ₃)
OAc	2.00 (s)	21.1 (CH ₃)			2.05 (s)	21.4 (CH ₃)
OAc		170.8 (C)				171.1 (C)

Table 2. Cytotoxicity effect of compounds **1–3**.

Compound	Cytotoxicity (IC ₅₀ , μM , 48 h)			
	HeLa cell	A549 cell	B16-F10 cell	RAW 264.7 cell
1	7.81	9.30	10.83	5.99
2	49.33	54.09	92.36	43.74
3	136.04	188.00	175.88	45.22

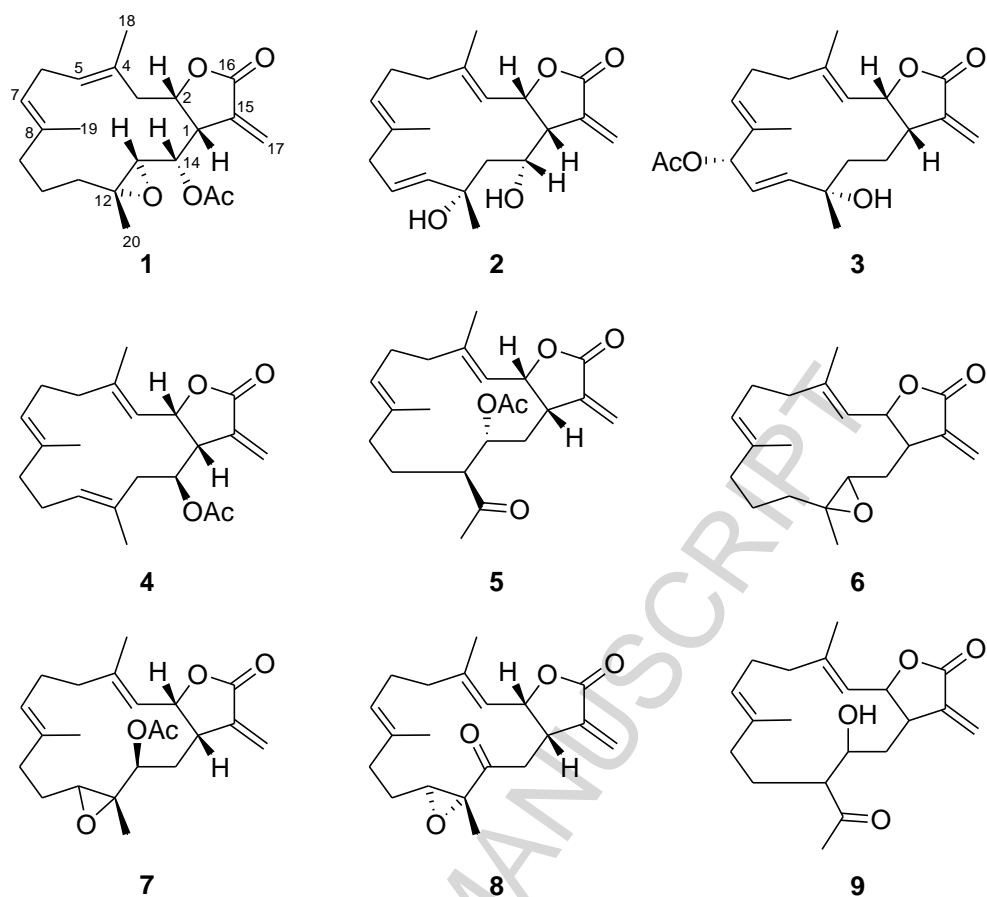


Figure 1. Structures of compounds 1–9

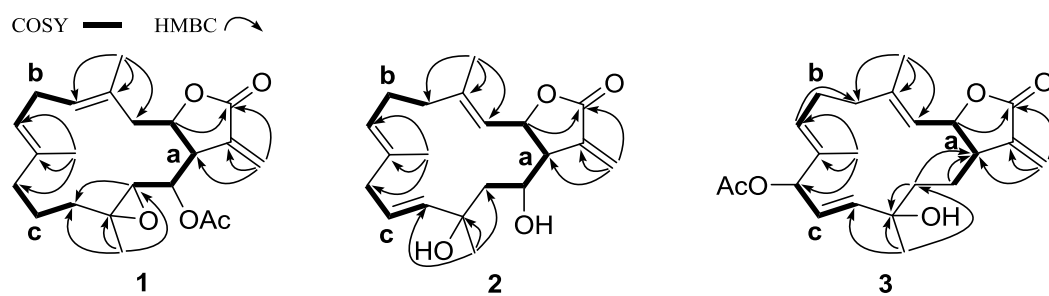


Figure 2. Partial structures of **1–3** based on COSY (bold line) and key HMBC correlations (arrow).

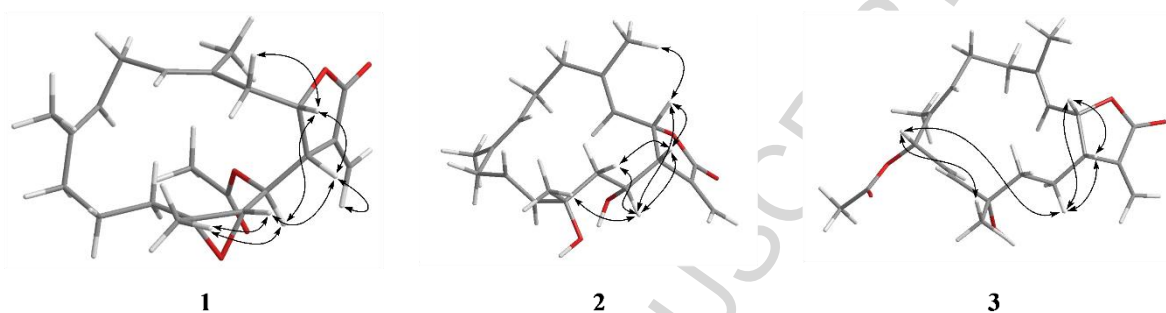


Figure 3. Computer-generated models of **1–3** using MM2 force calculations and key NOESY correlations.

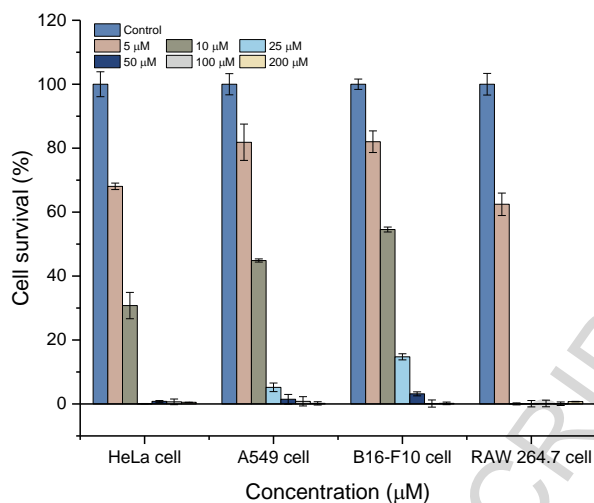


Figure 4. Cytotoxicity of **1** against HeLa, A459, B16-F10, and RAW 264.7 cells. Data represent the mean \pm standard error of three replicates.

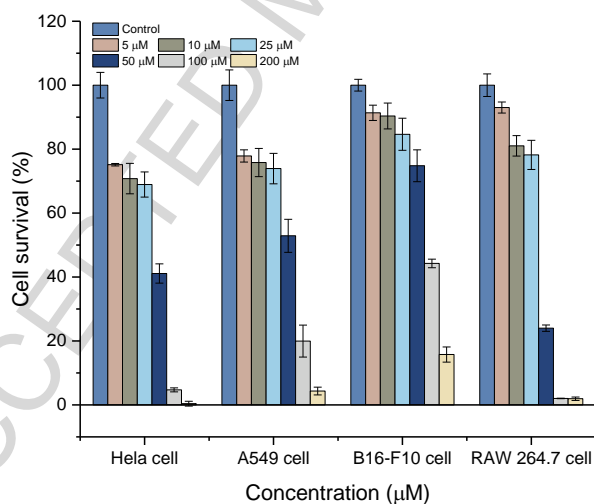


Figure 5. Cytotoxicity of **2** against HeLa, A459, B16-F10 and RAW 264.7 cells. Data represent the mean \pm standard error of three replicates.

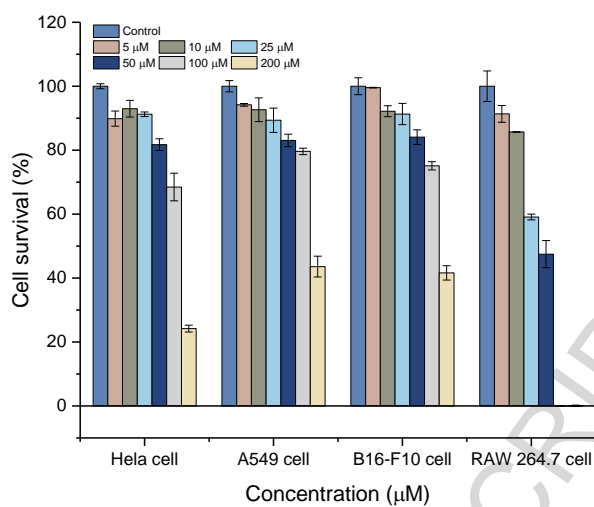


Figure 6. Cytotoxicity of **3** against HeLa, A459, B16-F10 and RAW 264.7 cells. Data represent the mean \pm standard error of three replicates.

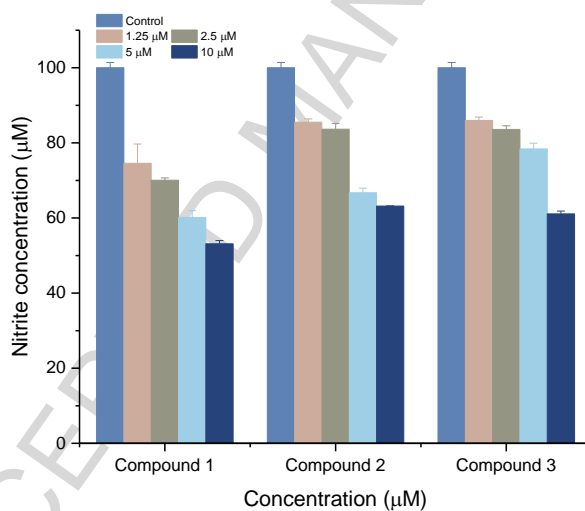
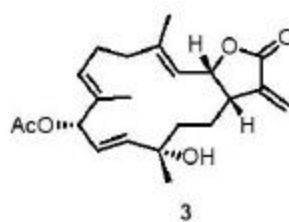
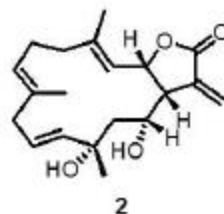
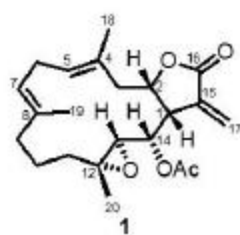
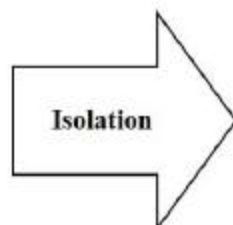


Figure 7. Inhibition of NO production in LPS-induced RAW 264.7 macrophage cells. Data represent the mean \pm standard error of three replicates.



Graphical abstract

ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT