Black Hole Quencher-1 (BHQ-1) is classified as a dark quencher (a non-fluorescent chromophore), and is extensively used as the 3'-quencher moiety in a variety of Fluorescence Resonance Energy Transfer (FRET) DNA detection probes. Such probes are primarily used in nucleic acid assays, but also find a place in nucleic acid structural studies (1). Examples include TaqMan probes (2), Scorpion primers (3), and Molecular Beacons (4).

BHQ-1 has an absorbance maximum of 534 nm, and an effective absorbance range of 480-580 nm. It is the preferred quencher for pairing with fluorescent dyes that emit in the yellow-green to yellow part of the visible range (519-556 nm). The emission spectra of this set of dyes sufficiently overlaps the absorbance spectrum of BHQ-1 to allow the latter to quench the fluorescence of the former with a high degree of efficiency.

The advantages of using a dark quencher in a FRET probe are (a) low background fluorescence (and thus better signal-to-noise ratio), (b) higher dynamic range, (c) amenability to multiplex assays (due to a dark quencher having no secondary fluorescence), and (d) ease of synthesis of FRET probes with a dark quencher (due to dark quenchers being resistant to degradation during the oligo deprotection step) (5).

Quencher Spectral Data

- **Absorption Max, nm**
  - BHQ-2 (579 nm)
- **Quenching Range, nm**
  - Dabcyl 453-530
  - BHQ-0 495-430-520
  - BHQ1 534-480-580
  - BHQ2 579-550-650
  - BHQ3 672-620-730
  - BBQ-650 650-550-750

Click here for complete list of quenchers **Black Hole Quencher License Agreement**

Black Hole Quencher License Agreement. "Black Hole Quencher®, BHQ®, CAL Fluor® and Quasar® are registered trademarks of Biosearch Technologies, Inc.
, Petaluma, California. The BHQ, CAL Fluor and Quasar dye technologies are protected by U.S. and world-wide patents either issued or in application. Compounds incorporating these dyes are made and sold under agreement with Biosearch Technologies, Inc. for end-user's non-commercial research and development use only. Their use in commercial applications is encouraged but requires a separate Commercial Use License granted by Biosearch Technologies, Inc."

References