

## Preliminary Study of the Prainha Algal Reef (Santa Maria, Azores)

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In the south coast of the island of Santa Maria (Azores) a fossilised level of calcareous algae emerges from the base of a Quaternary deposit, staged 2 meters above the present mean sea level. This covering of calcareous crusts extends for about 200 meters along the littoral, with a maximum thickness of 60 centimetres.

The preliminary study of this reef, after crossing information from field observation, thin sections and electron microscopy (SEM), revealed it is a recent formation mainly built by coralline algae from the genus *Lithophyllum* and *Neogoniolithon*. This work is the first phycological study of this structure, and has an important role as a palaeoenvironmental and palaeobathimetric indicator of the deposit where it is inserted.

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## ***Abstracts***

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