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Organizing Committee

Miguel Menezes de Sequeira

Manuela Gouveia

Aida Pupo

Maria Zita Ferreira

Roberto Jardim

Grupo de Botânica da Madeira, Universidade da Madeira, Portugal

Manfred Kaufmann

Universidade da Madeira, Portugal & CIIMAR_Madeira

Luís Silva

Mónica Moura

Ana Neto

Universidade dos Açores, Portugal

Juli Caujapé Castells

Jardín Botánico Canario "Viera y Clavijo" – Unidad Asociada CSIC, España

Isildo Gomes

Samuel Gomes

Instituto Nacional de Investigação e Desenvolvimento Agrário, Cape Verde

Mark Carine

Fred Rumsey

The Natural History Museum, United Kingdom

Hanno Schäfer

Plant Biodiversity Research, Technische Universität München, Germany

Maria Romeiras

Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, Portugal

Jorge Capelo

Instituto Nacional de Recursos Biológicos I.P., Portugal

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P61. Isolation and screening of indigenous strains of *Haematococcus pluvialis* Flotow for biomass and astaxanthin production

Xavier, E.D.¹, Azevedo, J.M.¹, Teves, L.², Mota, G.² and Neto, A.I.^{1,3}

¹ CIRN & Grupo de Biologia Marinha do Departamento de Biologia, Universidade dos Açores, Apartado 1422, 9501-801 Ponta Delgada, Açores, Portugal (emanuelxavier@uac.pt)

² ALGICEL – Biotechnology and Research, Rua do Loreto 9, Apt 55, 9500-452 Ponta Delgada, Açores, Portugal, geral@algel.pt
Ponta Delgada, Portugal

³ Centro Interdisciplinar de Investigação Marinha e Ambiental (CIIMAR), Laboratório de Investigação Aquática Insular (LAIR), Portugal (aneto@uac.pt)

Indigenous microalgae are well adapted to the prevailing regional abiotic and biotic factors. Screening local strains is therefore critical in outdoor facilities and may be a source of interesting biotechnological potential. Two strains of *Haematococcus pluvialis* were identified and isolated from freshwater ponds in the Azores, Portugal. They were cultured for a period of sixty days in a culture chamber at 25 °C using sterilised MES - volvox Medium. Periodic measurements were performed to evaluate biomass production and astaxanthin accumulation. Compared to commercial strains, the local varieties showed, respectively, the highest and lowest overall biomass productivity and astaxanthin concentration, which demonstrates the variability between strains of the same species. These results reinforce the need to evaluate the potential of indigenous strains when considering large-scale developments, particularly in outdoor conditions.