Reinventing Circularity through upcycling oceanic litter into building materials.

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Case study area

The Portuguese Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) comprises 3 subareas:

- the mainland subarea (287,521 km2),
- the Madeira subarea (442,248 km2)
- and the Azores subarea (930,687 km2)



R.S. Ribeiro: Oceans, Infinite Blue, Public Library and Regional Archive Luís da Silva Ribeiro – ISBN: 978-989-54455-6-1, Angra do Heroísmo (2023) (in portuguese).

The Azores Archipelago has 844km of coastal strip and is made up of nine islands, divided into three groups:

- Western (Flores and Corvo),
- Central (Terceira, Graciosa, Pico, São Jorge and Faial)
- and Eastern (São Miguel and Santa Maria).







Ríos, N., Frias, J. P., Rodríguez, Y., Carriço, R., Garcia, S. M., Juliano, M., & Pham, C. K. (2018). Spatio-temporal variability of beached macro-litter on remote islands of the North Atlantic. Marine pollution Bulletin, 133, 304-311.



Waste collection, separation and characterization

 Collection of wastes (over 20 tonnes till now) collected in the sea, beaches and ports of Azores.



• The sample was separated by type, such as fishing nets, fishing lines and different types of ropes and cables

- To identify the material, an analysis was carried out using Fourier-Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR), which measures the absorption of infrared radiation by the sample material versus wavelength. The polymer identified for the mooring cables was High Density Polyethylene (HDPE).
- Greater focus was given to the material coming from the mooring cables of fishing vessels, due to its high volume and evaluation as a source of material for textile structures and building construction systems;











Waste treatment and recycling





Test models to 3D print using Recycled oceanic plastic











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Laboratorial tests carried out in University of Minho Textile Engeneering Department















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Laboratorial tests carried out in Center for Rapid and Sustainable Product Development, IP- Leiria.



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Development of a translucid panel from polyamide fishing wires and algae Catarina Ribeiro, MSc student







Algae lamps and "patella chair" by Nieta Atelier





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Equipment available in Uminho School of Architecture, Art and Design for In-situ tests to be carried out in situ and in Test Cells



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Test Cells under construction in Terceira Island, Azores



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Daylight Simulations for Test cells





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Proposals for fishermen shelters for São Mateus village port done by students on the Curricular Unit Ephemeral Installations with reused materials, 2022/2023 Coordinator: Paulo Mendonça



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Proposals for fishermen shelters for São Mateus village port done by Azores EcoBlue team, 2023 Coordinator: Paulo Mendonça







Fisherman shelter proposal for São Mateus village port v1



Fisherman shelter proposal for São Mateus village port v2



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Thank You







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