

Current and novel approaches to downstream processing of microalgae: A review

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1 Current and novel approaches to downstream processing of microalgae: A

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15 review

17 Abstract

Biotechnological application of microalgae cultures at large scale has significant potential in the various fields of biofuels, food and feed, cosmetic, pharmaceutic, environmental remediation and water treatment. Despite this great potential application, industrialisation of microalgae culture and valorisation is still faced with serious remaining challenges in culture scale-up, harvesting and extraction of target molecules. This review presents a general summary of current techniques for harvesting and extraction of biomolecules from microalgae, their relative merits and potential for industrial application. The cell wall composition and its impact on microalgae cell disruption is discussed. Additionally, more recent progress and promising experimental methods and studies are summarised that would allow the reader to further investigate the state of the art. A final survey of energetic assessments of the different techniques is also made. Bead milling and high-pressure homogenisation seem to give clear advantages in terms of target high value compounds extraction from microalgae, with enzyme hydrolysis as a promising emerging technique. Future industrialisation of microalgae for high scale biotechnological processing will require the establishment of universal comparison-standards that would enable easy assessment of one technique against another.

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50 Keywords: Biotechnology, microalgae, harvesting, downstream processing, cell wall

51 disruption, high value molecule extraction, bioenergy

52	Index	Page
53	1. Introduction	3
54	1.1 Microalgae in the context of biorefinery	5
55	1. 2 Microalgal cell wall recalcitrance	6
56	2. Harvesting	8
57	2.1 Sedimentation	8
58	2.2 Coagulation-Flocculation	9
59	2.3 Centrifugation	11
60	2.4 Flotation	11
61	2.5 Membrane filtration	12
62	3. Pretreatment of microalgae & Extraction of target molecules	13
63	3.1 Physical methods	13
64	3.1.1 Milling	13
65	3.1.2 High-pressure homogenization (HPH)	15
66	3.1.3 Ultrasonication	17
67	3.1.4 Pulsed Electric Field	17
68	3.1.5 Drying	19
69	3.2 Chemical methods	19
70	3.2.1 Hydrothermal	19
71	3.2.2 Acid treatment	22
72	3.2.3 Alkaline treatment	23
73	3.2.4 Oxidative pretreatment	24
74	3.2.4.1 Ozonolysis	24
75	3.2.4.2 Hydrogen peroxide	25
76	3.3 Enzymatic methods	26
77	3.4 Novel downstream processing concepts	27
78	3.5 Energy efficiency of downstream processing	31
79	4. Conclusion and outlook	33
80	References	35

- 81
- 82 1. Introduction

Since CO_2 has been identified as a potent greenhouse gas, reduction of anthropogenic CO_2 emissions has become a focal point of both policy and research initiatives. The extended use of fossil hydrocarbon reserves to produce heat, electricity, transportation fuel and precursors for the chemical industry, have unbalanced the natural carbon cycle leading to increased CO_2 levels in the atmosphere. This has been 87 linked to the increase in the average global temperature. Several world agreements have promoted the 88 replacement of traditional fossil derived energy with renewable solar, wind, water, geothermal and 89 biomass alternatives (Chu et al., 2017; Demirbas et al., 2009). More specifically, the Paris Agreement 90 has set the ambitious goal to reduce CO₂ emissions to a level that will limit average global temperature 91 rise to less than 2 °C (Krug, 2018). In this context, not only reducing anthropogenic CO₂ generation, but 92 also CO₂ capturing technologies have become important.

Microalgae ability to fix CO₂ and convert it into useful molecules via photosynthesis makes them 93 94 attractive for the emerging bio economy. Microalgae can be divided into prokaryotic blue and green 95 algae (cyanobacteria), and eukaryotic microalgae that are further divided into Chlorophyta, 96 *Phaecophyta*, and *Chrysophyceae* based on the type of their photosynthetic pigments (green, brown and 97 gold, respectively) (Masojídek et al., 2013). The production of biomass and useful metabolic products 98 from a readily available and free carbon source is not the only advantage of microalgae. Their ability to utilize inorganic nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus, allows their use for tertiary and quaternary 99 100 effluents treatment from secondary wastewater treatment process plants (Abdel-Raouf et al., 2012). Organic carbon assimilation from microalgae in heterotrophic or photomixotrophic growth metabolism 101 is also possible, enhancing their wastewater treatment potential (Neilson and Lewin, 1974) and potential 102 valorization on the anaerobic co-digestion process. Coupling wastewater treatment with CO₂ capture 103 and biomass production may serve as an elegant and efficient solution of current environmental and 104 105 economic challenges, for example by integrating CO₂ from industrial flue gasses to microalgal wastewater treatment (Molazadeh et al., 2019; Razzak et al., 2013). Although this type of an integrated 106 107 approach has not yet reached maturity, the All-gas project is an example of municipal wastewater treatment, CO_2 fixation and biogas production that has reached the demonstration scale (Maga, 2017). 108

As with higher plants, microalgae require land for their production, although the use of coastal waters 109 are increasingly suggested. Microalgae, however, can give higher productivity compared to terrestrial 110 crops due to their continuous cultivation mode, fast growth rate, short cycle doubling time, year-round 111 112 operation and higher content in target molecules (Eing et al., 2013). By extrapolating results from laboratory scale microalgae cultivation to the commercial scale it was estimated that several 113 Chlorophyta achieved much higher oil yields compared to land crops (Nascimento et al., 2014). For 114 example, Chlamydomonas sp. and Chlorella vulgaris oil yield was 10.4 m³ ha⁻¹ year⁻¹ and 44.4 m³ ha⁻¹ 115 year⁻¹, respectively. Palm oil productivity on the other hand was estimated at only 6 m³ ha⁻¹ year⁻¹ 116 (Nascimento et al., 2014). Biomass yields of microalgae is also higher and in the range of 70-100 t DW 117 ha⁻¹ year⁻¹ (metric tones DW per hectare per year), compared to 20 t DW ha⁻¹ year⁻¹ of miscanthus energy 118 culture (Eing et al., 2013; Lewandowski and Heinz, 2003), where DW is the dry weight of the sample. 119 Both open and closed systems have been used for microalgae culture. Open systems mainly consist of 120 raceway ponds with paddle wheels (Filali et al., 2019) and open cascade systems (Lee, 2001) and are 121 characterized by design and construction simplicity, lower capital cost, natural light and temperature 122 control and easier maintenance. Their disadvantages include microbial contamination, high area 123 124 demand, dependence on environmental conditions, insufficient mixing and mass transfer (Ugwu, C.U. and Aoyagi, H., 2012; Acién et al., 2017; Eing et al., 2013). Closed culture systems (photobioreactors) 125 on the other hand require less space, enable better operational parameters control, allow axenic culture 126 conditions, and good culture mixing, but at higher construction and operation cost. This makes them 127 suitable for the cultivation of more microalgae species, including less robust species, or when the 128 targeted product purity is essential (Acién et al., 2017). Harvesting and concentration costs of microalgal 129 biomass is a major inconvenience of the overall biorefinery process in both reactor types. 130

Microalgae cultivation requires significant area and land availability can be an important limiting factor of a microalgae-based bioeconomy. The low DW biomass productivity of photosynthetic microalgae cultures means that large volume of water is required to produce relatively low biomass amounts. Available alkaline or saline water reservoirs valorisation can partially cover the water requirements of microalgae cultivation (Hannon et al., 2010); such a solution, however, would be limited to a small number of microalgae species adapted to survive in harsh media. Industrial process water, with or without supplements, can also serve as a growth medium for microalgae cultures.

Light is the main limiting factor in microalgae cultures (Carvalho et al., 2011). Photosynthetic biomass 138 139 growth and productivity relies on CO_2 assimilation, and the flux of light energy the cells are exposed to (Clement-Larosiere et al., 2014). Additionally, exposure to light is not homogeneous inside 140 photobioreactors, and depends on the geometrical configuration and the culture systems hydrodynamic 141 142 properties. The cells auto-shading and formation of biofilms on the photobioreactor walls or on the 143 culture's surface also have a strong impact on light penetration. The drop in light intensity is very steep 144 even a few millimetres from the photobioreactor surface. Indeed, photobioreactors are naturally divided 145 into light and dark zones, with efficient photosynthetic activity occurring only in the light zones. 146 Depending on the bioreactor design parameters, such as tube diameter or pond depth, the dark areas can 147 constitute the majority of the reactor volume (Carvalho et al., 2011). Light limitation is a major reason for the low productivity of photoautotrophic cultures compared to heterotrophic fermentations. 148 149 Temperature effects can also significantly affect production efficiency and may require temperature 150 control increasing investment and operation costs (Ras et al., 2013). Typical biomass concentration for photoautotrophic cultures is in the region of 0.5 to 2.0 g L⁻¹, whereas in heterotrophic cultures biomass 151 concentrations of 18 g L⁻¹ (Cheng et al., 2009) and 24 g L⁻¹ (Chen and Walker, 2011) are possible. For 152 153 traditional industrial fermentations utilizing yeast, concentrations of greater than 50 or 60 g L⁻¹ can be achieved (Di Serio et al., 2001; Paredes-López et al., 1976). In turn, the low cell densities of microalgae 154 cultures make downstream processing, such as cell concentration and extraction of valuable molecules, 155 critical to the success of industrial microalgae valorization (Gayen et al., 2019). 156

157

158 1.1 Microalgae in the context of biorefinery

159 Deriving value from microalgae through a biorefinery operation (Fig.1) can appear rather attractive as the carbon nutrient (CO_2) is not only free but its removal from the atmosphere is desired. The use of 160 microalgae, however, presents several challenges: the growth of microalgae requires significant 161 quantities of carbon, nitrogen and phosphorus. The inorganic carbon required for photosynthesis can 162 come either from CO_2 or from dissolved bicarbonate ions in the medium (Gonçalves et al., 2017). 163 Inorganic nitrogen (nitrate, nitrite, ammonium, ammonia, molecular nitrogen) uptake is species 164 dependent (Hellebust and Ahmad, 1989). Organic compounds such as urea can also be used as a nitrogen 165 166 source (Kim et al., 2016). Phosphorus, on the other hand, is assimilated mainly as phosphate ions, with the ability of organic phosphorus uptake also shown (Singh et al., 2018). Most microalgae have the 167 168 ability to uptake more phosphorus than is required for growth and store it in the form of inorganic polyphosphate. This natural adaptation to phosphorus poor environments is termed luxury phosphorus 169 170 uptake (Solovchenko et al., 2019). The use of industrial fertilizers as sources of nitrogen and phosphorus 171 can be a cheaper alternative to growth medium formulation increasing the economic sustainability of microalgae culture and valorisation. Magnesium (Mg²⁺), an important component of the photosynthetic 172 apparatus, is also critical for microalgae growth and biomass productivity is related to its concentration 173 in the growth medium (Ben Amor-Ben Ayed et al., 2016, 2015). Coupling microalgae biorefinery with 174 175 process water treatment and carbon dioxide biofixation is economically attractive for sustainable microalgae culture. Process water is rich in inorganic content that is expensive to remove in traditional 176 tertiary process water treatment operations. Their use as growth media in a biorefinery would reduce the 177 cost of both process water treatment and microalgae culture. In addition, the process water would 178 179 provide a readily available source of water, and organic and/or inorganic compound necessary for microalgae growth. The ability of microalgae to remove nitrogen (Delgadillo-Mirquez et al., 2016) 180 magnesium (Ben Ayed et al., 2017) and excess phosphorus -through luxury phosphorus uptake-181 (Solovchenko et al., 2019) from their growth medium, makes them suitable for such water depollution 182 applications (Fig. 1). The biomass produced can be used as a fertilizer or converted to renewable fuels 183 and energy and increase the operation's sustainability. This could be an interesting solution despite the 184 problem of light penetration into the culture caused by the secondary effluent's turbidity and colour. 185 Lack or limitations of nutrients that are necessary for growth in the medium can affect the composition 186 of the microalgae biomass. Such limitations are often desirable and are induced as a stress factor; can 187 be accomplished by formulation of the growth medium. For example, nitrogen limitation in the latter 188 stages of microalgae growth can induce lipid production as an energy storage mechanism, and therefore 189

increase the value of the produced biomass (Juneja et al., 2013). The effects of limitation of majornutrients in the growth medium can be seen in Table 1.

192

Figure 1

193

Table 1

The low dry weight content of microalgae cultures (typically around 1 g L⁻¹) makes harvesting and 194 195 concentration an expensive unit operation of any biorefinery. Harvesting and dewatering are the main 196 downstream processes required for any applications where the whole microalgae biomass can be used directly as the final product, such as for animal and fish feed or food supplements (e.g. Arthrospira 197 198 platensis tablets and powder). Biomass concentration can be achieved by the combination of some techniques such as settling, decantation, centrifugation and filtration; all followed by an operatory 199 process of microalgae conditioning by drying of the concentrated pastes (Raja et al., 2018). Harvesting 200 and dewatering processes may also include membrane filtration, shaking separators, flotation and 201 flocculation, or pressing. 202

The various molecules of interest in the microalgae biomass can be classified into structural e.g. cell 203 wall carbohydrates and proteins and cell membrane lipids; and non-structural e.g. storage lipids and 204 205 carbohydrates, vitamins, polyunsaturated fatty acids and pigments (Cuellar-Bermudez et al., 2015; Shannon and Abu-Ghannam, 2018). These may be the final target molecules, as in the case of ω -3 or ω -206 207 6 fatty acids and β -carotene that can be used in food supplements; or used as feedstock for fuels and chemical products, as in the case of carbohydrates and lipids. Such diversity in the chemical composition 208 209 of microalgae, requires a fractionation step of the target molecule. The fractionation process must be selective in order to maximize the desired molecule's yield and minimize formation of unwanted and 210 211 inhibitory products.

Cell disruption can be achieved by physical (Ultrasonication, High Pressure Homogenization, Bead 212 Milling, Pulsed Electric Field) chemical (Acid, Alkaline and Oxidation), thermal (Hydrothermal, Steam 213 214 Explosion) and biological methods (Enzymatic treatment) (Soo Youn Lee et al., 2017). During cell wall disruption, intracellular molecules can be extracted with organic solvents (Araujo et al., 2013), ionic 215 liquids (Y. Zhang et al., 2018), supercritical CO₂ (Reyes et al., 2016; Cheng et al., 2011) or supercritical 216 217 mixtures of CO₂ and solvents (Obeid et al., 2018). Cell-wall components fractionation, may require their further depolymerization via hydrothermal (Lorente et al., 2017), acid (Hernández et al., 2015) or 218 enzymatic hydrolysis (Sierra et al., 2017). The targeted molecules separation and purification can be 219 performed with chromatography (Bousquet et al., 1994; Fábryová et al., 2019) and membrane 220 221 technology (Giorno et al., 2013).

222

223 1. 2 Microalgal cell wall recalcitrance

224 The bulk production of fuels such as biogas (Córdova et al., 2018) or bio-oil through hydrothermal liquefaction (Hu et al., 2017) are common methods of deriving value from microalgae biomass. In such 225 cases, cell disruption does not facilitate extraction or fractionation of molecules but enhances the 226 conversion reactions towards the desired end products (Mahdy et al., 2014a; B. Zhang et al., 2018). Cell 227 wall disruption may be essential for the efficient extraction of intracellular molecules such as pigments 228 229 and oils. Cell wall components may themselves be target molecules, requiring disruption for their 230 efficient fractionation e.g. carbohydrates for bioethanol production (Kim et al., 2012), or hydrocarbons 231 from the *Botryococcus* extracellular matrix (Ciudad et al., 2014)

Cell wall structure (Fig. 2) and composition has been extensively reviewed elsewhere (Baudelet et al., 2017). Cell wall thickness and chemical composition have been identified as the most important factors determining the cell wall strength (Zhipeng Duan et al., 2017). Cell wall robustness can vary related to microalgae species (Montsant et al., 2001). *Isochrysis Galbana* completely lacks a cell wall (Throndsen, 1997), making it very fragile, whereas *Chlorella sp.* have a glucosamine rigid cell wall and a hemicellulose-like cell wall layer mainly of galactose and mannose sugars (Rodrigues and da Silva Bon, 238 2011). *Haematococcus pluvialis* has a very thick cell wall composed of cellulose-like polysaccharides
 239 and a very resistant polymer, algaenan (Hagen et al., 2002). Algaenan is one of the most inert microalgae

- 240 cell wall components and very resistant to physical, chemical and enzymatic pretreatment (Mendes-
- 241 Pinto et al., 2001).

The cell wall of the blue-green alga A. platensis is composed of four layers one of which is a more robust 242 243 peptidoglycan layer (Van Eykelenburg, 1977). Tisochrysis lutea has a cell wall consisting of two-layered plates (Orlova et al., 2019). A comparative study of cell disruption of various species with 244 ultrasonication has correlated cell wall composition and structure to resistance to physical damage (shear 245 246 stress) (Zhipeng Duan et al., 2017). From the treatment of green algae and cyanobacteria the following 247 suggested order of cell wall robustness can be proposed for a few species: Chlorella pyrenoidosa > 248 Synechococcus elongatus > Microcystis aeruginosa > Chlamydomonas reinhardtii. The more resistant 249 cell wall of C. pyrenoidosa is composed mainly of cellulose rich polysaccharides, the cyanobacteria of a peptidoglycan layer with an extracellular mucilage layer and a further, serrated external layer (S-layer) 250 and finally, of the rupture prone C. reinhardtii of hydroxyproline-rich glycoproteins (Zhipeng Duan et 251 al., 2017). The cell wall of *Chlorella* strains also contains a chitin-like layer (Kapaun and Reisser, 1995). 252 Besides the organic layers some microalgae cell walls have inorganic components, like the cell wall of 253 254 the diatom *Phaeodactylum tricornutum*, that contains a silica shell (Gügi et al., 2015).

Similar indirect suggestions for a possible correlation between cell wall composition and robustness 255 256 exist in other articles. In a study of rupture of *Tetraselmis suecica*., *Chlorella* sp. and *Nannochloropsis* 257 sp, by High Pressure Homogenization the pressure required to rupture 50% of the cells was determined at 170 bar, 1060 bar and 1380 bar, respectively (Spiden et al., 2013). The order of cell wall robustness 258 of these species therefore can be proposed as: Nannochloropsis sp. > Chlorella sp. > T. suecica. 259 260 Although the cell wall composition of these species was not measured in the study, it is noted from the 261 literature that they are made up from polymers resistant to mechanical rupture, polysaccharides and 262 glycoproteins, and carbohydrate scales, for *Tetraselmis suecica*., *Chlorella* sp. and *Nannochloropsis* sp. respectively (Spiden et al., 2013). In a similar approach, cell fragility at 1750 bar was studied (Taleb A. 263 2016) from which the order of cell wall robustness can be proposed for the following species: 264 265 Scenedesmus sp. UTEX 1589 > Nannochloropsis salina 537 CCMP > Scenedesmus obliquus 393 UTEX > Nannochloropsis gaditana 527 CCMP > Parachlorella kessleri 2229 UTEX. Again, the cell wall 266 267 composition of the species was not provided.

A second level of recalcitrance is presented by microalgae organized in coenobial communities, held together by extracellular structures. For example, *Botryococcus* strains have thick cell walls, rich in hemicellulose-like carbohydrates predominantly of arabinose and galactose composition, an algaenan layer, and form colonies held together with a hydrocarbon extracellular matrix. Equally complex is the cell wall of *Scenedesmus*, containing cellulose-like carbohydrate layers, algaenan and an external coenobial seath when the cells are grown in colonies.

274

Figure 2

Modifications during the different stages of microalgae growth can also significantly affect the 275 recalcitrance of the cell wall. For example, H. pluvialis vegetative cells are susceptible to breakage at 276 277 moderate pressures (4000 to 10,000 psi), whereas cysts with thicker algaenan-rich cell walls required very high pressure (20,000 psi) for complete cell disruption (Montsant et al., 2001). It has also been 278 shown that growth rate can also affect cell wall robustness, as cultures grown at higher rates produce 279 cells with thinner walls (Němcová and Kalina, 2000). In general, the thickness and chemical 280 composition of the cell wall can vary a lot even in the same species depending on the growth conditions 281 (Liu et al., 2006). Concerning the enzymatic methods, the multilayered structure of a cell wall poses an 282 283 additional challenge as each layer may require enzymatic treatment by a different class of enzymes, 284 increasing the enzymatic cocktail's complexity and cost, or requiring multi-stage pretreatment. In 285 electricity-based pretreatment methods, such as Pulsed Electric Field, the small size of the microalgae 286 cell also enhances resistance to disruption.

287 Structural modifications induced from the specie's growth state, energy requirements, pretreatment costs288 and price of the desired products must be carefully considered in order to select an appropriate cell

disruption method. Sensitivity of the targeted molecules to degradation during pretreatment must also be considered in order to minimize losses in the final product yield and biological activity. Some interesting microalgae species, their cell wall composition, targeted molecules, and their respective prices, are summarized in Table 2.

293

Table 2

- 294
- 295 2. Harvesting

Harvesting is the solid-liquid separation of cells from the growth medium. The microalgae cells are the 296 297 main culture product, whereas the nutrient depleted medium is a valuable water source that can be 298 recycled into the bioreactor directly or supplemented with nutrients, if required. The very low microalgae biomass concentrations make harvesting a critical operation unit for a biorefinery from the 299 economical point of view. Further downstream processing steps such as cell disruption and extraction-300 301 fractionation cannot be performed at low solids content as the high diluted solutions would not be 302 treated. The typically low biomass yield in microalgae production systems poses severe economic and 303 energetic restrictions to the harvesting and consequently to the whole biorefinery process. Operating cost cannot exceed the value of final products, and since at least some of the biorefinery end products 304 305 will be fuels, the harvesting energy should not exceed the biomass energy content. The relatively small size of microalgae cells -typically between 2 and 25 µm as well as the negative surface charge pose 306 additional challenges to the harvesting step. Harvesting can be divided into preconcentration, aiming to 307 increase the initial biomass content from 0.5-1.0% to around 3% and dewatering that can lead to a very 308 309 concentrated microalgal biomass, up to 25% in dry weight (Muylaert et al., 2017). In the case of larger 310 size filamentous microalgae like A. platensis the biomass can be efficiently harvested using vibrating 311 sieves, a relatively simple technology (Shelef et al., 1984).

312

313 2.1 Sedimentation

Natural sedimentation of microalgae cells is a very simple and low-cost harvesting method. The speed of sedimentation depends on cell diameter and the density difference between the cell and the growth medium, according to Stoke's equation, commonly used as a first approximation:

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$$V_s = \frac{gd^2(\rho_c - \rho_m)}{18\mu}$$

where, V_s is sedimentation velocity, g acceleration of gravity, d cell diameter, ρ_c microalgae cells density, 318 319 ρ_m medium density, and μ the medium viscosity. The Stoke's equation can describe sedimentation of round shaped cells with good approximation, however its use in not universal and for different cell 320 321 shapes the equation cannot be applied (Peperzak et al. 2003). Indeed, when the shape of the microalgae 322 is not spherical or where there are formations like thorns on the surface of the cell the correlation of cell 323 size to settling rate can be negative (Peperzak et al. 2003). A negative correlation between size and sedimentation rate has also been observed in the case of some microalgae colonies (Peperzak et al. 324 2003). It seems that cell density -or the difference between cell and medium density- is more significant 325 326 and higher cell densities will result in higher sedimentation rates (Peperzak et al. 2003). Sedimentation 327 velocity can vary several orders of magnitude among microalgae species depending on cell size, density and shape. As a general rule small diameter and low-density microalgae tend to sediment very slowly 328 329 compared to larger and denser cells (Mathimani and Mallick, 2018).

In mixed microalgae cultures, sedimentation by gravity is an efficient harvesting method if the colony is dominated by species with large settling velocities. When slow settling microalgae become dominant the harvesting efficiency is reduced even at prolonged settling periods of 24h (Park et al., 2011). Natural sedimentation has been proposed as a harvesting method or pre-concentration step even for slow settling microalgae like *Monoraphidium* sp. that could be harvested after 24 h with a 98% yield (Yu et al., 2012).

The filamentous cyanobacterium A. platensis with a fast sedimentation velocity of 0.64 m h⁻¹ and 335 336 accumulation of carbohydrates during nitrogen starvation could be concentrated 15 times by spontaneous sedimentation that achieved 93% removal of water (Depraetere et al., 2015). The diatom 337 Amphora with the impressive sedimentation velocity of 2.91 m h⁻¹, can be harvested by a simple low 338 cost and fast gravity sedimentation (Chtourou et al., 2015). It also exhibits relatively fast growth rate 339 and significant fat accumulation. Microalgae with such properties have a great advantage compared to 340 341 slowly settling ones in terms of harvesting efficiency. Their valorization could be prioritized over other 342 species as they may be an economically viable solution to a truly efficient microalgae biorefinery.

343 Nitrogen starvation in Nannochloropsis salina and Chlorella sp. cultures led to reduction in the cell 344 density and settling velocity by as much as an order of magnitude at the latter culture stages (Baroni et 345 al., 2019). This could be a disadvantage for harvesting as nitrogen starvation is typically related to lipid accumulation, and the lipid rich cells could be harder to separate. A compromise might be necessary 346 347 between biomass, lipid yields and settling velocity if unassisted gravity sedimentation is being considered as the sole method of harvesting. However, as gravity sedimentation can seldom induce the 348 required biomass dewatering, its use for pre-concentration followed by another method is preferable. 349 350 For example, gravity sedimentation coupled with centrifugation can reduce the harvesting cost and energy by a factor of 30 compared to centrifugation alone (Badvipour et al., 2016). 351

352

353 2.2 Coagulation-Flocculation

Coagulation and flocculation are conventional technologies used in water treatment to promote the 354 separation of small particles by sedimentation. Both methods involve the addition of compounds which 355 356 cause the agglomeration of particles into larger flocs to increase their sedimentation velocity, according 357 to Stoke's equation. Coagulation is a chemical technique based on the neutralization of charge of the microalgae surface to disrupt the repulsive forces and promote cell aggregation. Flocculation is a 358 physical method that uses compounds on which cells can clump together without involving surface 359 360 charge neutralization. There is a subtle difference between the two phenomena but in the scientific 361 literature most authors only refer to flocculation.

362 Coagulation can occur with the addition of inexpensive multivalent salts such as $Al_2(SO_4)_3$ that could 363 remove more than 85% of *N. salina* in 62 min, although at a relatively high dosage - 229 mg L⁻¹ 364 (Chatsungnoen and Chisti, 2016). Coagulation of *C. reinhardtii* at elevated pH values was induced by 365 ferric (FeCl₃), calcium (CaCl₂), and magnesium chlorides (MgCl₂). Even at very low concentrations (>5 366 mM) more than 90% biomass harvesting could be achieved making this an attractive and inexpensive 367 method (Fan et al., 2017).

Coagulation with multivalent cations can be improved by pH adjustment to basic values. Indeed, its 368 efficiency can be related to the cells zeta potential, a pH depended phenomenon (Fan et al., 2017). 369 Adjustment of pH to 9.51 induced coagulation of Chaetoceros calcitrans and 89% of cells were 370 harvested with a sedimentation rate of 0.125 m h⁻¹ and a concentration factor of 4 in 10 min (Sirin et al., 371 2015). Adjustment of pH to 10.2 with addition of sodium or potassium hydroxide led to high harvesting 372 efficiency (> 90%) of C. calcitrans biomass. At increased polyelectrolyte dosages the sedimentation 373 rate was greatly improved without loss of cell viability or harvesting yield (Harith et al., 2009). C. 374 vulgaris biomass required a pH higher than 11 for coagulation efficiency above 90% with magnesium 375 376 hydroxide for reuse (Vandamme et al., 2012). Microalgae biomass contamination by the coagulation reagents is the biggest process disadvantage as they can reduce the extracted biomolecules quality or 377 378 interfere with other downstream processing operations (Vandamme et al., 2012). This can be overcome by re-suspending the coagulation reagent after harvesting. For example in the coagulation of C. vulgaris 379 380 and Phaeodactylum tricornutum with Mg(OH)₂, a mild acidification of the microalgae slurry could dissolve 95% of the precipitated magnesium hydroxide (Vandamme et al., 2015). 381

The use of inorganic reagents can be less effective when used for the harvesting of marine microalgae due to the shielding of cells by ions in the medium that lead to inhibition of floc formation (Vandamme et al., 2013). Organic polymers on the other hand can be effective flocculants for both marine and freshwater microalgae (Table 3). Organic polymers with positive charges also neutralize the negative surface charge of microalgae cells but can act on several cells simultaneously leading to a bridging effect (Figure 3) and floc formation. Reduced harvesting efficiencies have sometimes been observed at increased dosages of cationic polymers (Lam, 2017). This has been explained by a protection of the cells by the excess flocculant leading to surface charge reversal and repulsive forces from the cationic polymers inhibiting floc formation (Figure 3).

391 Figure 3

To achieve flocculation, charged organic polymers can be used such as, chitosan a natural-based cationic 392 biopolymer, which is efficient at low concentrations. At 20 mg L⁻¹ and pH 8 a 90% harvesting efficiency 393 and 80% cell viability of C. calcitrans is possible (Harith et al., 2009). Although alginate has been shown 394 to not induce flocculation in some cases (Zhu et al., 2014), its addition with chitosan that has an opposite 395 charge, creates a polyelectrolyte complex that can enable harvesting of microalgae by flocculation at 396 397 ppm range concentrations. Scenedesmus obliquus biomass was harvested with an efficiency of 86%, 398 with this way (Matter et al., 2018). Cationic starch is another cationic biopolymer that can induce flocculation of *Chlorella protothecoides* at 40 mg L⁻¹ and achieves an extraction efficiency of 98% at 399 near neutral and alkaline pH values (Letelier-Gordo et al., 2014). Polyacrylamide is another type of 400 401 organic polymer that has been extensively used for harvesting of microalgae by flocculation. They 402 achieved very high flocculation efficiencies between 90% and 100% for a variety of microalgae species. 403 (Van Haver and Navar, 2017). The charge of the polymers seems to play a more important role in the 404 case of marine microalgae. For example, in the marine microalgae N. salina using polyacrylamide 405 polymers of medium, high, and very high charge -with all other parameters kept the same- improved the 406 harvesting efficiency from 73% to 88% to 94%, respectively (Table 3). This effect was not observed for 407 the freshwater microalgae C. vulgaris, where the harvesting efficiency remained almost 100% 408 irrespectively of the charge of the polymer (Van Haver and Nayar, 2017). This could be caused by the 409 presence of salt ions in the marine microalgae medium that can partially neutralize or counteract the 410 charge of the polymer; or it could be related to the surface charge of the individual species. In both cases it is worth noting that the very promising harvesting results were achieved with very low polyacrylamide 411 dosages; 3 mg L⁻¹ for N. salina and 1.66 mg L⁻¹ for C. vulgaris (Van Haver and Nayar, 2017). Despite 412 these promising results, polyacrylamides are potentially hazardous chemicals and their presence can 413 414 contaminate the harvested biomass, making it unsuitable for pharmaceutical, cosmetic and food applications, and limiting their use to biofuels production. 415

416 Tannins is a class of phenolic biomolecules -present in plant biomass- that are very efficient flocculants (Table 3). POLYSEPAR[®]CFL25, a tannin quaternary ammonia salt with low molecular weight and high 417 charge showed 95 % harvesting efficiency of *Chlorella sp.* cells at a dosage of 30 mg L^{-1} (Van Haver 418 and Nayar, 2017). Tanfloc SL, another tannin polymer of low molecular weight and low to medium 419 charge could harvest 100% of C. vulgaris cells at a dose of 5 mg L^{-1} (Van Haver and Nayar, 2017). A 420 lower cost bio flocculant has been produced by fermentation of rice bran with Bacillus agaradhaerens 421 422 C9. The bioflocculant is possibly a hemicellulose oligomers hydrolysate as xylanase activity was 423 detected in the fermentation broth. It achieved around 90% harvesting efficiency at a 60 mg L⁻¹ 424 concentration (Liu et al., 2017). Other bioflocculant polymers such as poly γ -glutamic acid produced by 425 Bacillus Licheniformis have been successfully used for the flocculation of Desmodesmus brasiliensis at 426 > 98 % efficiency. Anionic and non-ionic polymers showed no or poor flocculation efficiency in most 427 cases, or had inferior performance compared to cationic ones (Tilton et al., 1972; Udom et al., 2013; 428 Uduman et al., 2010). This could be caused by the fact that the surface charges of microalgae are usually 429 negative (Danguah et al., 2009) and their neutralization requires positively charged flocculants or combination with coagulants. Another interesting approach is thermal flocculation without the addition 430 of a flocculating agent. For example, thermal treatment of C. vulgaris and S. obliquus induced the 431 432 secretion of organic matter that acts as a flocculating agent and causes the formation of flocs. The authors have hypothesized that the organic matter can be polysaccharides and/or protein (Xue et al., 2019) 433

As harvesting can represent up to 30% of the total microalgae processing cost, coagulant or flocculant price can have a negative impact on biorefinery economics (Wu et al., 2015). Prices can vary significantly between the less expensive coagulant salts such as $Al_2(SO_4)_3$ (0.2 \$ kg⁻¹) and the more 437 expensive flocculant: chitosan (19.6 g^{-1}) (Wu et al., 2015). It has been deduced that coagulation-438 flocculation can be only marginally cheaper than centrifugation; auto flocculation, bioflocculation and 439 electroflocculation methods were suggested as more economically viable alternatives (Vandamme et al., 440 2013). The use of polyelectrolytes as economical flocculants has also been proposed, as the doses 441 required are up to two orders of magnitude less than salts or chitosan and their cost is comparable to the 442 inexpensive salt coagulants. (Granados et al., 2012).

- 443
- 444 Table 3

445

446 2.3 Centrifugation

Centrifugation process simply increases the g force accelerating settlement as stated by Stokes equation. 447 448 Strain morphology can play an important role in the centrifugation efficiency. For example, linear A. platensis filaments could be harvested at around 85% efficiency at 4000 x g for 10 min, in a laboratory-449 scale fixed angle rotor centrifuge. In contrast helical A. platensis filaments showed poor harvesting yield 450 451 (around 50%) even at 9000 x g (Cuellar-Bermudez et al., 2019). S. obliquus cells could be removed from the culture by centrifugation at 3000 x g for 10 min, in a 750W TD5A centrifuge, with a harvest 452 efficiency of 99.3% (Wang et al., 2019). Various types of centrifuges can be used to harvest and 453 454 concentrate microalgae, such as, spiral plate centrifuge (Collet et al., 2011), decanter centrifuge 455 (Adesanya et al., 2014), disk stack centrifuge (Milledge and Heaven, 2011), and hydrocyclone (Amaro 456 et al., 2017).

457 Although centrifugation is a very efficient dewatering method, it has some of the highest energy requirements (Guldhe et al., 2016). Especially when microalgae are used to produce biofuels, the overall 458 energy consumption should ideally be lower than the biofuel energy content. When producing biogas 459 from microalgae, it was shown that neither centrifugation nor flocculation or sedimentation as a 460 461 standalone harvesting method can meet this criterion as the energy input was greater than the energy content of the produced biogas. On the other hand, a positive energy balance can be achieved when 462 463 centrifugation is combined with pre-concentration by sedimentation or flocculation, (Milledge and Heaven, 2017). Flocculation is used to preconcentrate the microalgal biomass or to reduce the energy 464 465 costs of harvesting by producing large size flocs that can be centrifuged more efficiently than single 466 cells (Collotta et al., 2017; Fan et al., 2017). In the harvesting of Chlorella sorokiniana cells by centrifugation, with or without preflocculation, the benefits of preflocculation were clearly shown. 467 Preflocculation of the cells was performed with a dosage of 10 mg chitosan g⁻¹ dry algae weight more 468 than 99% clarification efficiency. The performance of centrifugation with and without flocculation was 469 470 similar (Xu et al., 2013). However, preflocculation decreased the volume of the algae suspension between 20 and 50 times, with more than 95% of the water being removed in the latter case, leading to 471 significant reduction in the energy for dewatering (Xu et al., 2013). Preconcentration by natural settling 472 can be another option for energy reduction of centrifugation. It was estimated, for example that the 473 474 energy consumption for concentration of C. vulgaris cells by spiral plate centrifugation could be as low as 0.042 kWh kg⁻¹ of biomass if preconcentrated by natural settling (Collet et al., 2011). 475

Disc stack centrifuges, on the other hand have a much higher energy consumption (Milledge and Heaven, 2011) that can represent almost up to half of the total energy requirements of a biorefinery (Mata et al., 2014). Hydrocyclone centrifugation is a low-cost and low energy option for harvesting microalgae cells, however, as this method can achieve low cell concentrations (below 0.4% suspended solids) its usefulness is limited to preconcentration (Amaro et al., 2017). Decanter centrifuges can achieve high solid concentrations (approx. 20% DW) in continuous mode with pulsed discharges of the concentrated biomass. Its use is suggested together with flocculation (Ramos Tercero et al., 2014).

- 483
- 484 2.4 Flotation

Flotation can also be considered a gravity based harvesting method, but the strategy is opposite to the processes discussed above. The aim of this technique is to transfer the microalgae from suspension to the medium surface where they can be easily harvested by skimming. This is achieved by the introducing gas bubbles that attach to the cells and lift them. The microalgae cell attached to the gas bubble has much lower density compared to the medium. According to Stoke's equation, this creates a negative settling velocity or a rising velocity.

491 Several variations of flotation harvesting exist. In dissolved air flotation (DAF), pressure reduction of air saturated water leads to bubble formation. When optimized it can lead to high biomass harvesting 492 493 yields. A 91% harvesting efficiency was achieved with dissolved air flotation in the pilot scale with a 494 floatation tank of 3.8 L (Niaghi et al., 2015). DAF is usually more expensive due to the cost of water pressurization. In dispersed air flotation, air bubbles are created by gas injection into the medium 495 496 through a diffuser or sparger, often assisted by mechanical agitation for more efficient dispersion. Bubble sizes typically fall within the 60 to 655 μ m range with a concentration of 2 10⁵ bubbles cm⁻³. 497 The process efficiency depends on the formed bubbles stability as well as the proper bubble size 498 499 (optimally below 500 μm) (Alhattab and Brooks, 2017). Dispersed air flotation has been used to harvest 500 Chlorella saccharophila (Alhattab et al., 2019). Flotation is often combined with flocculation to enable 501 harvesting of concentrated flocs. This is an efficient harvesting method with reported harvesting yields of 93.6 % for S. obliguus by thermal flocculation and air flotation (Xue et al., 2019); or 80% harvesting 502 of Dunaliella salina by combining NaOH-induced coagulation and DAF in the pre-industrial scale 503 (Besson et al., 2019). Flotation has also been combined with bioflocculation either by inducing 504 exopolysaccharides production in A. plantensis with more than 90% harvesting efficiency (Vergnes et 505 al., 2019); or bioflocculant produced from Cobetia marina for the flocculation-flotation of C. vulgaris 506 507 also with higher than 90% efficiency (Lei et al., 2015).

508 Besides air, flotation can also be achieved by other gases such as ozone. The harvesting efficiency reported for an ozone dosage of 0.23 mg mg⁻¹ of dried biomass was 79.6%. Although not so efficient, 509 510 ozonoflotation simultaneously pretreats the microalgae cells and increases the lipid extraction yields (Velasquez-Orta et al., 2014). Ozone reduces the microalgae carbohydrate and protein content due to 511 512 cell lysis and partial release of these molecules in the medium. Denaturation of these proteins leads to foaming that acts as a surfactant and aids flotation (Nava Bravo et al., 2019). Indeed, the addition of 513 surfactants like cetyl trimethyammonium bromide (CTAB), has verified the beneficial effect of foaming 514 on flotation. Foam facilitates microalgae cell attachment to the air bubbles by modifying the 515 hydrophobicity of the bubble surface. The surfactant's introduction could modify the extracted lipids 516 517 chemical composition, possibly due to increased extraction of lipids from the cell membrane's lipid bilayer (Coward et al., 2014). The heat-induced flotation of Scenedesmus dimorphus at 85 °C has been 518 proposed as a method for the utilization of heat from off-gases of industrial processes, with harvesting 519 520 efficiency around 80% (Laamanen and Scott, 2017).

521

522 2.5 Membrane filtration

523 Membrane filtration, batch or continuous, is a very common harvesting method that can be employed 524 as dead-end with vertical flow across the membrane, or as tangential filtration where the flow is parallel 525 to the membrane surface (Hung and Liu, 2018). Membrane material can be ceramic (Jana et al., 2018) or 526 polymer (Zhao et al., 2016), and the process can be microfiltration (Kim et al., 2019) or ultrafiltration 527 (Zhang et al., 2019), with membrane pore sizes 10 μ m - 0.1 μ m and 0.1 μ m - 0.01 μ m, respectively. 528 Molecule retention rate depends not only on membrane pore size but also on their chemical nature 529 (polymeric, ceramic etc.).

530 Nylon membrane filtration is a very common filtration method. Gravity-driven dead-end filtration 531 through 5 μ m nylon membranes was enough to achieve > 90% harvesting efficiency of *A. platensis* 532 cultures. Pumped filtration additionally increased the filtration flux up to 20 m³ m⁻² h⁻¹ enabling a faster 533 process (Cuellar-Bermudez et al., 2019). The flux of typical membrane filtration processes can be

534 considerably smaller. For example, in the harvesting of *Arthrospira* sp. with ceramic microfiltration and

ultrafiltration membranes, fluxes of 230 L m⁻² h⁻¹ and 93 L m⁻² h⁻¹ were reported, respectively (Jana et al., 2018).

For marine microalgae, growth medium salinity can have detrimental effects on harvesting efficiency 537 538 by tangential-flow membrane filtration. Small increases in salinity of *Picochlorum* sp., and *Tetraselmis* 539 sp. growth medium significantly increased membrane fouling and reduced the permeate flux and 540 microalgae concentration factor, at the same time increasing the process energy requirements (Das et al., 2019). Membrane filtration performance is also influenced by the culture's growth phase. For 541 example, harvesting of *Scenedesmus acuminatus* at the latter growth stages through ultrafiltration 542 membranes increased flux from 97 L m⁻² h⁻¹, to 131 L m⁻² h⁻¹ leading to faster processing by 36 %. This 543 544 was caused by the reduction of the average molecular weight of algogenic organic matter (AOM) 545 secreted by the cells in the latter stages. The high molecular weight content of AOM (higher than 50 kDa) decreased from 50% in the exponential phase to 42% in the stationary and 26% in the declining 546 phase. As the high molecular weight fraction of AOM has the greatest membrane fouling potential its 547 548 reduction led to minimized membrane fouling and increased flux. However, algogenic organic matter 549 negatively impacted the process efficiency through enhanced fouling at all stages of ultrafiltration (Ye 550 et al., 2019). Fouling is the major problem of membrane harvesting as it can negatively impact the 551 process performance, reducing flux and increasing energy requirements for efficient harvesting (Elcik 552 and Cakmakci, 2017). Regarding the effect of different types of AOM on fouling, it was found that polysaccharides excreted by the microalgae cells in the medium were related to reversible membrane 553 554 fouling, whereas deposition of excreted protein led to irreversible membrane fouling (Jiang et al., 2018). 555 Other soluble microbial metabolism products such as humin-like substances also contribute to 556 irreversible membrane fouling (Wu et al., 2018; Zhao et al., 2017).

557 Fouling can be dealt with by adding surfactants like CTAB that remove hydrophilic and high molecular weight foulants and additionally lead to electrostatic microalgae cells neutralization allowing for more 558 efficient dewatering (Taghavijeloudar et al., 2019). Alternatively, it can be prevented by the designing 559 of antifouling membranes (Elcik et al., 2017), e.g. containing novel materials such as carbon nanotubes 560 that improve membrane hydrophilicity (Khairuddin et al., 2019). Another approach is the introduction 561 of local turbulence. This was achieved by a membrane module with a cylinder with holes at its center 562 that created turbulent jets ejecting the feed into the membrane surface in a perpendicular direction. When 563 used for the microfiltration of C. vulgaris, at a speed of 7 L min⁻¹ fouling was reduced by 126% 564 565 compared to conventional type modules such as hollow fiber membrane (Kim et al., 2019). Application of a shearing vibration is also able to reduce both reversible and irreversible fouling (Zhao et al., 2018, 566 567 2017). Cake layer formation of the filtered microalgae cells also contributes to fouling and increased 568 membrane resistance (Wu et al., 2018). Introduction of rigid particles both in dead-end and crossflow filtration, as in the case of *Chlorella* sp. harvesting, can reduce the cake resistance and increase the flux 569 and the membrane performance (Hung and Liu, 2018). Introduction of flocculants during the ceramic 570 571 membrane filtration (both micro- and ultra-) of Arthrospira sp. also reduced fouling. This is caused as 572 flocculation leads to the formation of larger size particles and reduces their ability to enter the membrane 573 matrix (Jana et al., 2018). Indeed, membrane filtration is often used in combination with flocculation 574 due to the synergy of the two methods (Sahoo et al., 2017; Shi et al., 2017).

- 575 Table 4
- 576
- 577 3. Pretreatment of microalgae & Extraction of target molecules
- 578 3.1 Physical methods
- 579 3.1.1 Milling

580 Milling is one of the most promising methods for cell disruption of microalgae. Although it has been 581 studied in various setups and sizes such as lab scale vortex milling (Araya et al., 2014) and pilot scale 582 ball milling (Balasundaram et al., 2012), bead milling has been the most studied method. Typically, 583 bead milling uses discs or rings to set in motion the grinding elements inside the milling chamber (Günerken et al., 2015a). Several disruption mechanisms are possible during bead milling. Shear stress 584 due to acceleration of beads towards the mill wall, shear due to centrifugal acceleration of the mill wall, 585 586 and due to collision of cells with beads due to differences in velocities (Kwade, 1999). The main 587 mechanism of cell disruption is the third, ie cell disruption occurs through beads collisions because of 588 velocity gradients in tangential direction near the stirring disks (Balasundaram et al., 2012; Hennart et al., 2009; Kwade, 1999) leading to combinations of cleavage, fracture and abrasion of cells or particles 589 590 depending on particle size (Hennart et al., 2009). For large particles of around 15 µm particles disintegration occurs through cleavage and fracture, for medium size particles of around 0.8 µm through 591 592 cleavage and abrasion, and for small particles only through cleavage (Hennart et al., 2009). Indeed, the disintegration of Nannochloropsis sp. in a bead mill, has revealed that larger size cell fractions are 593 594 disintegrated via impact and compression - correlated to fracture and cleavage- and smaller fractions via 595 shear forces more related to abrasion (Figure 4) (Pan et al., 2017).

- 596 Table 5
- 597 Figure 4

Since beads transfer energy to the cells their size plays a critical role in process efficiency. Decreasing 598 599 the bead size from 1mm to 0.3 mm improved the protein release kinetics of N. oleoabundans and C. 600 vulgaris but the effect on the protein yield was less profound (Postma et al., 2017). In the same work the kinetics of carbohydrate release from C. vulgaris peaked at a bead size of 0.4 mm and an optimum 601 602 carbohydrate release yield of approximately 65% was achieved. Bead size did not significantly affect 603 cell disintegration, protein and carbohydrate release of *Tetraselmis suecica* in the same study, indicating a weaker cell wall (Postma et al., 2017). Protein release of 99% for T. suecica with a bead size of 0.3 604 605 mm was achieved at 400 sec of processing time where a plateau is observed. Maximum carbohydrate 606 release did not reach a plateau and was only observed at the end of the experiment, i.e. 900 sec of 607 processing time (Postma et al., 2017). Small bead size also improved the kinetics of Nanochloropsis pretreatment in a turbine mill (Pan et al., 2017). More than 90% cell disruption¹ was achieved at 25 min 608 with 0.3-0.4 mm beads, whereas 45 min were required for a similar result with 0.8-1.0 mm size. A 609 610 further increase of bead size to 1.8-2.0 mm led to a dramatic drop in the mill performance (65% cell disruption at 55 min). Optimal bead sizes for the disruption of *Chlorella* strain P12 with a 4.3 µm cell 611 diameter, depended on the type of instrument used (Doucha and Lívanský, 2008). An optimal bead 612 613 diameter of 0.3-0.5 mm was found for the Dvno-Mill and LabStar LS 1 bead mills, whereas the optimal 614 bead diameter for the homogenizer MS 18 was 0.5-0.7 mm (Doucha and Lívanský, 2008). However, 1.3 mm glass beads were optimum for the bead milling of *P. cruentum* leading to a cell disintegration 615 efficiency of 50% (Montalescot et al., 2015). It is clear from the above that bead size alone cannot 616 efficiently describe the process; other factors, such as the bead density affect the disruption efficiency. 617 618 Beads with higher densities has been shown to perform better because they can tranfer higher energy to 619 the cells (Hopkins 1991).

The milling chamber fill ratio is another important parameter. For C. vulgaris, increasing the chamber 620 621 filling ratio had a positive effect on milling efficiency. For example, when using ZrO2 beads of 0.3 mm diameter in homogenizer MS 18, increasing the filling ratio from 60% to 75% and 80% increased cell 622 disintegration from 65% to 83% and 85% respectively (Doucha and Lívanský, 2008). Similarly, when 623 using ZrO₂ beads 0.3-0.4 mm in the Dyno-Mill KD 20 S increasing fill ratio from 75% to 85% increased 624 cell disintegration from 75% to 83% (Doucha and Lívanský, 2008). For P. cruentum increasing the filling 625 626 ratio from 35% to 65% not only improved cell disruption, but also led to a shift in the optimum bead size from 1.3 mm to 0.65 mm (Montalescot et al., 2015). Continuous bead milling can be performed in 627 628 single and multi-pass operation and the flow rate can also affect the performance. Usually increasing 629 the flow rate reduces cell disintegration efficiency, by reducing the residence time in the milling chamber (Doucha and Lívanský, 2008; Montalescot et al., 2015). For example, increasing the feed rate from 12 630

¹ As determined by microscopic counting, in a hemocytometer, of intact cells before and after disintegration

631 Kg h^{-1} to 18 Kg h^{-1} reduced cell disintegration from 92% to 70%. Energetically, it is evident that an 632 optimized process with the shortest duration of treatment is desired and a compromise on the disruption

632 optimized process with the shortest633 ratio may need to be reached.

During bead milling cell disruption² follows first-order kinetics (Doucha and Lívanský, 2008). Disintegration rates of *N. gaditana* show a sharp increase in the initial minutes and a plateau of 95% disintegration is reached at around 20 min (Safi et al., 2017a). Protein release in the same work reached a 50% yield plateau at around 8 min, suggesting that full cell disruption is not always required for efficient extraction of targeted molecules. For *T. suecica* the kinetics of cell wall disruption and protein release are identical and reach a 99% plateau after 6.7 min. A similar carbohydrate release on the other hand is achieved after 15 min without reaching a plateau (Postma et al., 2017).

- Increasing the solids content of the microalgae biomass slurry has a positive effect both on the yield of 641 642 extraction and the process energy consumption up to a point. After that threshold the process becomes inefficient. For the extraction of lipids from Schizochytrium this limit was 50 g L⁻¹ of biomass (Byreddy 643 et al., 2016), and the disruption of Nannochloropsis cells became inefficient after a 18% volume of cell 644 concentration (Pan et al., 2017). Assuming a near water cell density (Mathimani and Mallick, 2018) and 645 a 10% biomass dry weight content, the 18% v/v can be estimated at around 2% DW, a surprising low 646 concertation limit for the process. On the other hand, the extraction of water-soluble protein from 647 Nannochloropsis gaditana, was energy efficient at 100 g L^{-1} but with around 50% protein yield (Safi et 648 649 al., 2017a).
- 650 Besides bulk molecules such as lipids and carbohydrates, bead milling pretreatment can improve the vields of high-value molecules found in microalgae. In the lab scale, bead milling of A. platensis biomass 651 in 4 cycles of 25 sec at 30 Hz, allowed almost 100% extraction of proteins and phycocyanin at 46 g 100 652 g⁻¹ biomass, and 95 mg g⁻¹ biomass, respectively (Jaeschke et al., 2019). Bead milling pretreatment has 653 654 also been used in lutein extraction from Scenedesmus almeriensis. When the dry biomass was treated 655 for 5min, followed by an alkaline treatment and hexane extraction around 50% of lutein extraction yield was achieved. Addition of alumina powder in the biomass at 1:1 ratio acted as an extra disintegrating 656 agent and increased lutein yield to 98 % (Cerón et al., 2008). Bead milling of C. vulgaris for 1 h allowed 657 yields of 50% chlorophyll and 30% carotenoids extracted with supercritical CO₂ and ethanol as a co-658 solvent (Safi et al., 2014). B-phycoerythrin, a natural high-value pigment was obtained from 659 Porphyridium cruentum at a yield of 1.35 mg g⁻¹ of wet biomass after bead milling (Ruiz-Ruiz et al., 660 661 2013). Although these results are promising, bead milling pretreatment was used in combination with other treatments, such as freeze drying of the biomass, alkaline pretreatment, and addition of alumina 662 663 powder as a second disintegration agent. Such steps would increase complexity and cost of an industrial process and their economic and energetic viability would have to be assessed. 664
- In the end, bead milling is a very complex process and many more parameters, like bead density, agitation speed, agitators design, and solid content of biomass can affect the outcome. The microalgae cell wall robustness is also a critical factor as it can vary between very weak like *Porphyridium cruentum* to very tough like *Nannochloropsis oculata* (Montalescot et al., 2015). Therefore, optimization can be tedious but also very precise if all parameters are carefully considered. The applicability of statistical design of experiments to such optimisation is evident.

671

672 3.1.2 High-pressure homogenization (HPH)

High-pressure homogenization (HPH) is typically used for emulsification purposes but is also suitable
for the large-scale disruption of microalgae cells (Günerken et al., 2015a). Typically, a cell suspension
is pumped at high pressures through a valve, colliding with an impact ring and then exiting from the
high-pressure area into the environment where a high-pressure drop occurs (Middelberg, 1995). Various
mechanisms of cell breakage (Figure 5) have been proposed including: shear due to sudden pressure

² As measured by counting undisrupted cells before and after milling in a Bürker chamber

drop, shear stress, cavitation and impingement of the cells to the surface of the valve at high velocities 678 679 (Middelberg, 1995). Several of these mechanisms of cell disruption can occurr simultaneously and which one is prevalent may also be species dependent (Middelberg, 1995). However, in most cases cell 680 disruption is caused by shear stress and pressure drop between the valve and the vessel, as well as cell 681 impingement onto the valve walls (Halim et al., 2012). The impingment stress was reported as being 682 proportional to the operating relative pressure in some types of homogenisers (Chisti and Moo-Young, 683 1986). As pressure drop is one of the main cell-breaking mechanisms, the system operating pressure is 684 critical for process performance (Balduyck et al., 2018; Halim et al., 2012; Onumaegbu et al., 2018; 685 686 Samarasinghe et al., 2012). Increasing the pressure in the HPH of *Chlorella sp.* from 250 to 1400 bar increased cell rupture³ from 10% to 80% (measured by counting undisrupted cells before and after HPH 687 in a Neubauer haemocytometer chamber) and subsequently the recovered lipids from 20% to 100% (Yap 688 et al., 2014). Similarly, in the HPH treatment of *Desmodesmus* sp. F51 increasing the pressure from 689 689.5 to 2758 bar increases the release of carotenoids from around 0.02 mg g⁻¹ to around 0.28 mg g⁻¹ 690 691 and the release of chlorophylls from around 0.01 mg g^{-1} to almost 1.5 mg g^{-1} (Xie et al., 2016). Complete disruption of N. gaditana cells occurred at 1500 bar. However, the protein release had already peaked 692 at a much lower pressure (1000 bar), with a yield of 50%, indicating that partial cell breakage is enough 693 694 for the sufficient extraction of desired compounds (Safi et al., 2017a). As with other disruption and extraction methods, the method's influence on the target compound degradation is an important quality 695 factor to consider during a biorefinery process. 696

697 Figure 5

698 The number of passes also has a positive impact on HPH extraction yields (Balduyck et al., 2018; Samarasinghe et al., 2012). Increasing the number of passes from 1 to 4 increased carotenoid release 699 from *Desmodesmus* sp. F51 from around 0.28 mg g^{-1} to around 0.42 mg g^{-1} , and chlorophyll release 700 701 from 1.5 mg g^{-1} to 2.4 mg g^{-1} (Xie et al., 2016). Five passes were optimal for release of carbohydrates and proteins from dilute solutions of C. vulgaris treated at 1500 bar (Carullo et al., 2018). After five 702 passes of Chlorococcum sp. cells more than 90% disruption was achieved (Halim et al., 2012). Increasing 703 704 the number of passes to 6 had a positive effect on both the total protein and reducing sugars extraction yields from HPH treated N. oculata (Shene et al., 2016). Pretreatment of Nannochloropsis sp. with HPH 705 at 150 MPa required 6 passes to maximize extraction of green and red pigments, as deduced from 706 707 increases in spectral intensities of the extracts at 415 nm and 620 nm, respectively (Grimi et al., 2014). 708 In general, HPH exhibits a first order decrease of cell disruption rate after each passage through the homogenizer (Halim et al., 2012). The rupture of Nannochloropsis sp., Chlorella sp. and T. suecica cells 709 710 followed an exponential decay as a function of the number of passes (Spiden et al., 2013).

Smaller effects on HPH performance were attributed to cell concentration and culture stress level 711 712 (Samarasinghe et al., 2012). Increasing the cell concentration of *Desmodesmus* sp. F51 from 2 and up to 90 g/L did not affect the particle size distribution of HPH treated cells nor the release of carotenoids 713 714 and chlorophylls (Xie et al., 2016). Increasing the cell concentration of N. oculata from 1.78% up to 8% 715 w/w had little effect on the yield of lipids extracted (Shene et al., 2016). Indeed, it was found for Nannochloropsis sp. that important processing parameters such as flow rate, power draw and disruption 716 717 efficiency were independent of cell concentration up to 25% w/w (Yap et al., 2015). As 25% is a typical 718 concentration target of many harvesting/dewatering methods the ability to effectively break cells at these concentrations makes HPH a potential method for industrial microalgal cell disruption. 719

The method is also affected by the microalgae species biological properties. More specifically by cell wall toughness and its resistance to disruption. For example, only 170 bars are enough to break T. *suecica* cells, whereas *Chlorella sp.* cells require 1070 bar, and *Nannochloropsis sp.* 2000 bar (Spiden et al., 2013).

724

³ As measured by counting undisrupted cells before and after HPH in a Neubauer haemocytometer chamber

725 3.1.3 Ultrasonication

Two major mechanisms of cell disruption are reported during ultrasonication. Generation of high-726 pressure bubbles and their cavitation, which generates shock waves that cause high shear forces (Gerde 727 et al., 2012; Günerken et al., 2015b; Soo Youn Lee et al., 2017). The additional effect of free radical 728 generation and oxidative degradation of cells has also been reported (Gerde et al., 2012). Increasing 729 ultrasonication power and treatment time have a positive effect on cell disruption (Greenly and Tester, 730 2015; Keris-Sen et al., 2014; Meng Wang and Yuan, 2015; B. Zhang et al., 2018). Increasing the power 731 increases bubble generation but reduces pressure inside the bubbles (Wang and Yuan, 2016). Beyond 732 the optimum power and time values, undesirable effects on released products can occur, such as 733 734 oxidative degradation (Gerde et al., 2012), and reduction of fatty acids chain size and double bond saturation (Cheng et al., 2014). Increasing the frequency of ultrasonication, positively affects cell 735 736 disruption. Optimum sonication frequency is species depended and should be determined for each 737 microalgae species (Kurokawa et al., 2016). Application of a pulsed mode improved protein extraction 738 yield from C. vulgaris FSP-E (Chia et al., 2019). The pulsed mode has many advantages such as energy 739 input reduction, lower heat generation during treatment, hence reduction in the extracted protein 740 denaturation. This is important as temperature during ultrasonication can reach as high as 93 °C if not 741 controlled (de Farias Silva et al., 2020). Ultrasonication efficiency seems to be independent of cell concentration at low to medium concentrations (1.5 to 14.1 g L^{-1}) (Gerde et al., 2012). At higher cell 742 743 concentrations a significant reduction in disruption efficiency can occur (Greenly and Tester, 2015; Meng Wang and Yuan, 2015) and has been attributed either to increased viscosity or reduced energy 744 745 input per cell (Meng Wang and Yuan, 2015). Cell disruption in ultrasonication follows first order kinetics. The constant of disruption rate is directly proportional to the power level and has a parabolic 746 747 relationship to cell concentration (Halim et al., 2013).

748 Figure 6

Cell aggregate formation during flocculation adversely affects cell disruption by ultrasonication. Cell aggregation reduces the penetration of ultrasonic power and protects cells inside the aggregate from bubble generation and collapse (Wang et al., 2015). The formation of microalgae cell aggregates by flocculation can occur naturally or be induced during harvesting/concentration (Muylaert et al., 2017). As flocculation is one of the most efficient concentration methods of microalgae biomass, its negative effect on cell disruption by ultrasonication demonstrates that careful selection of all downstream processes is required when assembling multiple methods in the same process.

756 Ultrasonication performed poorly in many comparative studies of cell disruption methods. It was less 757 effective compared to microwave, electroflotation and thermal treatment (Florentino de Souza Silva et al., 2014), microwave and thermal treatment (McMillan et al., 2013), High-Pressure Homogenization, 758 759 sulfuric acid and bead beating (Halim et al., 2012), Pulsed Electric Field, and High-Pressure 760 Homogenization (Grimi et al., 2014). For example, ultrasound was not effective when applied in the pretreatment of microalgae with a very resistant cell wall such as *H. pulvialis* cysts. Even at 600 W for 761 30 min at 20 kHz frequency and pulses 1 sec on 3 sec off a very low 12% astaxanthin yield was observed 762 (Liu et al., 2018). In another study 80% extraction efficiency of astaxanthin was achieved only when 763 ultrasound pretreatment of the *H. pluvialis* biomass was performed in a 2M sodium hydroxide solution 764 765 (Haque et al., 2016). Although careful optimization of all these methods is required before safe 766 conclusions can be drawn, it seems that ultrasonication is not a very effective method for cell disruption. 767 It also suffers from the inability to handle large cell concentrations. Despite that, it can be useful in combination with other methods as it can enhance the disruption efficiency of other pretreatment 768 769 methods. This will be discussed in following sections.

- 770
- 771 3.1.4 Pulsed Electric Field

Pulsed Electric Field is based on the exposure of microalgae cells to an intense electric field for veryshort durations (pulses). When the applied electric field is above a threshold it can induce reversible or

irreversible pores creation (electroporation) on the cell membranes. Irreversible electroporation can

775 facilitate intracellular material extraction (Figure 7) (Luengo et al., 2015). The microalgae suspension must not contain ions in order to be non-conductive. The medium of marine microalgae that contains 776 significant salt concentrations, must be removed before PEF treatment, for example by electrodialysis, 777 778 or cell washing and resuspension, increasing process steps, cost and energy. PEF is therefore more suitable for freshwater microalgae treatment (Günerken et al., 2015b). The cell membranes 779 780 permeabilization (electroporation) is dependent on the electric field energy (Carullo et al., 2018). The 781 main effect of PEF is pore creation in the cell membranes and does not lead to total cell disruption and 782 cellular debris generation (Carullo et al., 2018). Temperature increase during PEF treatment is generally small (Picart and Cheftel, 2003), for example during PEF treatment of C. vulgaris the sample 783 temperature increased from 20 °C to 38 °C depending on the operating parameters; the effect of this 784 temperature increase on the yield of extracted proteins and their functionality were not investigated 785 (Scherer et al., 2019). When very high treatment intensities were applied, e.g. higher than 35 kWh m⁻³ 786 787 in the PEF treatment of Synechocystis PCC 6803, it led to limited cell disruption (approx.10%), while 788 the cell majority (around 87%) remained intact but with damaged membranes (Sheng et al., 2011).

789 Figure 7

790 PEF efficiency is affected by the microalgae culture's growth state and cell size. Larger cells are more 791 susceptible to electroporation, whereas smaller cells are more resistant (Safi et al., 2017a). The large size 792 of *H. pulvialis* cells (20 µm) may, therefore, have aided PEF treatment, as a 96% astaxanthin extraction efficiency, using ethanol, was reported (Martínez et al., 2019). In contrast, the small cell size (2-8 µm) 793 794 of C. sorokiniana (Azaman et al., 2017) may have a negative impact on PEF treatment. For example, a yield of 3.25 mg g⁻¹ DW of pigments was achieved after PEF treatment, an improvement of 14% 795 796 compared to the untreated sample (Leonhardt et al., 2020). Both species have rigid cell walls; H. 797 pulvialis with a resistant algaenan layer, and C. sorokiniana a glucosamine rich and chitin-like layer. 798 Cell wall rigidity can lead to inefficient extraction of molecules even at very high intensities and number 799 of pulses (Safi et al., 2017a). This has been confirmed by comparing the PEF efficiency between a wild 800 type strain of C. reinhardtii with cell wall and a mutant without cell wall (T Lam et al., 2017). A dramatic increase on protein extraction yields was observed in the cell wall free mutant even at very low power 801 802 intensities. The effect could be repeated when the wild strain's cell wall was removed by enzymatic 803 digestion.

Due to its relatively mild effect on cell integrity, PEF is often described as a mild or selective pretreatment method that can specifically target intracellular molecules, such as low molecular weight proteins and carbohydrates (Carullo et al., 2018; Safi et al., 2017a; T Lam et al., 2017). Although a significant increase in the release of water-soluble intracellular components is induced by PEF, their yields are relatively low (around or below 10%) even at relatively high intensities indicating only partial success of PEF as a pretreatment method. In all these studies the treated microalgae had a full cell wall, that may explain the low yields obtained.

The low levels of lipids released with PEF from Auxenochlorella protothecoides cells is possibly 811 because the generated pores are more permeable to smaller water-soluble molecules rather than the 812 813 larger lipid droplets (Eing et al., 2013). This can enable an easier separation of carbohydrates and proteins from lipids that could be sequentially extracted by organic solvents (Eing et al., 2013). PEF 814 treatment of wet Synechocystis PCC 6803 biomass increased the lipid yields and lowered the solvent to 815 816 biomass ratio from 10 to 5 as it allowed the penetration of isopropanol through the pores to extract lipid molecules (Sheng et al., 2011). The kinetics of lipid extraction from Ankistrodesmus falcatus with the 817 green solvent ethyl acetate were relatively slow and around 2h were required for the process to plateau 818 at a yield of around 2500 μ g L⁻¹. After PEF treatment the lipid extraction was almost time independent 819 820 as increasing extraction time between 0 and 2 h lead to a marginal increase in lipids from 9000 μ g L⁻¹ to 821 almost 9800 μ g L⁻¹ (Zbinden et al., 2013). Although a yield increase is also shown, extraction experiments with and without PEF treatments were performed with different microalgae samples, and 822 therefore the effect of PEF on the yield remains inconclusive (Zbinden et al., 2013). Similarly, the PEF 823 treatment of A. protothecoides increased lipid extraction with 100% ethanol from around 30 to around 824 220 mg g^{-1} of dry weight biomass (Eing et al., 2013). 825

826

827 3.1.5 Drying

828 Drying is the decrease of microalgae biomass moisture content to around 10%. It is a post harvesting 829 and dewatering process aims at improving the stability of the final product. The main challenges of drying are the long time and high energy input required and the associated cost increase. The simplest 830 drying technology is sun drying as it requires low capital and operating cost (Ansari et al., 2018). 831 832 However, long process time is needed for efficient water removal from the sample, even as high as 72 833 h (Guldhe et al., 2014). Sun drying can decrease the extraction yield of biomolecules from microalgae compared to untreated biomass (Ansari et al., 2018) possibly due to degradation reactions or due to 834 consumption from microbial contamination during the long drying times. Convection drying utilizes hot 835 air to remove moisture from the biomass. It has shorter process times, up to 12h and leads to less 836 837 biomolecule degradation compared to sun drying (Ansari et al., 2018). The lipids extracted from oven 838 dried biomass has slightly lower saponification and acid values compared to sun dried biomass, indicating lower free fatty acid values. 839

840 Freeze drying, also called lyophilization, is a very mild drying method that does not destroy the biomolecules of the biomass samples (Ansari et al., 2018). It is based on the sublimation of ice from a 841 842 frozen sample into the vapor phase inside a vacuum. Freeze-drying can have long process time, usually around 24h. Due to the requirement for deep freezing of the sample, and maintaining a vacuum and a 843 negative temperature in the freeze-drier, it is the most energy consuming and expensive method, 844 845 typically 1 or 2 orders higher than the rest (Table 6). Its long process time, high energy requirement and 846 high cost should limit application of freeze-drying for very sensitive and high-value products. Spray drying is based on heating of the microalgae slurry as it passes through a spraying nozzle which leads 847 to the formation of a dry powder as the moisture rapidly evaporates from the sample droplets. |Samples 848 of freeze-dried P. tricornutum cells were found more prone to lipolysis, and spray dry lipolysis ed 849 850 samples were more sensitive to oxidation caused by the reduction of the antioxidant carotenoid content (Ryckebosch et al., 2011). Drum drying is a mature drying technology with applications in the food 851 industry. It has lower energy requirements and costs compared to spray drying (Table 6) but can process 852 853 only up to 1000 Kg h⁻¹ of sample compared to the 10000 Kg h⁻¹ maximum upper limit for spray drying. This big difference in processing capacity if favor of spray drying can compensate for the slightly higher 854 855 energy and operational costs, and make spray drying an attractive drying method (Fasaei et al., 2018).

By Drying microalgae before extraction of valuable components clearly adds to the treatment cost while
greatly increasing the extraction efficiency. Recent technology on extraction from wet biomass is
promising but the cross-over point where the lower extraction efficiency of wet extraction can be
accepted has not been reached.

- 860
- 861 Table 6
- 862
- 863 3.2 Chemical methods
- 864 3.2.1 Hydrothermal

Cell wall disruption via hydrolysis is variably referred in the literature as water bath treatment (McMillan et al., 2013), autoclave (Florentino de Souza Silva et al., 2014), hydrothermal pretreatment (Xiao et al., 2019) and steam explosion (Lorente et al., 2018). In all these variations two main mechanisms are thought responsible for the microalgae cell disruption; cell wall rupture due to internal pressure buildup from the heating, and hydrolysis of cell wall components. Due to this dual effect the method can be classified both as physical and chemical. At lower temperatures where hydrolytic reactions of the cell wall components are not yet favoured disruption due to internal pressure build-up is the prevailing

872 mechanism (McMillan et al., 2013). Even at such mild treatment conditions, e.g. 90 °C, for 20 min,

extensive disruption⁴ of 87% for *N. oculata* cells was observed. At higher temperatures the hydrolysis reactions of the microalgae structural components such as the cell wall polysaccharides becomes significant, leading to the production of monomeric sugars and the reduction of cell wall integrity (Xiao et al., 2019). In the steam explosion variation of the method the microalgae slurry is heated under pressure with saturated steam to the desired temperature, and at the end of the reaction the slurry undergoes rapid decompression (explosion) through a release valve (Lorente et al., 2017). The rapid change in pressure can create an additional cell disruption effect.

880 The hydrothermal method has been extensively used to pretreat lignocellulosic biomass, in order to 881 remove hemicellulose (Garrote et al., 1999) and enhance the enzymatic digestibility of cellulose (Nitsos et al., 2013), and to subsequently increase the bioethanol (Ruiz et al., 2012) and biomethane (Antwi et 882 al., 2019) production yields. The method can also be applied to microalgae that have a carbohydrate cell 883 wall composition. For example, it is very efficient in the release of carbohydrates from microalgae. 884 Carbohydrate yields of 44 % of total carbohydrate content from *N. gaditana* (Lorente et al., 2015), 60% 885 886 (Fu et al., 2018) and 80 % (Xiao et al., 2019) from C. pyrenoidosa, 97 % from C. vulgaris (Xiaojian et al., 2017) have been achieved. At prolonged pretreatment times the released biomolecules can further 887 react to form degradation products (Córdova et al., 2018), such as furans and organic acids from the 888 889 dehydration (Horvat et al., 1985; Mussatto and Roberto, 2004; Palmqvist and Hahn-Hägerdal, 2000), or from Maillard reactions (Fu et al., 2018) of the carbohydrates with amine containing groups. Bioethanol 890 891 production from hydrothermally treated Schizocytrium sp. slurry after enzymatic hydrolysis reached 90% of the theoretical maximum ethanol yield (Kim et al., 2012). Hydrothermal pretreatment increased 892 893 the yield of biogas from the anaerobic digestion of microalgae biomass by 11% (Martín Juárez et al., 894 2018) and 28% (Passos et al., 2015) for mixed microalgae biomass and 57% for pure C. pyrenoidosa 895 (Xiao et al., 2019). The production of toxic compounds due to the released molecules degradation during steam explosion led to a reduction of biomethane yield due to anaerobic digestion inhibition (Córdova 896 897 et al., 2018).

898

899 Table 7

900

Two stages can be observed during hydrothermal treatment of microalgae based on the temperature 901 regimes. Initially and up to 100 °C the release of high molecular weight intracellular components such 902 as starch and protein occurs; the gelatinization of starch and denaturation of proteins can lead to an 903 increase in the medium viscosity; at 140-160 °C the macromolecules are hydrolyzed into oligomers of 904 905 lower molecular weight and the viscosity decreases (Chen et al., 2019a; McMillan et al., 2013). The microalgae slurries produced from hydrothermal pretreatment, exhibited shear thinning behavior, 906 907 suggesting non-Newtonian fluid behaviour (Chen et al., 2018). The ability of viscosity reduction by increasing the temperature or the shear rate can be valuable as it would allow the processing of high 908 909 biomass concentrations in downstream unit operations.

A kinetic study showed that the treatment temperature, time and pressure were the most important parameters of hydrothermal pretreatment in terms of carbohydrate release, whereas temperature was the main factor that controlled protein release (Xiaojian et al., 2017). This dependence of carbohydrate release on time and temperature is similar in the hydrothermal pretreatment of lignocellulosic biomass, due to the hydrolytic reaction that dominates it. To express the combined effect of time and temperature the severity factor ($logR_o$) has been established in the hydrolysis of lignocellulosic materials, that can be calculated from the equation

⁴ As measured by counting the number of intact cells treated after a specific time interval against those initially determined from the control, using a microscope

917
$$R_o = t * exp\left(\frac{T_{(t)} - 100}{14.75}\right)$$

918 where, t is the pretreatment time and $T_{(t)}$ the pretreatment temperature for holding time t.

It is possible that due to similarities in the chemical composition of carbohydrates in plants and 919 920 microalgal cell walls, the equation can correlate the effects of microalgae pretreatment with time and temperature. Some evidence towards that can be seen in Table 7. Although the data points correspond 921 to yields from different studies, with different microalgae species, e.g. C.vulgaris (Mendez et al., 2013), 922 N. gaditana (Lorente et al., 2015) C. pyrenoidosa (Xiao et al., 2019), different mixing and heating 923 924 régimes, e.g. stirring in reactor (Qu et al., 2018), lack of mechanical mixing in steam explosion (Lorente et al., 2015) and biomass concentrations ranging from 16 g L^{-1} (Mendez et al., 2013) up to 20% w/w 925 926 (Qu et al., 2018)), the increase of biomolecules release or extraction yield with increasing severity can 927 be clearly seen.

928 Significant protein release from hydrothermally treated microalgae biomass is also possible; 47 % (Xiao et al., 2019) and 83% (Fu et al., 2018) of protein was isolated from C. pyrenoidosa, and 76% from C. 929 vulgaris (Xiaojian et al., 2017). Lower protein recovery (approx. 20%) is observed at lower severity 930 factor (logRo) values (approx. 2). As with carbohydrates, protein release is also well correlated to the 931 treatment's severity factor. Cell wall disruption also allowed the subsequent extraction of lipids, with 932 yields of 60% from N. salina (Lee and Han, 2015a), 68% from C. vulgaris (Xiaojian et al., 2017) and 933 84% from Nannochloropsis sp. (Qu et al., 2018) reported. After the hydrothermal pretreatment of C. 934 vulgaris it was shown that the lipids remained in the biomass and were not detected in the pretreatment 935 liquid that was rich in carbohydrates and protein (Xiaojian et al., 2017). This may allow the selective 936 separation of water-soluble molecules and lipids, in comparison to other cell disruption methods like 937 938 bead beating that generate difficult to separate water-oil emulsions.

939 Other applications include the extraction of carotenoids from *H. pluvialis* at yields higher than 85% 940 (Mendes-Pinto et al., 2001). Near complete extraction of astaxanthin was shown by hydrothermal disruption of *H. pluvialis* cells at 200 °C for 10 min (logRo 4) (Cheng et al., 2017). The chemicals 941 942 released from hydrothermal treatment of H. pluvialis at 200 °C for 20 min (logRo 4.2) showed significant antioxidant and antimicrobial activity. The antimicrobial activity was attributed to extracted short chain 943 944 fatty acids, while the antioxidant activity was to vitamin E, penolics, as well as carbohydrate degradation 945 products (Rodríguez-Meizoso et al., 2010). The extraction of phenolic compounds from *Chlorella sp.* by mild hydrothermal treatment is also possible. Treatment of Chlorella sp. biomass at a concentration 946 947 of 20 wt. % for 5 min at 163 °C (logRo 2.6), yielded 58.73 mg of gallic acid equivalent g⁻¹ that exhibited significant antioxidant activity (inhibiting by 68.5% the DPPH radical) (Zakaria et al., 2017). 948 Temperature had a significant effect on extraction yield. Increasing the temperature from 100 °C to 170 949 950 °C increased both the total phenolic content and the antioxidant activity of the extracts. Further increases of the temperature up to 250 °C led to a decrease of the phenolic content and antioxidant activity by 951 almost 50%, to levels comparable to those at 100 °C. (Zakaria et al., 2017). This was attributed to thermal 952 953 degradation of the extracted phenolics. Increase of time from 5 to 20 min decreased phenolic content 954 and antioxidant activity of the extracts by approximately 10% (Zakaria et al., 2017). Increasing the 955 biomass concentration from 5 wt. % to 20 wt. % increased phenolic content by approx. 50%. Antioxidant 956 activity, however, peaked at 12.5 wt. % and remained almost constant up to 20 wt. % of biomass 957 concentration, but no explanation for this phenomenon was offered (Zakaria et al., 2017).

Hydrothermal treatment of biomass at very high temperatures (above 230 °C -supercritical water) can 958 959 lead to cellular structure disintegration through biomass carbonization, that can also be beneficial for 960 lipid extraction (Kröger et al., 2018). At even higher temperatures (e.g. 260, 300, 340 °C) the biomass undergoes hydrothermal liquefaction (HTL) and is directly converted to hydrothermal bio-oil that can 961 962 be used as a biofuel (B. Zhang et al., 2018). This is no longer a pretreatment method but a direct conversion method of microalgae biomass into the final product. Its main advantages are that water 963 removal is not required and that it is a single step process, but it is limited to biofuel production, and 964 965 therefore maybe more suited for lower value microalgae or microalgae debris after the extraction of 966 valuable molecules.

967 Overall hydrothermal pretreatment has many advantages including lack of reagents other than water, 968 ability to operate at high solids content, ability to pretreat a variety of microalgae species and ease of 969 post treatment separation and fractionation of compounds. Careful optimization is required, to minimize 970 degradation of valuable products due to the high temperatures employed. Another disadvantage is the 971 energy input required for the reaction to take place, however, significant energy can be recovered by 972 heat exchange (Chen et al., 2019b) and even solar heated hydrothermal reactors showed significant 973 extraction yields minimizing energy requirements of the process (Xiao et al., 2019).

- 974
- 975 3.2.2 Acid treatment

976 The pretreatment of microalgae with dilute solutions of inorganic acids can be considered as a 977 hydrothermal pretreatment variation. The rate of hydrolytic reactions at elevated temperatures in water, 978 are enhanced by the acid catalyst's addition. High carbohydrate, lipid and protein yields can be achieved 979 at lower temperatures and shorter reaction times. Acid concentration employed is usually between 1-5 980 % and temperatures between 110°C and 150°C have been reported; but the specific conditions must be tailored to the target molecules to be extracted. Sulfuric acid is most commonly used for acid 981 982 pretreatment due to its low cost and efficiency. Other acids such as nitric acid have also been tested, but 983 significant reduction in the yield has been observed at higher acid concentrations (Lee et al., 2014; Lee 984 and Han, 2015b). This is probably a result of the nitric acid's oxidative action that would degrade the released molecules. Hydrochloric acid gave superior saccharification results compared to sulfuric acid 985 986 and nitric acid at concentrations ranging from 0.2 M to 2M, in the hydrolysis of Hindakia tetrachotoma 987 ME03 biomass (Onay, 2019).

A modified version of the severity factor (logR_o) from the hydrothermal pretreatment can be expressed
 in terms of time (t), temperature (T) and acid catalyst concentration (related to pH). The Combined
 Severity Factor (CSF) is given by the equation:

991
$$CSF = log \left[t \exp\left(\frac{T - 100}{14.75}\right) \right] - pH$$

992

A good correlation between the process CSF and the carbohydrate release or the lipid extraction yields 993 can be obtained (Table 8). For N. gaditana a carbohydrate yield of 50 % was achieved at a CSF 0.4 and 994 995 increased to 59%, 63% and 89.7% for CSFs of 0.75, 1.0 and 1.4, respectively (Lorente et al., 2015). The 996 pretreatment of Chlorella sorokiniana and P. tricornutum at CSF of 1.4, leads to almost complete 997 carbohydrate recovery yields (95% and 96%, respectively). The big advantage of the process is that 998 these high carbohydrate extraction yields are achieved only after 5 min of pretreatment time. At higher 999 CSFs of 1.87 both N. gaditana and C. sorokiniana showed reduced carbohydrate yields, at 69% (Lorente 1000 et al., 2017) and 79.2 % (Lorente et al., 2018) respectively; possibly due to released sugar degradation. 1001 Released carbohydrates from microalgae have been used to produce bioethanol with increased yield compared to the untreated biomass (Choi et al., 2010; Ngamsirisomsakul et al., 2019). The degradation 1002 1003 products generated from acid hydrolysis can lead to inhibition of fermentation-based microalgae valorisation processes (Martín Juárez et al., 2018). Pretreatment liquid neutralization may also be 1004 required as the low pH values can significantly reduce microbial growth. 1005

- 1006
- 1007 Table 8

Lipid extraction yields remain relatively low (< 30%) below CSF values of 1.4, whereas lipid yields up to 88% are reported at CSF of 1.9 (Lee et al., 2014). This indicates that relatively high cellular wall degradation is required to enable efficient intracellular lipids solvent extraction Although the degree of cell disruption is not reported by the authors, it is possible that at these higher CSF' values where lipid extraction is efficient, extensive cell wall disruption has occurred. Optimal carbohydrate-hydrolysis and lipid-extraction yields seemed to occur in a very narrow parameter range (CSF values between 1.4 and

- 1014 2). This can lead to severe degradation of the released products even with minute changes in the process1015 control. Moderate protein release around 50% is also possible with CSF values of approximately 2
- 1015 control. Moderate pro 1016 (Lorente et al., 2017).

1017 Acid treatment has also showed promising results in extraction of high-value molecules. Astaxanthin 1018 extraction from *H. pluvialis* by treatment with 4M HCl at 70 °C for 60 min (CSF 1.5) achieved a yield 1019 of 80% (Liu et al., 2018). Lutein extraction yield of 3.5 mg g⁻¹ *C. pyrenoidosa* biomass was achieved 1020 with 16% HCl treatment for 41 min (Arun, 2017).

In general, dilute acid pretreatment is a very fast and efficient pretreatment method for the extraction of carbohydrates and lipids from microalgae. Application for extraction of high value molecules may also become possible in the future. However, due to the acids aggressive nature, careful pretreatment conditions optimization is required to avoid the extracted molecules degradation, especially the proteins, antioxidants, and pigments.

1026 3.2.3 Alkaline treatment

1027 Alkaline treatment involves biomass exposure to a basic aqueous medium at elevated temperature. Like acid hydrolysis, it can also be considered as a hydrothermal pretreatment variation with addition of a 1028 1029 basic catalyst. A fundamental difference concerns the operatory condition of theses pre-treatments, especially adapted for lower temperatures, (below 120 °C), and longer treatment time that can span up 1030 to several days (Mahdy et al., 2014a). Alkaline pretreatment can target the hydrolysis of ester bonds and 1031 hydrogen bonds between polysaccharide and non-polysaccharide cell wall components, especially at 1032 1033 lower temperatures (Costa and Plazanet, 2016). For this reason, it has been extensively used for the extraction of hemicellulose from lignocellulosic biomass. At low temperature microalgae alkaline 1034 1035 pretreatment induces a mercerization-like effect accompanied by cell wall swelling and an improvement 1036 of protein extraction yields (Phong et al., 2018). At higher temperatures intramolecular glycoside bonds are also affected leading to the hydrolysis of cell wall and intracellular carbohydrates. 1037

1038 Like acid pretreatment the combined effect of time (t), temperature (T) and base catalyst concentration

- 1039 (pOH), can be expressed by a modified Combined Severity Factor (CSF') that is given by the equation:
- 1040

$$CSF' = log\left[t\exp\left(\frac{T-100}{14.75}\right)\right] - pOH$$

1042

1041

The CSF' can describe the effect of pretreatment on the hydrolysis of carbohydrates, release of protein 1043 1044 and lipid extraction from microalgae. Again, a narrow range of CSF' values (between 1.2 and 2.5) 1045 provides the optimal carbohydrate hydrolysis yields (80 to 100 %) that have been reported. Approximately 80% of total carbohydrates were recovered in the hydrolysates of *H. tetrachotoma* ME03 1046 (Onay, 2019) and a mixed microalgae culture (Shokrkar et al., 2017) at CSF' 2.4 and 2.5, respectively. 1047 1048 Complete carbohydrate recovery was possible for C. vulgaris ESP6 at a much lower CSF' of 1.3 (Liu et 1049 al., 2012). Protein release yields from a mixed extraction yield was moderate at 32%, however very low CSF' values were tested (CSF'<-2.9). These values were obtained by pretreatment temperatures up to 75 1050 1051 °C and prolonged pretreatment times of up to 48h; CaO (lime) was used as the alkaline catalyst. Similar results were found for the pretreatment of C. vulgaris with 42% protein yield at CSF' -1.8 (Mendez et 1052 1053 al., 2013). The extraction of lipids by enzymatic hydrolysis of alkaline pretreated Nannochloropsis sp. 1054 was comprehensively studied for a variety of temperature, time and pH pretreatment conditions (Wu et al., 2017). Alkaline treatment was followed by an enzymatic hydrolysis step with a cocktail of 1055 1056 commercial enzymes (cellulase, protease, lysozyme, and pectinase). The results show a very good 1057 correlation with CSF'. Maximum lipid extraction yields were obtained at low CSF' values, between -0.9 and -0.3, much lower compared to those required for maximum carbohydrate release shown above. They 1058 are also lower compared to the CSF values required for quantitative lipid extraction by acid pretreatment. 1059 1060 This could be due to differences in cell wall resilience between species. Also, the results of this study

1061 are not directly comparable to the rest alkaline pretreatment studies as it employs an extra enzymatic 1062 hydrolysis process step, after alkaline treatment, leading to increased cell wall degradation and easier 1063 lipid extraction. Further increasing the severity beyond -0.3 leads to a reduction in the lipid yield, 1064 probably due to lipid degradation.

Alkaline pretreatment is also used to enhance the production of bio-methane from microalgae anaerobic 1065 digestion. The pretreatment of C. vulgaris and Scenedesmus sp. at low CSF' values led to marginal 1066 1067 increases in the methane yield (20% improvement at the base case) (Mahdy et al., 2014a). Similar results were obtained in the alkaline pretreatment of mixed microalgae culture at low CSF' (0.24) that led to a 1068 1069 25% improvement of methane yield (Solé-Bundó et al., 2017). The NaOH pretreatment of C. vulgaris at CSF' -1.8 gave a 68.8% methane yield (Mendez et al., 2013). NaOH pretreatment of mixed microalgae 1070 biomass significantly increased methane production from approximately 162 mL CH₄ g⁻¹ of volatile 1071 solids (VS) to 377 mL CH4 g⁻¹ VS, leading to 91% of biodegradability (Martín Juárez et al., 2018). The 1072 enhanced extraction of the carotenoid lutein from Scenedesmus almeriensis by alkaline pretreatment has 1073 also been studied (Cerón et al., 2008). The recovery yield can be related to CSF' over a very narrow 1074 1075 range, between -2 and 0 with the maximum recovery of 90% achieved at -0.8 The rapid lutein yield decrease shows that optimization of parameters is critical for extraction of sensitive molecules to avoid 1076 loss through degradation reactions. 1077

- 1078
- 1079 3.2.4 Oxidative pretreatment
- 1080 3.2.4.1 Ozonolysis.

Exposure to oxidative agents can be a very aggressive treatment of biological materials. It has been 1081 traditionally used in the pulp and paper industry for pulp bleaching, as a more environmentally friendly 1082 alternative to traditional chlorine-based processes (Rounsaville and Rice, 1996). Bleaching is achieved 1083 1084 by removing the residual and recalcitrant lignin that remains after the pulping process. It has also been applied as a pretreatment method of lignocellulosic biomass to enhance enzymatic hydrolysis (García-1085 Cubero et al., 2009), and as a cell disruption method for treatment of microalgae (Keris-Sen and Gurol, 1086 1087 2017). As with pretreatment of lignocellulosic biomass, ozonolysis of microalgae cells can increase the enzymatic cell wall saccharification leading to 81% glucose yields. Pretreatment efficiency increases 1088 1089 with the ozone dose administered up to a maximum and then gradually decreases. Low glucose yields 1090 at low ozone doses is attributed to insufficient cell wall disruption, whereas low yields at high ozone dosages is the result of carbohydrates degradation (Keris-Sen and Gurol, 2017). Thus, an ozone dose 1091 1092 optimization is to be determined in order to improve the yield of glucose.

Exposure of microalgae cells to ozone could be performed by conventional bubbling of ozone or under 1093 1094 pressure assisted ozonation with compression and decompression cycles (Huang et al., 2014). Ozonolysis leads to cell rupture and the release of intracellular material in the medium that is 1095 1096 accompanied by measurable increases of total organic compounds, nitrogen and phosphorus. Increasing the ozone pressure as well as the number of compression and decompression cycles is beneficial for the 1097 lipid extraction; optimization of the two parameters led to 27% lipid yield (g g⁻¹ biomass) (Huang et al., 1098 2014). Two mechanisms of pretreatment were identified. Under conventional ozonation, oxidation 1099 increases cell wall permeability and cytoplasm release. In the pressure assisted system, compression 1100 1101 increases dissolved gas inside the cytoplasm and during decompression gas expansion occurs. Repetition 1102 of the compression decompression cycle induces additional stress to the cells and increases disruption 1103 efficiency and lipid extraction yields (Huang et al., 2014).

1104 Ozonation of the filamentous cyanobacteria *A. platensis* has been investigated in various ozone doses. 1105 At low ozone concentrations (5-15 mg L^{-1}) the dominant effect observed was the filament's shear into 1106 smaller fragments. At higher ozone doses (up to 510 mg L^{-1}) an increase in filament transparency 1107 accompanied by the release of intracellular organic material was observed; these cellular material 1108 subsequently formed clusters (Akao et al., 2019). Similar effects were observed in the ozonation of 1109 mixed microalgae cultures for the production of methane through anaerobic digestion (Cardeña et al., 2017). At optimal ozonation pretreatment conditions a 66% increase in the methane yield was obtained.
Under these conditions cells exhibited fragmentation in the cell walls due to oxidation leading to cell
lysis and better access of hydrolytic enzymes from the anaerobic bacteria to the intracellular material

- 1112 (Cardeña et al., 2017). Ozonation pretreatment leads to significant increases in the oil extraction yield
- 1114 up to 100% in some cases (Lin and Hong, 2013).
- 1115 3.2.4.2 Hydrogen peroxide
- 1116 H₂O₂ is an alternative oxidizing agent for the pretreatment of microalgae with a similar mechanism to
- 1117 ozonation. Oxidation of mixed microalgae culture with H_2O_2 leads to biomass solubilization of 23% and
- 1118 a 173% increase in the methane production yield corresponding to 67% biodegradability (Martín Juárez
- et al., 2018). Astaxanthin extractability of 54.5 % from *H. pluvialis* was possible by treatment with 2M
- 1120 of H_2O_2 (Haque et al., 2016).
- 1121 An alternative method to increase oxidation capacity is to combine the H_2O_2 with iron ions in order to
- induce Fenton-like reactions. The two chemicals react to create hydroxyl radicals (·OH⁻) that attack the 1122 1123 microalgae's organic molecules. The combined use of H₂O₂ with FeSO₄ significantly increased lipid extraction efficiency from C. vulgaris to 78% of total lipids compared to 41% when H₂O₂ was used 1124 1125 alone, (Steriti et al., 2014). A Fenton-like reaction with FeCl₃ as the cell disruption reagent for lipid extraction from Chlorella sp. KR-1, was improved by simultaneous UV-irradiation of the reaction 1126 mixture. The unaided Fenton-like reaction yielded 80% of total lipids at 0.5% H₂O₂. The UV-Fenton-1127 like reaction experiment improved the lipid yield to 85% at a reduced 0.3% H₂O₂ consumption (Seo et 1128 al., 2015a). The substitution of H_2O_2 with the persulfate ion $(S_2O_8^{2-})$ was also investigated. The 1129 persulfate ion reacted with Fe³⁺ to generate SO₄⁻⁻ and S₂O₈⁻⁻ radicals instead of the \cdot OH radicals of the 1130 typical Fenton reaction (Seo et al., 2016). The persulfate reagent at 2mM concentration led to improved 1131 1132 lipid extraction yield 95%, compared to 80% for 0.5% (v/v) H_2O_2 at the same pretreatment conditions.
- The aggressive nature of all the oxidative pretreatment reactions leads to chemical alterations of the 1133 1134 targeted biomolecules. Most affected are the sensitive pigments like chlorophyll. The partial or complete 1135 destruction of chlorophyll in the oxidation pretreatment of microalgae samples has been reported for 1136 ozonation (Huang et al., 2014; Kamaroddin et al., 2016) and Fenton-like reaction pretreatments (Seo et al., 2015a, p.). Additionally, significant chemical changes are observed in the composition of the 1137 1138 extracted lipids. These changes are mainly the significant increase of saturated and monounsaturated fatty acids and the reduction in polyunsaturated fatty acids. The Fenton pretreatment of C. vulgaris 1139 increased the saturated, monounsaturated and C18:2 fatty acids in the extracted lipid from 35 % (w/w) 1140 1141 in the untreated sample to 80 % (w/w) after pretreatment. At the same time the content of polyunsaturated fatty acids in the cells pretreated by Fenton reaction was dramatically decreased from 1142 1143 60 % to 20 % (w/w) (Concas et al., 2015a). In another study of C. vulgaris pretreated by Fenton reaction the polyunsaturated fatty acids content decreased from 21 % (w/w) to 4.75 % (w/w) (Concas et al., 1144 1145 2015b). Similarly, the ozonation of C. vulgaris decreased the concentration of saturated fatty acids to 1146 very small or non-detectable amounts, and even decreased the content of some saturated fatty acids, probably due to very severe oxidation conditions (Huang et al., 2014). The sensitivity of polyunsaturated 1147 fatty acids to oxidation was also shown in the ozonation of D. salina where accumulation of saturated 1148 1149 fatty acids and even some hydrocarbons were detected in the extracted lipids (Kamaroddin et al., 2016).

The reduction in chlorophyll content is considered beneficial when the isolated lipids are transformed 1150 1151 into biodiesel as chlorophyll deactivates the esterification catalyst (Seo et al., 2015a). Equally beneficial is the reduction in polyunsaturated fatty acids and the increase in saturated, as the corresponding 1152 saturated fatty acid methyl esters (biodiesel) are more resistant to oxidation and degradation from 1153 oxygen, heat, light etc. (Concas et al., 2015a; Steriti et al., 2014). However, if the targeted products are 1154 high added value molecules such as unsaturated fatty acids (e.g. ω 3 fatty acids) pigments (e.g. 1155 chlorophyll, carotenoids) and antioxidants (e.g. astaxanthin) that are sensitive to oxidation, such 1156 1157 pretreatment methods may be detrimental to the product quality and/or yield. If optimization of oxidative 1158 processes to minimize product degradation is not possible, they should be exclusively used for the

production of bulk products such as fermentable sugars (Keris-Sen and Gurol, 2017), biogas(Martín
Juárez et al., 2018) and biodiesel (Steriti et al., 2014).

- 1161
- 1162 3.3 Enzymatic methods

1163 Enzymatic treatment is even more species specific than the methods described above. Microalgal cell 1164 walls are chemically complex and may contain several carbohydrates (cellulose, hemicellulose, pectin or chitin), protein or other organic polymers such as sporopollenin and algaenan. They are also 1165 1166 structurally complex as these polymers are often organized in layers. Cell wall structure and composition varies between species and as a result the enzymatic activities on cell walls of different species will 1167 differ. Successful enzymatic disruption of such complex structures requires combinations of the 1168 necessary enzymatic activities. Indeed, the treatment of N. gaditana with Alkalase -a protease with 1169 esterase activity for peptide and amino acid esters- showed only 35% protein release (Safi et al., 2017b). 1170 Although significant hydrolysis of protein can be achieved, cell wall integrity was not compromised and 1171 1172 cell breakage was not detected, because the remaining structural components remain intact. Another 1173 disadvantage of the protease is the reduction of the released protein functionality due to their hydrolytic fragmentation (Safi et al., 2017a). 1174

1175 Similarly, treatment of Scenedesmus sp. with lysozyme -an enzyme that hydrolyses cell wall peptidoglycan by specifically degrading N-acetylglucosamine- increased the lipid extraction yield by 1176 only 16.6% compared with cellulase treatment alone (Taher et al., 2014). Lysozyme treatment on C. 1177 vulgaris thinned and delaminated the outer wall and removed hair-like fibers from the cell's surface 1178 (Gerken et al., 2013). This study compared many enzymes (chitinase, chitosanase, b-glucuronidase, 1179 pectolyase, trypsin, laminarinase, lyticase, phospholipase A1, sulfatase, b-glucuronidase and sulfatase) 1180 and showed that lysozyme was the only enzyme able to increase cell permeability when applied alone. 1181 1182 When lysozyme and sulfatase were combined the permeabilization of 96 % of the cell population was achieved. In other experiments lysozyme treatment, enabled high protein and pigments extraction from 1183 Chlorella sp., Scenedesmus sp. and Chlamydomonas sp. (Al-Zuhair et al., 2017). This required a 30fold 1184 increase in the pretreatment time (16h) compared to the previous study (Taher et al., 2014). 1185

1186 The combination of a protease with a cellulase is a typical enzymatic treatment strategy as it can target the two main cell wall components, proteins/peptides and cellulose and/or other carbohydrates. In the 1187 treatment of C. reinhardtii and C. vulgaris Alkalase and Viscozyme (a multienzyme with b-glucanase, 1188 arabinase, hemicellulase, xylanase and other activities) led to almost complete protein and carbohydrate 1189 solubilization (Mahdy et al., 2014b). Cellulase, pectinase and lysozyme were used together for lipid 1190 extraction from Nannochloropsis sp. with a 22% recovery yield (Chen et al., 2017). In some cases, the 1191 cellulase-protease combination performed poorly. For example, treatment of *H. pluvialis* by combined 1192 1193 protease K and drierase (a cellulase, hemicellulase and pectinase mix) did not enhance the extraction efficiency of astaxanthin. This was attributed to the enzymes inability to attack the cell wall 1194 1195 sporopollenin, a very recalcitrant polymer (Mendes-Pinto et al., 2001). This underlines the importance of selecting the appropriate mix of enzymatic activities according to the microalgae specie. 1196

Combination of carbohydrate hydrolyzing enzymes is another strategy for cell wall disruption. The 1197 combined use of cellulase and pectinase at 1:1 ratio and 7000 U mL⁻¹ total enzyme dosage enabled 1198 71% astaxanthin extraction (Ye et al., 2020). The combined treatment of Nannochloropsis sp. with 1199 Cellulyve \mathbb{B} 50LC (cellulase) and Feedlyve \mathbb{B} GMA (Endo- β -1,4-mannanase) led to a lipid extraction 1200 1201 vield of 90% (Zuorro et al., 2016). Treatment with carbohydrase cocktails has also been performed in 1202 tandem, when the enzymes have different temperature optima simultaneous treatment would lead to 1203 denaturation and loss of some enzymatic activity. For example, treatment of mixed cultures with β -1204 glucosidase/cellulase at 65 °C, followed by α-amylase at 95 °C and an amyloglucosidase at 55 °C yielded 95% of total sugars (Shokrkar et al., 2017). A similar total sugar yield of 92% was achieved by the same 1205 1206 treatment strategy in the case of *H. tetrachotoma* ME03 (Onay, 2019). Fermentation of the sugar 1207 hydrolysates gave approximately 90% of theoretical bioethanol yield. It is also worth noting that the 1208 enzymatic reaction sequence initially targeted the cell wall structural carbohydrates (cellulase and bglucosidase activities) followed by the intracellular storage carbohydrates (a-amylase and amyloglucosidase activities). This enzyme specificity towards the targeted molecules could be useful in hydrolysis products separation e.g. carbohydrates and proteins. This can be achieved by sequential treatment, first with proteases to enable protein release, followed by carbohydrate hydrolysing enzymes to remove sugars from the microalgae biomass.

A variation of enzymatic pretreatment is autolysis. It occurs when the microalgae cells under stress 1214 produce cell wall degrading enzymes leading to cell lysis. When C. reinhardtii is exposed to nitrogen 1215 1216 depletion stress the production of autolysin is induced. Autolysin is a protease that targets proline-rich areas in C. reinhardtii cell wall polypeptides. Its synthesis can be enough to enable extensive cell 1217 1218 disruption and quantitative protein and lipid release (Sierra et al., 2017). The main benefits of this strategy are the expensive enzyme redundancy and conservation of intracellular protein integrity. 1219 Another strategy to reduce the high cost of enzymes is their *in-situ* production by coculturing the 1220 microalgae with an enzyme producing microorganism. For this reason, C. vulgaris was co-cultured with 1221 1222 the bacterium Flammeovirga yaeyamensis that could release amylase, cellulase, and xylanase in the 1223 growth medium (Chen et al., 2013). The collected microalgae cells showed damage to the cell walls induced from the enzymes during co-culture. The supernatant from the co-culture was used to pretreat 1224 1225 C. vulgaris cells in a separate pretreatment process, significantly increasing the release of hydrolyzed sugars and lipids. 1226

1227 The non-specific enzymatic pretreatment of microalgae is also possible with the use of oxidizing enzymes. For example, manganese peroxidase (a lignin degrading enzyme using Mn²⁺ ions as oxidizing 1228 1229 mediators) was produced by the white-rot fungi Anthracophyllum discolor. The enzymatic extract was 1230 used for the pretreatment of *Botryococcus braunii* to enhance methane production (Ciudad et al., 2014). 1231 The enzymatic pretreatment increased methane production from approximately 320 mL CH₄/g VS to 521 mL CH₄/g VS that corresponds to 90% of biodegradability, compared to 60% biodegradability of 1232 the untreated microalgae cells. A complex enzymatic broth containing laccase (another lignin oxidizing 1233 enzyme) from the fungus Trametes versicolor exhibited similar improvement in methane production 1234

1235 from the anaerobic digestion of pre-treated mixed microalgae cultures (Hom-Diaz et al., 2016).

Despite the promising results, high enzyme cost is the major hurdle to be overcome for application of 1236 enzymatic processes to biorefineries. Several strategies have been employed towards this end, such as 1237 1238 co-cultivation and autolysis that were discussed above. Another strategy concerns the optimization of the enzyme production process to reduce production cost through increased productivity and yield. 1239 Reduction of cost through lowering the enzyme dosage has also been achieved by optimizing the 1240 enzymatic cocktail and by discovery of new more potent enzymes. Such approaches in bioethanol 1241 1242 production from lignocellulosic biomass have reduced the enzyme production costs by a factor of ten (10) (Dahiya, 2020). 1243

- 1244 Table 9
- 1245
- 1246 3.4 Novel downstream processing concepts
- 1247 3.4.1 Combinations of cell disruption methods

Combinations of disruption methods have been frequently investigated to increase pretreatment 1248 efficiency. One example is the combination of heat treatment together with High Pressure 1249 1250 Homogenization. This led to an initial increase in viscosity due to increased solubilization of polymers, such as proteins and carbohydrates, and a subsequent reduction of viscosity from the HPH treatment 1251 caused by a decrease in the molecular weight due to increased shear thinning (Bernaerts et al., 2018, 1252 1253 2017). The combination allowed the treatment of cells at high concentrations, e.g. Nannochloropsis sp pastes of 20-25% solids (Olmstead et al., 2013). The thermal pretreatment increased cell wall 1254 1255 susceptibility to mechanical disruption by HPH and improved lipid extraction yields (Halim et al., 2016).

1256 Ultrasonication is a pretreatment method with moderate efficiency, however, it can be easily combined 1257 with other methods to increase cell disruption capability. When used together with H_2O_2 oxidation a 1258 two-fold increase of C. pyrenoidosa cell lysis was achieved, compare to ultrasonication alone (Z. Duan et al., 2017). Combined with alkali pretreatment it could improve cell disruption, protein solubilization 1259 and protein yield from C. sorokiniana and C. vulgaris, compared to either pretreatment method on its 1260 own (Phong et al., 2018). Improved cell lysis was also observed when ultrasonication was combined 1261 with physical pretreatment methods such as pressure drop through nozzle spraying (M. Wang and Yuan, 1262 2015). When Parachlorella kessleri was treated with HPH low protein and carbohydrate yields of 11% 1263 and 20%, were obtained, respectively. When HPH was preceded by ultrasonication these values 1264 increased to 89% and 74%, respectively (Zhang et al., 2019a). Ultrasonication in combination with a 1265 two-phase system of methanol/K₃PO₄ solution can effectively combine cell-lysis and partition of 1266 1267 proteins from cellular debris in one step (Phong et al., 2017). Cell lysis and recovery of protein in a single step is also possible with the combination of ultrasonication in an ionic liquid, that led to 95.0% 1268 protein recovery (Sze Ying Lee et al., 2017). Despite these interesting concepts, the major drawback of 1269 1270 ultrasonication remains its inability to process high cell concentration cell-pastes. Ultrasolication at 400 used in combination with the ionic liquid cholinium 1271 has been 2-hvdroxv-3morpholinopropanesulfonate to extract 95% of total protein from C. vulgaris cells. Cell disruption and 1272 1273 protein extraction were performed in a single step as the ionic liquid (as a 50mM aqueous buffer) was a 1274 suitable solvent for protein extraction (Lee et al., 2017). The processing time was 30 min and biomass concentration was 6 g L^{-1} (Lee et al., 2017). 1275

- 1276
- 1277 3.4.2 Novel cell disruption methods
- 1278
- 1279 3.4.2.1. CO₂ explosion

1280 Cell lysis via CO₂ explosion is an interesting method for microalgae pretreatment. The method includes 1281 cell pressurization with CO₂ that leads to increased intracellular gas concentration. It is followed by the rapid pressure release that causes expansion of intracellular gas and leads to cell disruption. It has already 1282 been shown to work for lipid extraction from the lipid producing yeast Rhodotorula glutinis, where CO₂ 1283 explosion was performed at 35 bar, leading to significant cell breakage and release of intracellular lipids 1284 to the aqueous phase (Howlader et al., 2017). The method has also been used for the extraction of 1285 carotenoids and chlorophylls from *B. braunii* (Uquiche et al., 2016). Pretreatment at 21°C and 130 bar 1286 1287 increased the pigments extraction yield 10-fold compared with non-treated cells. CO₂ explosion is 1288 similar to steam explosion, but the lack of heating reduces degradation reactions and could be a viable method for the extraction of valuable and sensitive intracellular molecules. Lately, a continuous CO₂ 1289 explosion system was described that can effectively disrupt Neochloris oleoabundans UTEX 1185 cells. 1290 1291 The continuous method reduced CO_2 consumption between 2-4 fold, reduced the process time 3-9 fold, 1292 and increased biomolecule yields by more than 2 fold compared to the batch method (Günerken et al., 2019). Other non-reactive gasses such as N₂ can also be used for cell lysis through explosive 1293 1294 decompression (Simpson, 2010).

- 1295
- 1296 3.4.2.2 Electricity-based methods

1297 High voltage electric discharges (HVED) utilizes electrodes of needle-plate geometry to deliver high voltage pulses to microalgae suspensions. Electroporation of cells similar to that hown for PEF is also 1298 present in HVED treatment. HVED additionally induces thermal and mechanical effects to the cells due 1299 to cavitation and shockwave formation (Zhang et al., 2019c). Application of HVED (40 kV cm⁻¹, 4 ms) 1300 1301 to Nannochloropsis sp. allowed the selective release of ionic components and small molecular weight water soluble components. Aggregation of the cells as a result of the electric discharge was also observed 1302 1303 (Grimi et al., 2014). These findings were also confirmed in the HVED treatment of 1% w/w Parachlorella kessleri suspensions at similar conditions (40 kV cm⁻¹, 8 ms) that led to release of ionic 1304 1305 cell components and carbohydrates but protein yield was only 15% w/w (Zhang et al., 2019b). For this 1306 reason, HVED was proposed as a first treatment step for the selective release of low molecular weight and water-soluble molecules, followed by organic solvent extraction of chlorophylls, carotenoids and
lipids (Zhang et al., 2020). Application of HVED to *B. braunii* cell collonies allows the easy separation
of the cells from their hydrocarbon extracellular matrix. Subsequantly cells sink to the bottom while the
hydrocarbon matrix rises to the surface of the process vessel, allowing for easy separation and collection
(Guionet et al., 2019).

Non-thermal plasma is another electricity-based method where a needle to plate electrode geometry is 1312 placed in an argon filled reactor. The application of high voltage (17 kV, 30 mA) between the electrodes 1313 generated an intense core plasma towards the microalgae biomas that led to 65-70% cell rupture of N. 1314 gaditana cells and 18.7% lipid extraction (Matos et al., 2019). The method decreased the content of 1315 polyunsaturated ω -3 fatty acids from 31% to 11% making it more suitable to biofuels applications. 1316 Nanowire-assisted electroporation of Chlorella sp. with copper oxide nanowire-modified three-1317 dimensional copper foam electrodes (10 sec, 2V) led to complete inactivation and disruption of the cells 1318 1319 and release of organic matter in the liquid phase (50 mg L⁻¹) with a very low energy consumption 0.014 kWh kg⁻¹ (Bai et al., 2019). Osmotic shock of A. platensis at the same pretreatment conditions led to the 1320 highest lipid yield (8.9% extracted with chloroform/methanol 1:2 v/v) compared to ultrasonication, 1321 autoclave, acid and alkaline treatments (Sumprasit et al., 2017) 1322

1323

1324 3.4.2.3 Osmotic shock

1325 Osmotic shock is a simple and effective microalgae pretreatment method. When microalgae cells are suspended in high concentration salt solutions, the density difference between cytoplasm and salt 1326 1327 solution creates an osmotic pressure across the cellular membrane that can lead to cell disruption. 1328 Treatment of C. vulgaris cells in a 10% w/v NaCl solution for 48 h yielded 86% of total lipids. 1329 Microscopic observations showed that osmotic shock acts by creating holes in the cell membranes and does not lead to complete cell disintegration. The disruption effect treatment is also more homogeneous 1330 1331 in the cell population (Heo et al., 2017). Effectiveness of the osmotic shock treatment depends on the concentration of the salt solution. When 6% w/v solutions of NaCl and sorbitol were used for the 1332 pretreatment of C. reinhardtii, lipid yields were not increased compared to the untreated cells (Yoo et 1333 al., 2012). When cell wall-free mutants were treated at the same conditions, lipid yield for sorbitol and 1334 1335 NaCl increased to 20% and 35%, respectively (Yoo et al., 2012). The type and concentration of salts, incubation time and concentration of biomass are all important factors affecting the efficiency of the 1336 method (Krishna Koyande et al., 2020). Osmotic shock has been used for extraction of protein from C. 1337 *vulgaris* biomass. Treatment with magnesium sulphate at 100 g L⁻¹ for 10 min resulted in a high (> 90%) 1338 1339 protein recovery. Increasing the biomass concentration from 0.25 % w/w to 5 % w/w resulted in a slight decrease of protein yield to approximately 80% (Krishna Koyande et al., 2020). Osmotic shock is an 1340 1341 attractive cell disruption method due to its simplicity and promising yields in biomolecules extraction. Although prohibitively high treatment times of 48h are often reported, low treatment times of 10 min 1342 1343 ware also shown, indicating that optimization of the method can reduce treatment time to more realistic 1344 levels.

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1346 3.4.2.4 Ionic liquids

Ionic liquids are organic salts with low melting points below 100 °C. The cation contains heteroatoms 1347 in the organic structure, usually nitrogen. The cations can be imidazolium, pyridinium, ammonium, 1348 cholinium and phosphonium, among others (Orr et al., 2016). The anions can be either organic or 1349 inorganic. Many ionic liquids are found in liquid form at room temperature and are very stable 1350 chemically and thermally. (Nitsos et al., 2013). These useful properties have classified them as green 1351 solvents. Ionic liquids have the ability to form hydrogen bonds, which allows them to interact with 1352 1353 biopolymers such as cellulose found in the cell wall of microalgae. The recalcitrance of cellulose is 1354 based on the large number of hydrogen bonds formed between the cellulose microfibrils. The hydrogen 1355 bond capacity of ionic liquids allows the disruption of these interfibrillar hydrogen bonds of cellulose and can dissolve the cellulose structure. This leads to compromised microalgae cell wall structures and 1356

allows the more efficient extraction of intracellular or cell wall components of the microalgae (Chen et al., 2018). The chemical hydrolysis of cellulose by ionic liquids has also been proposed (van Spronsen et al., 2011). Interaction with other cell wall components like hemicelluloses and proteins is also possible, although the complexity of the cell wall composition and variation between species make the exact mechanism of action still unclear (Orr et al., 2016).

1362 Imidazolium based ionic liquids are very commonly used for microalgae pretreatment and are very 1363 effective at improving lipid extraction (Orr et al., 2016). For example, pretreatment of C. vulgaris with different types of imidazolium based ionic liquids (Table 10) led to complete cell lysis and extraction 1364 yields ranging from 45 to 98% of total lipids (Teixeira, 2012). However, employment of high 1365 temperature (140°C) for 30 min increases the energy input of the method. The requirement of heating to 1366 relatively elevated temperatures is relatively common in ionic liquid treatments, which could potentially 1367 render them less energy efficient (Orr et al., 2016). For this reason, microalgae treatment with ionic 1368 liquids at room temperatures has attracted some attention. Disruption of C. vulgaris cells was achieved 1369 with a variety of ionic liquids at ambient temperature for 16 h. Extraction of lipids from the pretreated 1370 1371 cells with hexane showed significant improvement compared to untreated biomass (5% g g⁻¹ biomass lipid extraction yield). The best result (25 % g g^{-1} biomass lipid extraction) was shown for a 1372 phosphonium ionic liquid tributylmethylphosphonium propanoate (Orr et al., 2016). These results 1373 1374 however were performed with freeze dried biomass, that can facilitate the easier extraction of lipids due 1375 to structural damage to the cell membranes. Depending on pretreatment conditions, milder effects of ionic liquids on the lipid extraction yields from wet microalgal biomass (20%-40% of total oils) 1376 compared to freeze dried biomass (80-90 % of total oils) have been observed (Zhang et al., 2018). In the 1377 1378 same study optimization of the pretreatment and extraction process using the phosphonium salt 1379 tributylmethylphosphonium propanoate could increase the oil yield at 80% (Zhang et al., 2018). The use 1380 of butyrolactam, caprolactam, propylammonium and hydroxypropylammonium based ionic liquids in the treatment of wet Chlorella sp. and Chlorococcum sp. achieved very good cell disruption. The best 1381 1382 results were demonstrated by butyrolactam hexanoate with efficiency of 76% and 84% for Chlorella sp. and Chlorococcum sp., respectively (Shankar et al., 2017). These results were obtained at room 1383 temperature, but long treatment times of 24 hours were required. Pigment extraction has also been 1384 reported with ionic liquids. Extraction of 85% of total astaxanthin was achieved with the treatment of 1385 1386 H. pluvialis with a 40% w/w aqueous solution of 1-Butyl-3-Methylimidazolium Chloride for 1 h at 60 °C. Astaxanthin was extracted with methanol (Liu et al., 2018). 1387

1388 Table 10.

1389

1390 3.4.2.5 Viral cell lysis

1391 A very novel approach, appealing for its low energy requirement is the viral lysis of microalgae cell walls. For example, infection of Chlorella variabilis by the Chlorella-virus Paramecium bursaria led 1392 1393 to almost complete cell lysis and lipid yields comparable to microwave and ultrasonication (Kim and Kim, 2018). The method also proved successful in the production of bioethanol from starch-1394 accumulating C. variabilis when combined with amylase treatment of the released starch and 1395 fermentation (Cheng et al., 2013). Viral production and cell lysis efficiency was significantly influenced 1396 1397 by the carbon to nitrogen ratio of the culture when viral infection was done in situ (Y.-S. Cheng et al., 1398 2015). This approach allows for nitrogen content manipulation to optimize lipid or carbohydrate 1399 production and hence, cell lysis. Additionally, it reduces the processing times of viral cell lysis (Kim and Kim, 2018). 1400

1401

1402 3.4.2.6 Cell disruption by contact

1403 Cell disruption of *Aurantiochytrium* sp. was achieved with a poly-dimethylaminomethylstyrene coated 1404 nylon membrane. The membrane was submerged in a culture of microalgale cells and the culture was 1405 shaken bringing the membrane and cells into contact. Contact of the negatively charged cell surface with the functionalized membrane's positive charged surface led to electrostatic interactions -possibly
rearrangements in the phospholipid bilayer- and cell lysis. Although cell disruption efficiency was
relatively low (26%) the method is very promising due to its simplicity and low energy requirements.
(Yoo et al., 2013).

A similar effect was noticed when *C. vulgaris* cells were contacted with silver nanoparticles (Abdul Razack et al., 2016). Silver nanoparticles are known for their bacteriocidal properties that are promoted by a positive surface charge (Abbaszadegan et al., 2015), and therefore a similar cell lysis mechanism may be in action. The proposed method, however, included drying of the cells both pre and post treatment and its efficiency on wet microalgae could vary.

- 1415
- 1416 3.4.2.7 Combined harvesting and cell disruption

Among the most promising novel approaches are those combining harvesting with microalgae biomass 1417 pretreatment. Such methods if properly optimized can have significant benefits for both capital 1418 1419 investment and operating costs as they reduce the number of downstream unit operations required. One 1420 such example is electroflotation, by alternating current (Florentino de Souza Silva et al., 2014). Introduction of the alternating current that breaks water molecules and creates oxidative species like O_3 , 1421 1422 H_2O_2 and -OH. These in turn cause cell disruption through oxidative reactions. The method achieved very high harvesting efficiency of 99% at 140 min processing time. Lipid extraction yield with 1423 1424 chloroform-methanol increased from 5% in untreated cells to 25% when pretreated with electroflotation. In a similar approach ozonoflotation, combines the harvesting effect of gas bubbles with the oxidative 1425 1426 pretreatment induced by the contact of ozone with the microalgae cell walls. The method could harvest 1427 80% of the algal biomass and double the lipids yield (measured by extraction with chloroform-methanol 1428 2:1 v/v from lyophilized biomass), indicating significant cell disruption effects (Velasquez-Orta et al., 1429 2014). Ozonation could potentially achieve the simultaneous disinfection, harvesting and pretreatment of cultures as was demonstrated by the short time in situ ozonation of D. salina (Kamaroddin et al., 1430 1431 2016). The study showed that ozonation of a mixed culture of the green alga D. salina and Halomonas, a Gram-negative bacterium representing bacterial contamination, with 8 mg L⁻¹ of ozone for 10 min 1432 1433 resulted 93% sterilization efficiency without harming the microalgae cells (Kamaroddin et al., 2016). Ozone-flotation has been used for efficient harvesting and pretreatment of microalgae for biooil 1434 production through hydrothermal liquefaction (Nava Bravo et al., 2019). One of the major disadvantages 1435 of open pond systems is the high contamination from bacteria and other microorganisms as they are 1436 1437 exposed to the natural elements. This problem can be enhanced when process water -that often carries a 1438 high bacterial load- is used as the culture medium. Reduction of bacterial load during cultivation or 1439 during harvesting and pretreatment with ozonation can make open pond systems more attractive for microalgae biorefineries. 1440

1441 Combined harvesting and pretreatment can also be achieved by a flocculation variation. Cells are harvested by coagulation-flocculation with ferric chloride at 200 ppm and pH 3 with 90% efficiency 1442 after 20 min. In the second step, cells are pretreated with 0.5% H_2O_2 at 90 °C. Interaction of ferric ions 1443 with H₂O₂ forms a Fenton-like reagent with potent oxidation radicals leading to 80% lipid extraction 1444 1445 efficiency. With oxidized pyrite (20 mM) as catalyst, 90% lipid extraction and esterification were 1446 achieved (Seo et al., 2015b). As has been described in the oxidative pretreatment section, such methods may not be suitable for the valorization of antioxidants, pigments, and unsaturated fatty acids due to the 1447 severe influence of the oxidative reagents. 1448

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- 1450 3.5 Energy efficiency of downstream processing

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Among the reviewed microalgae harvesting methods, dissolved air flotation (Niaghi et al., 2015) and electroflocculation (Vandamme et al., 2011) appear to be the most energy efficient with 0.0025 kWh m⁻ and 0.15-1 kWh m⁻³ of sample, respectively. However, as these harvesting methods were performed at

the laboratory scale, upscaling could alter the energy requirements of the processes. Centrifugation also 1455 1456 shows a favorable energetic assessment with an energy range of 0.70-1.30 kWh m⁻³ required at high scale (Fasaei et al., 2018). The main advantage of centrifugation systems is their ability to deliver high 1457 harvesting efficiency (up to 99%) and high solids concentrations (up to 20%) at this energy range (Table 1458 1459 11). This makes centrifugation ideal as a dewatering process able to produce microalgae pastes. Its combination with other harvesting techniques therefore could establish efficient harvesting and 1460 dewatering operations (Fasaei et al., 2018). A scenario of combined membrane filtration and 1461 centrifugation for harvesting and dewatering required 0.84 kWh kg⁻¹, which is inside the energy input 1462 range of centrifugation alone (Table 11). Flocculation combined with centrifugation in the same scenario 1463 considerably reduced the energy requirements to 0.06 kWh·kg⁻¹ (Fasaei et al., 2018). A similar energy 1464 input (0.05 kWh·kg⁻¹) was required for combined flocculation and membrane filtration. From these 1465 examples it is apparent that size increase induced through the formation of flocks greatly enhances the 1466 1467 efficiency of both centrifugation and membrane filtration. On the other hand, the use of flocculants increases the cost to $0.97 \in \text{Kg}^{-1}$ compared to the $0.30 \in \text{Kg}^{-1}$ required for combined membrane filtration 1468 and centrifugation. Such scenarios provide good benchmarks for development of harvesting and 1469 1470 dewatering systems tailored to the needs of specific microalgae biorefineries. Selection of the appropriate methods could depend on the application, for example value of isolated biomolecules and 1471 1472 the energy content of the biomass for biofuel production.

1473 The energy efficiency of High Pressure Homogenization cell disruption method has been extensively studied. Energy consumption is dependent on biomass concentration. Low cell densities clearly do not 1474 1475 favor the treatment in terms of energy requirements. For example, 20 kWh kg⁻¹ DW is required for cell 1476 disintegration of 1.2%, w/w C. vulgaris suspensions (Carullo et al., 2018). Increasing the concentration 1477 of *Desmodesmus* sp. F51413 from 2.0 g L⁻¹ to 90 g L⁻¹ reduced the specific energy consumption from 413 kJ g⁻¹ to 9.19 kJ g⁻¹ (Xie et al., 2016). This solids content increase does not affect carotenoid 1478 extraction yields that remains unchanged throughout the whole 2.0 g L^{-1} to 90 g L^{-1} range. Efficient 1479 disruption (>95%) of a 10% suspension of *N. gaditana* could also be achieved at high energy efficiency 1480 (<0.5 kWh kg⁻¹ biomass). The method is also cost efficient with a reported price range of 0.15–0.25 € 1481 kg⁻¹ of isolated protein (Safi et al., 2017a). Energy requirements are also dependent on cell wall 1482 robustness. The energy required for the disruption of single of T. suecica cells was 5.88 x 10^{-5} J cell^{;1} 1483 for *Chlorococcum* sp., it was 6.43 10^{-5} J cell⁻¹ (Halim et al., 2013). The cell walls of *T. suecica* are made 1484 up from polysaccharides such as mannans, together with 2-keto sugars and glycoproteins. 1485 1486 Chlorococcum sp. has a cell wall primarily of polysaccharides such as cellulose pectins, hydroxyprolinerich glycoproteins and arabinogalactan proteins. Correlation of cell wall strength to compositional 1487 1488 differences are not easy. However, the authors have attributed the difference in energy disruption 1489 requirements to the thinner cell walls of T. suecica. For relatively fragile microalgae like 1490 Nannochloropsis sp. cell disruption and energy efficiency were independent of cell density up to 25% 1491 solids (Yap et al., 2015); although this effect could be related with the ease of cell wall disruption it 1492 remains to be investigated. Treatment of the relatively tough *B. braunii* was also energy efficient (~0.04 1493 kWh kg⁻¹) when extraction of the hydrocarbon rich extracellular matrix was considered (Tsutsumi et 1494 al., 2017).

Bead milling was less energy efficient compared to HPH for the disruption of N. gaditana cells for 1495 maximum protein release (0.43 kWh kg⁻¹ and 0.32 kWh kg⁻¹, respectively) (Safi et al., 2017a). Specific 1496 1497 energy requirements were, reported for maximum protein release by bead milling from T. suecica (0.49 kWh kg⁻¹), Neochloris oleoabundans (0.55 kWh kg⁻¹) and C. vulgaris (0.72 kWh kg⁻¹), with experiments 1498 1499 performed at 9% (w/v) solids (Postma et al., 2017). It was also shown that energy efficiency can increase 1500 with the reduction of bead diameter, probably due to more efficient bead impacting. Maximum 1501 carbohydrate release was achieved at similar specific energy for T. suecica (0.48 kWh kg⁻¹) and C. 1502 vulgaris (0.72 kWh kg⁻¹) but higher energy input was required for N. oleoabundans (0.94 kWh kg⁻¹). These values indicate that both HPH and bead milling can perform below the maximum specific energy 1503 1504 limit of 0.682 kWh kg⁻¹ for efficient target molecules extraction in the biorefinery, as set by the National 1505 Algal Biofuels Technology Roadmap target of the US Department of Energy (Postma et al., 2017). Bead milling treatment of *B. braunii* is also energy efficient (~0.08 kWh kg⁻¹). 1506

1507 PEF pretreatment of 10% solids of N. gaditana cells was significantly less efficient compared to HPH 1508 and bead milling requiring an energy input of 10.42 kWh.kg⁻¹ for a very low 10% protein yield, compared to 50% with the other methods at much lower energy inputs (Safi et al., 2017a). The very 1509 small size of *N. gaditana* cells (2–4 µm) could adversely affect PEF efficiency and PEF should be only 1510 considered for larger microalgae cells. Protein extraction from C. reinhardtii by PEF pretreatment was 1511 equally inefficient in terms of energy input. Even at high energy input of 26.5 kWh kg⁻¹ protein yields 1512 1513 did not exceed 15% (T Lam et al., 2017). The average cell size of C. reinhardtii was 4-5 µm. In contrast disruption of the cell wall deficient mutant of C. reinhardtii, in the same study, was more energy efficient 1514 1515 with 40% protein yield at 2.5 kWh kg⁻¹ (T Lam et al., 2017). This shows that the cell wall of C. reinhardtii causes its resilience to PEF and indicates that PEF may be less suitable for microalgae species with a 1516 recalcitrant cell wall. Even at low biomass concentrations (4 g L⁻¹) PEF is still not as energy efficient as 1517 HPH and bead milling. Contradicting these results efficient extraction of molecules from A. 1518 protothecoides with PEF at 10% solids was reported with a 0.42 kWh kg⁻¹ specific energy input (Eing 1519 1520 et al., 2013). Average cell size was larger at 7 µm and the studied microalgae is known to have a rigid cell wall consisting of a triple layer with an acetolysis-resistant material sandwiched between 1521 polysaccharides (Kalina et al., 1993). These discrepancies demonstrate how careful optimization may be 1522 needed for a more conclusive evaluation of a process potential, and that process efficiency can be species 1523 1524 specific.

Hydrothermal treatment methods also appear to be energy efficient. An 87% disruption of N. oculata 1525 cells could be achieved with water bath heating at 0.01 kWh L⁻¹ energy input (McMillan et al., 2013). 1526 Steam explosion of C. sorokiniana was very efficient as it enabled microalgal biomass solubilization in 1527 1528 the range 65-73% with an energy input of 0.03-0.06 kWh kg⁻¹ of volatile solids (Córdova et al., 2018). These studies, however, lacked information on solids content of the treated sample and therefore the 1529 1530 more relevant specific energy input per unit biomass could be significantly higher. An energy input of 1.58 kWh kg⁻¹ for the autoclaving of S. obliguus (5 min at 121 °C) is a more accurate estimation of the 1531 energy requirements of hydrothermal treatment (Ansari et al., 2018). Even at these relatively mild 1532 1533 pretreatment conditions five-fold higher energy is required compared to HPH and bead milling. Even higher energy input (2.26 kWh kg⁻¹) was reported for the efficient disruption of Nannochloropsis 1534 1535 oceanica at 10% solids by steam explosion. At these optimal pretreatment conditions extensive cell 1536 disruption and almost complete lipid recovery could be achieved (J. Cheng et al., 2015). Although the 1537 energy input is higher compared with previously discussed HPH and bead milling significant heat recovery is possible for hydrothermal and steam explosion pretreatment methods via heat exchange 1538 1539 (Chen et al., 2019b).

Utrasound and osmotic shock treatments were in the same energy range as hydrothermal with 1.5 kWh kg⁻¹ and 1.72 kWh kg⁻¹, respectively (Ansari et al., 2018). Enzymatic treatments are also very attractive and promising methods due to their low energy requirements. The treatment of a 10% (w/v) slurry of *N. gaditana* with Alkalase could be performed at a specific energy input of 0.34 kWh kg⁻¹ (Safi et al., 2017a). Although soluble protein yield was lower compared to HPH and bead milling in the same study, enzymatic reaction optimization and use of complementary enzymatic activities can greatly improve the reaction efficiency, as was previously discussed.

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- 1548 Table 11
- 1549 Table 12
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- 1551 4. Conclusion and outlook

1552 Although a significant amount of research on microalgae valorization has been conducted it cannot be 1553 considered exhaustive. The large number of available (as well as yet unexplored) microalgae species 1554 combined with the variety of downstream processing methods requires an even greater research and 1555 optimisation effort. A unification and standardization of reporting would allow the easier comparison of

different studies and a more comprehensive understanding of the field. For example, the microalgae cell 1556 1557 concentration in slurries is reported in various ways including number of cells per unit of volume, volatile solids per unit of volume and total solids per unit of volume, often hampering comparison of 1558 reported results between studies. Similarly, the pretreatment method efficiency has been variably 1559 1560 evaluated by cell lysis, turbidity and product extraction yield. Between these methods cell counting is an objective way of reporting cell disruption efficiency. Turbidity is affected by cell size and 1561 agglomeration of cells or debris, and yield can be affected by the formation of degradation products 1562 1563 (Spiden et al., 2013). Decrease of the cells dry weight (due to release of intracellular materials) and increase of free proteins and DNA in the supernatant are good indicators that the cell wall structure is 1564 1565 compromised. These methods could be sufficient to express pretreatment efficiency, especially as partial 1566 cell wall disruption is not visible by cell counting (Safi et al., 2017a).

Energy efficiency is reported as energy input per unit of microalgal biomass, energy input per unit of harvested product, energy input per unit energy content of the microalgal biomass or its lipid products. The latter calculation methods are more important when biofuels and energy are the main microalgal biorefinery target products, as the overall process net energy ratio cannot exceed the energy content of the microalgae and its products. When the production of high value molecules such as antioxidants, pigments, and food supplements is the main goal of the biorefinery energy input is more related to process cost and therefore should be reported as energy input per unit mass of the biomass.

1574 The effect of biomass concentration on the energy and the extraction efficiency of the various pretreatment methods, has not been thoroughly investigated yet. Few methods have demonstrated 1575 efficient cell disruption at truly high biomass concentrations such as 20%. Much of the works were 1576 conducted at cell concentrations around or below 10%. Indeed, it appears that 10% solids content 1577 represents a limit above which mixing, and mass transfer is not efficient in the valorization of 1578 1579 lignocellulosic biomass (Weiss et al., 2019). Determining the concentration limits for cell disruption 1580 methods is of critical importance to select operational conditions where energy input is minimal without compromising the extraction efficiency. This limit should also be correlated to the requirements of the 1581 harvesting method in order to reduce the energy input of biomass concentration and dewatering. In this 1582 respect, energy intensive dewatering operations to very high solids content may only be required for 1583 1584 applications of microalgae for direct use as feed or as food supplements in the form of pills and powders.

Harvesting and dewatering of microalgae biomass can become more efficient by combination of 1585 methods. Initial preconcentration by simple and low-cost methods such as gravitation settling can be 1586 extremely beneficial in terms of cost and energy requirements. Therefore, selection of suitable 1587 1588 microalgae strains with high sedimentation velocities and ability to accumulate the desired biomolecules is paramount. The initial microalgae species selection can provide considerable cost, energy and time 1589 1590 savings, as these methods are much more efficient when applied to moderately weak cell walls. 1591 Flocculation and membrane filtration are also promising preconcentration methods and combined with 1592 efficient dewatering processes such as centrifugation can reduce energy and cost requirements. The effect of upscaling of the harvesting and dewatering operations on energy efficiency also has to be 1593 1594 considered.

Among emerging microalgae pretreatment methods thermal such as hydrothermal and steam explosion, 1595 dilute acid and alkaline hydrolysis are interesting due to the ability for fast and efficient cell disruption 1596 1597 and fractionation of biomass components. Optimization and easy correlation of yield and energy 1598 requirements with process parameters such as time, temperature and pH with a single severity factor is 1599 also attractive. Viscosity reduction through hydrolytic reactions of macromolecules can enable such 1600 methods to handle increased solids concentrations of microalgal biomass. Energy recovery through heat exchange is an additional benefit. Enzymatic pretreatment is very promising due to the low energy 1601 1602 requirements selectivity and the non-destructive nature of the process that can preserve the bioactive properties of the isolated molecules. Explosive decompression of microalgal cells pressurized by a gas 1603 such as CO₂ and N₂ is also interesting, although it has not been yet extensively studied. The mode of 1604 1605 action is similar to steam explosion, but the lack of heat may make the method viable for the isolation 1606 of sensitive molecules such as pigments and antioxidants.

- 1607 Among the most interesting methods, however, are those combining harvesting with pretreatment such 1608 as electroflocculation, ozonoflotation, and chemical flocculation with iron and oxidation through Fenton 1609 reaction by addition of H_2O_2 . Even if these methods fail to reach industrial maturity, the reduction of 1610 unit operation can provide significant benefits in terms of investment and operating costs. Similar
- 1610 strategies may prove critical for the implementation of a mature microalgae biorefinery in the future.
- 1612
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Table 1. Effects of medium composition on the chemical composition of various microalgae species.
Table adapted from Juneja et al 2013. Information on magnesium from (Wang. et al. 2014, Polat et al.
2020).

Medium composition	Conditions	Microalgae specie	Biochemical modification		
		Nannochloropsis oculata	Increase in lipid synthesis		
		Phaeodactylum	Increase in lipid synthesis and		
Nitrogon	Limitation	tricornutum	decrease in protein content		
Nitrogen	LIIIIItation	Chlorella vulgaris	Increase in lipid synthesis		
		Haematococcus pluvialis	Increase in carotenoid		
			formation		
	Limitation	Chlamydomonas	Decrease in		
		reinhardtii	phosphatidylglycerol		
	Limitation	Ankistrodesmus falcatus	Decrease in chlorophyll and		
Phosphorus			protein; Increase in		
Thosphorus			carbohydrate and lipids		
	Starvation	Selenastrum minutum	Reduced rate of respiration;		
			Decreased photosynthetic		
			CO ₂ fixation		
	Limitation	Dunaliella tertiolecta	Decrease in cellular		
			chlorophyll concentration		
Iron	High concentration	Chlorella vulgaris	Increase in lipid content		
	High concentration	Haematococcus pluvialis	Increase in carotenoid		
			formation		
	Increasing CO ₂	Chlamydomonas	Increase in amount of fatty		
	concentration at 10%	reinhardtii	acid		
	Increasing CO ₂	Dunaliella salina	Increase in amount of fatty		
Carbon	concentration at 10%				
	Elevated CO ₂	Spirulina platensis	Increase in carbonydrate		
	concentrations		and nigmonts		
	Increasing NaCl	Dunalialla cn	Increase in saturated and		
		Dununenu sp.	monouncaturated fatty acids		
		Dunalialla tartiolocta	Increase in intracellular linide		
			and triglyceride		
Salinity	concentration		concentration		
	Increasing NaCl	Botryococcus braunii	Increase in carbohydrate		
	concentration	boti yococcus bruumi	content, and lipid content.		
			Decrease of protein content		
	Magnesium deficiency	Chlorella Vulaaris	Decrease chlorophyll and		
	accession of		protein. Increase in		
			triacylglyceride (TAG)		
Magnesium			accumulation		
	Magnesium starvation	Auxenochlorella	Decrease the total		
	_	protothecoides	chlorophyll production.		
			Increase the lipid content		

Robustness	Species	Cell size	Cell wall composition	Reference	Main product/price ^a
of cell wall		(µm)			
High	Scenedesmus sp.	5-7	Trilaminar sheath (algaenan), Inner cell wall	(Baudelet et al., 2017).	Carbohydrates
			(mannose, glucose), coenobial adhesive		
High	Haematococcus pluvialis	20	Trilaminar sheath (algaenan), primary,	(Baudelet et al., 2017).	Astaxanthin / 1,450-5075 \in kg ⁻¹
			secondary and tertiary cell wall (mannose,		
			other sugars)		
Medium	Phaeodactylum	25	Silica, sulfated α -glucurunomannan, proteins,	(Johansen, 1991) (Le	Fucoxanthin/ \$ 200 kg ⁻¹ -4450 €g ^{-1 b}
	tricornutum		polyamines	Costaouëc et al., 2017)	
Medium	Arthrospira platensis	8	Peptidoglycan layer (Murein), two fibrillary	(Akao et al., 2019;	Phycocyanin/360€ kg ⁻¹
			layers, sheath of acidic polysaccharides	Kröger et al., 2018)	
Medium	Chloromonas nivalis	15	By-layered cell wall	(Remias et al., 2010)	Astaxanthin/ 1,450-5075 € kg ⁻¹
Medium	Dunaliella salina	5-25	Double-layered rigid wall (hyaline, algaenan)	(Baudelet et al., 2017)	$\beta\text{-carotene}/\ 215\text{-}2150 \notin kg^{-1}$
Low	Isochrysis galbana	5–6	Lack of cell wall, plasma membrane	(Thu et al., 2015)	$\omega 3 \omega 6 / 78 - 116 \in kg^{-1}$

Table 2. Cell wall structures and high-value products of typical microalgae species

^a as reviewed in (Cuellar-Bermudez et al., 2015), ^b from (Shannon and Abu-Ghannam, 2018)

Table 3. Flocculation process parameters for typical polyelectrolytes. Table adapted from Van Haver and Nayar, 2017

Flocculant	Cell	Dosage	Volume	Time	Species	Harvesting	Reference
	concentration	(mg L ⁻¹)	(L)	(min)		efficiency	
						(%)	
Chitosan	-	20	0.5	240	C. calcitrans	98	Harith et al. 2009
Magnafloc® LT 25	-	0.1	0.5	240	C. calcitrans	83	Harith et al. 2009
Chitosan+Sodium alginate	1.24 ^a	30 ppm + 40 ppm	0.01	60	S. obliquus	90	Matter et al., 2018
Zetag 7557,	0.7 ^b	10	0.004	120	Neochloris oleoabundans	52	Lam, 2017
Polyacrylamide							
Synthofloc 5080H,	3.6 ^b	10	0.25	120	P. tricornutum	95	Lam, 2017
Polyacrylamide							
Cationic starch	0.77 g L ⁻¹	40	-	30	C. protothecoides	90	Letelier-Gordo et al., 2014
Zetag 63, Polyacrylamide	10 ⁶ cells mL ⁻¹	10	1	30	Chlorella stimatophora	93	Van Haver and Nayar, 2017
F04650, Polyacrylamide,	0.7 g L ⁻¹	3	0.05	60	N. salina	73	Van Haver and Nayar, 2017
Medium charge	U U						
FO4800, Polyacrylamide,	0.7 g L ⁻¹	3	0.05	60	N. salina	88	Van Haver and Nayar, 2017
High charge	Ŭ						

FO4990, Polyacrylamide, Very high charge	0.7 g L ⁻¹	3	0.05	60	N. salina	94	Van Haver and Nayar, 2017
Emfloc KC750, Potato starch	10 ⁷ cells mL ⁻¹	70	0.1	30	C. reinhardtii	90	Van Haver and Nayar, 2017
POLYSEPAR®CFL25, Tannin,quaternary ammonia salt	10 ⁷ cells mL ⁻¹	30	0.1	30	Chlorella sp.	95	Van Haver and Nayar, 2017
Tanfloc SL, Tannin Natural polymer	0.26	5	3	-	C. vulgaris	100	Van Haver and Nayar, 2017
OD: Optical Density	^a OD _{680 nm}	^b OD _{750 nm}	•	•	-	•	•

Table 4. Process parameters and yields of typical microalgae harvesting processes

Method	Species	Time	Initial biomass	Total	Harvesting	Reference
			concentration	volume	efficiency	
Gravitational settling	Monoraphidium sp. FXY-10	24 h	0.218 g L ⁻¹	-	98 %	Yu et al., 2012
Gravitational settling	A. platensis	-	0.55 g L ⁻¹	1 L	85 %	Depraetere et al., 2015
Coagulation	N. salina	2.5 h	0.5 g L ⁻¹	0.113 L	85 %	Chatsungnoen and Chisti, 2016
Flocculation	C. reinhardtii	0.25 h	0.7 g L ⁻¹	0.1 L	90%	Fan et al., 2017
Flocculation	C. calcitrans	0.17 h	0.095 g L ⁻¹	0.25 L	89 %	Şirin et al., 2015
Flocculation	C. vulgaris	0.5 h	0.5 g L ⁻¹	0.1 L	90 %	Vandamme et al., 2012
Flocculation	D. brasiliensis	0.017 h	0.5 g L ⁻¹	50 L	99.2 %	Ndikubwimana et al., 2016
Centrifugation	A. platensis	0.17 h	0.41 g L ⁻¹	0.005 L	85%	Cuellar-Bermudez et al., 2019
Centrifugation	S. obliquus	0.17 h	0.746 g L ⁻¹	70 L	99.3%	Wang et al., 2019
Dissolved air flotation	Mixed microalgae	-	0.545 g L ⁻¹	-	91%	Niaghi et al., 2015
Flocculation-flotation	S. obliquus	0.25 h	0.73×10^6 cells mL ¹	1 L	93.6 %	Xue et al., 2019
Bioflocculation	A. plantensis	0.25 h	1.4 g L ⁻¹	0.6 L	95%	Vergnes et al., 2019
Bioflocculation	Mixed microalgae	0.083 h	0.419 g L ⁻¹	0.95 L	79.6%	Velasquez-Orta et al., 2014

 Table 5. Overview of major microalgae cell disruption methods

Method	Mechanism	Advantages	Disadvantages	Cell concentration	Selectivity product separation	Energy requirements
Bead Milling	Beads collision (cell	Effective cell disruption	Emulsification of	High	Low	Low
	cleavage, fracture, abrasion)	High biomass	products			
		concentration	Requires cooling			
High-pressure	shear stress induced	Effective cell disruption	Emulsification of	High	Low	Low
homogenization	pressure drop	High biomass	products may hamper			
		concentration	separation			
		Viscosity reduction				
Ultrasonication	Shear force from bubble	Simple	Low disruption efficiency	Low-medium	Low	Low
	cavitation	Can be combined with	Low-medium biomass			
	Free radical	other processes	concentration			
	formation/oxidation		Requires cooling			
Pulsed Electric Field	Electroporation of cell	Mild effect	Inefficient for small cell	High	Medium	Low
	wall/membrane	High biomass	size			
		concentration				

Hydrothermal/Steam	Explosion of cells from	Lack of reagents	Degradation of sensitive	Medium-High	Low	Medium
Explosion	pressure drop	Viscosity reduction due	products			
	Hydrolysis of cell wall	to depolymerization of	Generation of			
	components	macromolecules	fermentation inhibitors			
		Simple rector set-up	Hydrolysis of			
			carbohydrates & protein			
			may be undesirable			
Acid treatment	Hydrolysis of cell wall	Effective cell disruption	Neutralization of process	Medium-High	Low	Medium
	components	Simple rector set-up	liquid			
			Degradation of sensitive			
			products			
			Generation of			
			fermentation inhibitors			
Alkaline treatment	Hydrolysis of cell wall	Effective cell disruption	Neutralization of process	Medium-High	Low	Medium
	components	Simple rector set-up	liquid			
			Degradation of sensitive			
			products			
			Generation of			
			fermentation inhibitors			

			Long treatment time			
Ozonolysis	Oxidation of cell wall	Optimal for biodiesel	Oxidation of sensitive &	Low	Low	Low
	components	production	high-value products			
Hydrogen peroxide	Oxidation of cell wall	Optimal for biodiesel	Oxidation of sensitive &	Low	Low	Low
	components	production	high-value products			
Enzymatic	Hydrolysis/ Oxidation of	High specificity	High enzyme cost	Medium	High	Low
	cell wall components	Low temperature	Long process time			
		No degradation				

Carbohydrate Drying Lipid yield **Protein yield** Energy **Process conditions** Reference yield Cost (KWh kg⁻¹) Method (% w/w) (% w/w) (% w/w) Untreated Ansari et al., 31.07 19.9 _ _ 2018 Natural sunlight (400-Sun-drying Ansari et al., $1200 \text{ mmolm}^{-2} \text{ s}^{-1}$), 0.011 \$ L⁻¹ 2018 11.64 19.5 0.055 25.7 18-27 °C, 2-3 days Freeze-drying Deep freeze -84 °C, Ansari et al., 1.189 \$ L⁻¹ 18.45 31 21.3 21.81 0.9 kW for 24 h 2018 Oven-drying Ansari et al., Air oven, 60 °C 12 h 13 30.98 18.8 0.343 \$ L⁻¹ 6.33 2018 Spray dryer Fasaei et al. 0.30 € kg⁻¹ 6.1 _ _ _ _ 2018 Drum dryer Fasaei et al. 0.25 € kg⁻¹ 5.1 _ _ --2018

Table 6. Effect of different drying methods on extraction of biomolecules from S. obliquus. Table adapted from Ansari et al., 2018.

	Pretreatment	Reactor loading/ Biomass	Time	Temperature		Yield	
Species	method	Concentration	(min)	(°C)	logR ₀	(%)	Reference
		Lip	vids				
Chlorella sorokiniana	Steam explosion	100g / 20% w/w solids	5	120	1.29	18.4 ^a	Lorente et al., 2015
Nannochloropsis gaditana	Steam explosion	250g / 17% w/w solids	5	120	1.29	3.6 ^a	Nurra et al., 2014
Nannochloropsis gaditana	Steam explosion	100g / 20% w/w solids	5	120	1.29	17.9ª	Lorente et al., 2015
Nannochloropsis gaditana	Steam explosion	100g / 20% w/w solids	5	150	2.17	18.2ª	Lorente et al., 2015
Chlorella vulgaris	Hydrothermal	$30~mL/~50~g~L^{-1}$	120	150	3.60	67.7°	Xiaojian et al., 2017
Nannochloropsis oceanica	Steam explosion	$200\ mL$ / 10% w/w solids	5	207.12	3.85	93.9 ^b	Cheng et al., 2015
Nannochloropsis sp.	Hydrothermal	na ^e / 20 w/w solids	60	180	4.13	84.0 ^d	Qu et al., 2018
		Carbok	ydrates				
Nannochloropsis gaditana	Steam explosion	100g / 20% w/w solids	5	120	1.29	43.7 ^f	Lorente et al., 2015
Chlorella vulgaris	Hydrothermal	na ^e / 5g tCOD L ⁻¹	20	120	1.89	51.8 ^f	Mendez et al., 2013
Nannochloropsis gaditana	Steam explosion	100g / 20% w/w solids	5	150	2.17	44.4 ^f	Lorente et al., 2015
Chlorella vulgaris	Hydrothermal	na ^e / 5g tCOD L ⁻¹	40	120	2.19	58.2 ^f	Mendez et al., 2013
Chlorella pyrenoidosa	Hydrothermal	$na^{e}\ /\ 10\ \%\ w/w$ solids	10 ^g	160	2.77	46.9	Fu et al., 2018
Chlorella pyrenoidosa	Hydrothermal	na^e / 7 % w/w solids	15 ^h	155.2	2.80	80.5	Xiao et al., 2019

Table 7. Effect of process severity factor during hydrothermal pretreatment on biomolecule extraction yields

Chlorella vulgaris	Hydrothermal	$30 \text{ mL}/ 50 \text{ g L}^{-1}$	120	150	3.55	60.6	Xiaojian et al., 2017
			Protein				
Chlorella vulgaris	Hydrothermal	na ^e / 5g tCOD L ⁻¹	20	120	1.89	20.2 ⁱ	Mendez et al., 2013
Chlorella vulgaris	Hydrothermal	na ^e / 5g tCOD L ⁻¹	40	120	2.19	26.4 ⁱ	Mendez et al., 2013
Chlorella pyrenoidosa	Hydrothermal	nae / 10 % w/w solids	10	160	2.77	46.9 ^j	Fu et al., 2018
Chlorella vulgaris	Hydrothermal	$30 \text{ mL}/ 50 \text{ g L}^{-1}$	60	200	4.72	75.9 ^j	Xiaojian et al., 2017

^aBligh and Dyer method : chloroform–methanol (1:2 v/v); ^b modified Bligh and Dyer method ; ^chexane-methanol (7:3 v/v); ^d diethyl ether ^e na : information not available:; ^fcalculated as % of total monosaccharides measured in the pretreatment liquid; ^g retention time in a continuous system with a flow rate of 14 L h⁻¹; ^h retention time in a continuous system with a flow rate of 40 L h⁻¹; ⁱ calculated as % of total protein measured in the pretreatment liquid as total Kjeldahl nitrogen (TKN) x 5.95 ; ^j calculated as % of total protein measured in the pretreatment liquid with the Lowry method **Table 8.** Effect of process severity factor during dilute acid pretreatment on biomolecule extraction yields

		Reactor loading /							
		Biomass	Time	Temperature		Yield			
Species	Acid	Concentration	(min)	(°C)	CSF	(%)	Reference		
			Lipids						
N. gaditana	H ₂ SO ₄ , 5% w/w wet basis	100g / 20% w/w solids	5	120	0.40	17.7 ^a	Lorente et al., 2015		
N. gaditana	H_2SO_4 , 10 % w/w wet basis	100g / 20% w/w solids	5	120	0.75	17.8ª	Lorente et al., 2015		
N. gaditana	H_2SO_4 , 5% w/w wet basis	100g / 20% w/w solids	5	150	1.02	18.5ª	Lorente et al., 2015		
N. salina	HNO ₃ 0.57%, v/v	na/ 20 g L ⁻¹	30	120	1.21	24.4 ^b	Lee et al., 2014		
N. gaditana	H ₂ SO ₄ , 10 % w/w wet basis	100g / 20% w/w solids	5	150	1.40	18.5 ^a	Lorente et al., 2015		
N. gaditana	H2SO4, 5% w/w wet basis	100g / 20% w/w solids	5	150	1.87	79 ^a	E. Lorente et al., 2017		
N. salina	HNO ₃ 0.5%, v/v	na/ 20 g L-1	60	120	1.94	88.4 ^b	Lee and Han, 2015		
Carbohydrates									
mixed culture	H ₂ SO ₄ 0.5 M	na	10	121	1.32	18 °	Shokrkar et al., 2017		
mixed culture	H ₂ SO ₄ 0.5 M	na	20	121	1.62	44 ^c	Shokrkar et al., 2017		
mixed culture	H ₂ SO ₄ 1 M	na	20	121	1.92	58 °	Shokrkar et al., 2017		
mixed culture	$H_2SO_4 0.5 M$	na	40	121	1.92	85 °	Shokrkar et al., 2017		
mixed culture	H ₂ SO ₄ 1 M	na	40	121	2.22	92 °	Shokrkar et al., 2017		

mixed culture	$H_2SO_4 \ 2 \ M$	na	40	121	2.52	94 °	Shokrkar et al., 2017

^aBligh and Dyer method : chloroform–methanol (1:2 v/v); ^b hexane; ^ctotal reducing sugar content of pretreatment liquid determined with dinitrosalicylic acid method

Table 9. Extraction yield achieved by different cell disruption methods

	Species	Process parameters								
method		Time (min)	Temperature (°C)	Process specific	Yield (%)	Extraction method	Reference			
Lipids										
Bead milling	C. vulgaris	60	33	0.3–0.5 mm Y ₂ O ₃ stabilized ZrO ₂ grinding beads. 1:13 solid:water ratio (w v ⁻¹)	67	SC-CO ₂ 600 bar, 30 g min ⁻¹ CO ₂ flow rate, 5% ethanol, 60 °C	Safi et al., 2014			
High-pressure homogenization	Chlorella sp	-	-	Single pass at 1400 bar	100	modified Bligh and Dyer, 20 min solvent contact time	Yap et al., 2014			
Pulsed Electric Field	A.protothecoides	-	-	35 kV cm ⁻¹ 100 g L ⁻¹ algae slurry, 6 mL min ⁻¹	220 mg g ⁻¹	100% ethanol	Eing et al., 2013			
Hydrothermal	Nannochloropsis sp.	60	180	20 w/w solids	84.0 ^d	diethyl ether	Qu et al., 2018			

		60	120	HNO ₃ 0.5% v/v,			
Dilute acid	N. salina			20 g L ⁻¹ algae	88.4	hexane	Lee and Han, 2015
				slurry			
		480	100	300 g L ⁻¹ algae			
Alkalina	Nannochloropsis sp.			slurry, pH 10.5	83.5	30 mL chloroform	Wu et al., 2017
Aikainie				(adjusted by			
				2mM NaOH)	95	1h extraction with 5mL	
	Chlorella sp	60	90	17 g L ⁻¹ algae			
Oxidation				slurry, 2 mM			Seo et al., 2016
	KK-1			$K_2S_2O_8$		chloroform	
		210	53	20 g L ⁻¹ algae			
	Nannochloropsis sp.			slurry, pH 4.4,	90	1 h Extraction with chloroform/methanol (2:1, v/v) and stirred at 37 °C	Zuorro et al., 2016
				cellulase: 13.8			
Enzymatic				mg g ⁻¹ biomass,			
				Endo- β-1,4-			
				mannanase: 1.5			
				mg g ⁻¹ biomass			
Carbohydrate							
Bead milling	T. suecica	15	25	Yttrium stabilized ZrO ₂ 0.3 mm beads, bead filling ratio 65% v/v,	99	Determined in the supernatant by the phenol - sulfuric acid assay	Postma et al., 2017
---------------------------------	----------------	-----------------	---------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------
High-pressure homogenization	C. vulgaris	-	< 25 °C	5 passes 1500 bar, at 155 mL min ⁻¹ , 12 g L ⁻¹ biomass slurry	41.9% (w/w)	Determined in the supernatant by the DuBois metod	Carullo et al., 2018
Hydrothermal	C. pyrenoidosa	15 ^h	155	7 % w/w solids	80.5	Determined in the supernatant bby the phenol-sulfuric acid method	Xiao et al., 2019
Dilute acid	mixed culture	40	121	H ₂ SO ₄ 2 M	94 °	determined in the pretreatment liquid with dinitrosalicylic acid method	Shokrkar et al., 2017

Alkaline	H. tetrachotoma ME03	30	121	10% w/v lyophilized microalgae slurry, 2M NaOH Protein	80	determined in the pretreatment liquid anthrone method	Onay 2019
Bead milling	T. suecica	6,67	25	Yttrium stabilized ZrO ₂ 0.3 mm beads, bead filling ratio 65% v/v,	99	Determined in the supernatant by the Lowry assay	Postma et al., 2017
High-pressure homogenization	C. vulgaris	-	< 25 °C	5 passes 1500 bar, at 155 mL min ⁻¹ , 12 g L ⁻¹ biomass slurry	54.1%	Determined in the supernatant by the Lowry assay	Carullo et al., 2018
Steam explosion Dilute acid	C.sorokiniana	5	150	4 kg microalgae impregnated with H ₂ SO ₄ at a concentration of 5% w/w wet sample basis	55.7	determined in the pretreatment liquid with the bicinchoninic acid protein assay	Lorente et al., 2018

Alkaline	C. vulgaris	40	120	25 g tCOD L ⁻¹ biomass slurry, pH 10 (adjusted by 4M NaOH)	42	total Kjeldahl nitrogen x 5.95	Mendez et al., 2013
				Pigments			
Ball mill grinding	C. zofingiensis	3.5	-	10 mm stainless steel balls	100	Acetone extraction of lutein	Araya et al., 2014
High-pressure homogenization	Desmodesmus sp. F51	-	-	2413 bar, 4 passes at 40 mL min ⁻¹	7.9 mg g ⁻¹ biomass	carotenoids extracted by ethyl ether	Xie et al., 2016
Pulsed Electric Field	H. pluvialis	-		1 kV·cm ⁻¹ , 10 pulses, 50 ms,	96	6h post treatment incubation followed by extraction of astaxanthin with 99.5% v/v methanol	Martínez et al., 2019
Hydrothermal	H. pluvialis	10	200	high temperature and high pressure microfluidic platform	100	20 min acetone extraction of astaxanthin	Cheng et al., 2017

Dilute acid	H. pluvialis	60	70	4M HCl, 10 g l ⁻¹ algae slurry	80	60 min acetone extraction of astaxanthin	Liu et al., 2018
Alkaline	S. almeriensis	80	20	100 g L ⁻¹ algae slurry, 4 w/v % KOH	99	5 min hexane extraction of lutein	Cerón et al., 2008

Table 10. Disruption and lipid extraction from *C. vulgaris* cells by various imidazolium based ionic liquids. Table adapted from (Orr et al., 2016).

Species	Ionic liquid	Algae/ionic	Time	Temperature	Cell disruption ^a	Lipid yield
		liquid ration	(min)	(°C)		(% total lipids)
C. vulgaris	1-ethyl-3-methylimidazolium chloride	1:20	30	140	Complete lysis	96
C. vulgaris	1-butyl-3-methylimidazolium chloride	1:20	30	140	Complete lysis	88
C. vulgaris	1-(2-hydroxylethyl)-3-methylimidazolium chloride	1:20	30	140	Complete lysis	98
C. vulgaris	1-allyl- 3-methylimidazolium chloride	1:20	30	140	Complete lysis	45

^a microscopic observation

Table 11. Energy and cost requirements of typical microalgae harvesting methods. Table adapted from Fasaei et al., 2018

Harvesting	Size or		Concentration of	Energy	Biomass recovery	Output solid
method	processing capacity	Costs	biomass (kg m ⁻³)	requirement (kWh m ⁻³)	(%)	concentration (%)
Centrifuge	$80 \text{ m}^3 \cdot \text{h}^{-1}$	250,000 €	200	0.70-1.30	95-99	10-20
Microfiltration	-	300 € m ⁻²	50	-	-	-
Flocculation	100 m ³	125,000	-	-	-	-
Spiral plate	$4 \text{ m}^3 \text{h}^{-1}$	229,000	200	0.95-2.00	95–99	20–22
Dissolved air flotation	3.8 L	-	0.545	0.0025	91	-
Membrane filtration	-	-	-	0.80-2.51	99	1.5-10
Electroflocculation	1.5 L	-	0.3-0.6	0.15-1	80–95	-
Flocculation + Centrifuge	-	0.98 € Kg ⁻¹	-	0.06 kWh∙kg⁻¹	-	-
Flocculation + Membrane filter	-	0.97 € Kg ⁻¹	-	0.05 kWh∙kg⁻¹	-	-

Membrane filter +						
Centrifuge	-	0.30 € Kg ⁻¹	-	$0.84 \text{ kWh} \cdot \text{kg}^{-1}$	-	-
continuego						

Table 12. Energy and cost requirements of cell disruption methods

Disruption method	Species	Biomass	Energy	Cost	Reference
		concentration	(KWh kg ⁻¹)		
НРН	N. gatidana	100 g L ⁻¹	0.32	0.15-0.25 ^a	Safi et al. 2017
Bead milling	N. gatidana	100 g L ⁻¹	0.43	0.4–1ª	Safi et al. 2017
PEF	N. gatidana	100 g L ⁻¹	10.42	2 - 20 ª	Safi et al. 2017
Enzymatic	N. gatidana	100 g L ⁻¹	0.34	-	Safi et al. 2017
Ultrasound	S. obliquus	-	1.5	0.26 ^b	Ansari et al., 2018
Autoclave	S. obliquus	-	1.58	0.26 ^b	Ansari et al., 2018
Steam explosion	N. oceanica	10 % w/w	2.26	-	Cheng et al., 2015
Osmotic shock	S. obliquus	-	1.72	0.31 ^b	Ansari et al., 2018

^a € Kg⁻¹ of isolated protein ^b € L⁻¹ of treated sample

Figure captions

Figure 1. Overview of microalgae biorefinery

Figure 2. Cell wall structure of a: A *Chlamydomonas* biflagellate cell, B *Desmodesmus* four-celled coenobium, C mature *Haematococcus lacustris* cystm from (Baudelet et al., 2017), D *Phaeodactylum tricornutum* from (Gügi et al., 2015), E *Arthrospira platensis* (Van Eykelenburg, 1977) F *Tisochrysis lutea* (Orlova et al., 2019).

Figure 3. Typical mechanisms of microalgae flocculation (a) coagulation with bivalent cations (b) neutralization and bridging effect of cationic polymers (c) autoflocculation induced by excreted algogenic organic matter (d) detailed mechanism of flocculation with cationic polymers including "charge shielding" hypothesis for negative effect of high cationic polymer dosages (adapted from Lam, 2017)

Figure 4. Types of forces acting acting on microalgae cellss during bead milling. The diagram is not to scale and servesd for illustration purposes only.

Figure 5. Mechanism of cell disruption during High Pressure Homogenization. The cell sizedigram is not shown to scale. Pressure drop is the main effect of the process causingcause of the cell disruption.

Figure 6. Mechanism of cell disruption by ultrasound treatment

Figure 7. Pore formation in the cell membrane and subsequent release of intracellular molecules as a result of PEF treatment of microalgae cells







cell stabilization



Figure 4



Figure 5





Figure 7