



Hanged vineyard: an ancient and endangered agroforestry wine production system in Northern Portugal

www.eurafagroforestry.eu/afinet/

In the Portuguese Northern region, a traditional system originated from the middle ages persists, although with an alarming decreasing area: the 'hanged vineyard' ('vinha do enforcado'). The system is based on the combined production of grapes for wine production, cultivated around the limits of the agricultural plots, deliberately managed in a vertical position (reaching 4 m or more) with the support of trees such as *Platanus* spp, *Celtis australis*, *Fraxinus* spp etc. Inside the plots, arable crops production or pastoral activities are carried out.

In this system trees are pruned annually in order to supply of tree fodder to animals, reducing the shading of vines by the trees that ultimately would restrict the grapes development and maturation and/or ramial chipped wood production for the improvement of soil properties (ex: pH, OM). For this reason, tree species known to be suitable for coppicing practices are the ones selected for this purpose.

The regional plant varieties used in the 'vinha do enforcado' (Biscainho, Sousão, Sesão forte de Basto, Azal, Espadeira, Borraçal, Verdelho and Murrão) present distinct characteristics when compared to other vineyards: i) high predominance of vertical growth; ii) high tolerance to shadow; iii) distinct grape organoleptic properties.

These varieties and management specificities, both now endangered, originate a unique type of wine, with specific properties, that should be considered by the wine industry.

References and links:

http://www.eurafagroforestry.eu/afinet/rains/agroforestry-action/hanged_vineyard

<https://www.repository.utl.pt/handle/10400.5/15921>

http://www.eurafagroforestry.eu/pt-pt/afinet/rains/agroforestry-action/vinha_do_enforcado
http://www.eurafagroforestry.eu/afinet/rains/agroforestry-action/hanged_vineyard

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramial_chipped_wood



Figure 1. "Hanged vineyard". Credits Ana Tomás

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