

“The most terrible enemy”: a fiery history of forest policies in the Portuguese New State

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Paisagens de fogo: Uma história política e ambiental dos grandes incêndios em Portugal (1950-2020) Ref: (PTDC/HAR-HIS/4425/2021)

Burning landscapes

A political and environmental history of large wildfires in Portugal (1950-2020)

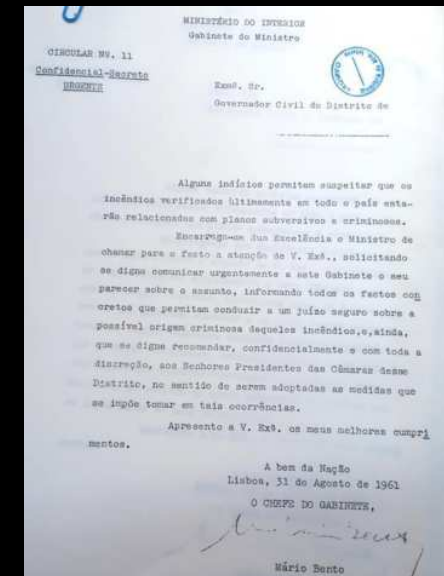
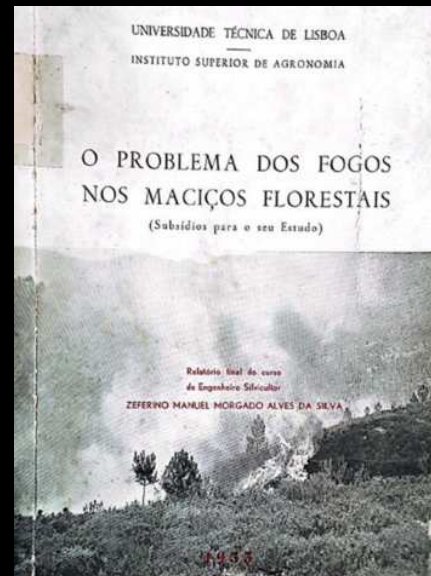
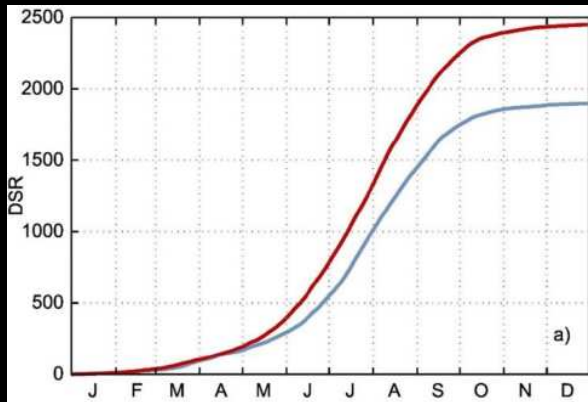
Environmental
History



History of Science
and Political History



Social History and
Anthropology



"(...) **cultivation by burning**, by *roças*, and *queimadas*, was truly a **system** (...) it was not a sporadic or supplementary means to increase the annual harvest, but a **mode of production** that occupied a central place in the agrarian life. **It was, in fact, a fundamental part of it.** And it would remain so long after the demise of the *Ancien Régime* (...)"

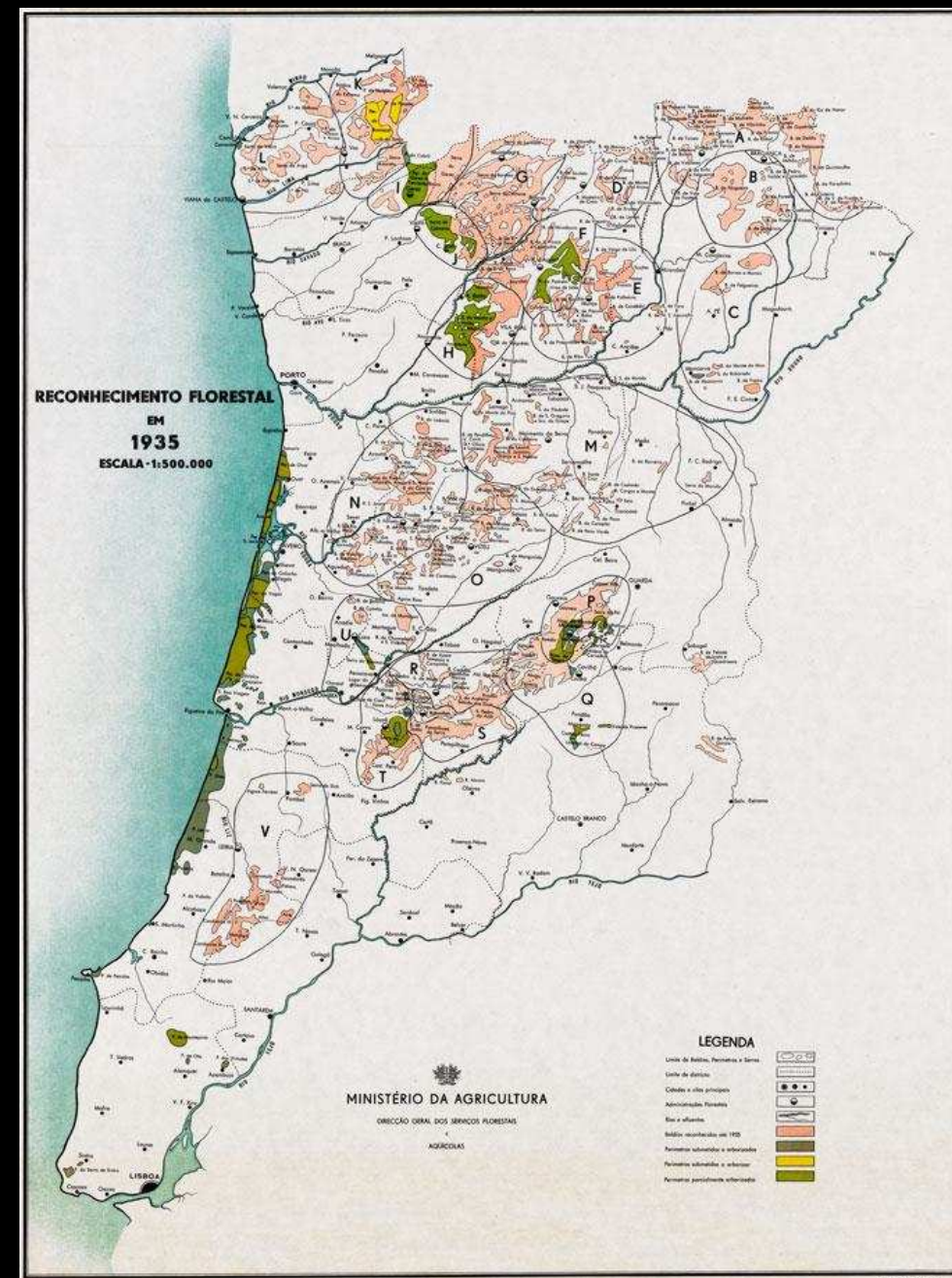
Albert Silbert, *Le Portugal méditerranéen à la fin de l'Ancien Régime* (1966), p. 454

The bottom of the slide features a dark blue background with a large, wavy, reddish-brown shape on the left side that curves across the bottom. A thin, light-colored line follows the curve of this shape, separating it from the dark blue background.



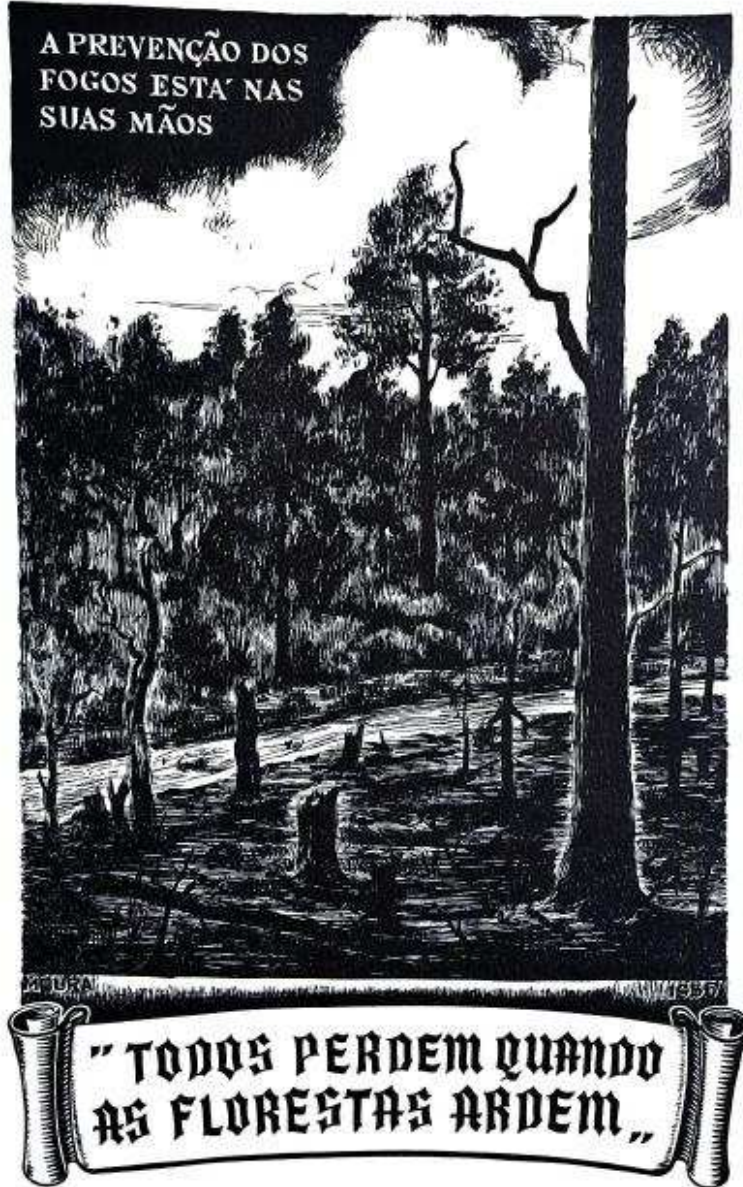
Carta Agrícola e Florestal de Portugal (1910)

- **1852:** Creation of the Agricultural Institute in Lisbon
- **1868:** *Report on the General Afforestation of the Country*
- **1886:** Creation of the Forest Service
- **1901:** Forest Regime Act
- **1926:** Military dictatorship
- **1933:** Promulgation of the *Estado Novo* constitution
- **1938:** Forest Settlement Law (*Lei do Povoamento Florestal*)



I

PORTUGAL, PELAS SUAS CARACTERÍSTICAS MESOLÓGICAS, É UM PAÍS ESSENCIALMENTE FLORESTAL.



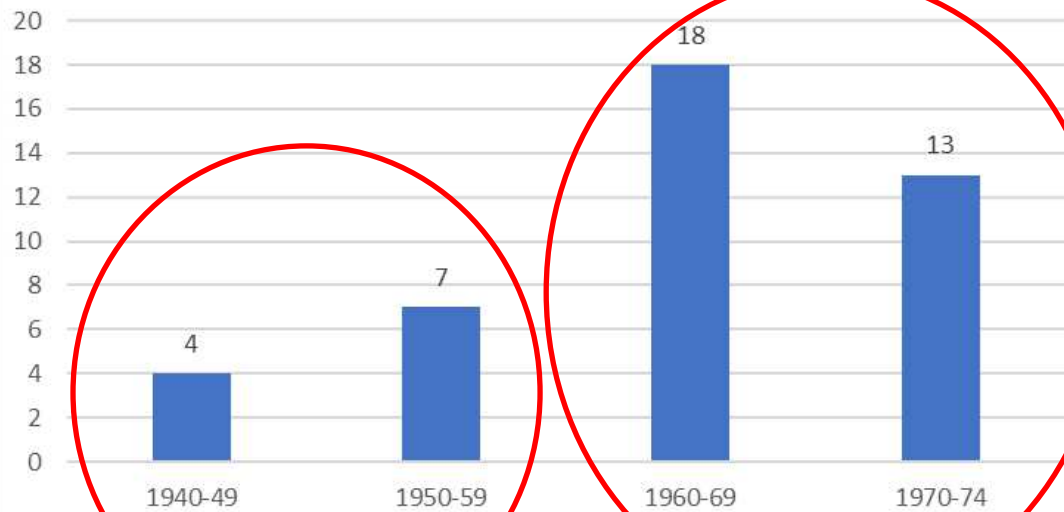
"Fire prevention is in your hands. Everyone loses when the forests burn".

António Bello Dias, *Elementos para a organização da defesa contra fogos no património florestal* (1955)

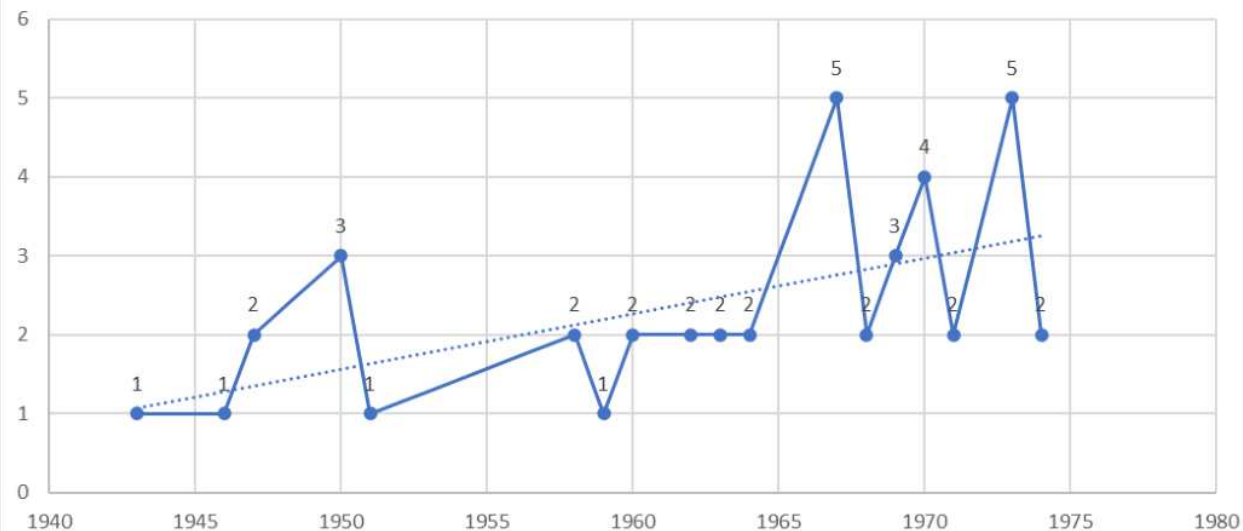
"The Forestry Services are already responsible for the tree cover of vast regions, thus saving them from uselessness and even complete ruin (...) **Fire, the axe and grazing have for centuries prevented the spontaneous regeneration of the forest**, offering the thin and unprotected land to the **unlimited and corrosive greed of the natural elements.**"

José Monteiro da Rocha Peixoto, Assembleia Nacional, 23 April 1958

Sessões parlamentares em que foram debatidos incêndios florestais (por década)



Sessões parlamentares em que foram debatidos incêndios florestais (por ano)

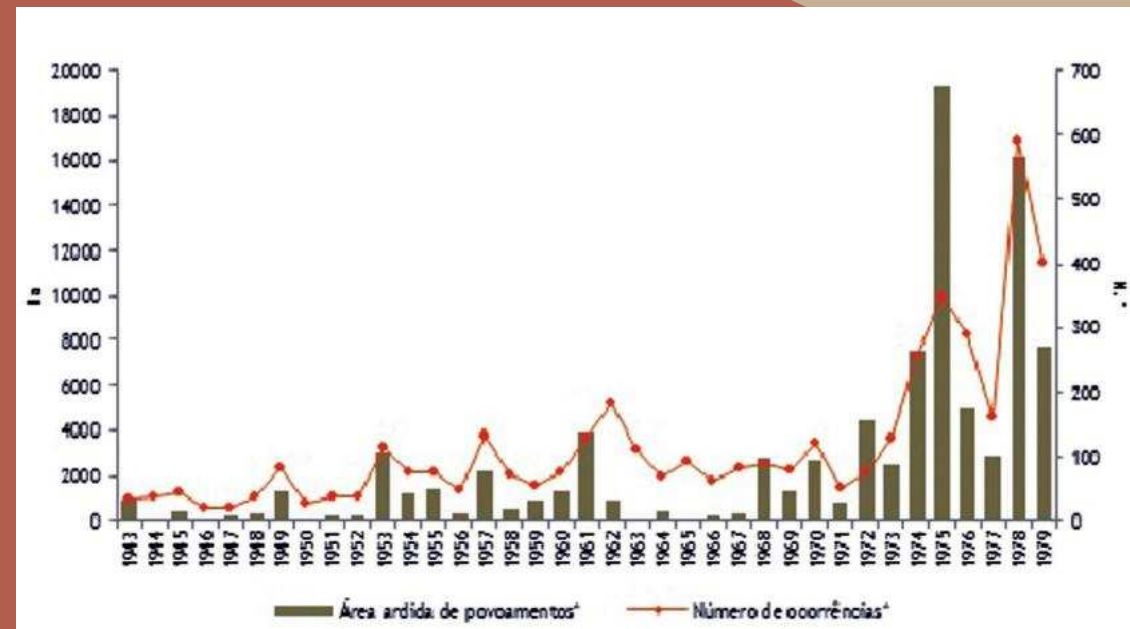


Keywords: “fogos florestais”, “fogo florestal”, “fogo controlado” “incêndio florestal”, “incêndios florestais”, “fogo AND floresta”, “fogo AND mata”, “incêndio AND floresta”, “queimada”

"Strategic planning and a quick response are the cornerstones of our common defence against the devastations of woodland, the most important of which are **the wildfires that in a few moments can destroy a wealth that takes dozens of years to create**. And it is not without trembling that I recall now all **the pain and anguish that we suffered last summer, with the terrible wilfires that scourged all of Portugal** (...) in the face of these manifold losses caused by the evils of wildfires and the terrible threat of future devastation, I call on the Government to do its utmost to consider the necessary means to the elimination, or at least the attenuation, of such an **apocalyptic enemy**".

Augusto Simões, Assembleia Nacional, 10 January 1963

- **1945:** Serra da Lousã
- **1961:** Serra da Aveleira/Arganil
- **1961:** Vale do Rio/Figueiró dos Vinhos
- **1962:** Viana do Castelo
- **1964:** Boticas
- **1966:** Serra de Sintra
- **1966:** Serra de Monchique



Leite, Lourenço e Bento-Gonçalves, "Grandes incêndios florestais na década de 60 do século XX" (2014)

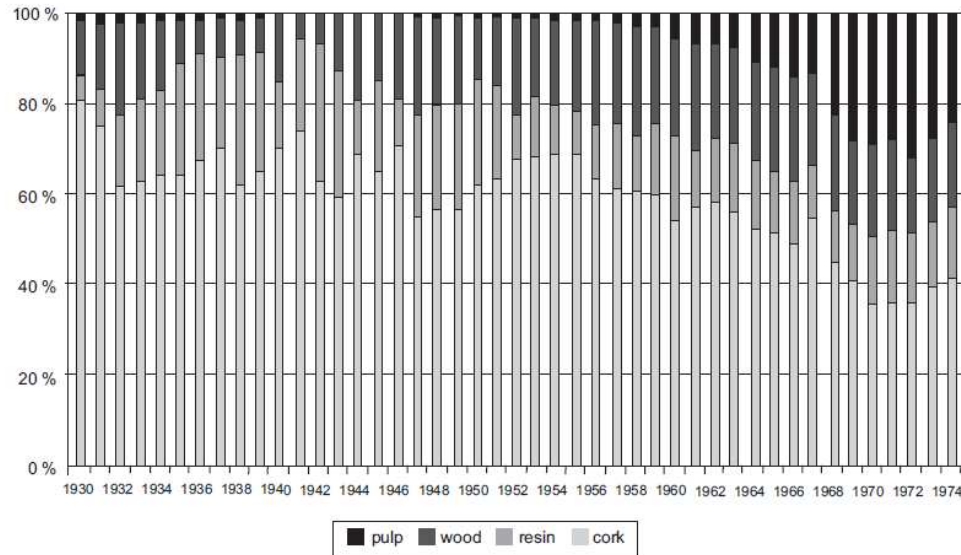


Aldeia de Vale do Rio (1961)



FIGURE 1

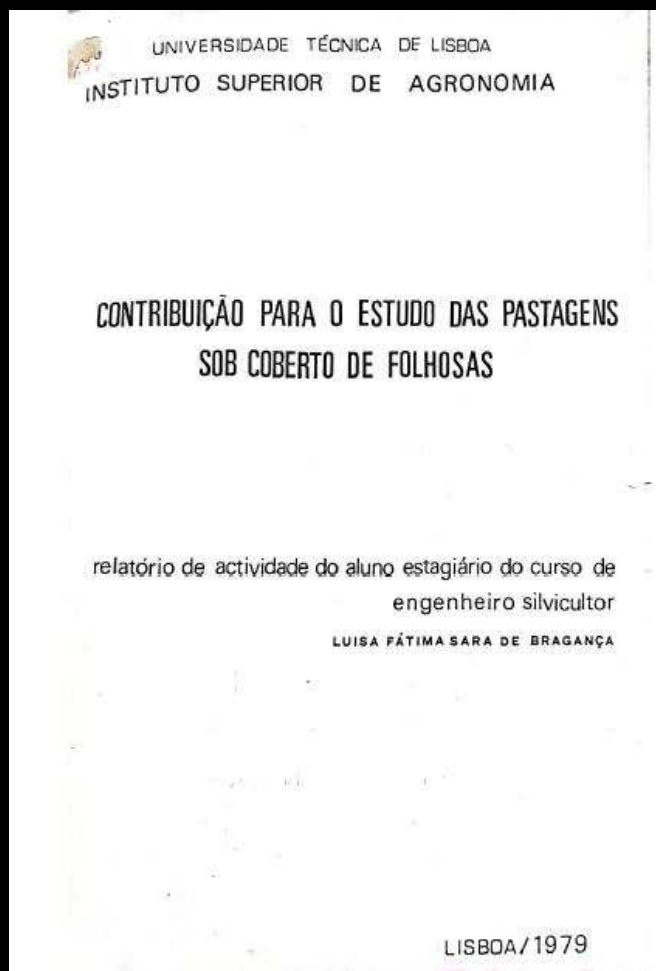
EVOLUTION IN THE RELATIVE SHARE OF FOREST-BASED EXPORTS



Amélia Branco, "Was the Portuguese Forest Policy a contribution towards economic modernization?" (2010)

- **1945:** Creation of the Forest Development Fund (*Fundo de Fomento Florestal*)
- **1954:** Forest and Soil Conservation Act and Regional Afforestation Plans
- **1957:** First tests using Eucalyptus wood for the production of paper pulp in Cacia (Aveiro)
- **1964:** Regulation of the Forest Development Fund
- **1970:** Law 488/70 on the Prevention, Detection and Extinction of Forest Fires

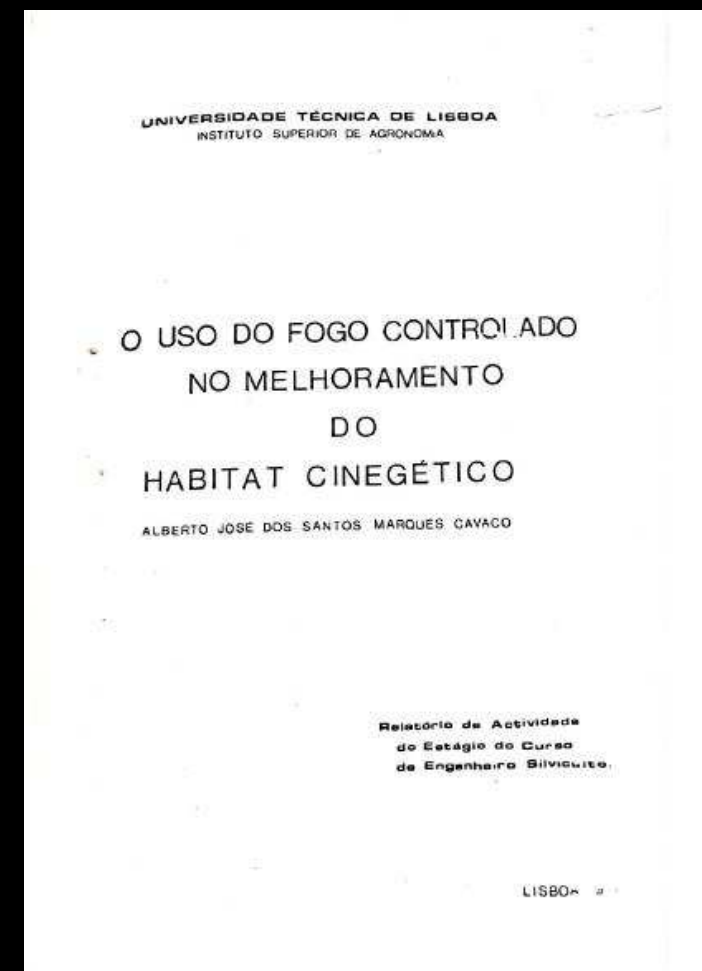
"Preventing, detecting and fighting forest fires is extremely complex, given their multiple effects. This is why it is recognised, at least in relation to private forest property, that there is a need **for concerted action by various bodies, among which the Forest Service must play a key role.** (...) And although it may be understood that the defence of private forests is primarily the responsibility of the owners, **there is no doubt that the entire forest represents national wealth, which must be safeguarded as a whole,** while also avoiding other consequences that often result from forest fires"



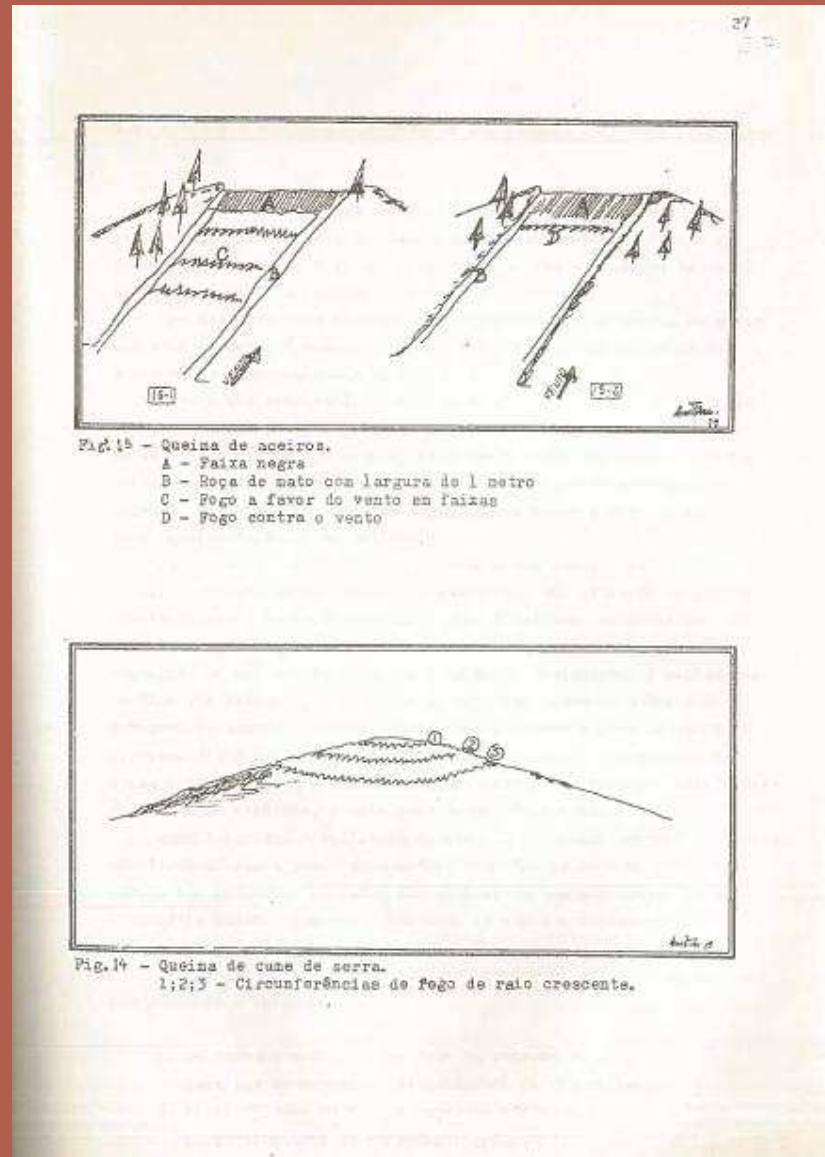
Luísa Fátima de Bragança,
*Contribution to the study of pastures
under broadleaf cover (1979)*



Amândio José de Oliveira Torres,
*Prescribed fire in the prevention of
forest fires
(1979)*



Alberto José dos Santos Cavaco,
*The use of prescribed fire to improve
hunting habitat
(1979)*



"Scheme for scrub burning" in Oliveira Torres (1979)

LOCALIZAÇÃO: _____ DATA: _____ ÁREA TOTAL: _____		QUEIMADA Nº _____
OBJECTIVO: _____		ÁREA QUEIMADA: _____
METEOROLOGIA • TEMPERATURA _____ • H. RELATIVA _____ • ULT. PRECIPITAÇÃO _____ DIAS S/ PRECIPITAÇÃO _____ • VENTO _____ DIRECÇÃO _____ REGULARIDADE _____ • HORA DO DIA _____ • HUMIDADE DO SOLO _____		COMPORTAMENTO DO FOGO • TIPO DE FOGO _____ • INTENSIDADE _____ • ALTURA DE CHAMAS _____ • VELOCIDADE DE AVANÇO _____ EFEITOS DO FOGO • % DE SOB-COBERTO SUPR/ _____ • % DE MANEIRA MOVA SUPR/ _____ • AMARELECIMENTO DE JORNS _____ • ÁRVORES QUEIMADAS _____ • ALTURA DE CASCA QUEIMADA _____
VEGETAÇÃO • COBERTO (ESP) _____ DENSIDADE _____ ALTURA _____ • SOB-COBERTO (ESP) _____ DENSIDADE _____ ALTURA _____ • MANEIRA-MORTA (TIPO) _____ PROFUNDIDADE _____ HUMIDADE _____		EXECUÇÃO • Nº PESSOAS _____ • DURAÇÃO DA QUEIMADA _____ • MEIOS UTILIZADOS _____ CUSTOS/HA DA QUEIMADA OBSERVAÇÕES _____ _____ _____
TOPOGRAFIA • DECLIVE _____ • EXPOSIÇÃO _____ • SITUAÇÕES ESPECIAIS _____		

"Scrub burning registration form" in Oliveira Torres (1979)

ALGUNS ASPECTOS ECOLÓGICOS E SOCIAIS RELACIONADOS
COM O FOGO

J. MOREIRA DA SILVA

Todos sabemos que a floresta natural "não arde" o que quer dizer que ela tem em si a capacidade da sua própria defesa e recuperação. Na floresta de caducifolias a humidade que lhe está associada e a

"(...) [it] will have to be recovered, at the cost of exhaustive surveys among older shepherds and farmers (time is pressing...) the ancestral cultural practice of using cold fire, to eliminate the dangerous summer wildfires"

Por razões de diversa ordem (e não cabe aqui discutir se deverá ou não ser revista esta opção) fomos "empurrados" para a utilização, em larga escala, duma espécie exótica - pinheiro bravo - especialmente sensível ao fogo e isto agravado pelo facto de no nosso país se verificar um elevado perigo de incêndio durante o verão pois às temperaturas mais elevadas correspondem fracas pluviosidades e baixas percentagens de humidade relativa do ar. É com esta realidade que

Thank you for your attention!



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