

# IUFRO FOREST ENVIRONMENT DIV 8 CONFERENCE 2023

October 24th – 27th  
ÉVORA, PORTUGAL



## Landscape fire severity: a multi-scale analysis of the drivers

**N. Guiomar,**

S. Godinho, R. Machado, T. Marques, P. Fernandes



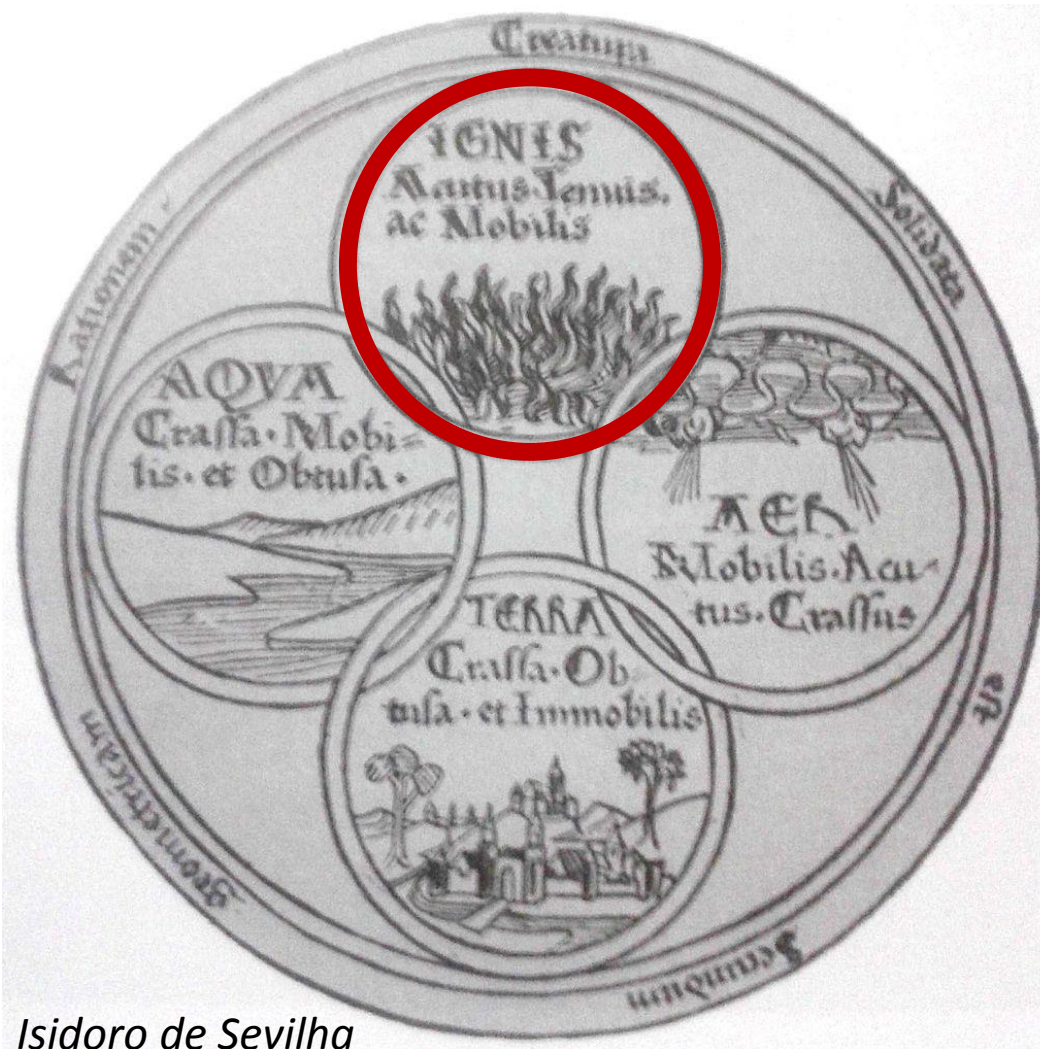
# INTRODUCTION



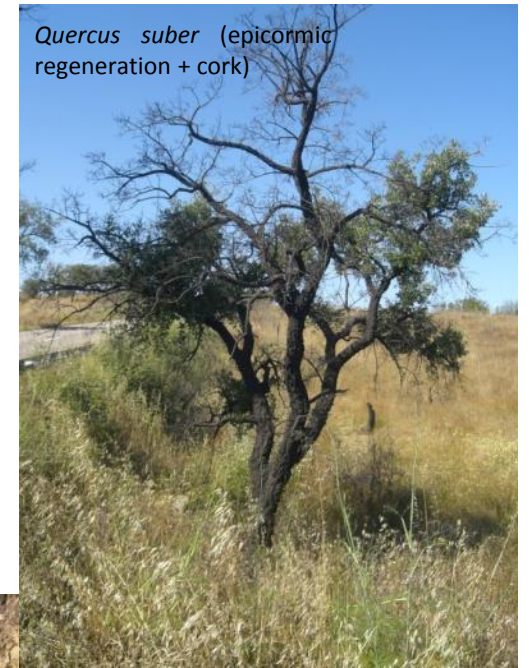
*Phyllirea angustifolia*  
(Juli Pausas)



*Pinus pinaster* (serotinous cones; Photo: K.B. Budde)



Isidoro de Sevilha



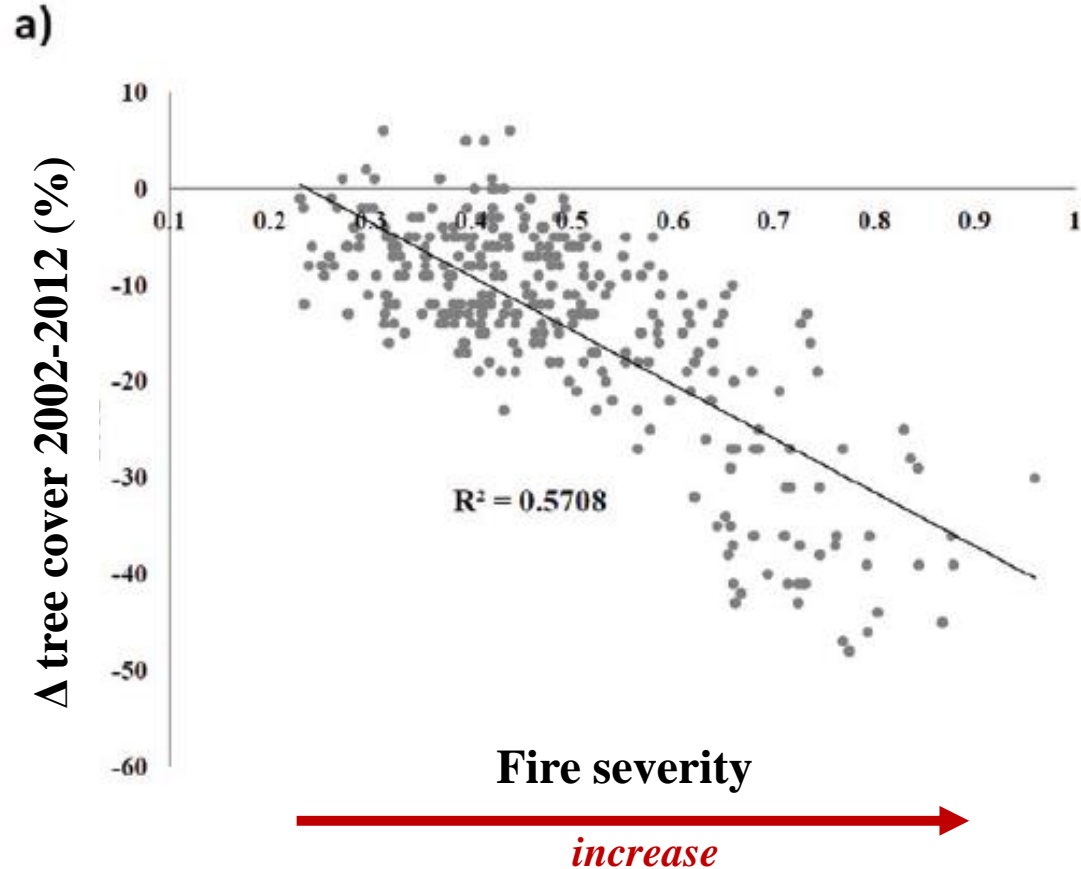
*Quercus suber* (epicormic regeneration + cork)



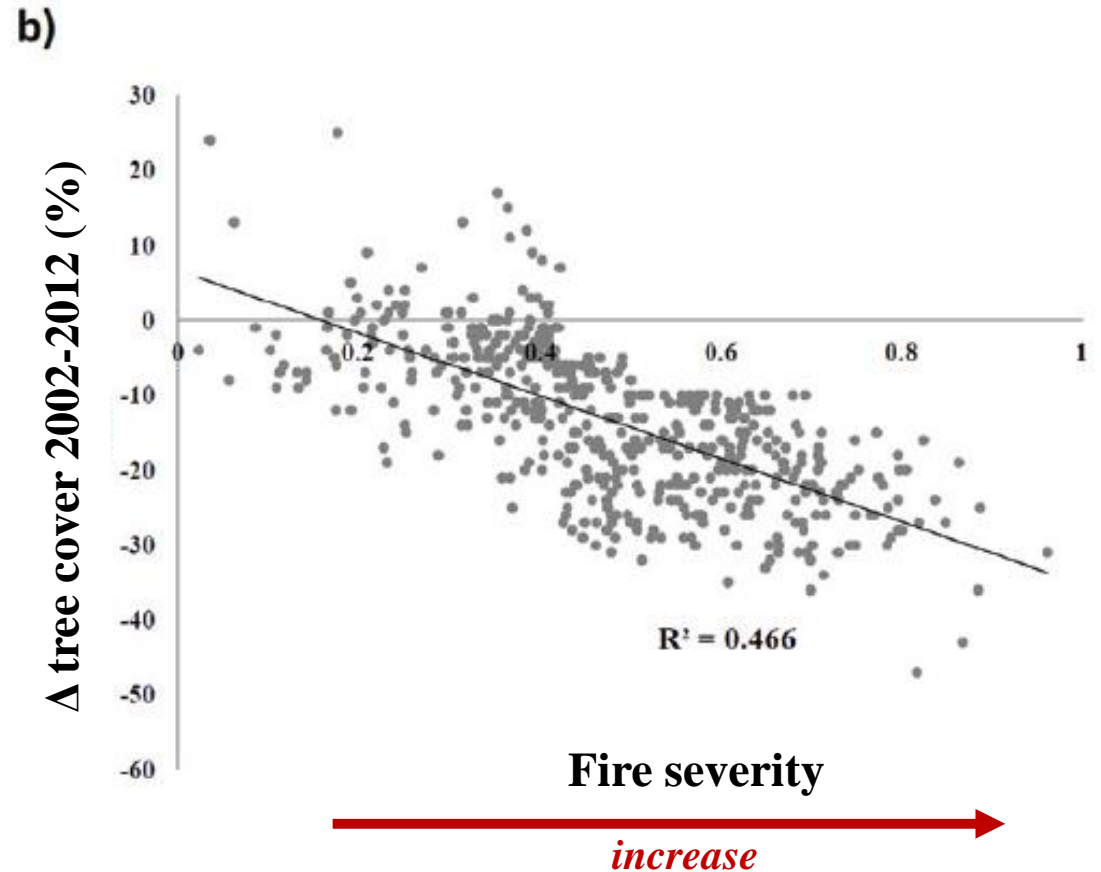
*Cistus ladanifer* (hard-coated seeds)

# INTRODUCTION

## Cork oak



## Maritime pine



OS INCÊNDIOS  
COMO CAUSA DE  
DESARBORIZAÇÃO  
EM PORTUGAL

Por: Paulo Fernandes<sup>1</sup> e Nuno Guiomar<sup>2</sup>

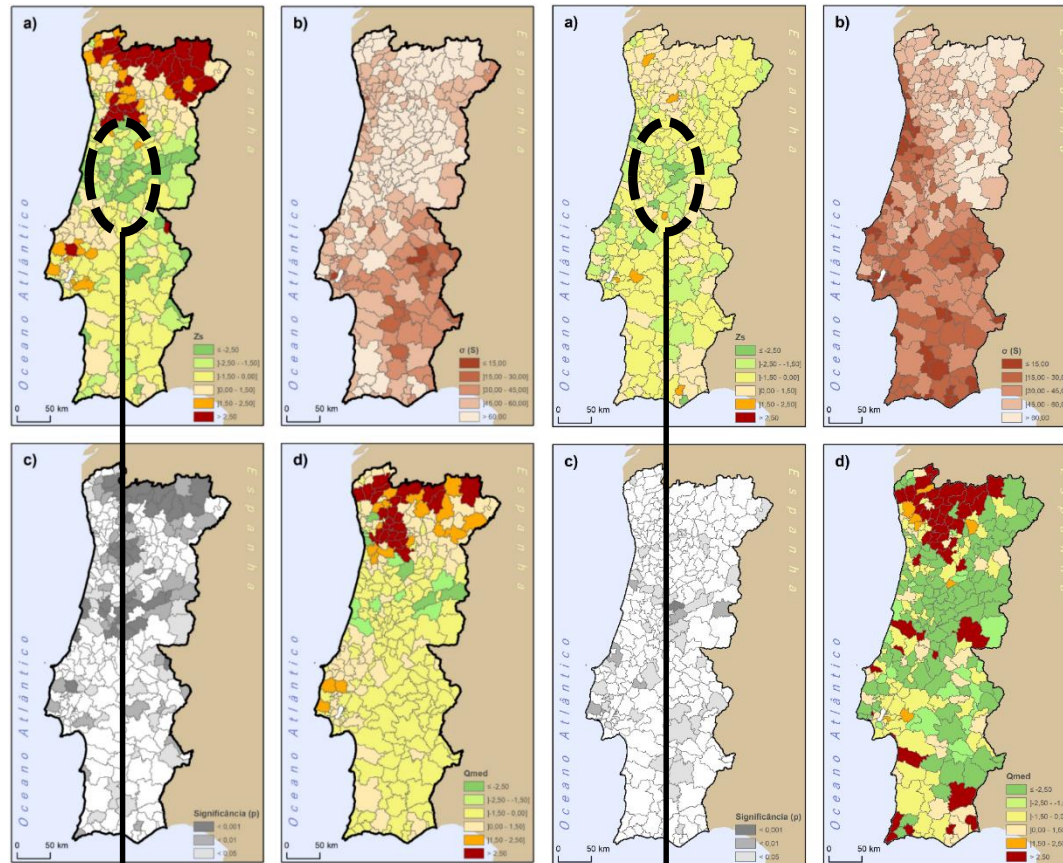
<sup>1</sup>[pfern@utad.pt](mailto:pfern@utad.pt)

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<sup>1</sup>Centro de Investigação e Tecnologias Agroambientais e Biológicas (CITAB), Universidade de Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro

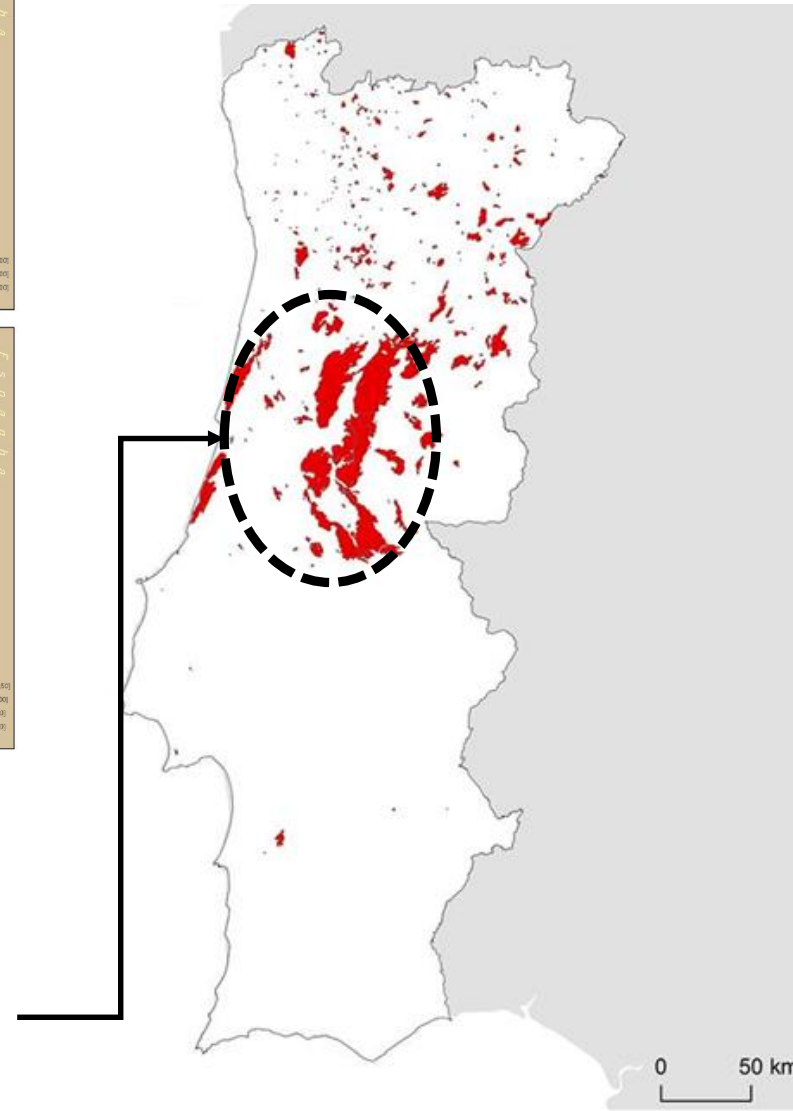
<sup>2</sup>Instituto de Ciências Agrárias e Ambientais Mediterrânicas (ICAAM), Universidade de Évora

# INTRODUCTION



decrease in the number of ignitions and burnt area between 1980 and 2013

Mega-fires in 2017



# INTRODUCTION

pyrocumulonimbus lightning strike  
(Pedrogão Grande 17/06/2017)



Vieira de Leiria, 15/10/2017  
Photo: Nuno Osório



Masticated fuels



Fire spread = 1,0 m/min  
Flame height = 0,7 m  
Fireline intensity = 413 kW/m  
Guiomar et al., 2011



Nuno Guiomar



Nuno Guiomar

# INTRODUCTION

*By definition, it is a direct measure of the effect of fire on the landscape/ecological system/vegetation/soil*

**Fire severity assessment is one of the critical instruments for the necessary paradigm shift in fire management across fire-prone regions**



## PERSPECTIVE

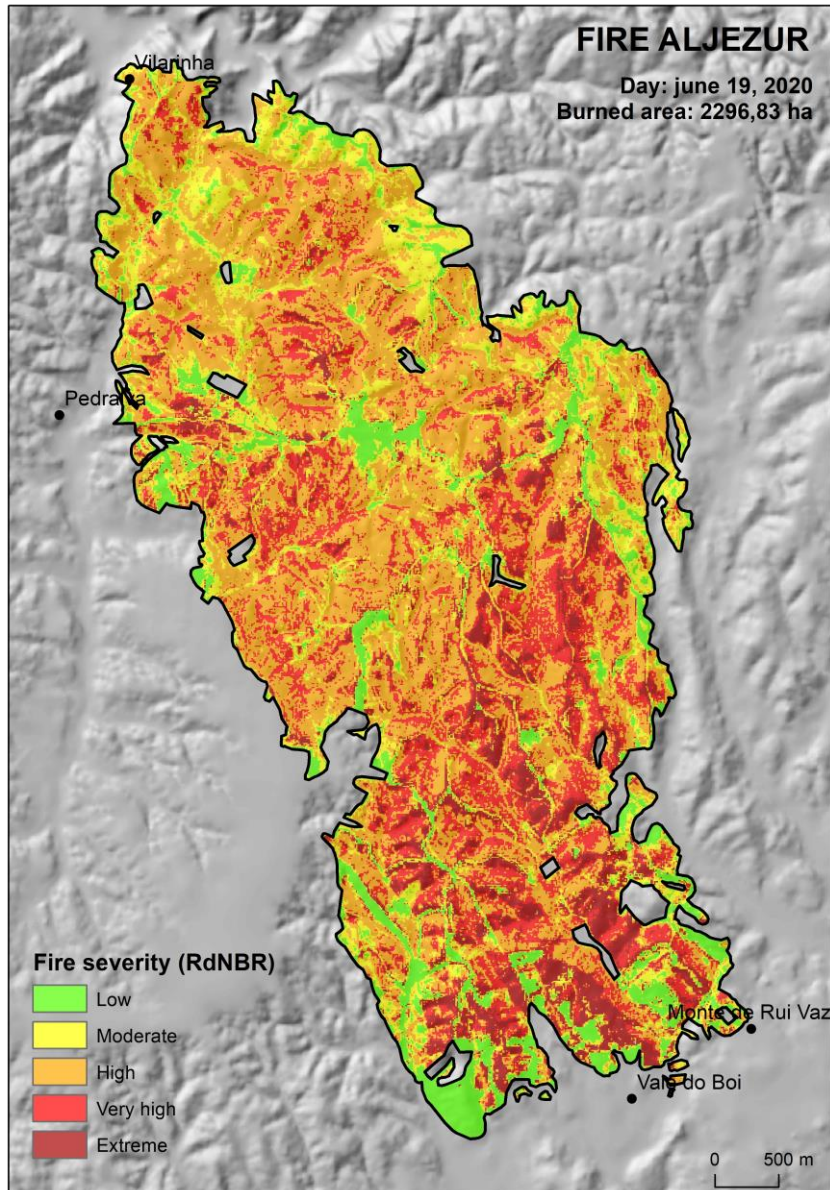
Wildfire management in Mediterranean-type regions: paradigm change needed

Francisco Moreira<sup>1,2,24</sup> , Davide Ascoli<sup>3</sup>, Hugh Safford<sup>4</sup>, Mark A Adams<sup>5</sup>, José M Moreno<sup>6</sup>, José M C Pereira<sup>7</sup>, Filipe X Catry<sup>8</sup>, Juan Armesto<sup>9</sup>, William Bond<sup>10</sup>, Mauro E González<sup>11</sup> , Thomas Curt<sup>12</sup>, Nikos Koutsias<sup>13</sup>, Lachlan McCaw<sup>14</sup>, Owen Price<sup>15</sup>, Juli G Pausas<sup>16</sup> , Eric Rigolot<sup>17</sup>, Scott Stephens<sup>18</sup>, Cagatay Tavsanoglu<sup>19</sup>, V Ramon Vallejo<sup>20</sup>, Brian W Van Wilgen<sup>21</sup> , Gavriil Xanthopoulos<sup>22</sup> and Paulo M Fernandes<sup>23</sup> 

## Set the need for a paradigm shift

*policy effectiveness should not be primarily measured as a function of area burned (as it usually is), but rather **as a function of avoided socio-ecological damage and loss***

# HOW CAN BE MEASURED?



## Field work

### GUÍA PARA LA EVALUACIÓN DE CAMPO DE LA SEVERIDAD DEL FUEGO EN EL SUELO

• CRISTINA FERNÁNDEZ • JOSÉ M. FERNÁNDEZ-ALONSO  
• JACOB KEIZER • ANTONIO GIRONA-GARCÍA  
Centro de Investigación Forestal de Lourizán-Xunta de Galicia  
Centre for Environmental and Marine Studies (CESAM),  
Dept. Environment and Planning, University of Aveiro

Departamento Florestal  
Universidade de Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro



Elaborado no âmbito do projecto de Norma Portuguesa "Sistemas de Gestão Florestal Sustentável. Aplicação dos critérios pan-europeus para a gestão florestal sustentável"

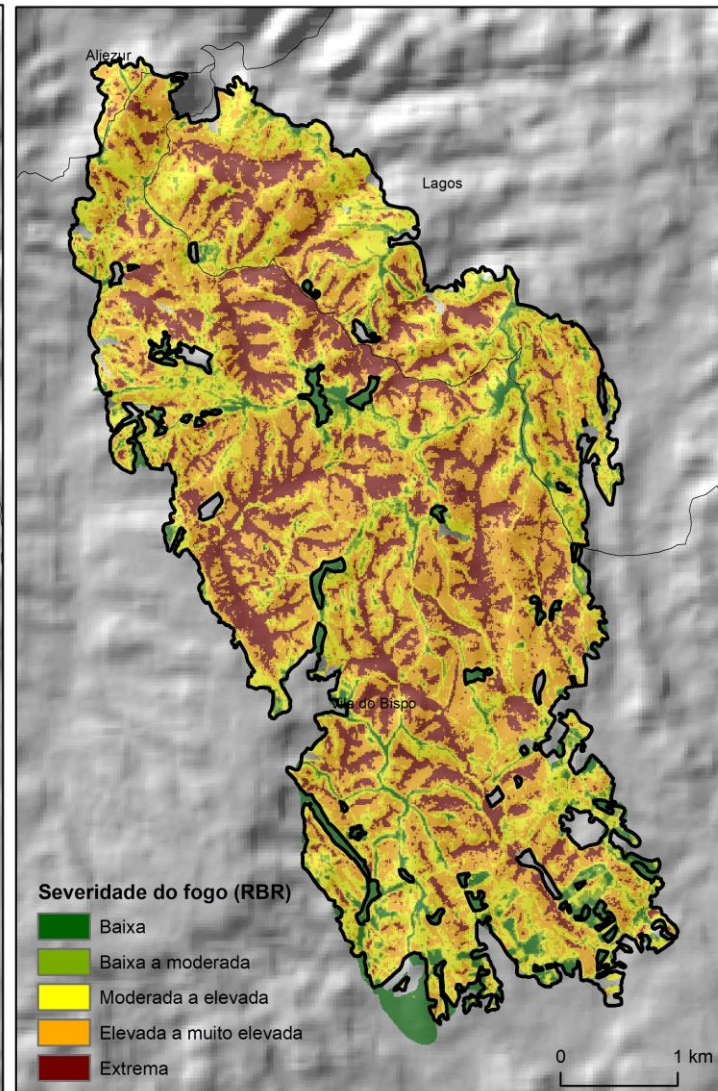
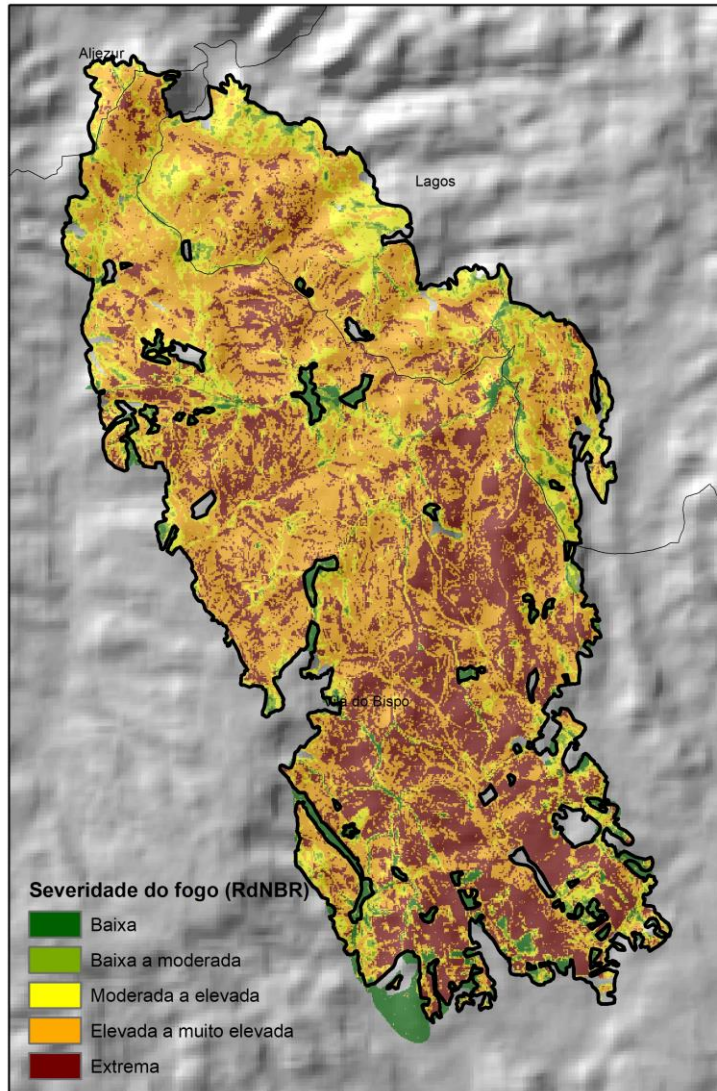
Critério 2. - Manutenção da saúde e vitalidade dos ecossistemas florestais  
Quadro B.4 - Indicador 2.1: Perigo de incêndio

## Through satellite images

$$dNBR = ((NBR_{prefire} - NBR_{postfire}) * 1000)$$
$$NBR = \left( \frac{\text{band 4} - \text{band 7}}{\text{band 4} + \text{band 7}} \right)^*$$

***So what prevents the transition from models that inform fire managers of the higher or lower probability of a given area being affected by a fire to models that indicate how it will potentially burn?***

# WHAT IS THE BEST METRIC?



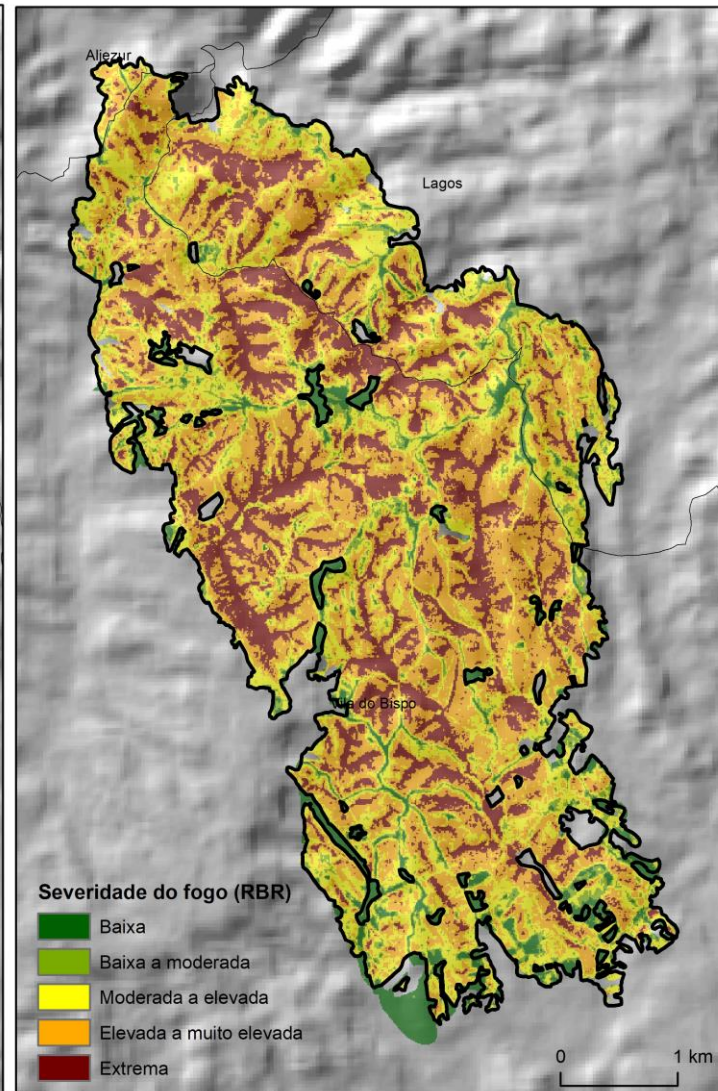
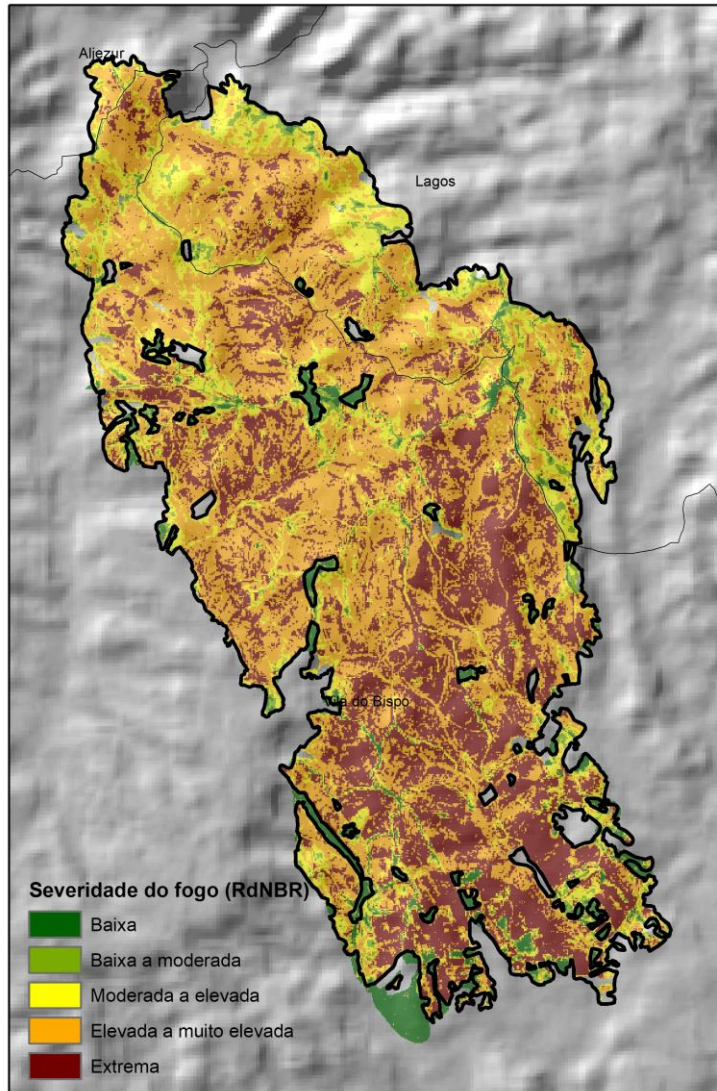
References	Post-fire metrics tested	Vegetation types/Regions
Harris et al., 2011	NDVI, SAVI, NBR, GEMI, VI <sub>3</sub> , MSAVI, GEMI <sub>3</sub> , MIRBI, BAI, EVI, CSI	Chaparral
Schepers et al., 2014	NDVI, SAVI, NBR, GEMI, MSAVI, MIRBI, BAI, EVI, CSI	Central European temperate heathlands
Fernández-Manso <i>et al.</i> , 2016	NDVI, NBR, GNDVI, SR, DVI, NDVI <sub>re1-3n</sub> , NDVI <sub>re1-3</sub> , PSRI, CI <sub>re</sub> , ND <sub>re1-2</sub> , ND <sub>re1-2m</sub> , SR <sub>re1-2</sub> , MSR <sub>re</sub> , MSR <sub>ren</sub>	Forest stands of <i>Pinus pinaster</i> and <i>Quercus pyrenaica</i>
Navarro et al., 2017	NDVI, GNDVI, NDVI <sub>re1-3n</sub> , NBR	Macaronesia
Santana et al., 2018	NDVI, NBR, GEMI, MIRBI, NBR <sub>2</sub> , BAIM (+ individual bands with and without "zero mean" normalization)	Amazonia
Chen <i>et al.</i> , 2020	GEMI, NBR, SAVI, MSAVI, GNDVI, NDVI, BAI (+ principal components, and NIR band)	Tundra
van Dijk et al. 2021	NDVI, SAVI, NBR (with SWIR <sub>1</sub> and SWIR <sub>2</sub> ), MSAVI, MIRBI, BAI, EVI, NBR <sub>2</sub> , BAIM, BAIS <sub>2</sub>	Heterogeneous socio-ecological systems

Or through a bi-temporal approach

$$dNBR = ((NBR_{prefire} - NBR_{postfire}) * 1000)$$



# WHAT IS THE BEST METRIC?



Severity Level	dNBR Range (scaled by 10 <sup>3</sup> )	dNBR Range (not scaled)
Enhanced Regrowth, high (post-fire)	-500 to -251	-0.500 to -0.251
Enhanced Regrowth, low (post-fire)	-250 to -101	-0.250 to -0.101
Unburned	-100 to +99	-0.100 to +0.99
Low Severity	+100 to +269	+0.100 to +0.269
Moderate-low Severity	+270 to +439	+0.270 to +0.439
Moderate-high Severity	+440 to +659	+0.440 to +0.659
High Severity	+660 to +1300	+0.660 to +1.300

Estudios	Índice	Umbral de clasificación a partir de teledetección		
		No quemado-Baja	Baja-Moderada	Moderada-Alta
(Key and Benson, 2006)	dNBR	100	270	440
(Miller and Thode, 2007)	dNBR	41	177	367
(Cansler and McKenzie, 2012)	dNBR	106	218	456
(Parks <i>et al.</i> , 2014)	dNBR	42	180	422
Este estudio	dNBR	160	260	481
(Miller and Thode, 2007)	RdNBR	69	316	641
(Cansler and McKenzie, 2012)	RdNBR	189	372	703
(Parks <i>et al.</i> , 2014)	RdNBR	99	319	704
Este estudio	RdNBR	230	475	835
(Parks <i>et al.</i> , 2014)	RBR	35	130	298
Este estudio	RBR	105	200	355



Different contexts → Different thresholds to define fire severity classes

Estudio de la severidad post-incendio en la Comunidad Valenciana comparando los índices dNBR, RdNBR y RBR a partir de imágenes Landsat 8

# HOW TO CALCULATE IT?

Moreover, dNBR values may have a high correlation with pre-fire NBR...

Miller & Thode, 2007  $RdNBR = \frac{dNBR}{|NBR_{prefire}|^{0.5}}$  Parks et al., 2014  $RBR = \left( \frac{dNBR}{(NBR_{prefire} + 1.001)} \right)$

Just as the effects resulting from phenological dynamics must be reduced

$$dNBR = ((NBR_{prefire} - NBR_{postfire}) * 1000) - dNBR_{offset}$$

However, in heterogeneous landscapes multiple offsets are needed (Guiomar et al., ...)

Land cover classes	Mean	Mean SE	Median	Median SE	Mest	Mest SE
Annual crops	0.118	0.0018	0.114	0.0018	0.115	0.0019
Olive groves	0.106	0.0013	0.103	0.0012	0.103	0.0014
Vineyards	0.092	0.0036	0.088	0.0044	0.089	0.0037
Orchards	0.096	0.0075	0.080	0.0077	0.090	0.0082
Small-scale farming systems	0.081	0.0009	0.077	0.0010	0.078	0.0008
Pastures	0.110	0.0040	0.099	0.0048	0.104	0.0042
Deciduous oaks and Castanea sativa	0.053	0.0012	0.051	0.0015	0.051	0.0012
Heterogeneous and sm	0.029	0.0008	0.022	0.0007	0.025	0.0006
Other broadleaved forest	0.046	0.0009	0.041	0.0011	0.043	0.0008
Deciduous o	0.041	0.0006	0.037	0.0006	0.038	0.0005
Other coniferous forest	0.049	0.0036	0.046	0.0026	0.046	0.0029
Riparian vegetation	0.113	0.0183	0.080	0.0324	0.100	0.0227
Shrubland	0.062	0.0012	0.055	0.0013	0.057	0.0011
Artificial surfaces	0.049	0.0014	0.044	0.0013	0.046	0.0012

# FIRE SEVERITY vs. FIRE SIZE

CSIRO PUBLISHING

www.publish.csiro.au/journals/ijwf

International Journal of Wildland Fire, 2007, 16, 277–284

## Analysis of Alaskan burn severity patterns using remotely sensed data

Paul A. Duffy<sup>A,E</sup>, Justin Epting<sup>B</sup>, Jonathan M. Graham<sup>C</sup>, T. Scott Rupp<sup>A</sup> and A. David McGuire<sup>D</sup>

*(...) found a positive relationship between fire size and proportion of high fire severity, which was mediated by distinct fire behavior drivers involving direct and indirect pathways.*

Science of the Total Environment 536 (2015) 338–352



Wildfire patterns and landscape changes in Mediterranean oak woodlands

N. Guiomar<sup>a,b,\*</sup>, S. Godinho<sup>a,b</sup>, P.M. Fernandes<sup>c,d</sup>, R. Machado<sup>a,b</sup>, N. Neves<sup>b,e</sup>, J.P. Fernandes<sup>a,b</sup>



*Large fires are more likely to contain areas that are more severely burned than smaller fires as opposed to a uniform increase in overall burn severity.*

Science of the Total Environment 875 (2023) 162575



Characterization of biophysical contexts leading to severe wildfires in Portugal and their environmental controls

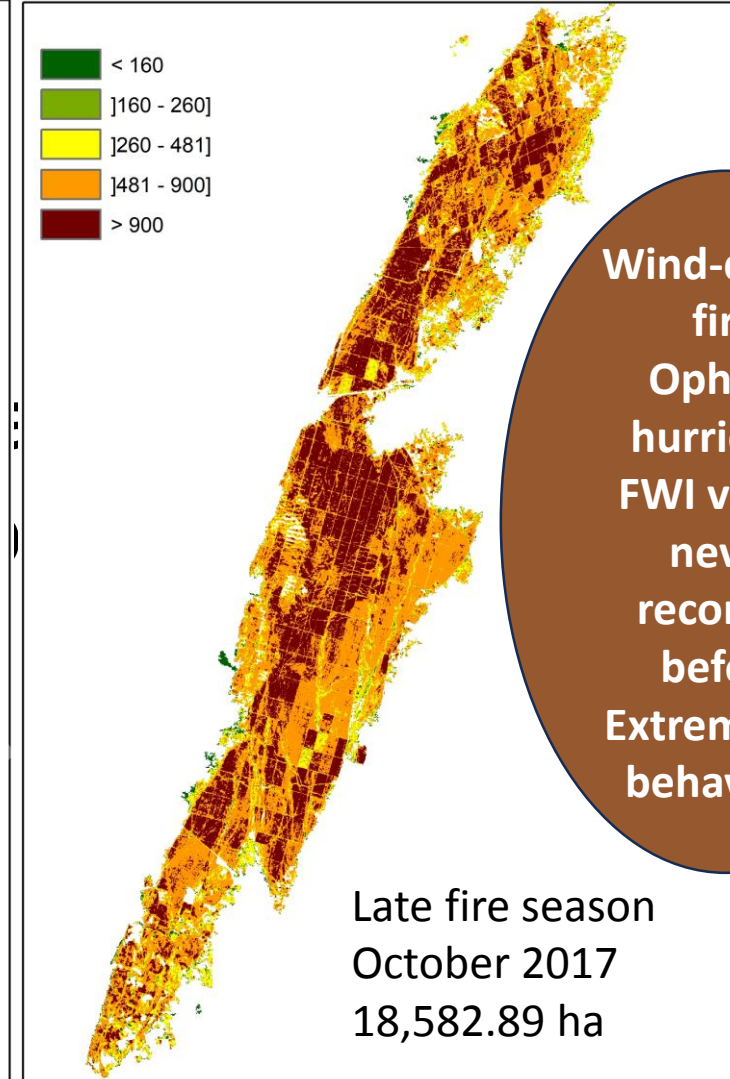
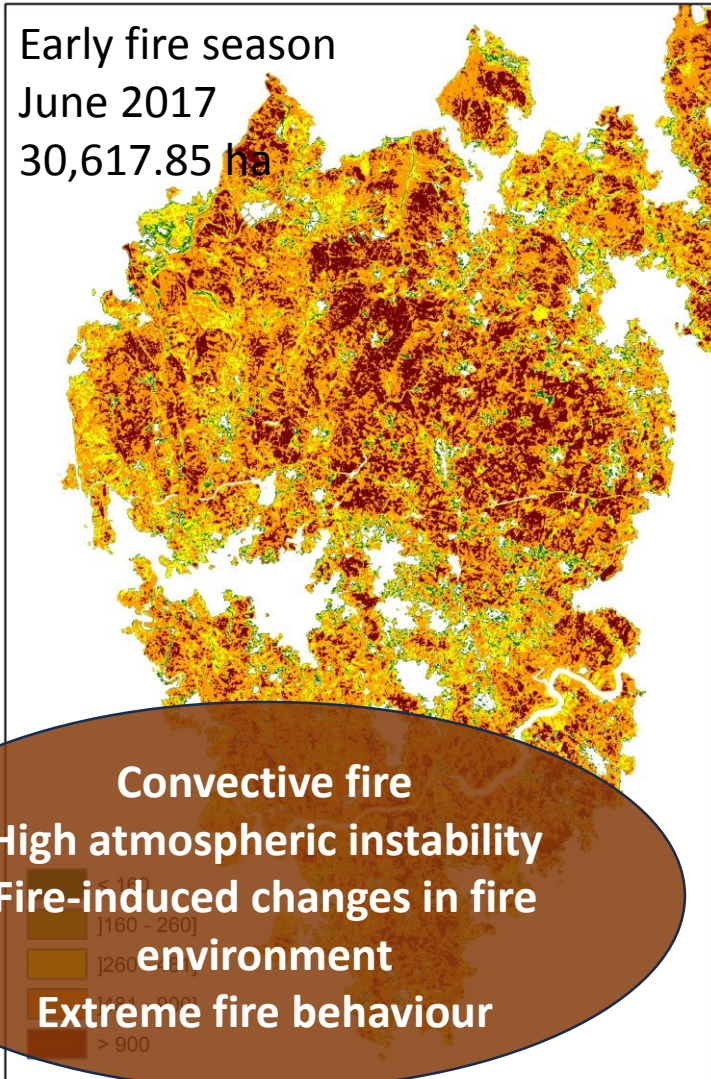
José Manuel Fernández-Guisuraga<sup>a,b,\*</sup>, Samuel Martins<sup>c</sup>, Paulo M. Fernandes<sup>a</sup>



*Large fires can affect montado resilience both directly and indirectly, contributing to its progressive decline. The authors highlight the role of fire extent as a proxy of burn severity.*

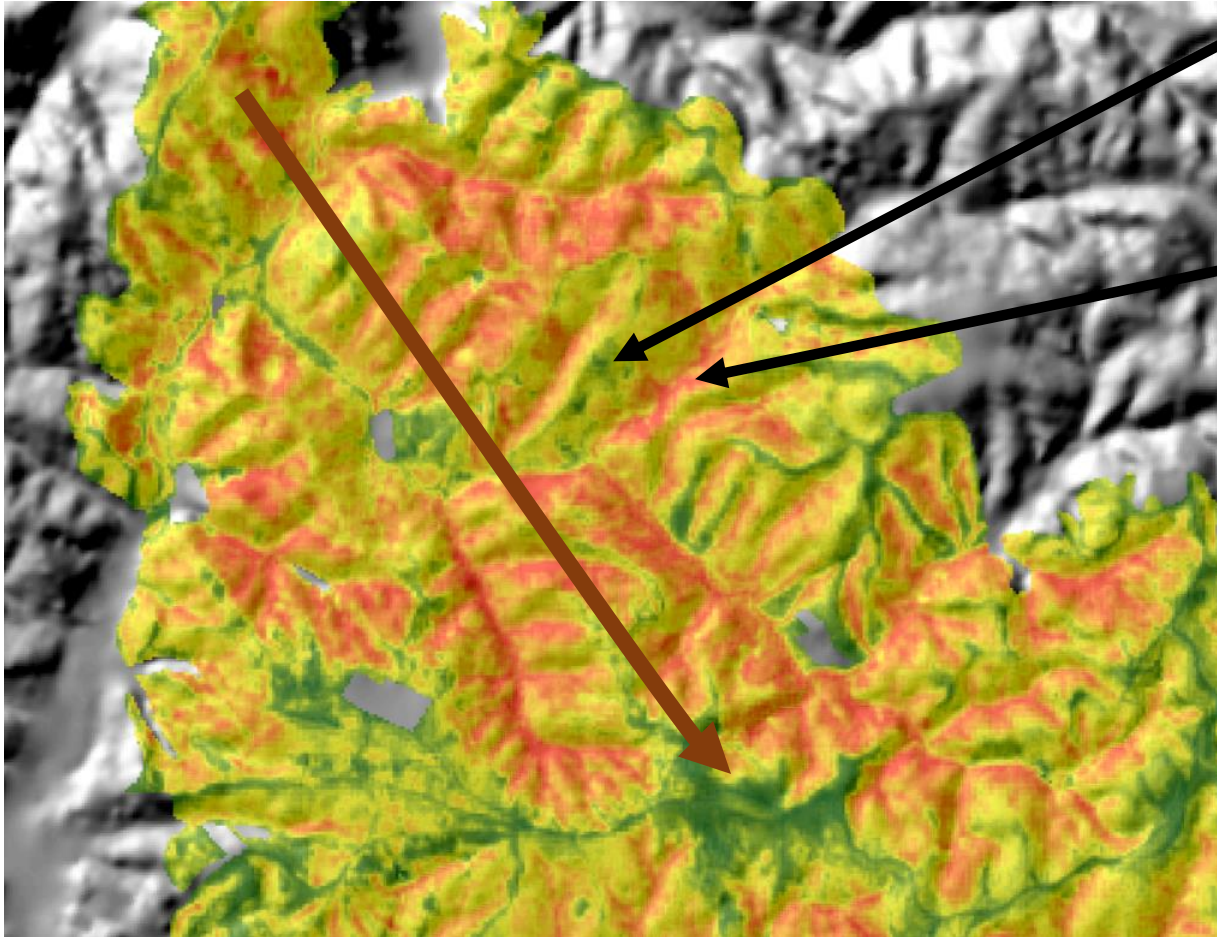
# @ LANDSCAPE SCALE

## Variability between fires



# @ LANDSCAPE SCALE

## Variability between fires



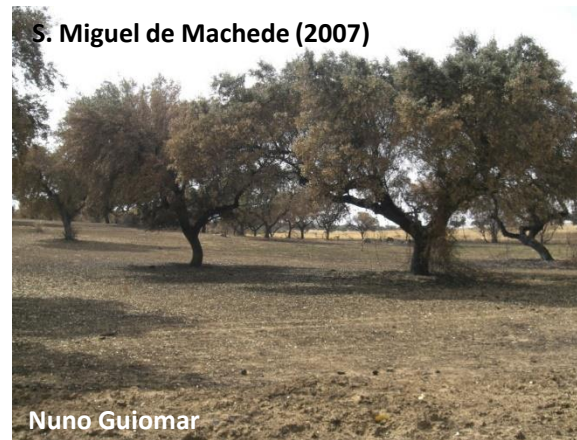
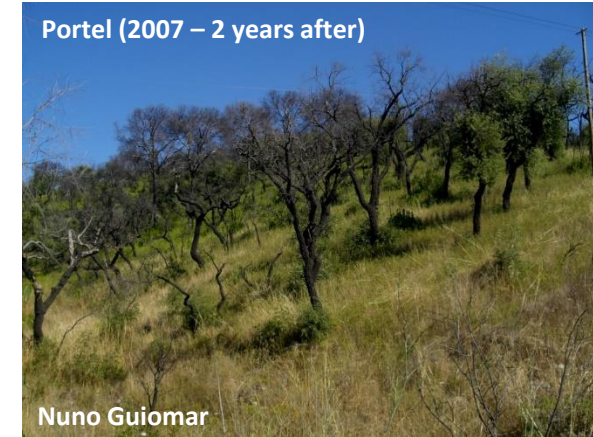
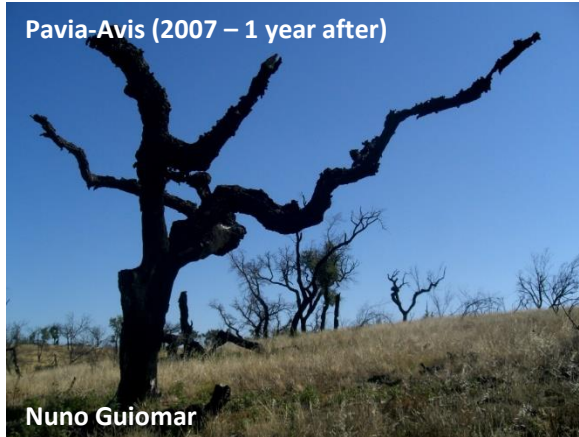
Fire spreading downstream

Fire spreading upstream (wind and slope alignment)

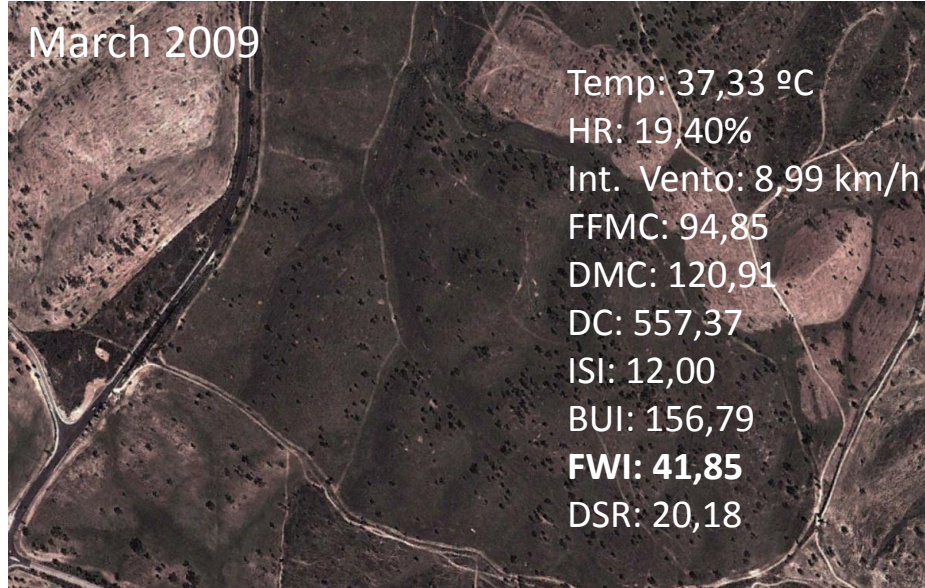
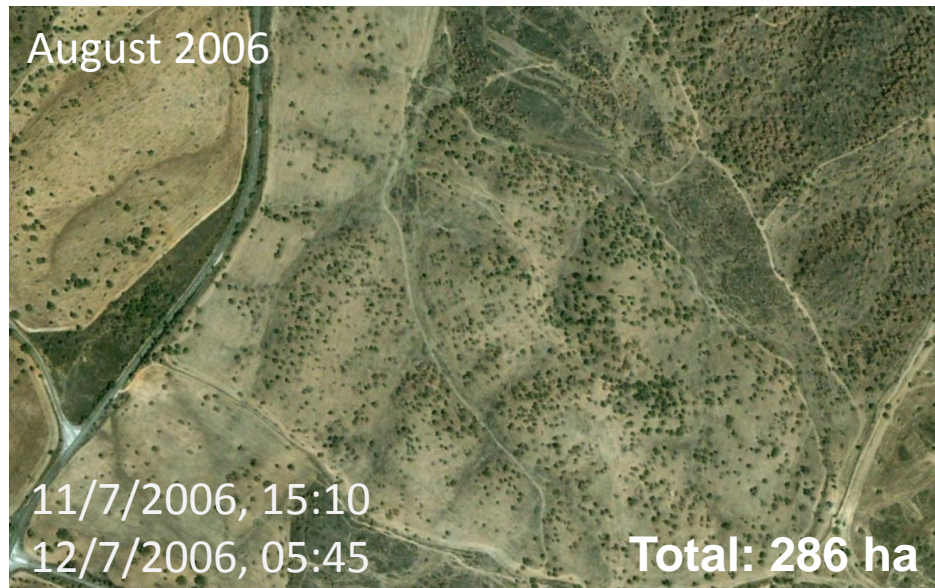
While variability in fire severity patterns between large fires are determined by macro- and/or meso-scale conditions, for fires driven by fire-weather more favorable to fire suppression, the spatial variability of fire severity is more related to local-scale parameters (e.g. "functional slope")

# @ CLASS SCALE

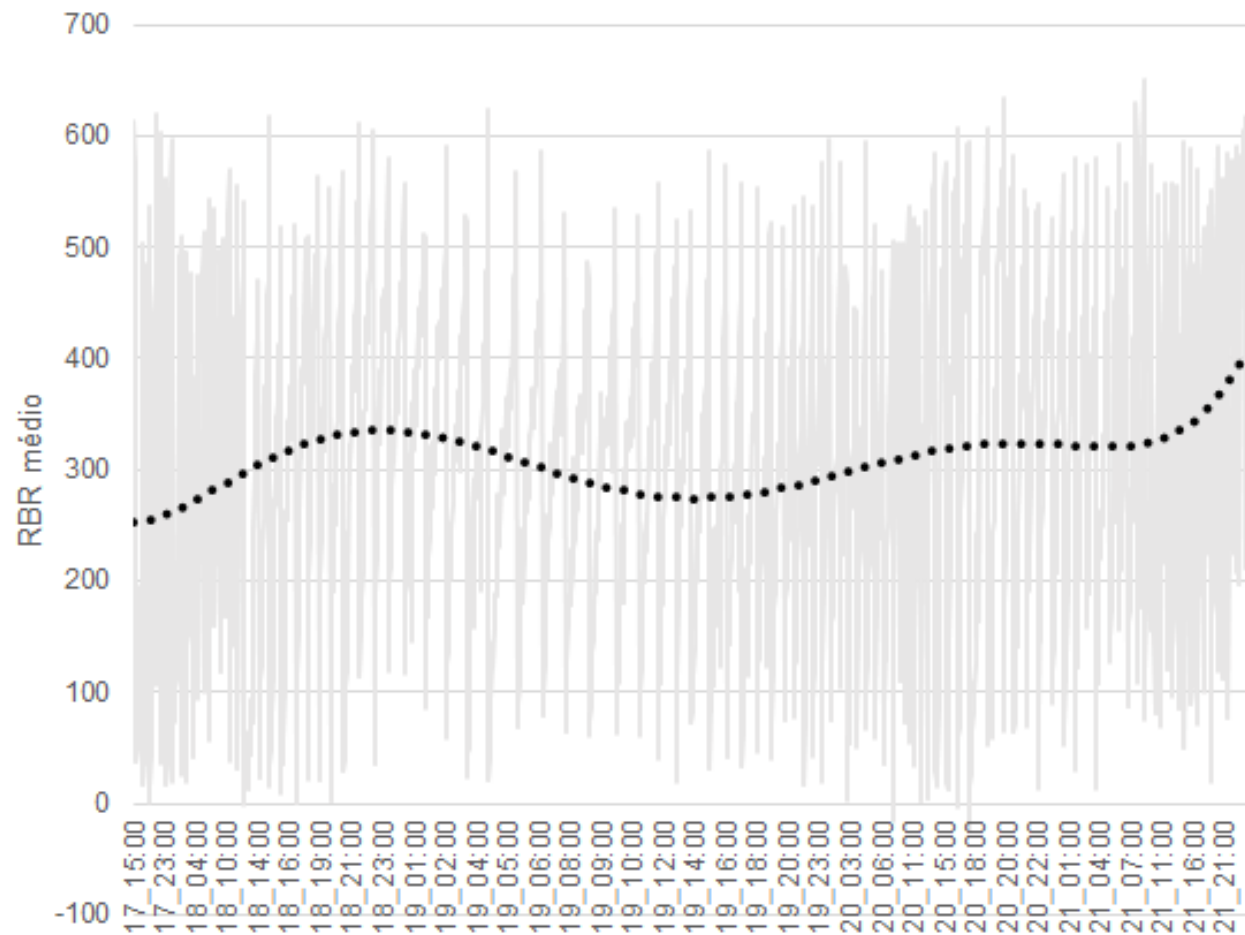
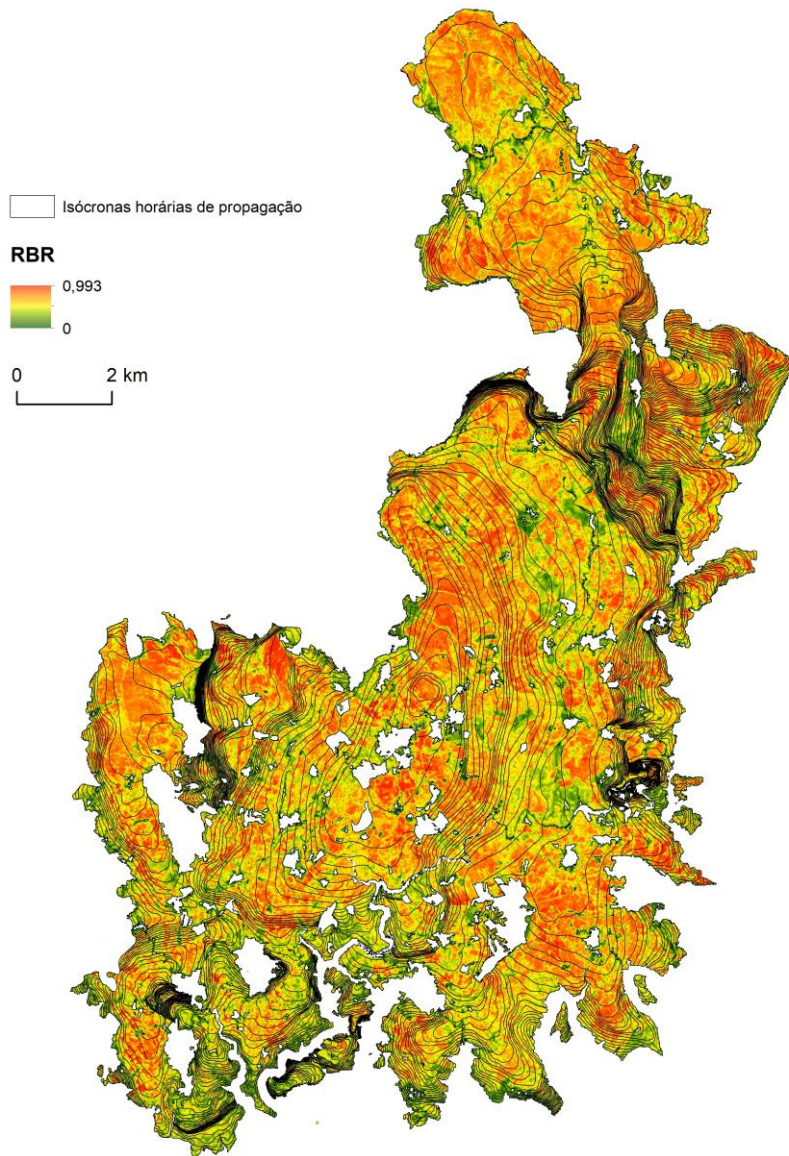
## Variability within the same fuel types



# @ CLASS SCALE

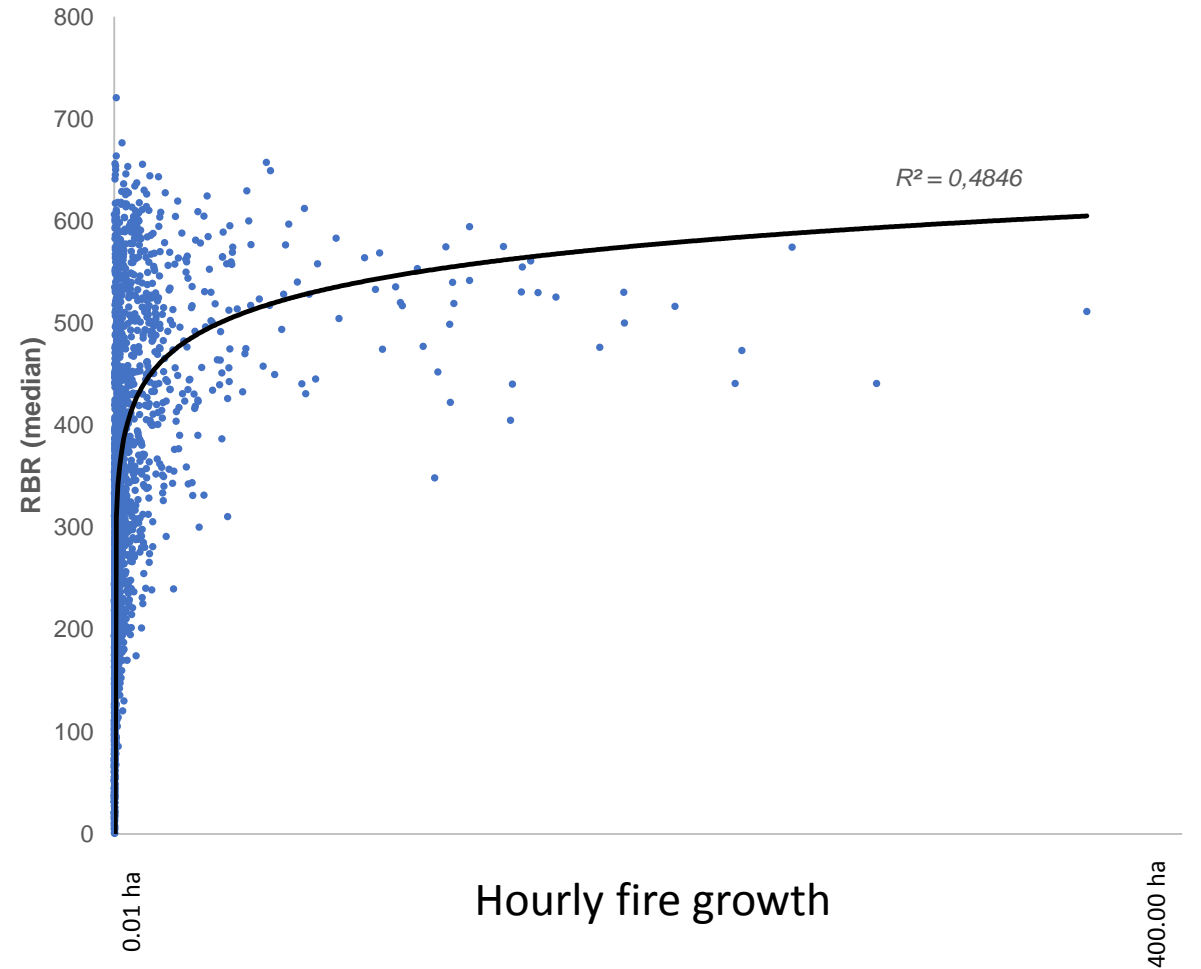
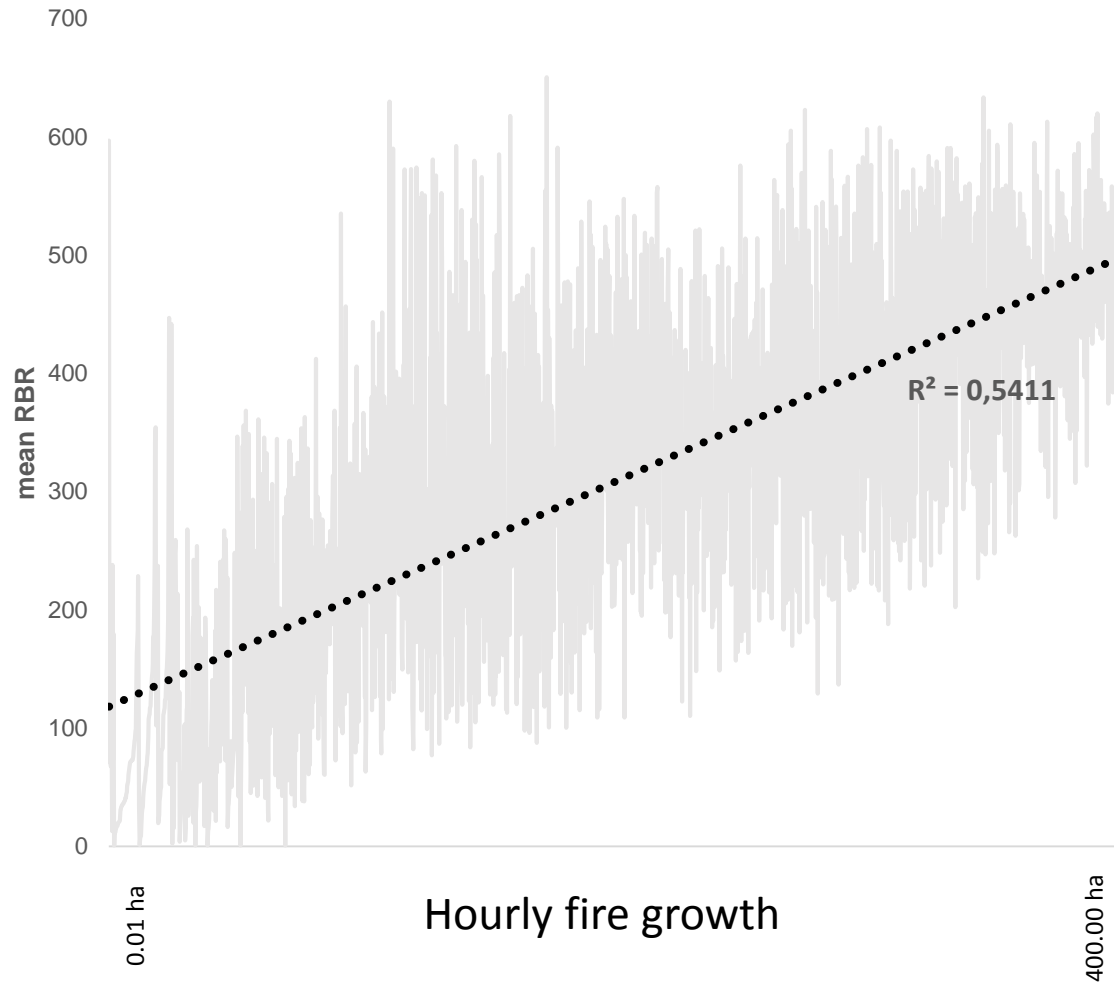


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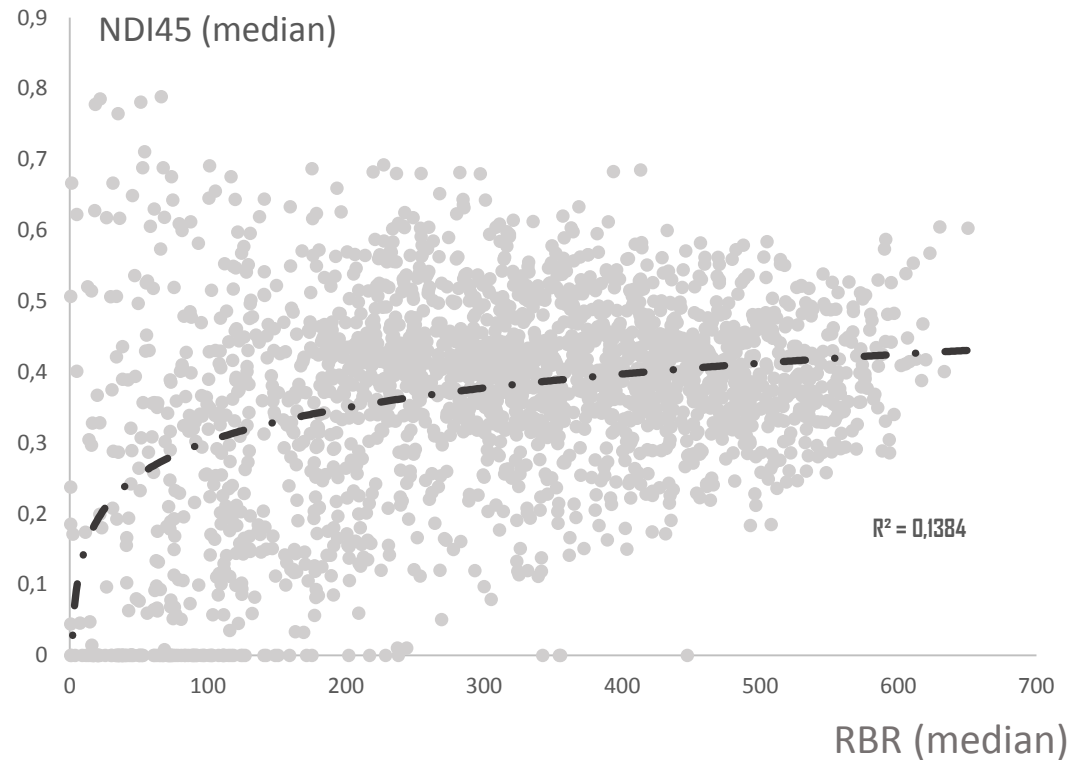




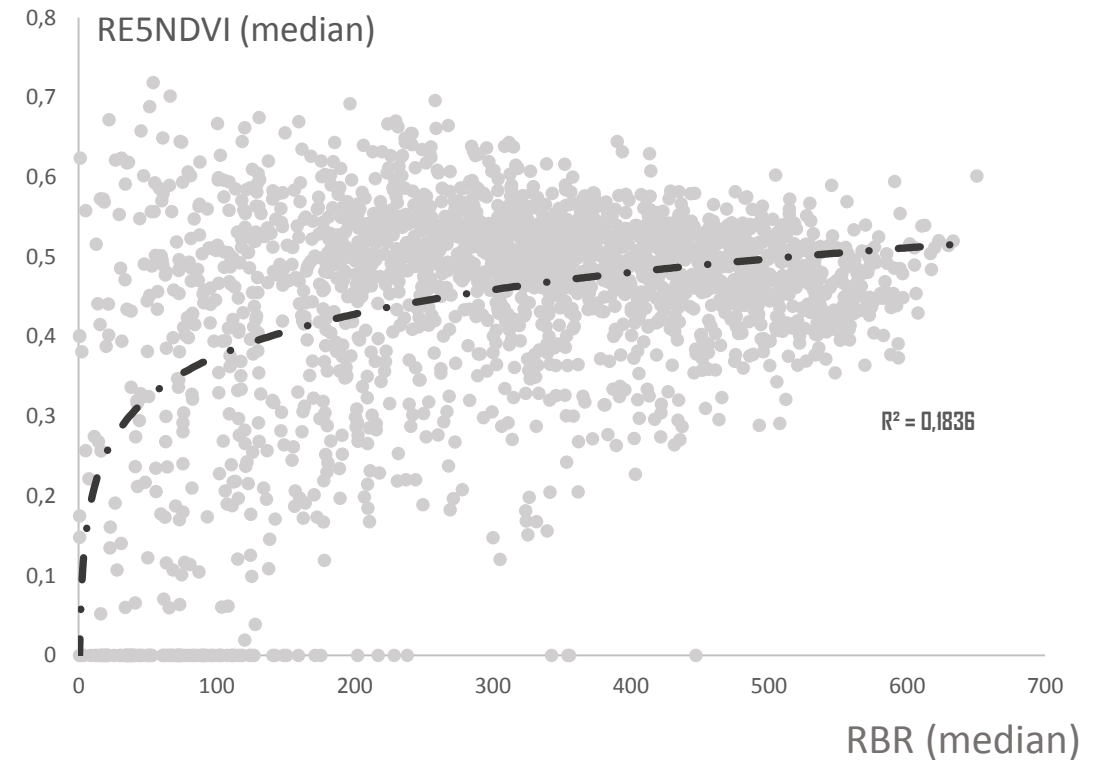
# @ CLASS SCALE



# @ CLASS SCALE

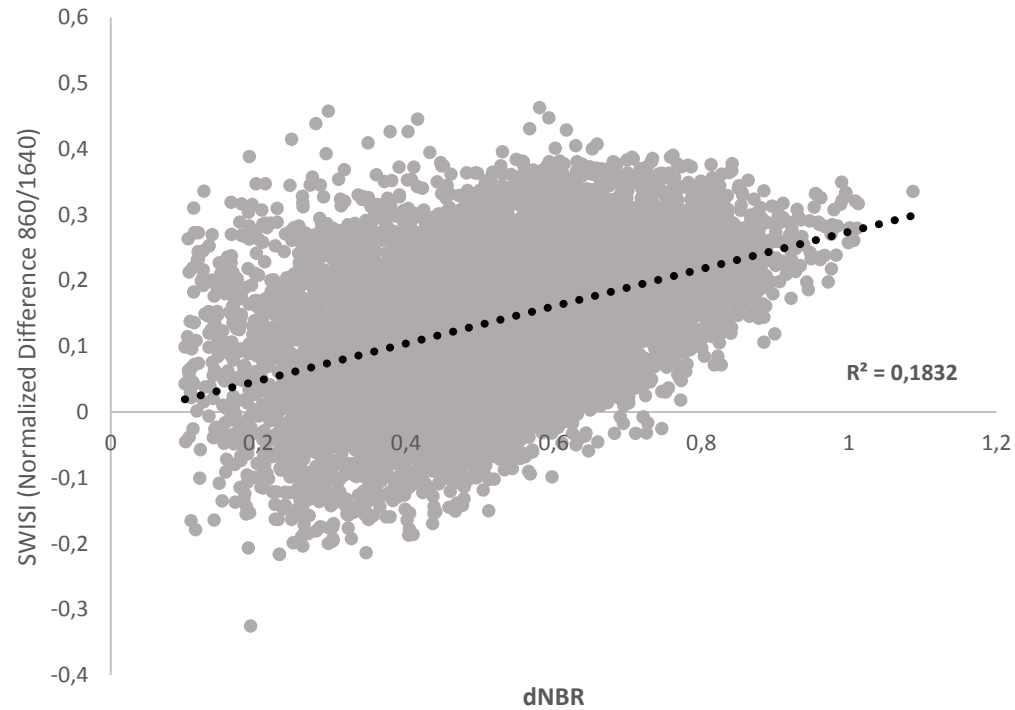


NDI45 is very sensitive to the chlorophyll content present in the canopy and, therefore, is normally a significant predictor of tree canopy attributes and plant vitality (Wang et al., 2016; Zimmermann et al., 2020; Nasiri et al., 2022).

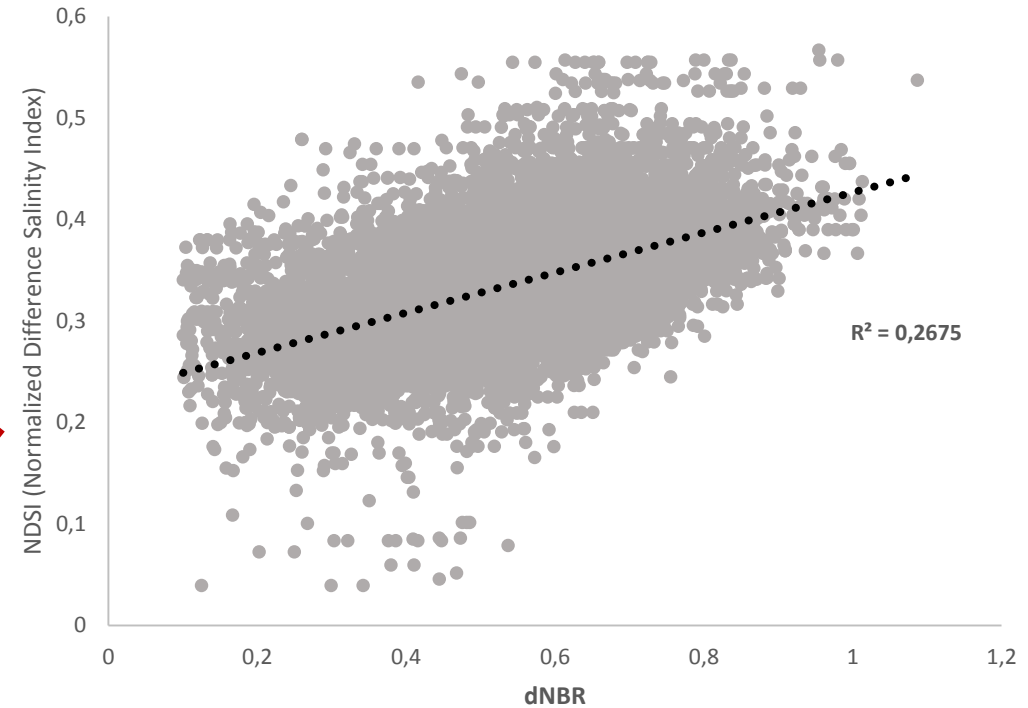


RE5NDVI (Red-Edge Normalized Vegetation Index; Gitelson & Merzlyak, 1996) performs better than NDVI in estimating biomass

# @ PIXEL SCALE



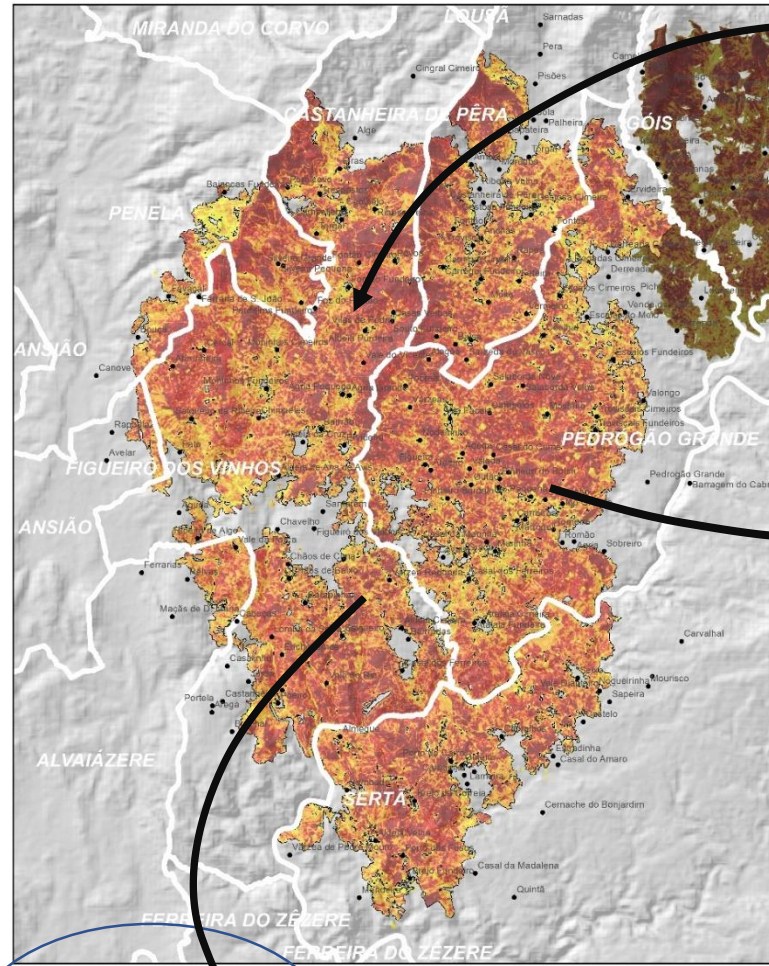
Estimate leaf of canopy water stress, especially in the semiarid environment.



Inversely proportional to water content (used as an indicator of vegetation health)

# THE PATHWAY FOR THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE

THE  
PATHWAY  
TO  
MODELING  
FIRE'S  
POTENTIAL  
SEVERITY



Establishment of relationships with spatially explicit indicators with high spatial and temporal resolution  
Integration of meteorological indices/indicators  
Consideration of expected fire behavior

Establishment of relationships with field-based indicators (search for ecological meaning)



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