

## **The fisheries in the shaping of the cultural landscape of the Minho river valley, Portugal**

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The paper discusses both the study of the origin of fisheries in the Minho River, in northern Portugal, and the role they play in the cultural landscape of the region. The fisheries are stone structures built along the river, with uncertain origin, but with a remarkable presence that uniquely characterizes the landscape of the river, that defines the border between Portugal and Spain. The valley still retains its riparian forests, essential to regulate nutrient and water availability throughout the year, but begins to suffer pressure for the development of the wine industry and the human occupation of the river banks.

This paper aims to add scientific information for there are few empirical studies about these structures. The approach is innovative in its approach to the study, by performing dimensional and construction surveys of existing fisheries in the valley. We have identified three distinct types to suit the different characteristics of the riverbed, along this route. These typologies also set the fishing gears used by local fishermen. This information is crossed with national and international specialized literature, clashing, later, with similar structures of the European continent, in the aspects of the design of the structures, building systems employed and the social and landscape context in which they emerged.

The information to be conveyed will evaluate the cultural significance that these structures have in shaping the cultural landscape of that border region, stressing the urgent need for conservation and protection of all inherent ecosystems of the banks of the river, to allow the continuation of traditions associated with these structures.