



[Nederlandse vertaling](#)

Dear Friends of Quinta Travancinha,

Very shortly after our glowing summer newsletter, we suddenly have some drastic news. We would like to inform you and call on you to join us.

Fire at the Quinta!

Last Wednesday (10 August 2022) our Quinta and the whole valley was again hit by a fire. This fire originated in the nearby village of Lagares da Beira. Fortunately, the Quinta residents and our faithful dog Moji were unharmed. Thanks to intensive contact and proper preparation, there were no casualties in the valley. However, unfortunately, there are still missing pets and much nature has been lost.

At our Quinta, in addition to the tremendous natural damage, 2 safari tents and 3 De Waard tents, including their contents, were lost. The fire has completely 'burnt clear' the upper plateaus. In the lower area (near the Seia river) we expect the broad-leaved trees (e.g. alder, ash, and oak) to survive.



The beautiful spot of Jos, before



and after the fire

At the same time, a huge fire raged in the Serra da Estrela, destroying thousands of hectares of nature. This left us to fend for ourselves, and the fire brigade was unable to provide immediate assistance.

In 2017, an even bigger fire ravaged our valley and the whole of central Portugal. It is a well-known phenomenon in Portugal, but the risk of fire is increasing. We recognise a number of causes, including drought and scanty soil, as a global problem (climate change).



Fire offers opportunity

But a violent event like this is not in vain. The fire has set our hearts on fire. Our dream of living in connection with nature and learning from nature with the community was fuelled further. From our organic development perspective, this event is used as fuel. Previously gained knowledge and inspiration about permaculture and syntropic agroforestry is now given tangible substance. Now that the Quinta has been 'cleared' of all dry vegetation, this is the ideal moment to structure the land according to these principles. This will make the land more fire-resistant in the future and will enrich the soil instead of impoverishing it. A habitat with abundant green and moist soil burns less easily and suffers less damage in the event of a fire.

Syntropic agroforestry

This is an agricultural method based on a number of natural principles. One of them is: create as much biodiversity as possible (trees, bushes, plants, animals), which creates abundance. You can easily feed 40 families on 1.5 hectares! It is a very old and natural way of small-scale farming, which offers many perspectives for the future. Syntropic agroforestry was developed by Ernst Götsch and is applied in many places in the world (also in Portugal). More about this in these wonderful documentaries: [Ernst Götsch Bluevision & Tropical Hothouse](#) [1.5 Acre](#) Syntropic Food Forest.

In order to enhance biodiversity in the rest of the valley, we will also further explore the principle of natural year-round grazing / rewilding with wild horses and cattle.



What next?

The situation demands that we work fast!

In the short term, we are going to:

- clean the Quinta – *starts mid-September*
- gain knowledge / experience and develop a plan for synthetic agroforestry. We are already in touch with the team of Ernst Götsch
- create large water reservoirs at various levels. This will allow us to collect and store water during the first rains. This will allow us to irrigate the land naturally – *starts at the end of October 2022*
- bring our multi-media channels up to speed: website, Facebook, newsletter, etc... – *starts immediately*
- set up crowdsourcing / crowdfunding – *starts as soon as possible*

In the long term we also envision the following:

- a green habitat with an abundance of plants and edible fruits in which people and animals feel comfortable
- we enjoy and learn a lot from it. Working becomes very easy! Pruning is harvesting
- we are a knowledge centre. We are happy to share all the knowledge we gain with whomever visits us.

This seems quite a turn of events, but in fact we feel it is entirely in line with our vision. This is how we want to make a difference!

Call

The transformation of the Quinta / valley into a more sustainable environment is an extensive project. We would like to tackle it together with you and other friends!

What do we need most of all?

In the short term you can support us by:

- already signing up to actively help clean up or help build in the future
- providing us with specialist knowledge and resources in the area of syntropic agroforestry
- assisting us with the website and social media
- shaping crowdsourcing / crowdfunding with us
- giving us your feedback (potentially with other supporting ideas, contacts...)
- making a financial contribution in order that we can realise the first steps of this transformation (bank account NL16TRIO0320469611 in the name of Friends of Quinta Travancinha Foundation)
- distributing this message further. You know who it will appeal to!

Thank you very much!

The partners: Jos Dohmen, Nel Willekens, Hans Heerdt, Klaske de Vries, and René Veldt (on location)
Harry Dohmen, René Albers, Niek Wijnands, and Elisabeth Roelvink (from the Netherlands)

We are pleased to hear from you via email jos@quintatravancinha.com or WhatsApp on +31 6 18358911.