

To UNESCO

The World Heritage Committee and the World Heritage Centre

Dear Sirs,

In the context of the construction of the Foz Tua dam in the World Heritage property "Alto Douro Wine Region" in Portugal, we, the undersign wine producers, support the claims expressed several times to you by "Plataforma Salvar o Tua" (Platform Save the Tua) and come to express our profound disagreement for the dam project.

The Douro valley is the oldest demarcated wine region in the world, producing world class wines for more than three centuries. Unfortunately, we have seen the great Douro river gradually transforming into a series of reservoirs (there are five dams in the Portuguese section of the Douro and another five in the international Portuguese-Spanish section) and the beautiful landscape and diverse ecosystem that supported it fading away. However, the relatively small dams on the Douro pale before the monstrosity that will be the Foz Tua dam, a concrete wall 108 m high and 270 m wide, highly visible from the Douro.

We do not have any use for another reservoir of poor quality water. The increase of humidity levels is also increasing the occurrence of diseases in our vineyards, leaving no option but to increase treatments with the proportional environmental and economic impact.

On the other hand, the single most effective tool we have to sell our products is to invite opinion leaders, clients and consumers to visit us every year and have the great experience of knowing our land, its products and the people who make it. We invest millions of Euros every year of private, public and European funds in these activities. With the new Foz Tua dam we lose the wildest river in the Alto Douro, with a unique landscape that is an essential complement of the Douro valley, and therefore a great tourism asset for the region.

It is very clear to us that the centuries-old agricultural and touristic vocation of this region is not compatible with further hydroelectric power production, moreover in a dam with such a huge negative impact and so little productivity.

We therefore urge UNESCO to follow its mission and help us preserve the identity of our wines and the classified Douro world heritage by stopping the construction of the Foz Tua dam and the ongoing destruction of the Tua valley, an important part of the Alto Douro.