

## **Fire versus chipped pruned branches impact on soil infiltration in vineyards. The "Els Alforins" study site, Valencia, Spain**

<sup>1</sup>Saskia Deborah Keesstra, <sup>2</sup>Jesús Rodrigo-Comino and <sup>3</sup>Artemi Cerdà

<sup>1</sup>*Climate-Kic Holding B.V. Plantage Middenlaan 45, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, ,*

<sup>2</sup>*Departamento de Análisis Geográfico Regional y Geografía Física, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, Campus Universitario de Cartuja, Universidad de Granada, 18071 Granada, España,*

<sup>3</sup>*Soil Erosion and Degradation Research Group, Departament de Geografia. Universitat de València. Blasco Ibàñez, 28, 46010-Valencia. Spain.*

### **Abstract**

Vineyards are being seen as a source of sediments and water due to the abuse of herbicides and plowing (Richter and Negendank, 1977; Prosdocimi et al., 2016; Biddoccu et al., 2018; Rodrigo-Comino, 2018; Rodrigo-Comino et al., 2018). The highest erosion rates within the world's agricultural land are found in vineyards (Panagos et al., 2015; Borrelli et al., 2021) and the future will be also negative due to the expected climate change (Panagos et al., 2021). There is a need to develop new strategies to reduce soil and water losses and restore the soil functions and soil properties that will restore the basic ecosystem services (Keesstra et al., 2016). Within the new strategies: cover crops, mulches, catch crops, or geotextiles (Keesstra et al., 2019; Rodrigo-Comino et al., 2020; Cerdà et al., 2021) farmers will prefer to use local and nature-based solutions such as chipped pruned branches (Keesstra et al., 2018). The infiltration capacity of soils is a relevant factor in soil erosion and runoff delivery. This is an easy-to-measure soil property that informs about soil sustainability. The steady-state infiltration rate informs about the soil health from a hydrology point of view.

This research evaluates the impact of chipped pruned branches on soil erosion and runoff loss control in rainfed vineyards. We selected two paired fields to measure the infiltration rate by means of a single-ring infiltrometer in the summer of 2022 (July) when the soil was dry. Two hundred measurements (100 in each of the fields) were carried out in a Control field (burn chipped pruned branches) and a Mulch field (chopped pruned branches). The measurements last 60 minutes and the Horton equation was fitted. The steady-state infiltration rate was calculated for each infiltration envelope. The results show that the soil infiltration rate ranged from 35.33 to 234.23 mm h<sup>-1</sup> in the control field and from 33.45 to 244.31 mm h<sup>-1</sup>. The average steady-state infiltration rates were 89.32- and 91.32-mm h<sup>-1</sup> respectively for control and Mulch plots. It was no statistical differences in the infiltration capacity of soils. We discuss if the 3 years of mulch

application was not enough to trigger a change in the soil infiltration capacity.

**Keywords:** Vineyards, Infiltration, Soil, Chipped pruned branches, Fire,

### References

Biddoccu, M., Zecca, O., Audisio, C., Godone, F., Barmaz, A., & Cavallo, E. (2018). Assessment of long-term soil erosion in a mountain vineyard, Aosta Valley (NW Italy). *Land Degradation & Development*, 29(3), 617-629. Borrelli, P., Alewell, C., Alvarez, P., Anache, J. A. A., Baartman, J., Ballabio, C., ... & Panagos, P. (2021). Soil erosion modelling: A global review and statistical analysis. *Science of the total environment*, 780, 146494. Cerdà, A., Terol, E., & Daliakopoulos, I. N. (2021). Weed cover controls soil and water losses in rainfed olive groves in Sierra de Enguera, eastern Iberian Peninsula. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 290, 112516. Keesstra, S. D., Bouma, J., Wallinga, J., Tittonell, P., Smith, P.,... & Bardgett, R. D. (2016). The significance of soils and soil science towards realization of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. *Soil*, 2, 111-128. Keesstra, S. D., Rodrigo-Comino, J., Novara, A., Giménez-Morera, A., Pulido, M., Di Prima, S., & Cerdà, A. (2019). Straw mulch as a sustainable solution to decrease runoff and erosion in glyphosate-treated clementine plantations in Eastern Spain. An assessment using rainfall simulation experiments. *Catena*, 174, 95-103. Keesstra, S., Nunes, J., Novara, A., Finger, D., Avelar, D., Kalantari, Z., & Cerdà, A. (2018). The superior effect of nature based solutions in land management for enhancing ecosystem services. *Science of the Total Environment*, 610, 997-1009. Panagos, P., Ballabio, C., Himics, M., Scarpa, S., Matthews, F., Bogonos, M., ... & Borrelli, P. (2021). Projections of soil loss by water erosion in Europe by 2050. *Environmental Science & Policy*, 124, 380-392. Panagos, P., Borrelli, P., Poesen, J., Ballabio, C., Lugato, E., Meusburger, K., ... & Alewell, C. (2015). The new assessment of soil loss by water erosion in Europe. *Environmental science & policy*, 54, 438-447. Prosdocimi, M., Cerdà, A., & Tarolli, P. (2016). Soil water erosion on Mediterranean vineyards: A review. *Catena*, 141, 1-21. Richter, G., & Negendank, J. F. (1977). Soil erosion processes and their measurement in the German area of the Moselle river. *Earth Surface Processes*, 2(2-3), 261-278. Rodrigo-Comino, J. (2018). Five decades of soil erosion research in "terroir". *The State-of-the-Art. Earth-Science Reviews*, 179, 436-447. Rodrigo-Comino, J., Keesstra, S., & Cerdà, A. (2018). Soil erosion as an environmental concern in vineyards: The case study of Celler del Roure, Eastern Spain, by means of rainfall simulation experiments. *Beverages*, 4(2), 31. Rodrigo-Comino, J., Terol, E., Mora, G., Giménez-Morera, A., & Cerdà, A. (2020). *Vicia sativa* Roth. Can Reduce Soil and Water Losses in Recently Planted Vineyards (*Vitis vinifera* L.). *Earth Systems and Environment*, 1-16.

**Acknowledgments:** This research was funded by REACT4MED: Inclusive Outscaling of Agro-Ecosystem Restoration Actions for the Mediterranean. REACT4MED Project (Grant Agreement No. 2122) funded by PRIMA, Horizon 2020, European Union's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation info@react4med.eu. SECOMAL AICO/2021/68 Soil Erosion Control in Mediterranean Agriculture Land. Conselleria d'Innovació, Universitats, ciència i societat digital. Firelinks EU Cost Action 18135. We thanks the Beca Leonardo a Investigadores y Creadores Culturales 2021 de la Fundación BBVA" (Ref. BBVA2021-Leonardo2; IP: J. Rodrigo-Comino) "Creación de una base nacional de erosión en viñedos para potenciar la protección del suelo fértil", and the Plan Propio de la Universidad de Granada (2021-2022): Visiting Scholar y Programa especiales con convenios con empresa.