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P26 Casting light on the chemical characterization of Acacia pods

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Invasive species impose a strain on natural ecosystems by contributing to the loss of certain native species. Acacia species are amongst the most aggressive invasive species in Portugal.

In this work, *Acacia retinodes*, *A. longifolia*, *A. melanoxylon*, *A. pycnantha* and *A. dealbata* pods were studied concerning the extraction of compounds for potential industrial application. The Acacia pods were collected in 2021 from different regions, according to their geographical distribution, lyophilized and frozen at -80 °C until analysis. The extraction was made according to the methodology described by Puga *et al.*¹. Different phenolic compounds were identified using high-performance liquid chromatography-diode array detector (HPLC/DAD) and liquid chromatography-electrospray ionization high-resolution tandem mass spectrometry (LC-ESI-HRMS/MS) using a quadrupole time-of-flight instrument (Q-TOF). Prior to any treatment, the fresh pods were also analysed by Near-infrared spectroscopy (NIR).

So far, 20 compounds have been analysed and identified, including simple phenolics, hydroxybenzoic acids, hydroxybenzoic aldehydes, hydroxycinnamic acids, hydroxycinnamic aldehydes, furans, flavonoids, flavanols, flavones.

The principal component analysis performed using analytical data and NIR spectra produced similar findings, allowing us to conclude that the Acacia pods present a distinct profile of compounds that may be easily distinguished by vibrational spectroscopy.

The compounds found in the Acacia pods seem to have the potential for harvest, with a focus on prospective applications being the goal of upcoming research.

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