

INDEX

INTRODUCTION	1
1. CHAPTER I Exploring the herbicidal potential of aqueous extracts from <i>Ailanthus altissima</i> (Mill.) Swingle	8
1.1. Introduction	10
1.2. Materials and methods	15
1.2.1. Plant material	15
1.2.2. Soil material	16
1.2.3. Treatments tested on target seeds	16
1.2.4. Statistical Analysis	19
1.3. Results	22
1.4. Discussion	30
1.5. Conclusions	31
2. CHAPTER II Effect of different parameters (treatment administration mode, concentration and phenological weed stage) on <i>Thymbra capitata</i> L. essential oil herbicidal activity	33
2.1. Introduction	35
2.2. Materials and methods	37
2.2.1. Essential oil tested	37
2.2.2. In vivo herbicidal activity assays on spontaneous weeds emerged from the soil seedbank	38
2.2.3. In vivo herbicidal activity assays on target plants	39
2.2.3.1. Plant material	39
2.2.3.2. Treatments on target plants	40

2.2.3.3.	Evaluation of the herbicidal activity assays on target plants.....	41
2.2.3.4.	Statistical Analysis.....	43
2.3.	Results	43
2.3.1.	Herbicidal activity of <i>T. capitata</i> EO against spontaneous weeds developed from the soil seedbank.....	43
2.3.2.	Herbicidal activity of <i>T. capitata</i> EO on target plants	45
2.4.	Conclusion.....	56
2.5.	Supplementary materials.....	56
3.	CHAPTER III Strategies to improve the efficacy of secondary metabolites.....	64
3.1.	Introduction	65
3.2.	Use of adequate formulations. Greenhouse trials	71
3.2.1.	Materials and methods	71
3.2.1.1.	Plant material.....	71
3.2.1.2.	Greenhouse conditions during the experiments	71
3.2.1.3.	Herbicidal tests on target plants.....	71
3.2.1.4.	Evaluation of the Herbicidal Activity.....	73
3.2.1.4.1.	Statistical Analyses	75
3.2.2.	Results.....	75
3.2.3.	Discussion.....	90
3.2.4.	Conclusions.....	93
3.2.5.	Supplementary materials.....	94
3.3.	Indications for a better performance in field assays	98
3.3.1.	Materials and methods	98
3.3.1.1.	Experimental sites.....	98

3.3.1.2.	Treatments and experimental design.	98
3.3.1.3.	Determinations and statistical analysis.....	100
3.3.2.	Results.....	101
3.3.2.1.	Effect on weed coverage.....	101
3.3.2.1.1.	Effect on Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) 103	
3.3.2.1.2.	Effect on weed damage.....	105
3.3.2.1.3.	Effect on weed biomass	107
3.3.2.2.	Discussion.....	108
3.3.2.3.	Conclusions	112
3.3.2.4.	Supplementary materials	112
3.4.	Combining compounds searching for synergies	115
3.4.1.	Introduction.....	115
3.4.2.	Objective.....	116
3.4.3.	Materials and methods	116
3.4.3.1.	Trial conditions	116
3.4.3.2.	Treatments tested on <i>Chenopodium album</i> L.....	117
3.4.3.3.	Methodology used for the study of synergies between natural products	119
3.4.3.3.1.	Method 1. Comparison of the efficacies of the compounds studied in their single doses, binary mixtures and their tertiary mixture.	120
3.4.3.3.2.	Method 2. Comparison of EC ₅₀ and EC ₈₀	120
3.4.3.4.	Statistical Data Analysis	122
3.4.3.5.	Results	122

3.4.3.5.1.	Phytotoxic effects of compounds studied in vivo in <i>Chenopodium album</i>	122
3.4.3.5.2.	Results of Method 1. Comparison of the efficacies of the compounds studied in their single doses, binary mixtures and their tertiary mixture	128
3.4.3.5.3.	Results of Method 2: Comparison of the EC ₅₀ and EC ₈₀ obtained for the tested compounds against the expected EC ₅₀ and EC ₈₀	129
3.4.3.6.	Discussion.....	132
3.4.3.7.	Conclusions	134
3.4.3.8.	Supplementary materials	135
4.	CHAPTER IV Bibliography	139
5.	CHAPTER V Scientific publications	156
5.1.	Scientific publications of this thesis.....	158
5.2.	Other scientific publications	158