

MISSION GREEN VISAKHA

Catamarans that last 18 years

The Institute of Wood Science and the centre in Vizag, which is the only one in the country, has been researching many ways to aid in the plantation activities in the city. We have noticed how many people have been using iron tree guards which are quite harmful. Exposed to the elements, the metal gets rusted and causes pollution. Any structures including metals or metal framework must be avoided, at the same time plastic tree guards must also not be used or we'll be ending up causing further damage. One alternative to the conventional tree guards is a structure made from timber. In a process called the Sap Displacement Method, small-width, freshly cut timber is made to stand in a wood preservative solution. The sap gradually evaporates and the pole will absorb the chemicals, extending its usability. This structure will do the job of a tree guard more effectively as it is entirely natural, and leaves no re-

siduals after completing its job. Similarly, we have also used special timber to extend the life of catamarans used by our fishermen. We use pressure treatment in which chemicals are injected into the wood. While a conventionally-built catamaran runs at sea for a minimum of eight hours every day and lasts for 4 to 5 years on an average, the catamarans we built using treated timber last for 18 years. Though the fishermen at Jalaripeta were initially skeptical, they let us test it anyway. We were thus able to aid fishermen in using boats that last longer with zero environmental hazards. Following the success of the model catamaran, the World Bank has come forward to fund the activity. At the moment, since Vizag is in desperate need of trees, we're using Sap Displacement to build tree guards for plantation activities to maximise the impact.

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