

# CAULKING OF FISHING BOATS

Leakage through seams or joints of wooden fishing boats is arrested by caulking the hull and deck. CIFT conducted a survey on the traditional caulking practices around Cochin area. The report furnished by the team is given below.-

## 1. Caulking of seams with cotton:

Caulking cotton is available in twisted form which is taken in strands and made soft by sprinkling with coconut oil. This is driven into seams and joints with caulking iron and mallet by clinching and looping. Tight seams are opened to 3mm width and 15mm depth. Water tightness is then checked by keeping water filled in the hull for 4 to 5 hours.

## 2. Application of seaming compound:

In the 2nd stage, caulked seams are coated with the seaming compound as under, using any one of the following mixtures made to a brushable consistency. (Fig I)

## 3. Application of putty:

Putty is prepared by boiling rosin, neem oil, poon seed oil and chalk powder to a dough like consistency. Putty is tightly pressed into the seams, nail holes and other grooves.

Fig. I

	Material	Quantity (g)	Preparation
1.	Neem oil	100	Mix, heat to 240°C for 160 min.
	Rosin	300	
2.	Neem oil	375	Heat the mixture till Rosin melts. Add about 1250g chalk powder.
	Poon seed oil	165	
	Rosin	300	
3.	Neem oil	300	Heat till Rosin melts. Add calcified shell.
	Rosin	120	
	Calcified shell	300	

## 4. Application of Sopper compound:

Sopper compound is coated over the outside area of the hull below water line and is a must prior to sheathing of wooden

fishing vessels. A layer of taffelt paper is then fixed over it, sheathed and painted. Sopper compound is prepared by any one of the following ways to a dough like consistency.

Fig. II

	Material	Quantity (g)	Preparation
1.	Neem oil	180	Melt tallow, add Neem oil. Heat, mix with chalk powder.
	Tallow	100	
	Chalk powder	300	
2.	Tar	100	Mix well
	Chalk powder	150	
3.	Neem oil	180	Melt Rosin, seive, add tallow and Neem oil till tallow melts. Mix in chalk powder.
	Tallow	100	
	Rosin	180	
	Chalk powder	630	

## B. Hull above water line:

Plank seams and other seams are caulked with cotton followed by plugging with putty.

## C. Deck

Caulking of deck involves driving in of cotton into seams, application of pitch and in some cases followed by a coating of

linseed oil.

Recaulking is done after thorough cleaning of the surface once in every 3 years for hull below water line and once in every 6 months for hull above water line and deck. Four days are required for proper drying before resheathing.

— Saly N. Thomas  
& Leela Edwin