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The strip planking: an eco-friendly solution for the end-of-life of ships

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In the last few years, the International and National attention to environmental sustainability has increased, even in shipbuilding. This aim can be achieved through various manners, for example by green propulsion (hybrid propulsion), by containment of spills and by studying the life cycle of vessels. About the last one, the problem of disposal of ships at the end of life is of high importance: due to new regulations about the treatment of hazardous materials, the disposal of plastic materials (as the fiberglass) is very complicated and expensive. For this reason, the use of wood for the shipbuilding, especially for small vessels, is a valid and ecological alternative to the use of fiberglass or aluminium. Even though this solution implies higher construction cost, it has the advantage of reducing the risks of disposal of materials at the end of life cycle. The strip planking is a modern process for the construction of wood ships, which provides the vessels with mechanical characteristics comparable to those offered by ships built in fiberglass. In this paper, the description of the construction process and the results obtained in a case study of a vessel built through the strip planking technique has been analysed.

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