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(54) **PLATFORM FOR CAGES, PARTICULARLY FOR SMALL ANIMALS SUCH AS RODENTS AND THE LIKE**

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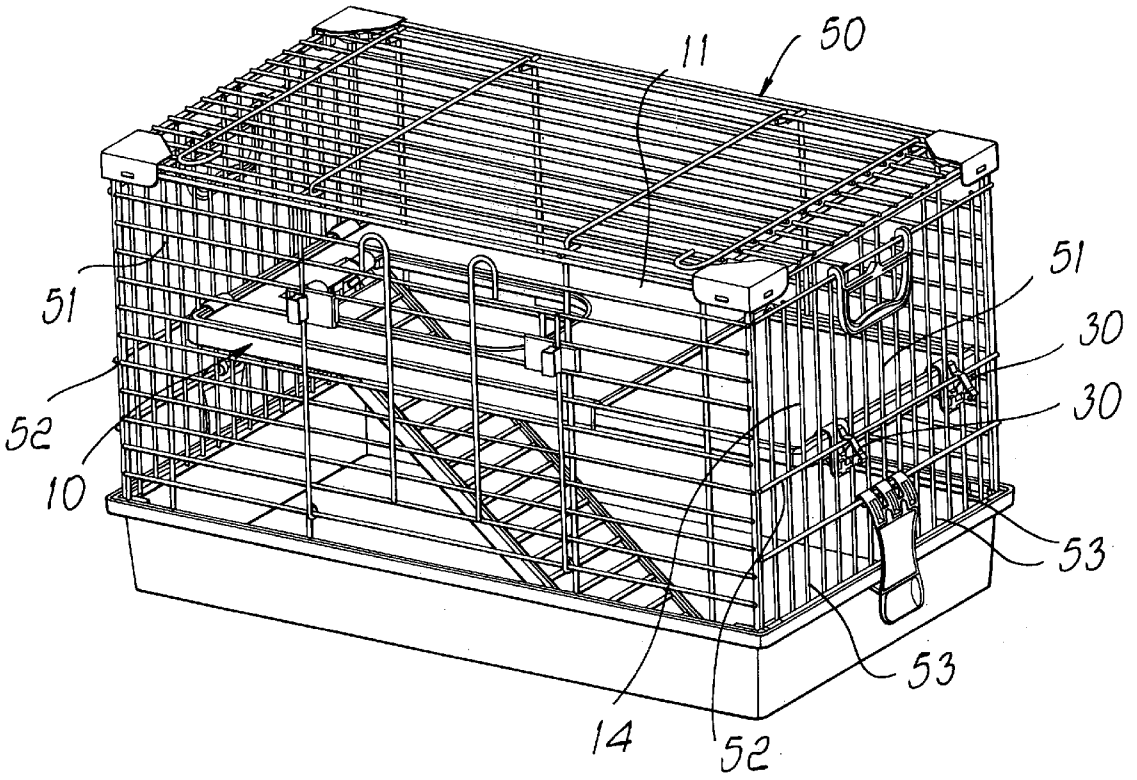
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A platform for cages, particularly for small animals such as rodents and the like, comprising a deck provided with elements for fixing to the grid-like walls of a cage, the deck having telescopic extension elements for adapting its extension to the dimensions of the cage that are constituted by at least one additional deck, which is adapted to slide, by way of guiding elements, parallel and adjacent to the deck, the deck containing the additional deck in a shorter retracted configuration of the platform.



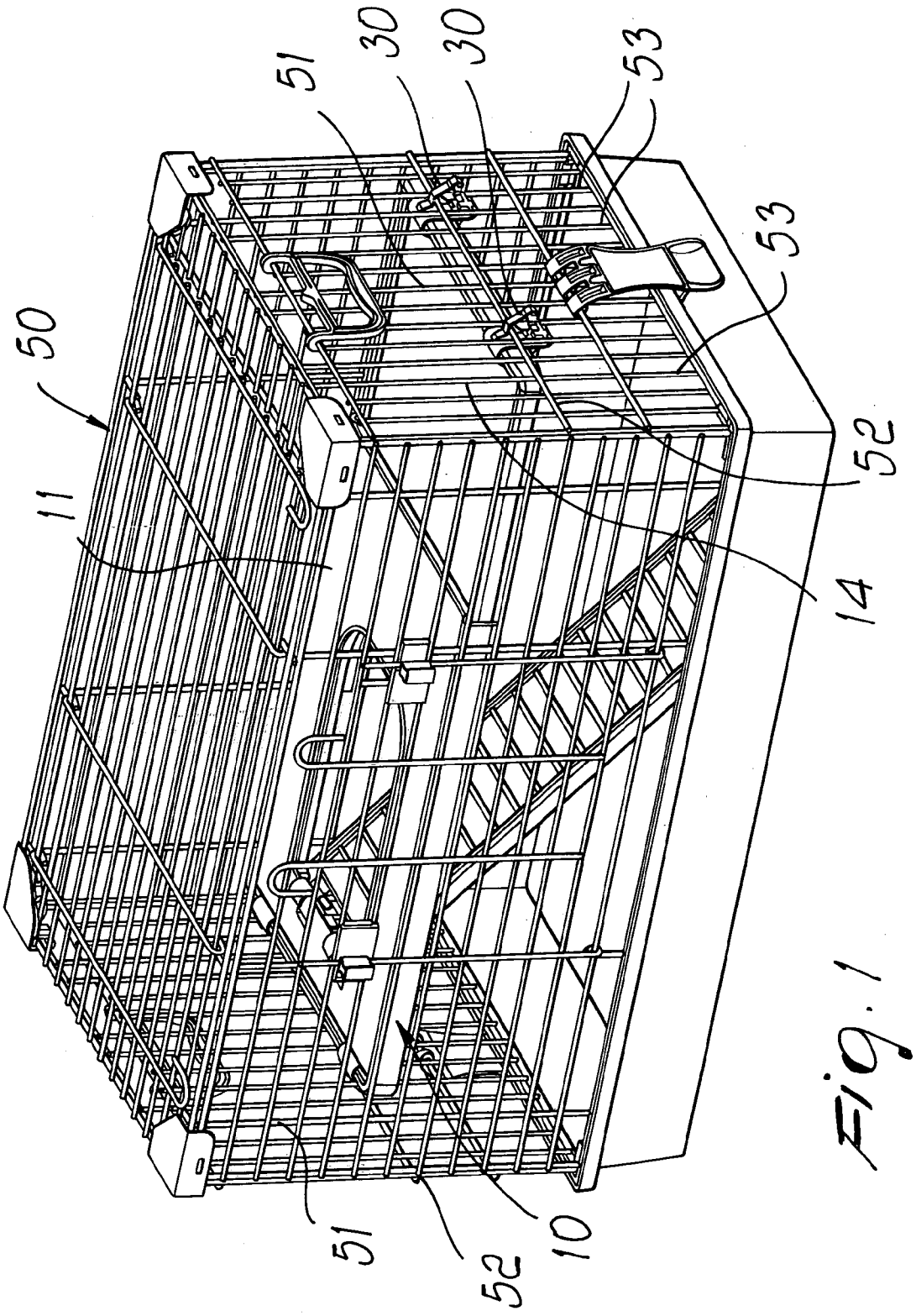


Fig. 1

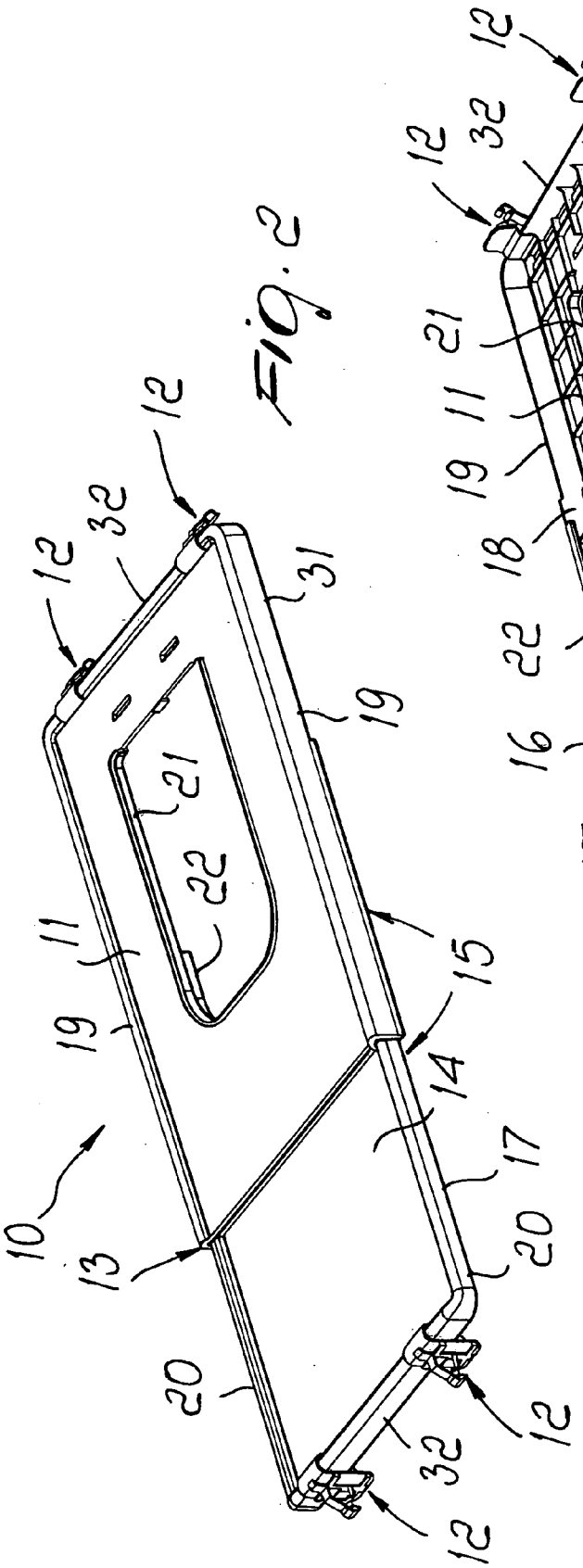

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Fig. 2

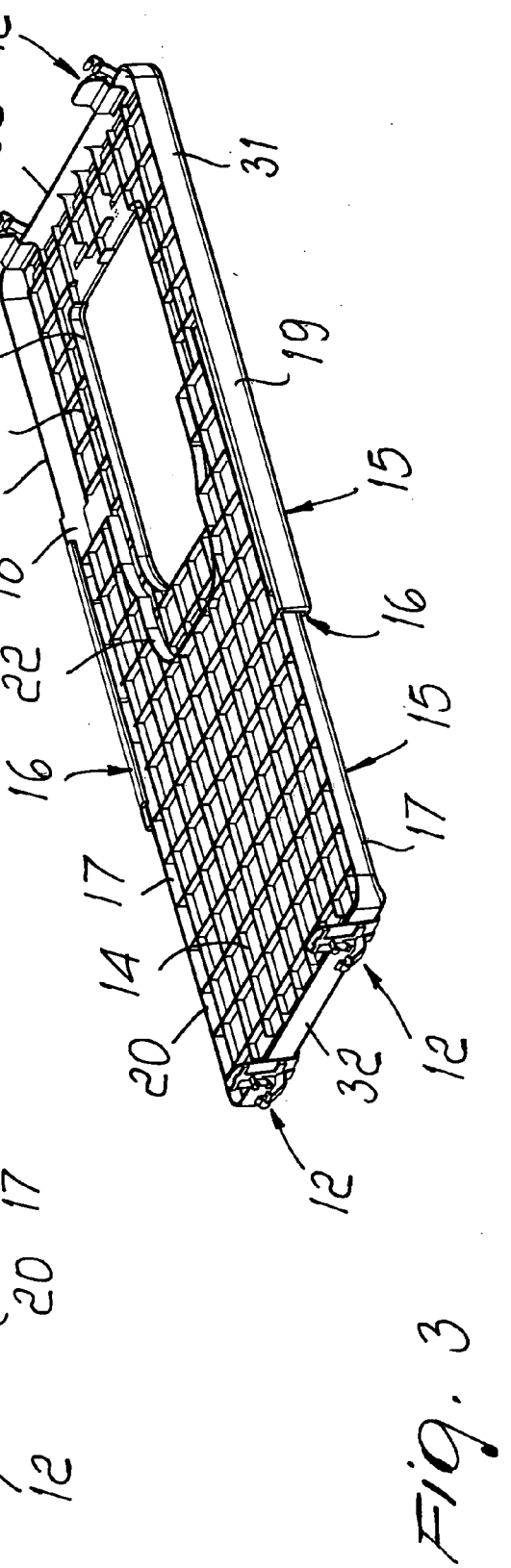

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Fig. 3

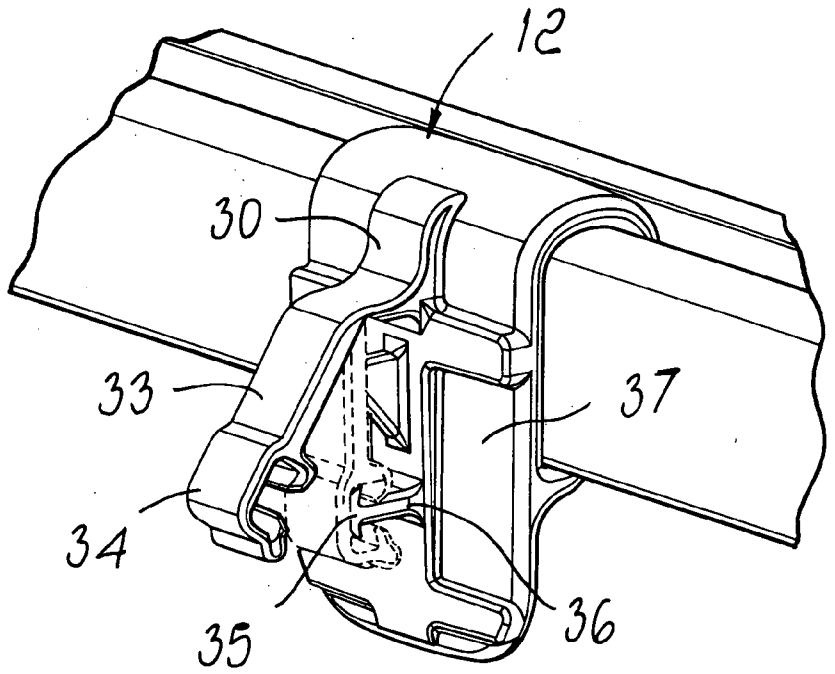


Fig. 4

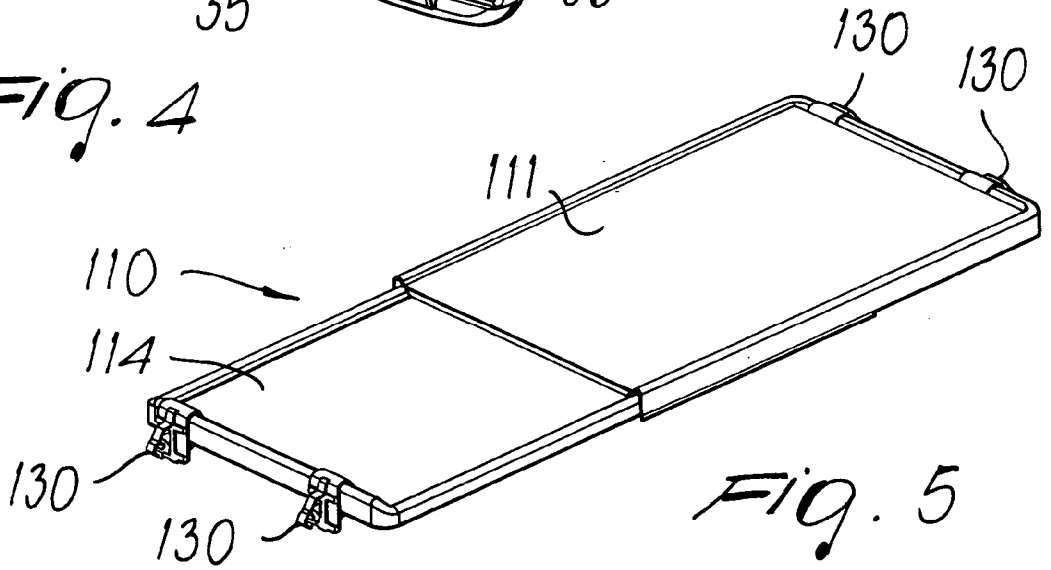


Fig. 5

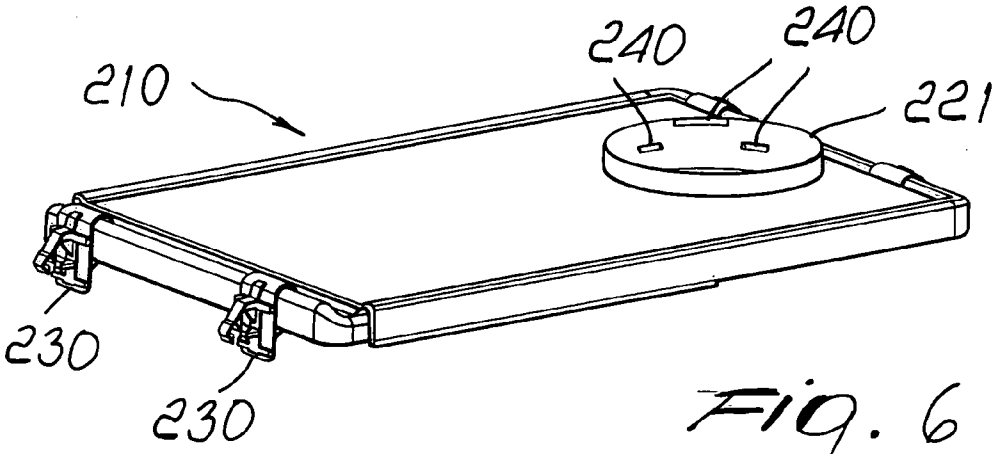


Fig. 6

PLATFORM FOR CAGES, PARTICULARLY FOR SMALL ANIMALS SUCH AS RODENTS AND THE LIKE

[0001] The present invention relates to a platform for cages, particularly for small animals such as rodents and the like.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The aim of the present invention is to provide a platform that can be installed easily inside cages of very different sizes.

[0003] Within this aim, an object of the present invention is to provide a platform whose length can vary so as to be arranged longitudinally or transversely in a same cage.

[0004] Another object of the present invention is to provide a platform on which the occupants of the cage can move and stay without dangers for their safety and from which the small animals can descend and climb nimbly and instinctively.

[0005] Another object of the present invention is to provide a platform for cages, particularly for small animals such as rodents and the like, that can be manufactured with known systems and technologies.

[0006] This aim and these and other objects that will become better apparent hereinafter are achieved by a platform for cages, particularly for small animals such as rodents and the like, of the type constituted by a deck provided with means for fixing to the grid-like walls of a cage, characterized in that said deck has telescopic extension means for adapting to the dimensions of said cage.

[0007] Advantageously, said extension means are constituted by at least one additional deck, which is suitable to slide, by way of guiding means, parallel and adjacent to said deck, which contains it in a shorter retracted configuration of said platform.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] Further characteristics and advantages of the invention will become better apparent from the following detailed description of a preferred but not exclusive embodiment thereof, illustrated by way of non-limiting example in the accompanying drawings, wherein:

[0009] **FIG. 1** is a perspective view of a platform according to the invention, installed in a cage for small animals;

[0010] **FIG. 2** is a top perspective view of a platform according to the invention, in the extended configuration;

[0011] **FIG. 3** is a bottom perspective view of the platform of **FIG. 2**;

[0012] **FIG. 4** is a perspective view of a detail of a platform according to an embodiment of the invention;

[0013] **FIG. 5** is a perspective view of a platform according to the invention, in a second embodiment, in the extended configuration;

[0014] **FIG. 6** is a perspective view of a platform according to the invention, in a third embodiment, in the retracted configuration.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0015] With reference to the figures, a platform for cages, particularly for small animals such as rodents and the like, is generally designated by the reference numeral **10**.

[0016] The platform **10**, provided with means **12** for fixing to grid-like walls **51** of a cage **50**, comprises a first deck **11**.

[0017] The first deck **11** has telescopic extension means **13** for adapting to the dimensions of the cage **50**.

[0018] The telescopic extension means **13** are constituted by a second deck **14**, which is suitable to slide, with guiding means **15**, parallel and adjacent to the first deck **11**.

[0019] The second deck **14**, in a shorter retracted configuration of the platform **10**, is substantially contained within the first deck **11**.

[0020] The guiding means **15** are formed by two sliding guides **16** provided on the first deck **11**.

[0021] Complementarily shaped sliding strips **17**, rigidly coupled to the second deck **14**, engage in the guides **16**.

[0022] The sliding guides **16** are formed by two lateral guides **18** provided inside longitudinal edges **19** of the first deck **11** and arranged below the first deck **11**.

[0023] The complementarily shaped strips **17** are constituted by the corresponding outer lateral edge **20** of the second deck **14**.

[0024] The first deck **11** has a passage **21** for small animals and the like, which have to climb on it or off it in order to access another similar platform arranged above or below.

[0025] Accordingly, the second deck **14** is provided with an opening **22** at the passage **21**.

[0026] The opening **22** is shaped so as to not obstruct the passage **21** when the platform **10** is in the retracted configuration and therefore also not obstruct it in the many intermediate configurations between the fully extended one and the fully retracted one, which is shown for example in **FIG. 6**.

[0027] In a second embodiment of a platform according to the invention, designated by the reference numeral **110**, the first deck **111** and the second deck **114** have no openings.

[0028] Such a platform **110** is designed particularly not only for the transit of small animals but also to accommodate within its perimeter shelters, drinking troughs and other similar accessories for said small animals.

[0029] The passage **21** on the first deck, and therefore also the corresponding opening **22** on the second deck, have different dimensions depending on the small animal for which they are intended.

[0030] In a third embodiment of a platform according to the invention, designated by the reference numeral **210**, the passage **221** is a hole, conveniently provided with seats **240** for the engagement for example of a crawling tube for small animals, which is not shown and is of the type disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 6,668,757, in the name of the same Applicant.

[0031] The fixing means **12** are constituted by four hooks **30**, which can move along the perimeter border **31** of the

platform **10** and are arranged in pairs on sides **32** that lie transversely with respect to the direction of extension of the platform **10**.

[**0032**] Each one of the hooks **30** comprises an articulated arm **33**, which is suitable to wrap around a cross-member **52** of a grid-like wall **51**.

[**0033**] The arm **33** interlocks reversibly by means of a head **34**, which is shaped so as to accommodate an end **35** of a mushroom-shaped tab **36**.

[**0034**] The tab **36** protrudes below the cross-member **52** from a plate-like portion **37** of the hook **30**.

[**0035**] Likewise, the second and third embodiments of the platform **10**, i.e., the platforms designated by the reference numerals **110** and **210**, are also provided with identical hooks **130** and **230**.

[**0036**] The platform **10**, **110**, **210** according to the invention can be installed easily, since it requires, for extension, only a traction so as to make the second deck exit from the first one.

[**0037**] Likewise, for retraction it is sufficient to push the second deck so that it slides within the first deck until it reaches the present length of the platform set by the dimensions of the cage with which said platform is to be associated.

[**0038**] Just as simply, the hooks **30**, **130**, **230** move along the perimeter **31** by means of a manual intervention.

[**0039**] In this manner, it is possible to move the hooks **30**, **130**, **230** so as to adapt their mutual length according to the spaces available between the uprights **53** of the cage **50**.

[**0040**] The hooks **30**, **130**, **230** therefore can also move externally with respect to the longitudinal edges **19** of the first deck **11**.

[**0041**] In practice it has been found that the invention thus described achieves the intended aim and objects.

[**0042**] In particular, the present invention provides a platform that can be installed easily inside cages having very different dimensions.

[**0043**] Moreover, the present invention provides a platform whose length can be adapted both to the longitudinal dimensions and to the transverse dimensions of a same cage.

[**0044**] Moreover, the present invention provides a platform on which the occupants of the cage can transit and stay without dangers for their safety but from which said small animals can descend and climb nimbly and instinctively.

[**0045**] Moreover, the present invention provides a platform with which it is possible to associate a conventional crawling tube for small animals.

[**0046**] Moreover, the present invention provides a platform that can be produced at low cost also by molding plastics.

[**0047**] In practice, the materials employed, so long as they are compatible with the specific use, as well as the dimensions, may be any according to requirements and to the state of the art.

[**0048**] The disclosures in Italian Utility Model Application No. PD2003U000110 from which this application claims priority are incorporated herein by reference.

What is claimed is:

1. A platform for cages for small animals, the cages having grid walls, the platform comprising: a deck; fixing means for fixing the deck to the grid walls of a cage; and telescopic extension means for adapting extension of said deck to cages having different sizes.

2. The platform of claim 1, wherein said telescopic extension means are constituted by guiding means provided parallel and adjacent to said deck and by at least one additional deck, which is guided by said guiding means, to slide with respect to said deck between an extended configuration of the platform and a shorter retracted configuration of the platform in which the additional deck is contained within said deck.

3. The platform of claim 2, wherein said guiding means are formed by at least one sliding guide, which is provided on said deck, and by a complementarily shaped sliding strip that engages in said at least one sliding guide and is rigidly coupled to said additional deck.

4. The platform of claim 3, wherein said at least one sliding guide comprises two lateral guides arranged inside longitudinal edges of said deck.

5. The platform of claim 4, wherein said complementarily shaped strip is constituted by an outer lateral edge of said additional deck that corresponds to each one of said lateral guides.

6. The platform of claim 1, wherein said deck is provided with a passage for small animals.

7. The platform of claim 6, wherein said additional deck is provided with an opening arrangeable at said passage.

8. The platform of claim 1, wherein said fixing means are constituted by at least three hooks, which are movable along a perimeter border of said platform.

9. The platform of claim 8, wherein each one of said hooks comprises: an articulated arm; a head of said arm; and a mushroom-shaped tab that protrudes from a plate-like portion of each one of the hooks and is arrangeable below a cross-member of a grid wall of a cage, said head being shaped so as to accommodate the end of the mushroom-shaped tab, and said arm being adapted to wrap around the cross-member of the grid wall and to interlock reversibly to the cross-member by way of said head.

10. The platform of claim 9, comprising four said hooks, which are arranged in pairs on transverse sides with respect to a direction of extension of said platform.

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