



(51) International Patent Classification:

C02F 1/08 (2006.01) **B01D 5/00** (2006.01)
B01D 1/22 (2006.01)

(21) International Application Number:

PCT/CN2013/076304

(22) International Filing Date:

28 May 2013 (28.05.2013)

(25) Filing Language:

English

(26) Publication Language:

English

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(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM, AO, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BH, BN, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CL, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DO, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, GT, HN, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KN, KP, KR, KZ, LA, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LY, MA, MD, ME, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MY, MZ, NA, NG, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PA, PE, PG, PH, PL, PT, QA, RO, RS, RU, RW, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, ST, SV, SY, TH, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LR, LS, MW, MZ, NA, RW, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, RU, TJ, TM), European (AL, AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, MK, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, RS, SE, SI, SK, SM, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, KM, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

— with international search report (Art. 21(3))

(54) Title: EVAPORATION-CONDENSATION SYSTEMS AND METHODS OF MANUFACTURING AND USING THE SAME

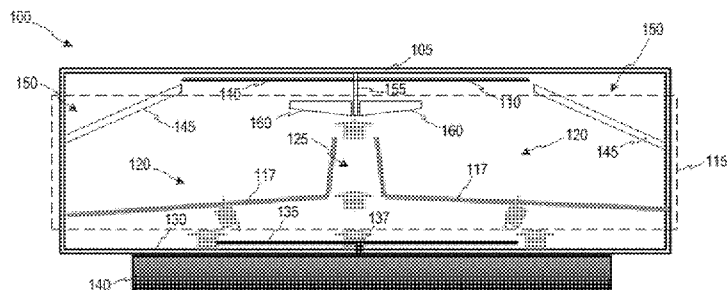


FIG. 1

(57) Abstract: An evaporation-condensation system (100) and methods of manufacturing and using the same are provided. The system (100) may include a condensation surface (105) having one or more wipers (110) and a gas diffusion apparatus (115). The one or more wipers (110) may be configured to move over the condensation surface (105) to displace one or more of fouling material and condensed material that may be present on the condensation surface (105). The gas diffusion apparatus (115) may include one or more anti-gas blades (160) positioned substantially parallel to the condensation surface (105) and one or more gas storage areas (120). The gas diffusion apparatus (115) may be configured to guide an amount of the vapor molecules by rotating the one or more anti-gas blades (160) around a central axis (155) and displacing an amount of non-condensable gas into the one or more gas storage areas (120).



EVAPORATION-CONDENSATION SYSTEMS AND METHODS OF MANUFACTURING AND USING THE SAME

BACKGROUND

[1] Systems and methods for large-scale desalination of seawater has been of particular interest in recent years, and many developments surrounding evaporation-condensation systems have sought to improve performance of the desalination process. However, despite the developments, several issues are still present.

[2] Three such issues with desalination with an evaporation-condensation system include inefficient heat exchange through the various chambers in the evaporation-condensation system, the presence of non-condensable gases that form on the condensing surfaces, and the presence of fouling material on the heat transfer surfaces. The presence of any of these issues may contribute to a significant decrease in heat transfer efficiency and low conductivity.

SUMMARY

[3] In an embodiment, evaporation-condensation systems may include a condensation surface having one or more wipers and a gas diffusion apparatus. The one or more wipers may be configured to move over the condensation surface to displace one or more of fouling material and condensed material that may be present on the condensation surface. The gas diffusion apparatus may include one or more anti-gas blades positioned substantially parallel to the condensation surface and one or more gas storage areas. The gas diffusion apparatus may be configured to guide an amount of vapor molecules towards the condensation surface and promote condensation of the vapor molecules by rotating the one or more anti-gas blades around a central axis and displacing an amount of non-condensable gas into the one or more gas storage areas.

[4] In an embodiment, evaporation-condensation systems may include a first evaporation surface configured to receive a first fluid, one or more first spreaders configured to move over the first evaporation surface in contact with at least a portion of the first fluid to generate a thin film of the first fluid on the first evaporation surface, a heat supply unit operably connected to the first evaporation surface, and a first condensation surface having one or more first wipers. The heat supply unit may be configured to heat the first fluid, causing the first fluid to transform to a first amount of vapor molecules, and the one or more first wipers may be configured to move over the first condensation surface to

displace fouling material that may be present on the first condensation surface. The evaporation-condensation system may also include a first gas diffusion apparatus having one or more first gas storage areas. The first gas diffusion apparatus may be configured to guide the first vapor molecules from the first evaporation surface towards the first condensation surface and promote condensation of the first vapor molecules by displacing a first amount of non-condensable gas into the one or more first gas storage areas. The evaporation-condensation system may also include a second evaporation surface positioned in thermal communication with the first condensation surface. The second evaporation surface may be configured to receive a second fluid and heat the second fluid with heat generated by condensation of the first vapor molecules, causing the second fluid to transform to a second amount of vapor molecules. The evaporation-condensation system may also include one or more second spreaders configured to move over the second evaporation surface in contact with at least a portion of the second fluid to generate a thin film of the second fluid on the second evaporation surface and a second condensation surface having one or more second wipers. The one or more second wipers may be configured to move over the second condensation surface to displace fouling material that may be present on the second condensation surface. The evaporation-condensation system may also include a second gas diffusion apparatus having one or more second gas storage areas. The second gas diffusion apparatus may be configured to guide the second vapor molecules from the second evaporation surface towards the second condensation surface and promote condensation of the second vapor molecules by displacing a second amount of non-condensable gas into the one or more second gas storage areas. The evaporation-condensation system may also include a preheating apparatus configured to receive a cold fluid and heat the cold fluid with heat obtained from the condensation of the second vapor molecules to be used as one or more of the first fluid and the second fluid.

[5] In an embodiment, methods of manufacturing an evaporation-condensation system may include providing a condensation surface configured to facilitate condensation of vapor molecules thereon, arranging one or more wipers on the condensation surface, and arranging a gas diffusion apparatus adjacent to the condensation surface. The one or more wipers may be configured to move over the condensation surface to displace fouling material that may be present on the condensation surface. The gas diffusion apparatus may include one or more gas storage areas and may be configured to guide an amount of vapor molecules towards the condensation surface and promote condensation of the vapor molecules by displacing an amount of non-condensable gas into the one or more gas

storage areas.

[6] In an embodiment, methods of manufacturing an evaporation-condensation system may include providing a first evaporation surface configured to evaporate a first fluid placed thereon and positioning one or more first spreaders on the first evaporation surface. The one or more first spreaders may be configured to move over the first evaporation surface in contact with at least a portion of the first fluid to generate a first thin film of the first fluid on the first evaporation surface. The method may also include attaching a heat supply unit to the first evaporation surface. The heat supply unit may be configured to heat the first fluid, causing the first fluid to transform to a first plurality of vapor molecules. The method may also include providing a first condensation surface configured to facilitate condensation of the first plurality of vapor molecules thereon and arranging a first gas diffusion apparatus between the first evaporation surface and the first condensation surface. The first gas diffusion apparatus may include one or more first gas storage areas and is configured to guide the first plurality of vapor molecules towards the first condensation surface and promote condensation of the first plurality of vapor molecules by displacing a first amount of non-condensable gas into the one or more first gas storage areas. The method may also include arranging one or more first wipers on the first condensation surface. The one or more first wipers may be configured to move over the first condensation surface to displace fouling material that may be present on the first condensation surface. The method may also include arranging a second evaporation surface in thermal communication with the first condensation surface. The second evaporation surface may be configured to obtain heat released from the first condensation surface to heat a second fluid placed thereon, thereby transforming the second fluid to a second plurality of vapor molecules. The method may also include positioning one or more second spreaders on the second evaporation surface. The one or more second spreaders may be configured to move over the second evaporation surface in contact with at least a portion of the second fluid to generate a second thin film of the second fluid on the second evaporation surface. The method may also include providing a second condensation surface configured to facilitate condensation of the second plurality of vapor molecules thereon and arranging a second gas diffusion apparatus between the second evaporation surface and the second condensation surface. The second gas diffusion apparatus may include one or more second gas storage areas and may be configured to guide the second plurality of vapor molecules towards the second condensation surface and promote condensation of the second plurality of vapor molecules by displacing a second

amount of non-condensable gas into the one or more second gas storage areas. The method may also include arranging one or more second wipers on the second condensation surface. The one or more second wipers may be configured to move over the second condensation surface to displace fouling material that may be present on the second condensation surface.

[7] In an embodiment, a method of operating an evaporation-condensation system may include providing a condensation surface configured to facilitate condensation of vapor molecules thereon. The condensation surface may include one or more wipers. The method may also include positioning a gas diffusion apparatus substantially adjacent to the condensation surface. The gas diffusion apparatus may include one or more gas storage areas. The method may also include providing a source of vapor through the gas diffusion apparatus, guiding the vapor molecules through the gas diffusion apparatus towards the condensation surface, displacing an amount of non-condensable gas into the one or more gas storage areas, and rotating the one or more wipers about a center axis on the condensation surface to displace fouling material that may be present on the condensation surface.

[8] In an embodiment, condensation surfaces configured to promote condensation of vapor molecules may include one or more wipers configured to rotate around a central axis to displace fouling material that may be present on the condensation surface. The one or more wipers may have a curved shape and may extend from the central axis to a boundary area that corresponds to an area outside the condensation surface. The boundary area may have a fouling material container configured to receive and store the fouling material as it is displaced by the one or more wipers.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[9] FIG. 1 depicts a side cross-sectional view of an evaporation-condensation system according to an embodiment.

[10] FIG. 2 depicts a side cross-sectional view of another evaporation-condensation system having multiple chambers according to an embodiment.

[11] FIG. 3 depicts a top cross-sectional view of the one or more wipers in an evaporation-condensation system according to an embodiment.

[12] FIG. 4 depicts a top perspective view of a wiper in an evaporation-condensation system according to an embodiment.

[13] FIG. 5 depicts a top cross-sectional view of a plurality of anti-gas blades in

an evaporation-condensation system according to an embodiment.

[14] FIG. 6 depicts a detailed side view of a system for collecting condensate according to an embodiment.

[15] FIG. 7 depicts a diagram of heat and fluid flow in a multiple chamber evaporation-condensation system according to an embodiment.

[16] FIG. 8 depicts a flow diagram of a method of manufacturing an evaporation-condensation system according to an embodiment.

[17] FIG. 9 depicts a flow diagram of a method of manufacturing an evaporation-condensation system having multiple chambers according to an embodiment.

[18] FIG. 10 depicts a flow diagram of a method for operating an evaporation-condensation system according to an embodiment.

[19] FIGS. 11A and 11B depict a graphical representation of a simulation of an evaporation-condensation system with no gas diffusion apparatus according to an embodiment.

[20] FIGS. 12A and 12B depict a graphical representation of a simulation of an evaporation-condensation system with a gas diffusion apparatus according to an embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[21] This disclosure is not limited to the particular systems, devices and methods described, as these may vary. The terminology used in the description is for the purpose of describing the particular versions or embodiments only, and is not intended to limit the scope.

[22] As used in this document, the singular forms “a,” “an,” and “the” include plural references unless the context clearly dictates otherwise. Unless defined otherwise, all technical and scientific terms used herein have the same meanings as commonly understood by one of ordinary skill in the art. Nothing in this disclosure is to be construed as an admission that the embodiments described in this disclosure are not entitled to antedate such disclosure by virtue of prior invention. As used in this document, the term “comprising” means “including, but not limited to.”

[23] FIG. 1 depicts a side cross-sectional view of an evaporation-condensation system, generally designated **100**, according to an embodiment. The evaporation-condensation system **100** may generally be a chamber having a condensation surface **105** and a gas diffusion apparatus **115**. The chamber may be any size or shape suitable for

evaporation and condensation, and may further be constructed of any materials. In some embodiments, at least a portion of the materials used in chamber construction may be thermal resistant. In other embodiments, at least a portion of the materials used in chamber construction may not be thermal resistant. In some embodiments, the materials used in chamber construction may be made of a material that can be pressurized. The evaporation-condensation system **100** disclosed herein may be any evaporation-condensation system and/or components thereof now known or later developed, and is not limited by this disclosure. Specific examples of evaporation-condensation systems may include heat pipes, vapor chambers, condensers, capillary-pumped loops, desalination systems, distillation systems, separation systems, and the like.

[24] In various embodiments, the condensation surface **105** may generally be used to effect condensation of liquid from vapor located within the evaporation-condensation system **100**, as described in greater detail herein. In some embodiments, the condensation surface **105** may be configured to release heat when it is contacted by vapor molecules. The heat may be used as a heat source for other components, whether or not specifically enumerated herein, as a heat source for an evaporation surface in another evaporation-condensation system, and/or the like. The condensation surface **105** is not limited by shape or size, and may be any shape or size suitable for condensation surfaces. In some embodiments, the condensation surface **105** may be substantially circular or ring-shaped to facilitate removal of unwanted objects from the surface, as will be discussed in greater detail herein.

[25] In various embodiments, the condensation surface **105** may include one or more wipers **110** disposed on the surface thereof. In particular embodiments, the condensation surface **105** may have about 1 wiper to about 8 wipers, or any value or range therebetween. In some embodiments, the one or more wipers **110** may be positioned within a distance of the condensation surface **105** such that the wipers are in contact with at least a portion of fouling material and/or the like that may be present on the condensation surface. Specific examples of the distance may include about 0 mm to about 1 mm. More particularly, the distance may be about 0 mm, about 0.001 mm, about 0.01 mm, about 0.1 mm, about 0.5 mm, about 1 mm, or any value or range between any two of the values. In some embodiments, the one or more wipers **110** may generally be configured to move over the condensation surface to displace the fouling material that may be present on the condensation surface **105**. While the term fouling material is used herein, it is understood that any objects, debris, materials, and/or the like is included, particularly objects that

include material that may hinder or prevent condensation, thus decreasing the efficiency of the evaporation-condensation system **100**. Specific examples may include condensed material, brine, salt, dust, and/or the like.

[26] In some embodiments, as also depicted in FIG. 3, the one or more wipers **110** may rotate around a central axis **155** to displace objects from the condensation surface **105**. The one or more wipers **110** may rotate at a revolution rate of about 5 revolutions per minute (RPM) to about 500 RPM. Specific examples of revolution rates may include about 5 RPM, about 10 RPM, about 25 RPM, about 50 RPM, about 100 RPM, about 250 RPM, about 500 RPM, or any value or range between any two of the values. In other embodiments, the one or more wipers **110** may move in a back and forth direction over the condensation surface **105** to remove fouling material. In some embodiments, the one or more wipers **110** may be substantially evenly distributed upon the condensation surface **105**, such as, for example, evenly distributed about the central axis **155**.

[27] The one or more wipers **110** may displace objects by moving the objects into a boundary area **150**. For example, the one or more wipers **110** may be sufficiently curved so that when they advance around the central axis **155**, they may push the objects (as indicated by element **112** in FIG. 3) in an outward direction away from the center of the condensation surface **105** until the objects drop into the boundary area **150**. As also depicted in FIG. 4, in various embodiments, each of the wipers **110** may have a longitudinal axis **410** with respect to a plane **405** that is substantially perpendicular to the condensation surface **105**. The longitudinal axis **410** may extend from the central axis **155** through the center of the wiper to the boundary area. Each wiper **110** may be pitched at an angle θ along the longitudinal axis **410** with respect to the plane, *i.e.*, between **410** and **415**. In some embodiments, the angle θ may be about 5° to about 60°. In particular embodiments, the angle θ may be about 5°, about 10°, about 15°, about 20°, about 25°, about 30°, about 40°, about 50°, about 60°, or any value or range between any two of these values.

[28] In various embodiments, the boundary area **150** may generally be a storage area that is located outside the condensation surface **105**. In some embodiments, the boundary area **150** may surround at least a portion of the condensation surface **105**. In particular embodiments, the boundary area **150** may surround the entire condensation surface **105**. The boundary area **150** may be defined by one or more fouling material containers **145** that are configured to store the fouling material as it is removed from the condensation surface by the one or more wipers **110**. In some embodiments, the boundary

area **150** and/or the one or more fouling material containers **145** may include one or more means for removal of collected fouling material after a period of time, such as when the boundary area and/or the one or more fouling material containers become full and are no longer able to collect additional fouling material.

[29] In various embodiments, the condensation surface **105** may include a collecting brush **605**, as depicted in FIG. 6. In some embodiments, the collecting brush **605** may be used instead of the one or more wipers **110** (FIG. 1). In other embodiments, the collecting brush **605** may be used in addition to the one or more wipers **110** (FIG. 1). The collecting brush **605** may be positioned generally in contact with the condensation surface **105** in a manner to allow the collecting brush to collect condensate **620** from the condensation surface. To effect collection, the collecting brush **605** may generally rotate around the central axis **155** to dislodge the condensate **620** from the condensation surface **105** and move the condensate under gravitational and/or centrifugal force to one or more condensate reservoirs **615**. In some embodiments, a guiding groove **610** may be positioned underneath the collecting brush **605** so that the collecting brush is located between the guiding groove and the condensation surface **105**. The guiding groove **610** may provide additional guiding for the condensate **620** to ensure that substantially all of the condensate removed from the condensation surface **105** by the collecting brush **605** is deposited into the condensate reservoirs **615**. In some embodiments, the guiding groove **610** may have a J-shaped cross section. In some embodiments, the guiding groove **610** may be tilted at a downwards angle to allow the condensate **620** to roll down the guiding groove. In some embodiments, the condensate reservoirs **615** may be configured to hold a volume of condensate **620**. In some embodiments, the condensate reservoirs **615** may be connected to a means for transporting the condensate **620** to other components, whether or not specifically enumerated herein. In some embodiments, the condensate reservoirs **615** may be connected to a means for transporting the condensate **620** to one or more external devices. In some embodiments, the condensate reservoirs **615** may be affixed to an inside surface of the evaporation-condensation system **100** (FIG. 1).

[30] Referring back to FIG. 1, in various embodiments, the gas diffusion apparatus **115** may include one or more anti-gas blades **160** and one or more gas storage areas **120**. Generally, the one or more anti-gas blades **160** may guide the vapor molecules towards the condensation surface **105** and may displace an amount of non-condensable gas into the one or more gas storage areas **120**.

[31] In various embodiments, the anti-gas blades **160** may be positioned

substantially parallel to the condensation surface **105** and may rotate around the central axis **155** in a substantially fan-like manner, as depicted in FIG. 5. While FIG. 1 depicts the anti-gas blades as being substantially closer to the condensation surface, those skilled in the art will recognize that they can be located at any location within the evaporation-condensation system **100** without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In some embodiments, each of the anti-gas blades **160** may be positioned at an angle to effect an upwards force of vapor molecules towards the condensation surface **105**, which may increase the momentum and/or velocity of the vapor molecules towards the condensation surface. In some embodiments, each of the anti-gas blades **160** may further be positioned at an angle to effect displacement of at least a portion of an impinging flow of the non-condensable gas into the one or more gas storage areas **120**. The non-condensable gas is not limited by this disclosure, and may be any type of non-condensable gas that may accumulate on the condensation surface **105**. Specific examples of non-condensable gas may include nitrogen, hydrogen, oxygen, carbon dioxide, helium, and the like, as well as combinations thereof. Based on the theory of interfacial mass transport, only the vapor molecules that reach the condensation surface **105** have a chance to condense, and the amount of the vapor molecules is expressed by Equation (1):

$$j = \Gamma(a) \left(\sqrt{\frac{\bar{M}}{2\pi\bar{R}}} \right) \left(\frac{P}{mT^{1/2}} \right) \quad (1)$$

where P is the vapor pressure, T is the vapor temperature, m is the mass of each vapor molecule, $\bar{M}$ is the molecular weight, $\bar{R}$ is the universal gas constant, and $\Gamma(a)$ is a factor representing the influence of the vapor bulk flow, $\Gamma(a) \approx a\pi^{1/2}$ where a is proportional to the bulk flow velocity towards the interface. When the vapor bulk is moving towards the condensation surface **105**, $\Gamma(a)$ is larger and thus more vapor molecules can reach the condensation surface.

[32] In various embodiments, the one or more gas storage areas **120** may generally be defined by one or more anti-gas inserts **117** and/or the inside walls of the evaporation-condensation system **100**. The inserts **117** may be any shape and/or size, and thus are not limited by this disclosure. In some embodiments, the inserts **117** may be shaped to funnel the vapor from a large area to a smaller area (*e.g.*, **125**) that is focused near the center of the condensation surface **105**. The funnel shape of the inserts **117** may additionally act to increase the velocity and/or momentum of the vapor travelling towards the condensation surface **105**. In some embodiments, the inserts **117** may extend from one or more inside vertical walls of the evaporation-condensation system and curve or bend

upward so that a portion of the inserts may be parallel to the inside vertical walls. The type of material used to create the inserts **117** is not limited by this disclosure, and may be of any material, particularly materials commonly known for use in evaporation-condensation systems and the like.

[33] In various embodiments, the one or more gas storage areas **120** may be configured to receive the non-condensable gas and reduce the concentration of the gas. Reduction of the concentration of the non-condensable gas may be completed by dilution, removal of the non-condensable gas from the gas storage areas **120**, and/or the like.

[34] In various embodiments, the evaporation-condensation system **100** may further include an evaporation surface **130**. The evaporation surface **130** may be configured to heat a fluid so that it vaporizes. To assist in the vaporization process, the evaporation surface **130** may incorporate one or more spreaders **135** that are configured to move over the evaporation surface to generate a thin film of fluid on the evaporation surface. In some embodiments, the one or more spreaders **135** may be in contact with at least a portion of the evaporation surface to effect spreading of the fluid. Similar to the one or more wipers **110** previously described herein, the one or more spreaders **135** may move over the evaporation surface **130** in a back and forth motion, or may move over the evaporation surface in a circular motion by rotating around a center axis **137**. While the center axis **137** of the one or more spreaders **135** is shown to be separate from the center axis **155** of the one or more wipers **110**, those skilled in the art will recognize that a single center axis may be used to rotate all of the elements discussed herein without departing from the scope of the present disclosure.

[35] In various embodiments, the evaporation surface **130** may be operably connected to a heat supply unit **140**. The heat supply unit **140** is not limited by this disclosure, and may include any device that is capable of generating, receiving, transferring, and/or distributing heat. In some embodiments, the heat supply unit **140** may receive heat from an external source. In some embodiments, the heat supply unit **140** may generate heat using any number of components commonly known to generate heat. In some embodiments, the heat supply unit **140** may be a portion of a second evaporation-condensation system, wherein the heat is received from the condensation surface of the second evaporation-condensation system, as described in greater detail herein. The heat supply unit **140** may provide the evaporation surface **130** with heat necessary for the evaporation surface to convert the fluid to vapor molecules.

[36] In various embodiments, the evaporation surface **130** may also be

configured to receive the fluid to be used for vaporization. In some embodiments, the evaporation surface **130** may be connected to an inlet and/or the like (not shown), which provides a fluid source. The inlet may be configured to receive the fluid from other components, from the surrounding environment, from storage tanks, and/or the like and deposit the fluid onto the evaporation surface **130**.

[37] In various embodiments, to effect a suitable evaporation and condensation reaction, the gas diffusion apparatus **115** may be positioned substantially between the evaporation surface **130** and the condensation surface **105**. Additionally, the evaporation surface **130** may generally be located on a bottom surface of the evaporation-condensation system **100** and the condensation surface **105** may generally be located on a top surface, so as to allow vapor molecules to flow in an upwards direction, condense upon contacting the condensation surface, and then fall under force of gravity, as previously described herein.

[38] In various embodiments, the anti-gas blades **160**, the spreaders **135**, the wipers **110**, and/or the collecting brush **605** (FIG. 6) may, either collectively or individually, be attached to the rotating central axis **155**. The rotating central axis **155** may be the same axis for all of the elements or a portion of the elements. In some embodiments, multiple rotating central axes **155** may exist. The rotating central axis **155** may be powered by one or more motors and/or other propulsion devices that are configured to rotate the central axis at a rotational velocity that is suitable for the movement of at least one of the components discussed herein.

[39] FIG. 2 depicts a side cross-sectional view of an evaporation-condensation system having multiple chambers, generally designated **200**, according to an embodiment. While the present disclosure depicts two chambers, those skilled in the art will recognize that more than two chambers may be used without departing from the scope of this disclosure. In general, the components of the evaporation-condensation system **200** are identical to the system described hereinabove with respect to FIG. 1, but include an additional chamber for evaporation and condensation. Particularly, the evaporation-condensation system **200** may include a first chamber having a first evaporation surface **230**, one or more first spreaders **235** attached to the first evaporation surface, a heat supply **240** in communication with the first evaporation surface, a first condensation surface **205** having one or more wipers **210**, and a first gas diffusion apparatus **215** having one or more first gas storage areas **220**, one or more first anti-gas inserts **217** (including **225**), and one or more first anti-gas blades **260**. Additionally, the evaporation-condensation system **200** may also include a second chamber having a second evaporation surface **330**, one or more

second spreaders **335** attached to the second evaporation surface, a second condensation surface **305** having one or more wipers **310**, and a second gas diffusion apparatus **315** having one or more second gas storage areas **320**, one or more second anti-gas inserts **317** (including **325**), one or more second anti-gas blades **360**, and a preheating apparatus **340**.

[40] As described in greater detail herein, the one or more first spreaders **235** and the one or more second spreaders **335** may generally be configured to move over the respective evaporation surface **230**, **330** in contact with at least a portion of the fluid thereon to generate a thin film of fluid on each respective evaporation surface. As also described in greater detail herein, the one or more first wipers **210** and the one or more second wipers **310** may generally be configured to move over the respective condensation surface **205**, **305** to displace fouling material that may be present on each respective condensation surface into the respective boundary areas **250**, **350** and the respective fouling material containers **245**, **345**.

[41] In various embodiments, as described in greater detail herein, the first gas diffusion apparatus **215** and second gas diffusion apparatus **315** may each be positioned between the respective evaporation surfaces **230**, **330** and the respective condensation surfaces **205**, **305**. In some embodiments, the first gas diffusion apparatus **215** and second gas diffusion apparatus **315** may each be configured to guide vapor molecules from the respective evaporation surface **230**, **330** towards the respective condensation surface **205**, **305**. Additionally, the first gas diffusion apparatus **215** and the second gas diffusion apparatus **315** may each be configured to displace non-condensable gas away from each respective condensation surface **205**, **305** into each respective gas storage area **220**, **320**. Each gas diffusion apparatus may use the respective anti-gas blades **260**, **360** to aid in completion of these tasks.

[42] As previously described herein, the heat supply unit **240** may be operably connected to the first evaporation surface **230** to effect heating of the fluid located thereon. Heating of the first evaporation surface **230** via the heat supply unit **240** may cause the fluid to vaporize, and the resultant vapor to rise through the first gas diffusion apparatus **215** and condense on the first condensation surface **205**. The first condensation surface **205** may be thermally connected to the second evaporation surface **330** in such a manner that the heat released from the condensation of vapor molecules contacting with the first condensation surface is used to provide the heat necessary to heat and vaporize the fluid on the second evaporation surface. Thus, little or no additional energy is needed to heat the second evaporation-condensation chamber. However, in some embodiments, an additional

heat supply unit (not shown) may be used to provide a supplemental amount of heat to the second evaporation surface **330**. In other embodiments, the heat supply unit **240** may also be operably connected to the second evaporation surface **330** in addition to the first evaporation surface **230**. In these embodiments, the heat supply unit **240** may be used to provide a supplemental amount of heat to the second evaporation surface **330**. The second evaporation surface **330** may vaporize the fluid, and the resultant vapor may rise through the second gas diffusion apparatus **315** and condense on the second condensation surface **305**.

[43] As described in greater detail herein, both the first condensation surface **205** and the second condensation surface **305** may include, respectively, one or more collecting brushes, one or more guiding grooves, and one or more condensate reservoirs (not shown) for removing and collecting condensate from the respective condensation surface. In some embodiments, each condensate reservoir may be attached to an apparatus for removing and transporting the condensate, as previously described herein.

[44] In various embodiments, the second condensation surface **305** may be thermally connected to the preheating apparatus **340** and may be configured to provide heat from the condensation of vapor to the preheating apparatus. In some embodiments, the preheating apparatus **340** may be configured to receive fluid, such as fluid from areas surrounding the evaporation-condensation system **200** from an inlet **370**. In some embodiments, the preheating apparatus **340** may be configured to heat the fluid with the heat obtained from the second condensation surface **305**. In some embodiments, the preheating apparatus **340** may direct the heated fluid to the first evaporation surface **230** and/or the second evaporation surface **330** to be used in creating additional vapor.

[45] FIG. 7 depicts a diagram of the movement of fluid and heat in the multiple chamber evaporation-condensation system **200** described in FIG. 2. Heat **705** flows from the heat supply unit up to the first chamber **720** where it is used to heat the first fluid so that it vaporizes and condenses at the top of the first chamber. The heat **705** from the condensation reaction in the first chamber **720** is then used to drive vaporization of fluid in the second chamber **725**. The vapor is then condensed in the second chamber, and the heat **705** from the second condensation is used to heat the fluid **715** in the preheating apparatus, which is then returned to one or both of the chambers to repeat the process. The condensed liquid **710** is collected in each chamber and is outputted from the evaporation-condensation system.

[46] FIG. 8 depicts a flow diagram of a method of manufacturing an

evaporation-condensation system according to an embodiment. The method described herein is merely illustrative; additional, fewer, and/or alternative processes are contemplated without departing from the scope of the present disclosure. The processes described herein will be described with respect to a user; however, more than one user and/or one or more machines may also conduct the processes.

[47] In an embodiment, the user may provide **805** a condensation surface. In some embodiments, the condensation surface may be configured to facilitate condensation of vapor molecules thereon, as previously described herein. The user may arrange **810** one or more wipers on the condensation surface. In some embodiments, the one or more wipers may be arranged **810** in a manner that allows them to move over the condensation surface to displace fouling material that may be present on the condensation surface, as described herein. In some embodiments, the one or more wipers may be arranged **810** in contact with at least a portion of the condensation surface and in an evenly distributed pattern about a rotating center axis, as described in greater detail herein.

[48] In various embodiments, the user may arrange **815** the gas diffusion apparatus substantially adjacent to the condensation apparatus. The gas diffusion apparatus may further be arranged **815** in such a manner so as to allow it to guide vapor molecules towards the condensation surface and promote condensation by displacing non-condensable gas into one or more gas storage areas, as described in greater detail herein.

[49] In various embodiments, the user may arrange **820** an evaporation surface adjacent to the gas diffusion apparatus. In some embodiments, the evaporation surface may generally be arranged **820** in such a manner that the gas diffusion apparatus is located between the evaporation surface and the condensation apparatus. In some embodiments, the evaporation surface may be located on the bottom of an evaporation-condensation chamber, the condensation surface on the top, and the gas diffusion apparatus located between. This arrangement may allow for fluid to vaporize, flow up through the gas diffusion apparatus, and then condensate on the condensation surface, as described in greater detail herein. In some embodiments, the user may position **825** one or more spreaders on the evaporation surface. The one or more spreaders may be positioned **825** in such a manner so that they can move over the evaporation surface in contact with at least a portion of the fluid to generate a thin film on the evaporation surface.

[50] In various embodiments, the user may attach **830** a heat supply unit to the evaporation surface. In some embodiments, the heat supply unit may be directly attached **830** to the evaporation surface. In other embodiments, the heat supply unit may be

thermally attached **830** to the evaporation surface. In yet other embodiments, the heat supply unit may be located in a remote location and configured to deliver heat to the evaporation surface. In some embodiments, the heat supply may be attached **830** in such a manner so as to allow the heat supply unit to heat the fluid on the evaporation surface to effectively transform the fluid into vapor molecules.

[51] In various embodiments, the user may position **835** one or more anti-gas blades between the condensation surface and the gas diffusion apparatus. In some embodiments, the anti-gas blades may be positioned **835** at an angle in an evenly distributed manner around a central axis and may further be substantially parallel to the condensation surface so that the anti-gas blades facilitate movement of vapor towards the condensation surface and displacement of non-condensable gas into the gas storage areas, as described in greater detail herein.

[52] In various embodiments, the user may position **840** a collecting brush at or near the surface of the condensation surface. In some embodiments, the collecting brush may be positioned **840** in a manner that allows it to move over the condensation surface to collect condensate, and with the help of a guiding groove, deposit the condensate into a condensate reservoir, as described herein.

[53] In various embodiments, the user may connect **845** the elements of the evaporation-condensation system to any other additional systems. Examples of additional systems are not limited by this disclosure, and may include, for example, additional evaporation-condensation systems, heat pipes, vapor chambers, condensers, capillary-looped pumps, desalination systems, distillation systems, separation systems, and/or the like.

[54] FIG. 9 depicts a flow diagram of a method of manufacturing an evaporation-condensation system having multiple chambers according to an embodiment. The method described herein is merely illustrative; additional, fewer, and/or alternative processes are contemplated without departing from the scope of the present disclosure. The processes described herein will be described with respect to a user; however, more than one user and/or one or more machines may also conduct the processes.

[55] In various embodiments, the user may provide **905** a first evaporation surface on the bottom of a first evaporation-condensation chamber. In some embodiments, the user may position **910** a first set of spreaders on the first evaporation system, as previously described herein. In some embodiments, a heat supply may be attached **915** to the first evaporation surface to provide heat for vaporization of fluid on the first

evaporation surface.

[56] In various embodiments, the user may provide **920** a first condensation surface on the top of the first evaporation-condensation chamber and arrange **925** a first gas diffusion apparatus in the first evaporation-condensation chamber. In some embodiments, the first gas diffusion apparatus may be arranged **925** substantially between the first condensation surface and the first evaporation surface, as previously described herein. In some embodiments, the user may arrange **930** a first set of wipers and/or a first collecting brush on the first condensation surface, as previously described herein. In some embodiments, the first collecting brush may be arranged **930** with a guiding groove and/or one or more condensate reservoirs and positioned in such a manner that the first collecting brush can collect condensate from the first condensation surface and deposit the condensate in the condensate reservoirs via the guiding groove, as previously described herein.

[57] In various embodiments, the user may arrange **935** a second evaporation surface on the bottom of a second evaporation-condensation chamber. In some embodiments, the second evaporation surface may be arranged **935** in such a manner that it is connected to the first condensation surface so as to receive the heat released from the first condensation surface for use in heating fluid, as previously described herein. Accordingly, the second evaporation-condensation chamber may be positioned substantially above the first evaporation-condensation chamber. In some embodiments, the user may position **940** a second set of spreaders on the second evaporation system, as previously described herein.

[58] In various embodiments, the user may provide **945** a second condensation surface on the top of the second evaporation-condensation chamber and arrange **950** a second gas diffusion apparatus in the second evaporation-condensation chamber. In some embodiments, the second gas diffusion apparatus may be arranged **950** substantially between the second condensation surface and the second evaporation surface, as previously described herein. In some embodiments, the user may arrange **955** a second set of wipers and/or a second collecting brush on the first condensation surface, as previously described herein. In some embodiments, the second collecting brush may be arranged **955** with a guiding groove and/or one or more condensate reservoirs and positioned in such a manner that the second collecting brush can collect condensate from the second condensation surface and deposit the condensate in the condensate reservoir via the guiding groove, as previously described herein.

[59] In various embodiments, the user may also complete additional steps, such as, for example, placing and arranging additional components, attaching the evaporation-condensation system to other components, and/or the like.

[60] FIG. 10 depicts a flow diagram of a method for operating an evaporation-condensation system according to an embodiment. The method described herein is merely illustrative; additional, fewer, and/or alternative processes are contemplated without departing from the scope of the present disclosure. The processes described herein will be described with respect to a user; however, more than one user and/or one or more machines may also conduct the processes.

[61] In various embodiments, the user may provide **1005** a condensation surface configured to facilitate condensation, position **1010** a gas diffusion apparatus configured to direct vapor towards the condensation surface, and position **1015** an evaporation surface configured to vaporize fluid, all of which have previously been described in greater detail herein. In some embodiments, the user may provide **1020** a fluid to the evaporation surface. The user may provide **1020** the fluid from a preheating unit, as described herein, or may provide the fluid from another external location.

[62] In some embodiments, the user may spread **1025** the fluid in a thin film on the evaporation surface, such as through use of one or more spreaders, as described in greater detail herein. The user may also heat **1030** the evaporation surface so that the thin film of fluid is converted to vapor. The spreading **1025** and heating **1030** processes may be completed continuously, so that additional fluid is constantly being converted to vapor.

[63] In various embodiments, the user may guide **1035** the vapor through the gas diffusion apparatus toward the condensation surface, where it may be given additional momentum to reach the condensation surface. In some embodiments, the user may displace **1040** non-condensable gases that travel with the vapor through the use of one or more anti-gas blades and/or one or more gas storage areas, as previously described herein. Displacement **1040** of the non-condensable gases may ensure that a greater amount of vapor is able to condense. In some embodiments, the user may also rotate **1045** one or more wipers located at or near the condensation surface to remove fouling material present on the condensation surface, as described in greater detail herein. Removal of the fouling material may also ensure that a greater amount of vapor is able to condense.

[64] In various embodiments, as the vapor condenses, the user may use **1050** the heat from the condensation to drive evaporation of fluid from other chambers and may collect **1055** the condensate from the condensation surface through the use of a collecting

brush, a guiding groove, and/or one or more condensate reservoirs, as described in greater detail herein. In some embodiments, additional steps may also be completed, such as, for example, transmitted the collected condensate to other systems and/or apparatuses.

EXAMPLES

Example 1: Validation of Gas Diffusion Apparatus

[65] A comprehensive computational fluid dynamics (CFD) simulation has been conducted to evaluate the performance of an anti-gas insert in a gas diffusion apparatus. Particularly, software that contains broad physical modeling capabilities needed to model flow, turbulence, heat transfer, and reactions is used to complete the CFD simulation. In this instance, FLUENT flow modeling simulation software (ANSYS Inc., Canonsburg, PA) was used. A heat pipe is simulated. The evaporation is at the bottom and the condensation is at the top. The evaporation side temperature is 4K higher than the condensation side temperature. Three cases were simulated for comparison:

- **Case 1:** When the mass fraction of non-condensable gases (NCG) is ideally 0 (there is no NCG in the system), the condensation mass rate of the system is 0.95 grams/second.
- **Case 2:** When the NCG mass fraction is 1.1 %, the condensation rate drops sharply to 0.44 grams/second, a reduction of 54%. The vapor is generated at the evaporation side and flows to the condensing side for condensation. As shown in FIGS. 11A and 11B, a high concentration of NCG is shown in the center and covering the condensation surface, which decreases heat transfer.
- **Case 3:** The anti-gas insert is introduced in the chamber as shown in FIGS. 12A and 12B. The flow field in the chamber is manipulated by the insert as shown in FIG. 12A. In FIG. 12B, it is shown that the NCG layer near the condensation surface has been prevented. The condensation rate has been enhanced to 0.89 grams/second. Compared to 0.44 grams/second as discovered in Case 2, the heat transfer has been enhanced about 100%.

Example 2: Addition of a Flow Aid

[66] By adding a flow aid such as one or more anti-gas blades to the gas diffusion apparatus shown in Example 1, the heat transfer on the condensation surface can be further increased. The anti-gas blades are positioned as a fan in the center of the system to help with the vapor jet that impinges to the condensing surface. The simulation was

completed to evaluate performance of a combination of the anti-gas insert and the flow aid. While the previous simulation was based on 4K temperature difference between the condensing surface (304K) and the evaporating surface (308K), the present simulation is based on a 1K difference between the condensing surface (307K) and the evaporating surface (308K) to make the effect of the flow aid more conspicuous. The results are shown in the table below:

	No gas diffusion apparatus	Anti-gas insert only	Anti-gas insert and flow aid	
No NCG	0.254 g/s			
1% NCG	0.1534 g/s	0.2032 g/s (32% enhancement)	0.2108 g/s (10 Pa pressure difference, 37% enhancement)	0.2438 g/s (50 Pa pressure difference, 59% enhancement)

Example 3: Multiple Chamber System

[67] A multiple chamber system used for desalinating sea water for drinking is arranged so that two substantially cylindrical chambers are stacked on top of each other. Each chamber has a round evaporation surface on the bottom, a condensation surface on the top and a gas diffusion apparatus placed between the two. The condensation surface of the bottom chamber is placed in thermal communication with the evaporation surface of the top chamber, so that heat from the condensation surface can be used by the evaporation surface.

[68] Each of the evaporation surfaces has two spreaders attached to it, with the spreaders rotating around a central axis that is powered by a motor. Each condensation surface has three wipers attached to it, with the wipers also rotating around the central axis. The central axis spans the length of both chambers and is used to power both sets of spreaders. The central axis also has four gas diffusion blades attached to it in the bottom chamber, and four gas diffusion blades attached to it in the top chamber. Both sets of gas diffusion blades are located closer to the respective evaporation surface than the condensation surface. The central axis also has two collection brushes attached at a location where each collection brush is in contact with at least a portion of one condensation surface. Each brush rotates around the condensation surface and collects the condensate, which falls under force of gravity and centrifugal force downwards and

outwards along a guiding groove into a condensate reservoir attached around the circumference of the inside vertical wall of each chamber. The condensate reservoir has an exit hatch, which is used to transport the condensate to remote drinking water storage containers.

[69] In the above detailed description, reference is made to the accompanying drawings, which form a part hereof. In the drawings, similar symbols typically identify similar components, unless context dictates otherwise. The illustrative embodiments described in the detailed description, drawings, and claims are not meant to be limiting. Other embodiments may be used, and other changes may be made, without departing from the spirit or scope of the subject matter presented herein. It will be readily understood that the aspects of the present disclosure, as generally described herein, and illustrated in the Figures, can be arranged, substituted, combined, separated, and designed in a wide variety of different configurations, all of which are explicitly contemplated herein.

[70] The present disclosure is not to be limited in terms of the particular embodiments described in this application, which are intended as illustrations of various aspects. Many modifications and variations can be made without departing from its spirit and scope, as will be apparent to those skilled in the art. Functionally equivalent methods and apparatuses within the scope of the disclosure, in addition to those enumerated herein, will be apparent to those skilled in the art from the foregoing descriptions. Such modifications and variations are intended to fall within the scope of the appended claims. The present disclosure is to be limited only by the terms of the appended claims, along with the full scope of equivalents to which such claims are entitled. It is to be understood that this disclosure is not limited to particular methods, reagents, compounds, compositions or biological systems, which can, of course, vary. It is also to be understood that the terminology used herein is for the purpose of describing particular embodiments only, and is not intended to be limiting.

[71] With respect to the use of substantially any plural and/or singular terms herein, those having skill in the art can translate from the plural to the singular and/or from the singular to the plural as is appropriate to the context and/or application. The various singular/plural permutations may be expressly set forth herein for sake of clarity.

[72] It will be understood by those within the art that, in general, terms used herein, and especially in the appended claims (for example, bodies of the appended claims) are generally intended as “open” terms (for example, the term “including” should be

interpreted as “including but not limited to,” the term “having” should be interpreted as “having at least,” the term “includes” should be interpreted as “includes but is not limited to,” et cetera). While various compositions, methods, and devices are described in terms of “comprising” various components or steps (interpreted as meaning “including, but not limited to”), the compositions, methods, and devices can also “consist essentially of” or “consist of” the various components and steps, and such terminology should be interpreted as defining essentially closed-member groups. It will be further understood by those within the art that if a specific number of an introduced claim recitation is intended, such an intent will be explicitly recited in the claim, and in the absence of such recitation no such intent is present. For example, as an aid to understanding, the following appended claims may contain usage of the introductory phrases “at least one” and “one or more” to introduce claim recitations. However, the use of such phrases should not be construed to imply that the introduction of a claim recitation by the indefinite articles “a” or “an” limits any particular claim containing such introduced claim recitation to embodiments containing only one such recitation, even when the same claim includes the introductory phrases “one or more” or “at least one” and indefinite articles such as “a” or “an” (for example, “a” and/or “an” should be interpreted to mean “at least one” or “one or more”); the same holds true for the use of definite articles used to introduce claim recitations. In addition, even if a specific number of an introduced claim recitation is explicitly recited, those skilled in the art will recognize that such recitation should be interpreted to mean at least the recited number (for example, the bare recitation of “two recitations,” without other modifiers, means at least two recitations, or two or more recitations). Furthermore, in those instances where a convention analogous to “at least one of A, B, and C, et cetera” is used, in general such a construction is intended in the sense one having skill in the art would understand the convention (for example, “a system having at least one of A, B, and C” would include but not be limited to systems that have A alone, B alone, C alone, A and B together, A and C together, B and C together, and/or A, B, and C together, et cetera). In those instances where a convention analogous to “at least one of A, B, or C, et cetera” is used, in general such a construction is intended in the sense one having skill in the art would understand the convention (for example, “a system having at least one of A, B, or C” would include but not be limited to systems that have A alone, B alone, C alone, A and B together, A and C together, B and C together, and/or A, B, and C together, et cetera). It will be further understood by those within the art that virtually any disjunctive word and/or phrase presenting two or more alternative terms, whether in the description, claims, or

drawings, should be understood to contemplate the possibilities of including one of the terms, either of the terms, or both terms. For example, the phrase “A or B” will be understood to include the possibilities of “A” or “B” or “A and B.”

[73] In addition, where features or aspects of the disclosure are described in terms of Markush groups, those skilled in the art will recognize that the disclosure is also thereby described in terms of any individual member or subgroup of members of the Markush group.

[74] As will be understood by one skilled in the art, for any and all purposes, such as in terms of providing a written description, all ranges disclosed herein also encompass any and all possible subranges and combinations of subranges thereof. Any listed range can be easily recognized as sufficiently describing and enabling the same range being broken down into at least equal halves, thirds, quarters, fifths, tenths, et cetera. As a non-limiting example, each range discussed herein can be readily broken down into a lower third, middle third and upper third, et cetera. As will also be understood by one skilled in the art all language such as “up to,” “at least,” and the like include the number recited and refer to ranges which can be subsequently broken down into subranges as discussed above. Finally, as will be understood by one skilled in the art, a range includes each individual member. Thus, for example, a group having 1-3 cells refers to groups having 1, 2, or 3 cells. Similarly, a group having 1-5 cells refers to groups having 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 cells, and so forth.

[75] Various of the above-disclosed and other features and functions, or alternatives thereof, may be combined into many other different systems or applications. Various presently unforeseen or unanticipated alternatives, modifications, variations or improvements therein may be subsequently made by those skilled in the art, each of which is also intended to be encompassed by the disclosed embodiments.

CLAIMS

1. An evaporation-condensation system comprising:
a condensation surface having one or more wipers, wherein the one or more wipers are configured to move over the condensation surface to displace one or more of fouling material and condensed material that may be present on the condensation surface; and
a gas diffusion apparatus comprising:
one or more anti-gas blades positioned substantially parallel to the condensation surface; and
one or more gas storage areas,
wherein the gas diffusion apparatus is configured to guide an amount of vapor molecules towards the condensation surface and promote condensation of the vapor molecules by rotating the one or more anti-gas blades around a central axis and displacing an amount of non-condensable gas into the one or more gas storage areas.
2. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 1, further comprising:
an evaporation surface configured to receive a fluid; and
one or more spreaders configured to move over the evaporation surface in contact with at least a portion of the fluid to generate a thin film of the fluid on the evaporation surface.
3. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 2, further comprising a heat supply unit operably connected to the evaporation surface, wherein the heat supply unit is configured to heat the fluid, causing the fluid to transform to the vapor molecules.
4. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 2, wherein the gas diffusion apparatus is positioned substantially between the evaporation surface and the condensation surface and is configured to guide the vapor molecules from the evaporation surface towards the condensation surface.
5. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 1, wherein the one or more wipers each comprise a curved shape and extend from a rotating center axis to a boundary area that corresponds to an area outside the condensation surface.

6. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 5, wherein the one or more wipers are configured to rotate around the rotating center axis.

7. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 6, wherein the rotation of the one or more wipers causes the one or more wipers to push the fouling material into the boundary area.

8. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 7, wherein the boundary area comprises a fouling material container configured to store the fouling material.

9. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 6, wherein the one or more wipers are configured to rotate at a revolution rate of about 5 revolutions per minute to about 500 revolutions per minute.

10. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 6, wherein the one or more wipers are substantially evenly distributed about the rotating center axis.

11. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 1, wherein each of the one or more wipers is pitched at an angle of about 5° to about 60° along a longitudinal axis of each wiper with respect to a plane perpendicular to the condensation surface.

12. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 1, wherein the one or more wipers comprise about 1 wiper to about 8 wipers.

13. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 1, wherein the one or more wipers comprise 2 wipers.

14. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 1, wherein the one or more wipers are positioned within a distance of the condensation surface such that the one or more wipers are in contact with one or more of at least a portion of the fouling material and at least a portion of the condensed material.

15. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 14, wherein the distance is about 0.01mm to about 1 mm.

16. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 1, wherein the one or more gas storage areas are configured to reduce the concentration of the non-condensable gas.

17. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 1, wherein the evaporation-condensation system is one or more of a heat pipe, a vapor chamber, a condenser, a capillary-pumped loop, a desalination system, a distillation system, and a separation system.

18. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 1, wherein the condensation surface is configured to release heat when contacted by the vapor molecules, wherein the heat is used as a heat source for an evaporation surface in a second evaporation-condensation system.

19. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 1, wherein the non-condensable gas comprises one or more of nitrogen, hydrogen, oxygen, carbon dioxide, and helium.

20. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 1, wherein the fouling material comprises one or more of brine, salt, and dust.

21. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 1, further comprising a collecting brush positioned in contact with the condensation surface, wherein the collecting brush is configured to collect condensate from the condensation surface and deposit the condensate into one or more condensate reservoirs.

22. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 21, wherein a guiding groove is configured to receive the condensate from the collecting brush and guide the condensate into the one or more condensate reservoirs.

23. An evaporation-condensation system comprising:
a first evaporation surface configured to receive a first fluid;
one or more first spreaders configured to move over the first evaporation surface in contact with at least a portion of the first fluid to generate a thin film of the first fluid on the first evaporation surface;

a heat supply unit operably connected to the first evaporation surface, wherein the heat supply unit is configured to heat the first fluid, causing the first fluid to transform to a first amount of vapor molecules;

a first condensation surface having one or more first wipers, wherein the one or more first wipers are configured to move over the first condensation surface to displace fouling material that may be present on the first condensation surface;

a first gas diffusion apparatus comprising one or more first gas storage areas, wherein the first gas diffusion apparatus is configured to guide the first vapor molecules from the first evaporation surface towards the first condensation surface and promote condensation of the first vapor molecules by displacing a first amount of non-condensable gas into the one or more first gas storage areas;

a second evaporation surface positioned in thermal communication with the first condensation surface, wherein the second evaporation surface is configured to receive a second fluid and heat the second fluid with heat generated by condensation of the first vapor molecules, causing the second fluid to transform to a second amount of vapor molecules;

one or more second spreaders configured to move over the second evaporation surface in contact with at least a portion of the second fluid to generate a thin film of the second fluid on the second evaporation surface;

a second condensation surface having one or more second wipers, wherein the one or more second wipers are configured to move over the second condensation surface to displace fouling material that may be present on the second condensation surface;

a second gas diffusion apparatus comprising one or more second gas storage areas, wherein the second gas diffusion apparatus is configured to guide the second vapor molecules from the second evaporation surface towards the second condensation surface and promote condensation of the second vapor molecules by displacing a second amount of non-condensable gas into the one or more second gas storage areas; and

a preheating apparatus configured to receive a cold fluid and heat the cold fluid with heat obtained from the condensation of the second vapor molecules to be used as one or more of the first fluid and the second fluid.

24. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 23, wherein:

the first gas diffusion apparatus is positioned substantially between the first evaporation surface and the first condensation surface and is configured to guide the first

vapor molecules from the first evaporation surface towards the first condensation surface;
and

the second gas diffusion apparatus is positioned substantially between the second evaporation surface and the second condensation surface and is configured to guide the second vapor molecules from the second evaporation surface towards the second condensation surface.

25. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 23, wherein:

the first wipers each comprise a curved shape and extend from a rotating center axis to a first boundary area that corresponds to an area outside the first condensation surface; and

the second wipers each comprise a curved shape and extend from the rotating center axis to a second boundary area that corresponds to an area outside the second condensation surface.

26. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 25, wherein the first wipers and the second wipers are each configured to rotate around the rotating center axis.

27. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 25, wherein the rotation of the one or more first wipers causes the one or more first wipers to push the fouling material into the first boundary area.

28. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 27, wherein the first boundary area comprises a first fouling material container configured to store the fouling material.

29. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 25, wherein the rotation of the one or more second wipers causes the one or more second wipers to push the fouling material into the second boundary area.

30. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 29, wherein the second boundary area comprises a second fouling material container configured to store the fouling material.

31. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 25, wherein the one or more first wipers are configured to rotate at a revolution rate of about 5 revolutions per minute to about 500 revolutions per minute and the one or more second wipers are configured to rotate at a revolution rate of about 5 revolutions per minute to about 500 revolutions per minute.

32. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 25, wherein the one or more first wipers are substantially evenly distributed about the rotating center axis.

33. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 25, wherein the one or more second wipers are substantially evenly distributed about the rotating center axis.

34. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 25, wherein each of the one or more first wipers is pitched at an angle of about 15° along a longitudinal axis of each wiper with respect to a plane perpendicular to the first condensation surface.

35. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 25, wherein each of the one or more second wipers is pitched at an angle of about 15° along a longitudinal axis of each wiper with respect to a plane perpendicular to the second condensation surface.

36. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 23, wherein the one or more first wipers are positioned within a distance of the first condensation surface such that the one or more first wipers are in contact with at least a portion of the fouling material.

37. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 36, wherein the distance is about 0.01 mm to about 1 mm.

38. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 23, wherein the one or more second wipers are positioned within a distance of the second condensation surface such that the one or more second wipers are in contact with at least a portion of the fouling material.

39. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 38, wherein the distance is about 0.01 mm to about 1 mm.

40. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 23, wherein at least one of the one or more first gas storage areas and the one or more second gas storage areas is configured to reduce the concentration of the non-condensable gas.

41. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 23, further comprising a first collecting brush positioned in contact with the first condensation surface and a second collecting brush positioned in contact with the second condensation surface, wherein the first collecting brush and the second collecting brush are each configured to collect condensate from the respective condensation surface and deposit the condensate into one or more condensate reservoirs.

42. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 41, wherein:
a first guiding groove is configured to receive the condensate from the first collecting brush and guide the condensate into the one or more condensate reservoirs; and
a second guiding groove is configured to receive the condensate from the second collecting brush and guide the condensate into the one or more condensate reservoirs.

43. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 23, wherein the evaporation-condensation system is one or more of a heat pipe, a vapor chamber, a condenser, a capillary-looped pump, a desalination system, a distillation system, and a separation system.

44. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 23, wherein the fouling material comprises one or more of brine, salt, and dust.

45. The evaporation-condensation system of claim 23, wherein the non-condensable gas comprises one or more of nitrogen, hydrogen, oxygen, carbon dioxide, and helium.

46. A method of manufacturing an evaporation-condensation system, the method comprising:

providing a condensation surface configured to facilitate condensation of vapor molecules thereon;

arranging one or more wipers on the condensation surface, wherein the one or more wipers are configured to move over the condensation surface to displace fouling material that may be present on the condensation surface; and

arranging a gas diffusion apparatus adjacent to the condensation surface, wherein the gas diffusion apparatus comprises one or more gas storage areas and is configured to guide an amount of vapor molecules towards the condensation surface and promote condensation of the vapor molecules by displacing an amount of non-condensable gas into the one or more gas storage areas.

47. The method of claim 46, further comprising:

arranging an evaporation surface adjacent to the gas diffusion apparatus so that the gas diffusion apparatus is positioned between the evaporation surface and the condensation surface and is further configured to guide the vapor molecules from the evaporation surface towards the condensation surface; and

positioning one or more spreaders on the evaporation surface, wherein the one or more spreaders are configured to move over the evaporation surface in contact with at least a portion of a fluid to generate a thin film of the fluid on the evaporation surface.

48. The method of claim 47, further comprising:

attaching a heat supply unit to the evaporation surface, wherein the heat supply unit is configured to heat the fluid, causing the fluid to transform to the vapor molecules.

49. The method of claim 46, wherein arranging the one or more wipers further comprises arranging the one or more wipers in a substantially evenly distributed pattern about the rotating center axis.

50. The method of claim 46, wherein arranging the one or more wipers comprises positioning the one or more wipers within a distance of the condensation surface such that the one or more wipers are in contact with at least a portion of the fouling material.

51. The method of claim 50, wherein the distance is about 0.01 mm to about 1 mm.

52. The method of claim 46, wherein arranging the one or more wipers further comprises arranging each of the one or more wipers at a pitch angle of about 15° along a longitudinal axis of each wiper with respect to a plane perpendicular to the condensation surface.

53. The method of claim 46, further comprising positioning one or more fans at or near the evaporation surface, wherein the one or more fans are configured to aid in displacing the non-condensable gas into the one or more gas storage areas.

54. The method of claim 46, further comprising positioning one or more additional evaporation-condensation systems in thermal communication with the condensation surface, wherein the one or more additional evaporation-condensation systems are configured to obtain heat released from the condensation surface for use in evaporating additional fluid.

55. A method of manufacturing an evaporation-condensation system, the method comprising:

- providing a first evaporation surface configured to evaporate a first fluid placed thereon;

- positioning one or more first spreaders on the first evaporation surface, wherein the one or more first spreaders are configured to move over the first evaporation surface in contact with at least a portion of the first fluid to generate a first thin film of the first fluid on the first evaporation surface;

- attaching a heat supply unit to the first evaporation surface, wherein the heat supply unit is configured to heat the first fluid, causing the first fluid to transform to a first plurality of vapor molecules;

- providing a first condensation surface configured to facilitate condensation of the first plurality of vapor molecules thereon;

- arranging a first gas diffusion apparatus between the first evaporation surface and the first condensation surface, wherein the first gas diffusion apparatus comprises one or more first gas storage areas and is configured to guide the first plurality of vapor molecules towards the first condensation surface and promote condensation of the first plurality of vapor molecules by displacing a first amount of non-condensable gas into the one or more first gas storage areas;

arranging one or more first wipers on the first condensation surface, wherein the one or more first wipers are configured to move over the first condensation surface to displace fouling material that may be present on the first condensation surface;

arranging a second evaporation surface in thermal communication with the first condensation surface, wherein the second evaporation surface is configured to obtain heat released from the first condensation surface to heat a second fluid placed thereon, thereby transforming the second fluid to a second plurality of vapor molecules;

positioning one or more second spreaders on the second evaporation surface, wherein the one or more second spreaders are configured to move over the second evaporation surface in contact with at least a portion of the second fluid to generate a second thin film of the second fluid on the second evaporation surface;

providing a second condensation surface configured to facilitate condensation of the second plurality of vapor molecules thereon;

arranging a second gas diffusion apparatus between the second evaporation surface and the second condensation surface, wherein the second gas diffusion apparatus comprises one or more second gas storage areas and is configured to guide the second plurality of vapor molecules towards the second condensation surface and promote condensation of the second plurality of vapor molecules by displacing a second amount of non-condensable gas into the one or more second gas storage areas; and

arranging one or more second wipers on the second condensation surface, wherein the one or more second wipers are configured to move over the second condensation surface to displace fouling material that may be present on the second condensation surface.

56. The method of claim 55, further comprising positioning one or more additional evaporation-condensation systems in thermal communication with the second condensation surface, wherein the one or more additional evaporation-condensation systems are configured to obtain heat released from the second condensation surface for use in evaporating additional fluid.

57. The method of claim 55, further comprising:
positioning a first collecting brush in contact with the first condensation surface; and
positioning a second collecting brush in contact with the second

condensation surface,

wherein the first collecting brush and the second collecting brush are each configured to collect condensate from the respective condensation surface and deposit the condensate into one or more condensate reservoirs.

58. The method of claim 57, further comprising:

positioning a first guiding groove in operable communication with the first collecting brush, wherein the first guiding groove is configured to receive the condensate from the first collecting brush and direct the condensate to the one or more condensate reservoirs; and

positioning a second guiding groove in operable communication with the second collecting brush, wherein the second guiding groove is configured to receive the condensate from the second collecting brush and direct the condensate to the one or more condensate reservoirs.

59. A method of operating an evaporation-condensation system, the method comprising:

providing a condensation surface configured to facilitate condensation of vapor molecules thereon, wherein the condensation surface comprises one or more wipers;

positioning a gas diffusion apparatus substantially adjacent to the condensation surface, wherein the gas diffusion apparatus comprises one or more gas storage areas;

providing a source of vapor through the gas diffusion apparatus;

guiding the vapor molecules through the gas diffusion apparatus towards the condensation surface;

displacing an amount of non-condensable gas into the one or more gas storage areas; and

rotating the one or more wipers about a center axis on the condensation surface to displace fouling material that may be present on the condensation surface.

60. The method of claim 59, wherein providing the source of vapor comprises heating an evaporation surface configured to receive a fluid and spreading the fluid in a thin film of fluid on the evaporation surface.

61. The method of claim 59, wherein rotating the one or more wipers comprises rotating the one or more wipers at a revolution rate of about 5 revolutions per minute to about 500 revolutions per minute.

62. The method of claim 59, further comprising:
obtaining heat created from the condensation of vapor molecules on the condensation surface; and
heating an evaporation surface in a second evaporation-condensation system.

63. A condensation surface configured to promote condensation of vapor molecules, the condensation surface comprising one or more wipers configured to rotate around a central axis to displace fouling material that may be present on the condensation surface, the one or more wipers comprising a curved shape and extending from the central axis to a boundary area that corresponds to an area outside the condensation surface, the boundary area having a fouling material container configured to receive and store the fouling material as it is displaced by the one or more wipers.

64. The condensation surface of claim 63, wherein the one or more wipers are substantially evenly distributed about the central axis.

65. The condensation surface of claim 63, wherein the one or more wipers comprise 2 wipers.

66. The condensation surface of claim 63, wherein the one or more wipers comprise about 3 wipers to about 7 wipers.

67. The condensation surface of claim 63, wherein the one or more wipers are configured to rotate at a revolution rate of about 5 revolutions per minute to about 500 revolutions per minute.

68. The condensation surface of claim 63, further comprising a collecting brush positioned in contact with the condensation surface, wherein the collecting brush is configured to collect condensate from the condensation surface and deposit the condensate into one or more condensate reservoirs.

69. The condensation surface of claim 68, wherein a guiding groove is configured to receive the condensate from the collecting brush and guide the condensate into the one or more condensate reservoirs.

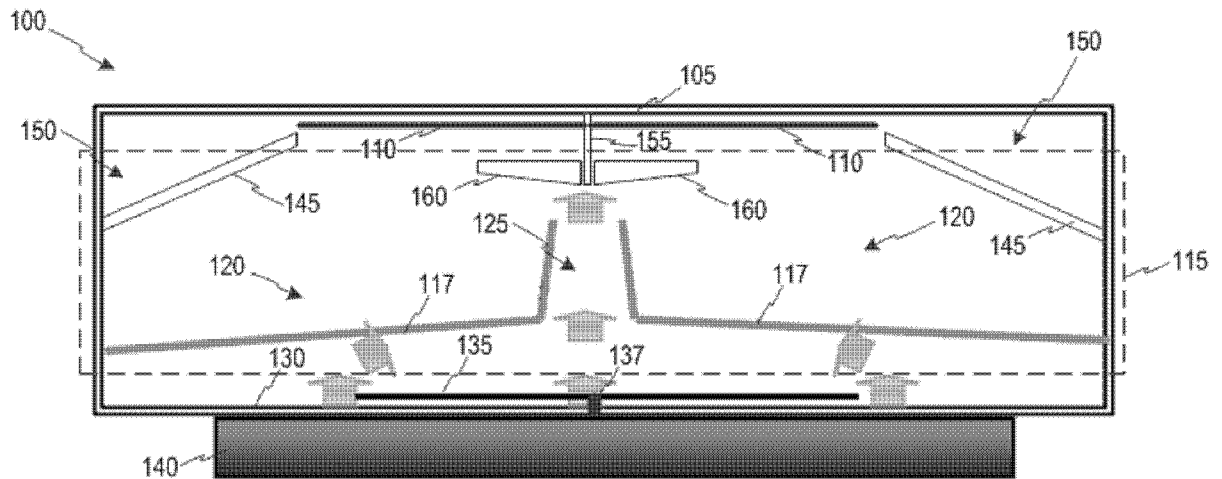


FIG. 1

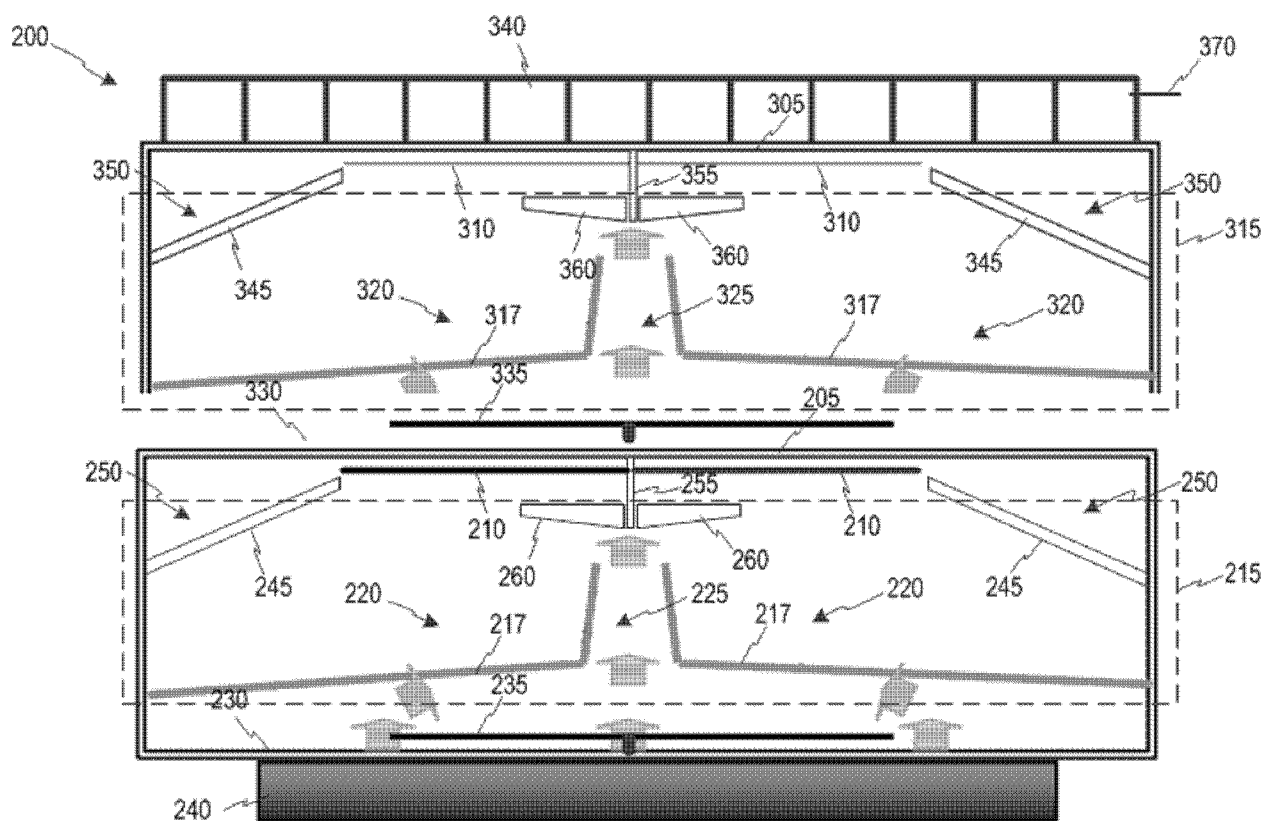


FIG. 2

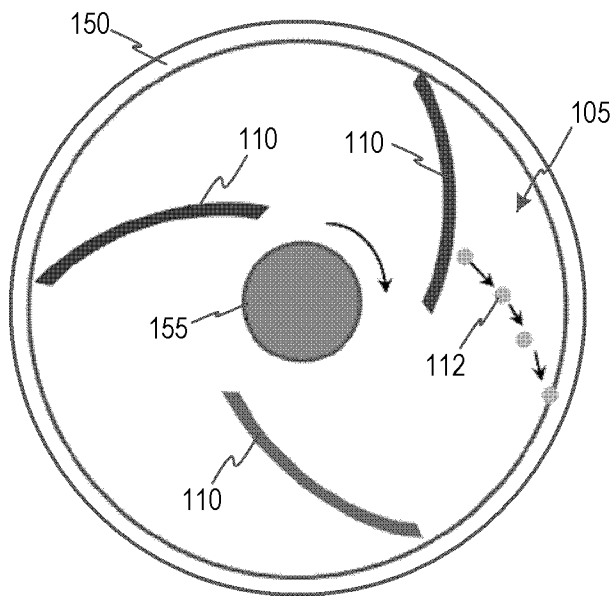


FIG. 3

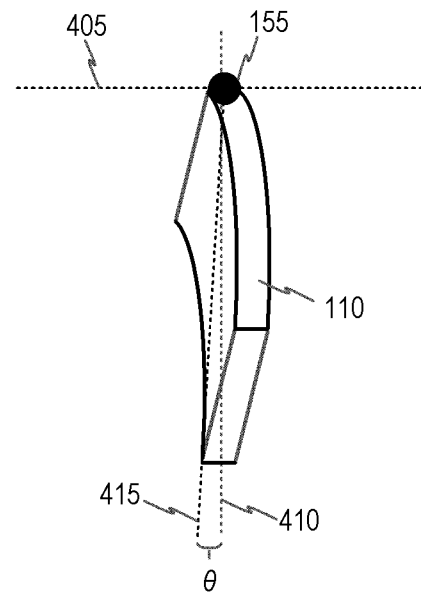


FIG. 4

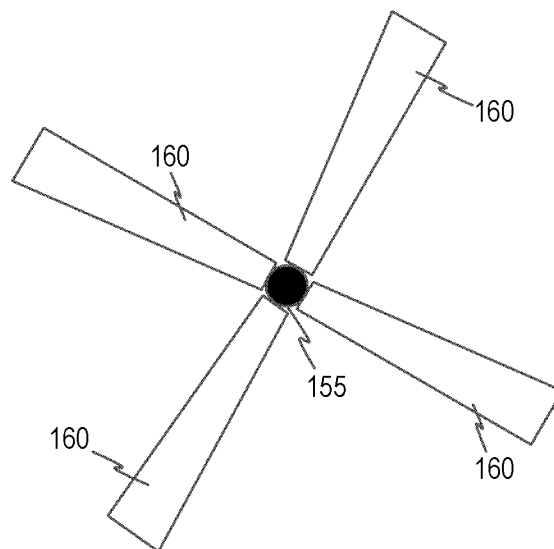


FIG. 5

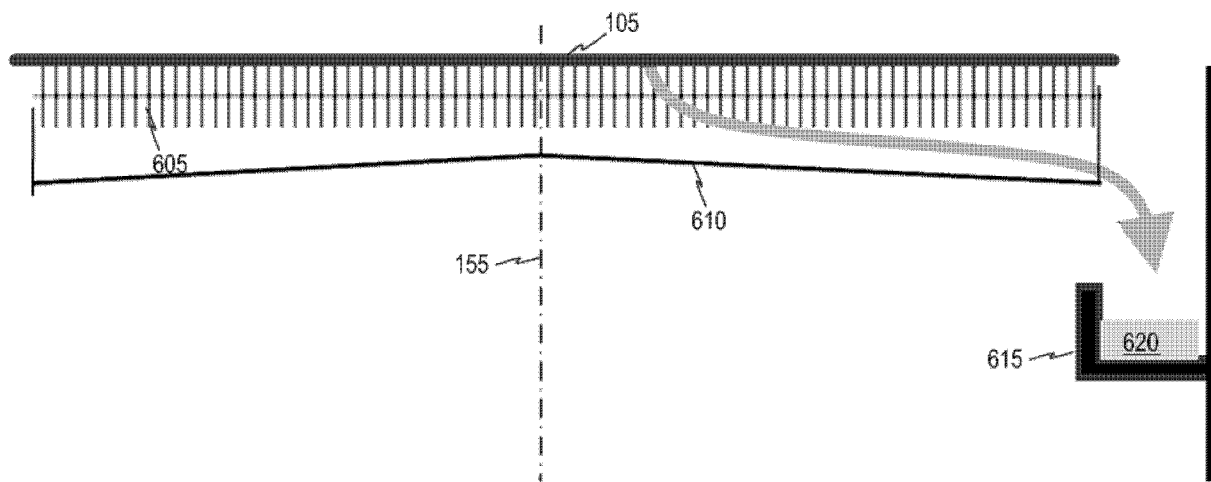


FIG. 6

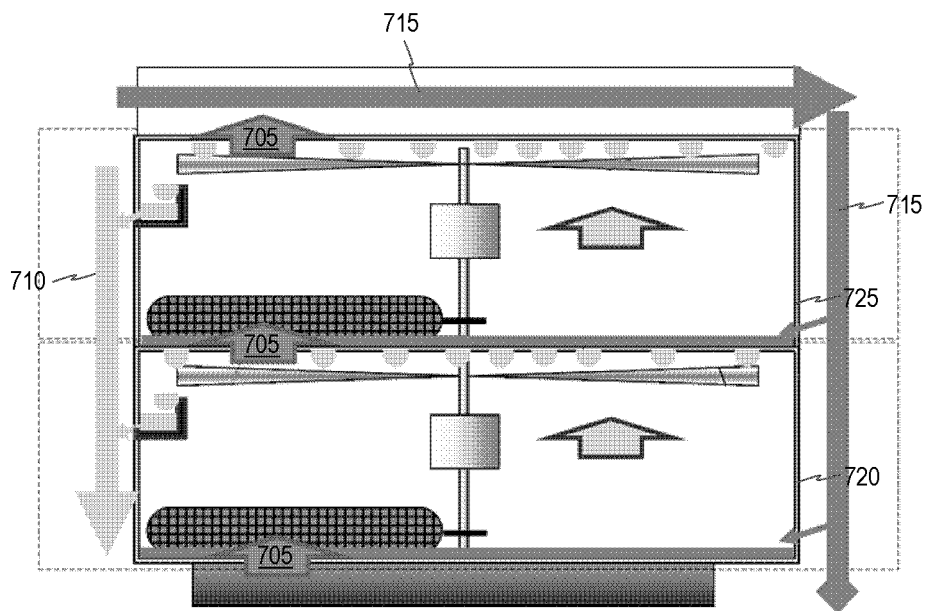


FIG. 7

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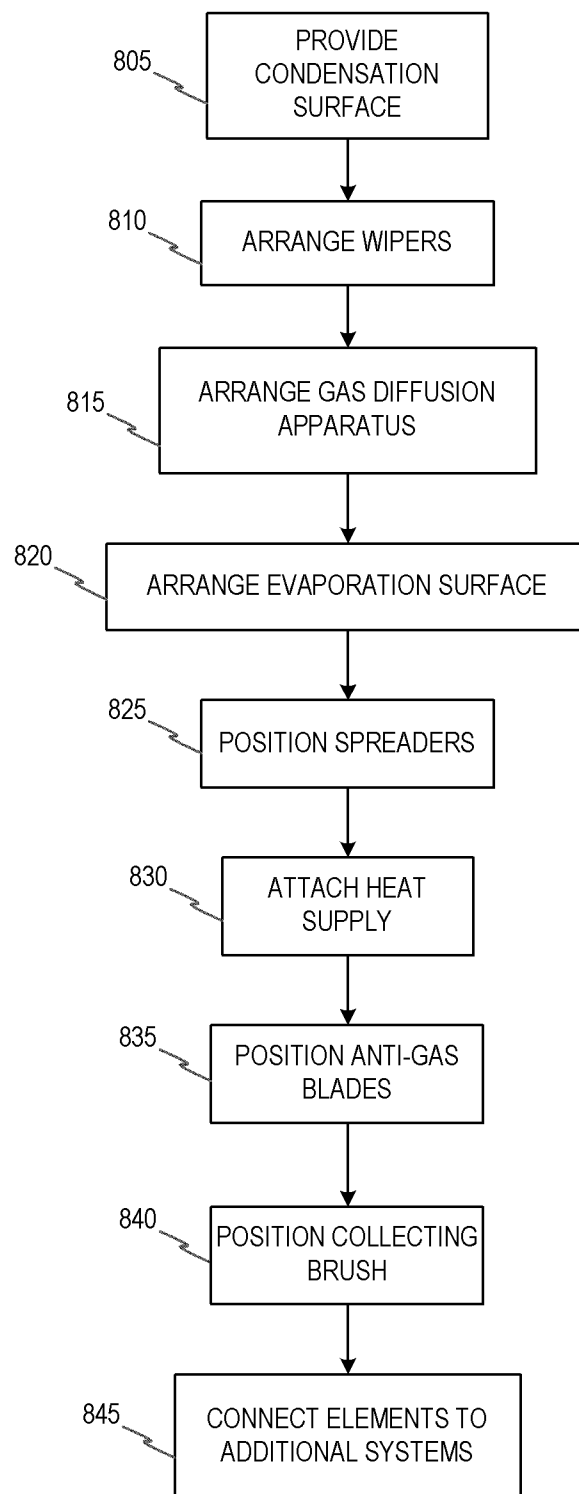


FIG. 8

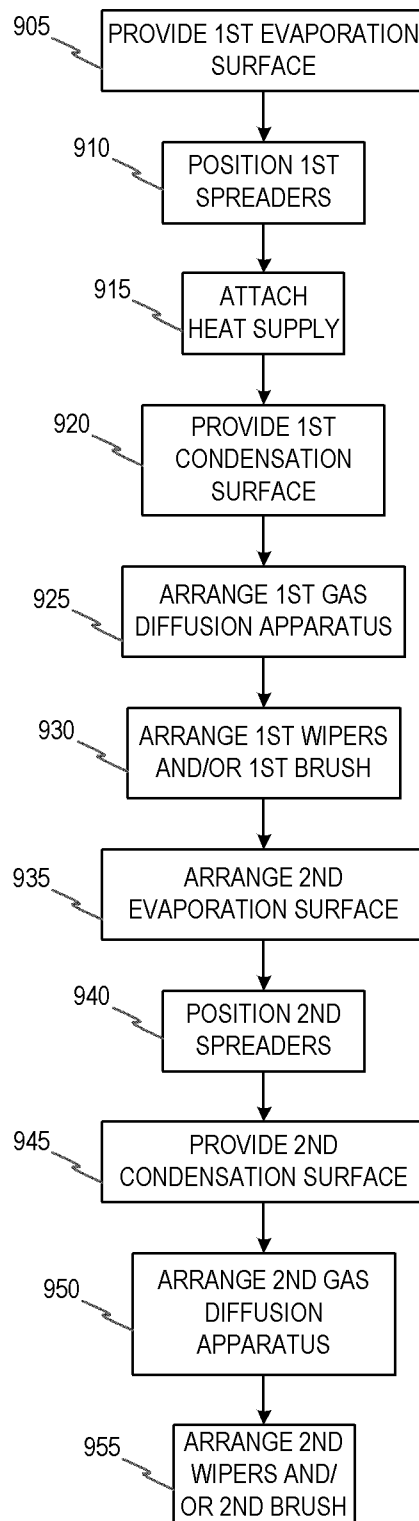


FIG. 9

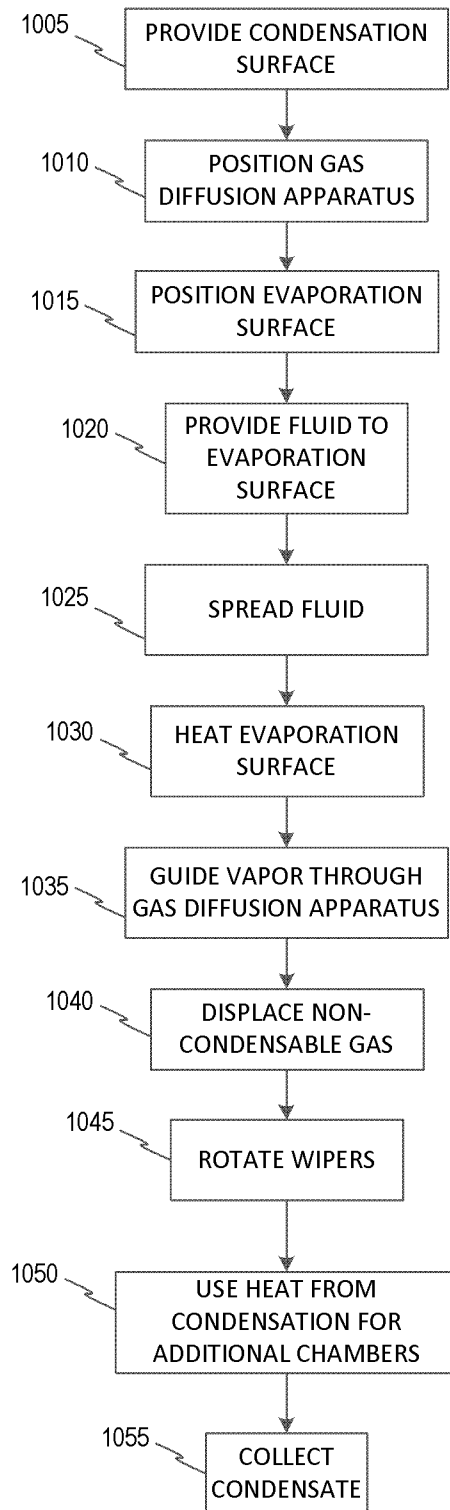


FIG. 10

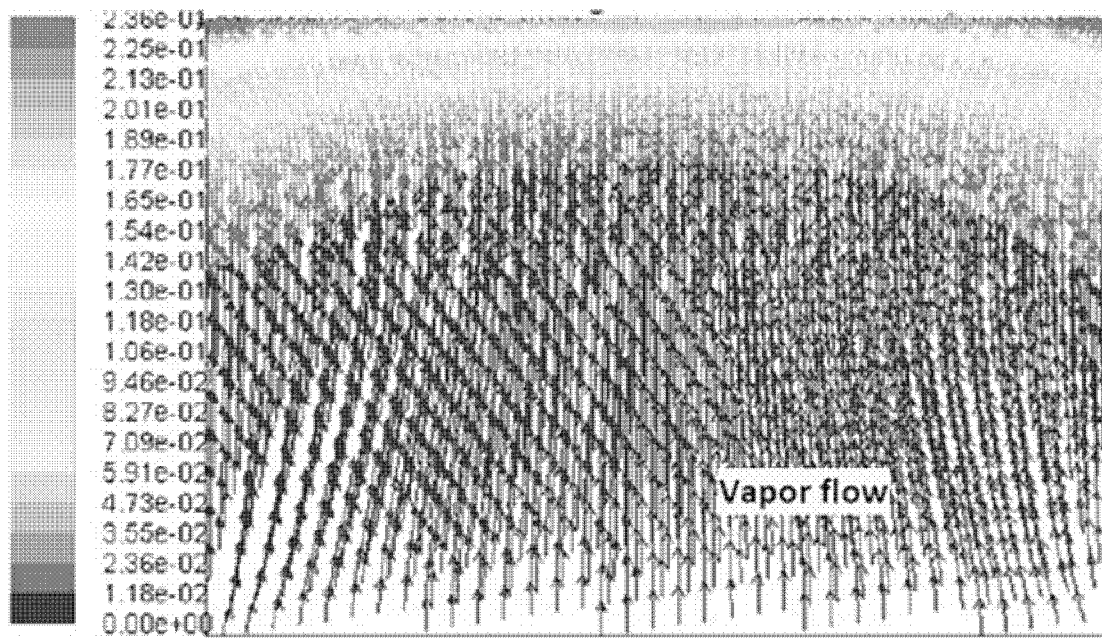


FIG. 11A

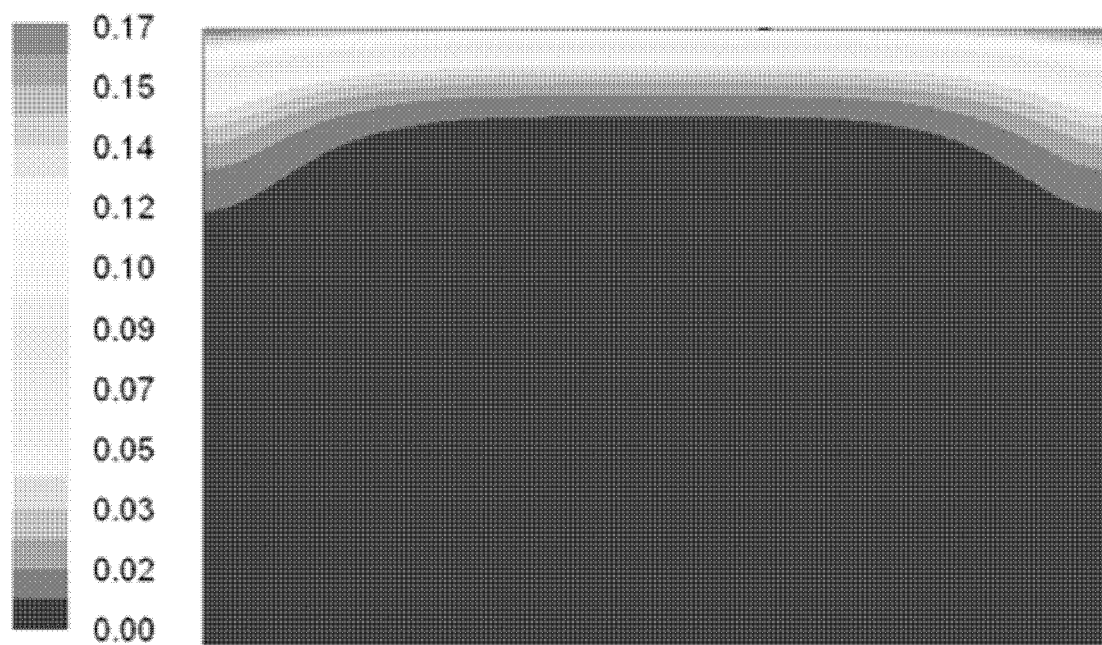


FIG. 11B

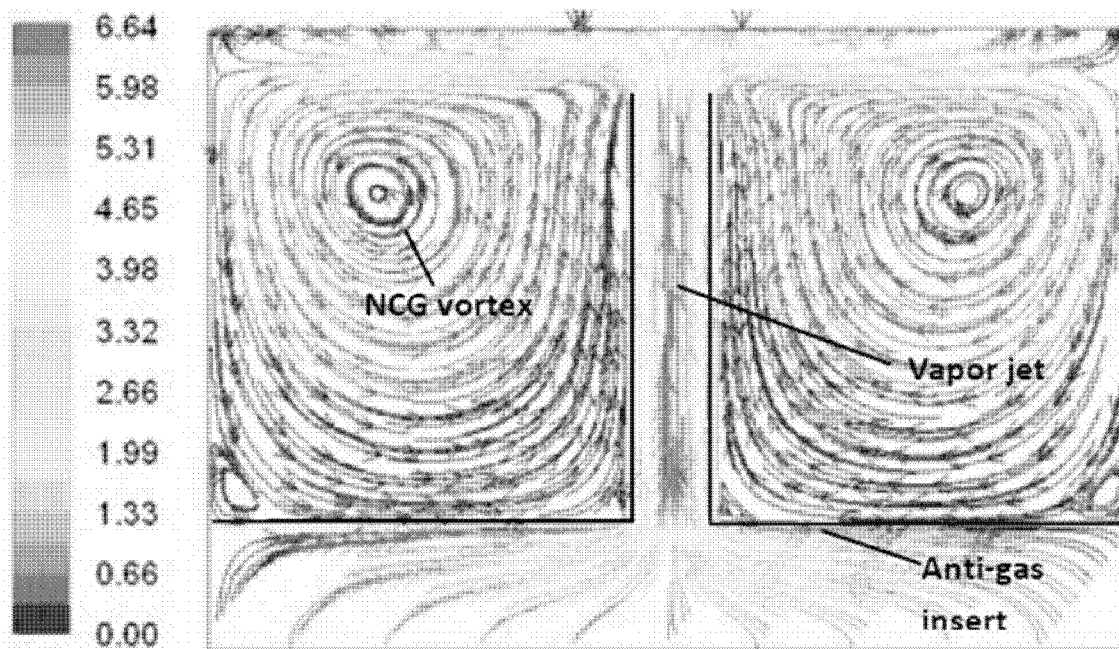


FIG. 12A

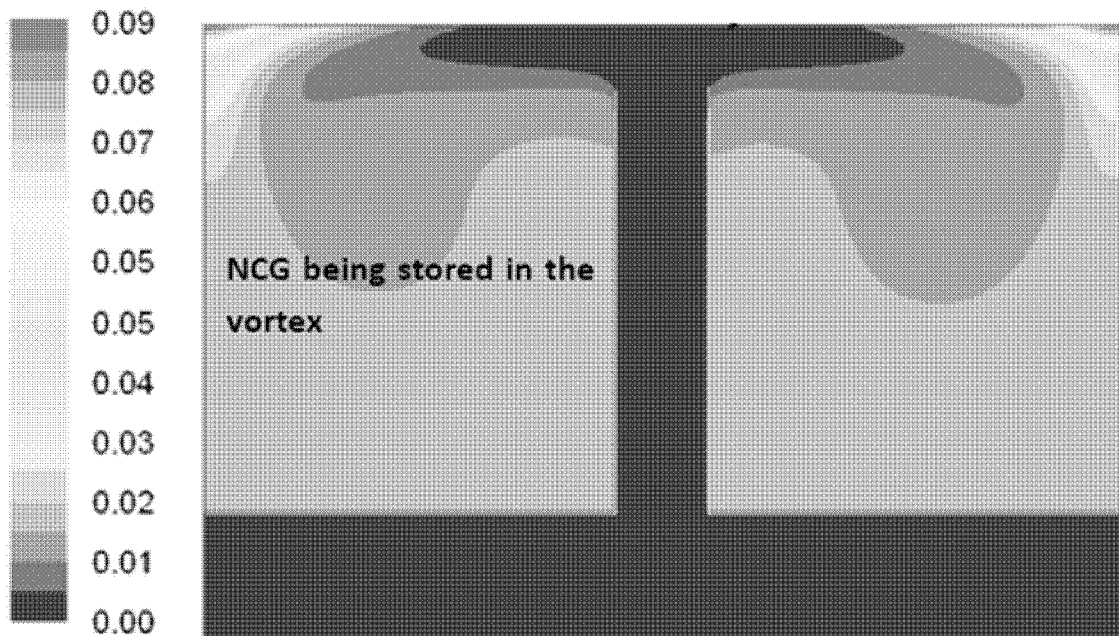


FIG. 12B

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/CN2013/076304

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

See the extra sheet

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC: B01D; C02F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

WPI, EPODOC, CNKI, CNPAT: seawater, ocean, brine, sea, salt, water, saline, desalt+, desalin+, evaporat???, condensat???, surface, wiper, applicator, scraper, scratcher, direct???, flow, guid???

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	WO 2009073929 A1 (H2OASIS ENERGY PTY LTD et al.) 18 June 2009 (18.06.2009) description, page 6, line 18 to page 10, line 4 and figures 1-12	1-69
Y	WO 2012012397 A1 (AQUABACK TECHNOLOGIES INC et al.) 26 January 2012 (26.01.2012) claims 1-2	1-69
Y	WO 2011004416 A1 (EASE SRL et al.) 13 January 2011 (13.01.2011) description, paragraphs [0025]-[0106] and figures 1-3	1-69
A	CN 1408647 A (YUAN, Yijun) 09 April 2003 (09.04.2003) description, page 1, line 19 to page 2, line 21 and figure 1	1-69
A	CN 101646327 A (WANG, Hao) 10 February 2010 (10.02.2010) the whole document	1-69

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

☒ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:	“T” later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
“A” document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	“X” document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
“E” earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date	“Y” document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
“L” document which may throw doubts on priority claim (S) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	“&” document member of the same patent family
“O” document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	
“P” document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	

Date of the actual completion of the international search
25 January 2014 (25.01.2014)

Date of mailing of the international search report
13 Mar. 2014 (13.03.2014)

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Facsimile No. 86-10-62019451

Authorized officer
GUO, Yanhua
Telephone No. (86-10)62084842

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT
Information on patent family members

International application No.
PCT/CN2013/076304

Patent Documents referred in the Report	Publication Date	Patent Family	Publication Date
WO 2009073929 A1	18.06.2009	AU 2010100471 A4	10.06.2010
		AU 2008336266 A1	18.06.2009
		AU 2010100471 B4	10.06.2010
WO 2012012397 A1	26.01.2012	US 2012037488 A1	16.02.2012
		EP 2593200 A2	22.05.2013
		CN 103180022 A	26.06.2013
		JP 2013530835 A	01.08.2013
WO 2011004416 A1	13.01.2011	ITMI 20091198 A1	08.01.2011
		ITMI 20091196 A1	08.01.2011
CN 1408647 A	09.04.2003	none	
CN 101646327 A	10.02.2010	US 2010025015 A1	04.02.2010
		CN 101646327 B	17.04.2013

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/CN2013/076304

Continuation of: the second sheet **A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER**

C02F 1/08 (2006.01) i

B01D 1/22 (2006.01) i

B01D 5/00 (2006.01) i