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(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **PERGO (EUROPE) AB** [SE/SE]; Strandidaregatan 8, S-231 25 Trelleborg (SE).

(72) Inventor; and

(75) Inventor/Applicant (for US only): **NILSSON, Magnus** [SE/SE]; Jarnvagsgatan 19, S-231 44 Trelleborg (SE).

(74) Agent: **PAVELKO, Thomas, P.**; Stevens, Davis, Miller & Mosher, L.L.P., 1615 L Street, N.W., Suite 850, Washington, DC 20036 (US).

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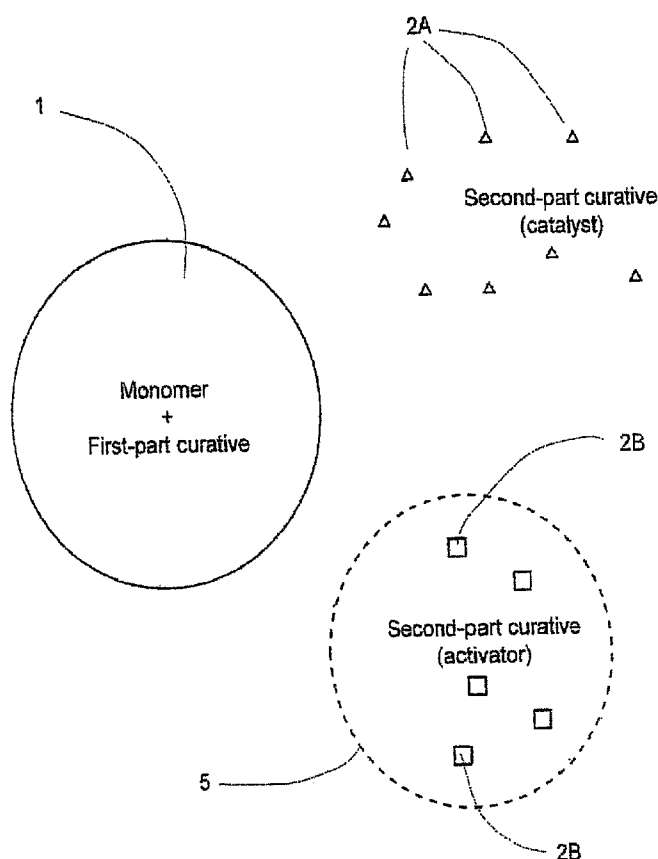
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: FLOORING SYSTEM INCLUDING A PREGLUE



(57) Abstract: A flooring system includes a plurality of tongue-and-groove panels, and a preglue. When activated, the preglue has a tensile strength of 7-20 kN/m when measured with a gap less than 0.1 mm and a pull rate of 2 mm/min; a storage stability of at least one year; a low initial tack value; and a set time of at least 45 minutes; as well as a creep strength of between 7 and 20 kN/m, when measured with a gap less than 0.1mm and a pull rate of 0.02 mm/min.

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— *before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments*

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No

PCT/IB2006/002822

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

INV. C09J5/00 C09J5/04 E04F15/02

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)

C09J E04F

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 practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, WPI Data

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	WO 01/94721 A1 (KAINDL M [AT]; KNAUSEDER FRANZ [AT]) 13 December 2001 (2001-12-13) page 5 - page 7 pages 9-11,15; claims 7,11-13; figures -----	7-24, 28-30
X	EP 1 229 182 A1 (FRITZ EGGER GMBH & CO [AT]) 7 August 2002 (2002-08-07) abstract paragraphs [0013] - [0016]; claims 1-12; figures; example 1 -----	7-24, 28-30
X	US 5 853 520 A (RICH RICHARD D [US] ET AL) 29 December 1998 (1998-12-29) abstract; claims 1-7 -----	7-24, 28-30
X	EP 1 362 968 A (FRITZ EGGER GMBH & CO [AT]) 19 November 2003 (2003-11-19) paragraphs [0019] - [0022]; claims; examples 2,3 -----	7-24, 28-30

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.☒ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents :

- *A* document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- *E* earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- *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)
- *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

- *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
- *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
- *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.
- * & * document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

23 January 2007

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European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,
Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Meier, Stefan

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

Continuation of Box II.2

Claims Nos.: 1-6, 12(part), 13(part), 20-24(part), 25-27, 29(part), 30(part)

Present claims 1-6, 12(part), 13(part), 20-24(part), 25-27, 29(part), 30(part) attempt to describe the surface element, surface system and methods of how to produce them, defined by reference to a desirable characteristic (a result to be achieved), described by very specific parameters P1-P5 relating to the properties of the dry/preglue applied to the surface of said surface element:

- P1: creep strength of between 1-50 kN/m, when measured with a gap less than 0.1 mm and a pull rate of 0.02 mm/min
- P2: tensile strength of 1-20 kN/m when measured with a gap less than 0.1 mm and a pull rate of 2 mm/min
- P3: storage stability of at least one year;
- P4: low initial tack value
- P5: set time of at least 45 minutes

The use of these parameters in the present context is considered to lead to a lack of clarity withing the meaning of Art. 6 PCT. While the parameters P1-P5 might be known in the art, it is impossible to compare the parameters the Applicant has chosen under the exact specific conditions of gap distance and pull rate with that what is set out in the prior art.

Furthermore, the claims cover all products (surface elements, surface system) and methods of how to produce them, having these characteristics, whereas the application provides support within the meaning of Art. 6 PCT and disclosure withing the meaning of Art. 5 PCT for only a very limited number of such products.

In the present case, the claims so lack support, and the application so lacks disclosure, that a meaningful search over the whole of the claimed scope is impossible.

Consequently, the search has been restricted to surface elements, surface systems and methods of how to produce them based on the components for the glue applied described in claims 7-11 and paragraphs [0049]-[0169] of the description.

Thus, claims 1-6 and 25-27 were not searched, claims 12, 13, 20-24, 29 and 30 were searched incompletely.

The applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that claims relating to inventions in respect of which no international search report has been established need not be the subject of an international preliminary examination (Rule 66.1(e) PCT). The applicant is advised that the EPO policy when acting as an International Preliminary Examining Authority is normally not to carry out a preliminary examination on matter which has not been searched. This is the case irrespective of whether or not the

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

claims are amended following receipt of the search report or during any Chapter II procedure. If the application proceeds into the regional phase before the EPO, the applicant is reminded that a search may be carried out during examination before the EPO (see EPO Guideline C-VI, 8.5), should the problems which led to the Article 17(2) declaration be overcome.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/IB2006/002822**Box II Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)**

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
2. ☒ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:
see FURTHER INFORMATION sheet PCT/ISA/210
3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box III Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. ☐ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
- ☐ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No

PCT/IB2006/002822

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