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(54) **Dinghy and equipment for handling said dinghy**

(57) A structure (10) of a dinghy (11), particularly of the type known as tender, for pleasure sailboats and the like, which comprises a dinghy body (12) equipped with a first joint part (13), there being also

- a second joint part (14) to be jointly connected to a watercraft (15),
- means (16) for connecting the first joint part (13) to the

second joint part (14).

The first joint part (13) and the second joint part (14) are connected by way of the connecting means (16), composing a joint (17) that jointly connects the dinghy (11) to the watercraft (15), allowing at least one launching configuration and one hauling configuration of the dinghy (11) with respect to the watercraft (15).

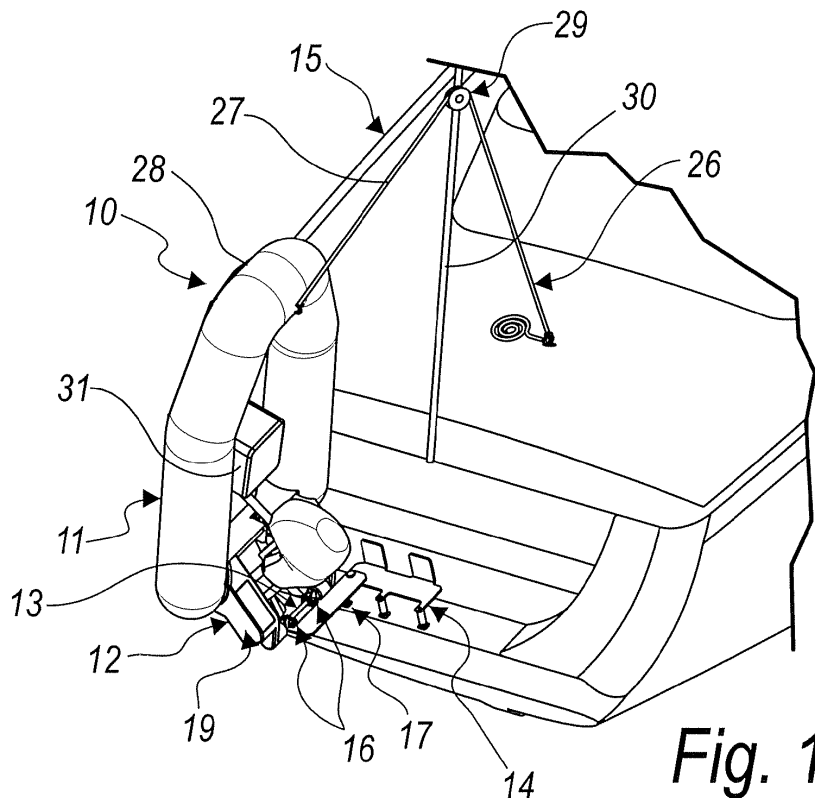


Fig. 1

Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a dinghy, particularly of the type known as tender, for pleasure sailboats and the like.

[0002] Particularly in the field of pleasure sailboats, the need is currently felt for easy management of the dinghy, better known as tender, which is generally constituted by an inflatable boat with an outboard motor.

[0003] One widespread solution in fact currently consists in storing the tender uninflated and folded in a locker.

[0004] For use, the tender is removed from the locker, inflated, equipped with the motor and the onboard equipment and launched from the boat.

[0005] For storage, vice versa, it is hauled up onto the watercraft, the motor and the onboard equipment are removed, and then it is deflated, folded and stored in the locker designed to accommodate it.

[0006] This solution, therefore, entails a complicated and time-consuming procedure, which accordingly is scarcely appreciated.

[0007] One alternative solution keeps the tender inflated and secured on the deck and optionally also equipped with the motor and with the onboard equipment.

[0008] Particularly in small boats, for example measuring 13 meters or less, the tender on the deck hinders navigation maneuvers that require the crew to work on the deck.

[0009] Sometimes, larger watercraft currently have the tender supported abaft by launching and hauling davits.

[0010] In this case, the tender hangs unsafely from the davits, to the full disadvantage of navigation safety.

[0011] Moreover, the aesthetic contribution of the tender that hangs from the watercraft is generally scarcely appreciated.

[0012] Currently known solutions, therefore, do not meet the need to have a dinghy available safely and easily, particularly in the field of pleasure sailboats.

[0013] The aim of the present invention is to provide a dinghy, particularly of the type known as tender, for pleasure sailboats and the like, which fulfills the need of safe operation and easiness, allowing to launch or haul a dinghy simply and quickly.

[0014] Within this aim, an object of the invention is to provide a dinghy that allows its safe fitting to watercraft.

[0015] Another object of the invention is to provide a dinghy that can be fixed easily and effectively to watercraft that are equipped with it.

[0016] Another object of the invention is to provide a dinghy that is simple and easy to use and can be manufactured with relatively low costs.

[0017] This aim and these and other objects that will become better apparent hereinafter are achieved by a dinghy, particularly of the type known as tender, for pleasure sailboats and the like, characterized in that it comprises a dinghy body equipped with a first joint part, there being also

- a second joint part to be jointly connected to a watercraft,
- means for connecting said first joint part and said second joint part,

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said first joint part and said second joint part, connected by way of said connecting means, composing a joint that connects said dinghy to said watercraft, said joint being adapted to allow at least one launching configuration and one hauling configuration of said dinghy with respect to said watercraft.

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[0018] Further characteristics and advantages of the invention will become better apparent from the following detailed description of a preferred but not exclusive embodiment of the dinghy according to the invention, illustrated by way of nonlimiting example in the accompanying drawings, wherein:

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Figure 1 is a perspective view of a solution for use of a dinghy according to the invention;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of a second joint part of a dinghy according to the invention;

Figure 3 is a perspective view of another solution for use of a dinghy according to the invention;

Figure 4 is a perspective view of a dinghy according to the invention;

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Figure 5 is a longitudinal sectional view of a dinghy according to the invention;

Figures 6 and 7 are perspective views of different operating configurations of a dinghy according to the invention;

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Figures 8 and 9 are partially sectional side elevation views of a dinghy according to the invention, respectively in a hauling configuration and in a launching configuration;

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Figure 10 is an enlarged-scale sectional view of a detail of a dinghy according to the invention.

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[0019] It is noted that anything found to be already known during the patenting process is understood not to be claimed and to be the subject of a disclaimer.

[0020] With reference to the figures, the reference numeral 10 generally designates a structure of a dinghy 11, particularly of the type known as tender, for pleasure sailboats and the like, which has a particularity in that it comprises a dinghy body 12 equipped with a first joint part 13, there being also

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- a second joint part 14 to be jointly connected to a watercraft 15, preferably at its stem,

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- means 16 for mutually connecting the first joint part 13 and the second joint part 14.

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[0021] Such joint parts, when connected by way of the connecting means 16, compose a joint 17 that connects the dinghy 11 to the watercraft 15.

[0022] The joint 17 is adapted to allow at least one launching configuration and one hauling configuration of

the dinghy 11 with respect to the watercraft 15.

[0023] The expression "launching configuration" is used to reference a configuration of the dinghy 11 with respect to the watercraft 15, when the latter is being used, in which the dinghy 11 floats on the sea, lake or river adjacent to the watercraft 15.

[0024] Likewise, the expression "hauling configuration" is used to reference a configuration in which the dinghy 11 is retracted toward the watercraft 15 and is supported thereon.

[0025] Advantageously, the dinghy body 12 comprises a transom 18 that is jointly connected to two arms 19 that protrude abaft, and at the same time the first joint part 13 comprises a pivot 20 that mutually connects the free ends 21 of the arms 19.

[0026] The second joint part 14 comprises forks 22 for accommodating the pivot 20.

[0027] In an alternative embodiment of the structure 10 of a dinghy 11, according to the invention, not shown in the accompanying figures, the arms are advantageously extensible and retractable, for example telescopically, in order to adapt to the contingent relative space occupations of the watercraft and of the dinghy.

[0028] A first axis A for the pivoting of the dinghy 11 to the watercraft 15 is formed by the axis of the pivot 20, which is inserted rotatably in the forks 22.

[0029] The connecting means 16 conveniently comprise hooks 23 for locking the pivot 20 inserted in the forks 22, conveniently associated with the second joint part 14.

[0030] More particularly, the transom 18 and the arms 19 are conveniently a single monolithic body.

[0031] Moreover, the dinghy body 12 preferably comprises a keel which is monolithic with the transom 18 and the arms 19.

[0032] The second joint part 14 also comprises advantageously a fixed support 24 for a movable support 25, which is jointly connected to the forks 22 and is pivoted to the fixed support 24 along a second pivoting axis B, which is substantially perpendicular to the first pivoting axis A.

[0033] Conveniently, the hooks 23 are supported by the movable support 25.

[0034] In this manner, the dinghy 11, in the hauling configuration, can be rotated about the second pivoting axis B, for example to allow to extend easily from the stem of the watercraft 15 a gangboard for disembarking from the watercraft 15, which is not shown in the accompanying figures.

[0035] There are also conveniently means 26 for hauling and launching the dinghy 11, which is connected to the watercraft 15 by means of the joint 17, which can be actuated for the passage of the dinghy 11 from the hauling configuration to the launching configuration or vice versa.

[0036] The hauling and launching means 26 conveniently comprise a line 27, which is associated with the stem 28 of the dinghy 11, and there are means 29, con-

veniently a sheave, for guiding the line 27 which are connected to a backstay 30.

[0037] Advantageously, one or more containers 31 for the onboard equipment of the dinghy 11 are further provided which are jointly connected to the dinghy body 12, so that when it is launched it is ready for navigation without having to be equipped further.

[0038] The use of the structure 10 of the dinghy according to the invention is as follows.

[0039] When the dinghy 11 is hauled on board the watercraft 15, it is articulated thereto by way of the joint 17, so that it can be turned about the first pivoting axis A for launching and about the second pivoting axis B, for example to facilitate the arrangement, in its vicinity, of a gangboard for disembarking from the watercraft 15.

[0040] For launching, the operator loosens the line 27, freeing the dinghy 11 from the backstay 30 to which the dinghy is pulled by such line in the hauling configuration.

[0041] The dinghy 11 rotates about the first pivoting axis A by gravity or by the action of the operator until it arranges itself so that it floats in the launching configuration.

[0042] Then the operator releases the hooks 23 from the pivot 20, subsequently extracting it from the forks 22.

[0043] In this manner, the dinghy 11 is launched.

[0044] Vice versa, for hauling, the dinghy 11 is arranged stem to stem with respect to the watercraft 15, so as to place the first joint part 13 adjacent to the second joint part 14.

[0045] The operator inserts the pivot 20 in the forks 22, then locks it with the hooks 23, thus composing the joint 17.

[0046] After passing the line 27 through the guiding means 29, the operator pulls it, hoisting the dinghy 11, which rotates about the first pivoting axis A.

[0047] Then the line 27 is locked, so as to keep the dinghy 11 jointly attached to the watercraft 15, forming substantially a single body with it.

[0048] In practice it has been found that the invention achieves the intended aim and objects, providing a dinghy, particularly of the type known as tender, for pleasure sailboats and the like, which allows to launch or haul a dinghy simply and quickly.

[0049] Further, a dinghy having a structure according to the invention is, during navigation, jointly fixed to the watercraft that carries it, to the advantage of safe navigation.

[0050] A dinghy according to the invention can be fixed easily and effectively to the watercraft that are equipped with it, thanks to the simplicity of use and the structural rigidity of the joint that connects them.

[0051] Moreover, a dinghy that has a structure according to the invention allows rapid evacuation of the watercraft, in case of emergency, since it is simple and quick to haul and is already equipped for navigation.

[0052] The invention thus conceived is susceptible of numerous modifications and variations, all of which are within the scope of the appended claims; all the details

may further be replaced with other technically equivalent elements.

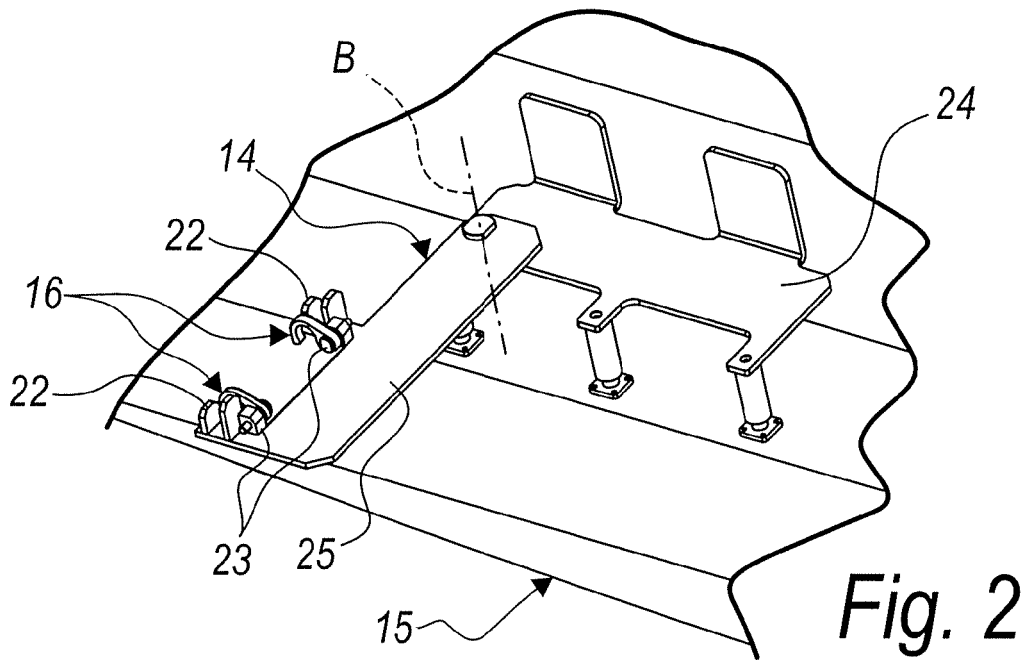
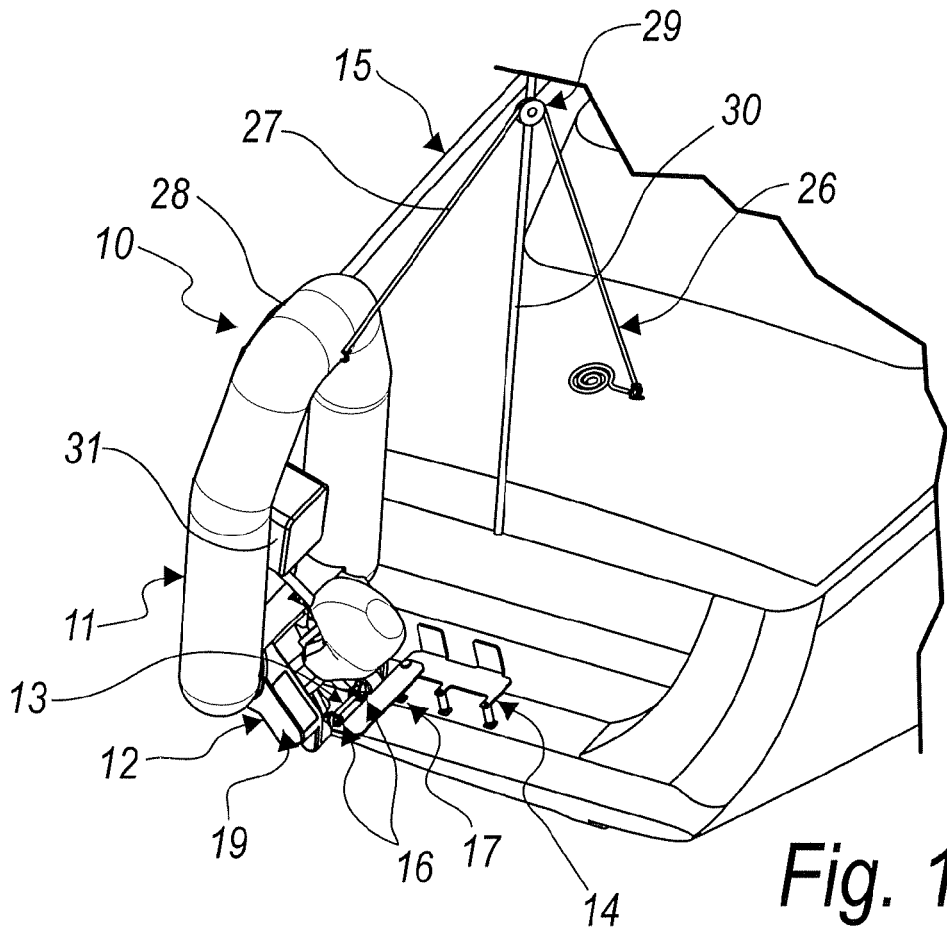
[0053] In practice, the materials used, as well as the contingent shapes and dimensions, may be any according to requirements and to the state of the art.

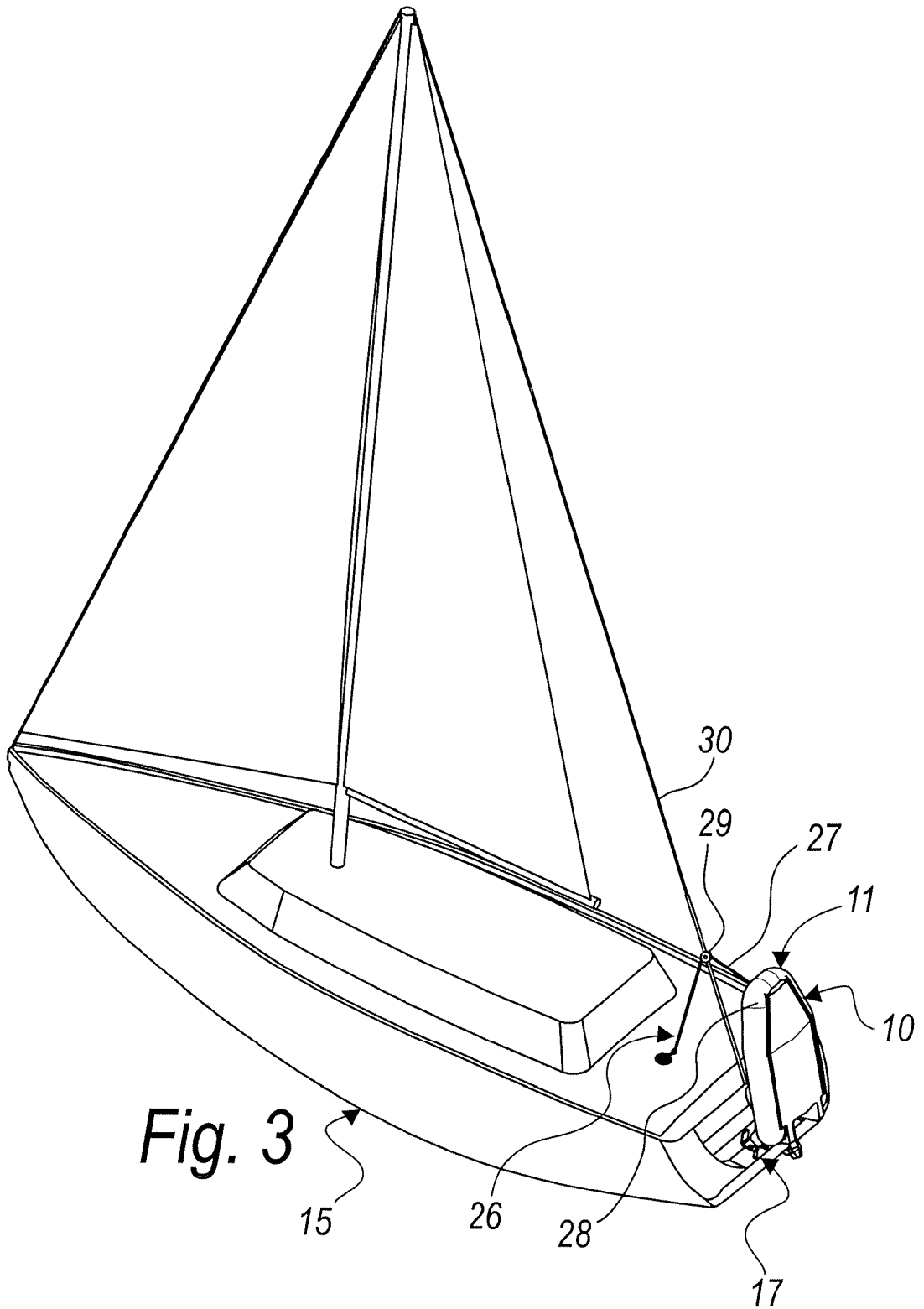
[0054] The disclosures in Italian Patent Application No. PD2008A000281 from which this application claims priority are incorporated herein by reference.

[0055] Where technical features mentioned in any claim are followed by reference signs, those reference signs have been included for the sole purpose of increasing the intelligibility of the claims and accordingly such reference signs do not have any limiting effect on the interpretation of each element identified by way of example by such reference signs.

Claims

1. A dinghy (11), particularly of the type known as tender, for pleasure sailboats and the like, **characterized in that** it comprises a dinghy body (12) equipped with a first joint part (13), there being also
 - a second joint part (14), to be jointly connected to a watercraft (15),
 - means (16) for connecting said first joint part (13) and said second joint part (14),
 said first joint part (13) and said second joint part (14), connected by way of said connecting means (16), composing a joint (17) that connects said dinghy (11) to said watercraft (15), said joint being adapted to allow at least one launching configuration and one hauling configuration of said dinghy (11) with respect to said watercraft (15).
2. The dinghy according to claim 1, **characterized in that** said dinghy body (12) comprises a transom (18) that is jointly connected to two arms (19) that protrude abaft, said first joint part (13) comprising a pivot (20) that mutually connects the free ends (21) of said arms (19), said second joint part (14) comprising forks (22) for accommodating said pivot (20), a first axis (A) for the pivoting of said dinghy (11) to said watercraft (15) being formed by the axis of said pivot (20) inserted rotatably in said forks (22).
3. The dinghy according to claim 2, **characterized in that** said connecting means (16) comprise hooks (23) for locking said pivot (20) inserted in said forks (22).
4. The dinghy according to claim 2, **characterized in that** said transom (18) is monolithic with said arms (19).
5. The dinghy according to claim 2, **characterized in that** said dinghy body (12) comprises a keel that is monolithic with said transom (18) and with said arms (19).
6. The dinghy according to claim 1, **characterized in that** said second joint part (14) comprises a fixed support (24) for a movable support (25) that is jointly connected to said forks (22) and is pivoted to said fixed support (24) along a second pivoting axis (B) that is substantially perpendicular to said first pivoting axis (A).
7. The dinghy according to claim 1, **characterized in that** it comprises hauling and launching means (26) for said dinghy (11) connected to said watercraft (15) by means of said joint (17), said means being actuable for the transition of said dinghy (11) from said hauling configuration to said launching configuration or vice versa.
8. The dinghy according to claim 7, **characterized in that** said hauling and launching means (26) comprise a line (27) that is associated with the stem (28) of said dinghy (11), means (29) for guiding said line (27) being connected to a backstay (30).





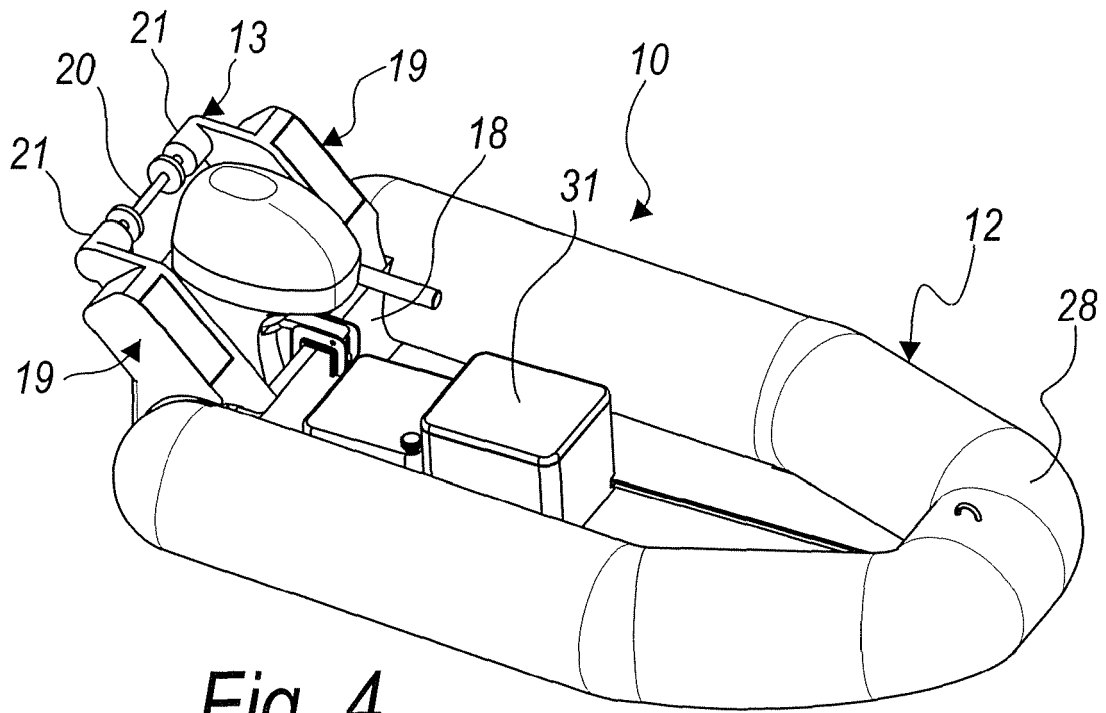


Fig. 4

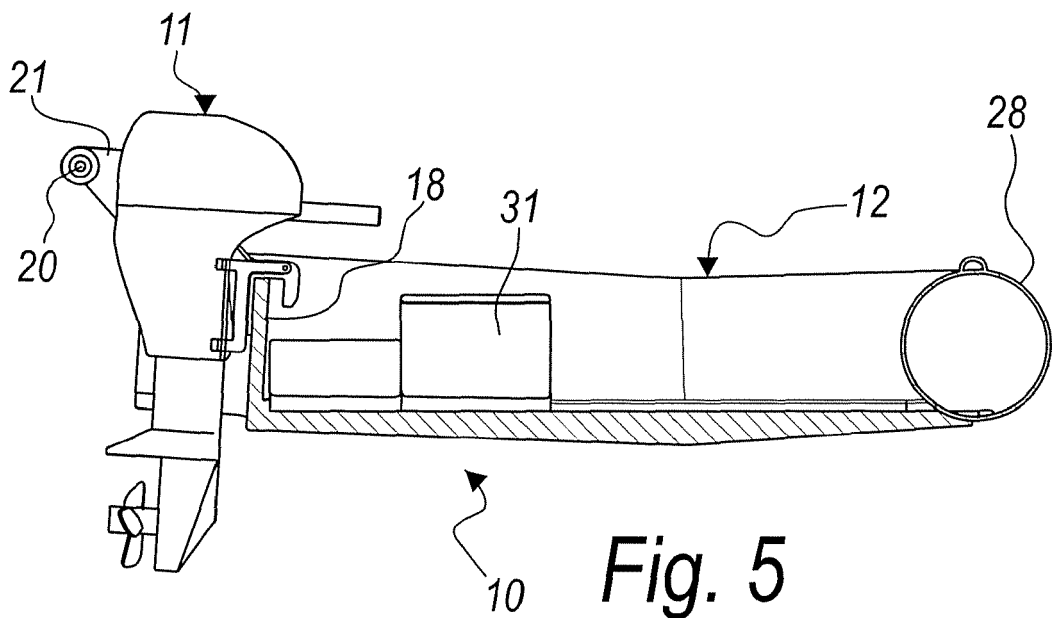


Fig. 5

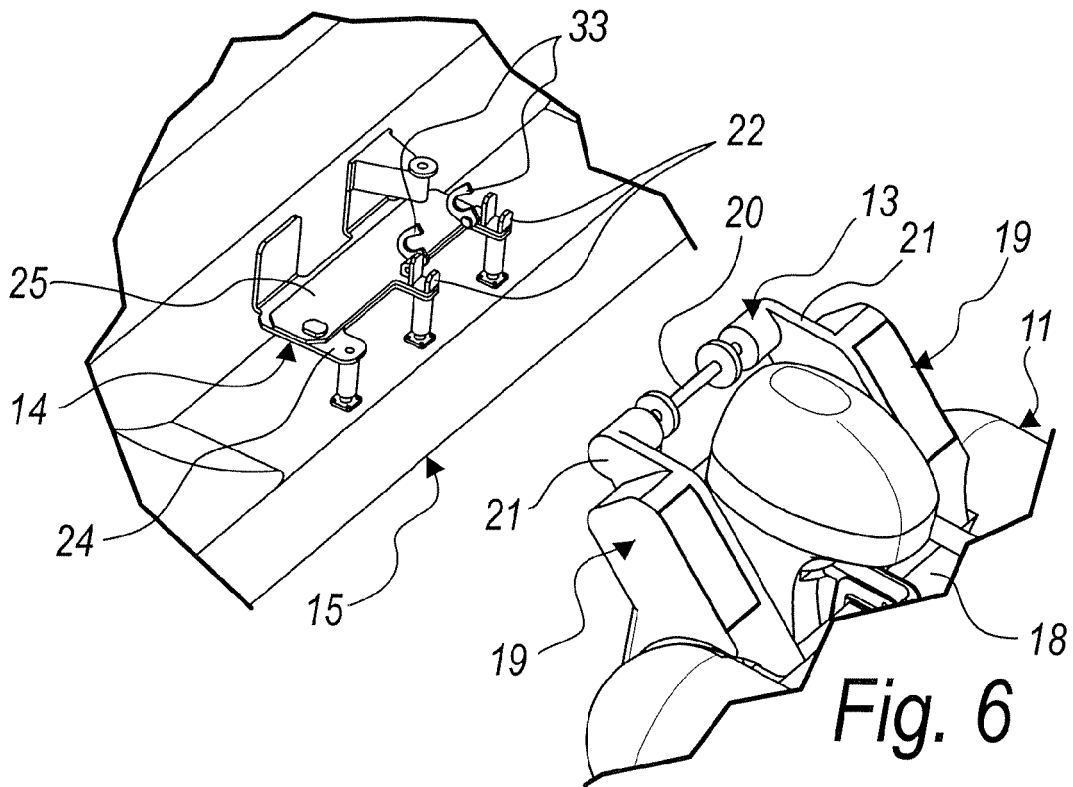


Fig. 6

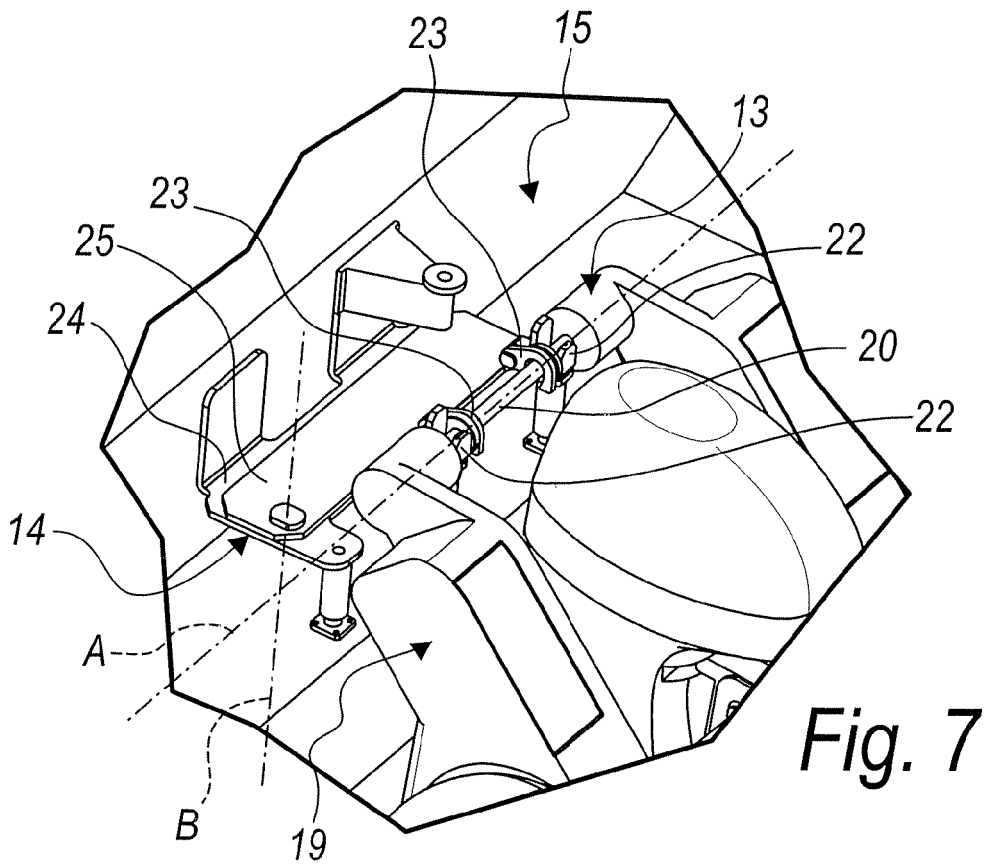
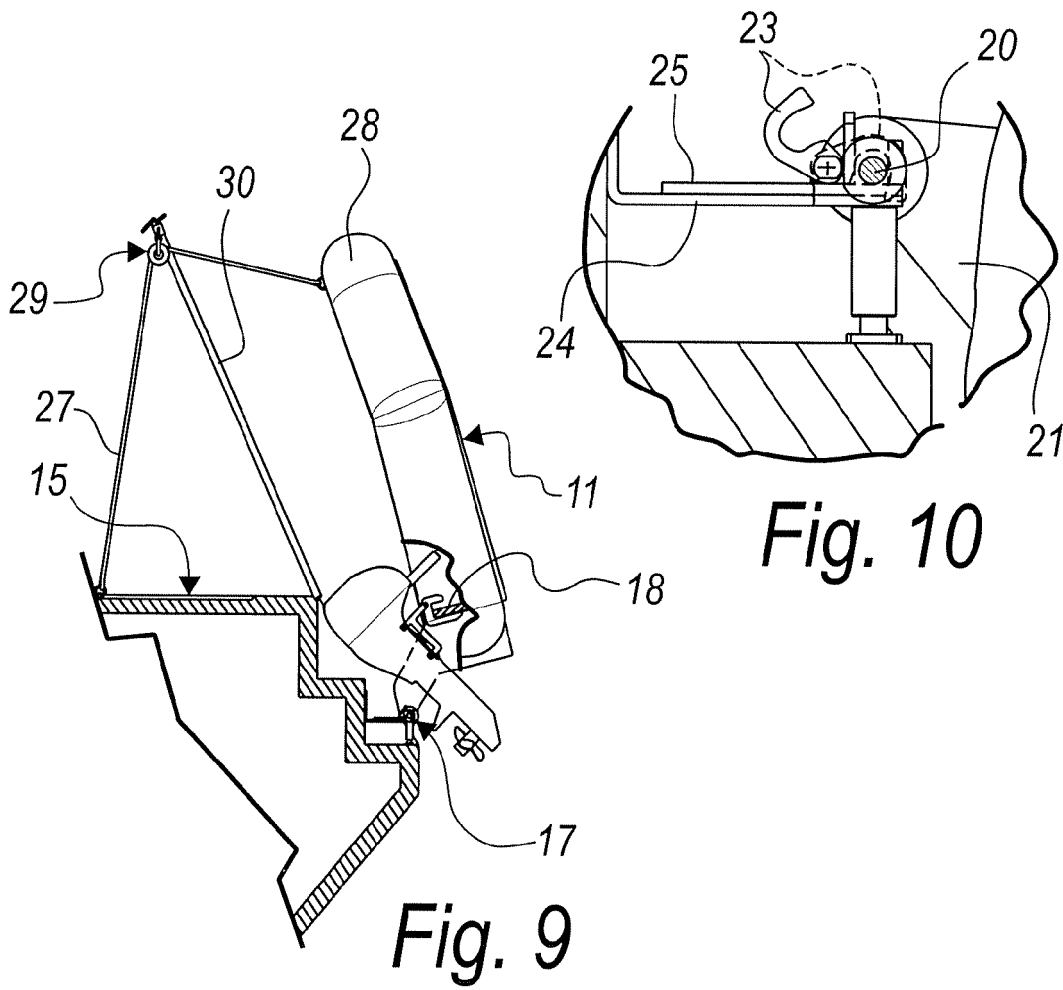
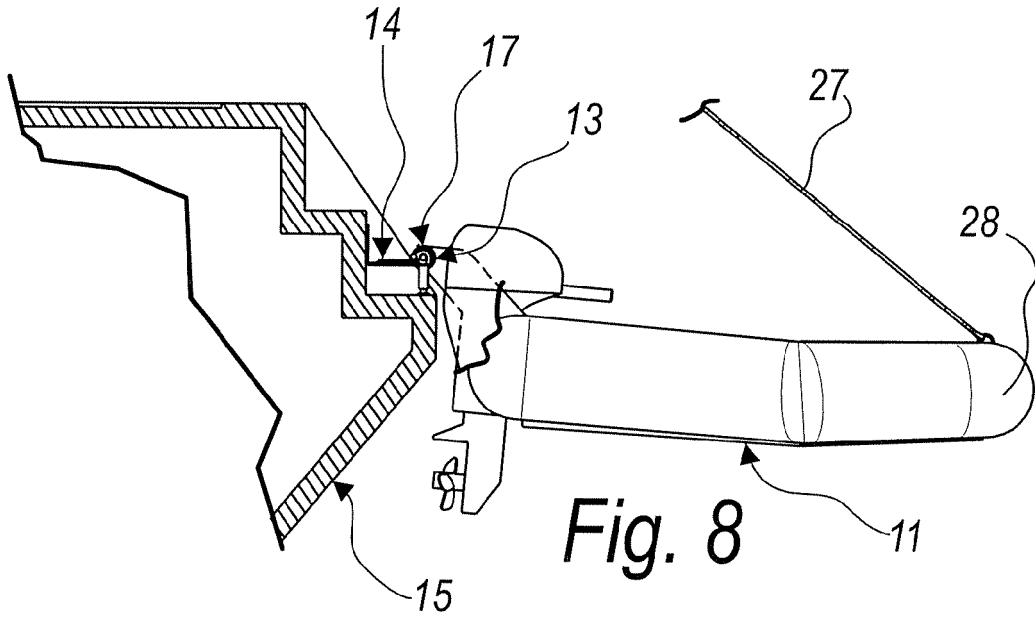


Fig. 7





EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 09 17 1931

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Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC) B63B
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 5 February 2010	Examiner Nicol, Yann
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	

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EPC FORM 1503 03.02 (P/4C01)

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EP 09 17 1931

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05-02-2010

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For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82

REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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