

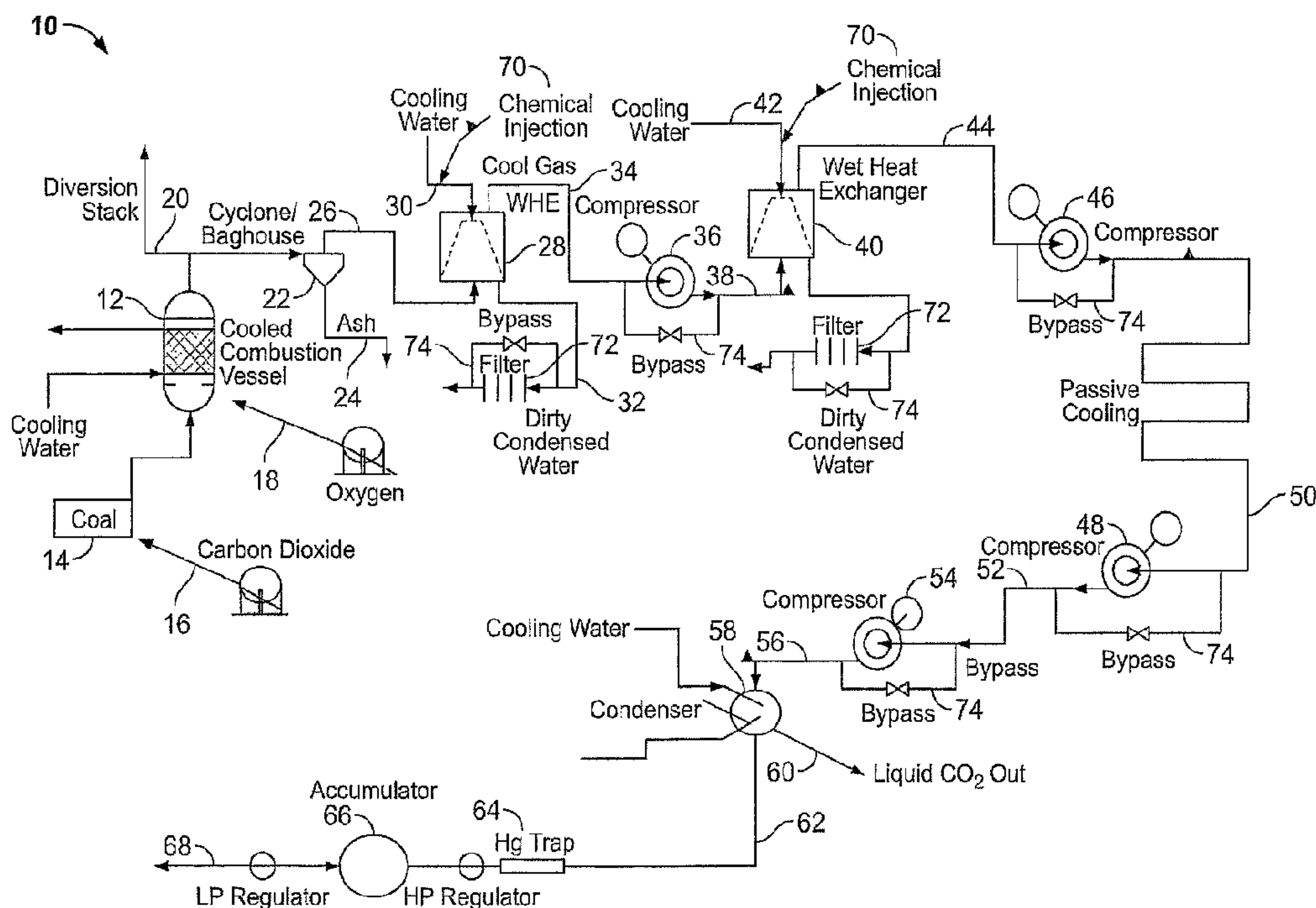


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(54) Title: OXY-FUEL COMBUSTION WITH INTEGRATED POLLUTION CONTROL



(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**

An oxygen fueled integrated pollutant removal and combustion system includes a combustion system and an integrated pollutant removal system. The combustion system includes a furnace having at least one burner that is configured to substantially prevent the introduction of air. An oxygen supply supplies oxygen at a predetermine purity greater than 21 percent and a carbon based fuel supply supplies a carbon based fuel. Oxygen and fuel are fed into the furnace in controlled proportion to each other and combustion is controlled to produce a flame temperature in excess of 3000 degrees F and a flue gas stream containing CO₂ and other gases. The flue gas stream is substantially void of non-fuel borne nitrogen containing combustion produced gaseous compounds. The integrated pollutant removal system includes at least one direct contact heat exchanger for bringing the flue gas into intimated contact with a cooling liquid to produce a pollutant-laden liquid stream and a stripped flue gas stream and at least one compressor for receiving and compressing the stripped flue as stream.

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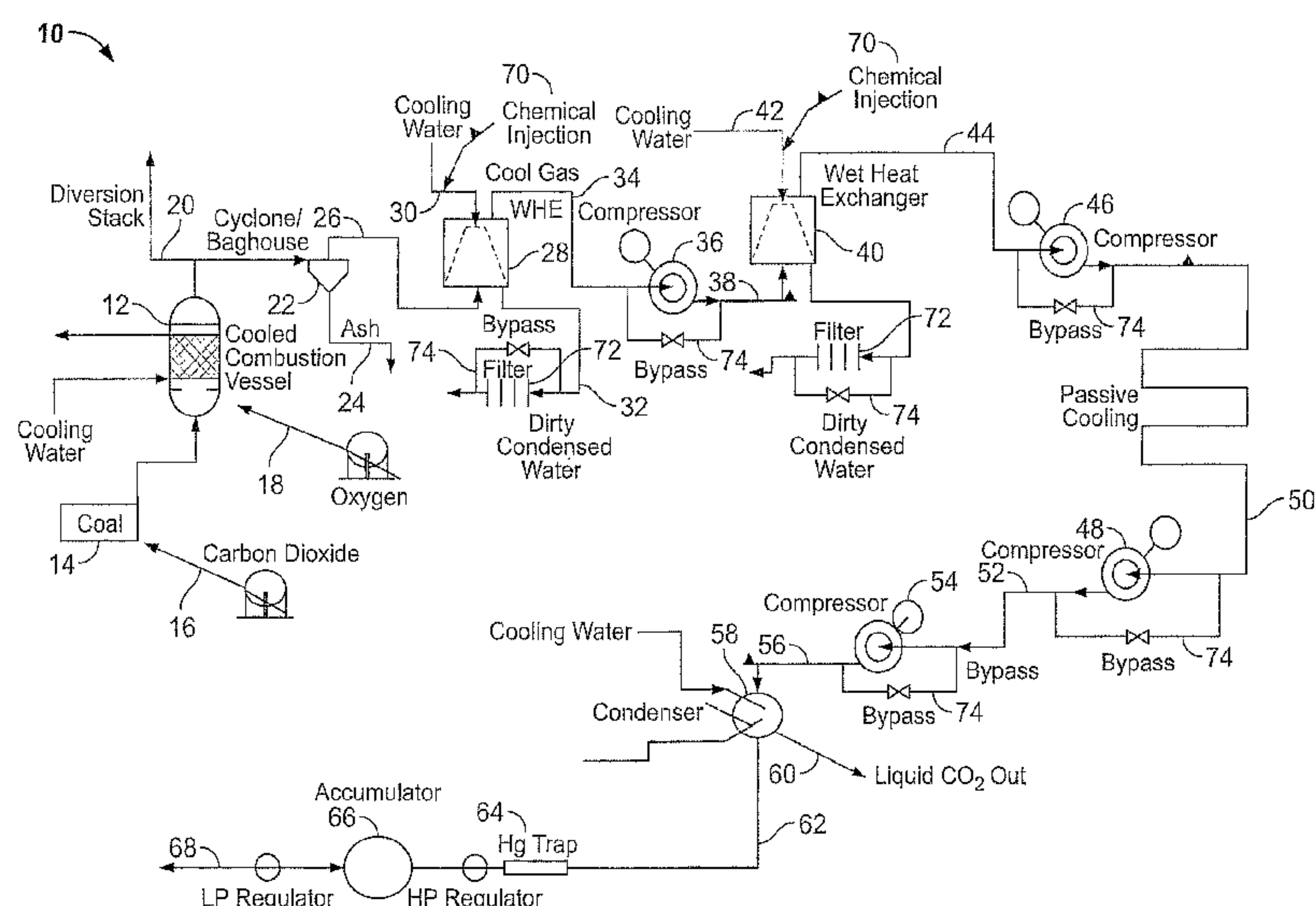
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(54) Title: OXY-FUEL COMBUSTION WITH INTEGRATED POLLUTION CONTROL

(57) Abstract: An oxygen fueled integrated pollutant removal and combustion system includes a combustion system and an integrated pollutant removal system. The combustion system includes a furnace having at least one burner that is configured to substantially prevent the introduction of air. An oxygen supply supplies oxygen at a predetermine purity greater than 21 percent and a carbon based fuel supply supplies a carbon based fuel. Oxygen and fuel are fed into the furnace in controlled proportion to each other and combustion is controlled to produce a flame temperature in excess of 3000 degrees F and a flue gas stream containing CO₂ and other gases. The flue gas stream is substantially void of non-fuel borne nitrogen containing combustion produced gaseous compounds. The integrated pollutant removal system includes at least one direct contact heat exchanger for bringing the flue gas into intimated contact with a cooling liquid to produce a pollutant-laden liquid stream and a stripped flue gas stream and at least one compressor for receiving and compressing the stripped flue as stream.

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TITLE OF THE INVENTION

OXY-FUEL COMBUSTION WITH INTEGRATED POLLUTION CONTROL

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention pertains to an integrated oxygen fueled combustion and pollution control system. More particularly, the present invention pertains to an oxy-fueled combustion system having integrated pollution control to effectively reduce, to near zero, emissions from combustion sources.

[0002] Oxy-fueled combustion systems are known in the art. Such systems use essentially pure oxygen for combustion with fuel in near stoichiometric proportions and at high flame temperatures for high efficiency energy production. Oxy-fuel systems are used in boilers to produce steam for electrical generation and in industrial settings, such as in aluminum recycling to melt aluminum for recasting. It is also contemplated that oxy-fueled combustion can be used for waste incineration as well as other industrial and environmental applications. Oxy-fuel technology and uses for this technology are disclosed in Gross, U.S. Patent Nos. 6,436,337, 6,596,220, 6,797,228 and 6,818,176, all of which are commonly owned with the present application.

[0003] Advantageously, because oxy-fuel combustion uses oxygen rather than air as an oxygen source, there is concomitant reduction in flue gas produced. In addition, combustion is carried out so that the NO_x combustion products are near zero and are due almost exclusively to fuel-borne nitrogen. That is, because oxygen rather than air is used as an oxygen source, there is less mass flow and no nitrogen to contribute to the formation of NO_x.

[0004] Although oxy-fuel combustion provides fuel efficient and reduced emission energy generation, there is still a fairly substantial amount of emissions that are produced during the combustion process. In addition, because the volume of gas is less, due to the use of oxygen instead of air, the concentration of other pollutants is higher. For example, the mass of SO_x and particulate matter will not change, however, the concentration will increase because of the reduced overall volume.

[0005] Pollution control or removal systems are known in the art.

These systems can, for example, use intimate contact between the flue gases and downstream process equipment such as precipitators and scrubbers to remove particulate matter, sulfur containing compounds and mercury containing compounds. Other systems use serial compression stripping of pollutants to remove pollutants and recover energy from the flue gas stream. Such a system is disclosed in Ochs, U.S. Patent No. 6,898,936.

[0006] Accordingly, there is a need for a combustion system that produces low flue gas volume with integrated pollution removal. Desirably, such a system takes advantage of known combustion and pollution control systems to provide fuel efficient energy production in conjunction with reduced pollutant production and capture of the remaining pollutants that are produced.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] An integrated oxygen fueled combustion system and pollutant removal system, reduces flue gas volumes, eliminates NO_x and capture condensable gases. The system includes a combustion system having a furnace with at least one burner that is configured to substantially prevent the introduction of air. An oxygen supply supplies oxygen at a predetermine purity greater than 21 percent and a carbon based fuel supply supplies a carbon based fuel. Oxygen and fuel are fed into the furnace in controlled proportion to each other. Combustion is controlled to produce a flame temperature in excess of 3000 degrees F and a flue gas stream containing CO₂ and other gases and is substantially void of non-fuel borne nitrogen containing combustion produced gaseous compounds.

[0008] The pollutant removal system includes at least one direct contact heat exchanger for bringing the flue gas into intimated contact with a cooling liquid, preferably water, to produce a pollutant-laden liquid stream and a stripped flue gas stream. The system includes at least one compressor for receiving and compressing the stripped flue gas stream.

[0009] Preferably, the system includes a series of heat exchangers and compressors to cool and compress the flue gas. The flue gas can be cooled and compressed to and the stripped flue gas stream can separated into non-condensable gases and condensable gases. The condensable gases, in large part

CO₂, are condensed into a substantially liquid state and can be sequestered. The CO₂ can be recirculated, in part, to carry a solid fuel such as coal into the furnace.

[0010] A method oxy-fuel combustion integrated with pollutant removal includes providing a furnace having at least one burner, and configured to substantially prevent the introduction of air, providing an oxygen supply for supplying oxygen at a predetermine purity greater than 21 percent and providing a carbon based fuel supply for supplying a carbon based fuel.

[0011] Either or both of the oxygen and carbon based fuel are limited to less than 5 percent over the stoichiometric proportion and combustion is controlled to produce a flame temperature in excess of 3000 degrees F and a flue gas stream containing CO₂ and other gases and substantially void of non-fuel borne nitrogen containing combustion produced gaseous compounds.

[0012] The pollutant removal system is provided which includes a direct contact heat exchanger in serial arrangement with a compressor. The flue gas is brought into intimated contact with a cooling liquid, preferably water, in the heat exchanger to produce a pollutant-laden liquid stream and a stripped flue gas stream. The stripped flue gas stream is fed into the compressor to compress the stripped flue gas stream.

[0013] In a preferred method, the steps of cooling the stripped flue gas stream and compressing the cooled stripped flue gas stream are carried out as well as sequestering the compressed cooled stripped flue gas stream.

[0013a] In another aspect of the invention, there is provided an oxygen fuelled integrated pollutant removal and combustion system. The integrated system comprises an oxy-fuel combustion system having at least one burner and configured to substantially prevent the introduction of air, an oxygen supply for supplying oxygen at a predetermined purity great than 21%, a carbon based fuel supply for supplying a carbon based fuel, means for feeding the oxygen and the carbon based fuel into the furnace in control proportion to each other and means for controlling the combustion of the carbon based fuel to produce flame temperature in excess of 3000°F and the flue gas stream containing CO₂ and other gases and substantially void of non-flue borne nitrogen containing combustion

produced gaseous compounds. There is further provided a pollutant removal system for directly receiving flue gas from the combustion system. The pollutant removal system includes at least one direct contact heat exchanger for bringing the flue gas into intimated contact with a cooling liquid to produce a pollutant-laden liquid stream and a stripped flue gas stream. There is at lest one compressor and at least one heat exchanger for receiving and compressing the stripped flue gas stream defining a compressed flue gas stream in order to separate condensable vapors from non-condensable vapors by way of cooling of the compressed flue gas stream by way of the heat exchanger in order to condense the CO₂ and any other condensable vapors defining condensed vapors and non-condensable vapors. The pollution control system also includes a discharge for discharging the condensable vapors.

[0013b] In another aspect of the invention there is provided an oxygen fuelled combustion system comprising a combustion system having a furnace which has a controlled environment with substantially no in-leakage from an external environment and is configured to substantially prevent the introduction of air. There is an oxidizing agent supply for supplying oxygen having a predetermined purity and a carbon based fuel supply for supplying a carbon based fuel and including means for feeding the oxygen and the carbon based fuel into the furnace in a stoichiometric proportion to one another limited to an excess of either the oxygen or the carbon based fuel to less than 5 percent over the stoichiometric proportion. A means for controlling the combustion of the carbon based fuel to produce a flue gas stream from the furnace having substantially zero nitrogen-containing combustion produced gaseous compounds from the oxidizing agent is included. There is further provided a pollutant removal system including at least one direct contact heat exchanger for bringing the flue gas stream into intimated contact with a cooling water to produce a pollutant-laden liquid stream and a stripped flue gas stream. There is at least one compressor and at least one heat exchanger for receiving and compressing the stripped flue gas stream and cooling the compressed flue gas stream by way of the at least one heat exchanger in order to separate condensable

from non-condensable vapors. The pollutant control system including a drain for draining said condensable vapors which include CO₂.

[0013c] In another aspect of the invention there is provided a combustion and integrated pollutant removal method comprising the steps of: providing a furnace having at least one burner, and configured to substantially prevent the introduction of air; providing an oxygen supply for supplying oxygen at a predetermine purity greater than 21 percent; providing a carbon based fuel supply for supplying a carbon based fuel limiting an excess of either the oxygen or the carbon based fuel to less than 5 percent over the stoichiometric proportion; controlling the combustion of the carbon based fuel to produce a flame temperature in excess of 3000°F and producing a flue gas stream containing CO₂ and other gases and substantially void of non-fuel borne nitrogen containing combustion produced gaseous compounds; directing the flue gas stream to a pollutant removal system including a direct contact heat exchanger in serial arrangement with a compressor; bringing the flue gas into intimated contact with a cooling liquid in the heat exchanger to produce a pollutant-laden liquid stream and a stripped flue gas stream; feeding the stripped flue gas stream into the compressor to compress the stripped flue gas stream; cooling the compressed stripped flue gas stream in order to separate condensable and non-condensable vapors; and draining the condensable vapors which include CO₂.

[0014] These and other features and advantages of the present invention will be apparent from the following detailed description, in conjunction with the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWINGS

[0015] The benefits and advantages of the present invention will become more readily apparent to those of ordinary skill in the relevant art after reviewing the following detailed description and accompanying drawings, wherein:

[0016] FIG. 1 is flow diagram of an integrated oxy-fuel combustion and pollutant removal system that was assembled for testing the principles of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0017] While the present invention is susceptible of embodiment in various forms, there is shown in the drawings and will hereinafter be described a

presently preferred embodiment with the understanding that the present disclosure is to be considered an exemplification of the invention and is not intended to limit the invention to the specific embodiment illustrated. It should be further understood that the title of this section of this specification, namely, "Detailed Description Of The Invention", relates to a requirement of the United States Patent Office, and does not imply, nor should be inferred to limit the subject matter disclosed herein.

[0018] As discussed in the aforementioned patents to Gross, an oxy-fuel combustion system uses essentially pure oxygen, in combination with a fuel source to produce heat, by flame production (i.e., combustion), in an efficient, environmentally non-adverse manner. Oxygen, which is supplied by an oxidizing agent, in concentrations of about 85 percent to about 99+ percent can be used, however, it is preferable to have oxygen concentration (i.e., oxygen supply purity) as high as possible.

[0019] In such a system, high-purity oxygen is fed, along with the fuel source in stoichiometric proportions, into a burner in a furnace. The oxygen and fuel is ignited to release the energy stored in the fuel. For purposes of the present disclosure, reference to furnace is to be broadly interpreted to include any industrial or commercial heat generator that combusts fossil (carbon-based) fuel. For example, water-tube-walled boilers for electrical power generation, as well as direct fired furnaces for industrial applications are contemplated to use the oxy-fueled combustion system. In a preferred system, oxygen concentration or purity is as high as practicable to reduce green-house gas production.

[0020] It is contemplated that essentially any fuel source can be used. For example, oxygen can be fed along with natural gas, for combustion in a furnace. Other fuel sources contemplated include oils including refined as well as waste oils, wood, coal, coal dust, refuse (garbage waste), animal wastes and products and the like. Those skilled in the art will recognize the myriad fuel sources that can be used with the present oxy-fuel system.

[0021] Compared to conventional combustion processes which use air as an oxidizing agent to supply oxygen, rather than essentially pure oxygen, for combustion, the oxy-fuel system has an overall flow throughput that is greatly reduced. The oxygen component of air (about 21 percent) is used in combustion, while the remaining components (essentially nitrogen) are heated in and exhausted from the furnace. Moreover, the present process uses oxygen in a stoichiometric

proportion to the fuel. That is, only enough oxygen is fed in proportion to the fuel to assure complete combustion of the fuel. Thus, no "excess" oxygen is fed into the combustion system.

[0022] Many advantages and benefits are achieved using the oxy-fuel combustion system. Aside from increased efficiency (or conversely reduced fuel consumption to produce an equivalent amount of power), because of the reduced input of gas, there is a dramatic decrease in the volume of flue gas. Based on the difference between using air which is 21 percent oxygen and pure oxygen, the volumetric flow rate is about one-fifth (1/5) using an oxy-fuel combustion system, compared to a conventional air-fed combustion system. In addition, because there is no energy absorbed by non-combustion related materials (e.g., excess oxygen or nitrogen), more energy is available for the underlying process.

[0023] Advantageously, the reduced gas volume (and thus flue gas volume) also increases the residence time of the gases in the furnace or boiler to provide additional opportunity for heat transfer.

[0024] In that the overall flue gas volume is so greatly reduced, highly efficient downstream processing that would otherwise not be available or would be impractical can now be used in large scale industrial and power generation settings.

[0025] Accordingly, the present invention uses oxy-fuel combustion in conjunction with the removal of multiple pollutants through the integrated condensation of H₂O and CO₂ with entrainment of particulates and dissolution and condensation of other pollutants including SO₂. Such a pollutant removal system and method is disclosed in the aforementioned patent to Ochs et al.

[0026] Consolidating the removal of pollutants into one process has the potential to reduce costs and reduce power requirements for operation of such a system. Non-condensable combustion products including oxygen and argon may be present in combustion products. Although the oxy-fuel combustion system is operated at or very near stoichiometry (preferably within 5 percent of stoichiometry), oxygen may be present in the flue gas. Argon can come from the air separation process (remaining in the produced oxygen). Some relatively small amounts of nitrogen may also be present as fuel-borne or as air in-leakage into the underlying process equipment.

[0027] Condensable vapors such as H₂O, CO₂, SO_x, and although minimal, NO_x, are produced in the combustion process and are the targets for

condensation. When referring to combustion products in this invention it is assumed that these condensable vapors and non-condensable gases are present as well as particulates and other pollutants.

[0028] The pollutant control portion of the system can also accomplish remediation and recovery of energy from combustion products from a fossil fuel power plant having a fossil fuel combustion chamber (e.g., a boiler, furnace, combustion turbine or the like), a compressor, a turbine, a heat exchanger, and a source of oxygen (which could be an air separation unit). Those skilled in the art will understand and appreciate that reference to, for example, a compressor, includes more than one compressor.

[0029] The fossil fuel power plant combustion products can include non-condensable gases such as oxygen and argon; condensable vapors such as water vapor and acid gases such as SO_x and (again, although minimal, NO_x); and CO_2 and pollutants such as particulates and mercury. The process of pollutant removal and sequestration, includes changing the temperature and/or pressure of the combustion products by cooling and/or compressing the combustion products to a temperature/pressure combination below the dew point of some or all of the condensable vapors.

[0030] This process is carried out to condense liquid having some acid gases dissolved and/or entrained therein and/or directly condensing the acid gases (such as CO_2 and SO_2) from the combustion products. It is carried out further to dissolve some of the pollutants thus recovering the combustion products. Dissolve in the context of this disclosure means to entrain and/or dissolve.

[0031] This process is repeated through one or more of cooling and/or compressing steps with condensation and separation of condensable vapors and acid gases. The recovery of heat in the form of either latent and/or sensible heat can also be accomplished. The condensation reduces the energy required for continued compression by reducing mass and temperature, until the partially remediated flue gas is CO_2 , SO_2 , and H_2O poor. Thereafter the remaining flue gases are sent to an exhaust.

[0032] The fossil fuel can be any of those discussed above. In certain instances, the pollutants will include fine particulate matter and/or heavy metals such as mercury other metals such as vanadium.

[0033] The present invention also relates to a method of applying energy saving techniques, during flue gas recirculation and pollutant removal, such that power generation systems can improve substantially in efficiency. For example, in the case of a subcritical pulverized coal (PC) system without energy recovery, the performance can drop from 38.3% thermal efficiency (for a modern system without CO₂ removal) to as low as 20.0% (for the system with CO₂ removal and no energy recovery). A system according to one embodiment of the present invention can perform at 29.6% (with CO₂ removal) when energy recovery is included in the model design. It is anticipated that better efficiencies will be achieved. The present oxy-fuel combustion with integrated pollution control is applicable to new construction, repowering, and retrofits.

[0034] In an exemplary system using the present oxy-fuel and IPR process, flue gases as described in the table below are predicted. The flue gases will exit from the combustion region or furnace area, where they would pass through a cyclone / bag house or electrostatic precipitator for gross particulate removal. The combustion gas then passes through a direct contact heat exchanger (DCHX). In this unit the flue gases come into contact with a cooler liquid. This cooling step allows the vapors to condense. The step also allows for dissolving the entrained soluble pollutants and fine particles.

[0035] The gases exiting the first column are now cleaner and substantially pollutant free. These gases are compressed and can proceed into a successive DCHX and compression step. A final compression and heat exchange step is used to separate the oxygen, argon, and nitrogen (minimal) from the CO₂. Also a mercury trap is used to remove gaseous mercury before release to atmosphere.

[0036] The table below shows the expected results as a comparison of the present oxy-fuel combustion and IPR system to a conventional air fueled combustion process. As the results show, the volume of flue gas at the outset, is less in the oxy-fuel combustion system by virtue of the elimination of nitrogen from the input stream. In the present system, the IPR serves to further reduce the volume and gas flow through successive compression and cooling stages. As the flue gases progress through the combined processes the final product is captured CO₂ for sequestration.

	Conventional after economizer	Oxyfuel exhaust	After 1 st compression	After 2 nd compression	After 3 rd compression
Gas Flow (kg/hr)	1,716,395	686,985	364,367	354,854	353,630
Vol flow (m ³ /hr)	1,932,442	826,995	72,623	15,944	661
Inlet Pressure (psia)	14.62	15.51	62	264	1,500
Inlet Temp. (°F)	270	800	342	323	88.2
Density (kg/m ³)	0.8882	0.8307	5.02	22.26	534.61
H ₂ O (fraction)	0.0832	0.33222	0.0695	0.00994	0.0004
Ar (fraction)	0.0088	0.01152	0.0163	0.01730	0.0175
CO ₂ (fraction)	0.1368	0.61309	0.8662	0.92161	0.9305
N ₂ (fraction)	0.7342	0.00904	0.0128	0.01359	0.0137
O ₂ (fraction)	0.0350	0.02499	0.0353	0.03755	0.0379
SO ₂ (fraction)	0.0020	0.00913	0.0000	0.00000	0.0000

TABLE 1 – A COMPARISON OF THE PROPERTIES AND COMPOSITIONS OF IPR-TREATED OXY-FUEL COMBUSTION PRODUCTS WITH THOSE FROM A CONVENTIONAL COAL FIRED BOILER

[0037] As can be seen from the data of Table 1, the volume of the combustion products has dropped significantly as a result of the successive compressing and cooling stages. The result is a capture of CO₂ and subsequent sequestration, which is the ultimate goal. The CO₂ thus resulting can be stored or used in, for example, a commercial or industrial application.

[0038] A test system 10 was constructed to determine the actual results vis-à-vis oxy-fuel combustion in conjunction with CO₂ sequestration and pollutant removal. A schematic of the test system is illustrated in FIG. 1. The system 10 includes an oxy-fueled combustor 12 having a coal feed 14 (with CO₂ as the carrier gas 16), and an oxygen feed 18. Coal was fed at a rate of 27 lbs per hour (pph), carried by CO₂ at a rate of 40 pph, and oxygen at a rate of 52 pph. In that the system 10 was a test system rather than a commercial or industrial system (for example, a commercial boiler for electrical generation), the combustor 12 was cooled with cooling water to serve as an energy/heat sink.

[0039] The combustor exhaust 20 flowed to a cyclone/bag house 22 at which ash (as at 24) was removed at a rate of about 1 pph. Following ash removal 24, about 118 pph of combustion gases remained in the flue gas stream 26 at an exit temperature that was less than about 300°F.

[0040] The remaining flue gases 26 were then fed to a direct contact heat exchanger 28 (the first heat exchanger). Water (indicated at 30) was sprayed directly into the hot flue gas stream 26. The cooling water condensed some of the hot

water vapor and further removed the soluble pollutants and entrained particulate matter (see discharge at 32). About 13 pph of water vapor was condensed in the first heat exchanger 28 – the flue gases that remained 34 were present at a rate of about 105 pph.

[0041] Following exit from the first heat exchanger 28, the remaining gases 34 were fed into a first, a low pressure compressor 36, (at an inlet pressure of about atmospheric) and exited the compressor 36 at a pressure of about 175 lbs per square inch gauge (psig). As a result of the compression stage, the temperature of the gases 38 increased. The remaining flue gases were then fed into a second direct contact heat exchanger 40 where they were brought into intimate contact with a cooling water stream as at 42. The exiting stream 44 released about an additional 4 pph of water and thus had an exiting exhaust/flue gas 44 flow rate of about 101 pph.

[0042] Following the second heat exchanger 40, the gases 44 were further compressed to about 250 psig at a second compressor 46. Although the second compression stage resulted in a temperature increase, it was determined during testing that a third heat exchange step was not necessary. It will be appreciated that in larger scale operation, however, such additional heat exchange/cooling stages may be necessary.

[0043] A third compression stage, at a third compressor 48 was then carried out on the remaining flue gases 50 to increase the pressure of the exiting gas stream 52 to about 680 psig. Again, it was determined that although the temperature of the gases increased, active or direct cooling was not necessary in that losses to ambient through the piping system carrying the gases were sufficient to reduce the temperature of the gases.

[0044] A final compression, at a final compressor 52, of the gases was carried out to increase the pressure of the gases to about 2000 psig. Following the final compression stage, the remaining gases 56 were fed into a heat exchanger 58, the final heat exchanger, in which the temperature of the stream 56 was reduced to below the dew point of the of the gases and as a result, condensation of the gases commenced. The condensate (as at 60), which was principally liquefied CO₂ (at a rate of 80 pph), was extracted and sequestered. In the present case, the CO₂ was bottled, and retained.

[0045] The non-condensable gases (as at 62), which included a small amount of CO₂, were passed through a mercury filter 64 and subsequently bled into

an accumulator 66. The accumulator 66 provided flexibility in control of the system flow rate. The exhaust 68 from the accumulator 66 was discharged to the atmosphere. The flow rate from the accumulator 66, normalized to steady state from the overall system, was about 21 pph.

[0046] It will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that the above-presented exemplary system 10 was for testing and verification purposes and that the number and position of the compression and cooling stages can and likely will be changed to accommodate a particular desired design and/or result. In addition, various chemical injection points 70, filters 72, bypasses 74 and the like may also be incorporated into the system 10 and, accordingly, all such changes are within the scope and spirit of the present invention.

[0047] The projected fuel savings and other increased efficiencies of the present oxy-fuel combustion system with IPR are such that the cost of this combined process is anticipated to be competitive with current combustion technologies. Additionally, the prospect of new regulatory requirements are causing power plant designers to revisit the conventional approaches used to remove pollutants which would only serve to improve the economics behind this approach.

[0048] It will be appreciated that the use of oxy-fueled combustion systems with IPR in many industrial and power generating applications can provide reduced fuel consumption with equivalent power output or heat generation. Reduced fuel consumption, along with efficient use of the fuel (i.e., efficient combustion) and integrated IPR provides significant reductions in overall operating costs, and reduced and sequestered emissions of other exhaust/flue gases.

[0049] Due to the variety of industrial fuels that can be used, such as coal, natural gas, various oils (heating and waste oil), wood and other recycled wastes, along with the various methods, current and proposed, to generate oxygen, those skilled in the art will recognize the enormous potential, vis-à-vis commercial and industrial applicability, of the present combustion system. Fuel selection can be made based upon availability, economic factors and environmental concerns. Thus, no one fuel is specified; rather a myriad, and in fact, all carbon based fuels are compatible with the present system. Accordingly, the particulate removal stages of the integrated IPR system may vary.

[0050] As to the supply of oxygen for the oxy-fueled burners (combustion system), there are many acceptable technologies for producing oxygen at

high purity levels, such as cryogenics, membrane systems, absorption units, hydrolysis and the like. All such fuel uses and oxygen supplies are within the scope of the present invention.

[0051] In general, the use of oxygen fuel fired combustion over current or traditional air fuel systems offers significant advantages in many areas. First is the ability to run at precise stoichiometric levels without the hindrance of nitrogen in the combustion envelope. This allows for greater efficiency of the fuel usage, while greatly reducing the NO_x levels in the burn application. Significantly, less fuel is required to achieve the same levels of energy output, which in turn, reduces the overall operating costs. In using less fuel to render the same power output, a natural reduction in emissions results. Fuel savings and less emissions are but only two of the benefits provided by the present system. In conjunction with the integrated pollutant removal (IPR) system, the present oxy-fuel IPR system provides far greater levels of efficiency and pollution control than known systems.

[0052] It is anticipated that combustors (e.g., boilers) will be designed around oxygen fueled combustion systems with integrated IPR to take full advantage of the benefits of these systems. It is also anticipated that retrofits or modifications to existing equipment will also provide many of these benefits both to the operator (e.g., utility) and to the environment.

[0053] In the present disclosure, the words “a” or “an” are to be taken to include both the singular and the plural. Conversely, any reference to plural items shall, where appropriate, include the singular.

[0054] From the foregoing it will be observed that numerous modifications and variations can be effectuated without departing from the true spirit and scope of the novel concepts of the present invention. It is to be understood that no limitation with respect to the specific embodiments illustrated is intended or should be inferred. The disclosure is intended to cover by the appended claims all such modifications as fall within the scope of the claims.

Claims:

1. An oxygen fueled integrated pollutant removal and combustion system comprising:

an oxy-fuel combustion system having (i) at least one burner configured to substantially prevent the introduction of air, (ii) an oxygen supply configured to supply oxygen at a predetermined purity greater than 21 percent, (iii) a carbon based fuel supply configured to supply a carbon based fuel, and (iv) a control system configured to (a) feed the oxygen and the carbon based fuel into the at least one burner in a controlled proportion to each other and (b) control the combustion of the carbon based fuel to produce a flame temperature in excess of 3,000° Fahrenheit, and a flue gas stream containing CO₂ and other gases, wherein the flue gas stream is substantially void of non-fuel borne nitrogen containing combustion produced gaseous compounds; and

a pollutant removal system configured to directly receive the flue gas stream from said combustion system, said pollutant removal system including (i) at least one direct contact heat exchanger configured to bring the flue gas stream into intimated contact with a cooling liquid to produce a pollutant-laden liquid stream and a stripped flue gas stream, (ii) at least one compressor operatively coupled with the at least one direct contact heat exchanger and configured to receive and compress the stripped flue gas stream, defining a compressed flue gas stream, in order to separate condensable vapors from non-condensable vapors by cooling said compressed flue gas stream by way of said direct contact heat exchanger to condense said CO₂ and any other condensable vapors, defining condensed vapors

and non-condensable vapors, and (iii) a discharge configured to discharge said condensable vapors.

2. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 1, wherein the cooling liquid is water.

3. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 1 including at least two compressors.

4. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 1, wherein the stripped flue gas stream is separated into non-condensable gases and condensable gases.

5. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 4, wherein the condensable gases are condensed into a substantially liquid state.

6. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 5, wherein the condensable gases condensed into the substantially liquid state are sequestered.

7. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 6, wherein the condensable gases condensed into the substantially liquid state are, in large part, CO₂.

8. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 1, wherein the carbon based fuel is a solid fuel and wherein the stripped flue gas stream is recirculated, in part, to carry the carbon based fuel into the oxy-fuel combustion system .

9. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 8, wherein the stripped flue gas stream is substantially CO₂.

10. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 1 including a plurality of heat exchangers and compressors, wherein at least two of said plurality

of heat exchangers are direct contact heat exchangers for intimately contacting cooling water with the flue gas stream and wherein at least one of said plurality of compressors is disposed between the at least two heat exchangers for compressing the stripped flue gas stream between the at least two heat exchangers.

11. An oxygen fueled combustion system comprising:

a combustion system including (i) a furnace having a controlled environment with substantially no in-leakage from an external environment, and configured to substantially prevent the introduction of air, (ii) an oxidizing agent supply configured to supply oxygen having a predetermined purity, (iii) a carbon based fuel supply configured to supply a carbon based fuel, and (iv) a control system configured to feed the oxygen and the carbon based fuel into the furnace in a stoichiometric proportion to one another limited to an excess of either the oxygen or the carbon based fuel to less than 5 percent over the stoichiometric proportion, and to control the combustion of the carbon based fuel to produce a flue gas stream from the furnace having substantially zero nitrogen-containing combustion produced gaseous compounds from the oxidizing agent; and

a pollutant removal system including (i) at least one direct contact heat exchanger for bringing the flue gas stream into intimated contact with a cooling water to produce a pollutant-laden liquid stream and a stripped flue gas stream, (ii) at least one compressor operatively coupled with at least one heat exchanger configured to receive and compress the stripped flue gas stream, defining a compressed flue gas stream, and to cool the compressed flue gas stream by way of said at least one heat exchanger in order to separate condensable from non-

condensable vapors, and (iii) a drain configured to drain said condensable vapors, which include CO₂.

12. The oxygen fueled combustion system in accordance with claim 11 including at least two heat exchangers and at least two compressors.

13. The oxygen fueled combustion system in accordance with claim 11, wherein the stripped flue gas stream is separated into non-condensable gases and condensable gases.

14. The oxygen fueled combustion system in accordance with claim 13, wherein the condensable gases are condensed into a substantially liquid state.

15. The oxygen fueled combustion system in accordance with claim 14, wherein the condensable gases condensed into the substantially liquid state are sequestered.

16. The oxygen fueled combustion system in accordance with claim 15, wherein the condensable gases condensed into the substantially liquid state are, in large part, CO₂.

17. The oxygen fueled combustion system in accordance with claim 1, wherein the carbon based fuel is a solid fuel and wherein the stripped flue gas stream is recirculated, in part, to carry the carbon based fuel into the furnace.

18. The oxygen fueled combustion system in accordance with claim 17, wherein the solid fuel is coal or a mixture of coal and another solid fuel.

19. The oxygen fueled combustion system in accordance with claim 17, wherein the stripped flue gas stream is substantially CO₂.

20. The oxygen fueled combustion system in accordance with claim 11 including a plurality of heat exchangers and compressors, wherein at least two of said

plurality of heat exchangers are direct contact heat exchangers for intimately contacting cooling water with the flue gas stream and wherein at least one of said plurality of compressors is disposed between the at least two heat exchangers for compressing the stripped flue gas stream between the at least two heat exchangers.

21. A combustion and integrated pollutant removal method comprising the steps of:

- operating a furnace having at least one burner, and configured to substantially prevent the introduction of air;

- supplying oxygen at a predetermined purity greater than 21 percent;

- providing a carbon based fuel supply for supplying a carbon based fuel limiting an excess of either the oxygen or the carbon based fuel to less than 5 percent over the stoichiometric proportion;

- supplying the carbon based fuel, wherein an excess of either the oxygen or the carbon based fuel is limited to less than 5 percent over the stoichiometric proportion;

- controlling the combustion of the carbon based fuel to produce a flame temperature in excess of 3,000° Fahrenheit and producing a flue gas stream containing CO₂ and other gases and substantially void of non-fuel borne nitrogen containing combustion produced gaseous compounds;

- directing said flue gas stream to a pollutant removal system including a direct contact heat exchanger in serial arrangement with a compressor;

bringing the flue gas stream into intimated contact with a cooling liquid in the heat exchanger to produce a pollutant-laden liquid stream and a stripped flue gas stream;

feeding the stripped flue gas stream into the compressor to compress the stripped flue gas stream, defining a compressed stripped flue gas stream;

cooling said compressed stripped flue gas stream in order to separate condensable vapors and non-condensable vapors; and

draining said condensable vapors, which include CO₂.

22. The method in accordance with claim 21 including the steps of cooling the stripped flue gas stream, defining a cooled stripped flue gas stream, and compressing the cooled stripped flue gas stream, defining a compressed cooled stripped flue gas stream.

23. The method in accordance with claim 22 including the step of sequestering the compressed cooled stripped flue gas stream.

24. An oxygen fueled integrated pollutant removal and combustion system comprising:

a combustion system including (i) a furnace having at least one burner, and configured to substantially prevent the introduction of air, (ii) an oxygen supply configured to supply oxygen at a predetermined purity greater than 21 percent, (iii) a carbon based fuel supply configured to supply a carbon based fuel, and (iv) a control system configured to feed the oxygen and the carbon based fuel into the furnace in a controlled proportion to each other, and to control the combustion of the carbon based fuel to produce a desired flame temperature, and a flue gas

stream containing CO₂, and other gases and substantially void of non-fuel borne nitrogen containing combustion produced gaseous compounds; and

a pollutant removal system including (i) at least one heat exchanger for bringing the flue gas stream into contact with a cooling liquid to produce a pollutant-laden liquid stream and a stripped flue gas stream, (ii) at least one compressor operatively coupled with said at least one heat exchanger configured to receive, compress and cool the stripped flue gas stream in order to separate condensable vapors and non-condensable vapors, and (iii) a drain for draining said condensable vapors, which include CO₂.

25. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 24, wherein the cooling liquid is water.

26. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 25, wherein the at least one heat exchangers is a direct contact heat exchanger.

27. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 25, wherein, in a boiler based combustion system, the water is the boiler feedwater.

28. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 25, wherein the water is circulated for use in process heating.

29. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 24, wherein the desired flame temperature is a temperature in excess of 3,000° Fahrenheit.

30. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 24, wherein the at least one compressor is used in a gas compression stage to compress gasses and wherein there is more than one gas compression stage.

31. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 24, wherein the at least one heat exchanger is used in a gas-to-liquid condensation stage to

produce a condensate stream and wherein there is more than one gas-to-liquid condensation stage.

32. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 24, wherein the stripped flue gas stream is compressed and cooled to produce a liquid.

33. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 32, wherein the liquid produced is, in large part, CO₂.

34. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 24, wherein the stripped flue gas stream is compressed to a supercritical fluid.

35. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 34, wherein the supercritical fluid comprises, in large part, CO₂.

36. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 24, wherein the carbon based fuel is a solid fuel.

37. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 36, wherein the solid fuel is coal.

38. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 36, wherein the solid fuel is at least, in part, biomass.

39. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 37, wherein part of the flue gas stream is recirculated, in part, to carry the carbon based fuel into the furnace.

40. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 24, wherein a part of the flue gas stream is recirculated, in part, to improve convective heat transfer.

41. The integrated combustion system in accordance with claim 24 including a plurality of heat exchangers and compressors, wherein at least two of the plurality

of heat exchangers are direct contact heat exchangers for intimately contacting and mixing cooling water with the flue gas stream and wherein at least one of said plurality of compressors is disposed between the at least two heat exchangers for compressing the stripped flue gas stream between the at least two heat exchangers.

42. An oxygen-fossil fuel system comprising:

a combustion system including (i) a furnace having a controlled environment with substantially no in-leakage from an external environment, and configured to substantially prevent the introduction of air, (ii) an oxidizing agent supply configured to supply oxygen having a predetermined purity, (iii) a carbon based fuel supply configured to supply a carbon based fuel, and (iv) a control system configured to feed the oxygen and the carbon based fuel into the furnace in a stoichiometric proportion to one another whereby an excess of either the oxygen or the carbon based fuel is limited to less than 5 percent over the stoichiometric proportion, to recirculate combustion products to aid in supplying a carbon based fuel and to improve heat transfer properties, and to control the combustion of the carbon based fuel to produce a flue gas stream from the furnace having low nitrogen-containing combustion produced gaseous compounds from the oxidizing agent; and

a pollutant removal system including (i) at least one heat exchanger configured to bring the flue gas stream into thermal contact with a cooling water to produce a pollutant-laden liquid stream and a stripped flue gas stream that is stripped of at least a portion of pollutants and liquid in the flue gas stream, (ii) at least one compressor operatively coupled with the at least one heat exchanger

configured to receive, compress and cool the stripped flue gas stream in order to separate condensable liquids and non-condensable liquids, and (iii) a drain configured to drain said condensable liquids, which include CO₂.

43. The oxygen-fossil fuel system in accordance with claim 42 comprising at least two heat exchangers and two compression stages.

44. The oxygen-fossil fuel system in accordance with claim 42, wherein the flue gas stream is separated into two components using compression and cooling, one component of which is substantially condensable vapors, and the other is substantially non-condensable gases.

45. The oxygen-fossil fuel system in accordance with claim 44, wherein the condensable vapors are condensed into a liquid.

46. The oxygen-fossil fuel system in accordance with claim 44, wherein the condensable vapors are in a supercritical fluid state.

47. The oxygen-fossil fuel system in accordance with claim 44, wherein the condensable vapors are substantially CO₂.

48. The oxygen-fossil fuel system in accordance with claim 44, wherein the flue gas stream is cooled using condensate from boiler feedwater to cool the stream to allow condensation.

49. The oxygen-fossil fuel system in accordance with claim 44, wherein the flue gas stream is treated with a chemical reagent to remove SO₂ prior to separation.

50. The oxygen-fossil fuel system in accordance with claim 44, wherein the condensable gas stream is treated with a chemical reagent to remove SO₂ after separation.

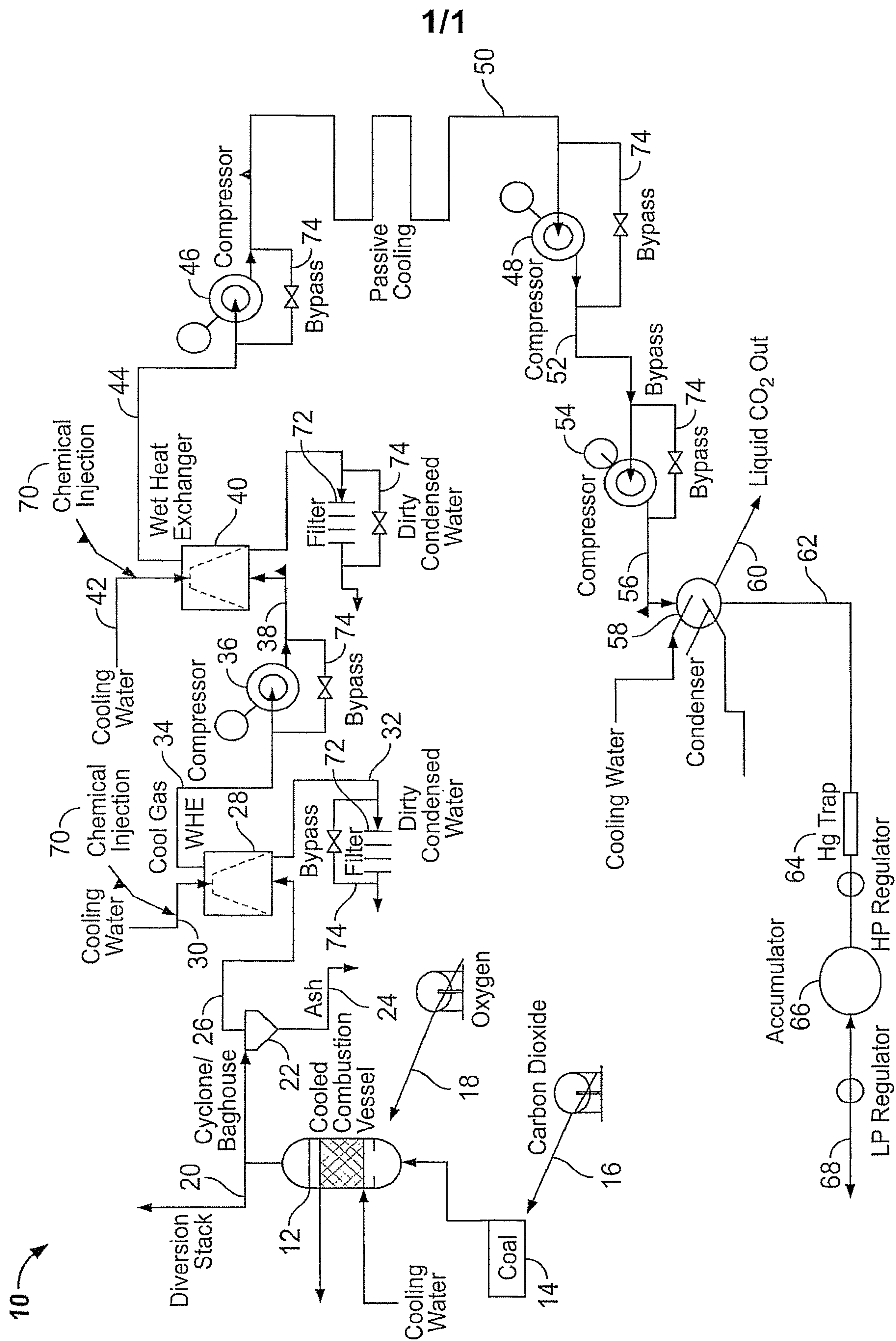


FIG. 1

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