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(54) **Trenching apparatus**

(57) A trenching unit (12) used to cut trenches in the seabed for laying pipelines or cables.  
 The unit comprises: a jetting arm (3) with a plurality of sections, each section having at least one nozzle; means for supplying fluid to nozzles (8) in at least two sections; and means (4) for separately controlling the flow characteristics of the fluid supplied to each individual section of the jetting arm.

Two or more units of such apparatus can be used in tandem to extend the fluidisation period of a localised area of the seabed. This is particularly useful when pipes or cables are relatively stiff. The fluidisation period depends upon the distance between the units which is calculated as a function of the characteristics of the seabed and the capabilities of the individual units.  
 The distance between the units is determined by the length of an adjustable linkage.

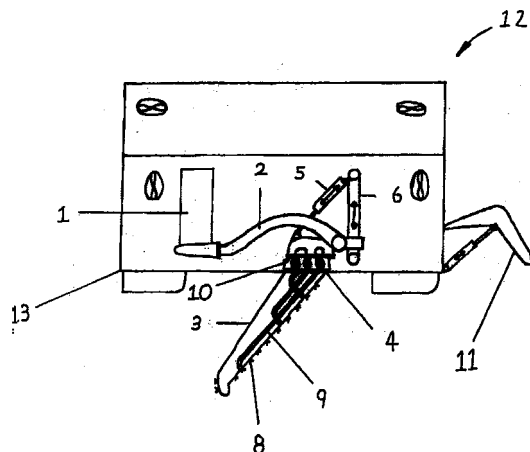


Figure 1



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# EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number  
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search <b>THE HAGUE</b>		Date of completion of the search <b>25 March 2002</b>	Examiner <b>Guthmuller, J</b>
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS		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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<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>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</p> <p>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 &amp; : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT  
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