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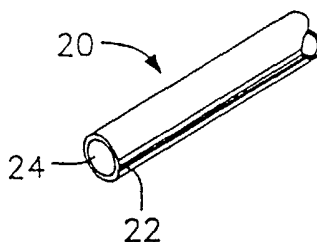
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(54) **Porous element**

(57) The invention relates to a substantially self-sustaining, three-dimensional, porous element formed of a web of flexible thermoplastic fibrous material comprising an interconnecting network of highly dispersed continuous fibers randomly oriented primarily in a longi-

tudinal direction and bonded to each other at points of contact, wherein at least a major part of said continuous fibers are bicomponent fibers comprising a core of thermoplastic polymer material substantially totally surrounded by a sheath of polymer material selected from polyethylene terephthalate and copolymers thereof.

FIG. 1



EP 1 230 863 A3



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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		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
THE HAGUE		28 January 2003	Lepretre, F
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<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 & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

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