

(19)



Europäisches Patentamt  
European Patent Office  
Office européen des brevets



(11)

**EP 1 625 840 A2**

(12)

## EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(43) Date of publication:  
**15.02.2006 Bulletin 2006/07**

(51) Int Cl.:  
**A61G 17/00 (2006.01)**

(21) Application number: **05076791.2**

(22) Date of filing: **02.08.2005**

(84) Designated Contracting States:  
**AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB GR  
HU IE IS IT LI LT LU LV MC NL PL PT RO SE SI  
SK TR**  
Designated Extension States:  
**AL BA HR MK YU**

(72) Inventor: **KANTERS, Martines Josephus Johanna  
Caspar Maria  
5408 PD Volkel (NL)**

(74) Representative: **Van kan, Johan Joseph Hubert  
Algemeen Octrooi- en Merkenbureau  
P.O. Box 645  
5600 AP Eindhoven (NL)**

(30) Priority: **10.08.2004 NL 1026811**

(71) Applicant: **KANTERS, Martines Josephus  
Johanna Caspar Maria  
5408 PD Volkel (NL)**

(54) **Coffin**

(57) The invention relates to a coffin. The coffin comprises a framework for defining a bottom surface and at

least one upright wall surface, wherein at least one wall surface is covered with braiding on the outer side, which braiding comprises paper.

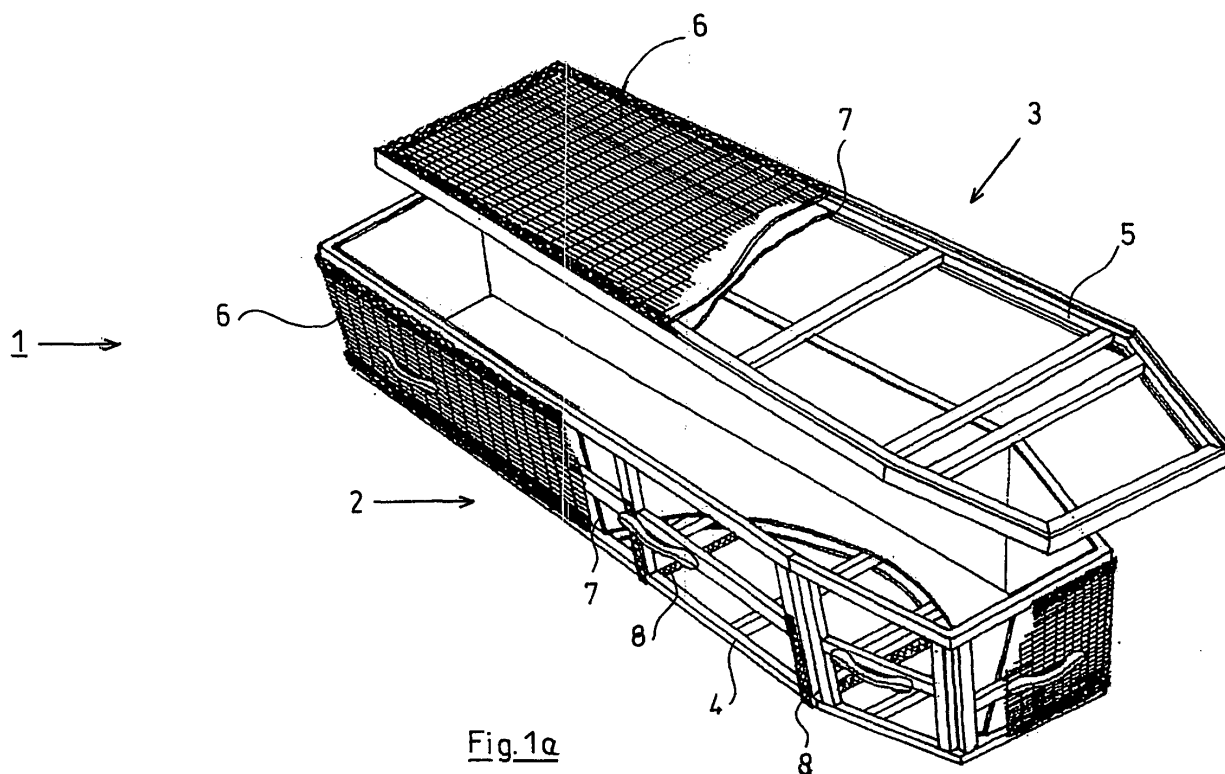


Fig. 1a

**EP 1 625 840 A2**

## Description

**[0001]** The present invention relates to a coffin comprising a framework for defining a bottom surface and at least one upright wall surface, wherein at least one wall surface is covered with braiding on the outer side. The term braiding as used herein also comprises woven fabric.

**[0002]** Such a coffin is known from DE 198 18 558 A1, which discloses a coffin that is less environmentally polluting than a coffin comprising panels of solid wood, the required shape stability being provided by a frame made of softwood slats. Said slats are provided with through bores for receiving thin elements of a natural braiding material, such as cane, water-hyacinth or willow. A drawback is the fact that such a coffin still will not readily decompose or combust when buried in the ground or when cremated. Consequently, it is an object of the present invention to provide a coffin which obviates the above drawback at least partially and which will decompose or combust more rapidly than the known coffin when buried in the ground or when cremated. This object is accomplished with the present invention by a coffin as referred to in the introduction, wherein the braiding comprises paper. Paper is a material which is easy to braid, which decomposes in the ground and which has excellent combustion properties. A further advantageous aspect is the fact that paper is a light-weight material, so that a very light coffin is provided. This is in particular advantageous because the coffin must frequently be carried without a corpse being present therein. This can be done by a single person, as the total weight of the coffin will be lower than the maximum weight that (in accordance with the Dutch Working Conditions Act) a person is allowed to lift.

**[0003]** Preferably, the braiding comprises strands of paper, for example in the form of "loom". Loom is a strand-like product, which is formed by braiding moist strands of paper similarly to a rope, after which the strands are dried. Paper decomposes and burns more rapidly than wood, especially when air is contained in the paper, as is the case with loom. Traditionally, the paper used in loom is reinforced by means of a core of another material, for example iron wire, but said reinforcing may be left out in this case, so that the braiding only consists of (strands of) paper.

**[0004]** In a preferred embodiment, a box is provided within the framework, in which box a corpse can be placed in use. In the first place, the box provides additional shape stability to the framework and, in addition, the cardboard provides more or less airtight layers, so that the coffin can be sealed more or less airtight by means of a lid.

**[0005]** The box is preferably made of cardboard. Cardboard provides a good combination of strength and decomposability. This is especially the case with corrugated cardboard, since air, and thus oxygen, is contained in the corrugated cardboard between the layers of paper.

**[0006]** Preferably, the box is provided with a liquid-tight

layer, preferably on the inner side. Said layer prevents leakage of bodily fluids from the corpse to the outside of the coffin.

**[0007]** Furthermore, markings that indicate drilling positions for fixing various kinds of fittings are preferably present on the inner side the box.

**[0008]** In another preferred embodiment, the framework defines side wall surfaces between which at least one strap extends under the bottom surface so as to provide additional load-bearing capacity when a corpse is to be supported in the coffin in use. This aspect gives the coffin additional strength, which is desirable in particular when the coffin is being moved.

**[0009]** Said straps are preferably made of jute. Jute is a material which provides sufficient load-bearing capacity and which, in addition, decomposes rapidly and burns well.

**[0010]** In a preferred embodiment, the coffin is provided with an at least partially removable lid comprising a framework provided with a covering that comprises paper. In this way the lid will have the same environmentally friendly properties as the coffin.

**[0011]** Preferably, a layer of cardboard extends over the framework of the lid on the side remote from the braiding. The layer of cardboard has the same function as the cardboard used in the coffin.

**[0012]** The paper of the lid is preferably supported by a supporting layer that extends over the entire lid. As the lid is opened and closed a number of times during the time a body lies in state, or even removed from the coffin to be placed back at a later point in time, it will be advantageous for the lid to have additional strength and to be self-sustaining, especially in the open position.

**[0013]** The supporting layer is preferably made of wood. Wood, and in particular plywood, provides sufficient strength and, in addition, has relatively good biodegradation and combustion properties.

**[0014]** Preferably, the framework of the coffin and/or of the lid comprises wooden slats. Also in this case, wood is chosen because of the biodegradability and combustibility of the material. Generally, softwood slats can be chosen for environmental reasons.

**[0015]** Preferably, the framework of the coffin and/or the lid comprises glued-together finger joints. The use of glue obviates the need to use additional jointing elements, such as nails or staples, which would have an adverse effect on the environmentally friendly nature of the coffin. The finger joint provides a relatively large glueing area, so that a better bond can be obtained.

**[0016]** In another preferred embodiment, the coffin is provided with fittings made of wood or loom. This contributes to the environmentally friendly nature of the coffin.

**[0017]** The present invention will be discussed in more detail below by means of a description of a preferred embodiment of the invention. In the description, reference will be made to the appended schematic figures, in which:

Figure 1a is a perspective view of a coffin according to the present invention;

Figure 1b is a detail view of a braiding pattern that may be used; and

Figure 2 is a cross-sectional view of the coffin of figure 1.

**[0018]** With reference to figure 1a, there is shown a coffin 1 comprising a main coffin part 2 and a lid 3. The shape of the coffin 1 is mainly determined by a wooden framework 4, 5 of the main coffin part 2 and the lid 3, respectively. The wooden slats of the framework 4, 5 are glued together, using finger joints. On the outer side, the framework 4, 5 is covered with a loom braiding 6. Figure 1b shows a braiding pattern for loom, in which an upper edge is formed by six braided strands 6a-6f. From said edge, a weaving pattern of horizontal strands 6g of loom woven into vertical strands 6h of loom extends. The loom material consists of twisted-together strips of paper, in which some air is contained, inherently to the manufacturing process of loom. The iron wire that is usually present inside the loom has been left out as far as the braiding of the main coffin part is concerned. The framework 4, 5 is panelled with cardboard 7 on the inner side, which cardboard comprises a liquid-tight layer (not shown) at the inner side of the main coffin part 2; in this embodiment, the cardboard 7 of the main coffin part 2 is configured as a box folded and glued from a single sheet of cardboard. The cardboard 7 of the main coffin part 2 is provided with markings (not shown) that indicate the pre-drilling positions for various kinds of fittings, such as wooden handles 10, for fixing the wooden handles 10 to the framework 4 of the main coffin part 2. Jute tensioning belts 8 are furthermore fixed to the outer side of the framework 4 of the main coffin part 2, which belts give the main coffin part 2 additional load-bearing capacity. The loom braiding 6 on the lid 3 is supported by a plywood plate 9, which is glued to the framework 5 of the lid 3. Handles 10 are furthermore fixed to the outer side of the main coffin part 2 for carrying the coffin 1. The coffin 1 may furthermore be lined with a textile or other material (not shown) on the inside so as to enhance the appearance of the inside of the coffin. Said lining is preferably made of a material which will rapidly decompose in the ground and which will rapidly combust upon cremation.

**[0019]** With reference to figure 2, a cross-sectional view of the coffin 1 of figure 1 is shown, in which the lid 3 closes the coffin 2. This cross-sectional view clearly shows the various layers of which the coffin 1 is built up as well as the air-rich construction. The inside of the coffin 1 is made up of cardboard 7, which is glued to wooden slats 11, 12 forming the structural elements of the coffin 1. This cross-sectional view shows the finger joints by which the slats 11 are glued together. The bottom 13 of the coffin is made up of cardboard that is glued to the slats 11 on the outer side of said slats 11. At the sides, the main coffin part 2 is provided with a loom braiding on the outer side of the slats 11, 12, which loom braiding is

fixed to the slats. A plywood plate 9 covered with a loom braiding 6 is glued to the outer side of the slats 11 of the lid 3. Air is present between the cardboard 7 and the plywood 9 of the lid, which air is more or less trapped between the two layers 7 and 9. The same applies to the layers of cardboard 7 and 13 of the bottom. On the sides, the presence of the loom braiding 6 enables air to flow freely between the cardboard 7 and the loom braiding 6.

**[0020]** In use, a dead person will lie in state in the main coffin part 2, during which period the lid 3 may be removed from the main coffin part 2 temporarily. Alternatively, the lid 3 may be hinged to the main coffin part 2, for example in that the main coffin part 2 and the lid 3 are joined together by means of loom. Eventually, the dead person will be buried or cremated in the coffin 1. Since the coffin 1 is mainly made up of paper and wood, it will decompose relatively easily after being buried and will not leave any harmful substances in the ground. In the case of cremation, a first advantage of this coffin is that it is made of materials that combust easily and rapidly. Secondly, the meshes in the loom braiding 6 and the air in the loom ensure a good supply of oxygen, so that the combustion process is further accelerated.

**[0021]** Many modifications to the embodiment of a coffin as described above and as shown in the figures are possible without limiting the scope of the present invention beyond the scope that is defined in the appended claims. Thus it is possible, for example, to fit the coffin with metal fittings and handles, which are removed before the coffin is definitively buried or cremated. Furthermore it is possible to use suitable materials other than the aforesaid cardboard and plywood, which materials preferably do not adversely affect the environmentally friendly nature of the coffin.

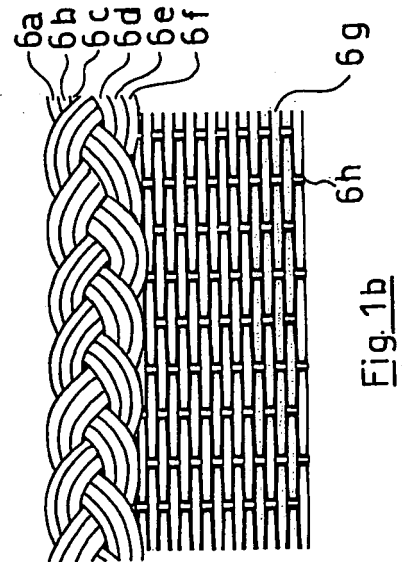
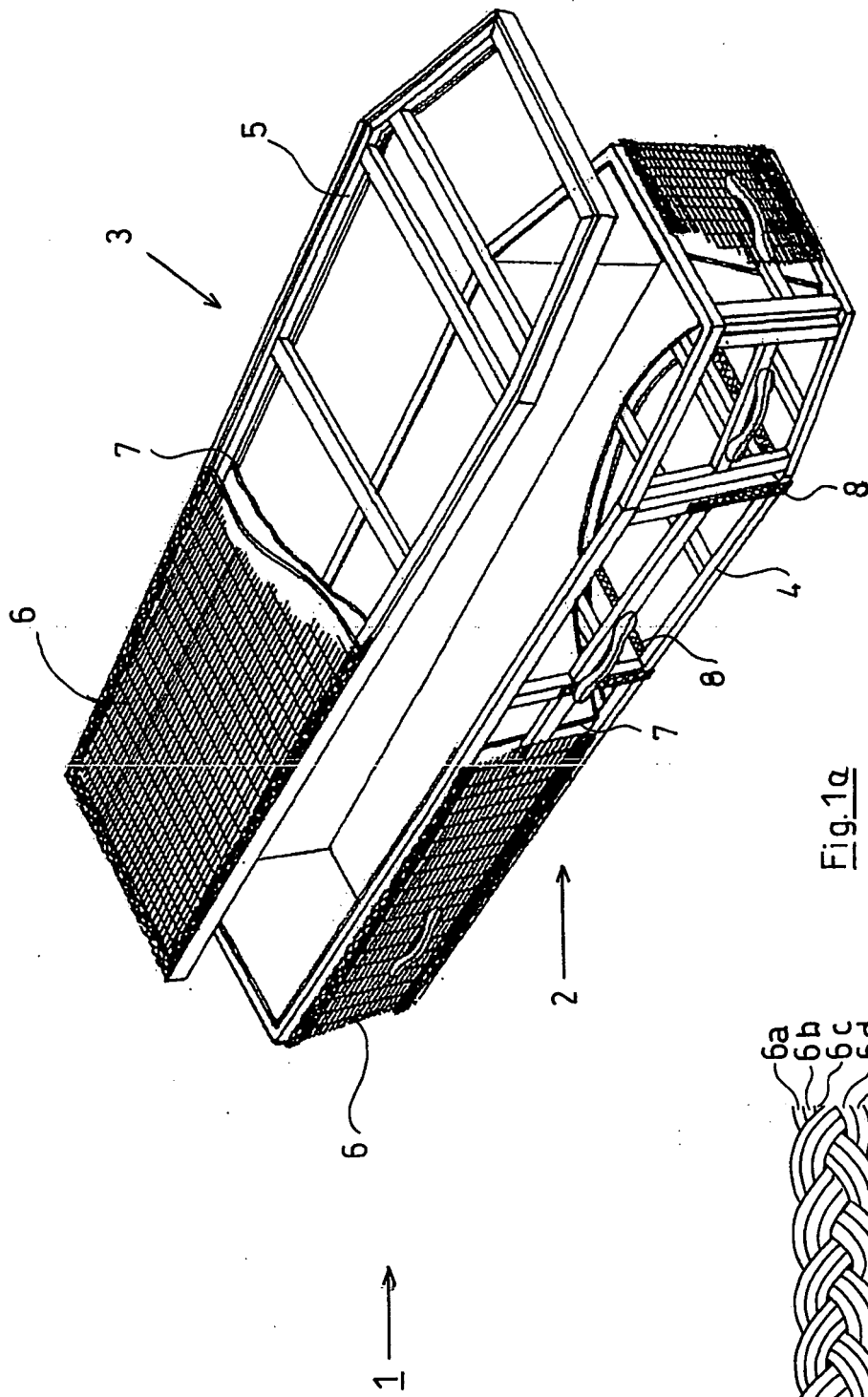
**[0022]** It will be understood that the description and the figures do not have a limitative effect as regards the scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims. Thus, the paper may also be woven into a pattern in another form, such as a straight strips of paper having a high grammage. The loom may be reinforced, for example with iron wire. In this way a stronger but less environmentally friendly product is obtained. Furthermore, various patterns, even decorative patterns, may be used for the braiding.

## Claims

1. A coffin comprising a framework for defining a bottom surface and at least one upright wall surface, wherein at least one wall surface is covered with braiding on the outer side, **characterized in that** said braiding comprises paper.
2. A coffin according to claim 1, **characterized in that** said braiding comprises strands of paper.
3. A coffin according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized in**

**that** a box is provided within the framework, in which box a corpse can be placed in use.

4. A coffin according to claim 3, **characterized in that** said box is made of cardboard. 5
5. A coffin according to claim 3 or 4, **characterized in that** said box is provided with a liquid-tight layer.
6. A coffin according to any one or more of the claims 3-5, **characterized in that** markings that indicate drilling positions for fixing various kinds of fittings are present on the inner side the box. 10
7. A coffin according to any one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the framework defines side wall surfaces between which at least one strap extends under the bottom surface so as to provide additional load-bearing capacity when a corpse is to be supported in the coffin in use. 15  
20
8. A coffin according to claim 7, **characterized in that** said straps are made of jute.
9. A coffin according to any one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the coffin is provided with an at least partially removable lid comprising a framework provided with a covering that comprises paper, preferably in the form of strands of paper, such as loom. 25  
30
10. A coffin according to claim 9, **characterized in that** a layer of cardboard extends over the framework of the lid on the side remote from the braiding. 35
11. A coffin according to claim 9 or 10, **characterized in that** the loom of the lid is supported by a supporting layer that extends over the entire lid.
12. A coffin according to claim 11, **characterized in that** said supporting layer is made of wood. 40
13. A coffin according to any one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the framework of the coffin and/or the lid comprises wooden slats. 45
14. A coffin according to any one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the framework of the coffin and/or the lid comprises glued-together finger joints. 50
15. A coffin according to any one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the coffin is provided with fittings made of wood or loom. 55



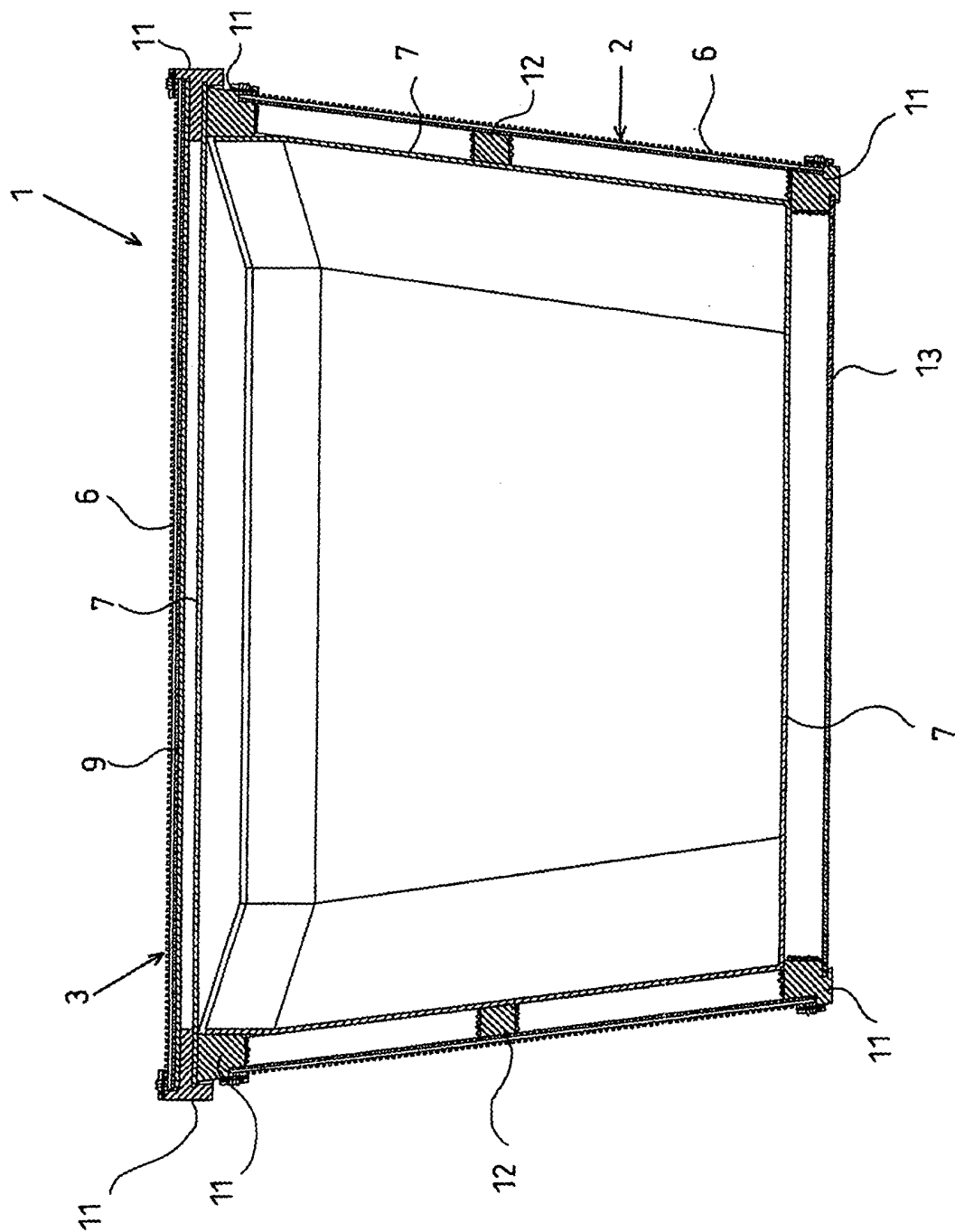


Fig. 2