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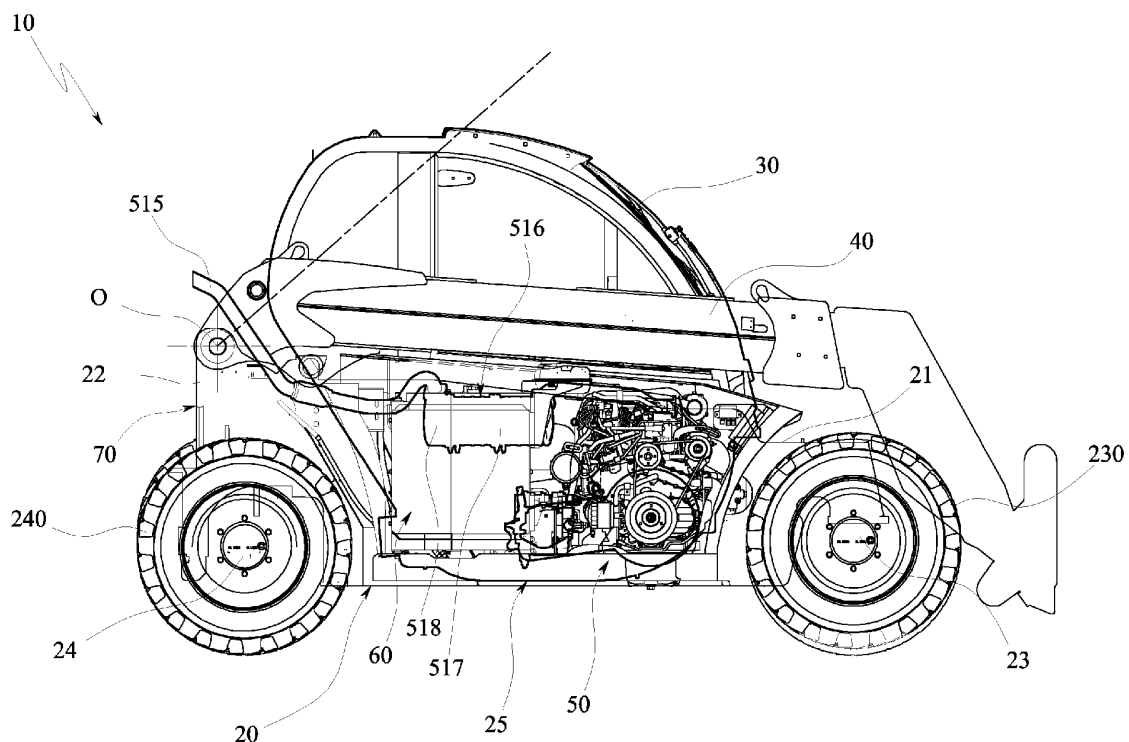
(54) VEHICLE FOR LOAD HANDLING

(57) A vehicle (10) for load handling, which comprises:

- a supporting chassis (20) having a front section (21) provided with a front axle (23) equipped with a pair of front wheels (230) and a rear section (22) provided with a rear axle (24) equipped with a pair of rear wheels (240);
- a load lifting arm (40) articulated to the rear section (22)

of the supporting chassis (20) with the possibility of rotating around at least one swing axis (O) and having a longitudinal axis (B) parallel to a longitudinal axis (A) of the supporting chassis (20); and

- a driver's cab (30) supported by the supporting chassis (20) and positioned on the side of an axial portion of the lifting arm (40).

**FIG.1****EP 3 718 952 A1**

Description**TECHNICAL FIELD**

[0001] The present invention relates to a vehicle for load handling.

[0002] More specifically, the invention relates to a vehicle for load handling equipped with a lifting arm, preferably telescopic, articulated to the supporting chassis of the vehicle, which carries at the front end thereof various types of tools, such as for example a fork, a shovel, an aerial platform or other suitable tool.

PRIOR ART

[0003] As is known, there are vehicles for load handling which generally consist of a supporting chassis supported by four ground-resting wheels, which are equipped with a lifting arm articulated in a rear section of the supporting chassis and equipped with a free end to which one or more tools can be fixed, for example interchangeably.

[0004] The lifting arm develops longitudinally along the longitudinal axis of the vehicle and is flanked by a control and driver's cab of the vehicle, in which the driver and operator of the vehicle can be accommodated.

[0005] A need felt in such known vehicles is to allow the driver and operator of the vehicle to have good visibility, i.e. that this is not hindered by the lifting arm, especially when it is in the lowered position (i.e. the vehicle is in transfer configuration).

[0006] A further requirement in these generally compact vehicles is to optimize the spaces, for example, the spaces inside the engine compartment where the powertrain is accommodated and also allow an increasingly effective cooling of the powertrain.

[0007] Furthermore, a need felt in these vehicles is to allow easy and convenient access, when necessary, to the powertrain located in the engine compartment and to all the operating (hydraulic and/or electric) elements necessary for the correct operation of the vehicle and that are subject to periodic maintenance and overhaul.

[0008] Another need felt for these vehicles is to effectively reduce the exhaust gas emissions of the combustion of the internal combustion engines that equip these engines and, therefore, to make any exhaust gas treatment systems of the engine more and more efficient and so that they can act in the best possible way, that is under conditions of use close to optimal conditions for which they were designed.

[0009] An object of the present invention is to solve the aforementioned needs of the prior art, with a simple, rational and low-cost solution.

[0010] Such purposes are accomplished by the characteristics of the invention given in the independent claim. The dependent claims outline preferred and/or particularly advantageous aspects of the invention.

DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

[0011] The invention particularly makes available a vehicle for load handling which comprises:

- a supporting chassis having a front section provided with a front axle equipped with a pair of front wheels and a rear section provided with a rear axle equipped with a pair of rear wheels;
- a load lifting arm (for example telescopic) articulated to the rear section of the supporting chassis with the possibility of rotating around at least one swing axis (preferably a single swing axis) and having a longitudinal axis parallel to a longitudinal axis of the supporting chassis;
- a driver's cab supported by the supporting chassis and positioned on the side of an axial portion of the lifting arm; and
- a powertrain supported inside an engine compartment of the supporting chassis at least partially positioned vertically below an (respective) axial portion of the lifting arm, wherein the powertrain comprises an engine equipped with a crankshaft positioned with a rotation axis orthogonal to the longitudinal axis of the supporting chassis.

[0012] Thanks to this solution, the requirements of the prior art are met, in particular the engine occupies a limited space in the engine compartment and, therefore, a particularly accessible and functional engine compartment is made available for maintenance interventions and to be able to place inside it the various components useful for the operation of the vehicle.

[0013] In particular, the engine thus arranged occupies a space along the longitudinal axis of the minor vehicle allowing a more effective arrangement of the other powertrain and/or exhaust gas treatment elements inside the engine compartment and allowing an effective cooling of the powertrain.

[0014] According to an advantageous aspect of the invention, the powertrain can comprise a pumping unit equipped with at least one pump equipped with a respective rotary shaft rotatably connected to the engine crankshaft.

[0015] Advantageously, the pumping unit can be positioned on the side of the engine and the rotary shaft of the pump is parallel and eccentric with respect to the engine crankshaft. Thanks to this solution, the arrangement of the pumping unit inside the engine compartment is rational, optimal and easily reachable, or particularly accessible in case of maintenance and/or control of the same.

[0016] Preferably, the vehicle can comprise a transmission device, for example having a 1:1 transmission ratio, which is equipped with an inlet shaft connected to the engine crankshaft and an outlet shaft connected to the rotary shaft of the pump.

[0017] Thanks to this solution, the aforesaid mutual ar-

rangement of the engine and of the pumping unit is optimized and the transfer of the rotary motion of the engine crankshaft to the rotary shaft of the pump is optimized.

[0018] According to a preferred aspect of the invention, the pumping unit can comprise a hydraulic pump and a hydrostatic pump, wherein the rotary shaft of the hydraulic pump is rigidly connected to the rotary shaft of the hydrostatic pump.

[0019] Advantageously, then, the engine compartment can be axially interposed between the front axle and the rear axle, thus allowing an effective distribution of the vehicle spaces. According to an aspect of the invention, the lifting arm can be articulated to the supporting chassis with respect to a single swing axis, that is in practice to be hinged thereto, wherein this swing axis is parallel to the rotation axis of the engine crankshaft. Preferably, but not limited to, the engine may be an internal combustion engine.

[0020] It is not excluded that the engine may be an electric engine in certain applications. According to a further aspect of the invention, when the engine is an internal combustion engine, the vehicle can comprise at least one exhaust gas treatment system of the internal combustion engine placed inside the engine compartment.

[0021] Thanks to this solution, the engine can comply with the strictest emission limits envisaged, and, for example, allow the classification of the engine as STAGE V of the agricultural machinery legislation.

[0022] Advantageously, the exhaust gas treatment system is at least partially positioned vertically below an (respective) axial portion of the lifting arm.

[0023] In practice, this position is optimal, as it does not excessively encumber the engine compartment and allows an effective proximity of the exhaust gas treatment system to the engine itself, which allows an excellent operation thereof, being able to exploit the heat developed by it, useful for efficient operation of the exhaust gas treatment system and for the periodic regeneration thereof.

[0024] Still, according to an advantageous aspect of the invention, the exhaust gas treatment system can comprise at least one catalytic converter and/or one particulate filter. According to an aspect of the invention, the vehicle can comprise a cooling system that delimits a wall of the engine compartment.

[0025] According to a further aspect of the invention, the engine compartment can comprise or delimit an empty volume placed on the side of the engine (for example behind it), wherein the empty volume is substantially equal to the volume occupied by the engine in the engine compartment.

[0026] Thanks to this solution it is possible to maximize the cooling efficiency of the engine with the same performance and consumption of the cooling system.

[0027] In particular, the cooling system is configured to be placed side by side/facing or in any case to put the outside of the engine compartment in communication with the internal empty volume of the same so as to force in it a flow of cooled fluid, for example air, which effectively

floods (from one side) the engine.

[0028] According to an aspect of the invention, the vehicle can comprise a counterweight connected to the rear section of the supporting chassis.

[0029] In this way the load acting on the vehicle's lifting arm is effectively counterbalanced. Advantageously, the counterweight can be hinged to the rear section of the supporting chassis around a swivel axis parallel to the swing axis of the lifting arm with the possibility of oscillating between two different predefined angular end positions.

[0030] Thanks to this solution, access to an inspection compartment located in the supporting chassis is made possible, for example in front of the counterweight itself and, moreover, it is possible - in certain cases where it is necessary - to move the centre of gravity of the counterweight to facilitate the correct position of the same as a function of the load acting on the lifting arm of the vehicle and/or the position of the vehicle and/or of the lifting arm itself.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0031] Further features and advantages of the invention will be more apparent after reading the following description provided by way of non-limiting example, with the aid of the accompanying drawings.

Figure 1 is a schematic side view of a vehicle according to the invention.

Figure 2 is a plan view from above of Figure 1.

Figure 3 is a schematic side view of the outline of the main components of the vehicle according to the invention.

Figure 4 is a plan view from above of Figure 3.

Figure 5 is an axonometric exploded view of the powertrain of the vehicle according to the invention.

Figure 6 is an axonometric rear view of a counterweight of the vehicle according to the invention.

Figure 7 is a side view of the rear section of the vehicle with the counterweight in a first angular closing end position.

Figure 8 is a side view of the rear section of the vehicle with the counterweight in a second angular opening end position.

BEST MODE OF THE INVENTION

[0032] With particular reference to these figures, 10 generally indicates a vehicle, particularly a vehicle for load handling (or a maintenance vehicle).

[0033] The vehicle 10 comprises a supporting chassis 20, which is substantially rigid (i.e. non-deformable with the usual workloads to which it is subjected in operation).

[0034] The supporting chassis 20 has for example an elongated shape along a longitudinal axis A (defining the longitudinal axis of the vehicle 10) and therefore has, at or near a first axial end thereof, a front section 21, and

at or near an opposing second axial end thereof, a rear section 22.

[0035] In the present description, front refers to the portion of the vehicle 10 or the supporting chassis 20 which precedes (that is, it is placed in front) in an advancement direction of the vehicle 10 on the ground in a usual and preferred forward gear and rear refers to the portion of the vehicle 10 or of the supporting chassis 20 which follows (that is, it is placed behind) in an advancement direction of the vehicle 10 on the ground in a usual and preferred forward gear (or that precedes in a reverse gear).

[0036] The supporting chassis 20 carries, in its front section 21, a front axle 23 supporting a front ground-resting unit, for example defined by a pair of front wheels 230. Furthermore, the supporting chassis 20 carries, in its rear section 22, a rear axle 24 supporting a rear ground-resting unit, for example defined by a pair of rear wheels 240. At least one of the pair of front wheels 230 and the pair of rear wheels 240 or both can be steering and/or drive wheels.

[0037] In the present discussion, vertical refers to either the absolute vertical or any direction orthogonal to the plane on which the front wheels 230 and the rear wheels 240 of the vehicle 10 rest. Furthermore, "horizontal" refers herein to either the absolute horizontal or any plane parallel to the plane on which the front wheels 230 and the rear wheels 240 of the vehicle 10 rest.

[0038] The supporting chassis 20 defines, on one side (for example the left side) a support seat, for example open at the top (and axially accommodated between the front axle 21 and the rear axle 22), which is configured to accommodate a driver's cab 30 fixed to the supporting chassis 20 (i.e. to the floor of the support seat of the same), for example through silent-blocks.

[0039] Inside the driver's cab 30, as is known, the driving controls of the vehicle 10 (such as for example the steering wheel supported by the steering column, the brake, clutch and accelerator pedals or others) are arranged in addition to a driver's place equipped with a seating and possibly a backrest, as well as all the commands and the mechanical, electrical, electronic and/or hydraulic control systems for the control and command of all vehicle functions 10 by a driver and vehicle operator 10 placed on board it inside the same driver's cab 30.

[0040] The driver's cab 30 stands above the floor of the support seat for a predetermined height.

[0041] For example, the driver's cab 30 develops in length along the longitudinal axis A of the supporting chassis 20, for example for a limited section with respect to the length of the supporting chassis itself.

[0042] In the illustrated example, the driver's cab 30 is placed behind the front wheel 230 (left) of the side of the supporting chassis 20 on which it is placed and at least partially aligned (vertically) in plan with the rear wheel 240 (left) of the same side of the supporting chassis 20 on which it is placed.

[0043] The driver's cab 30 does not protrude laterally

beyond the external (minimum) dimensions of the front wheels 230 and/or the rear wheels 240.

[0044] Furthermore, the driver's cab 30 develops in width in a (horizontal) direction orthogonal to the longitudinal axis A of the supporting chassis 20 over a width that does not exceed the width of the vehicle 10, that is, the (maximum) wheelbase between the front wheels 230 (and/or the rear wheels 240), preferably the width of the driver's cab 30 is substantially equal to half the width of the vehicle 10 (whereby vehicle width means the distance between the external surface of the front wheels 230 and/or the rear wheels 240). Preferably, the driver's cab 30 is arranged on the supporting chassis 20, so that it is secated by the vertical median plane which contains the longitudinal axis A of the supporting chassis itself (although most of the cab is arranged on one, left, side only of the supporting chassis 20).

[0045] Furthermore, the driver's cab 30 is substantially rigid (and/or stiffened by a roll-bar or other) and at least partially transparent and/or equipped with transparent front/side windows (on both sides) and rear windows.

[0046] On the side of the driver's cab 30, i.e. on the side opposite the vertical median plane of the supporting chassis 20 with respect to the side where the (most of) the same driver's cab 30 is located, the supporting chassis 20 comprises an engine compartment 25 for example delimited by a side wall (bordering on the driver's cab 30, a pair of front walls (a front front wall and a rear front wall, respectively), a lower base wall and an upper base wall.

[0047] The engine compartment 25 is then closed by a lateral door opposed to the aforesaid lateral wall, for example movable for opening and closing the engine compartment 25, for example hinged with respect to one or more hinging (for example horizontal and upper) axes.

[0048] The engine compartment 25 is placed, for example, entirely on the same (right) side of the supporting chassis 20 with respect to the longitudinal vertical median plane of the same.

[0049] Furthermore, the engine compartment 25 develops longitudinally along a longitudinal axis parallel to the longitudinal axis A of the supporting chassis 20, for example for a longitudinal section thereof interposed axially between the front wheel 23 and the rear wheel 24 on the same side.

[0050] The engine compartment 25 defines a predetermined internal empty volume V_0 (delimited by the aforesaid walls).

[0051] The upper wall of the engine compartment 25 is placed at a height (from the ground) lower than the predetermined height defined by the top of the driver's cab 30, in particular it is placed at a height substantially equal to or comparable to the seating height of the driver's seat placed inside the driver's cab 30 (on which the driver and operator of the vehicle 10 can sit).

[0052] Furthermore, the vehicle 10 comprises a load lifting arm 40, which is articulated to the supporting chassis 20, preferably above it, at the rear section 24 of the same.

[0053] The lifting arm 40 is rigid, i.e. non-deformable under bending or twisting under the usual workloads for which it is provided.

[0054] For example, the lifting arm 40 has an elongated shape along a longitudinal axis B parallel to the longitudinal axis A of the supporting chassis 20 (i.e. which lies on a plane parallel to the longitudinal axis A of the supporting chassis itself) and therefore has a rear axial end thereof constrained, as will be better described below, to the rear section 22 of the supporting chassis 20 and an opposed free front axial end, which protrudes for example beyond the front end 21 of the supporting chassis 20.

[0055] Tools of various type, such as a fork tool, a shovel, an aerial platform or other, can be mounted for example, by means of a suitable coupling, individually and selectively to the free front axial end of the lifting arm 40.

[0056] The lifting arm 40 is, for example, extensible, in a general direction, that is, it can be capable of extending its length, i.e. it can alternatively be actuated between a contracted configuration and an extended configuration, for example in a telescopic way, as is known to the person skilled in the art, having two or more sections telescopically coupled together, for example driven in extension and contraction by special (internal) cylinders.

[0057] The rear axial end of the lifting arm 40 (i.e. of the first section thereof) is articulated to the rear section 22 of the supporting chassis 20 (for example above it) so as to be able to swing with respect thereto around a (single) swing axis O, which is (always) orthogonal to the longitudinal axis A of the supporting chassis 20 (and therefore to the longitudinal axis of the lifting arm 40 itself) and, for example, it is horizontal.

[0058] In practice, the rear axial end of the lifting arm 40 is hinged to the rear section 22 of the supporting chassis 20 by means of a hinge pin defining said swing axis O.

[0059] The lifting arm 40 can be rotated around its swing axis O between two distinct end positions, of which:

- a first lower resting position (see Figures), wherein the lifting arm 40 is arranged with a substantially horizontal longitudinal axis B (in particular slightly inclined by a negative angle with respect to the horizontal plane, so that the front axial end is at a lower height than the rear axial end); and
- a second upper operating position (not shown in the Figures), wherein the lifting arm 40 is arranged with a longitudinal axis B substantially inclined with respect to the horizontal one, that is, forming therewith a preferably acute (non zero) inclination angle.

[0060] The vehicle 10 further comprises a drive unit configured to rotate the lifting arm 40 around its swing axis O between the two distinct end positions (and any intermediate position therebetween).

[0061] The drive unit comprises a first hydraulic jack, equipped with a rod slidingly movable inside a cylinder, in which the rod in the example is hinged to the supporting chassis around a hinging axis parallel and eccentric to

the swing axis O and the cylinder is hinged to (the first section of) the lifting arm 40 about a hinging axis parallel and eccentric to the swing axis O.

[0062] The drive unit comprises a respective hydraulic circuit, for example at least partially contained in the rear section 22 of the supporting chassis 20 enclosed in a special inspection compartment, for actuating the first hydraulic jack, between an extended configuration, in which the rod is in a position extracted from the cylinder, and a retracted configuration. The variation of the first hydraulic jack between the extended configuration and the retracted configuration allows the rotation of the lifting arm 40 as a whole with respect to the supporting chassis 10 between the second upper position and the first lower position thereof, respectively.

[0063] The lifting arm 40 is arranged on the side of the driver's cab 30, in practice the lifting arm 40 is placed on the opposite side with respect to the vertical median plane of the supporting chassis 20 with respect to the side where the (most of) the driver's cab 30 is located.

[0064] In particular, the lifting arm 40 is at least partially superimposed in plan (vertically) on the engine compartment 25, i.e. it is arranged at least partially above the upper wall thereof.

[0065] In particular, at least an axial section (intermediate, i.e. interposed between its rear axial end and its front axial end) of the lifting arm 40 is at least partially superimposed in plan (vertically) on the engine compartment 25 (when this is in its first lower position).

[0066] When the lifting arm 40 is in its first lower position, its upper end does not exceed in height the height of the backrest of the driver's seat, i.e. it does not obstruct the lateral view for the driver and operator of the vehicle 10 that occupies the driver's seat.

[0067] The lifting arm 40 extends in width in a (horizontal) direction orthogonal to the longitudinal axis A of the supporting chassis 20 over a width that does not exceed the width of the vehicle 10, i.e. the (maximum) wheelbase between the front wheels 230 (and/or the rear wheels 240), preferably the width of the lifting arm 40 is smaller than the distance between the longitudinal vertical median plane of the supporting chassis 20 and (the inner flank of) the front wheels 230 (and/or the rear wheels 240) of the (right) side which contains the lifting arm 40, more preferably (slightly) smaller than the distance between the cab wall proximal to the longitudinal vertical median plane of the supporting chassis 20 and (the inner flank of) the front wheels 230 (and/or the rear wheels 240) of the (right) side which contains the lifting arm 40.

[0068] The lifting arm 40, in its contracted configuration (and without tools attached thereto), has a length that (little) exceeds the length of the supporting chassis 20.

[0069] Alternatively, it is not excluded that the (only) front axial end of the lifting arm 40, in its contracted configuration (and without tools attached thereto), may protrude axially anteriorly with respect to the supporting chassis 20 (and to the front wheels 23).

[0070] The vehicle 10 comprises a powertrain 50, which is arranged inside the engine compartment 25 of the supporting chassis 20 and fixed to/supported by the supporting chassis 20 itself.

[0071] The powertrain 50 comprises in particular an engine 51, preferably an internal combustion engine.

[0072] In the example, the engine 51 is a diesel or gasoline, preferably diesel, engine, for example with three cylinders.

[0073] The engine 51 comprises a crankcase and a crankshaft 510, a free end of which comes out of the crankcase, which crankshaft 510 rotates around a central rotation axis R1.

[0074] The engine 51 is arranged in the engine compartment 25 with the rotation axis R1 of its crankshaft 510 preferably inclined with respect to the longitudinal axis A of the supporting chassis 20, particularly orthogonal to the longitudinal axis A of the supporting chassis 20 itself.

[0075] Into more detail, the rotation axis R1 of the crankshaft 510 of the engine 51 is orthogonal to the longitudinal vertical median plane of the supporting chassis 20 (i.e. of the vehicle 10).

[0076] In other words, the rotation axis R1 of the crankshaft 510 of the engine 51 is parallel (and eccentric) to the swing axis O of the lifting arm 40.

[0077] In a preferred embodiment, the engine 51 is arranged inside the engine compartment 25 in a front area thereof, i.e. proximal to the front section 21 of the supporting chassis 20, preferably arranged on the same (front) part with respect to a vertical transverse median plane (i.e. orthogonal to the longitudinal axis A) of the supporting chassis 20. The engine 51 has a volumetric encumbrance or overall volume V_m smaller than the internal volume V_0 of the engine compartment 25, preferably smaller than half of the internal volume V_0 of the engine compartment 25.

[0078] The engine 51 as a whole is at least partially placed vertically below the lifting arm 40, i.e. placed below its vertical projection on the horizontal plane.

[0079] In the illustrated example, the projection on the horizontal plane of the engine 51 is intersected/overlaps with the projection on the same horizontal plane of the lifting arm 40, in particular a percentage comprised between 20% and 50%, preferably less than 40%, of the projection on the horizontal plane of the engine 51, overlaps with the projection on the same horizontal plane of the lifting arm 40.

[0080] The crankshaft 510 of the engine 51 has a power take-off (at one end thereof) which comes out of the engine crankcase and is turned towards the longitudinal vertical median plane of the supporting chassis 20 (for example, at a non zero distance therefrom). The powertrain 50 further comprises a hydrostatic pump 52.

[0081] The hydrostatic pump 52 is configured to control the transmission of the vehicle 10, i.e. the rotation of the front wheels 230 and/or the rear wheels 240, as is known to the person skilled in the art.

[0082] The hydrostatic pump 52 comprises a crankcase and a rotary shaft 520, the free ends of which, an inlet end and an outlet end thereof, are accessible from the outside from the crankcase, which rotary shaft 520 rotates around a central rotation axis R2.

[0083] The hydrostatic pump 52 is arranged in the engine compartment 25 with the rotation axis R2 of its rotary shaft 520 preferably inclined with respect to the longitudinal axis A of the supporting chassis 20, particularly orthogonal to the longitudinal axis A of the supporting chassis 20 itself.

[0084] Into more detail, the rotation axis R2 of the rotary shaft 520 of the hydrostatic pump 52 is orthogonal to the longitudinal vertical median plane of the supporting chassis 20 (or of the vehicle 10).

[0085] Preferably, the rotation axis R2 of the rotary shaft 520 of the hydrostatic pump 52 is parallel and eccentric with respect to the rotation axis R1 of the crankshaft 510 of the engine 51.

[0086] The rotary shaft 520 of the hydrostatic pump 52 has its free inlet end turned towards the longitudinal vertical median plane of the supporting chassis 20 (for example, at a non zero distance therefrom), preferably substantially lying on a plane (parallel to the aforesaid longitudinal vertical median plane) on which also the power take-off of the crankshaft 510 of the engine 51 lies.

[0087] In a preferred embodiment, the hydrostatic pump 52 is arranged inside the engine compartment 25 in a median area thereof, i.e. at the rear of the engine 51, preferably secated (ideally) by the vertical transverse median plane (i.e. orthogonal to the longitudinal axis A) of the supporting chassis 20 or arranged for the most part on the same front part (with respect to this vertical transverse median plane) in which the engine 51 is placed.

[0088] The hydrostatic pump 52 has a volumetric encumbrance or overall volume V_{p1} smaller than the internal volume V_0 of the engine compartment 25, preferably smaller than a quarter of the volume V_m of the engine 51.

[0089] The hydrostatic pump 52 as a whole is at least partially placed vertically below the lifting arm 40, i.e. placed below its vertical projection on the horizontal plane.

[0090] In the illustrated example, the projection on the horizontal plane of the hydrostatic pump 52 is intersected/overlaps with the projection on the same horizontal plane of the lifting arm 40, in particular a percentage comprised between 60% and 100%, preferably comprised between 80% and 90 % of the projection on the horizontal plane of the hydrostatic pump 52 overlaps with the projection on the same horizontal plane of the lifting arm 40.

[0091] The hydrostatic pump 52, i.e. its rotary shaft 520, takes the rotary motion from the engine 51, i.e. from the crankshaft 510 of the same, as will be better described below. The powertrain 50 further comprises a hydraulic pump 53.

[0092] The hydraulic pump 53 is configured to control the actuation of the hydraulic circuit of the drive unit (of

the swing of the lifting arm 40) and/or the hydraulic circuits of the cylinders for actuating the extension of the lifting arm 40 (not shown as they are of a known type).

[0093] The hydraulic pump 53 comprises a crankcase and a rotary shaft 530, a free end of which, i.e. an inlet end, is accessible from the outside from the crankcase, which rotary shaft 530 rotates around a central rotation axis R3.

[0094] The hydraulic pump 53 is arranged in the engine compartment 25 with the rotation axis R3 of its rotary shaft 530 preferably inclined with respect to the longitudinal axis A of the supporting chassis 20, particularly orthogonal to the longitudinal axis A of the supporting chassis 20 itself.

[0095] Into more detail, the rotation axis R3 of the rotary shaft 530 of the hydraulic pump 53 is orthogonal to the longitudinal vertical median plane of the supporting chassis 20 (i.e. of the vehicle 10).

[0096] Preferably, the rotation axis R3 of the rotary shaft 530 of the hydraulic pump 53 is parallel and eccentric with respect to the rotation axis R1 of the crankshaft 510 of the engine 51.

[0097] In greater detail, the rotation axis R3 of the rotary shaft 530 of the hydraulic pump 53 is coaxial with the rotation axis R2 of the rotary shaft 520 of the hydrostatic pump 52.

[0098] The rotary shaft 530 of the hydraulic pump 53 has its free inlet end turned towards the longitudinal vertical median plane of the supporting chassis 20 (for example, at a non zero distance therefrom).

[0099] In a preferred embodiment, the hydraulic pump 53 is arranged inside the engine compartment 25 in a median area thereof, i.e. at the rear of the engine 51, preferably secated (ideally) by the vertical transverse median plane (i.e. orthogonal to the longitudinal axis A) of the supporting chassis 20 or arranged for the most part on the same front part (with respect to this vertical transverse median plane) in which the engine 51 is placed.

[0100] The hydraulic pump 53 has a volumetric encumbrance or overall volume V_{p2} smaller than the internal volume V_0 of the engine compartment 25, preferably smaller than a quarter of the volume V_m of the engine 51 (substantially equal to or smaller than the volume V_{p1} of the hydrostatic pump 52).

[0101] The hydraulic pump 53 as a whole is at least partially misaligned in (vertical) plan with respect to the lifting arm 40, i.e. it is (totally) external with respect to its projection on the horizontal plane.

[0102] The hydraulic pump 53, i.e. its rotary shaft 530, takes the rotary motion from the engine 51, or from the crankshaft 510 of the same, as will be better described below.

[0103] Into more detail, the hydraulic pump 53, i.e. its rotary shaft 530, takes the rotary motion from the rotary shaft 520 of the hydrostatic pump 52 (i.e. they are connected directly in line).

[0104] In particular, the free inlet end of the rotary shaft 530 of the hydraulic pump 53 is directly connected (en-

gaged) with the free outlet end of the rotary shaft 520 of the hydrostatic pump 52.

[0105] The powertrain 50 further comprises a transmission device 54, which is configured to transfer the rotary motion of the crankshaft 510 of the engine 51 to the rotary shafts 520 and 530 of the pumps, i.e. to the rotary shaft 520 of the hydrostatic pump 52.

[0106] The transmission device 54 has, for example, a 1:1 transmission ratio, i.e. the rotation speed of the rotary shafts 520 and 530 is equal to the rotation speed of the crankshaft 510.

[0107] The transmission device 54 comprises a box-shaped crankcase inside which two kinematically coupled rolling elements are rotatably associated, such as for example two (or more) gears or two toothed pulleys/crowns connected by means of a flexible member (belt or chain or similar).

[0108] In practice, the transmission device 54 comprises an inlet shaft, keyed on one of the two rolling elements, which is accessible from the outside of the box-shaped crankcase and is adapted to be connected (rigidly, i.e. engaged) to the crankshaft 510 of the engine 51 and an outlet shaft, keyed on the other one of the two rolling elements, which is accessible from the outside of the box-shaped crankcase and is adapted to be connected to the rotary shaft 520 of the hydrostatic pump 52.

[0109] In practice, the inlet shaft (female or male) and the outlet shaft (female or male) are parallel and eccentric between them and distant by a distance equal to the distance between the rotation axis R1 and the rotation axis R2.

[0110] In practice, the rolling elements are rotatably coupled to the box-shaped crankcase with respect to respective rotation axes, each of which is coaxial to one of the rotation axis R1 and the rotation axis R2.

[0111] The transmission device 54 has an overall limited axial encumbrance, i.e. in the direction parallel to the rotation axis of the rolling elements of the same, for example smaller than (or equal to) the axial length of the hydraulic pump 53.

[0112] The engine 54 has a volumetric encumbrance or overall volume V_t smaller than the internal volume V_0 of the engine compartment 25, preferably smaller than an eighth of the internal volume V_0 of the engine compartment 25.

[0113] The volume encumbrance or overall volume V_{tot} of the powertrain 50 is given by the sum of the volume V_m of the engine 51, of the volume V_{p1} of the hydrostatic pump 52, of the volume V_{p2} of the hydraulic pump 53 and, possibly, of the volume V_t of the transmission device 54.

[0114] Preferably, the overall volume V_{tot} of the powertrain 50 is smaller than the internal volume V_0 of the engine compartment 25, preferably smaller than or equal to (or in any case comparable) to half of the internal volume V_0 of the engine compartment 25.

[0115] In practice, the powertrain 50 as a whole occupies a front half of the engine compartment 25 (or in any

case most of it is located in the front half of the engine compartment 25, arranged in front of the vertical transverse median plane of the supporting chassis 20.

[0116] The engine 51 comprises a system for the discharge of the combustion exhaust gases, which comprises an exhaust manifold (which connects to the combustion chamber of each cylinder of the engine 51) and which connects to a longitudinal exhaust pipe 515, the (only) free end portion thereof comes out of the engine compartment 25, for example in a rear (and raised) area thereof, through a special opening made therein.

[0117] The longitudinal development of the exhaust pipe 515 is mainly parallel or substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis A of the supporting chassis 20.

[0118] The exhaust system also comprises an exhaust gas treatment system 516 of the engine 51, which is configured to vary (chemically and/or mechanically) the composition of the exhaust gases, for example through filtrations and/or oxidation reactions and/or reduction of the same.

[0119] The exhaust gas treatment system 516, as a whole, is arranged inside the engine compartment 25, for example interposed between the exhaust manifold (downstream of this in the direction of flow of the exhaust gases from the combustion chambers towards the free end portion of the exhaust pipe 515) and the exhaust pipe 515 itself.

[0120] Preferably, the exhaust gas treatment system 516 (as a whole or one or more of its components) is placed near the engine 51, i.e. the exhaust manifold thereof, preferably closer to the engine than it is to the free end portion of the exhaust pipe 515.

[0121] In the example, the exhaust gas treatment system 516 comprises a catalytic converter 517, for example a Diesel Oxidation Catalyst (DOC) and/or a Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR).

[0122] Furthermore, the exhaust gas treatment system 516 can comprise a particulate filter 518 (DPF), which is for example placed downstream of the catalytic converter 517, for example substantially adjacent thereto.

[0123] The exhaust gas treatment system 516 could be enclosed in a single box-like casing which contains the catalytic converter 517 and the particulate filter 518.

[0124] The exhaust gas treatment system 516, i.e. the box-like casing thereof, has an elongated shape with a longitudinal axis, which can be substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis A of the supporting chassis 20 or inclined with respect thereto, for example by an acute or right angle, in the illustrated example preferably by an acute angle comprised between 5° and 30°, preferably equal to 12°.

[0125] The exhaust gas treatment system 516 has a volumetric encumbrance or overall volume V_s (given by the volumetric encumbrance of the catalytic converter 517 and of the particulate filter 518) smaller than the internal volume V_0 of the engine compartment 25, preferably smaller than an eighth of the internal volume V_0 of the engine compartment 25.

[0126] For example, the volume V_s of the exhaust gas treatment system 516 is substantially equal to the sum of the volume V_{p1} of the hydrostatic pump 52 and the volume V_{p2} of the hydraulic pump 53.

[0127] The exhaust gas treatment system 516 as a whole is at least partially placed vertically below the lifting arm 40, i.e. placed below its vertical projection on the horizontal plane.

[0128] In the illustrated example, the projection on the horizontal plane of the exhaust gas treatment system 516 is intersected/overlaps with the projection on the same horizontal plane of the lifting arm 40, in particular a percentage comprised between 40% and 100%, preferably comprised between 80% and 90% of the exhaust gas treatment system 516 overlaps with the projection on the same horizontal plane of the lifting arm 40.

[0129] Furthermore, the exhaust gas treatment system 516 as a whole is at least partially placed vertically above at least one portion of the powertrain 50, in the example of one or both pumps, preferably of the hydrostatic pump 52, i.e. the vertical projection on the horizontal plane of the exhaust gas treatment system 516 intersects with the vertical projection on the same horizontal plane of the powertrain 50, i.e. of one or both pumps, preferably of the hydrostatic pump 52.

[0130] Still, in a preferred embodiment, the exhaust gas treatment system 516 is arranged inside the engine compartment 25 in a rear area of the engine compartment 25 which is at the rear (for the most part) of the powertrain 50, i.e. to the engine 51 of the same, i.e. proximal to the rear section 22 of the supporting chassis 20, preferably arranged on the same (rear) part with respect to a vertical transverse median plane (i.e. orthogonal to the longitudinal axis A) of the supporting chassis 20 or secated by it near a front end of the same.

[0131] The exhaust gas treatment system 516 is placed in the aforesaid rear area in an upper area, i.e. proximal to the upper base wall of the engine compartment 25 (for example with a substantially horizontal longitudinal axis).

[0132] The internal volume V_0 of the engine compartment 25 is occupied, in essence, by the overall volume V_{tot} of the powertrain 50 and by the volume V_s of the exhaust gas treatment system 516, leaving a volume V_L empty (free, i.e. not occupied), which is substantially given by the following relationship:

$$V_L = V_0 - V_{tot} - V_s.$$

[0133] The free, i.e. not occupied, volume V_L of the engine compartment 25 is mostly (or totally) located next to the engine 51 (and/or the powertrain 50), preferably at the rear thereof.

[0134] In particular, the free, i.e. not occupied, volume V_L of the engine compartment 25 is located in a rear area of the engine compartment 25 which is at the rear (for the most part) of the powertrain 50, i.e. to the engine 51

of the same, i.e. proximal to the rear section 22 of the supporting chassis 20, preferably arranged on the same (rear) part with respect to a vertical transverse median plane (i.e. orthogonal to the longitudinal axis A) of the supporting chassis 20.

[0135] The vehicle 10 further comprises a cooling system 60 configured to cool the powertrain 50, for example the engine 51, and/or the exhaust system.

[0136] The cooling system 60 is arranged inside the engine compartment 25 and communicates with the outside thereof, for example through slits, openings or grids made in one of its delimitation walls, preferably in the side door of the same.

[0137] The cooling system 60 is arranged on a support which is rotatable around a rotation axis which is substantially vertical, for example placed at the rear near a rear wall of the engine compartment 25.

[0138] The cooling system 60 comprises one or more heat exchangers and one or more cooling fans.

[0139] The cooling system 60 is placed in a rear area of the engine compartment 25 which is at the rear (for the most part) of the powertrain 50, i.e. to the engine 51 of the same, i.e. proximal to the rear section 22 of the supporting chassis 20, preferably arranged on the same (rear) part with respect to a vertical transverse median plane (i.e. orthogonal to the longitudinal axis A) of the supporting chassis 20.

[0140] In practice, the cooling system 60 laterally flanks the free volume V_1 of the engine compartment 25, so as to push a flow of cooled air into it, such as to effectively flood the powertrain 50 and/or the exhaust system enclosed in the engine compartment 25 for cooling thereof.

[0141] In the rear section 22 of the supporting chassis 20, the vehicle 10 comprises a counterweight 70 (or ballast), which is configured to counterbalance the imbalance due to the loads on the lifting arm 40.

[0142] The counterweight 70, for example, is defined by a shaped body 71, for example as a rounded plate, preferably made of a material with a high specific weight, such as a metal, preferably cast iron.

[0143] The counterweight 70 has a predetermined weight, for example substantially comprised between 200 kg and 280 kg, preferably comprised between 210 kg and 230 kg, for example substantially equal to 220 kg.

[0144] The counterweight 70 defines, as a whole, a rear wall of the vehicle 10 and is anchored to the rear section 22 of the supporting chassis 20.

[0145] The counterweight 70, i.e. the shaped body 71 of the same, comprises for example seats 72 within which the headlights or rear lights of the vehicle 10 are arranged and, for example, the license plate holder 73 of the vehicle 10 can be fixed to the counterweight 70, i.e. in the external face of the shaped body 71 turned rearwards.

[0146] The counterweight 70 comprises a centre of gravity centered on the shaped body 70, that is, it belongs to a vertical median plane of the same coinciding with the longitudinal vertical median plane of the supporting

chassis 20.

[0147] According to an aspect of the invention, the counterweight 70 is articulated to the rear section 22 of the supporting chassis 20, for example with respect to at least one articulation axis Z.

[0148] In a preferred embodiment, the counterweight 70 is hinged to the rear section 22 of the supporting chassis 20, so as to be able to swing around a (single) articulation axis Z, which is orthogonal to the longitudinal vertical median plane of the supporting chassis 20 (i.e. of the vehicle 10).

[0149] Preferably, this articulation axis Z is parallel and eccentric to the swing axis O of the lifting arm 40 and placed below it.

[0150] Advantageously, the articulation axis Z is placed near a lower end of the counterweight 70, i.e. of the shaped body 71 which defines it, preferably below the level at which the centre of gravity of the counterweight itself is placed.

[0151] The counterweight 70, therefore, has the possibility of swinging between two different predefined angular end positions, of which a first angular closing position - in which the upper end of the counterweight 70 posteriorly rests against the rear portion 22 of the supporting chassis 20 - and a second angular opening position - in which the upper end of the counterweight 70 is posteriorly detached from the rear portion 22 of the supporting chassis 20 (i.e. the counterweight 70 is tipped over backwards) -.

[0152] For example, in the first angular closing position the centre of gravity of the counterweight is vertically aligned with the articulation axis Z of the counterweight itself.

[0153] The angular travel of the counterweight 70 between the first angular closing position and the second angular opening position is equal to an acute (non zero) angle, for example smaller than 20° , preferably equal to 13° .

[0154] The rear section 22 of the supporting chassis 20 comprises fastening means, for example brackets and threaded or stationary fastening members, adapted to temporarily block the counterweight 70 in at least one of the first angular closing position and the second angular opening position.

[0155] Preferably, the rear section 22 of the supporting chassis 20 comprises brackets and threaded fastening elements adapted to block the counterweight 70 in the first angular closing position in a resolvable way and a mechanical stop (on which the counterweight

[0156] 70 stably rests under the effect of the weight force only) to stop the counterweight 70 in the second angular opening position.

[0157] When the counterweight 70 is in its first angular closing position, it closes the aforesaid inspection compartment, when - on the other hand - it is in its second angular opening position, it opens the aforesaid inspection compartment and makes it accessible from the outside of the vehicle 10, creating an interspace turned up-

wards between the upper end of the counterweight 70 and the rear section 22 of the supporting chassis 20, thereby allowing access - for maintenance or the like, to the hydraulic circuit contained in the inspection compartment.

[0158] The counterweight 70 is for example contained between the rear wheels 240 and actually defines a part of the rear hull (bumper) of the vehicle 10.

[0159] The invention thus conceived is susceptible to several modifications and variations, all falling within the scope of the inventive concept.

[0160] Moreover, all the details can be replaced by other technically equivalent elements.

[0161] In practice, the materials used, as well as the contingent shapes and sizes, can be whatever according to the requirements without for this reason departing from the scope of protection of the following claims.

Claims

1. A vehicle (10) for load handling, which comprises:

- a supporting chassis (20) having a front section (21) provided with a front axle (23) equipped with a pair of front wheels (230) and a rear section (22) provided with a rear axle (24) equipped with a pair of rear wheels (240);
- a load lifting arm (40) articulated to the rear section (22) of the supporting chassis (20) with the possibility of rotating around at least one swing axis (O) and having a longitudinal axis (B) parallel to a longitudinal axis (A) of the supporting chassis (20);
- a driver's cab (30) supported by the supporting chassis (20) and positioned on the side of an axial portion of the lifting arm (40); and
- a powertrain (50) supported inside an engine compartment (25) of the supporting chassis (20) at least partially positioned vertically below an axial portion of the lifting arm (40), wherein the powertrain (50) comprises an engine (51) equipped with a crankshaft (510) positioned with a rotation axis (R1) orthogonal to the longitudinal axis (A) of the supporting chassis (20).

2. The vehicle according to claim 1, wherein the powertrain comprises a pumping unit equipped with at least one pump equipped with a respective rotary shaft rotatably connected to the engine crankshaft.

3. The vehicle according to claim 2, wherein the pumping unit is positioned on the side of the engine and wherein the rotary shaft of the pump is parallel and eccentric with respect to the engine crankshaft.

4. The vehicle according to claim 3, which comprises a transmission device equipped with an input shaft

connected to the engine crankshaft and an output shaft connected to the rotary shaft of the pump.

5. The vehicle according to claim 2, wherein the pumping unit comprises a hydraulic pump and a hydrostatic pump, wherein the rotary shaft of the hydraulic pump is rigidly connected to the rotary shaft of the hydrostatic pump.

6. The vehicle according to claim 1, wherein the engine compartment is axially interposed between the front axle and the rear axle.

7. The vehicle according to claim 1, wherein the lifting arm is articulated to the supporting chassis with respect to a single swing axis parallel to the rotation axis of the engine crankshaft.

8. The vehicle according to claim 1, wherein the engine is an internal combustion engine.

9. The vehicle according to claim 1, which comprises at least one exhaust gas treatment system of the internal combustion engine placed inside the engine compartment.

10. The vehicle according to claim 9, wherein the exhaust gas treatment system is at least partially positioned vertically below an axial portion of the lifting arm.

11. The vehicle according to claim 9, wherein the exhaust gas treatment system comprises at least one catalytic converter and one particulate filter.

12. The vehicle according to claim 1, wherein the engine compartment comprises an empty volume placed on the side of the engine, wherein the empty volume is substantially equal to the volume occupied by the engine in the engine compartment.

13. The vehicle according to claim 1, which comprises a cooling system that delimits a wall of the engine compartment.

14. The vehicle according to claim 1, wherein a counterweight is connected to the rear section of the supporting chassis.

15. The vehicle according to claim 12, wherein the counterweight is hinged to the rear section of the supporting chassis around a swivel axis parallel to the swing axis of the lifting arm with the possibility of oscillating between two different predefined angular end positions.

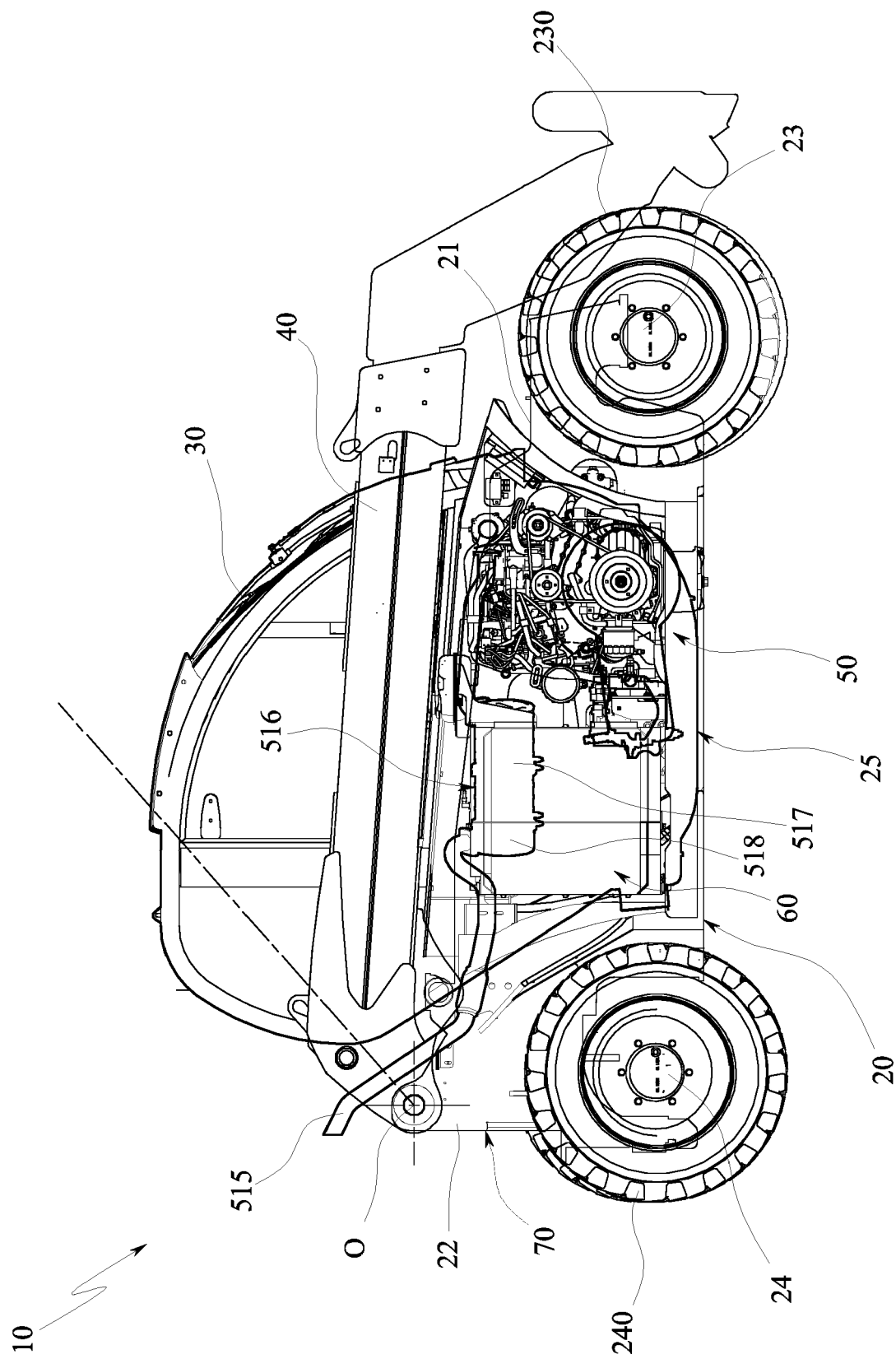


FIG.1

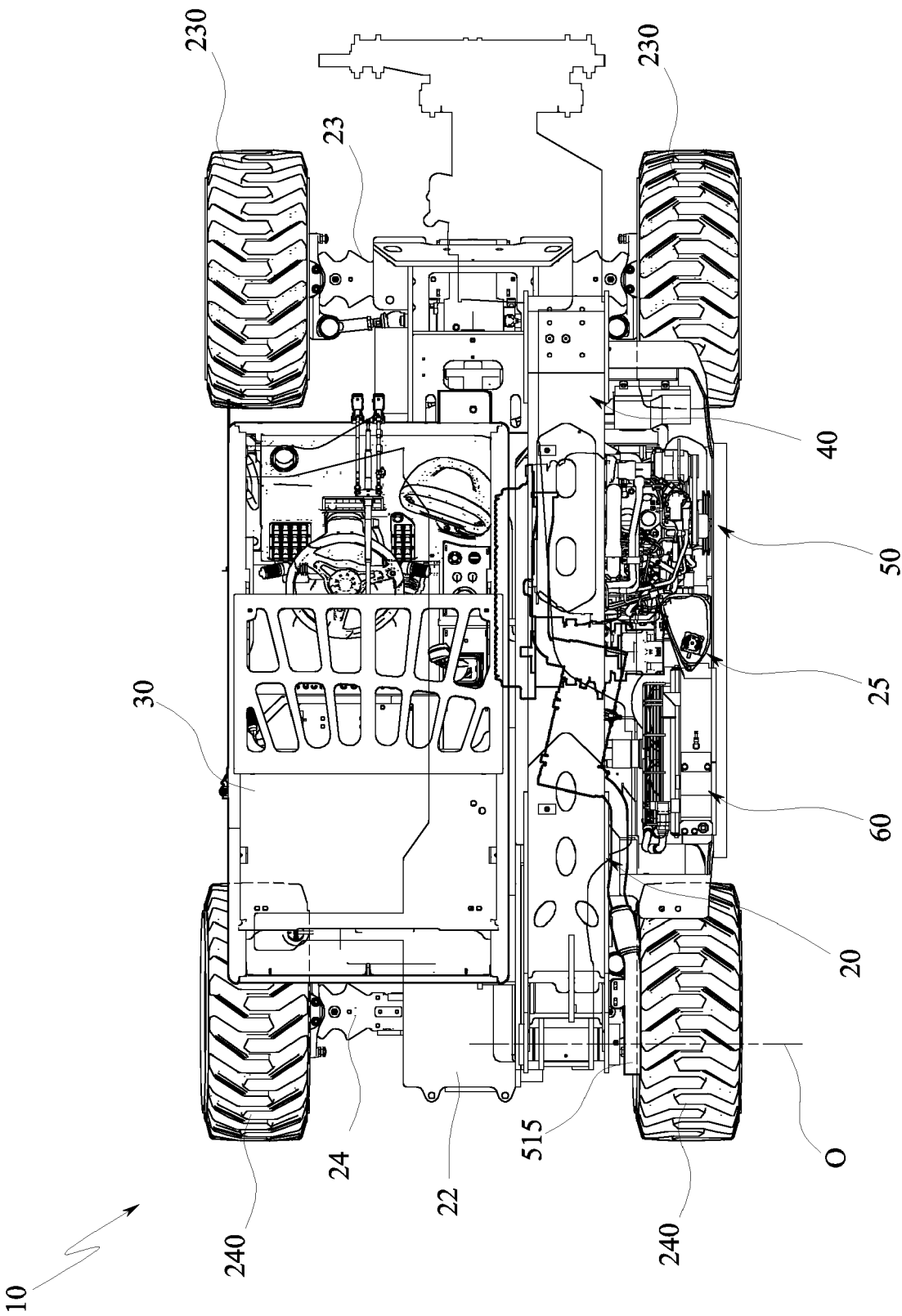


FIG.2

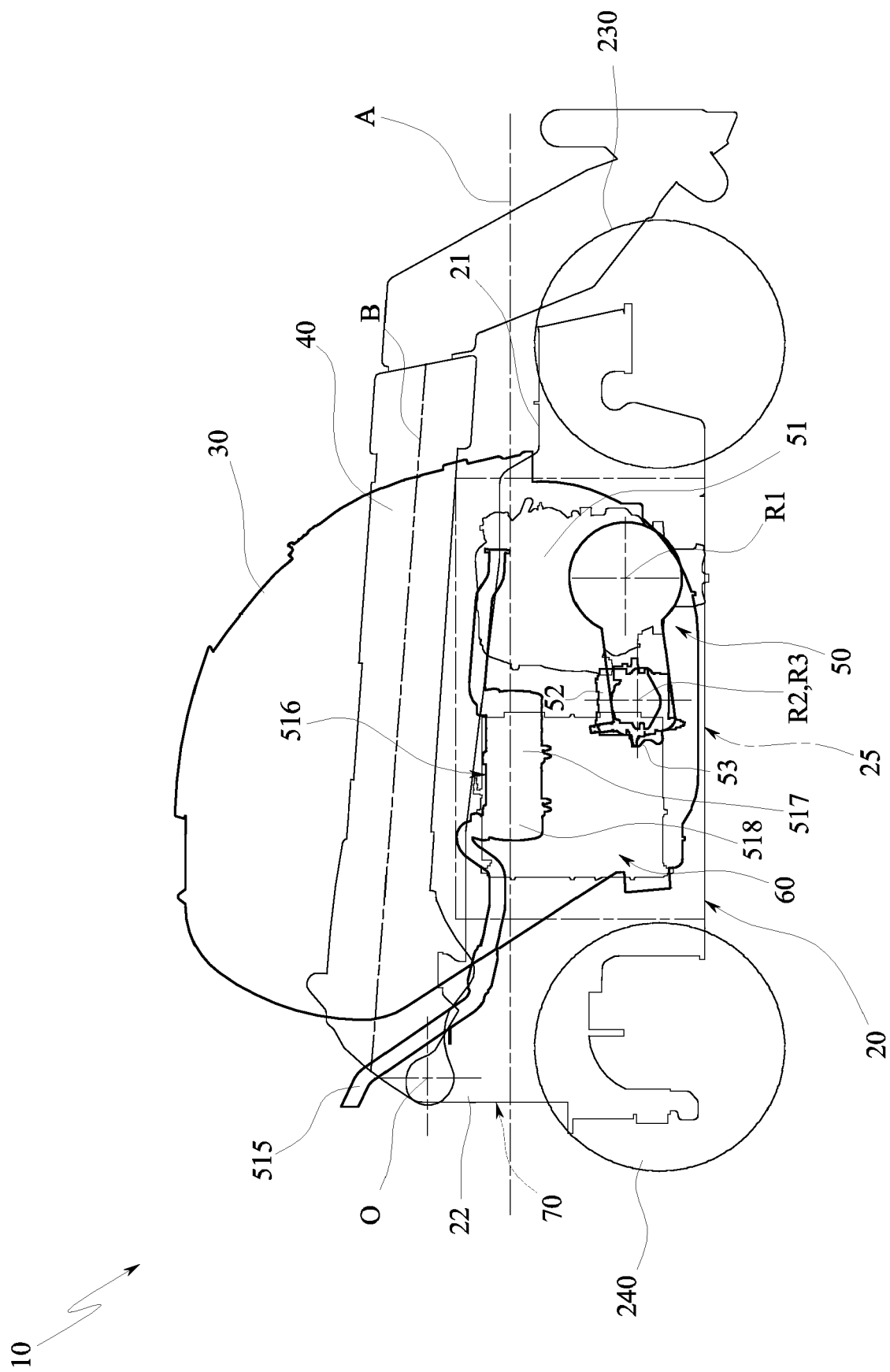
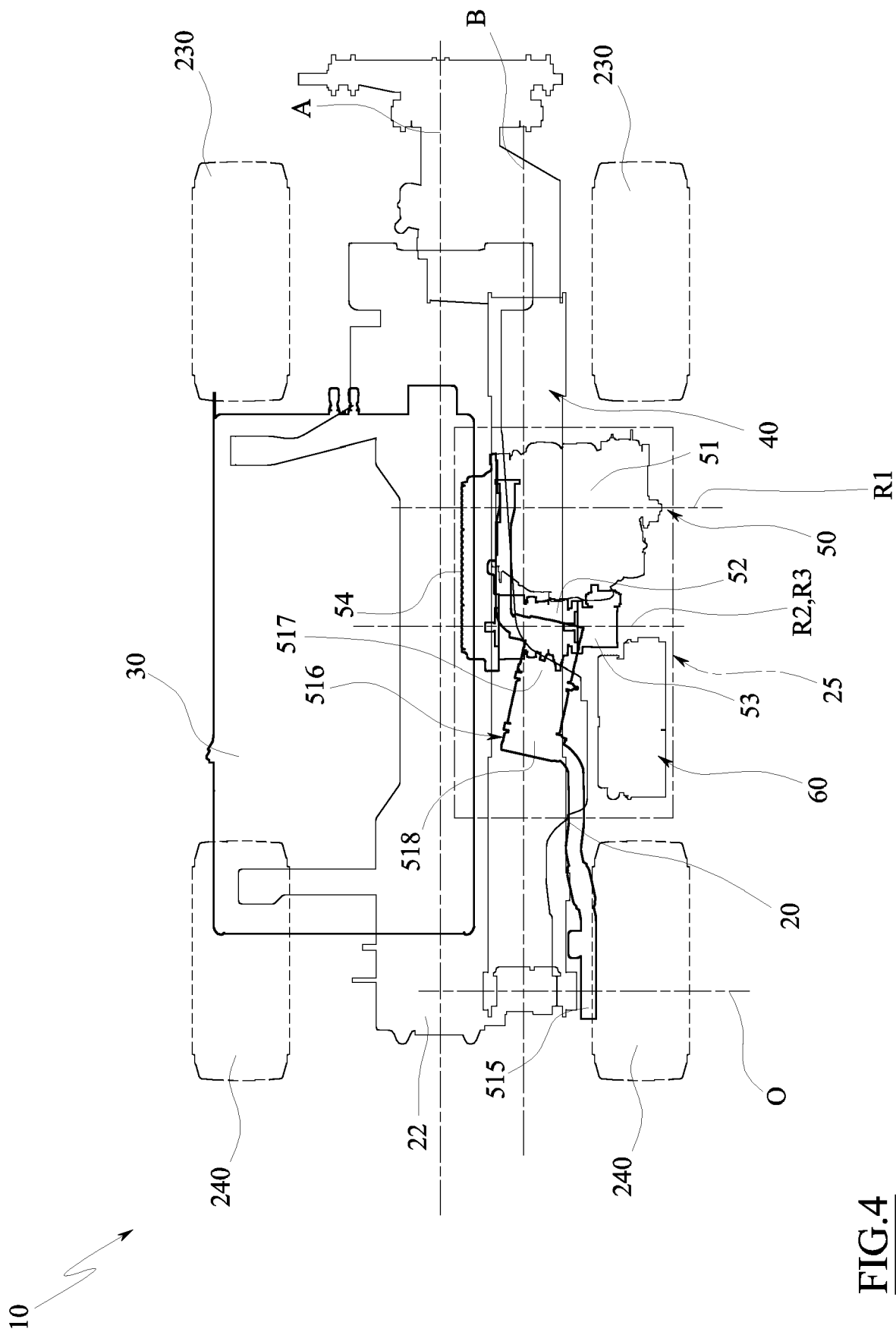
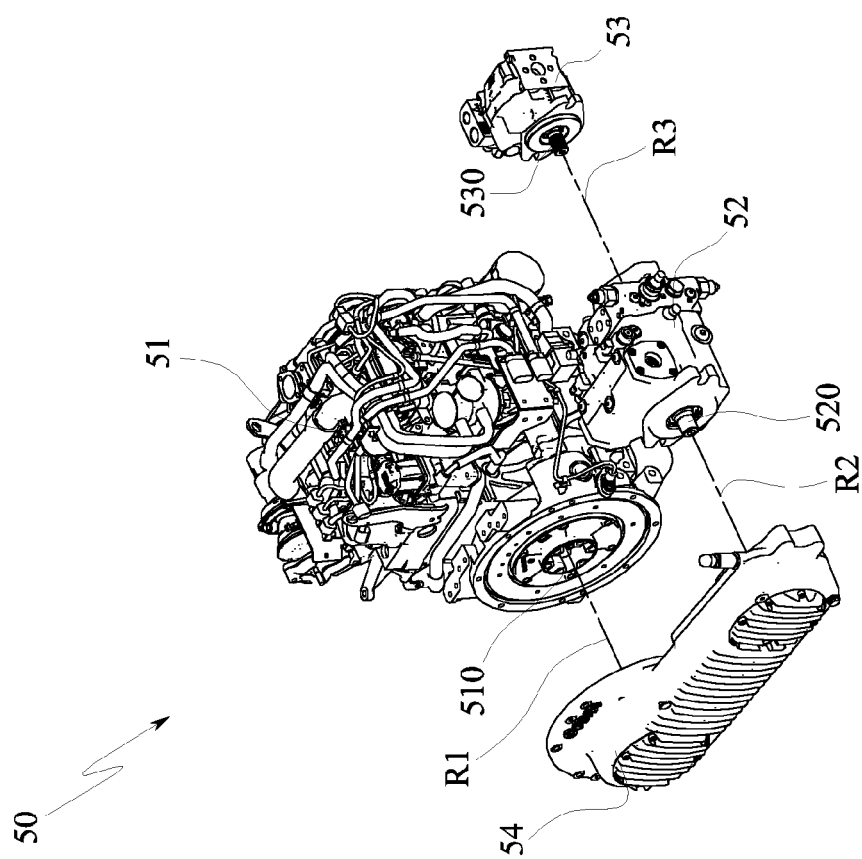
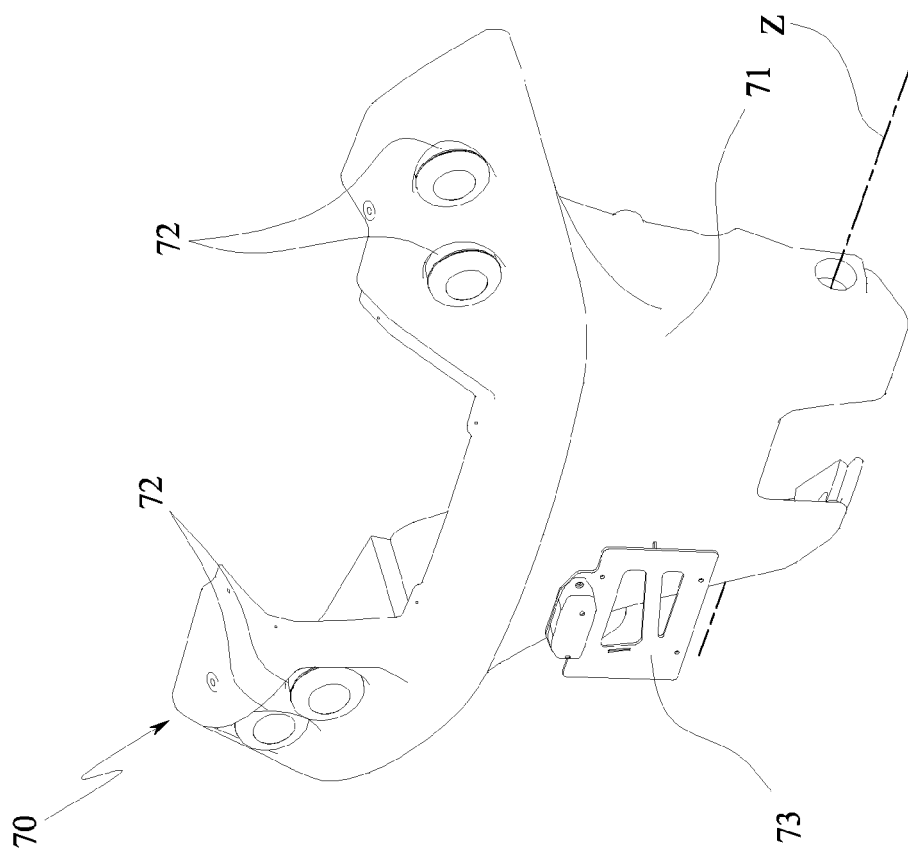
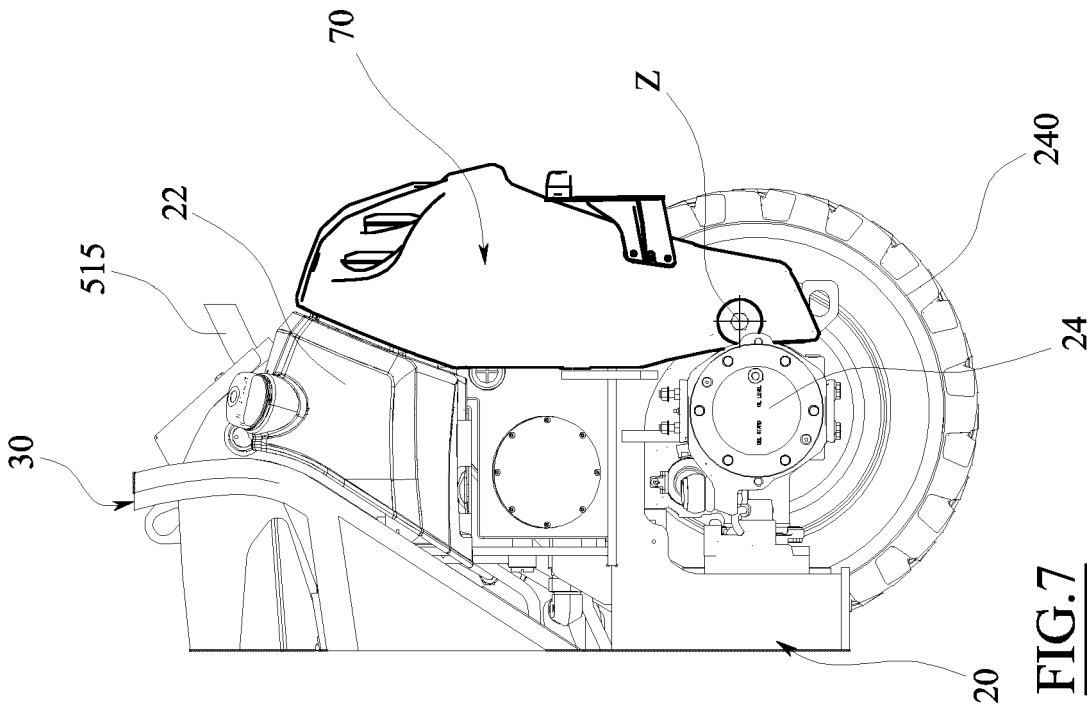
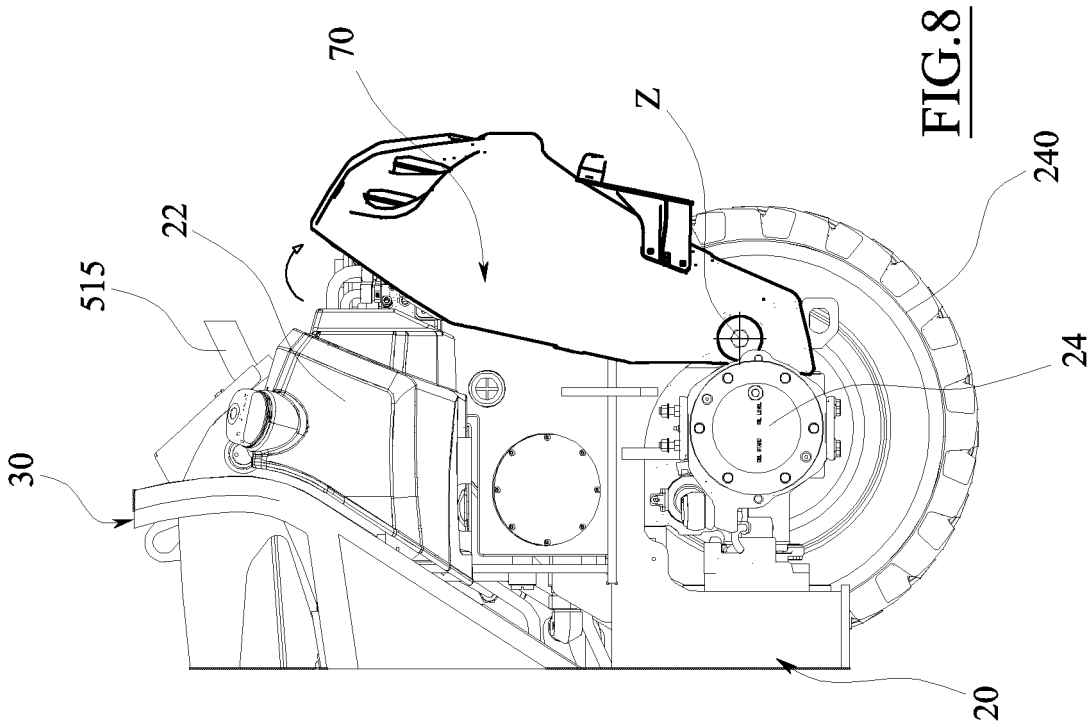


FIG. 3









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