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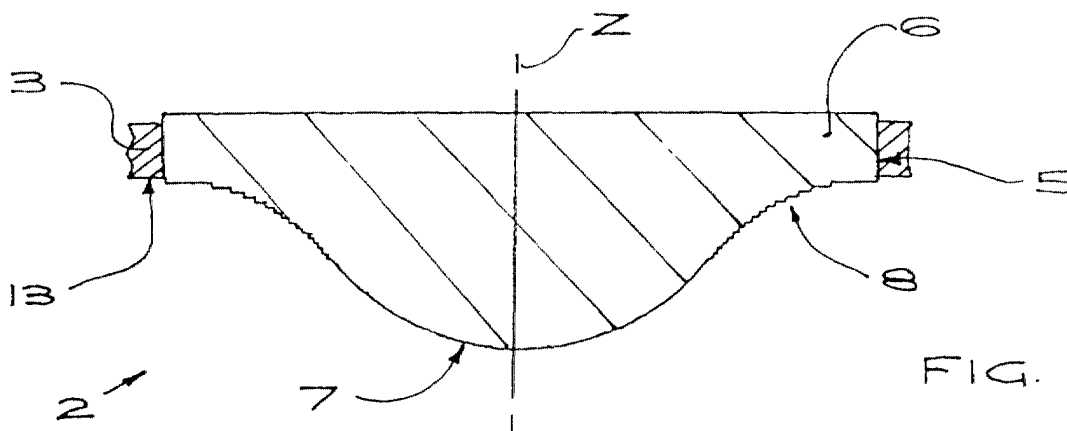
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(54) **Apparatus for the production of pearls**

(57) A nucleus (2, 102, 202) for producing blister or mabé pearls (10) in molluscs is disclosed. The nucleus (2, 102, 202) is generally bell-shaped with a dome (7) and a peripheral edge portion (8). The surface of the peripheral edge portion (8) and some or all of the dome (7) includes one or more steps (9) which start at or ad-

acent the outer edge. The steps (9) assist by providing a key for the deposition of nacre. The nucleus (2, 102, 202) may be secured to the shell (3) of the mollusc in a variety of ways. The nucleus (2, 102, 202) may include a tail (206) which is pulled through the shell (3). The mollusc is preferably selected from oysters, mussels and abalone.





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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 00 30 8020

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.CI.7)
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A	PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 0182, no. 71, 24 May 1994 (1994-05-24) & JP 06 046712 A (TOMIO OKUBO) * abstract * -----		
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.CI.7)
			A01K
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
THE HAGUE		25 July 2001	von Arx, V.
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS			
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		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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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82