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Patent search on cork (2010-2015)

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Abstract

The aim of this work is a patent search on cork materials, their manufacture processes and their applications, in the period 2010-2015, using Patenscope (search of international and national patent collections) from the World International Property Organization. 182 patent applications were found. They were classified in three major groups and by origin of application. This is a helpful tool for researchers, students and different professionals in the field of cork.

Keywords: cork; patent application; cork material; cork processing.

1. Introduction

The World International Property Organization (WIPO) is the global forum for intellectual property services, policy, information and cooperation. Within WIPO, the PATENTSCOPE database provides access to international Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) applications in full text format on the day of publication, as well as to patent documents of participating national and regional patent offices. The information may be searched by entering keywords, names of applicants, international patent classification and many other search criteria in multiple languages [1].

Using PATENTSCOPE one can search 45 million patent documents including 2.7 million published international patent applications (PCT) [2].

A WO patent is granted by the World Intellectual Property Organization. The prefix WO, which is short for WIPO, indicates that the patent will be administered by this body [3]. An EP patent is granted by the European Patent Organization. At national level the patents' origin is identified by the country codes defined by the ISO3166 standard (see, e.g. [4]).

2. Patent search

The patent search was carried out for the period 16th February 2010 to 16th February 2015 (five years).

In order to have a broad field of search on cork materials, their manufacture processes and their applications, after entering the site [2], the selected field of text was FRONT PAGE and the selected keyword was CORK.

The result of this search showed the patent applications sorted by publication date descending, presenting the title of the patent application with its publication number, its origin (WO, EP, country), publication date, class, application number, applicant and inventor.

The country codes shown in this patent search were:

CN – China; DE – Germany; JP – Japan; KR – South Korea; MX – Mexico; PT – Portugal; RU – Russia; SG – Singapore; US – United States of America.

This first result showed all the patent applications in which the word cork was wrote in the title or the abstract. Following this a selection was carried out choosing the patent applications dealing exclusively with cork or the cases in which cork was relevant.

In order to facilitate the search according to different

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interests, these selected patent applications were also classified in three major subjects: 1-Composites, 2-Stoppers, 3-Other.
Mention should be made that the some texts in English of the abstracts were obtained by automatic translations of several original languages and sometimes are not very well understandable.

3. Results, discussion and conclusions

This selection gives rise to a group of 182 patent applications. Based on this global selection of patents (2010-2015), the results were:

Patents on cork dealing with composites – 101 (55.5%)
Patents on cork dealing with stoppers – 34 (18.7%)
Patents on cork dealing with other subjects – 47 (25.8%)

By country and International Organization, the distribution was the following:

WO – 40 (22.0%)
EP – 35 (18.7%)
CN – 32(17.6%)
US – 28 (15.4%)
KR – 21 (11.5%)
PT – 14 (7.7%)
RU – 5 (2.7%)
DE – 3 (1.6%)
JP – 3 (1.6%)
SG – 1 (0.5%)
MX – 1 (0.5%)

It can be seen that the average was of more than 36 patent applications per year, being 2012 the most productive year in this period, with a total of 44 patent applications on this subject.

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