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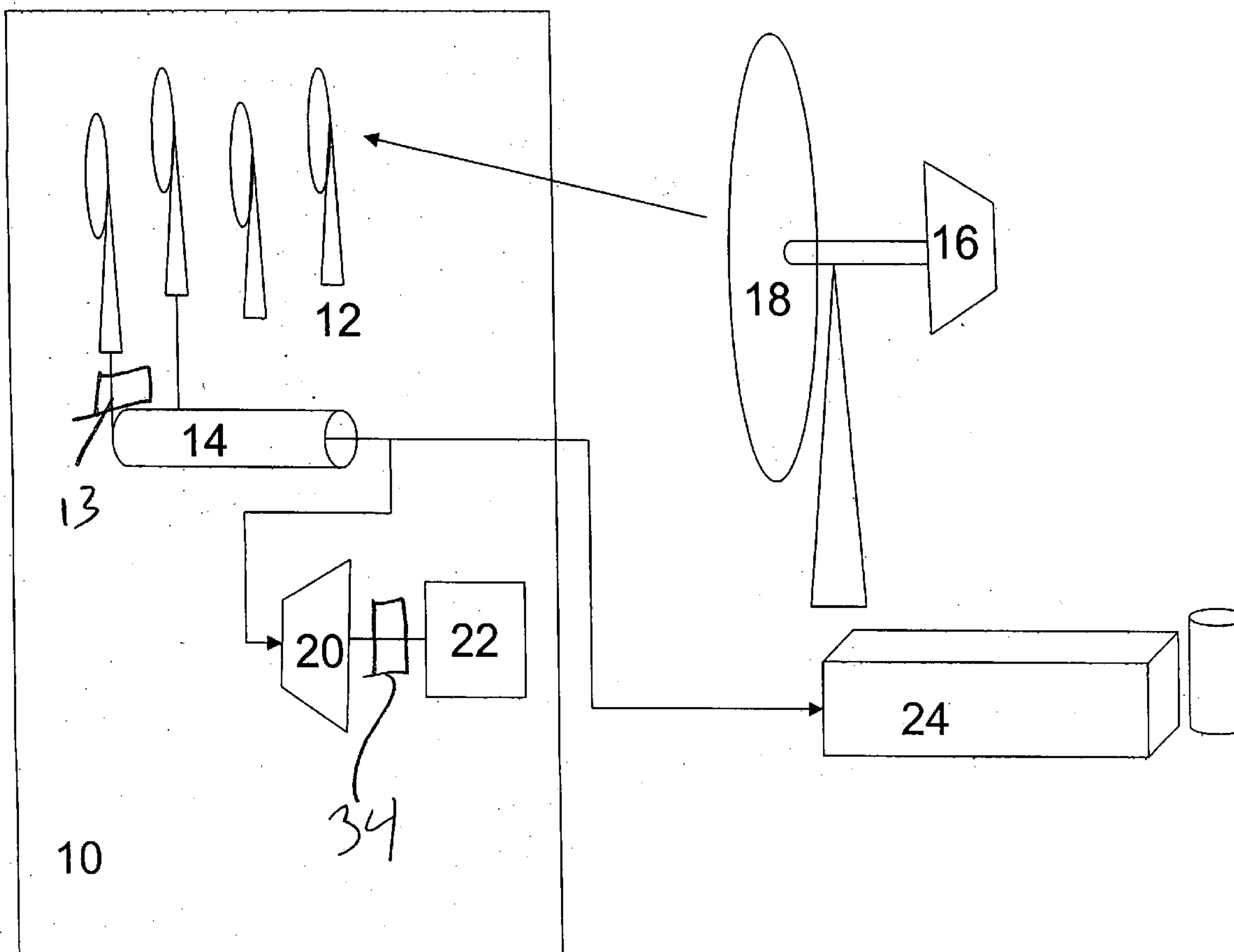
(57) **ABSTRACT**

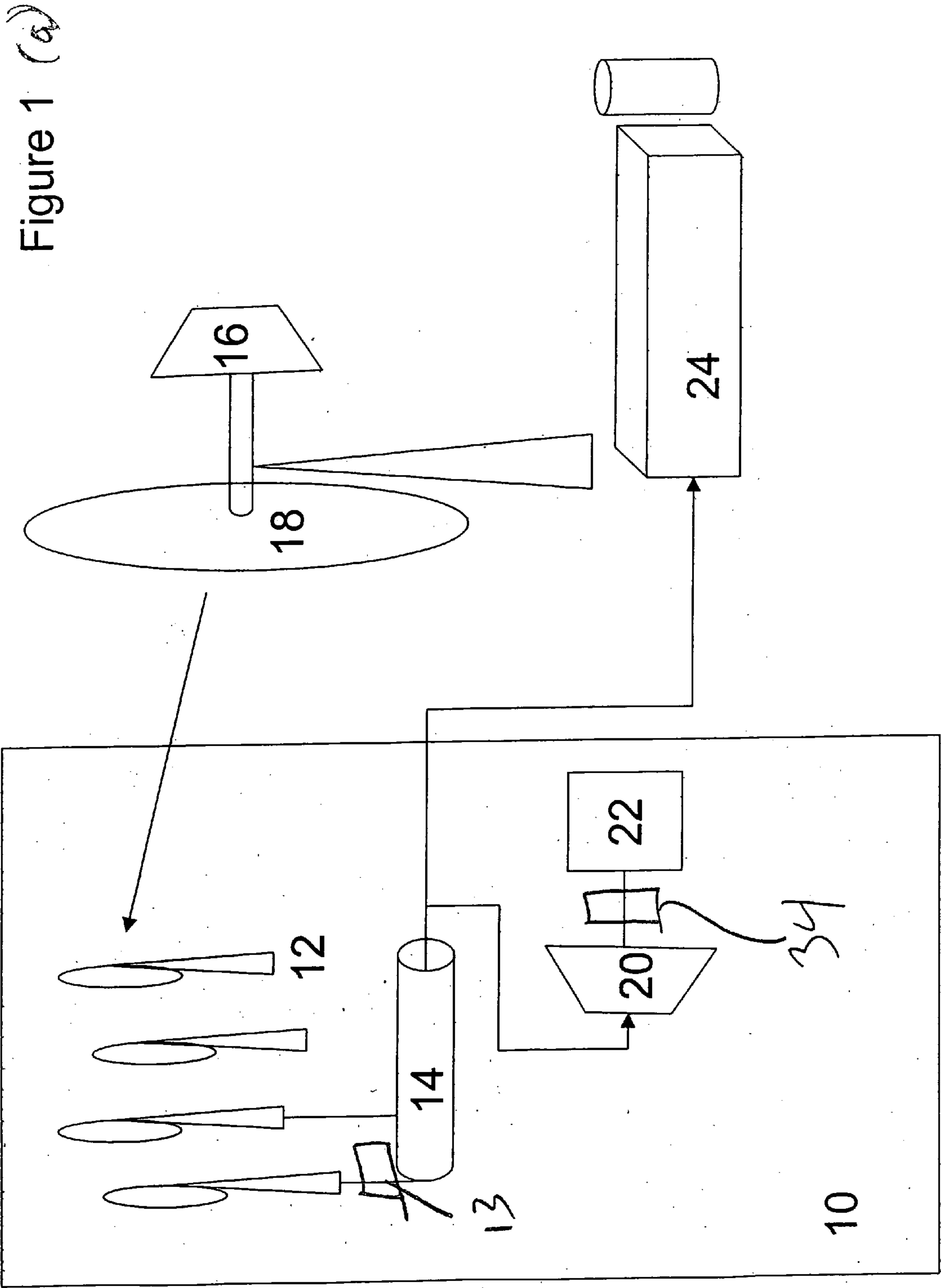
A wind energy generating and storage system has a plurality of direct compression wind turbine stations. A storage device is coupled to at least a portion of the wind turbine stations. At least a first compressor is coupled to the storage device to compress air. At least one expander is configured to release compressed air from the storage device. A generator is configured to convert compressed air energy into electrical energy. The system has a top-of-tower power to weight ratio greater than 1 megawatt/10 tons excluding the blades and rotor.

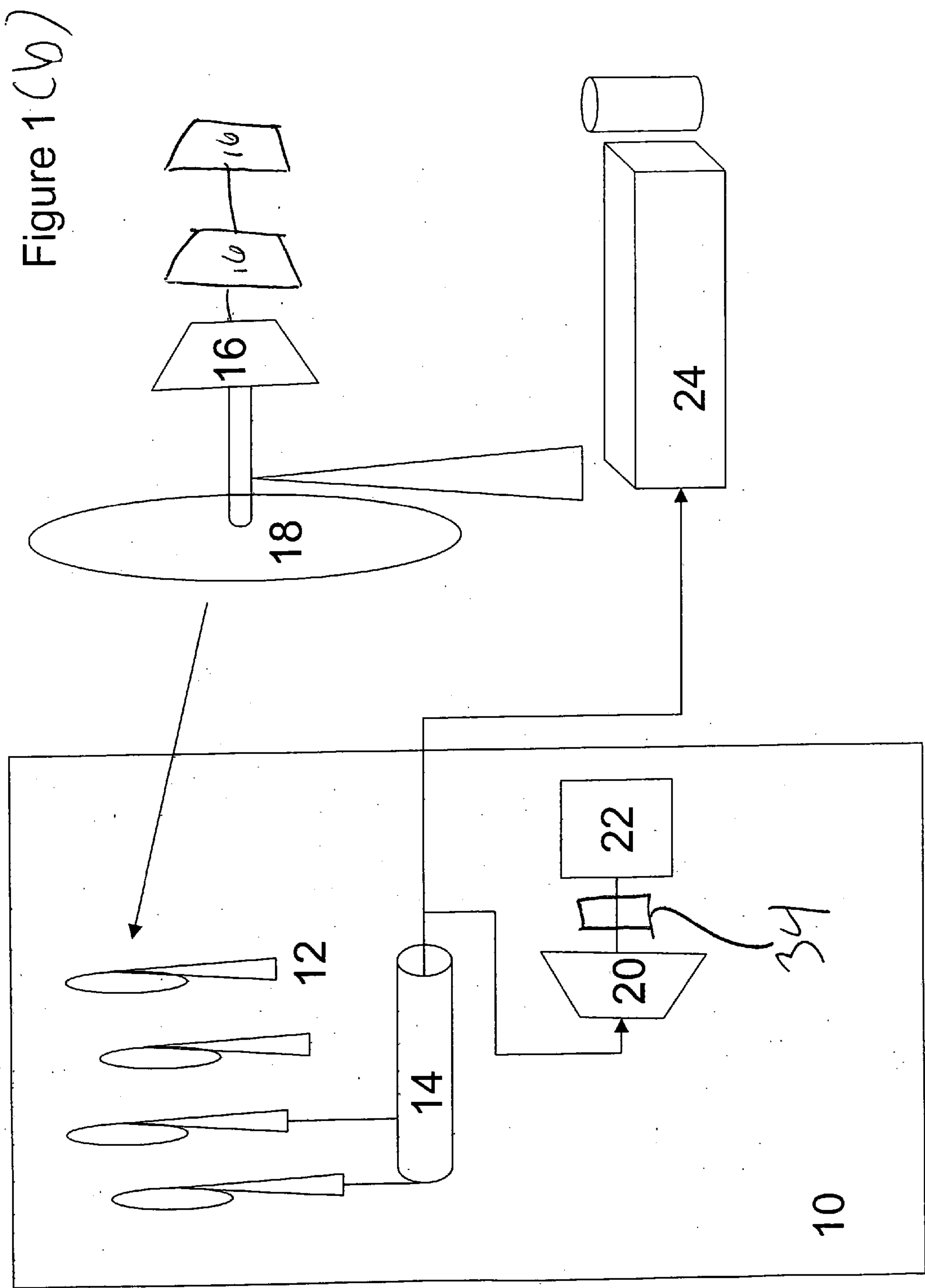
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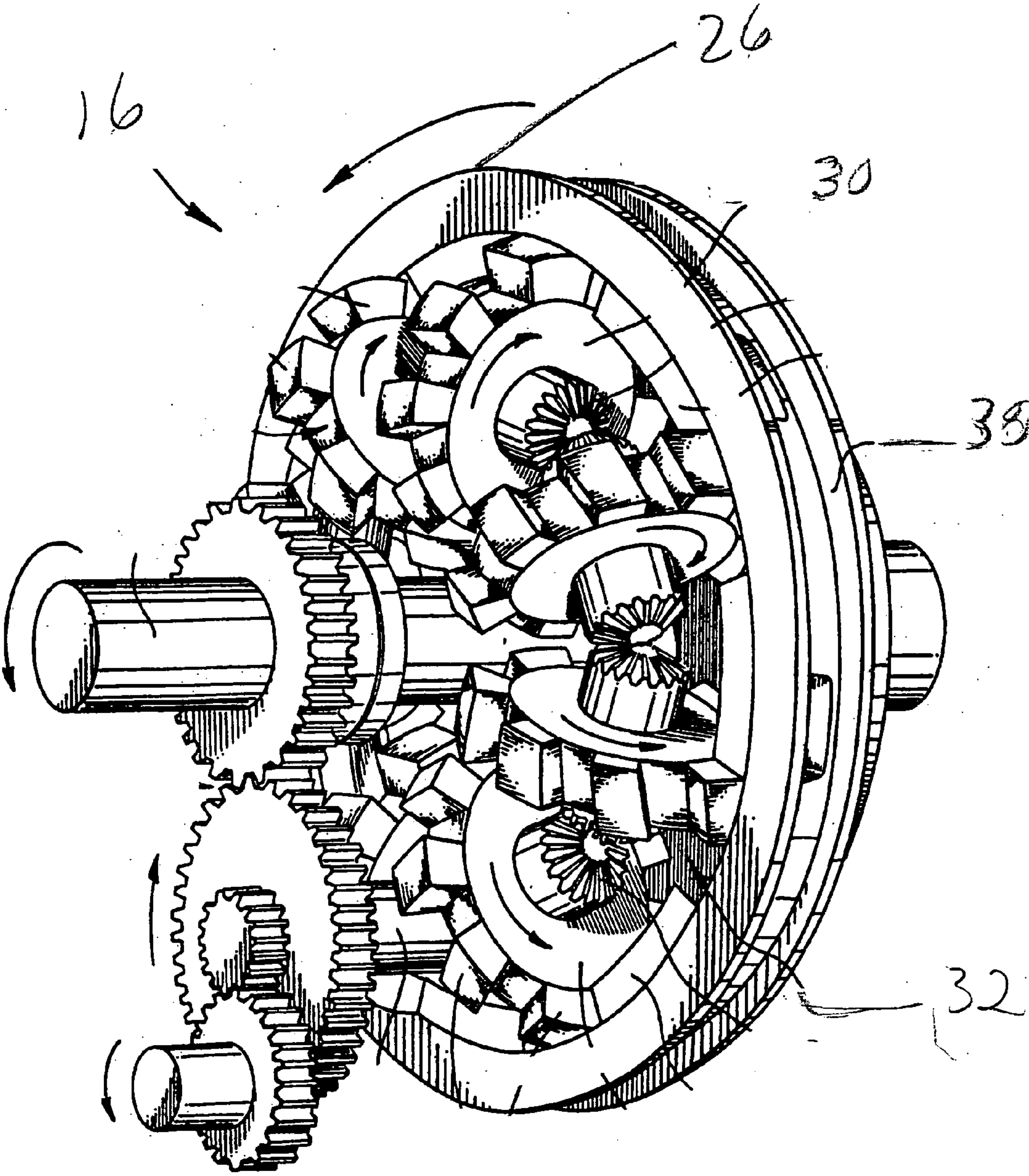


FIG. 2

DIRECT COMPRESSION WIND ENERGY SYSTEM AND APPLICATIONS OF USE

RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Ser. No. 10/744,232, filed Dec. 22, 2003, which application is fully incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] This invention relates generally to a wind energy and storage system, and more particularly to a wind energy and storage system that has a top-of-turbine power to weight ratio greater than 1 megawatt/15 tons.

[0004] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0005] From its commercial beginnings more than twenty years ago, wind energy has achieved rapid growth as a technology for the generation of electricity. The current generation of wind technology is considered mature enough by many of the world's largest economies to allow development of significant electrical power generation. By the end of 2005 more than 59,000 MW of windpower capacity had been installed worldwide, with annual industry growth rates of greater than 25% experienced during the last five years.

[0006] Certain constraints to the widespread growth of windpower have been identified. Many of these impediments relate to the fact that in many cases, the greatest wind resources are located far from the major urban or industrial load centers. This means the electrical energy harvested from the areas of abundant wind must be transmitted to areas of great demand, often requiring the transmission of power over long distances.

[0007] Transmission and market access constraints can significantly affect the cost of wind energy. Varying and relatively unpredictable wind speeds affect the hour to hour output of wind plants, and thus the ability of power aggregators to purchase wind power, such that costly and/or burdensome requirements can be imposed upon the deliverer of such varying energy. Congestion costs are the costs imposed on generators and customers to reflect the economic realities of congested power lines or "Bottlenecks." Additionally, interconnection costs based upon peak usage are spread over relatively fewer kwhs from intermittent technologies such as windpower as compared to other technologies.

[0008] Power from existing and proposed offshore windplants is usually delivered to the onshore loads after stepping up the voltage for delivery through submarine high voltage cables. The cost of such cables increases with the distance from shore. Alternatives to the high cost of submarine cables are currently being contemplated. As in the case of land-based windplants with distant markets, there will be greatly increased costs as the offshore windpower facility moves farther from the shore and the load centers. In fact, the increase in costs over longer distance may be expected to be significantly higher in the case of offshore windplants. It would thus be advisable to develop alternative technologies allowing for the transmission of distant offshore energy such as produced by windpower.

[0009] A need exists, for example, to reduce the costs associated with, improve the reliability of and commercial attractiveness of energy generated from, and improve the durability of the equipment associated with wind powered generators. Further, there exists a need to provide a wind energy and storage system that includes direct compression wind turbines. It would also be advisable to enhance the economic value of wind-generated electricity, by the development of technologies which allow for the storage of intermittent wind energy to sell at times of peak demand. There is also the need to develop technologies which enhance the value of windpower to be useful in the production of various hydrogen and other green fuels. Current wind turbines are designed to shed load in order to protect the electrical generators. There is a need to substantially improve the power curve of current wind turbines by eliminating generators in wind turbines in order to extract more energy from the wind at higher wind speeds.

SUMMARY

[0010] Accordingly, an object of the present invention is to provide an improved wind energy and storage system.

[0011] Another object of the present invention is to provide a wind energy and storage system that includes direct compression wind turbines, where the rotor is directly connected to one or more compressors.

[0012] Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a wind energy and storage system that includes direct compression wind turbines that dispatches electrical energy to a production facility.

[0013] Another object of the present invention is to provide a wind energy and storage system that has a top-of-turbine power to weight ratio greater than 1 megawatt/15 tons.

[0014] These and other objects of the present invention are achieved in a wind energy generating and storage system that has a plurality of direct compression wind turbine stations. A storage device is coupled to at least a portion of the wind turbine stations. At least a first compressor is coupled to the storage device to compress air. At least one expander is configured to release compressed air from the storage device. A generator is configured to convert compressed air energy into electrical energy. The direct compression wind turbine system has a top of tower power to weight ratio greater than 1 megawatt/10 tons excluding blades and rotor.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0015] FIG. 1(a) illustrates one embodiment of a wind energy and storage system of the present invention.

[0016] FIG. 1(b) illustrates one embodiment of a wind energy and storage system of the present invention with a multi-stage compressor.

[0017] FIG. 2 illustrates one embodiment of a toroidal intersecting vane compressor that can be used with the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0018] Referring to FIG. 1(a), one embodiment of the present invention is a wind energy generating and storage

system, generally denoted as **10**. A plurality of direct compression wind turbine stations **12** are provided. An inter-cooler **13** can be included. Direct compression is direct rotational motion of a shaft or a rotor coupled to one or more compressors **16**. A storage device **14** is coupled to at least a portion of the wind turbine stations **12**. At least a first toroidal intersecting vane compressor **16** is coupled to the storage device to compress or liquefy air. The compressor **16** has a fluid intake opening and a fluid exhaust opening. Rotation of a turbine **18** drives the compressor **16**. At least one expander **20** is configured to release compressed or liquid air from the storage device **14**. A generator **22** is configured to convert the compressed or liquid air energy into electrical energy.

[0019] In various embodiments, the compressor **16** operates at a pressure of about, 10 to 100 atmospheres at the fluid exhaust opening, 20 to 100 atmospheres, 10 to 80 atmospheres and the like. In various embodiments, the compressor has a minimum operating pressure for power storage of at least 20 atmospheres, has a peak pressure to low pressure ratio of about 10/1, has a peak pressure to low pressure ratio of about 5/1 and the like.

[0020] In one embodiment the system **10** has a top of tower power to weight ratio greater than 1 megawatt/10 tons excluding blades and rotor.

[0021] The compressor **16** is much lighter, and therefore less expensive than the generator **22** and gearbox it replaces. The best power-to-weight machine in current widescale commercial use is the Vestas 3 MW machine, which has a nacelle weight of 64 tons.

[0022] In another embodiment, illustrated in **FIG. 1(b)** a first multi-stage compressor **16** is coupled to the storage device **14** to compress air. In another embodiment, a pressure of compressed air in the storage device **14** is greater than 8 barr. The cost efficiency of storing compressed air in pipe changes dramatically with high pressure pipe and high pressure compressors **16**. For relatively little extra cost, storage can increase an order of magnitude. 80 barr air holds ten times the energy storage of 8 barr air.

[0023] In one embodiment of the present invention, a method of production collects and stores wind energy from a plurality of direct compression wind turbine stations **12**. Air is compressed or liquefied air is formed from the wind energy utilizing a toroidal intersecting vane compressor **16**. An expander **20** is used to release compressed or liquid air. An absorber is introduced to the compressed or liquid air for pressure swing absorption. The absorber is used for air separation into oxygen or nitrogen, argon, and other air products. In one embodiment, the absorber absorbs at a higher pressure and desorbs at a lower pressure.

[0024] In one embodiment, at least a portion of the electrical energy, vacuum pressure, compressed air, heat from compression and liquid air or another compressed fluid from the system **10** is dispatchable to a production facility **24**.

[0025] Suitable production facilities **24** include but are not limited to, an aluminum production facility, a fertilizer, ammonia, or urea production facility, a liquid air product production facility that can be used in manufacturing liquid air, liquid oxygen, liquid nitrogen, and other liquid air products, a fresh water from desalination production facility, a ferrosilicon production facility, an electricity intensive

chemical process or manufacturing facility, a tire recycling plant, coal burning facility, biomass burning facility, medical facility, cryogenic cooling process, or any plant that gasifies liquid oxygen, nitrogen, argon, CO₂, an ethanol production facility, a food processing facility. Examples of food processing facilities include but are not limited to, dairy or meat processing facilities and the like

[0026] In one embodiment, electricity provided by the system **10** is used to electrolyze water at the production facility **24**. In another embodiment, the system **10** is configured to provide pressure used at the production facility **24** to drive a reverse or forward osmosis process. In another embodiment, the system **10** is configured to provide at least one of vacuum or heat to drive a distillation process at the production facility **24**. In one embodiment, the compressor **16** compresses fluid that is evaporating from fluid in a distillation process. In another embodiment, compressed fluid that is evaporating from a distillation process is returned to exchange its heat with liquid in an evaporation or distillation process.

[0027] The production or processing facility **24** can be co-located with the system **10**.

[0028] In one embodiment, the system **10** is configured to receive waste heat from the production facility **24** and utilize at least a portion of the waste heat to provide the electrical energy that is dispatched to the production facility **24**. By way of illustration, and without limitation, the system **10** provides electricity for the reduction of carbon dioxide or water and can pressurize carbon dioxide to provide power to electrolyze the carbon dioxide to separate carbon from oxygen. The system **10** can be used to pressurize carbon dioxide and water to a supercritical state and provide power for reaction of these components to methanol. Hydrogen can be introduced to the carbon to create hydrocarbon fuels. The oxygen can be utilized to oxy-fire coal, process iron ore, burn col, process iron ore and the like.

[0029] The system **10** can be used to provide a vacuum directly to the production facility **24**. This could assist, for example, in the production of products at low temperature distillation facilities, such as fresh water at desalination plants.

[0030] By way of illustration, and without limitation, as shown in **FIG. 2** the toroidal intersecting vane compressor **16** includes a supporting structure **26**, a first and second intersecting rotors **28** and **30** rotatably mounted in the supporting structure **26**. The first rotor **28** has a plurality of primary vanes positioned in spaced relationship on a radially inner peripheral surface of the first rotor **28**. The radially inner peripheral surface of the first rotor **28** and a radially inner peripheral surface of each of the primary vanes can be transversely concave, with spaces between the primary vanes and the inside surface to define a plurality of primary chambers **32**. The second rotor **30** has a plurality of secondary vanes positioned in spaced relationship on a radially outer peripheral surface of the second rotor **30** and a radially outer peripheral surface of each of the secondary vanes can be transversely convex. Spaces between the secondary vanes and the inside surface define a plurality of secondary chambers **32**. A first axis of rotation of the first rotor **28** and a second axis of rotation of the second rotor **30** are arranged so that the axes of rotation do not intersect. The first rotor **28**,

second rotor **30**, primary vanes and secondary vanes are arranged so that the primary vanes and the secondary vanes intersect at only one location during their rotation. The toroidal intersecting vane compressor **16** can be self-synchronizing.

[0031] In one embodiment, the turbine **18** is configured to power the compressor(s) **16**. For example, the turbine **18** can drive the compressor **16** by a friction wheel drive that is frictionally connected to the turbine **18** and is connected by a belt, a chain, or directly to a drive shaft or gear of the compressor **16**. The compressed air can be heated or cooled. The compressed air can be heated or cooled while maintaining substantially constant volume. The compressed air can be heated or cooled while maintaining substantially constant pressure. The compressed air can be heated or cooled by a heat source selected from at least one of the following: solar, ocean, river, pond, lake, other sources of water, power plant effluent, industrial process effluent, combustion, nuclear, and geothermal energy.

[0032] The expander **20** can operate independently of the turbine **18** and the compressor **16**. The expander **20** and compressor **16** can be approximately the same or different sizes.

[0033] A heat exchanger **34** can be provided and coupled to an expander exhaust opening. At least a portion of the compressed air energy can be used as a coolant.

[0034] In one specific embodiment, a rotatable turbine **18** is mounted to a mast. In one embodiment, as mentioned above, a toroidal intersecting vane compressor (TIVC) **16** is used. The TIVC is characterized by a fluid intake opening and a fluid exhaust opening, wherein the rotation of the turbine **18** drives the compressor **16**. The system **10** permits good to excellent control over the hours of electrical power generation, thereby maximizing the commercial opportunity and meeting the public need during hours of high or peak usage. Additionally, the system **10** minimizes and can avoid the need to place an electrical generator **22** off-shore. The system **10** allows for an alternative method for transmission of power over long distance. Further, the system **10** can be operated with good to excellent efficiency rates.

[0035] In one embodiment, a generator apparatus **22** includes, (a) a rotatable turbine **18** mounted to a mast, (b) at least one toroidal intersecting vane compressor **16** characterized by a fluid intake opening and a fluid exhaust opening, wherein the rotation of the turbine **18** drives the compressor **16**; (c) a conduit having a proximal end and a distal end wherein the proximal end is attached to the fluid exhaust opening; (d) at least one toroidal intersecting vane expander **20** characterized by a fluid intake opening attached to the distal end; (e) an electrical generator **22** operably attached to the expander **20** to convert rotational energy into electrical energy, and to connect the generator **22** to one or more customers or the electric grid to sell the electricity.

[0036] The turbine **18** can be powered to rotate by a number of means apparent to the person of skill in the art. One example is air flow, such as is created by wind. In this embodiment, the turbine **18** can be a wind turbine, such as those well known in the art. One example of a wind turbine is found in U.S. Pat. No. 6,270,308, which is incorporated herein by reference. Because wind velocities are particularly reliable off shore, the turbine **18** can be configured to stand

or float off shore, as is known in the art. In yet another embodiment, the turbine **18** can be powered to rotate by water flow, such as is generated by a river or a dam.

[0037] As mentioned above, the compressor **16** is preferably a toroidal intersecting vane compressor **16**, such as those described in Chomyszak U.S. Pat. No. 5,233,954, issued Aug. 10, 1993 and Tomczyk, U.S. patent application Publication No. 2003/0111040, published Jun. 19, 2003. The contents of the patent and publication are incorporated herein by reference in their entirety. In a particularly preferred embodiment, the toroidal intersecting vane compressor **16** and elements of the system **10**, are found in U.S. Publications Nos. 2005132999, 2005133000 and 20055232801, each incorporated herein fully by reference.

[0038] In one embodiment, two or more toroidal intersecting vane compressors **16** are utilized. The compressors **16** can be configured in series or in parallel and/or can each be single stage or multistage compressors **16**. The compressor **16** will generally compress air, however, other environments or applications may allow other compressible fluids to be used.

[0039] The air exiting the compressor **16** through the compressor exhaust opening will directly or indirectly fill a conduit. Multiple turbines **18**, and their associated compressors **16**, can fill the same or different conduits. For example, a single conduit can receive the compressed air from an entire wind turbine farm, windplant or windpower facility. Alternatively or additionally, the "wind turbine farm" or, the turbines **18** therein, can fill multiple conduits. The conduit(s) can be used to collect, store, and/or transmit the compressed fluid, or air. Depending upon the volume of the conduit, large volumes of compressed air can be stored and transmitted. The conduit can direct the air flow to a storage vessel or tank or directly to the expander **20**. The conduit is preferably made of a material that can withstand high pressures, such as those generated by the compressors **16**. Further, the conduit should be manufactured out of a material appropriate to withstand the environmental stresses. For example, where the wind turbine **18** is located off shore, the conduit should be made of a material that will withstand seawater, such as pipelines that are used in the natural gas industry.

[0040] The compressed air can be heated or cooled in the conduit or in a slip, or side, stream off the conduit or in a storage vessel or tank. Cooling the fluid can have advantages in multi-stage compressing. Heating the fluid can have the advantage of increasing the energy stored within the fluid, prior to subjecting it to an expander **20**. The compressed air can be subjected to a constant volume or constant pressure heating or cooling. The source of heating can be passive or active. For example, sources of heat include solar, ocean, river, pond, lake, other sources of water, power plant effluent, industrial process effluent, combustion, nuclear, and geothermal energy. The conduit, or compressed air, can be passed through a heat exchanger to cool waste heat, such as can be found in power plant streams and effluents and industrial process streams and effluents (e.g., liquid and gas waste streams). In yet another embodiment, the compressed air can be heated via combustion.

[0041] Like the TIVC, the expander **20** is preferably a toroidal intersecting vane expander **20** (TIVE), such as those described by Chomyszak, referenced above. Thus, the tor-

oidal intersecting vane expander **20** can comprise a supporting structure, a first and second intersecting rotors rotatably mounted in the supporting structure, the first rotor having a plurality of primary vanes positioned in spaced relationship on a radially inner peripheral surface of the first rotor with the radially inner peripheral surface of the first rotor and a radially inner peripheral surface of each of the primary vanes being transversely concave, with spaces between the primary vanes and the inside surface defining a plurality of primary chambers, the second rotor having a plurality of secondary vanes positioned in spaced relationship on a radially outer peripheral surface of the second rotor with the radially outer peripheral surface of the second rotor and a radially outer peripheral surface of each of the secondary vanes being transversely convex, with spaces between the secondary vanes and the inside surface defining a plurality of secondary chambers, with a first axis of rotation of the first rotor and a second axis of rotation of the second rotor arranged so that the axes of rotation do not intersect, the first rotor, the second rotor, primary vanes and secondary vanes being arranged so that the primary vanes and the secondary vanes intersect at only one location during their rotation. Similarly, the toroidal intersecting vane expander **20** is self-synchronizing. Like the TIVC, the expanders **20** can be multistage or single stage, used alone, in series or in parallel with additional TIVEs. A single TIVE can service a single conduit or multiple conduits.

[0042] One of the advantages of the present invention is the ability to collect the compressed air or other fluid and convert the compressed air or fluid to electricity independently of each other. As such, the electricity generation can be accomplished at a different time and in a shorter, or longer, time period, as desired, such as during periods of high power demand or when the price of the energy is at its highest.

[0043] As such, the expander **20** is preferably configured to operate independently of the turbine **18** and compressor **16**. Further, because the conduit that is directing the compressed fluid, or air, to the expander **20** can be of a very large volume, the expander **20** need not be located proximally with the turbine **18** and compressor **16**. As such, even where the wind turbine **18** is located off shore, the expander **20** can be located on land, such as at a power plant, thereby avoiding the need to transmit electricity from the wind farm to the grid or customer.

[0044] Further, the sizes and capacities of the TIVCs and TIVEs can be approximately the same or different. The capacity of the TIVE is preferably at least 0.5 times, the capacity of the TIVCs it services, preferably the capacity of the TIVE exceeds the capacity of the TIVCs it services. Generally, the capacity of the TIVE is between about 1 and 5 times the capacity of the TIVCs it serves. For example, if 100 turbines **18**, with 100 TIVCs, each have a capacity of 2 megawatts, a TIVE that services all 100 turbines **18**, preferably has the capacity to produce 100 megawatts, preferably at least about 200 to 1,000 megawatts. Of course, TIVEs and TIVCs of a wide range of capacities can be designed.

[0045] Additional modifications to further improve energy usage can be envisioned from the apparatus of the invention. Energy recycle streams and strategies can be easily incorporated into the apparatus. For example, the expanded fluid

exiting from the expander **20** will generally be cold. This fluid can be efficiently used as a coolant, such as in a heat exchanger.

[0046] The dimensions and ranges herein are set forth solely for the purpose of illustrating typical device dimensions. The actual dimensions of a device constructed according to the principles of the present invention may obviously vary outside of the listed ranges without departing from those basic principles.

[0047] Further, it should be apparent to those skilled in the art that various changes in form and details of the invention as shown and described may be made. It is intended that such changes be included within the spirit and scope of the claims appended hereto.

1. A wind energy generating and storage system, comprising:

a plurality of direct compression wind turbine stations, wherein direct compression is direct rotational motion of a shaft or a rotor coupled to one or more compressors;

a storage device coupled to the at least a portion of the wind turbine stations;

at least a first compressor coupled to the storage device to compress air;

at least one expander configured to release compressed air from the storage device; and

a generator configured to convert compressed air energy into electrical energy, wherein the direct compression wind turbine system has a top of tower power to weight ratio greater than 1 megawatt/10 tons excluding blades and rotor.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the compressor operates at a pressure of about 10 to 100 atmospheres.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the compressor operates at a pressure of about 20 to 100 atmospheres.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein the compressor operates at a pressure of about 10 to 80 atmospheres.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein the compressor has a minimum operating pressure for power storage of at least 20 atmospheres.

6. The system of claim 1, wherein the compressor has a peak pressure to low pressure ratio of about 10/1.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein the compressor has a peak pressure to low pressure ratio of about 5/1.

8. The system of claim 1, wherein the compressor is a toroidal intersecting vane compressor.

9. The system of claim 1, wherein the compressor is configured to serve as a vacuum pump.

10. The system of claim 1, wherein at least a portion of at least one of, electrical energy, vacuum pressure, compressed air, heat from compression and liquid air or another compressed fluid is dispatchable to a production facility.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein the production facility is an aluminum production facility.

12. The system of claim 10, wherein the production facility is a fertilizer, ammonia, or urea production facility.

13. The system of claim 8, where the production facility is an ethanol production facility.

14. The system of claim 10, wherein the production facility is a food processing facility.

15. The system of claim 14, wherein the food processing facility is a dairy or meat processing facility.

16. The system of claim 10, wherein the production facility is a liquid air product production facility for use in manufacturing at least one, liquid air, liquid oxygen, liquid nitrogen, and other liquid air products.

17. The system of claim 10, wherein the production facility is a fresh water desalination production facility.

18. The system of claim 10, wherein electricity provided by the system is used to electrolyze water at the production facility.

19. The system of claim 10, wherein the system is configured to provide pressure used at the production facility to drive a reverse or forward osmosis process.

20. The system of claim 10, wherein the system is configured to provide at least one of vacuum or heat to drive a distillation process at the production facility.

21. The system of claim 10, wherein the compressor compresses fluid that is evaporating from fluid in a distillation process.

22. The system of claim 10, wherein compressed fluid that is evaporating from a distillation process is returned to exchange its heat with liquid in an evaporation or distillation process.

23. The system of claim 10, wherein the production facility is a ferrosilicon production facility.

24. The system of claim 10, wherein the system is configured to receive waste heat from the production facility and utilize at least a portion of the waste heat to provide electrical energy that is dispatched to the production facility.

25. The system of claim 10, wherein the system is configured to provide coolant to the production facility.

26. The system of claim 10, wherein the system provides electricity for the reduction of carbon dioxide or water.

27. The system of claim 10, wherein the system is configured to pressurize carbon dioxide and provide power to electrolyze the carbon dioxide to separate carbon from oxygen.

28. The system of claim 10, wherein the system is configured to pressurize carbon dioxide and water to a supercritical state and provide power for reaction of these components to methanol.

29. The system of claim 27, further comprising:

introducing hydrogen to the carbon to create hydrocarbon fuels.

30. The system of claim 27, wherein the oxygen is utilized to oxy-fire coal.

31. The system of claim 27, wherein the oxygen is utilized to burn coal or process iron ore.

32. The system of claim 10, wherein the system is configured to provide a vacuum directly to the production facility.

33. The system of claim 8, wherein the toroidal intersecting vane compressor includes a supporting structure, a first

and second intersecting rotors rotatably mounted in the supporting structure, the first rotor having a plurality of primary vanes positioned in spaced relationship on a radially inner peripheral surface of the first rotor with the radially inner peripheral surface of the first rotor and a radially inner peripheral surface of each of the primary vanes being transversely concave, with spaces between the primary vanes and the inside surface defining a plurality of primary chambers, the second rotor having a plurality of secondary vanes positioned in spaced relationship on a radially outer peripheral surface of the second rotor with the radially outer peripheral surface of the second rotor and a radially outer peripheral surface of each of the secondary vanes being transversely convex, with spaces between the secondary vanes and the inside surface defining a plurality of secondary chambers, with a first axis of rotation of the first rotor and a second axis of rotation of the second rotor arranged so that the axes of rotation do not intersect, the first rotor, the second rotor, primary vanes and secondary vanes being arranged so that the primary vanes and the secondary vanes intersect at only one location during their rotation.

34. The system of claim 1, wherein the compressor is self-synchronizing.

35. The system of claim 1, wherein the turbine drives the compressor by a friction wheel drive which is frictionally connected to the turbine and is coupled to the compressor.

36. The system of claim 1, wherein the compressed air can be heated or cooled.

37. The system of claim 1, wherein the compressed air is heated while maintaining substantially constant volume.

38. The system of claim 1, wherein the compressed air is heated while maintaining substantially constant pressure.

39. The system of claim 36, wherein the compressed air is heated by a heat source selected from at least one of, solar, ocean, river, pond, lake, power plant effluent, industrial process effluent, combustion, nuclear, and geothermal energy.

40. The system of claim 1, wherein the expander is configured to operate independently of the turbine and the compressor.

41. The system of claim 1, wherein the expander and compressor are the approximately the same or different sizes.

42. The system of claim 1, further comprising:

a heat exchanger coupled to an expander exhaust opening, wherein at least a portion of the compressed air energy is used as a coolant.

43. The system of claim 1, further comprising:

a processing facility co-located at the pre-determined location.

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