

**PATENT COOPERATION TREATY**

**PCT**

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY**  
(Chapter I of the Patent Cooperation Treaty)

(PCT Rule 44bis)

Applicant's or agent's file reference PC-9347	<b>FOR FURTHER ACTION</b>		See item 4 below
International application No. PCT/JP2004/015796	International filing date ( <i>day/month/year</i> ) 25 October 2004 (25.10.2004)	Priority date ( <i>day/month/year</i> ) 28 October 2003 (28.10.2003)	
International Patent Classification (8th edition unless older edition indicated) See relevant information in Form PCT/ISA/237			
Applicant NIKON CORPORATION			

<p>1. This international preliminary report on patentability (Chapter I) is issued by the International Bureau on behalf of the International Searching Authority under Rule 44 bis.1(a).</p> <p>2. This REPORT consists of a total of 5 sheets, including this cover sheet.</p> <p>In the attached sheets, any reference to the written opinion of the International Searching Authority should be read as a reference to the international preliminary report on patentability (Chapter I) instead.</p>																								
<p>3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:</p> <table> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Box No. I</td> <td>Basis of the report</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Box No. II</td> <td>Priority</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Box No. III</td> <td>Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Box No. IV</td> <td>Lack of unity of invention</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Box No. V</td> <td>Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Box No. VI</td> <td>Certain documents cited</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Box No. VII</td> <td>Certain defects in the international application</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Box No. VIII</td> <td>Certain observations on the international application</td> </tr> </table> <p>4. The International Bureau will communicate this report to designated Offices in accordance with Rules 44bis.3(c) and 93bis.1 but not, except where the applicant makes an express request under Article 23(2), before the expiration of 30 months from the priority date (Rule 44bis .2).</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Box No. I	Basis of the report	<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. II	Priority	<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. III	Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. IV	Lack of unity of invention	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Box No. V	Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Box No. VI	Certain documents cited	<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. VII	Certain defects in the international application	<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. VIII	Certain observations on the international application
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. VIII	Certain observations on the international application																						

	Date of issuance of this report 24 July 2006 (24.07.2006)
The International Bureau of WIPO 34, chemin des Colombettes 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland	Authorized officer  <b>Masashi Honda</b>
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**PATENT COOPERATION TREATY**

**TRANSLATION**

From the  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

**PCT**

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

(PCT Rule 43bis.1)

To:

Date of mailing  
(day/month/year)

Applicant's or agent's file reference <b>PC-9347</b>	<b>FOR FURTHER ACTION</b> See paragraph 2 below
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International application No. <b>PCT/JP2004/015796</b>	International filing date (day/month/year) <b>25.10.2004</b>	Priority date (day/month/year) <b>28.10.2003</b>
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International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC

Applicant  
**NIKON CORPORATION**

1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

- Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- Box No. II Priority
- Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

2. **FURTHER ACTION**

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA") except that this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of 3 months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

3. For further details, see notes to Form PCT/ISA/220.

Name and mailing address of the ISA/JP	Authorized officer
Facsimile No.	Telephone No.

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.

PCT/JP2004/015796

Box No. I	Basis of this opinion
1.	With regard to the <b>language</b> , this opinion has been established on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
<input type="checkbox"/>	This opinion has been established on the basis of a translation from the original language into the following language _____, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rule 12.3 and 23.1(b)).
2.	With regard to any <b>nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence</b> disclosed in the international application and necessary to the claimed invention, this opinion has been established on the basis of:
a.	type of material
<input type="checkbox"/>	a sequence listing
<input type="checkbox"/>	table(s) related to the sequence listing
b.	format of material
<input type="checkbox"/>	in written format
<input type="checkbox"/>	in computer readable form
c.	time of filing/furnishing
<input type="checkbox"/>	contained in the international application as filed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
<input type="checkbox"/>	furnished subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search.
3.	<input type="checkbox"/> In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing and/or table(s) relating thereto has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.
4.	Additional comments:

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No. PCT/JP2004/015796
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<b>Box No. V</b>	<b>Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement</b>		
1. Statement	Novelty (N)	Claims <u>3-11, 14, 15, 18-25</u>	YES
		Claims <u>1, 2, 12, 13, 16, 17, 26-28</u>	NO
	Inventive step (IS)	Claims <u>3-11, 14, 15, 18-25</u>	YES
		Claims <u>1, 2, 12, 13, 16, 17, 26-28</u>	NO
	Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims <u>1-28</u>	YES
		Claims _____	NO
2. Citations and explanations:			
<p>Document 1: WO 1999/049504 A1 (Nikon Corporation), 30 September 1999, claims, Figs. 1-5</p> <p>The inventions described in claims 1, 2, 12, 13, 16, 17 and 26-28 are disclosed in document 1 (claims, Figs. 1-5) cited in the ISR; therefore, they do not appear to be novel. A section protruding in a wafer traveling direction of a liquid immersion section in Fig. 4 etc. is a region having liquid immersion regions more than necessary for exposure.</p> <p>The inventions relating to claims 3-11, 14, 15 and 18-25 are not disclosed in any of the documents cited in the ISR; therefore, they appear to be novel. In particular, the point that the liquid in a preliminary liquid immersion region is held by a liquid holding sections provided on an outer periphery of the liquid immersion region with prescribed spaces therebetween is not disclosed in any of the documents.</p>			

**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY**

International application No. PCT/JP2004/015796
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<b>Box No. VI</b>	<b>Certain documents cited</b>			
1. Certain published documents (Rule 43bis.1 and 70.10)				
	Application No. Patent No.	Publication date (day/month/year)	Filing date (day/month/year)	Priority date (valid claim) (day/month/year)
	<b>JP 2005-12228 A</b>	<b>13.01.2005</b>	<b>18.06.2004</b>	<b>19.06.2003</b>
	<b>EX</b>			
	<b>JP 2004-320016 A</b>	<b>11.11.2004</b>	04.08.2004	11.04.2003
	<b>EX</b>			
2. Non-written disclosures (Rule 43bis.1 and 70.9)				
	Kind of non-written disclosure	Date of non-written disclosure (day/month/year)	Date of written disclosure referring to non-written disclosure (day/month/year)	