CLAIMS:

1. A method for improving the fuel economy of large low and medium speed engines that reach surface speeds of at least 3 mm/s and up to 100 mm/s and are lubricated by an engine oil by reducing the traction coefficient of the engine oil used to lubricate the engine, by employing as the engine oil a lubricating oil comprising a base oil comprising a bimodal blend of two different base oils, a first base oil being one or more oils selected from the group consisting of ~~Group III base oils,~~ Group IV base oils ~~and Group V base oils~~, which first base oil has a kinematic viscosity at 100°C of ~~from 2 to 12~~ about 6 mm^2/s, and a second base oil being one or more oils selected from Group IV base oils having a kinematic viscosity at 100°C of ~~at least 38~~ about 150 mm^2/s, the difference in kinematic viscosity between the first and second base oils in the blend being at least ~~32~~ 140 mm^2/s, the combination of the first and second base oils having a kinematic viscosity at 100°C of ~~15~~ about 9 mm^2/s or less, the lubricating oil further containing ~~0.5~~ 1.08 to ~~6~~ 1.95 wt% based on active ingredient of a detergent selected from ~~an alkali and/or alkaline earth metal~~ a calcium salicylate or a mixture of ~~alkali and/or alkaline earth metal~~ calcium phenate and ~~an alkali and/or alkaline earth metal~~ calcium salicylate, wherein the improvement in fuel economy is evidenced by the engine oil having a traction coefficient which is lower than the traction coefficient of engine oils which are not bimodal or which are not bimodal to the same degree as recited or which are based on Group I and/or Group II base oils, and which do not contain the aforesaid detergents.

~~2. A method for improving the fuel economy of large low and medium speed engines that reach surface speeds of at least 10 mm/s and are lubricated by an engine oil by reducing the traction coefficient of the engine oil used to lubricate the engine, by employing as the engine oil a lubricating oil comprising a base oil comprising a bimodal blend of two different base oils, a first base oil being one or more oils selected from the group consisting of Group III base oils, Group IV base oils and Group V base oils, which first base oil has a kinematic viscosity at 100°C of from 2 to 12 mm^2/s, and a second base oil being one or more oils selected from Group IV base oils having a kinematic viscosity at 100°C of at least 38 mm^2/s, the difference in kinematic viscosity between the first and second base oils in the blend being at least 32 mm^2/s, the combination of the first and second base oils having a kinematic viscosity at 100°C of 15 mm^2/s or less, the~~

lubricating oil further containing 0.5 to 6 wt% based on active ingredient of a detergent selected from an alkali and/or alkaline earth metal salicylate, a mixture of alkali and/or alkaline earth metal phenate and an alkali and/or alkaline earth metal salicylate or a mixture of an alkali and/or alkaline earth metal phenate and an alkali and/or alkaline earth metal sulfonate, wherein the improvement in fuel economy is evidenced by the engine oil having a traction coefficient which is lower than the traction coefficient of engine oils which are not bimodal or which are not bimodal to the same degree as recited or which are based on Group I and/or Group II base oils, and which do not contain the aforesaid detergents.

3. A method for improving the fuel economy of large low and medium speed engines that reach surface speeds of at least 30 mm/s and are lubricated by an engine oil by reducing the traction coefficient of the engine oil used to lubricate the engine, by employing as the engine oil a lubricating oil comprising a base oil comprising a bimodal blend of two different base oils, a first base oil being one or more oils selected from the group consisting of Group III base oils, Group IV base oils and Group V base oils, which first base oil has a kinematic viscosity at 100°C of from 2 to 12 mm^2/s, and a second base oil being one or more oils selected from Group IV base oils having a kinematic viscosity at 100°C of at least 38 mm^2/s, the difference in kinematic viscosity between the first and second base oils in the blend being at least 32 mm^2/s, the combination of the first and second base oils having a kinematic viscosity at 100°C of 15 mm^2/s or less, the lubricating oil further containing 0.5 to 6 wt% based on active ingredient of a detergent selected from an alkali and/or alkaline earth metal phenate, an alkali and/or alkaline earth metal salicylate, a mixture of alkali and/or alkaline earth metal phenate and an alkali and/or alkaline earth metal salicylate or a mixture of an alkali and/or alkaline earth metal phenate and an alkali and/or alkaline earth metal sulfonate, wherein the improvement in fuel economy is evidenced by the engine oil having a traction coefficient which is lower than the traction coefficient of engine oils which are not bimodal or which are not bimodal to the same degree as recited or which are based on Group I and/or Group II base oils, and which do not contain the aforesaid detergents.

4. The method of claim 1, 2 or 3 wherein the difference in the kinematic viscosity between the first and second base oils is at least 70 mm^2/s.

~~5. The method of claim 1, 2 or 3 wherein the combination of the first and second base oils has a kinematic viscosity of 7 to 13 mm^2/s.~~

~~6. The method of claim 1, 2 or 3 wherein the second base oil has a kinematic viscosity in the range of about 38 to 1200 mm^2/s.~~

~~7.~~2. The method of claim 1~~, 2 or 3~~ wherein the lubricating oil has a sulfated ash content of no more than 1.2 wt%.

~~8.~~3. The method of claim 1~~, 2 or 3~~ wherein the weight ratio of salicylate detergent to phenate detergent is ~~in the range of 0.75 to 2.0~~ about 1.2 based on active ingredient.

~~9. The method of claim 2 or 3 wherein the weight ratio of sulfonate detergent to phenate detergent is in the range of 0.5 to 1.5 based on active ingredient.~~

~~10. The method of claim 1, 2 or 3 wherein the first base oil is selected from Group III and Group IV base oil.~~

~~11.~~4. The method of claim 1~~, 2 or 3~~ wherein the second base oil is a PAO base oil.

~~12.~~5. The method of claim ~~11~~ 1 wherein the PAO base oil is made employing metallocene catalysis.

~~13.~~6. The method of claim ~~11~~ 1 wherein the PAO base oil is characterized by not more than 5.0 wt% of the polymer having a molecular weight of greater than 45,000 Daltons.