CLAIMS

1.- A handling system comprising:

- a lifting gantry (16) mounted moving on a naval platform (12),
- a floating dock for placement in the water and/or recovery of an unmanned surface vehicle (20) configured to house the unmanned surface vehicle (20), the floating dock comprising, in the lower part, a cradle (18) for receiving the unmanned surface vehicle (20) and, in the upper part, a lifting spreader (22) configured to be attached to the lifting gantry (16),

characterized in that the lifting spreader (22) is detachable from the cradle (18), and in that the assembly formed on the one hand by the lifting gantry and on the other hand by the spreader, detached from the floating dock, but also attached to the lifting gantry, being able to project and to no longer interfere with any handling operations seeking to load/unload the deck of the unmanned surface vehicle.

2.- The system for handling an unmanned surface vehicle (20) according to claim 1, wherein the cradle (18) comprises at least one element for locking/unlocking the lifting spreader (22).

3.- The system for handling an unmanned surface vehicle (20) according to claim 2, wherein the locking/unlocking element is a bolting/unbolting element.

4.- The system for handling an unmanned surface vehicle (20) according to claim 2 or 3, wherein the floating dock comprises at least one centering element associated with each locking/unlocking element.

5.- The system for handling an unmanned surface vehicle (20) according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the gantry (16) and the lifting spreader (22) are secured by at least one rigid link configured to stabilize the spreader (22) in the projecting position, the rigid link being formed at least by a cable (34) and a jack (32).

6.- A floating dock for placement in the water and/or recovery of the unmanned surface vehicle (20) configured to housing the unmanned surface vehicle (20), the floating dock comprising, in the lower part, a cradle (18) for receiving the unmanned surface vehicle (20) and, in the upper part, a lifting spreader (22) configured to be attached to a

lifting gantry (16) mounted moving on a naval platform (12), characterized in that the lifting spreader (22) is detachable from the cradle (18).

7.- A naval platform (12) comprising a handling system according to any one of claims 1 to 5.

8.- A handling method (50) implemented by a handling system comprising:

- a lifting gantry (16) mounted moving on a naval platform (12),
- a floating dock for placement in the water and/or recovery of an unmanned surface vehicle (20) configured to house the unmanned surface vehicle (20), the floating dock comprising, in the lower part, a cradle (18) for receiving the unmanned surface vehicle (20) and, in the upper part, a lifting spreader (22) configured to be attached to the lifting gantry (16), the lifting spreader (22) being detachable from the cradle (18), the assembly formed on the one hand by the lifting gantry and on the other hand by the spreader, detached from the floating dock, but also attached to the lifting gantry, being able to project and to no longer interfere with any handling operations seeking to load/unload the deck of the unmanned surface vehicle,

the method comprising at least:

- the detachment (52), from the cradle (18) of the floating dock, of the lifting spreader (22) secured to the lifting gantry (16),
- the projection (54), outside the platform (12), of the assembly formed by the lifting spreader (22) and the lifting gantry (16) to which the lifting spreader (22) is secured, by moving the lifting gantry (16) into a projecting position, the cradle (18) of the floating dock remaining on board the naval platform (12),
- the handling (56) of a payload (26) intended to be loaded/unloaded onto/from the unmanned surface vehicle (20),
- the loading/unloading (58) of the payload (26) onto/from the unmanned surface vehicle (20),
- the retraction (60) on board the platform (12), opposite the projection, of the assembly formed by the lifting spreader (22) and the lifting gantry (16), by moving the lifting gantry (16) into an on board position, the cradle (18) of the floating dock remaining on board the naval platform (22),
- the reattachment (62), to the cradle (18) of the floating dock, of the lifting spreader secured to the lifting gantry (16),

- the placement in the water (64) and/or recovery (64) of the floating dock housing the unmanned surface vehicle (18) on which the payload (26) is loaded by moving the lifting gantry into the projecting position.

9.- The method for handling an unmanned surface vehicle according to claim 8, wherein the placement in the water (64) of the floating dock housing the unmanned surface vehicle (20) on which the payload (26) is loaded comprises, simultaneously with the action to place the lifting spreader (16) in the water, the deployment (66) of transverse guide arms (38) for the placement in the water and/or recovery of the floating dock, each having an end secured to the plating of the platform (12), each transverse guide arm (38) being able to come into contact with the plating of the floating dock, and each being able to be activated between a retracted position substantially collinear to the plating of the platform (12) and a deployed position where each transverse guide arm (38) forms a predetermined offset angle relative to the plating of the platform (12).

10.- The method for handling an unmanned surface vehicle according to claim 8 or 9, wherein the recovery (64) of the floating dock housing the unmanned surface vehicle (20) on which the payload (26) is loaded comprises, simultaneously with the action to raise the lifting spreader, the retraction (66) of transverse guide arms (38) for the placement in the water and/or recovery of the floating dock, each having an end secured to the plating of the platform (22), each transverse guide arm (38) being able to come into contact with the plating of the floating dock, between a deployed position where each transverse guide arm forms a predetermined offset angle relative to the plating of the platform and a retracted position substantially collinear to the plating of the platform (12).