C L A I M S

1. A method for providing a hull of a vessel with bubble generators for reducing the drag of the hull, **characterized** in that said method comprises the following steps:

providing at least one elongated slot in the hull, said slot having a length extending in a lateral direction of the vessel and a width extending perpendicular thereto;

providing a multitude of bubble generator units, each having an inlet opening for supplying air and a bottom surface with at least one outlet opening for discharging air bubbles; and

mounting said multitude of bubble generator units in said slot in a side by side manner along the length of said slot such that said slot is filled and substantially closed off by said bubble generator units, and such that said inlet openings of said bubble generator units face the interior of the hull and the bottom surfaces with the outlet openings of said bubble generator units face the exterior of the hull, wherein the bubble generator units are mounted in said slots by means of mounting means, said mounting means being fixed to the longitudinal edges of said slot along the entire length thereof, and wherein said bubble generator units are mounted to said mounting means in a releasable manner.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein said mounting means comprise at least one mounting block, each mounting block comprising a base plate which is arranged to cover the width of the slot, and a first end wall and a second end wall which extend from the outer lateral ends of the base plate, wherein the end walls are fixed to the lateral edges of the slot, said at least one mounting block forming a substantially U-shaped channel in said slot in which the bubble generator units are mounted, such that the bottom surface of the bubble generator units are substantially flush with the exterior surface of the hull.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the interior surface of said base plate of said mounting block extends in a plane which is at a distance from the interior surface of the hull in the interior direction thereof.

4. The method according to any of the claims 1 to 3, wherein the mounting means are provided with inlet channels corresponding and in communication with one of each inlet opening of the bubble generator units.

5. The method according to claim 4, wherein the inlet openings of the bubble generator units are formed by inlet tube ends which extend at a lateral side of the bubble generator units, and which inlet tube ends are inserted in openings of the inlet channels which extend in corresponding side walls of the mounting blocks.

6. The method according to any of the claims 1 to 5, wherein the bubble generator units are provided with a stepped or sloping protrusion at one side, and said mounting means comprise locking elements which are arranged to engage the protrusion, and which is provided with fixation means, such as screws, for fixing the locking elements to the base plate.

7. The method according to any of the preceding claims, wherein providing an air channel in the interior of said hull to each of said inlet openings for providing air to each of said bubble generator units.

8. The method according to claim 7, wherein said air channel is connected to a source of pressurised air.

9. The method according to any of the claims 7 or 8, wherein said air channel is formed by a bent wall which covers the interior side of the slot and the bubble generator units therein, and wherein the lateral edges of the bent wall are connected to the interior surface of the hull.

10. The method according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the height of the bubble generator units is substantially smaller than the width of the slot.

11. The method according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the bubble generator units are fluidic oscillators for generating one or more pulsating air flows from a constant air flow.

12. A vessel with a hull provided with bubble generators for reducing the drag of the hull, **characterized** in that

the hull is provided with at least one elongated slot, said slot having a length extending in a lateral direction of the vessel and a width extending perpendicular thereto;

wherein a multitude of bubble generator units is provided, each having an inlet opening for supplying air and a bottom surface with at least one outlet opening for discharging air bubbles; and

wherein said multitude of bubble generator units is provided in said slot in a side by side manner along the length of said slot such that said slot is filled and substantially closed off by said bubble generator units, and such that said inlet openings of said bubble generator units face the interior of the hull and the bottom surfaces with the outlet openings of said bubble generator units face the exterior of the hull, wherein the bubble generator units are mounted in said slots by means of mounting means, said mounting means being fixed to the longitudinal edges of said slot along the entire length thereof, and wherein said bubble generator units are mounted to said mounting means in a releasable manner.

13. The vessel according to claim 12, wherein the vessel is a self propelled ship or a vessel which is to be towed by another vessel.