

## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

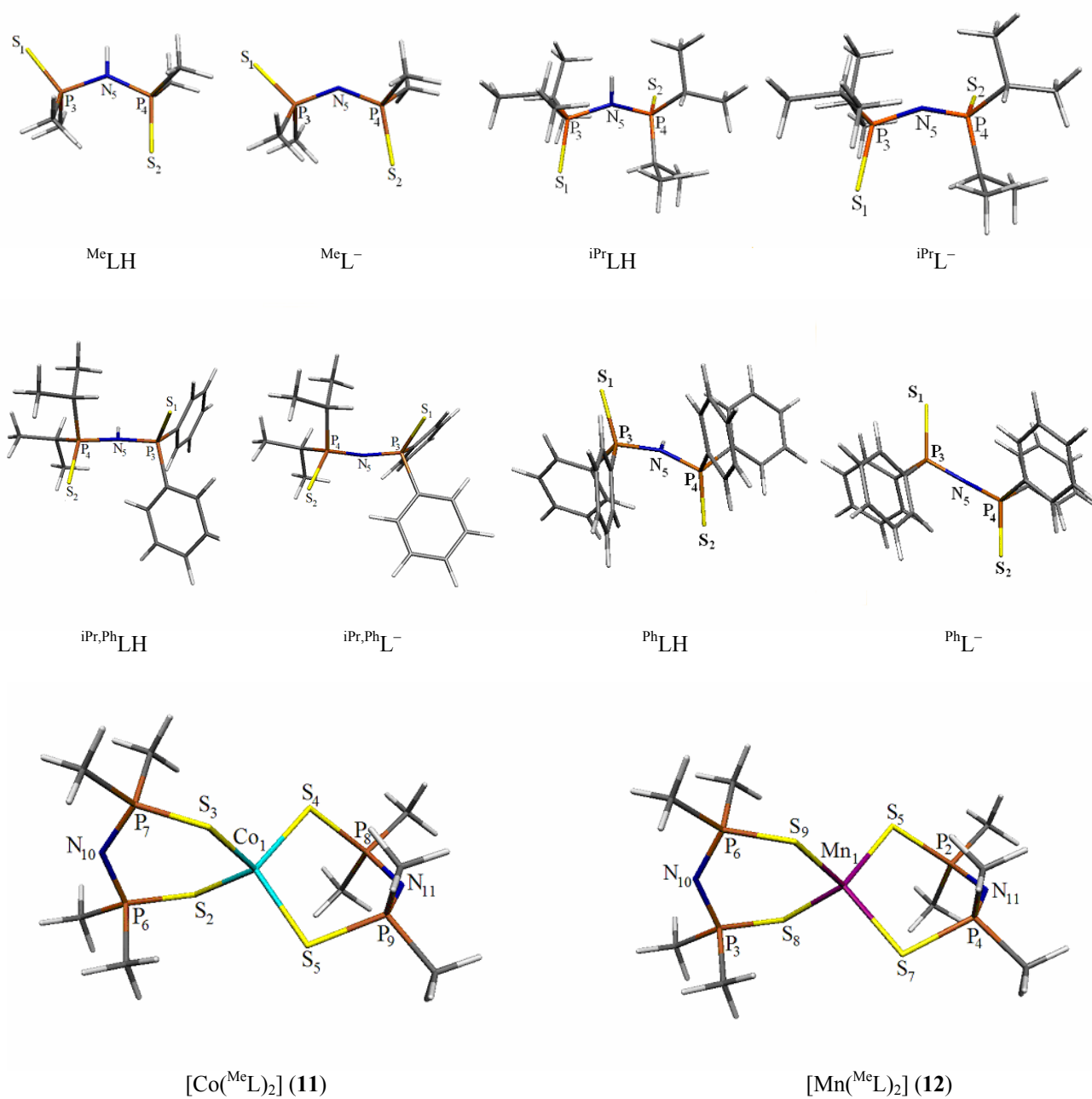
**Structural, spectroscopic and magnetic properties of  $M[R_2P(E)NP(E)R'_2]_2$  complexes,  $M = Co, Mn, E = S, Se$  and  $R, R' = Ph$  or  $^iPr$ . Covalency of M–S bonds from experimental data and theoretical calculations**

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**Fig. 1** Ground state optimized structures of the LH and L<sup>-</sup> forms of the ligands, as well as of complexes 11 and 12.

**Table S1** Selected bond lengths (Å) and angles (°) for complexes **3**, **5**, **6** and **7**

Complex 3			
Co(1)-S(2)	2.3061(4)	P(1)-N(1)	1.5826(12)
Co(1)-S(2)#1	2.3061(4)	P(2)-N(1)	1.5915(12)
Co(1)-S(1)	2.3356(4)	P(1)-C(11)	1.8109(15)
Co(1)-S(1)#1	2.3356(4)	P(1)-C(12)	1.8189(15)
P(1)-S(1)	2.0194(5)	P(2)-C(13)	1.8196(15)
P(2)-S(2)	2.0361(5)	P(2)-C(14)	1.8293(15)
S(2)-Co(1)-S(2)#1	110.69(2)	N(1)-P(1)-C(11)	106.70(7)
S(2)-Co(1)-S(1)	114.225(13)	N(1)-P(1)-C(12)	110.30(7)
S(2)#1-Co(1)-S(1)	110.599(13)	C(11)-P(1)-C(12)	103.81(6)
S(2)-Co(1)-S(1)#1	110.599(13)	N(1)-P(1)-S(1)	118.39(5)
S(2)#1-Co(1)-S(1)#1	114.225(13)	C(11)-P(1)-S(1)	108.67(5)
S(1)-Co(1)-S(1)#1	95.84(2)	C(12)-P(1)-S(1)	107.99(5)
P(1)-S(1)-Co(1)	98.553(18)	P(1)-N(1)-P(2)#1	139.21(8)
Symmetry transformations used to generate equivalent atoms: #1 -x,y,-z+3/2			

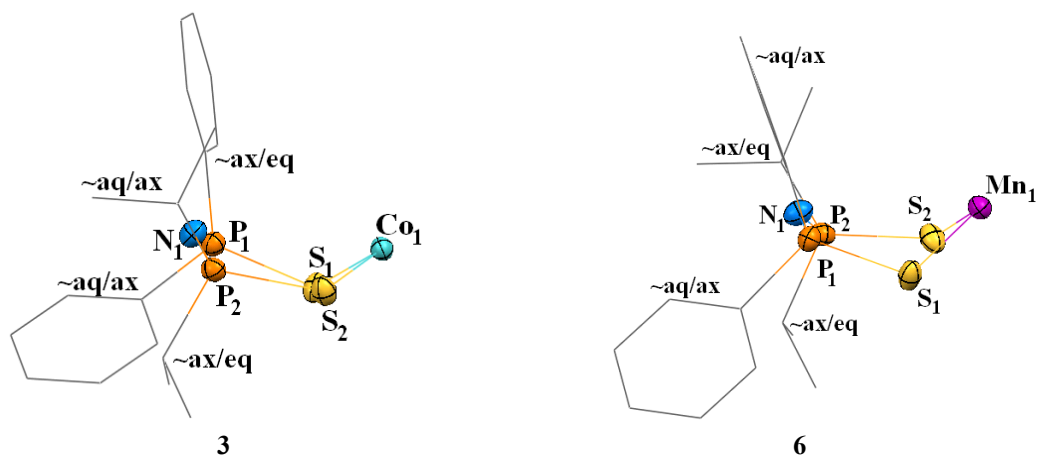
Complex 5					
Mn(1)-S(1)	2.4464(6)	Mn(1)-S(2)	2.4379(6)	Mn(1)-S(3)	2.4404(6)
P(1)-N(1)	1.5906(17)	P(2)-N(1)	1.5940(17)	P(3)-N(2)	1.5914(17)
P(1)-S(1)	2.0270(7)	P(2)-S(2)	2.0271(7)	P(3)-S(3)	2.0311(7)
P(1)-C(11)	1.826(2)	P(1)-C(12)	1.831(2)	P(2)-C(13)	1.830(2)
P(3)-C(16)	1.827(2)	P(3)-C(15)	1.834(2)	P(4)-C(17)	1.828(2)
P(1)-N(1)-P(2)	138.20(11)	P(3)-N(2)-P(4)	139.87(12)	S(1)-Mn(1)-S(2)	109.59(2)
S(1)-Mn(1)-S(3)	107.35(2)	S(2)-Mn(1)-S(4)	108.16(2)	S(1)-Mn(1)-S(4)	111.53(2)
N(1)-P(1)-C(11)	106.21(9)	N(1)-P(1)-C(12)	111.04(9)	N(2)-P(3)-C(15)	110.65(10)
N(1)-P(2)-C(13)	106.14(9)	N(1)-P(2)-C(14)	110.88(9)	N(2)-P(4)-C(17)	105.95(9)
N(1)-P(1)-S(1)	119.08(7)	N(1)-P(2)-S(2)	118.65(7)	N(2)-P(3)-S(3)	118.36(7)
P(1)-S(1)-Mn(1)	105.60(3)	P(2)-S(2)-Mn(1)	105.57(3)	P(3)-S(3)-Mn(1)	105.56(3)
Mn(1)-S(4)	2.4432(6)	P(4)-N(2)	1.5905(17)	P(4)-S(4)	2.0291(7)
P(4)-S(4)	2.0291(7)	P(2)-C(14)	1.831(2)	P(4)-C(18)	1.829(2)
S(2)-Mn(1)-S(3)	109.37(2)	S(3)-Mn(1)-S(4)	110.82(2)	N(2)-P(3)-C(16)	106.38(9)
S(3)-Mn(1)-S(4)	110.82(2)	N(2)-P(4)-C(18)	111.29(9)	N(2)-P(4)-S(4)	119.14(7)
N(2)-P(3)-C(16)	106.38(9)	N(2)-P(4)-S(4)	119.14(7)	P(4)-S(4)-Mn(1)	104.75(3)
N(2)-P(4)-C(18)	111.29(9)				

Complex 6					
Mn(1)-S(1)	2.4578(10)	Mn(1)-S(2)	2.4394(10)	Mn(1)-S(3)	2.4515(10)
P(1)-N(1)	1.583(3)	P(2)-N(1)	1.590(3)	P(3)-N(2)	1.580(3)
P(1)-S(1)	2.0142(12)	P(2)-S(2)	2.0286(13)	P(3)-S(3)	2.0156(12)
P(1)-C(11)	1.820(3)	P(1)-C(12)	1.815(4)	P(2)-C(15)	1.829(4)
P(3)-C(13)	1.812(4)	P(3)-C(14)	1.817(3)	P(4)-C(17)	1.822(3)
P(1)-N(1)-P(2)	140.8(2)	P(3)-N(2)-P(4)	141.2(2)	S(1)-Mn(1)-S(2)	110.02(4)
S(1)-Mn(1)-S(3)	96.91(3)	S(2)-Mn(1)-S(4)	107.07(4)	S(1)-Mn(1)-S(4)	117.01(4)
N(1)-P(1)-C(11)	110.21(16)	N(1)-P(1)-C(12)	106.46(17)	N(1)-P(2)-C(15)	104.60(17)
N(2)-P(3)-C(13)	106.62(17)	N(2)-P(3)-C(14)	110.28(16)	N(2)-P(4)-C(17)	112.27(17)
N(1)-P(1)-S(1)	118.50(12)	N(1)-P(2)-S(2)	116.96(12)	N(2)-P(3)-S(3)	118.55(12)
P(1)-S(1)-Mn(1)	95.98(4)	P(2)-S(2)-Mn(1)	99.35(5)	P(3)-S(3)-Mn(1)	96.81(4)
Mn(1)-S(4)	2.4348(10)	P(4)-N(2)	1.593(3)	P(4)-S(4)	2.0269(13)
P(4)-S(4)	2.0269(13)	P(2)-C(16)	1.828(4)	P(4)-C(18)	1.836(4)
S(2)-Mn(1)-S(3)	116.80(4)	S(3)-Mn(1)-S(4)	109.22(4)	N(1)-P(2)-C(16)	112.08(16)
S(3)-Mn(1)-S(4)	109.22(4)	N(1)-P(2)-C(16)	112.08(16)	N(2)-P(4)-C(18)	105.12(17)
N(1)-P(2)-C(16)	112.08(16)	N(2)-P(4)-C(18)	105.12(17)	N(2)-P(4)-S(4)	117.29(12)
N(2)-P(4)-C(18)	105.12(17)	N(2)-P(4)-S(4)	117.29(12)	P(4)-S(4)-Mn(1)	100.93(5)
N(2)-P(4)-S(4)	117.29(12)				

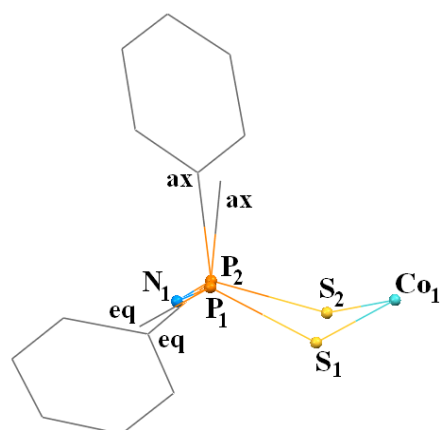
Complex 7					
Mn(1)-Se(1)	2.5643(11)	Mn(1)-Se(2)	2.5691(11)	Mn(1)-Se(3)	2.5603(11)
N(1)-P(1)	1.595(5)	N(1)-P(2)	1.589(5)	N(2)-P(3)	1.585(5)
P(1)-Se(1)	2.1721(16)	P(2)-Se(2)	2.1721(15)	P(3)-Se(3)	2.1804(16)
P(1)-C(11)	1.821(3)	P(1)-C(12)	1.821(3)	P(2)-C(13)	1.823(3)
P(3)-C(15)	1.823(3)	P(3)-C(16)	1.818(3)	P(4)-C(17)	1.806(3)
P(1)-N(1)-P(2)	132.2(3)	P(3)-N(2)-P(4)	136.3(3)	Se(1)-Mn(1)-Se(2)	112.81(4)
Se(1)-Mn(1)-Se(3)	108.01(4)	Se(2)-Mn(1)-Se(4)	102.90(4)	Se(1)-Mn(1)-Se(4)	105.44(4)
N(1)-P(1)-C(11)	104.9(2)	N(1)-P(1)-C(12)	110.1(2)	N(1)-P(2)-C(13)	109.9(2)
N(2)-P(3)-C(15)	110.8(2)	N(2)-P(3)-C(16)	104.4(2)	N(2)-P(4)-C(17)	107.6(2)
N(1)-P(1)-Se(1)	119.3(2)	N(1)-P(2)-Se(2)	117.6(2)	N(2)-P(3)-Se(3)	119.1(2)
P(1)-Se(1)-Mn(1)	97.43(5)	P(2)-Se(2)-Mn(1)	92.77(5)	P(3)-Se(3)-Mn(1)	94.22(5)
Mn(1)-Se(4)	2.5344(11)	N(2)-P(4)	1.589(5)	P(4)-Se(4)	2.1727(16)
N(2)-P(4)	1.589(5)	P(2)-C(14)	1.814(3)	P(4)-C(18)	1.818(3)
P(4)-Se(4)	2.1727(16)	P(4)-C(18)	1.818(3)	Se(2)-Mn(1)-Se(3)	113.75(4)
P(2)-C(14)	1.814(3)	Se(2)-Mn(1)-Se(3)	113.75(4)	Se(3)-Mn(1)-Se(4)	113.65(4)
P(4)-C(18)	1.818(3)	Se(3)-Mn(1)-Se(4)	113.65(4)	N(1)-P(2)-C(14)	105.1(2)
Se(2)-Mn(1)-Se(3)	113.75(4)	N(1)-P(2)-C(14)	105.1(2)	N(2)-P(4)-C(18)	108.1(2)
Se(3)-Mn(1)-Se(4)	113.65(4)	N(2)-P(4)-C(18)	108.1(2)	N(2)-P(4)-Se(4)	119.42(19)
N(1)-P(2)-C(14)	105.1(2)	N(2)-P(4)-Se(4)	119.42(19)	P(4)-Se(4)-Mn(1)	102.67(5)
N(2)-P(4)-C(18)	108.1(2)	P(4)-Se(4)-Mn(1)	102.67(5)		

**Table S2** Crystallographic data for complexes **3**, **5**, **6** and **7**

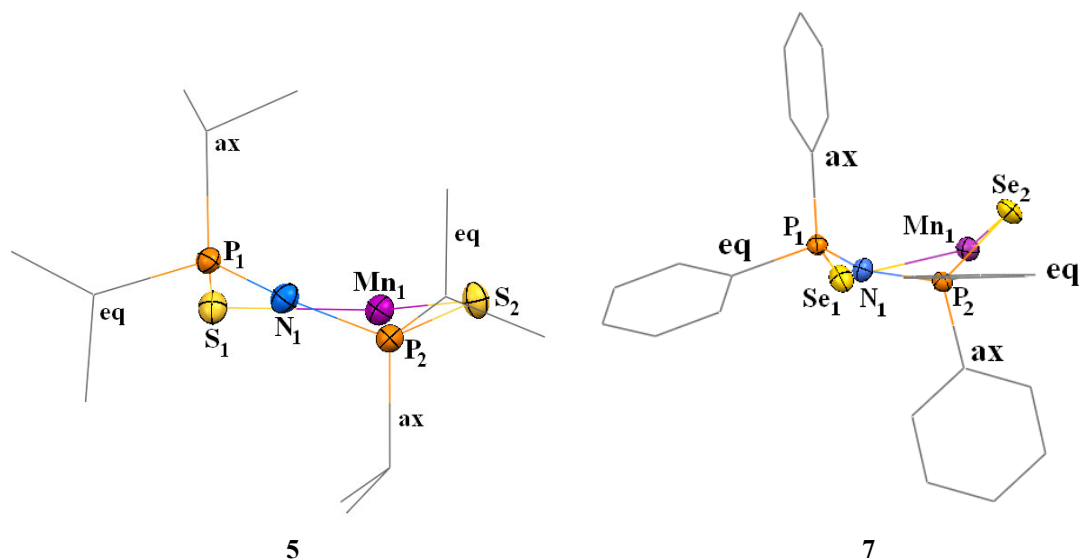
Complexes	<b>3</b> <sup>a</sup>	<b>5</b> <sup>b</sup>	<b>6</b> <sup>c</sup>	<b>7</b> <sup>d</sup>
Empirical formula	C <sub>36</sub> H <sub>48</sub> Co <sub>1</sub> N <sub>2</sub> P <sub>4</sub> S <sub>4</sub>	C <sub>24</sub> H <sub>56</sub> Mn <sub>1</sub> N <sub>2</sub> P <sub>4</sub> S <sub>4</sub>	C <sub>37</sub> H <sub>50</sub> Cl <sub>2</sub> Mn <sub>1</sub> N <sub>2</sub> P <sub>4</sub> S <sub>4</sub>	C <sub>48</sub> H <sub>40</sub> Mn <sub>1</sub> N <sub>2</sub> P <sub>4</sub> Se <sub>4</sub>
Fw	819.81	679.77	900.75	1139.48
Crystal system	Monoclinic	Triclinic	Triclinic	Triclinic
Space group	C 2/c	P -1	P 1	P -1
Crystal size, mm	0.42 x 0.25 x 0.18	0.30x0.71x0.52	0.20x0.21x0.30	0.35 x 0.15 x 0.15
Crystal shape and colour	Block, blue	Block, pink	Block, colourless	Block, colourless
A (Å)	12.6570(3)	9.2500(3)	9.9405(3)	13.7120(4)
B (Å)	15.6482(4)	12.7940(4)	10.2453(3)	13.8534(4)
C (Å)	21.4667(6)	16.3398(5)	11.2043(3)	14.1994(4)
A (deg)	90	79.2030(10)	96.560(2)	65.773(2)
B (deg)	103.356(2)	78.1480(10)	101.4900(10)	82.480(2)
Γ (deg)	90	69.0760(10)	100.4150(10)	70.427(2)
Volume (Å <sup>3</sup> )	4136.69(18)	1753.93(10)	1086.35(5)	2317.53(12)
Z	4	2	1	2
P calc, Mg/m <sup>3</sup>	1.316	1.287	1.377	1.633
Reflns collected/2θmax	30143/61.0	17062/58.0	11470/114.4	41533/61.0
no reflections for shell	5771	7172	6648	6696
R1 based on F/ goodness of fit	0.0327 <sup>a</sup> /1.050	0.0384 <sup>b</sup> /1.039	0.0421 <sup>c</sup> /1.094	0.0688 <sup>d</sup> /1.203
wR2 (F>4σ(F))	0.0901	0.0957	0.1035	0.1760
no of data/params/restr	6000/0/215	8180/0/316	11470/3/452	12970/0/436
Residual density, eÅ <sup>-3</sup>	0.575 / -0.237	0.595 and -0.394	0.485/-0.332	1.334 / -0.750
Weighted schemes:				
a	complex 3: w = 1/[s <sup>2</sup> (Fo <sup>2</sup> ) + (0.0501P) <sup>2</sup> + 1.6942P] where P = (Fo <sup>2</sup> + 2Fc <sup>2</sup> )/3 and 4997 data			
b	complex 5: w = 1/[s <sup>2</sup> (Fo <sup>2</sup> ) + (0.0470P) <sup>2</sup> + 1.0297P] where P = (Fo <sup>2</sup> + 2Fc <sup>2</sup> )/3 and 10848 data			
c	complex 6: w = 1/[s <sup>2</sup> (Fo <sup>2</sup> ) + (0.0482P) <sup>2</sup> + 0.0000P] where P = (Fo <sup>2</sup> + 2Fc <sup>2</sup> )/3 and 7228 data			
d	complex 7: w = 1/[s <sup>2</sup> (Fo <sup>2</sup> ) + (0.0369P) <sup>2</sup> + 20.3487P] where P = (Fo <sup>2</sup> + 2Fc <sup>2</sup> )/3 and 10646 data			



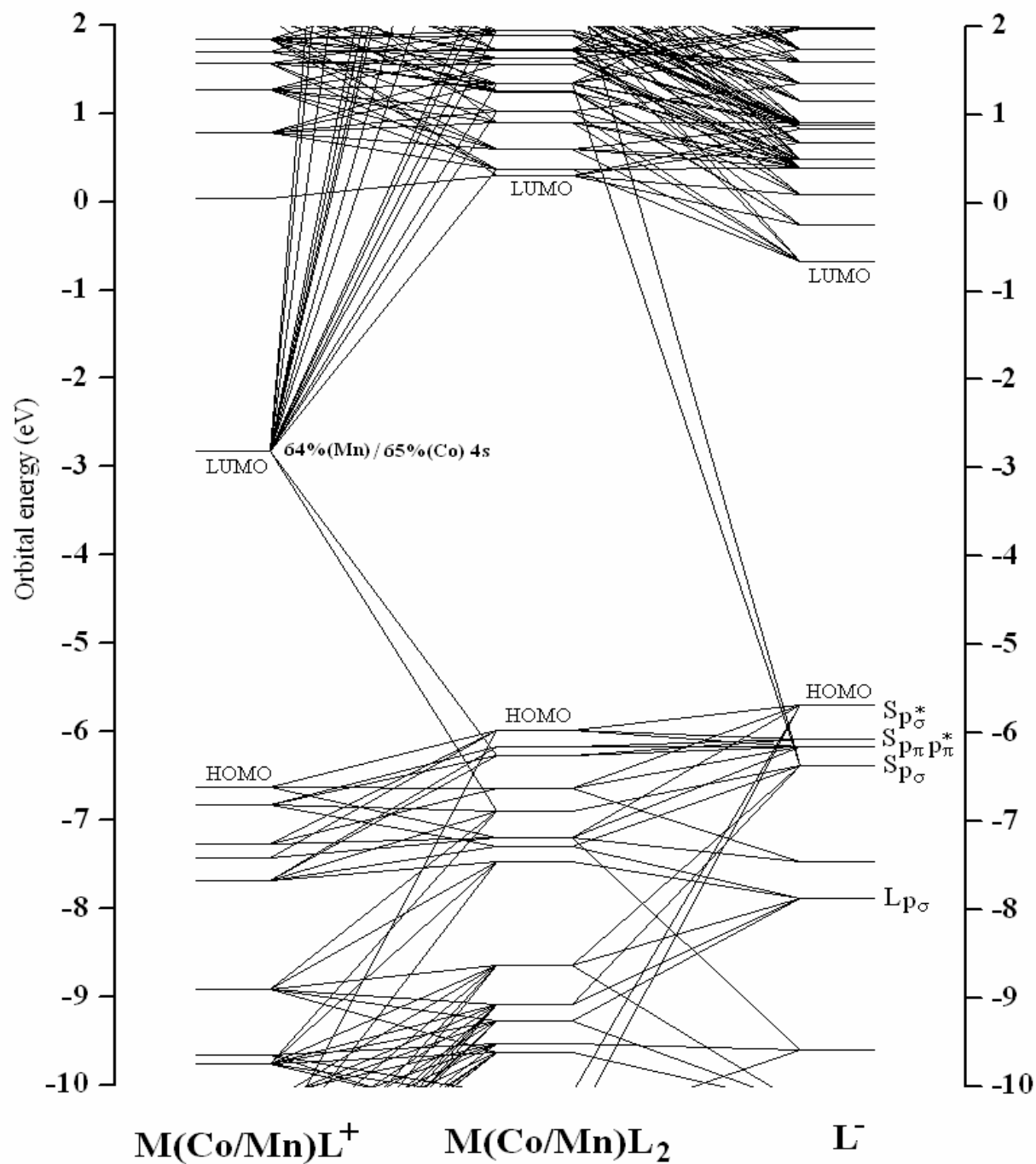
**Fig. S1** Pseudo-boat conformation of the MSPNPS rings in complexes **3** and **6** with M (M = Co or Mn) and N at the apices and distorted axial-equatorial R-R' interactions.



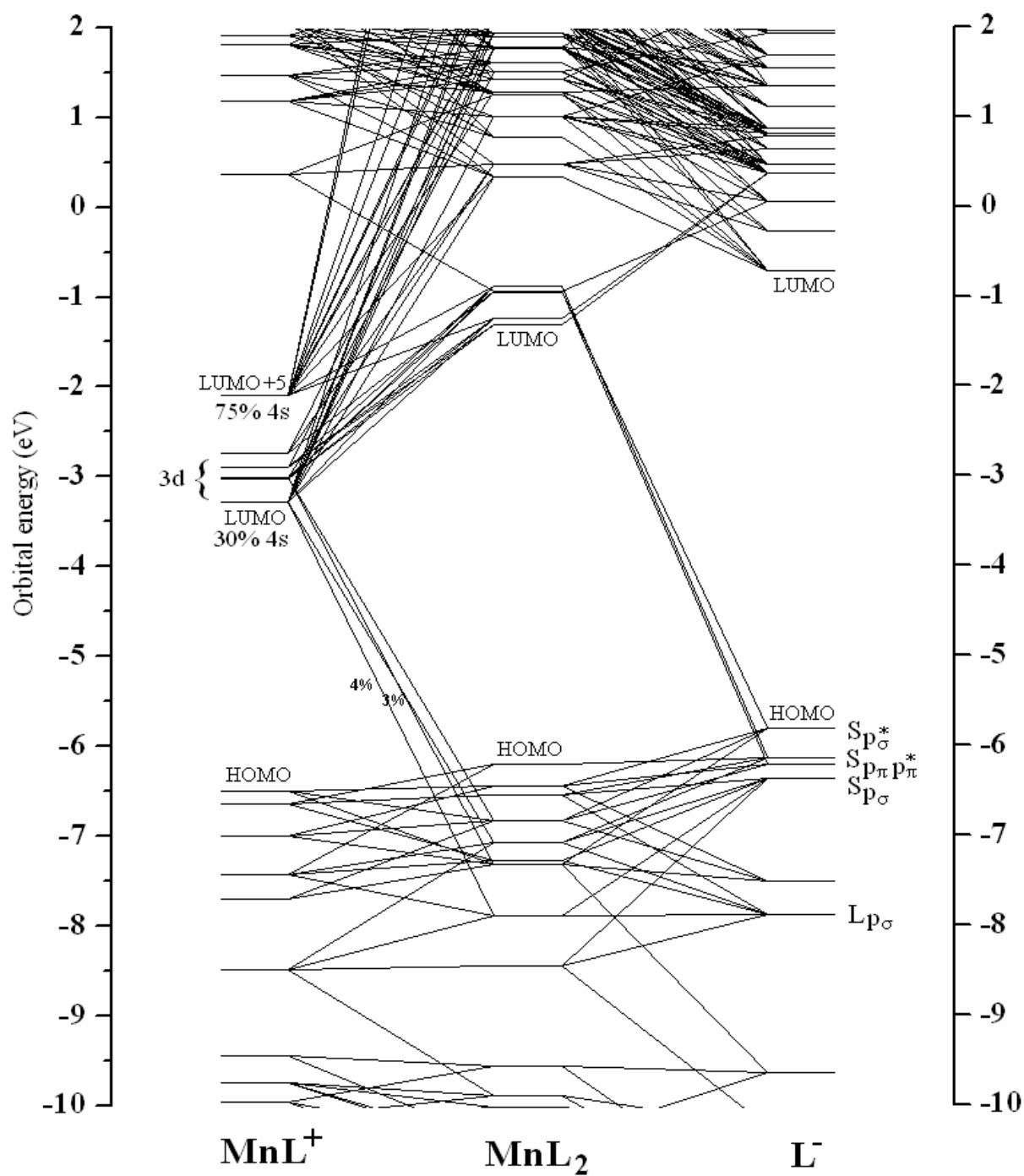
**Fig. S2** Pseudo-chair conformation of the CoSPNPS ring in complex **4** with the Co and N atoms at the apices and distorted axial-equatorial R-R' interactions.



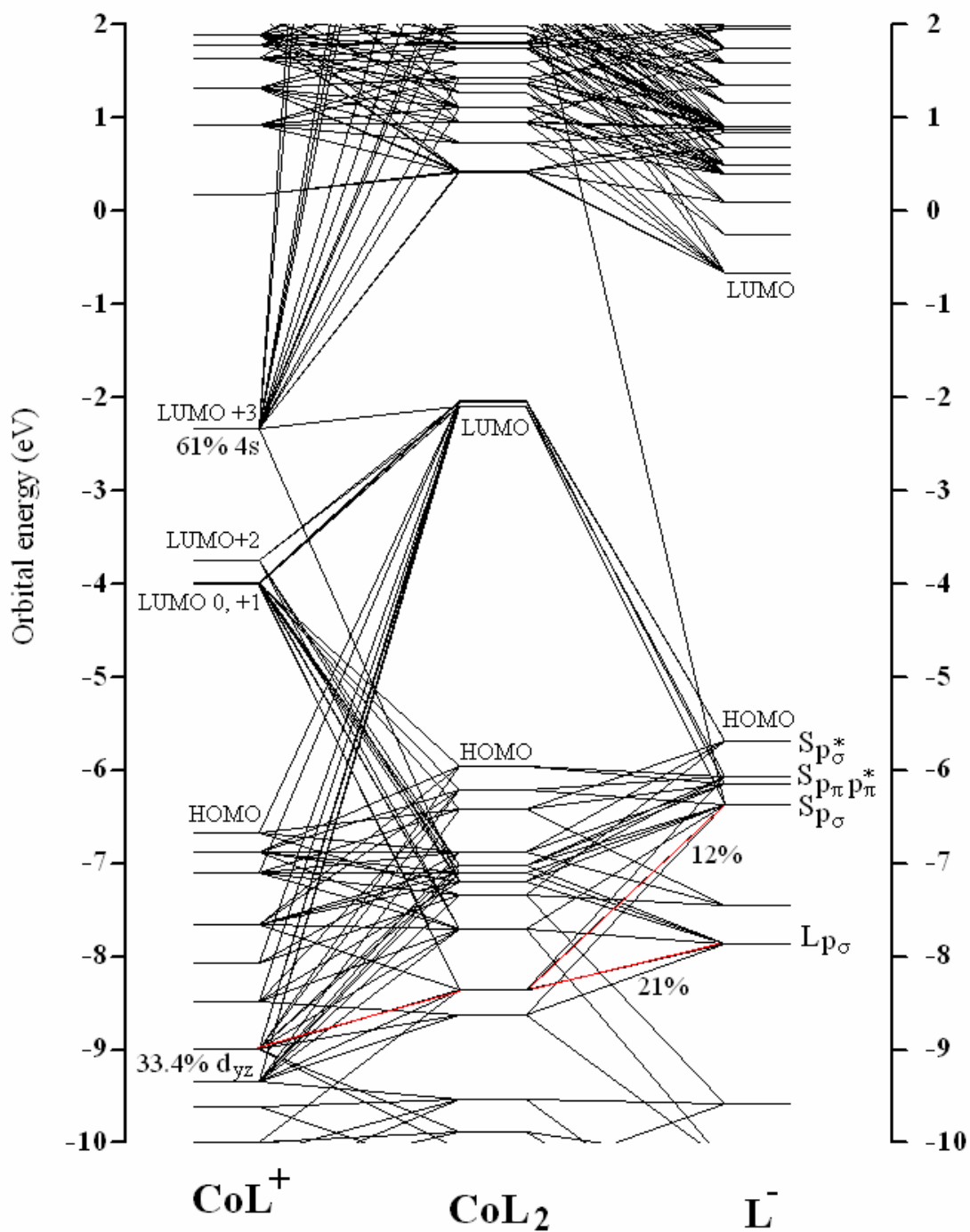
**Fig. S3** Pseudo-boat conformation of the MnEPNPE (E = S or Se) rings in complexes **5** and **7** with the P and S atoms at the apices and axial-equatorial R-R interactions.



**Fig. S4**  $\alpha$ -spin orbital interaction diagram from an AOMix-CDA calculation on complexes **11** and **12**, with respect to a B3LYP/TZVP SP calculation on the ground state optimised structure. Molecular orbitals of the fragments  $ML^+$  and  $L^-$  are shifted by 4.0 and  $-4.6$  eV respectively. Lines connect all MO-FO orbital pairs with the corresponding MO-FO character greater than 2%.



**Fig. S5** b-spin orbital interaction diagram from an AOMix-CDA calculation on complex **12**, with respect to a B3LYP/TZVP SP calculation on the ground state optimised structure. Molecular orbitals of the fragments  $ML^+$  and  $L^-$  are shifted by 4.0 and  $-4.6$  eV respectively. Lines connect all MO-FO orbital pairs with the corresponding MO-FO character greater than 2%.



**Fig. S6** b-spin orbital interaction diagram from an AOMix-CDA calculation on complex **11**, with respect to a B3LYP/TZVP SP calculation on the ground state optimised structure. Molecular orbitals of the fragments  $\text{ML}^+$  and  $\text{L}^-$  are shifted by 4.0 and  $-4.6$  eV respectively. Lines connect all MO-FO orbital pairs with the corresponding MO-FO character greater than 2%.