

## Methylene-bis[(aminomethyl)phosphinic acids]: synthesis, acid-base and coordination properties

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Table S1. Overall protonation constants ( $\log\beta$ ) of the title ligands.

Constant	$H_2L^1$	$H_2L^2$	$H_2L^3$
$\log b_1$	10.00(1)	9.84(1)	9.49(3)
$\log b_2$	18.89(1)	18.39(1)	18.29(2)
$\log b_3$	20.24(2)	–	20.38(2)

Table S2. Overall stability constants ( $\log\beta_{hlm}$ ) of complexes with the title ligands.

Metal ion	<i>h l m</i>	$H_2L^1$	$H_2L^2$	$H_2L^3$
$Cu^{2+}$	0 1 1	10.76(2)	11.13(1)	9.87(1)
	–1 1 1	2.35(3)	3.06(2)	1.05(2)
	–2 1 1	–8.91(4)	–9.23(3)	–9.48(4)
$Zn^{2+}$	0 1 1	6.78(2)	6.51(1)	6.29(1)
	–1 1 1	–1.26(2)	–2.26(2)	–2.29(1)
	–2 1 1	–11.98(7)	–13.28(4)	–
$Ni^{2+}$	0 1 1	7.87(2)	7.13(1)	7.51(1)
	–1 1 1	–1.17(4)	–1.44(2)	–0.90(2)
	–2 1 1	–13.94(8)	–13.94(4)	–
$Co^{2+}$	0 1 1	<sup>a</sup>	7.28(6)	5.79(1)
	–1 1 1	–0.73(4)	–0.56(4)	<sup>a</sup>
	–2 1 1	–8.91(5)	–8.57(5)	<sup>a</sup>
	–3 1 1	–20.60(7)	–18.60(6)	<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> not determined due to the formation of precipitate

Figure S1. Distribution diagrams of  $\text{H}_2\text{L}^2$  (A) and  $\text{H}_2\text{L}^3$  (B) in absence of metal ions ( $c_{\text{L}} = 4 \text{ mM}$ ,  $I = 0.1 \text{ M KNO}_3$ ,  $25^\circ\text{C}$ ).

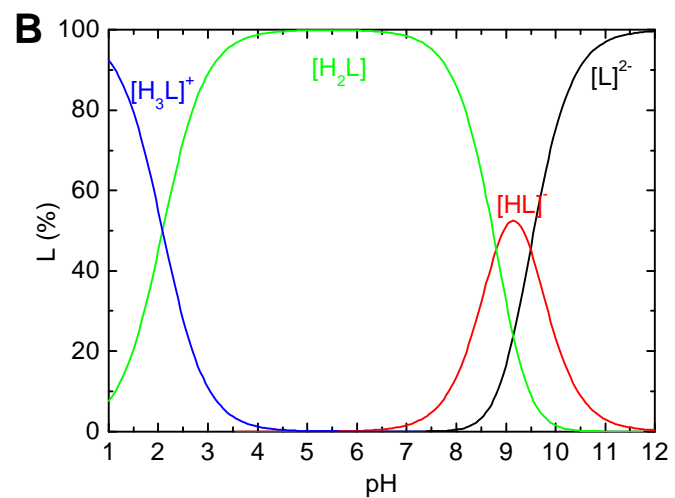
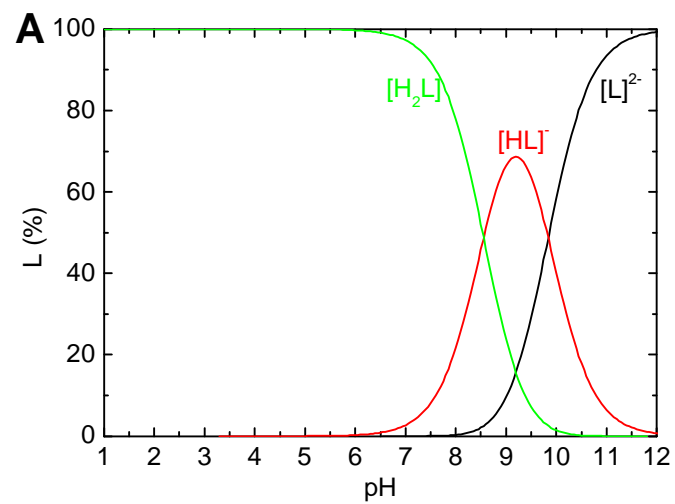


Figure S2. Distribution diagrams of  $\text{H}_2\text{L}^2$  in the presence of  $\text{Cu}^{2+}$  (A),  $\text{Zn}^{2+}$  (B),  $\text{Ni}^{2+}$  (C) and  $\text{Co}^{2+}$  (D) ions ( $c_{\text{L}} = c_{\text{M}} = 4 \text{ mM}$ ,  $I = 0.1 \text{ M KNO}_3$ ,  $25^\circ\text{C}$ ).

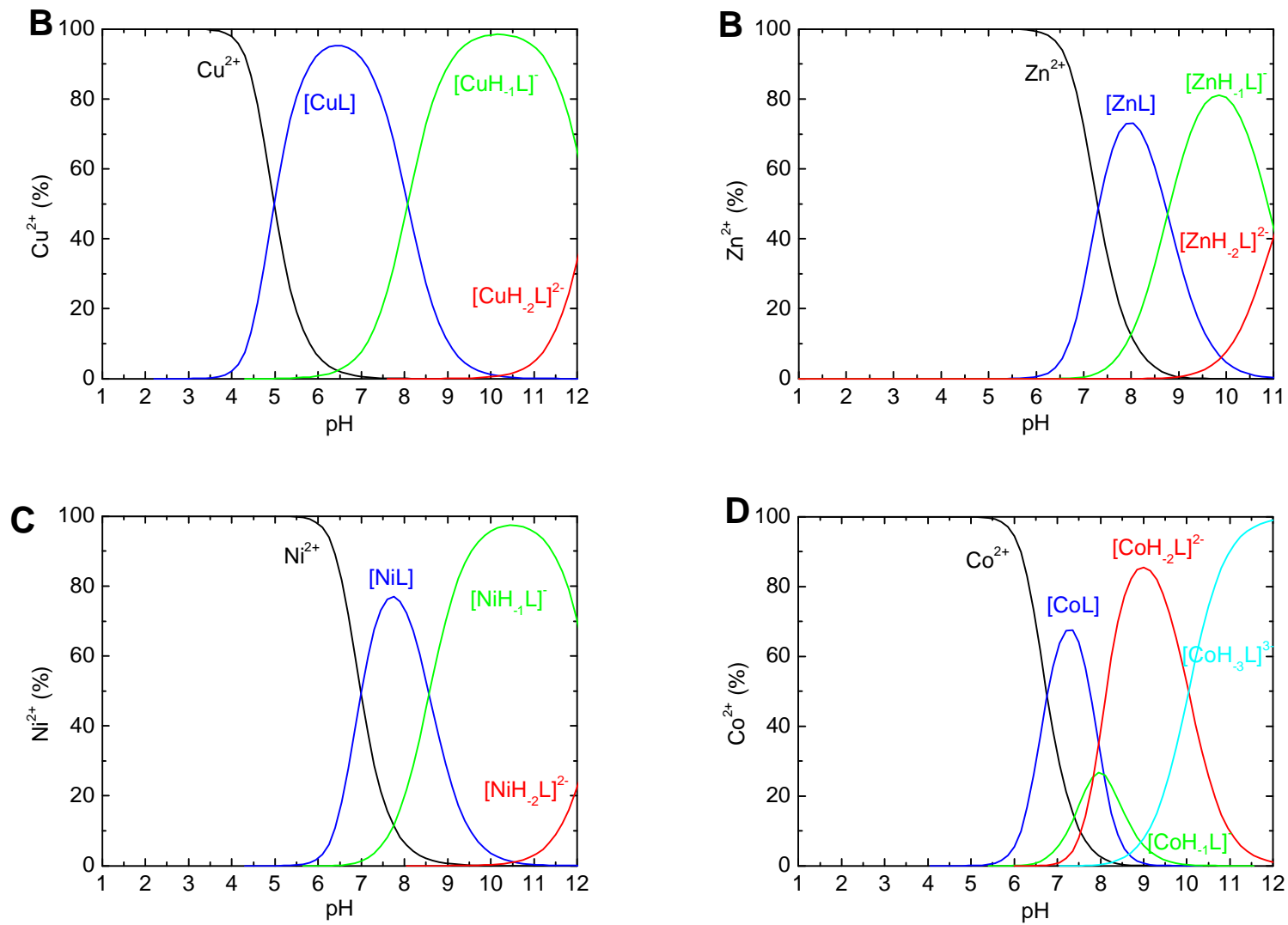


Figure S3. Distribution diagrams of  $H_2L^3$  in the presence of  $Cu^{2+}$  (A),  $Zn^{2+}$  (B),  $Ni^{2+}$  (C) and  $Co^{2+}$  (D) ions ( $c_L = c_M = 4$  mM,  $I = 0.1$  M  $KNO_3$ ,  $25^\circ C$ ).

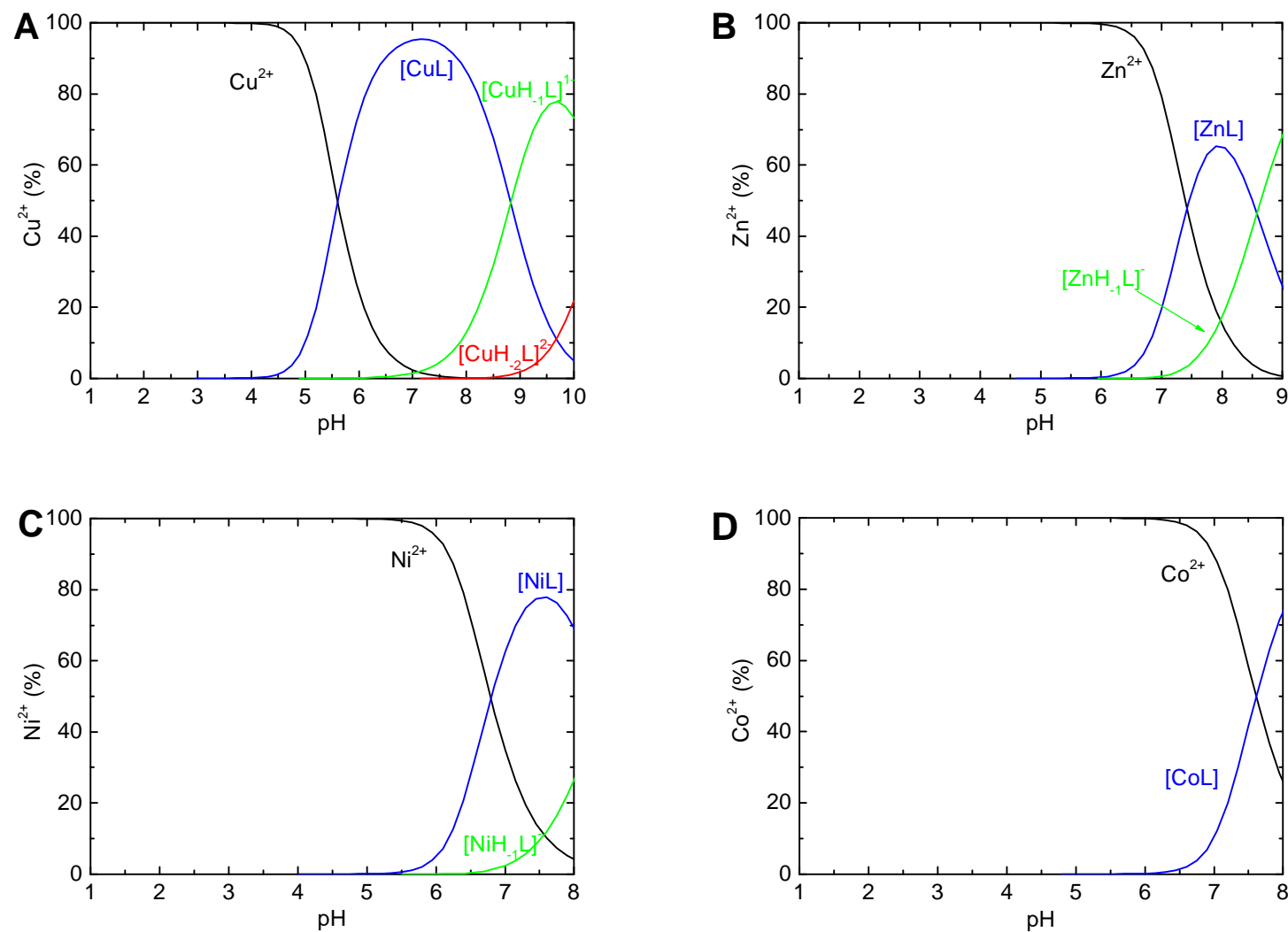


Figure S4. High resolution MS spectra of  $[\text{CuL}^1]$  (A) and  $[\text{CuL}^2]$  (B) complexes (M:L = 1:1, pH 10).

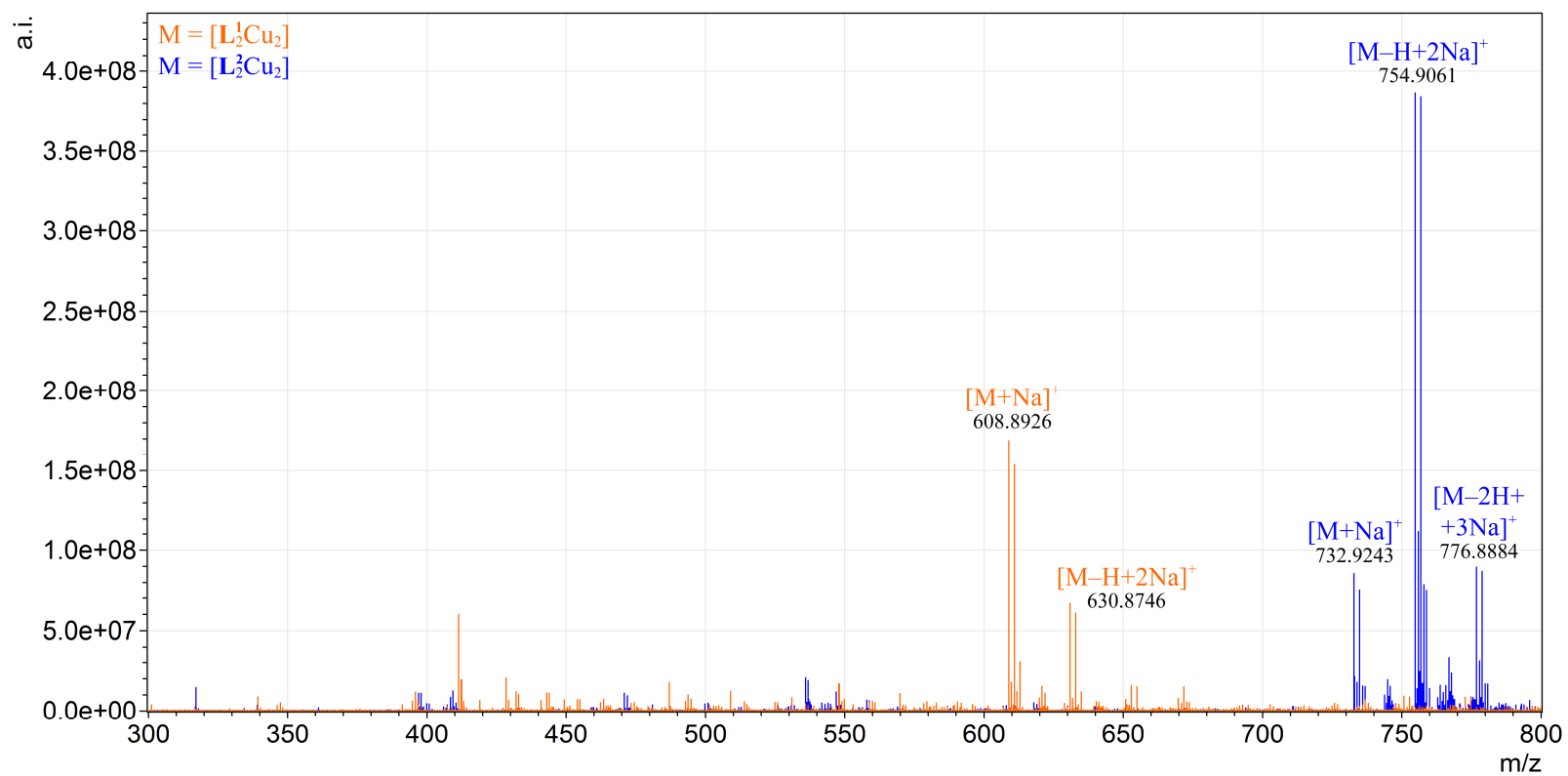


Table S3. Geometry of the bis(phosphinate) moiety.

	Distances P–C [Å]	Distances P–O [Å]	Distances C–O [Å]	Angles P–C–P (°)
$\text{H}_2\text{L}^1 \cdot 0.5\text{H}_2\text{O}$	1.846(2) 1.854(2)	1.5049(11) 1.5121(11) 1.5024(11) 1.5106(11)	1.436(2)	114.39(8)
$\text{H}_2\text{L}^3 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$	1.8123(9)	1.5055(9) 1.5100(9)	–	119.44(9)
$\text{Li}_2[\text{Co}_4(\text{H}_1\text{L}^1)_3(\text{OH})] \cdot 17.5\text{H}_2\text{O}$	1.849(3) 1.855(3) 1.846(3) 1.854(3) 1.847(3) 1.851(3)	1.503(2) 1.528(2) 1.509(2) 1.526(2) 1.509(2) 1.520(2) 1.513(2) 1.521(2) 1.502(2) 1.526(2) 1.493(2) 1.531(2)	1.442(4) 1.440(3) 1.449(3)	107.2(2) 107.2(1) 108.6(2)
$(\text{CN}_3\text{H}_6)_4[\text{Cu}_2(\text{H}_1\text{L}^2)_2]\text{CO}_3 \cdot 10\text{H}_2\text{O}$	1.859(2) 1.866(2) 1.868(2) 1.872(2)	1.496(2) 1.511(2) 1.508(2) 1.511(2) 1.495(2) 1.504(2) 1.503(2) 1.509(2)	1.430(3) 1.430(3)	109.57(11) 109.32(11)

Table S4. Geometry of the coordination sphere of Cu<sup>2+</sup> ions in (H<sub>2</sub>N=C(NH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>2</sub>)<sub>4</sub>[Cu<sub>2</sub>(H<sub>-1</sub>L<sup>2</sup>)<sub>2</sub>]CO<sub>3</sub>·10H<sub>2</sub>O.

Distances (Å)	Angles (°)	Angles (°)
	Unit 1	
Cu1 – N1A 2.001(2)	N1A – Cu1 – O41A 90.02(7)	N1B – Cu2 – O41B 89.05(7)
Cu1 – O41A 1.988(2)	N1A – Cu1 – O41B 164.70(7)	N1B – Cu2 – O41A 163.77(7)
Cu1 – O41B 1.928(2)	N1A – Cu1 – N7B 93.02(8)	N1B – Cu2 – N7A 92.23(8)
Cu1 – N7B 1.998(2)	N1A – Cu1 – O31A 85.38(7)	N1B – Cu2 – O31B 85.83(7)
Cu1 – O31A 2.639(2)	N1A – Cu1 – O51B 104.57(6)	N1B – Cu2 – O51A 101.96(7)
Cu1 – O51B 3.090(2)	O41A – Cu1 – O41B 78.37(6)	O41B – Cu2 – O41A 78.49(6)
	O41A – Cu1 – N7B 174.52(7)	O41B – Cu2 – N7A 175.49(8)
Cu2 – N1B 1.987(2)	O41A – Cu1 – O31A 73.92(6)	O41B – Cu2 – O31B 72.57(6)
Cu2 – O41B 1.984(2)	O41A – Cu1 – O51B 114.64(5)	O41B – Cu2 – O51A 114.39(6)
Cu2 – O41A 1.927(2)	O41B – Cu1 – N7B 99.38(7)	O41A – Cu2 – N7A 101.00(7)
Cu2 – N7A 2.004(2)	O41B – Cu1 – O31A 100.68(6)	O41A – Cu2 – O31B 100.07(6)
Cu2 – O31B 2.717(2)	O41B – Cu1 – O51B 72.08(6)	O41A – Cu2 – O51A 74.41(6)
Cu2 – O51A 2.908(2)	N7B – Cu1 – O31A 101.78(7)	N7A – Cu2 – O31B 103.20(7)
	N7B – Cu1 – O51B 68.95(6)	N7A – Cu2 – O51A 69.56(6)
	O31A – Cu1 – O51B 166.41(5)	O31B – Cu2 – O51A 169.35(5)
	Unit 2	
Cu3 – N1C 2.031(2)	N1C – Cu3 – O41C 94.04(7)	N1D – Cu4 – O41D 95.30(8)
Cu3 – O41C 1.959(1)	N1C – Cu3 – O41D 167.67(7)	N1D – Cu4 – O41C 168.18(9)
Cu3 – O41D 1.976(2)	N1C – Cu3 – N7D 96.32(8)	N1D – Cu4 – N7C 98.75(9)
Cu3 – N7D 2.026(2)	N1C – Cu3 – O31C 79.69(7)	N1D – Cu4 – O31D 79.20(7)
Cu3 – O31C 2.534(2)	N1C – Cu3 – O51D 93.17(7)	N1D – Cu4 – O51C 91.49(7)
Cu3 – O51D 2.503(2)	O41C – Cu3 – O41D 78.72(6)	O41D – Cu4 – O41C 78.58(6)
	O41C – Cu3 – N7D 167.96(7)	O41D – Cu4 – N7C 163.04(7)
Cu4 – N1D 2.024(2)	O41C – Cu3 – O31C 79.60(6)	O41D – Cu4 – O31D 81.02(6)
Cu4 – O41D 1.962(1)	O41C – Cu3 – O51D 101.60(6)	O41D – Cu4 – O51C 104.19(6)
Cu4 – O41C 1.979(2)	O41D – Cu3 – N7D 92.08(7)	O41C – Cu4 – N7C 89.13(7)
Cu4 – N7C 2.025(2)	O41D – Cu3 – O31C 108.41(6)	O41C – Cu4 – O31D 109.44(6)
Cu4 – O31D 2.529(2)	O41D – Cu3 – O51D 78.72(6)	O41C – Cu4 – O51C 80.38(6)
Cu4 – O51C 2.434(2)	N7D – Cu3 – O31C 96.23(7)	N7C – Cu4 – O31D 92.29(7)
	N7D – Cu3 – O51D 83.96(7)	N7C – Cu4 – O51C 84.96(7)
	O31C – Cu3 – O51D 172.84(5)	O31D – Cu4 – O51C 169.81(5)



Table S5. Geometry of the coordination sphere of Co<sup>2+</sup> ions in Li<sub>2</sub>[Co<sub>4</sub>(H<sub>-1</sub>L<sup>1</sup>)<sub>3</sub>(OH)]·17.5H<sub>2</sub>O.

Distances (Å)		Angles (°)		Angles (°)	
Co1 – O1	2.090(2)	O41A – Co1 – O1	82.56(8)	O1 – Co3 – O41C	83.95(8)
Co1 – O41A	2.101(2)	N1A – Co1 – O1	96.99(10)	O31B – Co3 – O41C	167.91(8)
Co1 – N1A	2.109(3)	O31C – Co1 – O1	92.40(9)	N1C – Co3 – O41C	100.73(9)
Co1 – O31C	2.121(2)	O51C – Co1 – O1	164.57(8)	O51B – Co3 – O41C	92.60(8)
Co1 – O51C	2.141(2)	O41C – Co1 – O1	81.79(8)	O41B – Co3 – O41C	83.62(7)
Co1 – O41C	2.145(2)	N1A – Co1 – O41A	100.01(9)	O31B – Co3 – O1	91.60(8)
		O31C – Co1 – O41A	168.56(8)	N1C – Co3 – O1	94.79(10)
Co2 – O1	2.063(2)	O51C – Co1 – O41A	94.25(8)	O51B – Co3 – O1	164.54(8)
Co2 – O41B	2.091(2)	O41C – Co1 – O41A	83.88(8)	O41B – Co3 – O1	81.90(8)
Co2 – O51A	2.120(2)	O31C – Co1 – N1A	90.77(9)	N1C – Co3 – O31B	90.82(9)
Co2 – N1B	2.124(3)	O51C – Co1 – N1A	98.44(10)	O51B – Co3 – O31B	88.71(8)
Co2 – O31A	2.131(2)	O41C – Co1 – N1A	175.77(9)	O41B – Co3 – O31B	84.63(8)
Co2 – O41A	2.162(2)	O51C – Co1 – O31C	87.88(9)	O51B – Co3 – N1C	100.65(10)
		O41C – Co1 – O31C	85.24(8)	O41B – Co3 – N1C	174.28(9)
Co3 – O41C	2.071(2)	O41C – Co1 – O41C	82.85(8)	O41B – Co3 – O51B	82.75(8)
Co3 – O1	2.075(2)				
Co3 – O31B	2.084(2)	O41B – Co2 – O1	84.70(8)	O41B – Co4 – N7B	94.95(9)
Co3 – N1C	2.111(3)	O51A – Co2 – O1	165.12(8)	N7C – Co4 – N7B	89.35(10)
Co3 – O51B	2.138(2)	N1B – Co2 – O1	97.05(9)	N7A – Co4 – N7B	90.99(10)
Co3 – O41B	2.192(2)	O31A – Co2 – O1	89.41(8)	O41A – Co4 – N7B	174.15(9)
		O41A – Co2 – O1	81.75(8)	O41C – Co4 – N7B	92.96(9)
Co4 – N7B	2.128(3)	O51A – Co2 – O41B	96.48(8)	N7C – Co4 – O41B	174.28(9)
Co4 – O41B	2.1470(2)	N1B – Co2 – O41B	98.64(9)	N7A – Co4 – O41B	91.91(9)
Co4 – N7C	2.148(3)	O31A – Co2 – O41B	167.09(8)	O41A – Co4 – O41B	83.05(8)
Co4 – N7A	2.154(3)	O41A – Co2 – O41B	84.22(8)	O41C – Co4 – O41B	81.68(7)
Co4 – O41A	2.155(2)	N1B – Co2 – O51A	97.43(9)	N7A – Co4 – N7C	91.78(10)
Co4 – O41C	2.201(2)	O31A – Co2 – O51A	86.31(8)	O41A – Co4 – N7C	92.30(9)
		O41A – Co2 – O51A	83.61(8)	O41C – Co4 – N7C	94.36(9)
		O31A – Co2 – N1B	93.47(9)	O41A – Co4 – N7A	94.57(8)
		O41A – Co2 – N1B	176.80(9)	O41C – Co4 – N7A	172.73(8)
		O41A – Co2 – O31A	83.56(8)	O41C – Co4 – O41A	81.32(7)

Table S6. Geometry of the Co<sub>4</sub>O<sub>4</sub> cage in Li<sub>2</sub>[Co<sub>4</sub>(H<sub>-1</sub>L<sup>1</sup>)<sub>3</sub>(OH)]·17.5H<sub>2</sub>O.

Distances (Å)	Angles (°)	Angles (°)
Co1 – Co2 3.1629(5)	O1 – Co1 – O41A 82.56(8)	Co1 – O1 – Co2 99.22(9)
Co1 – Co3 3.1261(6)	O1 – Co1 – O41C 81.79(8)	Co1 – O41A – Co2 95.78(8)
Co1 – Co4 3.2207(5)	O41A – Co1 – O41C 83.88(8)	Co1 – O1 – Co3 97.27(8)
Co2 – Co3 3.1335(6)	O1 – Co2 – O41A 81.75(8)	Co1 – O41C – Co3 95.69(8)
Co2 – Co4 3.1761(5)	O1 – Co2 – O41B 84.70(8)	Co1 – O41A – Co4 98.33(8)
Co3 – Co4 3.2272(6)	O41A – Co2 – O41B 84.22(8)	Co1 – O41C – Co4 95.64(8)
	O1 – Co3 – O41B 81.90(8)	Co2 – O1 – Co3 98.46(9)
	O1 – Co3 – O41C 83.95(8)	Co2 – O41B – Co3 94.01(8)
	O41B – Co3 – O41C 83.62(7)	Co2 – O41A – Co4 94.74(8)
	O41A – Co4 – O41B 83.05(8)	Co2 – O41B – Co4 97.08(8)
	O41B – Co4 – O41C 81.68(7)	Co3 – O41B – Co4 96.09(8)
	O41C – Co4 – O41A 81.32(7)	Co3 – O41C – Co4 98.08(8)