

Supporting Information for:

Nickel-Catalyzed Hydrocarboxylation of Alkynes with Formic Acid

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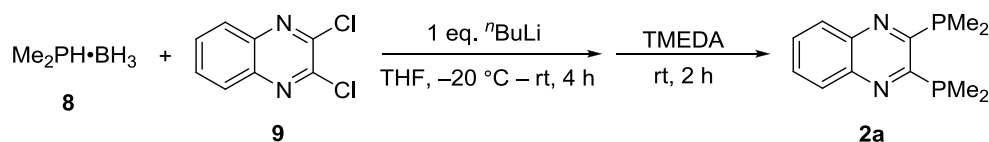
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General: Unless otherwise noted, the manipulations which are sensitive to moisture or air were performed in an argon-filled glove box MBRAUN labstar or using standard Schlenk techniques. NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker AV 400 spectrometer at 400 MHz (¹H NMR), 100 MHz (¹³C NMR) and 162 MHz (³¹P NMR). Chemical shifts were reported in ppm down field from internal Me₄Si. Data are presented in the following space: chemical shift, multiplicity, coupling constant in hertz (Hz), and signal area integration in natural numbers. GC analyses were performed using a Hewlett Packard Model HP 7890 Series instruments. Acetylene gas (99.95%) was purchased from Boc Gas Inc., Tianjin. All the solvents used for reactions were distilled under argon after drying over an appropriate drying agent. All substrates containing stabilizing agents were distilled prior to use. All reagents were commercially supplied and used as received unless stated otherwise. **1d¹, 3b – 3c², 4³ and 5c – 5d⁴** were synthesized according to the literatures.

(A) Preparation and Analysis of New Ligands

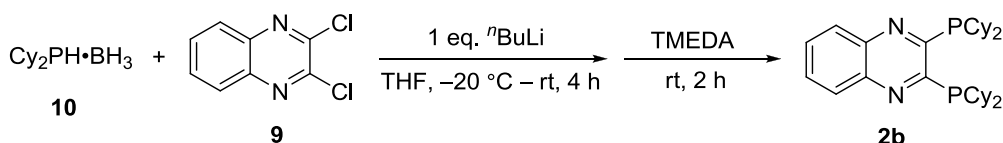
1. Preparation of 2,3-bis(dimethylphosphino)quinoxaline (2a)



A solution of $n\text{BuLi}$ (4.2 mL of 2.4 M hexane solution, 10.0 mmol) was added dropwise to a stirred solution of dimethylphosphine-borane (**8**) (890 mg, 10 mmol) in THF (30 mL) at $-20\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ under nitrogen. After 1 h, a solution of 2, 3-dichloroquinoxaline (**9**) (660 mg, 3.3 mmol) in THF (10 mL) was added in one portion with vigorous stirring and the mixture was warmed to room temperature. After stirring for an additional 3 h, tetramethylethylenediamine (5 mL) was added and the stirring was continued for 2 h. The reaction was quenched with 1 M HCl and the mixture was extracted with hexane. The combined extracts were washed with 1 M HCl and brine, and dried over Na_2SO_4 . The solvent was removed in vacuum and the residue was purified by chromatography on silica gel (PE/EtOAc = 30/1) to give 2,3-bis(dimethylphosphino)quinoxaline (**2a**) (250 mg, 30 %) as a yellow solid.

Mp. $72 - 74\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$. ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.06 (dd, $J = 6.3, 3.5\text{ Hz}$, 2H), 7.69 (dd, $J = 6.4, 3.4\text{ Hz}$, 2H), 1.48 (t, $J = 1.8\text{ Hz}$, 12H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 166.20 – 166.35 (m), 142.19, 129.36, 129.20, 25.61. ^{31}P NMR (162 MHz, CDCl_3) δ -44.5 (s). HRMS (ESI) calcd for $\text{C}_{12}\text{H}_{17}\text{N}_2\text{P}_2^+$ ($[\text{M} + \text{H}]^+$): 251.0867; Found: 251.0865.

2. Preparation of 2,3-bis(dicyclohexylphosphino)quinoxaline (2b)



A solution of $n\text{BuLi}$ (4.2 mL of 2.4 M hexane solution, 10.0 mmol) was added dropwise to a stirred solution of dicyclohexylphosphine-borane (**10**) (848 mg, 4 mmol) in THF (15 mL) at $-20\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ under nitrogen. After 1 h, a solution of 2, 3-dichloroquinoxaline (**9**) (263 mg, 1.3 mmol)

in THF (5 mL) was added in one portion with vigorous stirring and the mixture was warmed to room temperature. After stirring for an additional 3 h, tetramethylethylenediamine (5 mL) was added and the stirring was continued for 2 h. The reaction was quenched with 1 M HCl and the mixture was extracted with hexane. The combined extracts were washed with 1 M HCl and brine, and dried over Na₂SO₄. The solvent was removed in vacuum and the residue was purified by chromatography on silica gel (PE/EtOAc = 30/1) to give 2,3-bis(dicyclohexylphosphino)-quinoxaline (**2b**) (120 mg, 17 %) as an orange solid.

Mp. 168 – 170 °C. ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ. 8.11 (dd, *J* = 6.3, 3.4 Hz, 2H), 7.74 (dd, *J* = 6.4, 3.4 Hz, 2H), 2.30 – 2.50 (m, 4H), 1.90 – 2.05 (m, 4H), 1.73 – 1.85 (m, 4H), 1.55 – 1.72 (m, 12H), 1.10 – 1.40 (m, 20H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ. 165.83 – 165.91 (m), 141.58, 129.55, 129.24, 34.52 (t, *J* = 4.6 Hz), 29.98 (t, *J* = 5.7 Hz), 29.76 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz), 27.30 (dd, *J* = 10.5, 5.1 Hz), 25.61. ³¹P NMR (162 MHz, CDCl₃) δ –5.6 (s). HRMS (ESI) calcd for C₁₂H₁₇N₂P₂⁺ ([M + H]⁺): 523.3371; Found: 523.3368.

(B) Complementary Reaction Condition Optimizations

Table S1. Investigation on phosphine ligands for hydrocarboxylation of acetylene^a

Entry	Ligand	L/Pd	TON ^b
1	-	-	NR
2	PPh ₃	2	NR
3	PCy ₃	2	NR
4	P(OPh) ₃	2	NR
5	PBn ₃	2	NR
6	dppe	1	NR
7	dppb	1	NR
8	dppf	1	NR
9	d ^t bpf	1	NR

10	DPEphos	1	NR
11	Xantphos	1	NR
12	Triphos	1	NR

^a Reaction conditions: $P(C_2H_2) = 10$ atm, $Ni(acac)_2$ (5 μ mol), Ligand (5 μ mol), Ac_2O (0.75 mmol), $HCOOH$ (1.5 mmol), in THF (3 mL) at 100 °C for 12 h. ^b Yield determined by GC analysis using *n*-hexadecane as internal standard; NR = no reaction. DPEphos = bis(diphenylphosphino-phenyl)ether; Xantphos = 4,5-bis(diphenylphosphino)-9,9-dimethyl-xanthene.

Table S2. Effect of solvents on the hydrocarboxylation of acetylene^a

Entry	Solvent	TON ^b
1	THF	240
2	Et ₂ O	200
3	Dioxane	123
4	DME	95
5	DMF	25

^a Reaction conditions: $P(C_2H_2) = 10$ atm, $Ni(acac)_2$ (5 μ mol), **3c** (10 μ mol), $HCOOH$ (1.5 mmol), in Solvent (3 mL) at 100 °C for 12 h. ^b Yield determined by GC analysis using *n*-Hexadecane as internal standard;

Table S3. Effect of the dosage of Ac_2O on the hydrocarboxylation of acetylene.^a

Entry	$[Ac_2O]$ (μ mol)	TON ^b
1	750	170
2	375	245
3	180	240
4	90	238
5	45	240
6	22	80

^a Reaction conditions: $P(C_2H_2) = 10$ atm, $Ni(acac)_2$ (5 μ mol), **3c** (10 μ mol), $HCOOH$ (1.5 mmol), in THF (3 mL) at 100 °C for 12 h. ^b Yield determined by GC analysis using *n*-Hexadecane as internal standard;

Table S4. Effect of initial pressure on the hydrocarboxylation of acetylene.^a

Entry	P (atm)	TON ^b
1	1	300
2	3	300
3	5	290
4	7	277
5	10	240

^a Reaction conditions: Ni(acac)₂ (5 μmol), **3c** (10 μmol), Ac₂O (45 μmol), HCOOH (1.5 mmol), in THF (3 mL) at 100 °C for 12 h. ^b Yield determined by GC analysis using *n*-Hexadecane as internal standard;

Table S5. Effect of reaction temperature on the hydrocarboxylation of acetylene^a

Entry	T (°C)	TON ^b
1	25	30
2	40	140
3	60	300
4	80	300
5	100	300
6	120	280

^a Reaction conditions: initial pressure $P(\text{C}_2\text{H}_2) = 1$ atm, Ni(acac)₂ (5 μmol), **3c** (10 μmol), Ac₂O (45 μmol), HCOOH (1.5 mmol), in THF (3 mL) at 100 °C for 12 h. ^b Yield determined by GC analysis using *n*-Hexadecane as internal standard.

Table S6. Effect of the ratio of **3c/[Ni] on the hydrocarboxylation of acetylene under the condition of S/C = 10000^a**

Entry	3c /[Ni]	$P(\text{C}_2\text{H}_2)$	T (°C)	TON ^b
1	2	1	60	300
2	8	1	60	460
3	14	1	60	430
4	20	1	60	308

5	2	1	100	650
6	8	1	100	930
7	14	1	100	1400
8	20	1	100	2350
9	26	1	100	670
10	2	10	100	340
11	8	10	100	3500
12	14	10	100	4400
13	20	10	100	7700
14	26	10	100	2700

^a Reaction conditions: initial pressure Ni(acac)₂ (0.15 μ mol), Ac₂O (45 μ mol), HCOOH (1.5 mmol), in THF (3 mL) at 100 °C for 12 h. ^b Yield determined by GC analysis using *n*-Hexadecane as internal standard

(C) General Procedure for Hydrocarboxylation of Acetylene

General procedure for the hydrocarboxylation of acetylene. In a glove box, a glass vessel was charged with Ni(acac)₂ (1.3 mg, 5 μ mol), **3c** (2.8 mg, 10 μ mol). The vessel was placed into the autoclave and the autoclave was purged three times with argon. A solution of HCOOH (69 mg, 1.5 mmol) and Ac₂O (4.6 mg, 45 μ mol) in dry THF (3 mL) was added through the injection port. The autoclave was replaced with acetylene for three times before it was finally charged with 10 atm acetylene. The reaction mixture was stirred at 100 °C. After 12 h the autoclave was cooled to the room temperature, and the pressure was released. After adding *n*-hexadecane as an internal standard, the mixture was filtered through a short silica column and submitted to analysis of yield of acrylic acid by GC (using column HP-INNOWAX, 30 m $\times$ 0.25 mm $\times$ 0.25 μ m, flame ionization detector (FID) operating at 250 °C. Injector temperature was set at 230 °C. The carrier gas was nitrogen with a flow rate of 1.0 mL/min). The following temperature program was used in the analysis: 120 °C (4 min) – 10 °C/min – 250 °C (10 min). Using these conditions, the following retention times were observed: *n*-hexadecane (6.380 min), acrylic acid (6.997 min).

General procedure for the hydrocarboxylation of other alkynes. The general hydrocarboxylation procedure will be illustrated with a specific example. In a glove box, a glass vessel was charged with Ni(acac)₂ (2.6 mg, 10 μmol), **3c** (5.6 mg, 20 μmol). The vessel was placed into the autoclave and then the autoclave was purged three times with argon. A solution of phenylacetylene (51 mg, 0.5 mmol), HCOOH (69 mg, 1.5 mmol) and Ac₂O (15.3 mg, 0.15 mol) in dry THF (3 mL) was added through the injection port. The reaction mixture was stirred at 100 °C. After 12 h the autoclave was cooled to the room temperature. The reaction mixture was transferred to a round bottom flask and the solvent was evaporated in vacuum. The residue was purified with silica gel chromatography using PE/EA (2/1, v/v) as an eluent.

(D) Gas Chromatogram of Hydrocarboxylation of Acetylene with FA

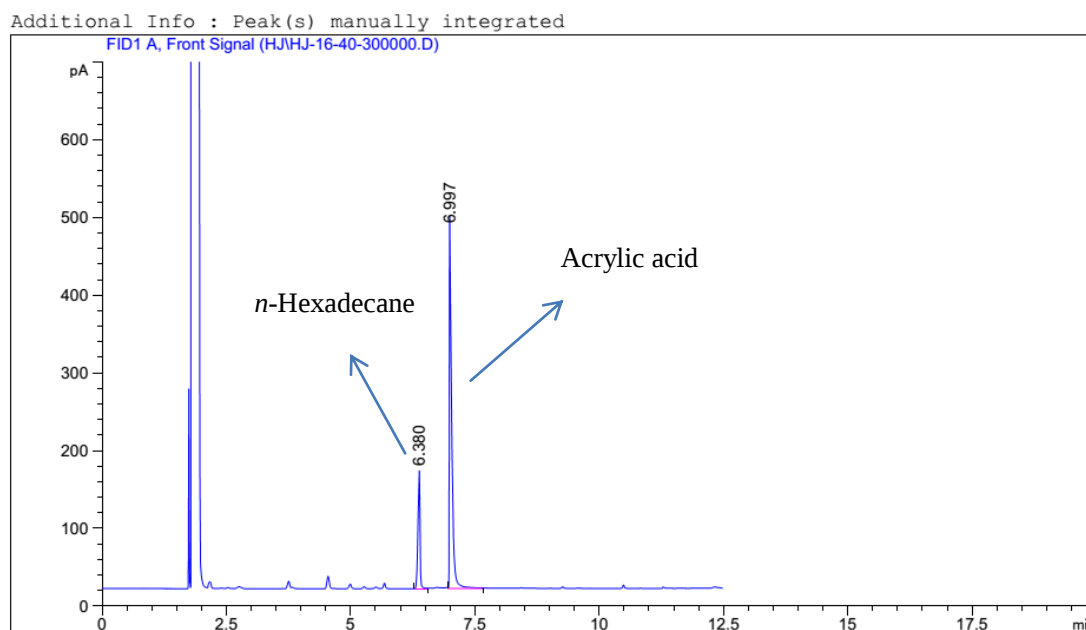
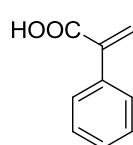


Figure S1. Representative chromatogram (Table S5, entry 3) (Temperature program was used in the analysis: 120 °C (4 min) – 10 °C/min – 250 °C (10 min))

(E) Analytical Data of the Hydrocarboxylation Products

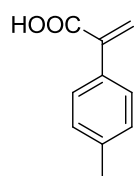
2-phenylacrylic acid (**6a**)



White solid, 88% yield (mixture of **6a** and **7a**, **6a** / **7a** = 97/3). NMR of **6a**: ¹H

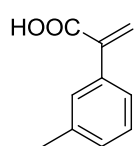
NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 12.47 (brs, 1H), 7.42 – 7.50 (m, 2H), 7.32 – 7.42 (m, 3H), 6.57 (s, 1H), 6.05 (s, 1H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 172.51, 140.55, 136.00, 129.60, 128.43, 128.33, 128.10.

2-*p*-tolylacrylic acid (**6b**)



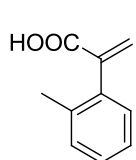
White solid, 89% yield (mixture of **6b** and **7b**, **6b** / **7b** = 97/3). NMR of **6b**: ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 12.24 (brs, 1H), 7.35 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 7.19 (d, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 2H), 6.51 (s, 1H), 6.01 (s, 1H), 2.38 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 172.60, 140.43, 138.25, 133.16, 128.82, 128.80, 128.30, 21.16.

2-*m*-tolylacrylic acid (**6c**)



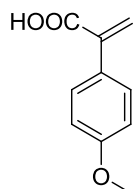
White solid, 85% yield (mixture of **6c** and **7c**, **6c** / **7c** = 96/4). NMR of **6c**: ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 12.34 (brs, 1H), 7.25 – 7.35 (m, 3H), 7.20 – 7.25 (m, 1H), 6.57 (s, 1H), 6.05 (s, 1H), 2.42 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 172.39, 140.75, 137.74, 136.03, 129.22, 129.11, 128.03, 125.53, 21.39

2-*o*-tolylacrylic acid (**6d**)



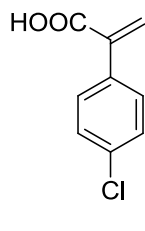
White solid, 28% yield (mixture of **6d** and **7d**, **6d** / **7d** = 98/2). NMR of **6d**: ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 11.83 (brs, 1H), 7.10 – 7.30 (m, 4H), 6.64 (d, *J* = 1.5 Hz, 1H), 5.84 (d, *J* = 1.5 Hz, 1H), 2.24 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 171.98, 141.10, 136.42, 136.18, 130.90, 129.91, 129.52, 128.38, 125.67, 19.85.

2-(4-methoxyphenyl)acrylic acid (**6e**)

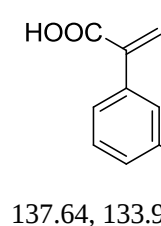


White solid, 84% yield (mixture of **6e** and **7e**, **6e** / **7e** = 93/7). NMR of **6e**: ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 12.18 (brs, 1H), 7.40 (d, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 6.91 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 6.48 (s, 1H), 3.83 (s, 3H), 5.98 (s, 1H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 172.63, 159.63, 139.89, 129.65, 128.46, 128.03, 113.50, 55.23

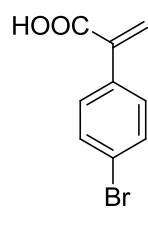
2-(4-chlorophenyl)acrylic acid (**6f**)


 White solid, 83% yield (mixture of **6f** and **7f**, **6f**/**7f** = 97/3). NMR of **6f**: ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 12.48 (brs, 1H), 7.30 – 7.42 (m, 4H), 6.57 (s, 1H), 6.04 (s, 1H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 171.99, 139.54, 134.50, 134.47, 130.06, 129.86, 128.39.

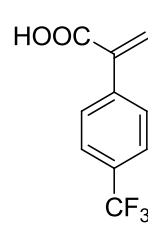
2-(3-chlorophenyl)acrylic acid (**6g**)


 White solid, 80% yield (mixture of **6g** and **7g**, **6g**/**7g** = 95/5). NMR of **6g**: ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 12.46 (brs, 1H), 6.46 (s, 1H), 6.62 (s, 1H), 7.28 – 7.38 (m, 3H), 7.26 (s, 1H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 171.90, 139.34, 137.64, 133.98, 130.68, 129.36, 128.58, 128.43, 126.67.

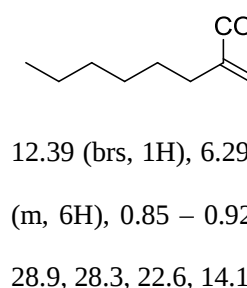
2-(4-bromophenyl)acrylic acid (**6h**)


 White solid, 80% yield (mixture of **6h** and **7h**, **6h**/**7h** = 95/5). NMR of **6h**: ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 12.16 (brs, 1H), 7.49 (s, 2H), 7.30 (s, 2H), 6.57 (s, 1H), 6.04 (s, 1H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 171.91, 139.48, 134.83, 131.30, 130.14, 130.10, 122.69.

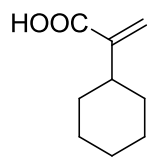
2-(4-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl)acrylic acid (**6i**)


 White solid, 80% yield (mixture of **6i** and **7i**, **6i**/**7i** = 95/5). NMR of **6i**: ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 12.38 (brs, 1H), 7.64 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.57 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 6.67 (s, 1H), 6.11 (s, 1H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 171.82, 139.49, 131.36, 128.90, 125.13, 125.10.

2-methyleneoctanoic acid (**6j**)


 Colourless oil, 64% yield (mixture of **6j** and **7j**, **6j**/**7j** = 93/7). NMR of **6j**: ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 12.39 (brs, 1H), 6.29 (s, 1H), 5.64 (s, 1H), 2.29 – 2.31 (m, 2H), 1.42 – 1.53 (m, 2H), 1.22 – 1.38 (m, 6H), 0.85 – 0.92 (m, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 173.3, 140.3, 126.9, 31.6, 31.4, 28.9, 28.3, 22.6, 14.1.

2-cyclohexylacrylic acid (**6k**)



White solid, 61% yield (mixture of **6k** and **7k**, **6k/7k** = 87/13). NMR of **6k**: ^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3): 12.14 (brs, 1H), δ 6.29 (s, 1H), 5.60 (s, 1H), 2.40 – 2.46 (m, 1H), 1.65 – 1.90 (m, 5H), 1.05 – 1.40 (m, 5H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl_3): δ 173.13, 145.59, 124.67, 38.69, 32.48, 26.55, 26.16.

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(F) NMR Spectra of New Compounds and Products

