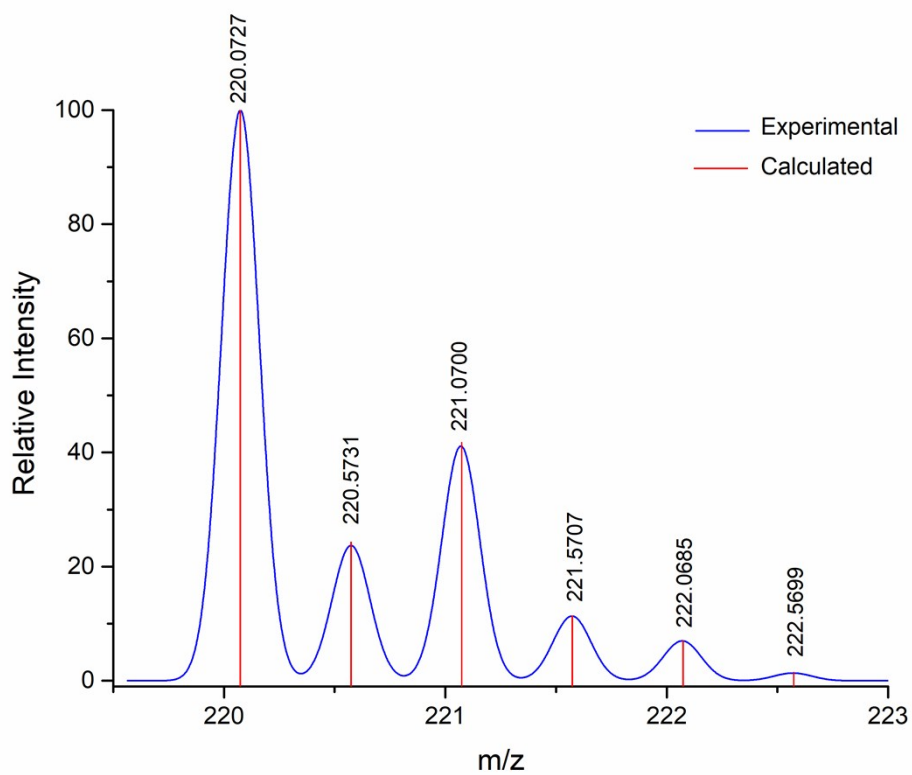


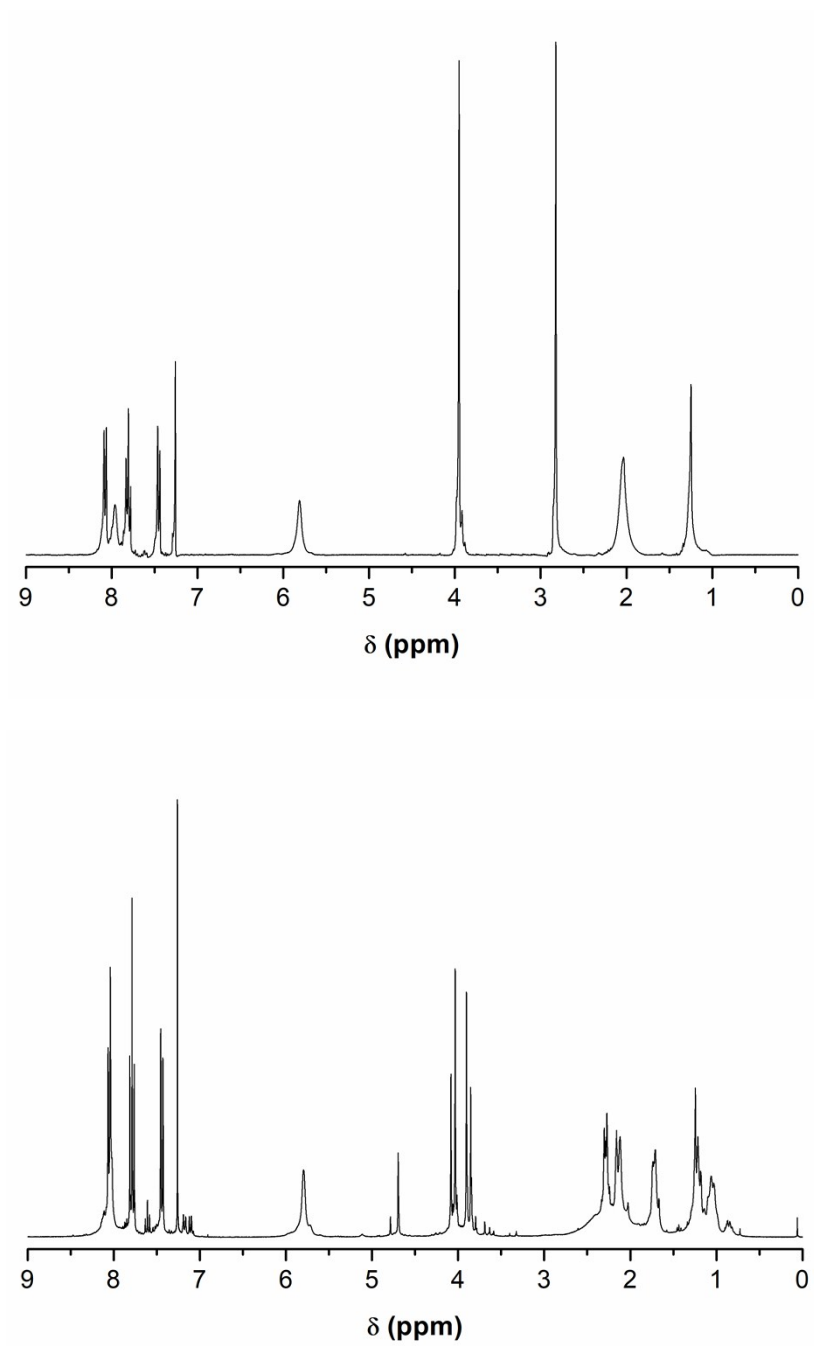
# **Toward Inert Paramagnetic Ni(II)-Based Chemical Exchange Saturation Transfer MRI Agents**

Laura Caneda-Martínez,<sup>a</sup> Laura Valencia,<sup>b</sup> Isabel Fernández-Pérez,<sup>a</sup> Martín Regueiro-  
Figueroa,<sup>a</sup> Goran Angelovski,<sup>c</sup> Isabel Brandariz,<sup>a</sup> David Esteban-Gómez,<sup>a\*</sup> and Carlos  
Platas-Iglesias<sup>a\*</sup>

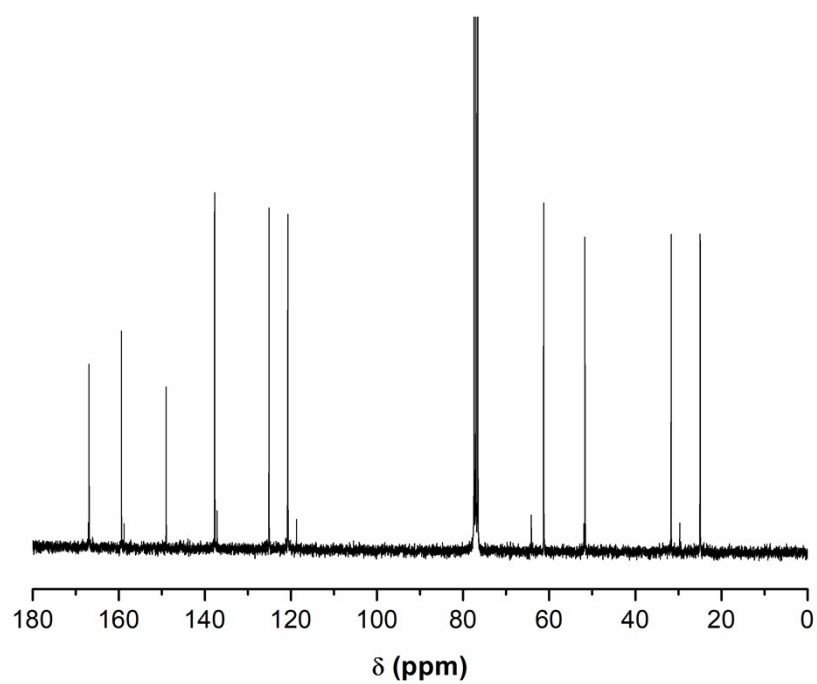
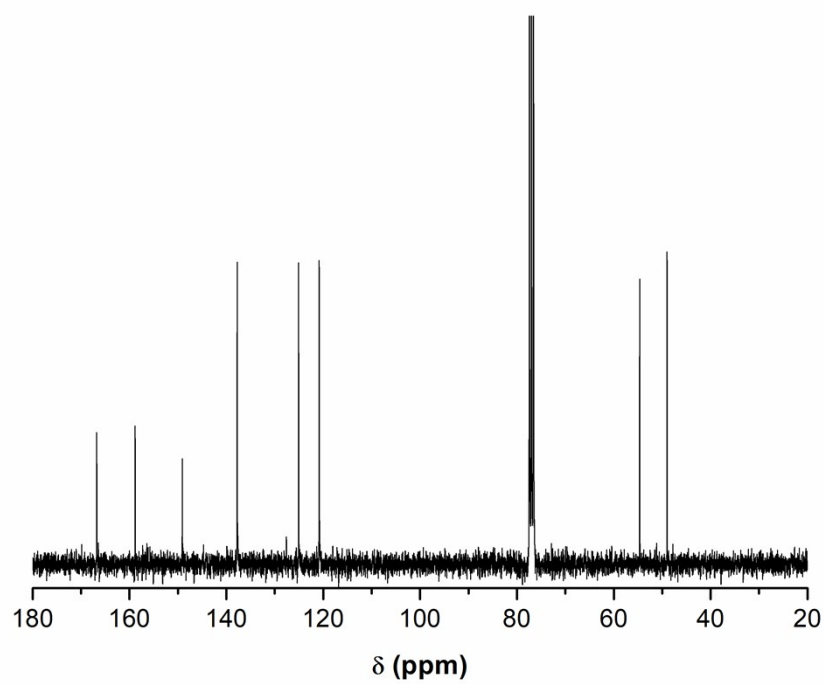
## **Electronic Supplementary Information( ESI)**



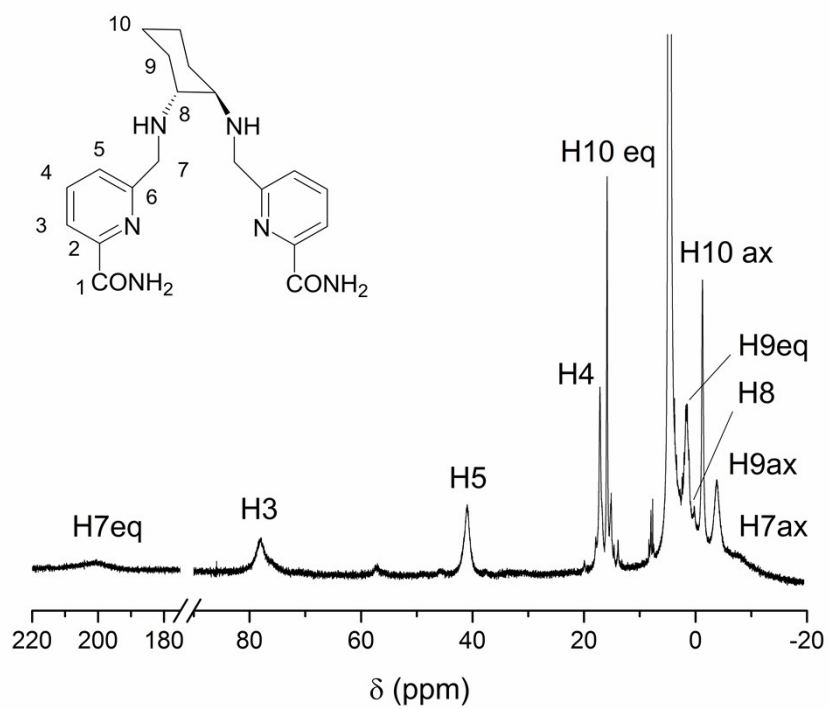
**Figure S1.** Calculated (red) and observed (blue) mass spectral isotopic distribution for the fragment  $[\text{Ni}(\text{chxdedpam})]^{2+}$  ( $\text{C}_{20}\text{H}_{26}\text{N}_6\text{NiO}_2^{2+}$ ).



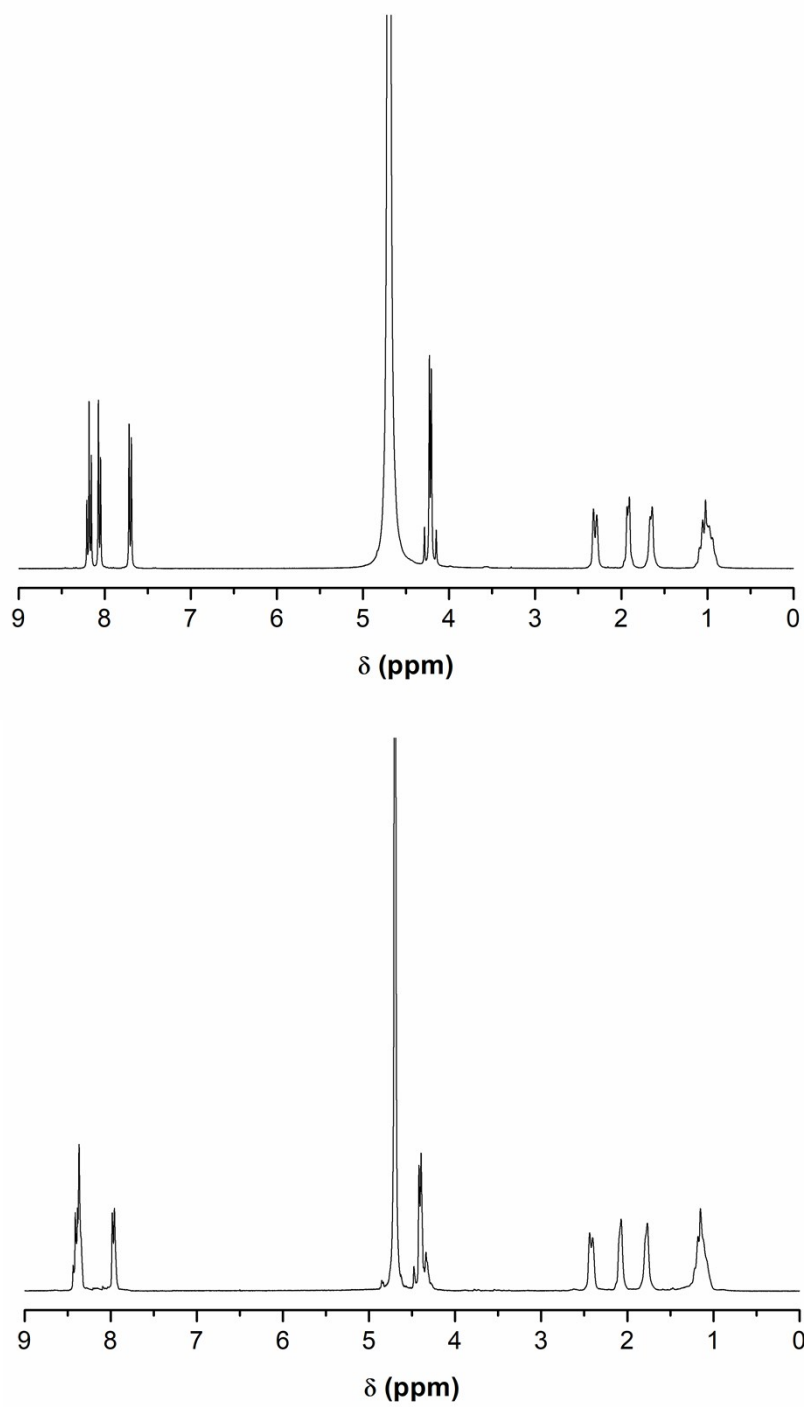
**Figure S2.**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectra (300 MHz, 25 °C) of  $\text{H}_2\text{dedpam}$  (top) and  $\text{chxdedpam}$  (bottom) recorded in  $\text{CDCl}_3$  solution.



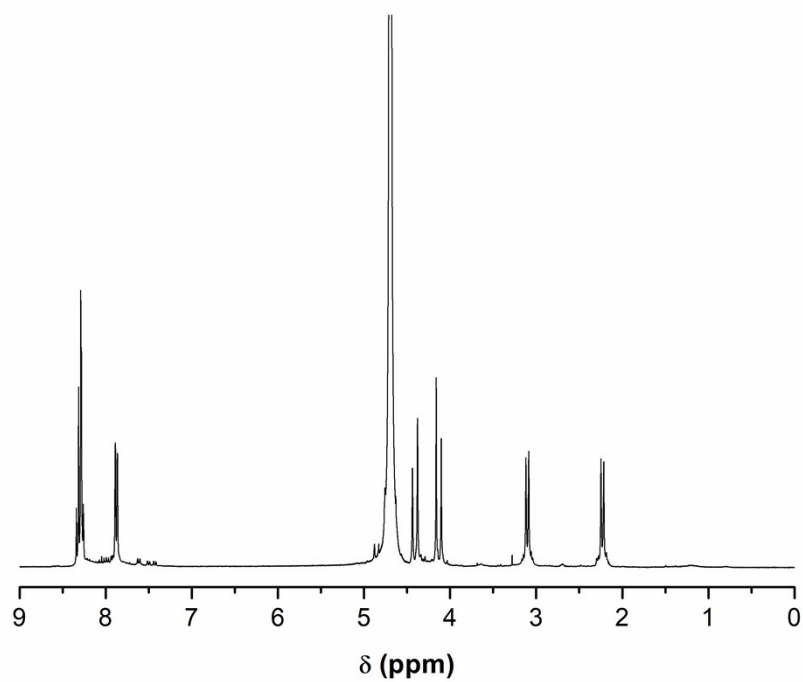
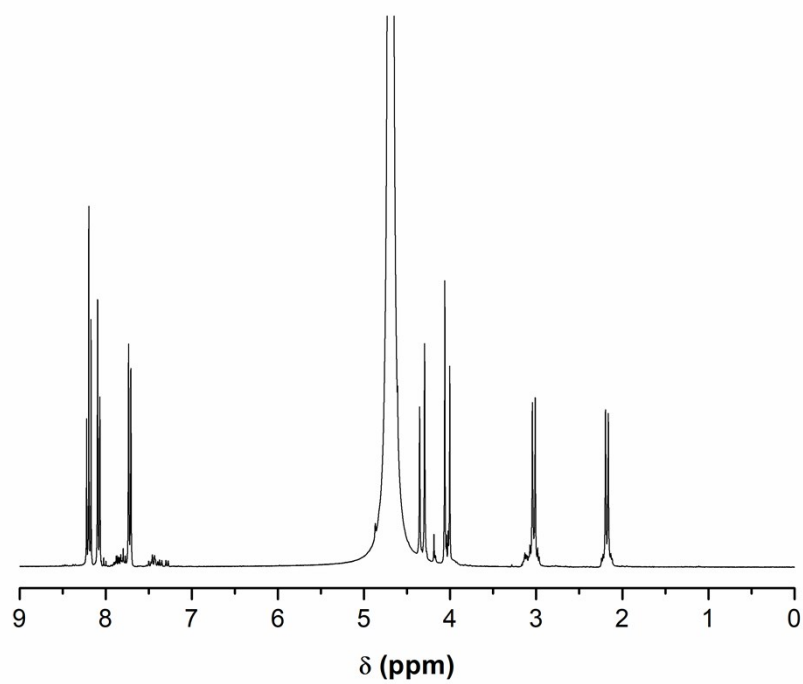
**Figure S3.**  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectra (75.5 MHz, 25  $^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) of dedpam (top) and chxdedpam (bottom) recorded in  $\text{CDCl}_3$  solution.



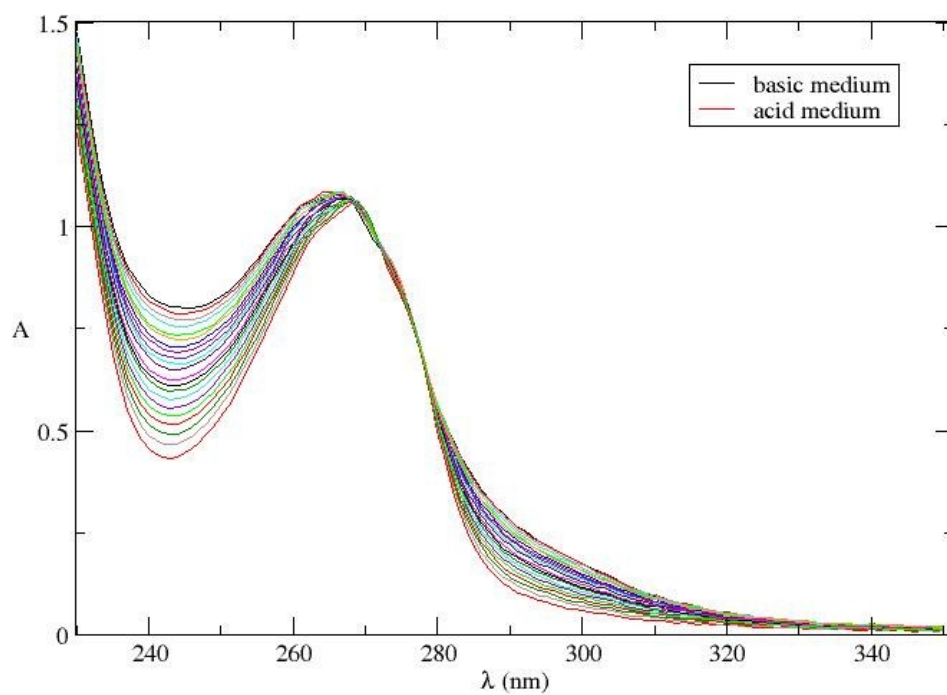
**Figure S4.**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of  $[\text{Ni}(\text{chxdedpam})]^{2+}$  and numbering scheme of ligand proton nuclei.



**Figure S5.**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectra (300 MHz, 25  $^{\circ}\text{C}$ , pD 7.0) of  $[\text{Zn}(\text{chxdedpa})]$  (top) and  $[\text{Zn}(\text{chxdedpam})]^{2+}$  (bottom) recorded in  $\text{D}_2\text{O}$  solution.

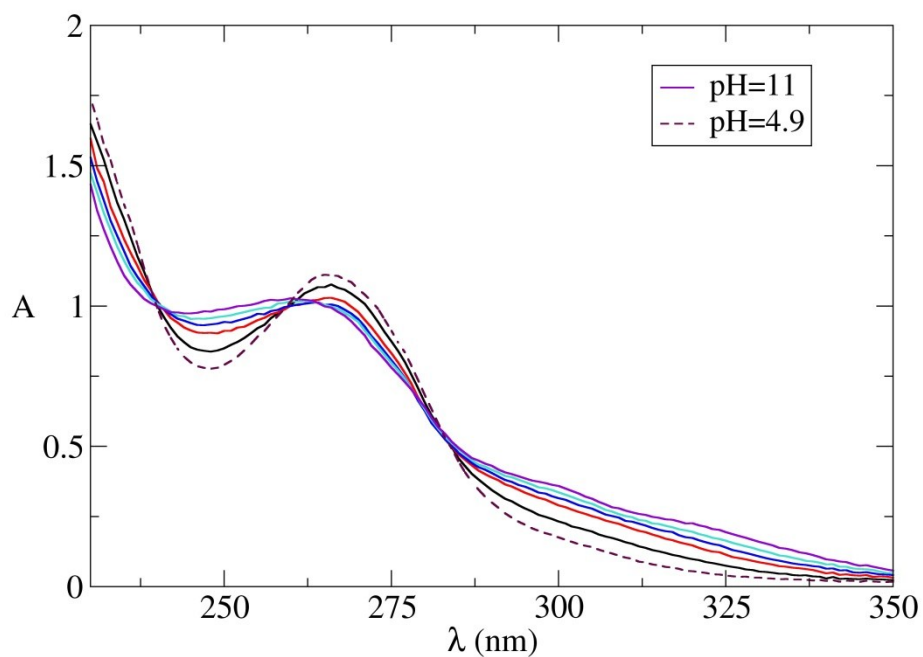


**Figure S6.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra (300 MHz, 25 °C, pD 7.0) of [Zn(dedpa)] (top) and [Zn(dedpam)]<sup>2+</sup> (bottom) recorded in D<sub>2</sub>O solution.

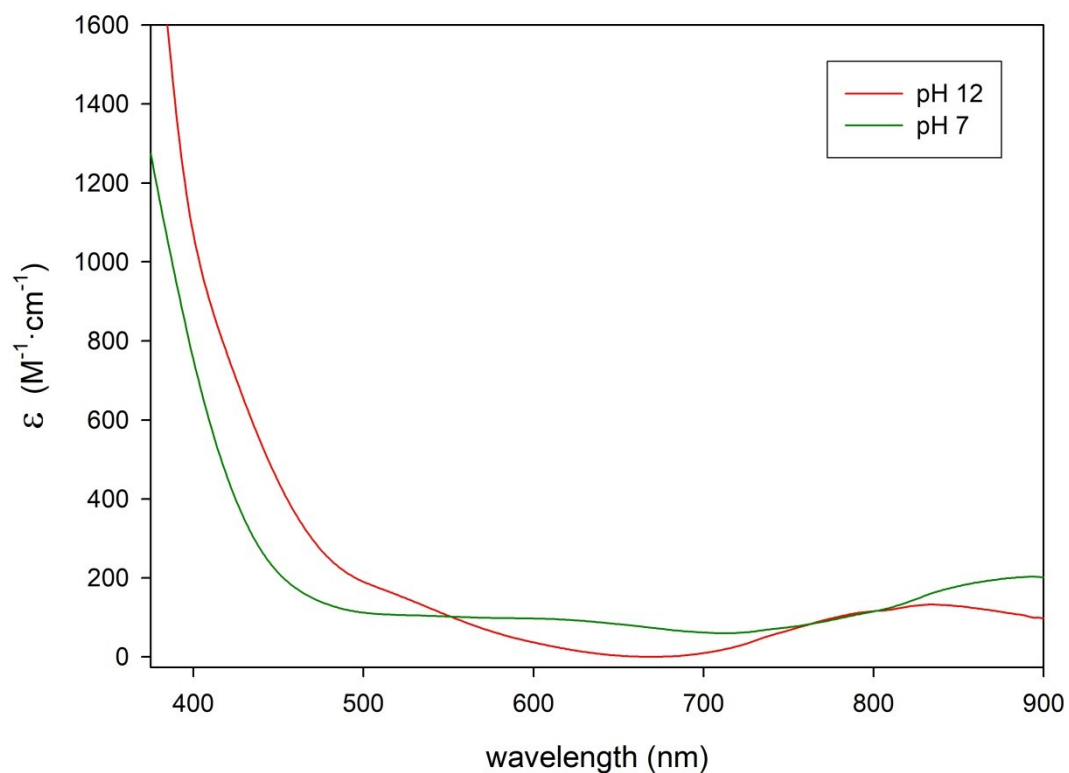


**Figure S7.** UV absorption spectra of an equimolar mixture ( $1.2 \times 10^{-4}$  M) of  $\text{dedpa}^{2-}$  and  $\text{Ni}^{2+}$  recorded from basic pH ( $[\text{OH}^-] = 7.4 \times 10^{-5}$  M, upper curve, bold black, in this media 100% of the ligand is forming the complex) to acidic pH (HCl 0.14 M lower curve, bold red, where 24% is  $[\text{Ni}(\text{dedpa})]$ , 73.5%  $\text{H}_4\text{dedpa}^{2+}$ , and 2.5% is  $\text{H}_3\text{dedpa}^+$ ).

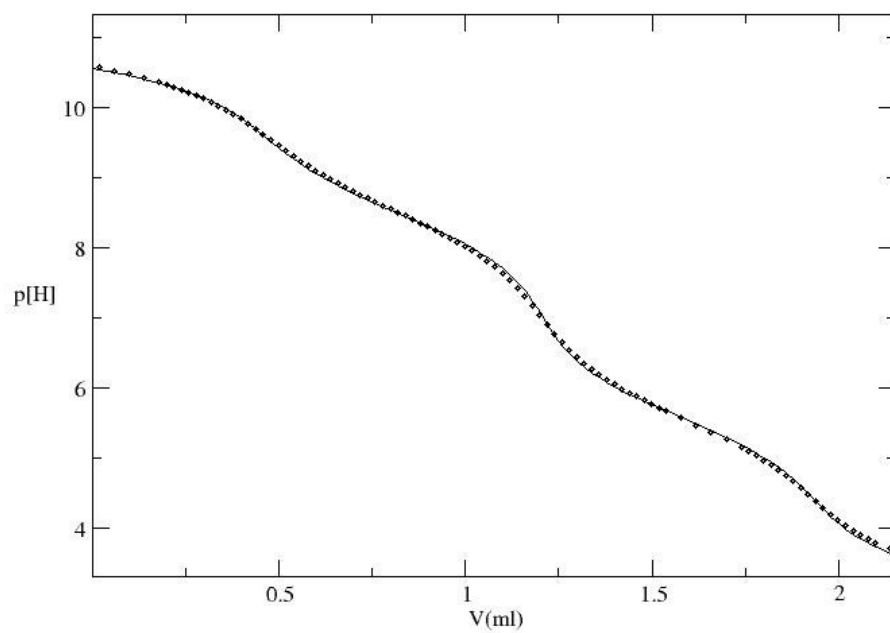




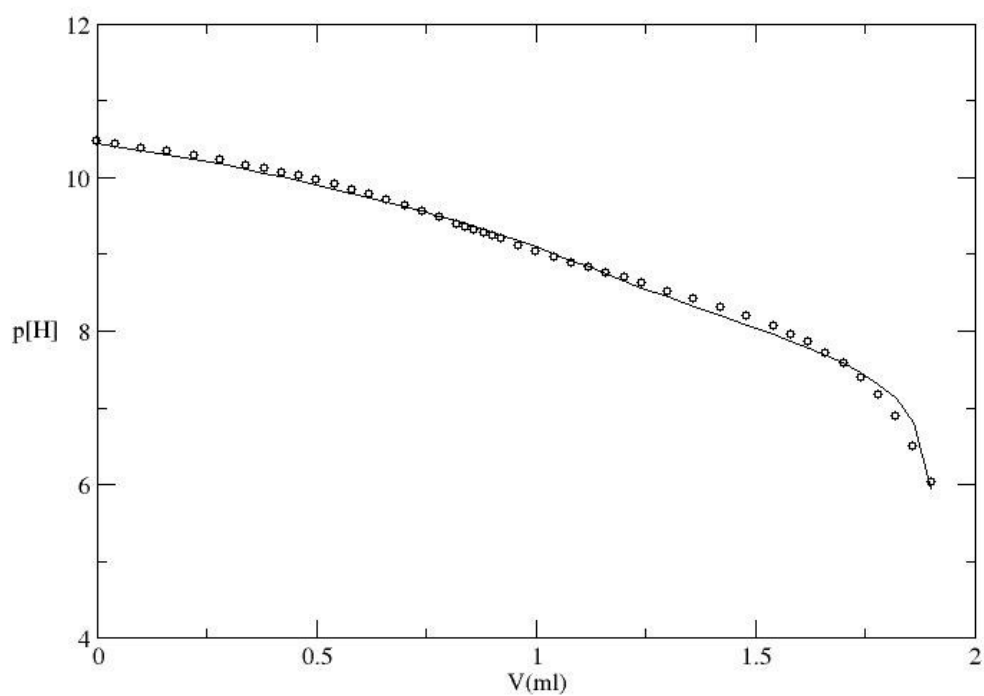
**Figure S8.** UV absorption spectra of an equimolar mixture of dedpam and  $\text{Ni}^{2+}$  recorded at different pH values ( $8.6 \times 10^{-5}$  M) in the pH range 4.9-11. At pH 5 the main species in solution is  $[\text{Ni}(\text{dedpam})]^{2+}$ , while at pH 11 the deprotonated  $[\text{Ni}(\text{H}_2\text{dedpam})]$  species predominates.



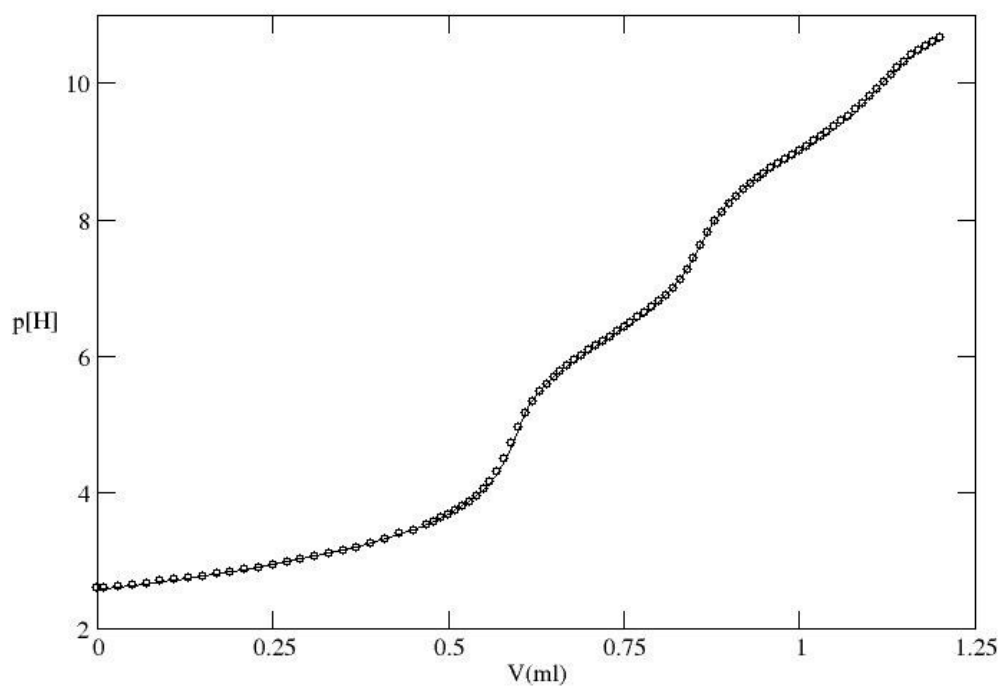
**Figure S9.** UV absorption spectra of an equimolar mixture of chxdedpam and  $\text{Ni}^{2+}$  recorded at pH 7 and pH 12 ( $7.5 \times 10^{-3}$  M). At pH 7 the main species in solution is  $[\text{Ni}(\text{chxdedpam})]^{2+}$ , while at pH 11 the deprotonated  $[\text{Ni}(\text{H}_2\text{chxdedpam})]$  species predominates.



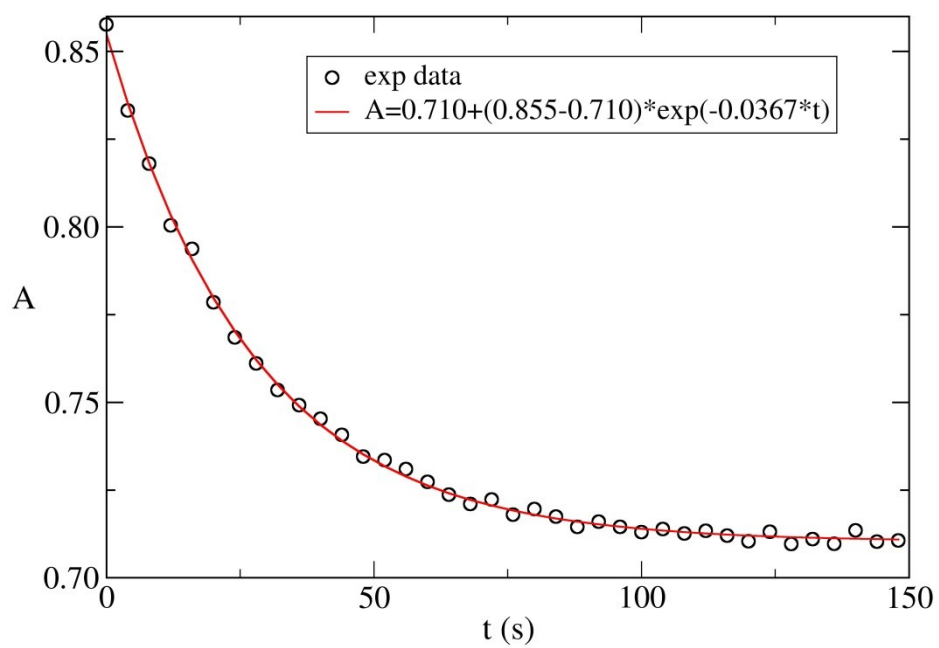
**Figure S10.** Potentiometric titration of dedpam (0.96 mM) in basic media titrated with HCl (0.02 M). The solid line corresponds to the least-squares fit of the data to obtain the ligand protonation constants.



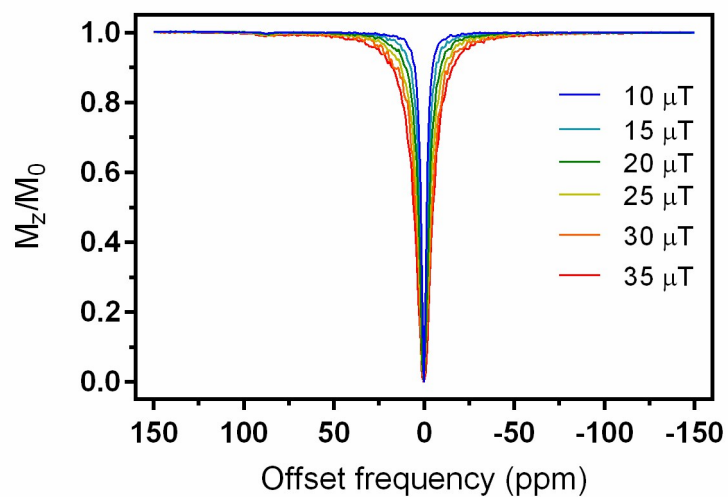
**Figure S11.** Potentiometric titration of dedpam and  $\text{Ni}^{2+}$  (both 0.79 mM) in basic medium titrated with HCl (0.02 M).



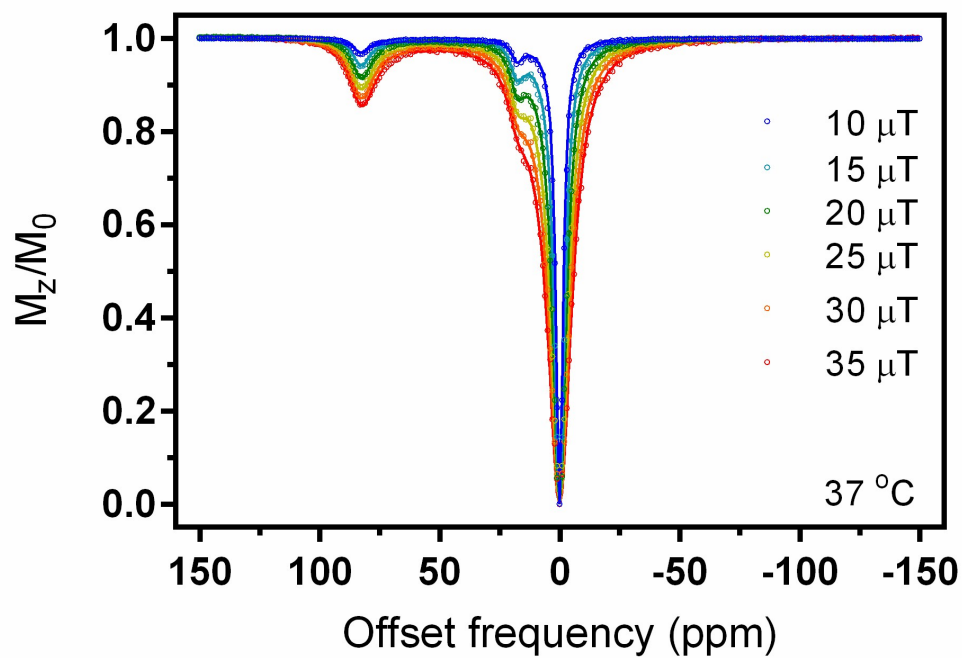
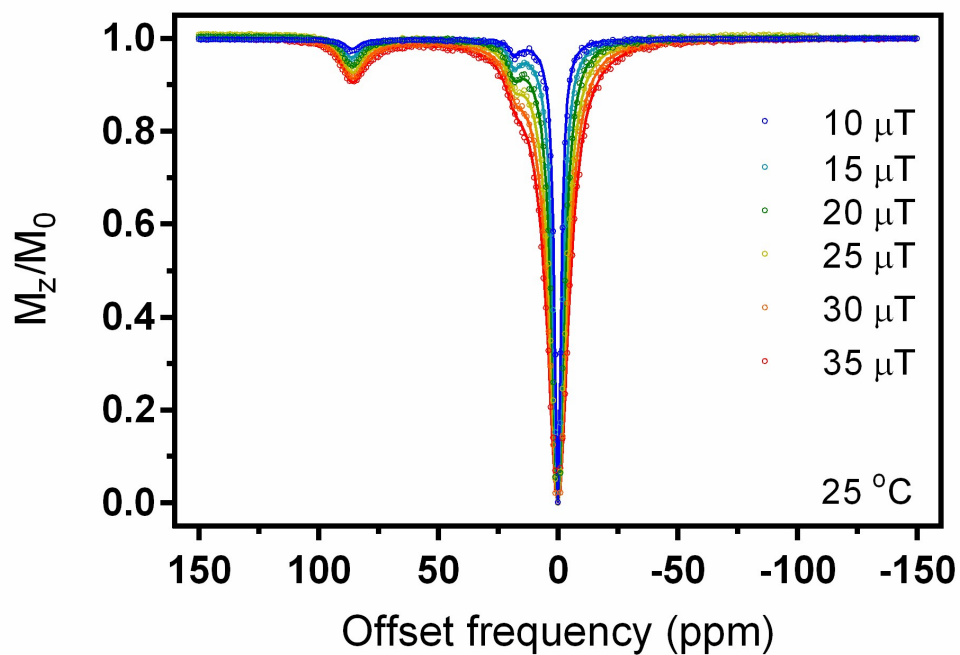
**Figure S12.** Potentiometric titration of dedpa (2.4 mM) in acid medium titrated with NaOH (0.0925 M). The solid line corresponds to the least-squares fit of the data to obtain the ligand protonation constants.



**Figure S13.** Acid-catalysed dissociation of  $[\text{Ni}(\text{dedpam})]^{2+}$  in 1 M HCl at 25 °C. A represents the absorbance of the solution at 265 nm. The red line corresponds to the fit of the data to eq (7) in the main manuscript.

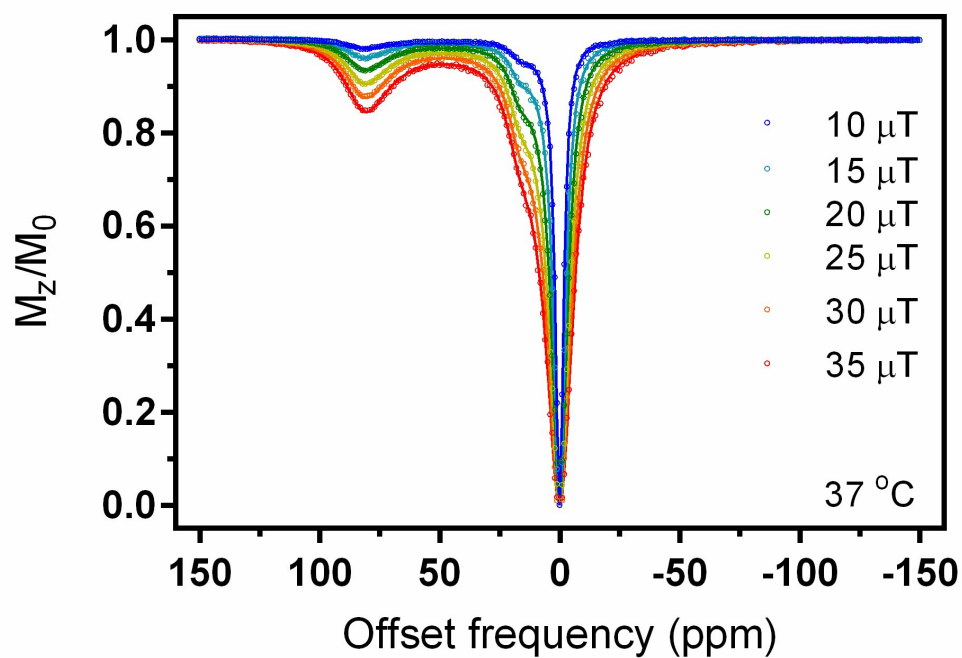
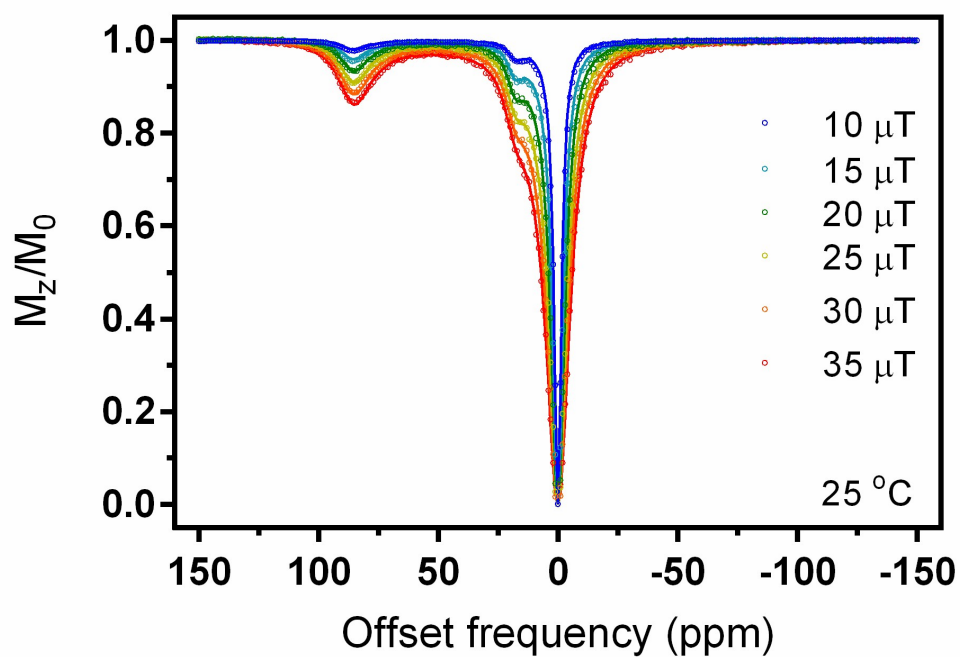


**Figure S14.** Z-spectra of  $[\text{Ni}(\text{chxdedpam})]^{2+}$  (15 mM) in  $\text{H}_2\text{O}:\text{D}_2\text{O}$  (9:1, v/v) at pH 5.9, saturation time 10 s and varying saturation power and temperature.



**Figure S15.** Z-spectra of  $[\text{Ni}(\text{chxdedpam})]^{2+}$  (15 mM) in  $\text{H}_2\text{O}:\text{D}_2\text{O}$  (9:1, v/v) at pH 7.2, saturation time 10 s and varying saturation power and temperature.





**Figure S16.** Z-spectra of  $[\text{Ni}(\text{chxdedpam})]^{2+}$  (15 mM) in  $\text{H}_2\text{O}:\text{D}_2\text{O}$  (9:1, v/v) at pH 8.0, saturation time 10 s and varying saturation power and temperature.

**Table S1.** [Ni(chxdedpam)]<sup>2+</sup>, TPSSh/TZVP, aqueous solution (0 Imaginary Frequencies)

| Atom | Coordinates (Angstroms) |             |             |
|------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|
|      | X                       | Y           | Z           |
| O    | -0.45084600             | -1.95469100 | 1.56084200  |
| O    | 0.44962200              | -1.95489500 | -1.56075800 |
| N    | -1.98690000             | -0.71997200 | -0.11119100 |
| N    | 1.98645700              | -0.72114300 | 0.11127900  |
| N    | 0.44653700              | 1.02714100  | 1.35102800  |
| H    | -0.27026600             | 1.14813500  | 2.06382800  |
| C    | 2.62549900              | -0.07436000 | 1.08532800  |
| C    | -2.62549800             | -0.07293000 | -1.08535400 |
| N    | -0.44589400             | 1.02734800  | -1.35096300 |
| H    | 0.27102500              | 1.14788400  | -2.06372500 |
| C    | -1.67548600             | -2.15534300 | 1.71647100  |
| C    | -2.63588300             | -1.50951300 | 0.75770100  |
| C    | 4.01030900              | -1.67591500 | -0.68440200 |
| H    | 4.55002100              | -2.31641600 | -1.36909800 |
| C    | -4.01070200             | -0.17691800 | -1.21038500 |
| H    | -4.53221200             | 0.35816500  | -1.99384200 |
| C    | 1.67412900              | -2.15636300 | -1.71636600 |
| C    | -1.72442200             | 0.69133600  | -2.02799800 |
| H    | -1.49374100             | 0.04843400  | -2.88089200 |
| H    | -2.23222900             | 1.57929200  | -2.41192200 |
| C    | -4.01130000             | -1.67383200 | 0.68418500  |
| H    | -4.55137600             | -2.31413100 | 1.36878600  |
| C    | 2.63494900              | -1.51099300 | -0.75770800 |
| C    | 1.72490700              | 0.69042700  | 2.02801600  |
| H    | 1.49390000              | 0.04764600  | 2.88091100  |
| H    | 2.23323000              | 1.57810100  | 2.41192200  |
| C    | 4.01066400              | -0.17901300 | 1.21018100  |
| H    | 4.53253300              | 0.35584100  | 1.99355200  |
| C    | -0.54200900             | 2.28020400  | -0.54026100 |
| H    | -1.51840300             | 2.24672800  | -0.04425500 |
| C    | -4.70095300             | -0.98415600 | -0.31476700 |
| H    | -5.77622500             | -1.08524100 | -0.39282600 |
| C    | 0.54335000              | 2.27990600  | 0.54025400  |
| H    | 1.51969600              | 2.24580300  | 0.04420800  |
| C    | 4.70041300              | -0.98656700 | 0.31446300  |
| H    | 5.77565200              | -1.08813000 | 0.39236000  |
| C    | 0.44936500              | 3.54601600  | 1.40002400  |
| H    | 1.24088000              | 3.54146800  | 2.15387900  |
| H    | -0.50797700             | 3.53313900  | 1.93535400  |
| C    | -0.44719400             | 3.54621900  | -1.40008600 |
| H    | 0.51016900              | 3.53273100  | -1.93536500 |
| H    | -1.23867800             | 3.54217300  | -2.15397800 |
| C    | 0.53887900              | 4.81420100  | 0.54456300  |
| H    | 1.53075100              | 4.87262000  | 0.08186400  |
| H    | 0.43396200              | 5.69369200  | 1.18531300  |
| C    | -0.53594900             | 4.81448600  | -0.54468300 |
| H    | -0.43052200             | 5.69389000  | -1.18546500 |
| H    | -1.52777800             | 4.87350400  | -0.08197800 |

|    |             |             |             |
|----|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Ni | -0.00017900 | -0.55344600 | 0.00009600  |
| N  | 2.14504900  | -2.92373700 | -2.69557500 |
| N  | -2.14693600 | -2.92225000 | 2.69578900  |
| H  | 1.49676000  | -3.36304700 | -3.33405700 |
| H  | 3.12976900  | -3.07614300 | -2.84780400 |
| H  | -3.13176400 | -3.07404800 | 2.84793300  |
| H  | -1.49896300 | -3.36197900 | 3.33430300  |

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E(UTPSSh) = -2765.4871973 Hartree  
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 Thermal correction to Enthalpy = 0.484995  
 Thermal correction to Gibbs Free Energy = 0.402981  
 Sum of electronic and zero-point Energies = -2765.028925  
 Sum of electronic and thermal Energies = -2765.003147  
 Sum of electronic and thermal Enthalpies = -2765.002202  
 Sum of electronic and thermal Free Energies = -2765.084217

**Table S2.** [Ni(chxdedpa)], TPSSh/TZVP, aqueous solution (0 Imaginary Frequencies)

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| Atom | Coordinates (Angstroms) |   |   |
|------|-------------------------|---|---|
|      | X                       | Y | Z |

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|   |             |             |             |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| O | -0.43392000 | -2.00120700 | 1.56128900  |
| O | 0.43548400  | -2.00152200 | -1.56161500 |
| O | -2.17026300 | -2.94983000 | 2.64265000  |
| N | -1.98389100 | -0.75586600 | -0.10908500 |
| N | 1.98443400  | -0.75456500 | 0.10916800  |
| N | 0.45328000  | 0.98995100  | 1.35292800  |
| H | -0.26250400 | 1.10732700  | 2.06661400  |
| O | 2.17285100  | -2.94906900 | -2.64216200 |
| C | 2.63738400  | -0.08643300 | 1.06208000  |
| C | -2.63731400 | -0.08840300 | -1.06215600 |
| N | -0.45407200 | 0.98971900  | -1.35335400 |
| H | 0.26153900  | 1.10773500  | -2.06711000 |
| C | -1.68033700 | -2.22836200 | 1.75940300  |
| C | -2.61706600 | -1.52554200 | 0.78416100  |
| C | 4.00143100  | -1.64312000 | -0.76072700 |
| H | 4.50055800  | -2.26793100 | -1.48956700 |
| C | -4.02603500 | -0.15457800 | -1.14004900 |
| H | -4.56047200 | 0.39449000  | -1.90559500 |
| C | 1.68215000  | -2.22773100 | -1.75924400 |
| C | -1.73568500 | 0.65535400  | -2.02267200 |
| H | -1.50701200 | -0.00243300 | -2.86473000 |
| H | -2.24067500 | 1.53992700  | -2.42060400 |
| C | -4.00023100 | -1.64581500 | 0.76094900  |
| H | -4.49887700 | -2.27088900 | 1.48989200  |
| C | 2.61816800  | -1.52393400 | -0.78397700 |
| C | 1.73511500  | 0.65676800  | 2.02241600  |
| H | 1.50691200  | -0.00107600 | 2.86456100  |
| H | 2.23935500  | 1.54181500  | 2.42024100  |
| C | 4.02614900  | -0.15154000 | 1.14000500  |

|    |             |             |             |
|----|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| H  | 4.56017400  | 0.39803800  | 1.90547200  |
| C  | -0.54512400 | 2.23554500  | -0.53977700 |
| H  | -1.51908500 | 2.20060600  | -0.03826500 |
| C  | -4.70732700 | -0.94247900 | -0.21406600 |
| H  | -5.78827900 | -1.00857000 | -0.25514100 |
| C  | 0.54335200  | 2.23591000  | 0.53945200  |
| H  | 1.51732200  | 2.20173800  | 0.03791300  |
| C  | 4.70801600  | -0.93909500 | 0.21416200  |
| H  | 5.78901500  | -1.00440500 | 0.25525900  |
| C  | 0.45397100  | 3.50619600  | 1.39525200  |
| H  | 1.24775900  | 3.50162400  | 2.14708700  |
| H  | -0.50149100 | 3.49374100  | 1.93460400  |
| C  | -0.45667100 | 3.50597600  | -1.39545200 |
| H  | 0.49882700  | 3.49430300  | -1.93476100 |
| H  | -1.25042400 | 3.50091500  | -2.14732300 |
| C  | 0.53905300  | 4.77514200  | 0.54116600  |
| H  | 1.52767700  | 4.83272200  | 0.07088700  |
| H  | 0.43950700  | 5.65567100  | 1.18191400  |
| C  | -0.54273100 | 4.77477500  | -0.54124900 |
| H  | -0.44386200 | 5.65545600  | -1.18189200 |
| H  | -1.53139400 | 4.83154200  | -0.07096000 |
| Ni | 0.00022700  | -0.64663600 | 0.00016200  |

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 Thermal correction to Gibbs Free Energy = 0.353332  
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 Sum of electronic and thermal Energies = -2803.906485  
 Sum of electronic and thermal Enthalpies = -2803.905541  
 Sum of electronic and thermal Free Energies = -2803.985484