

COMMUNICATION

# Phosphine-free Pincer Cobalt Catalyst Precursors for Selective Hydrogenation of Olefins

# **Supporting Information**

Pim Puylaert, <sup>[a]</sup> Andrea Dell'Acqua, <sup>[a]</sup> Fatima El Ouahabi, <sup>[a]</sup> Anke Spannenberg, <sup>[a]</sup> Thierry Roisnel, <sup>[b]</sup> Laurent Lefort, <sup>[c]</sup> Sergey Tin, <sup>[a]</sup> and Johannes G. de Vries\*<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>[a]</sup> P. Puylaert, A. Dell'Acqua, F. El Ouahabi, Dr. A. Spannenberg, Dr. S. Tin, Prof. Dr. J.G. de Vries Catalysis with Renewables and Platform Chemicals, Leibniz Institute for Catalysis, Albert-Einstein-Straße 29a, 18055 Rostock, Germany, E-mail: johannes.devries@catalysis.de.

<sup>[b]</sup> Dr. T. Roisnel, Université de Rennes 1, UMR "Sciences Chimiques de Rennes", UR1-CNRS 6226, Campus de Beaulieu, CS 74205, 35042 Rennes Cedex, France]

<sup>[c]</sup> Dr. L. Lefort, InnoSyn B.V., Urmonderbaan 22, 6167 RD, Geleen, The Netherlands

#### 1. General Information

Reagents and solvents were obtained from commercial sources and used as received unless noted otherwise. Dry solvents were obtained from a solvent purification system, or purchased water-free in a bottle with septum (isopropanol). Complexes were prepared using standard Schlenk techniques. Stock solutions for high-throughput screening were prepared and distributed using a Zinsser Lissy liquid handling robot equipped with 4 probes inside a glove box (see Figure **S1a**). High-throughput screening was carried out in a Premex 96-Multi Reactor that can accommodate 96 reactions vessels at the same temperature and hydrogen pressure (see Figure **S1b**). This reactor was developed by Premex in cooperation with DSM.<sup>[1]</sup>



Figure S1: Hardware available at InnoSyn for high throughput screening: a) Liquid handling robot (Zinsser Lissy) and b) Premex 96-Multi Reactor.<sup>[1]</sup>

GC analysis was carried out on an Agilent 7890B GC system with a HP-5 normal-phase silica column, using He as a carrier gas and dodecane as internal standard. NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker AV400, Bruker AV300 or Bruker Fourier300 NMR spectrometer. <sup>1</sup>H and <sup>13</sup>C-NMR spectra were referenced w.r.t. the solvent signal. All chemical shifts are in ppm, coupling constants in Hz. HR-MS measurements were recorded on an Agilent 6210 Time-of-Flight LC/MS (ESI) instrument; peaks as listed correspond to the highest abundant peak and are of the expected isotope pattern.

X-ray diffraction data for **1** and **2** were collected on a Bruker Kappa APEX II Duo and a Bruker D8 VENTURE diffractometer, respectively. The structures were solved by direct methods (SHELXS-97<sup>[2]</sup> and SHELXT<sup>[3]</sup>, resp.) and refined by full-matrix least-squares procedures on  $F^2$  (SHELXL-2014 and SHELXL-2018, resp<sup>[3]</sup>). XP (Bruker AXS) was used for molecular graphics. CCDC 1864013-1864014 contain the supplementary crystallographic data for this paper. These data are provided free of charge by The Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre.

## 2. Results and Discussion

#### 2.1 High-throughput screening

An initial screening was carried out at 0.2 mmol scale, with 2 mol% catalyst and 4 mol% of additives. Complexes **1** and **2** were initially screened for activity in the hydrogenation of 1-octene, acetophenone and 1-octen-3-one in toluene and THF. Three bases (KO<sup>t</sup>Bu, NaOMe, and NaOH), and four reductants (Zn, NaBEt<sub>3</sub>H, NaBH<sub>4</sub> and AlEt<sub>3</sub>) were screened for activation. Additionally, two monodentate ligands (pyridine and PMe<sub>3</sub>) were screened based on the assumption that these ligands expedite the dissociation of the dimeric complex **1**. The results of this screening are summarised in Table **S1** (1-octene and acetophenone, which were dissolved in the same stock solution) and Table **S2** (1-octen-3-ol). In several cases, the results were not interpretable due to broad or overlapping peaks in the GC trace, or other experimental artefacts (listed as 'n.a.').

 Table S1. High throughput screening of 1 and 2 in the hydrogenation of 1-octene and acetophenone.

| # <sup>[a]</sup> | Cat | Solvent | Additive 1         | Additive 2           | % octane <sup>[b]</sup> | % 1-phenylethanol |
|------------------|-----|---------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 1                | 1   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu |                      | n.a.                    | 0%                |
| 2                | 1   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | PMe <sub>3</sub>     | Isomerisation           | 0%                |
| 3                | 1   | THF     | NaOMe              |                      | n.a.                    | 0%                |
| 4                | 1   | THF     | NaOMe              | PMe <sub>3</sub>     | Isomerisation           | 0%                |
| 5                | 1   | THF     | NaOH               |                      | Isomerisation           | 0%                |
| 6                | 1   | THF     | NaOH               | PMe₃                 | n.a.                    | 0%                |
| 7                | 1   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | NaBEt₃H              | n.a.                    | 0%                |
| 8                | 1   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | Pyridine             | n.a.                    | 0%                |
| 9                | 1   | THF     | NaOMe              | NaBEt₃H              | n.a.                    | 0%                |
| 10               | 1   | THF     | NaOMe              | Pyridine             | n.a.                    | 0%                |
| 11               | 1   | THF     | NaOH               | NaBEt₃H              | n.a.                    | 0%                |
| 12               | 1   | THF     | NaOH               | Pyridine             | n.a.                    | 0%                |
| 13               | 1   | toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu |                      | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 14               | 1   | toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | PMe₃                 | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 15               | 1   | toluene | NaOMe              |                      | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 16               | 1   | toluene | NaOMe              | PMe <sub>3</sub>     | Isomerisation           | 0%                |
| 17               | 1   | toluene | NaOH               |                      | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 18               | 1   | toluene | NaOH               | PMe <sub>3</sub>     | Isomerisation           | 0%                |
| 19               | 1   | toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | NaBEt₃H              | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 20               | 1   | toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | Pyridine             | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 21               | 1   | toluene | NaOMe              | NaBEt₃H              | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 22               | 1   | toluene | NaOMe              | Pyridine             | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 23               | 1   | toluene | NaOH               | NaBEt₃H              | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 24               | 1   | toluene | NaOH               | Pyridine             | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 25               | 1   | THF     |                    | AlEt <sub>3</sub>    | 95%                     | 0%                |
| 26               | 1   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | AlEt <sub>3</sub>    | 90%                     | 0%                |
| 27               | 1   | Toluene |                    | AlEt <sub>3</sub>    | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 28               | 1   | Toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | AlEt <sub>3</sub>    | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 29               | 2   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu |                      | n.a.                    | 0%                |
| 30               | 2   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | NaBEt₃H              | Isomerisation           | 0%                |
| 31               | 2   | toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu |                      | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 32               | 2   | toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | NaBEt₃H              | Isomerisation           | 0%                |
| 33               | 2   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu |                      | n.a.                    | 0%                |
| 34               | 2   | THF     | NaOMe              | NaBEt <sub>3</sub> H | Isomerisation           | 0%                |
| 35               | 2   | toluene | NaOMe              |                      | n.a.                    | 0%                |
| 36               | 2   | toluene | NaOMe              | NaBEt₃H              | n.a.                    | 0%                |
| 37               | 2   | THF     |                    |                      | n.a.                    | 0%                |
| 38               | 2   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu |                      | n.a.                    | 0%                |
| 39               | 2   | Toluene |                    |                      | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 40               | 2   | Toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu |                      | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 41               | 2   | THF     |                    | NaBEt <sub>3</sub> H | 50% + isomerisation     | 0%                |
| 42               | 2   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | NaBEt <sub>3</sub> H | 30% + isomerisation     | 0%                |
| 43               | 2   | Toluene |                    | NaBEt <sub>3</sub> H | 80% + isomerisation     | 0%                |
| 44               | 2   | Toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | $NaBEt_3H$           | 80% + isomerisation     | 0%                |
| 45               | 2   | THF     |                    | NaBH <sub>4</sub>    | 80% + isomerisation     | 0%                |
| 46               | 2   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | NaBH <sub>4</sub>    | 40% + isomerisation     | 0%                |
| 47               | 2   | Toluene |                    | NaBH <sub>4</sub>    | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 48               | 2   | Toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | NaBH <sub>4</sub>    | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 49               | 2   | THF     |                    | Zn <sup>0</sup>      | 80%                     | 0%                |
| 50               | 2   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | Zn <sup>0</sup>      | 100%                    | 0%                |
| 51               | 2   | Toluene |                    | Zn <sup>0</sup>      | 0%                      | 0%                |
| 52               | 2   | Toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | Zn <sup>0</sup>      | 0%                      | 0%                |
|                  |     |         |                    |                      |                         |                   |

<sup>[a]</sup>Reaction conditions: 1-octene (0.2 mmol), acetophenone (0.2 mmol), solvent (2.5 mL), catalyst (1 mol% 1 or 2 mol% 2), additives (5 mol%), 50 bar H<sub>2</sub>, 100 °C, 16 h reaction time. <sup>[b]</sup>Area percentages; n.a. indicates the results were not interpretable.

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 Table S2. High throughput screening of 1 and 2 in the hydrogenation of 1-octen-3-ol.

| #      | Cat | Solvent | Additive 1         | Additive 2           | % 3-octanol <sup>[b]</sup> |
|--------|-----|---------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| π<br>1 | 1   | THE     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | Additive 2           | 0%                         |
| 2      | 1   | тыс     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | PMo-                 | 070                        |
| 2      | 1   | тыс     | NaOMo              | FIVIC3               | n.a.                       |
| ر<br>۱ | 1   | THE     | NaOMe              | DMo                  | n.a.                       |
| 4      | 1   |         | NaOlvie            | PIVIE <sub>3</sub>   | 11.d.                      |
| 5      | 1   |         | NaOH               | DMa                  | 40%                        |
| 0      | 1   |         |                    |                      | 00%                        |
| /      | 1   | THE     | KO BU              | NaBEt <sub>3</sub> H | 20%                        |
| 8      | 1   | THE     | KO BU              | Pyriaine             | 0%                         |
| 9      | 1   | THE     | NaOivie            | NaBEt <sub>3</sub> H | 10%                        |
| 10     | 1   | I HF    | NaOMe              | Pyridine             | 0%                         |
| 11     | 1   | THE     | NaOH               | NaBEt <sub>3</sub> H | 90%                        |
| 12     | 1   | THE     | NaOH               | Pyridine             | 5%                         |
| 13     | 1   | toluene | KO'Bu              |                      | 0%                         |
| 14     | 1   | toluene | KOʻBu              | PMe <sub>3</sub>     | 40%                        |
| 15     | 1   | toluene | NaOMe              |                      | 0%                         |
| 16     | 1   | toluene | NaOMe              | PMe <sub>3</sub>     | n.a.                       |
| 17     | 1   | toluene | NaOH               |                      | 50%                        |
| 18     | 1   | toluene | NaOH               | PMe <sub>3</sub>     | full conversion            |
| 19     | 1   | toluene | KO <sup>r</sup> Bu | NaBEt <sub>3</sub> H | 50%                        |
| 20     | 1   | toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | Pyridine             | 0%                         |
| 21     | 1   | toluene | NaOMe              | NaBEt <sub>3</sub> H | 20%                        |
| 22     | 1   | toluene | NaOMe              | Pyridine             | 0%                         |
| 23     | 1   | toluene | NaOH               | NaBEt <sub>3</sub> H | 95%                        |
| 24     | 1   | toluene | NaOH               | Pyridine             | 95%                        |
| 25     | 1   | THF     |                    | AlEt <sub>3</sub>    | full conversion            |
| 26     | 1   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | AlEt <sub>3</sub>    | full conversion            |
| 27     | 1   | Toluene |                    | AlEt <sub>3</sub>    | full conversion            |
| 28     | 1   | Toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | AlEt <sub>3</sub>    | full conversion            |
| 29     | 2   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu |                      | 0%                         |
| 30     | 2   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | NaBEt <sub>3</sub> H | 60%                        |
| 31     | 2   | toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu |                      | 0%                         |
| 32     | 2   | toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | NaBEt <sub>3</sub> H | full conversion            |
| 33     | 2   | THF     | NaOMe              |                      | 0%                         |
| 34     | 2   | THF     | NaOMe              | NaBet3H              | 60%                        |
| 35     | 2   | toluene | NaOMe              |                      | 0%                         |
| 36     | 2   | toluene | NaOMe              | NaBet3H              | 50%                        |
| 37     | 2   | THF     |                    |                      | broad                      |
| 38     | 2   | THF     | KOtBu              |                      | broad                      |
| 39     | 2   | Toluene |                    |                      | broad                      |
| 40     | 2   | Toluene | KOtBu              |                      | broad                      |
| 41     | 2   | THF     |                    | NaBEt <sub>3</sub> H | 60%                        |
| 42     | 2   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | NaBEt₃H              | 50%                        |
| 43     | 2   | Toluene |                    | NaBEt <sub>3</sub> H | 60%                        |
| 44     | 2   | Toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | NaBEt₃H              | 95%                        |
| 45     | 2   | THF     |                    | NaBH <sub>4</sub>    | 30%                        |
| 46     | 2   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | NaBH <sub>4</sub>    | 100%                       |
| 47     | 2   | Toluene |                    | NaBH₄                | n.a.                       |
| 48     | 2   | Toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | NaBH <sub>4</sub>    | n.a.                       |
| 49     | 2   | THF     |                    | Zn <sup>0</sup>      | 10%                        |
| 50     | 2   | THF     | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | Zn <sup>0</sup>      | n.a.                       |
| 51     | 2   | Toluene |                    | Zn <sup>0</sup>      | n.a.                       |
| 52     | 2   | Toluene | KO <sup>t</sup> Bu | Zn <sup>0</sup>      | n.a.                       |
|        |     |         |                    |                      |                            |

<sup>[a]</sup>Reaction conditions: 1-octen-3-ol (0.2 mmol), solvent (2.5 mL), catalyst (1 mol% **1** or 2 mol% **2**), additives (5 mol%), 50 bar H<sub>2</sub>, 100 °C, 16 h reaction time. <sup>[b]</sup>Area percentages; 'n.a.' indicates the results were not interpretable, whereas 'full conversion' indicates no starting material was observed after the reaction, but the products could not be determined.

It was concluded from this preliminary screening that  $\mathbf{2}$ , in combination with base and borohydride reducing agent was active in the hydrogenation of 1-octene as well as 1-octen-3-ol, although isomerisation was observed as side reaction. Reactions where  $\mathbf{1}$  was employed as catalyst typically gave no appreciable quantities of octane, with the notable exception where  $\mathbf{Et}_3$ Al was used as a reductant in THF. In no single case was 1-phenylethanol observed from the reduction of acetophenone.

#### 2.2 Solvent optimisation

Several representative reaction solvents were screened for conversion and selectivity in the hydrogenation/isomerisation of 1octen-3-ol (Table S3). The reaction in isopropanol led to full conversion with >99% selectivity towards the hydrogenated product **4a**.

Table S3. Solvent screening for the hydrogenation of 1-octen-3-ol by catalyst 2.



| # <sup>a)</sup> | Cat. | Solvent            | Yield <b>4a</b> : <b>4b</b> (%) <sup>b)</sup> |
|-----------------|------|--------------------|---|
| 1               | 2    | THF                | 95:1  |
| 2               | 2    | Toluene            | 1:2   |
| 3               | 2    | MeOH               | 58:30   |
| 4               | 2    | iPrOH              | >99:0   |
| 5               | 2    | HFIP <sup>c)</sup> | 0:0   |

<sup>a)</sup> Reaction conditions: 0.33 mmol 1-octen-3-ol, 1.0 mL solvent, 2 mol% **2**, 5 mol% of NaBH<sub>4</sub>, 50 bar H<sub>2</sub>, 100 °C, 16 h reaction time. <sup>b)</sup> Determined by GC using dodecane as internal standard. <sup>c)</sup> HFIP = hexafluoroisopropanol.

#### 2.3 Kinetics and Poisoning Experiments

After a typical experiment, a black residue was observed in the reaction vials (example in Figure **S2**), which prompted us to investigate the formation of nanoparticles.



Figure S2: Black residue after the reaction.

The reaction was followed by monitoring the hydrogen consumption over time, at 5 mmol scale (15 mL solvent), with 1 mol % of catalyst loading (Figure **S3**), which is often indicative of nanoparticle-catalysed reactions.

In order to assess whether the reaction was catalysed by nanoparticles, two types of poisoning experiments were performed. Firstly, the reactions were repeated in the presence of mercury on the optimisation scale (section 3.3). This led to lower conversions, but did not quench the reactivity completely (Table **S4**).

| Table S4. Mercury poisoning experiments |     |                |                |  |  |
|---|-----|----------------|----------------|--|--|
| # <sup>[a]</sup>                        | Cat | Hg loading (%) | Conversion (%) |  |  |
| 1                                       | 2   | 10             | 57             |  |  |
| 2                                       | 2   | 30             | 44             |  |  |

<sup>a</sup>)Reaction conditions: 0.33 mmol 1-octen-3-ol, 1.0 mL <sup>i</sup>PrOH, 2 mol%  $\mathbf{2}$ , 5 mol% of NaBH<sub>4</sub>, 50 bar H<sub>2</sub>, 100 °C, 16 h reaction time.



Figure S3:  $H_2$  uptake for the reduction of 1-octen-3-ol with 1 mol % of 2.

Based on the reportedly low solubility of cobalt in mercury, it was decided that another poisoning experiment using trimethylphosphine was in order.<sup>[4]</sup> The reaction was repeated on a 10 mmol scale (30 mL of iPrOH, 1 mol% **2**, 5 mol% NaBH<sub>4</sub>), and after the induction period was over and the reaction had started, trimethylphosphine (300  $\mu$ L,0.05 M in toluene, 15% w.r.t. cobalt) was injected under pressure. The hydrogen uptake curves are depicted in Figure **S6** and clearly show after injection of trimethylphosphine, the reaction stopped at 65% conversion (determined by GC with dodecane as internal standard).



Figure S6: H<sub>2</sub> uptake curve with injection of trimethylphosphine solution after an induction period. Graph a) shows the pressure values as measured; b) is corrected for the pressure spike that resulted from the addition of the solution under additional pressure.

#### 3. Experimental procedures

#### 3.1 Complex synthesis

L1 (NN<sup>H</sup>S) and L2 (NN<sup>Me</sup>S) were synthesised according to previously reported procedures.<sup>[5]</sup>

 $Co_2Cl_4(NN^{H}S)_2$  (1): In a schlenk flask, CoCl<sub>2</sub> (300 mg, 2.3 mmol) was dissolved in ethanol (40 mL). Upon addition of L1 (420 µL, 450 mg, 1 eq.) the colour of the reaction mixture changed from blue to indigo, and the mixture was stirred overnight. The solvent was removed *in vacuo*, after which the resulting dark blue oil was redissolved in dichloromethane (1.0 mL). Et<sub>2</sub>O (10 mL) was added, crashing out the majority of the material as a dark blue powder. While cooling on a dry ice/isopropanol bath, the Et<sub>2</sub>O/DCM mixture was filtered off. The product was washed with Et<sub>2</sub>O (2 x 10 mL) and dried *in vacuo*, yielding 1 (645 mg, 95%)

as a dark blue crystalline material. Crystals suitable for X-ray diffraction analysis were obtained by slow diffusion of heptane into a solution of **1** in dichloromethane.

HRMS (ESI+): m/z calcd. for  $C_{10}H_{16}CICoN_2S$ : 290.0049 [M-CI]<sup>+</sup>; found: 290.0046. *N.b.* [M]<sup>+</sup> or [M-CI]<sup>+</sup> for the dimeric complex were not observed. The complex supposedly dissociated on ionisation.

Elemental analysis calcd. (%) for C<sub>20</sub>H<sub>32</sub>Cl<sub>4</sub>Co<sub>2</sub>N<sub>4</sub>S<sub>2</sub>: C 36.83, H 4.95, N 8.59; found: C 36.96, H 4.89 N 8.43.

ATR-IR (cm<sup>-1</sup>): v(NH) 3203, v(CH) 2967, v(CH) 2925, v(CH) 2867, 1604 (m), 1442 (m), 1051 (m), 1017 (m), 940 (m), 764 (s), 418 (m)

Crystal data for complex **1**:  $C_{20}H_{32}Cl_4Co_2N_4S_2$ , M = 652.27, triclinic, space group  $P\overline{l}$ , a = 7.6862(3), b = 11.1085(4), c = 17.7851(6) Å,  $\alpha = 72.8236(10)$ ,  $\beta = 88.0499(11)$ ,  $\gamma = 70.2746(10)^\circ$ , V = 1362.03(9) Å<sup>3</sup>, T = 150(2) K, Z = 2, 54839 reflections measured, 6586 independent reflections ( $R_{int} = 0.0219$ ), final R values ( $I > 2\sigma(I)$ ):  $R_1 = 0.0214$ ,  $wR_2 = 0.0537$ , final R values (all data):  $R_1 = 0.0236$ ,  $wR_2 = 0.0554$ , 299 parameters. The asymmetric unit contains two molecules; in the main text, only one is depicted.



Figure S2: Molecular structure of 1 in the crystal. Displacement ellipsoids correspond to 30% probability. Hydrogen atoms are omitted for clarity. Operators for generating equivalent atoms are -x, -y+1, -z+1 and -x+1, -y+1, -z+2, respectively.

**CoCl<sub>2</sub>(NN<sup>Me</sup>S) (2): 2** (400 mg, 94%) was obtained as an ultramarine powder from  $CoCl_2$  (160 mg, 1.25 mmol) and **L2** (240  $\mu$ L, 260 mg, 1 eq.), analogously to the synthesis of **1**. Crystals suitable for X-ray diffraction analysis were obtained by slow diffusion of heptane into a solution of **2** in dichloroethane.

HRMS (ESI+): m/z calcd. for C<sub>11</sub>H<sub>18</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>CoN<sub>2</sub>S: 304.0206 [M-Cl]<sup>+</sup>; found: 304.0204.

Elemental analysis calcd. (%) for  $C_{11}H_{18}Cl_2CoN_2S$ : C 38.84, H 5.33, N 8.24; found: C 37.95 H 4.90 N 7.19. *N.b.* These values are outside of the commonly accepted margin of 0.4%. A contamination of  $CoCl_2$  is likely present in the obtained powder - when excess of ligand was used to prevent this, it was observed that two equivalents of ligand may coordinate to cobalt.

ATR-IR (cm<sup>-1</sup>): v(CH) 2972, v(CH) 2928, v(CH) 2853, 1603(m), 1447(m), 1436(m), 1298(m), 1000 (m), 980 (m), 762 (s), 732(m), 473(m), 420(m)

Crystal data for complex **2**:  $C_{11}H_{18}Cl_2CoN_2S$ , M = 340.16, triclinic, space group  $P\bar{l}$ , a = 7.0681(9), b = 9.0140(12), c = 12.2372(15) Å,  $\alpha = 108.210(4)$ ,  $\beta = 98.899(4)$ ,  $\gamma = 99.291(5)^\circ$ , V = 713.18(16) Å<sup>3</sup>, T = 150(2) K, Z = 2, 14675 reflections measured, 3215 independent reflections ( $R_{int} = 0.029$ ), final R values ( $l > 2\sigma(l)$ ):  $R_1 = 0.0336$ ,  $wR_2 = 0.0838$ , final R values (all data):  $R_1 = 0.0364$ ,  $wR_2 = 0.0852$ , 156 parameters.

# 3.2 Hydrogenation reactions (high-throughput screening, 0.2 mmol scale)

In oven-dried 5 mL headspace vials with crimp neck, **1** or **2** (1.3 mg, 2 mol% Co w.r.t. substrate) was weighed off in the glovebox, and the vials were capped. Stock solutions of the substrates (0.1 M) and additives (0.08 M) were prepared, and injected to the

reaction vials by robot. These were then transferred to a parallel reactor, pressurised with  $H_2$  (50 bar) and heated to 100 °C overnight. The results were analysed by GC based on area percentages and used as a starting point for identifying the desired reaction conditions.

#### 3.3 Hydrogenation reactions (optimisation, 0.33 mmol scale)

In a typical reaction, 4 mL glass vials were dried in the oven and closed with PTFE septa and screw caps. In the glovebox, catalyst, base, and additive were weighed off. Solvent (1.0 mL), dodecane (150  $\mu$ L) and 1-octen-3-ol (50  $\mu$ L, 0.33 mmol) were added, and the septum pierced with a needle. The vial was transferred to an autoclave, which was flushed with inert gas and then pressurised with H<sub>2</sub> (50 bar), and stirred at 100 °C overnight. Yields were determined by GC using dodecane as an internal standard.

#### 3.4 Hydrogenation reactions (substrate scope, 5 mmol scale)

Small-scale reactions were performed in vials as described under **2.2**. Reactions performed at a 5 mmol scale were carried out in a 100 mL hastelloy autoclave vessel, to which **2** (31 mg, 2 mol%) and NaBH<sub>4</sub> (9.5 mg, 5 mol%) were added. Under a flow of argon, isopropanol (15 mL) and substrate (5 mmol) were added, the vessel was closed, purged with N<sub>2</sub> and pressurised with H<sub>2</sub> (50 bar). After cooling down, the autoclave was depressurised, and the reaction mixture filtered over a short column of silica. The solvent was evaporated, yielding the product directly unless stated otherwise. Yields refer to isolated yields, the products were analysed by <sup>1</sup>H- and <sup>13</sup>C-NMR spectroscopy, as well as GC-MS. Analytical data correspond to those reported in literature, where reported. (See section 4 for analytical data, yields and spectra.)

# 4 Characterisation of isolated products

#### 3-Octanol (4a)

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1-Octen-3-ol (3a, 0.76 mL, 5.00 mmol) was converted to 635 mg (4.88 mmol, 98 %) of 3-octanol (4a).<sup>[6]</sup>

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  3.45 (broad, 1H), 1.62 – 1.10 (m, 11H, CH<sub>2</sub>, CH, OH), 0.87 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 3H, CH<sub>3</sub>), 0.83 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 3H, CH<sub>3</sub>). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  73.3, 36.9, 31.9, 31.9, 30.1, 25.3, 22.6, 14.0, 9.9. GC-MS: m/z calcd. for C<sub>8</sub>H<sub>18</sub>O: 130 [M]<sup>+</sup>; found: 130.



#### 1-phenyl-1-propanol (4b)



α-Vinylbenzyl alcohol (**3b**, 0.66 mL, 5.00 mmol) was converted to 641 mg (4.85 mmol, 97 %) of 1-phenyl-1-propanol (**4b**).<sup>[6]</sup>

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 7.32 – 7.13 (m, 5H, CH<sub>arom</sub>), 4.51 (t, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 1H, CH), 1.82 (d, *J* = 0.8 Hz, 1H, OH), 1.80 – 1.59 (m, 2H, CH<sub>2</sub>), 0.84 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 3H, CH<sub>3</sub>).<sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 144.6, 128.4, 127.5, 126.0, 76.0, 31.9, 10.2. GC-MS: m/z calcd. for C<sub>9</sub>H<sub>12</sub>O: 136 [M]<sup>+</sup>; found: 136.



# Cyclohexanol (4c)

2-Cyclohexen-1-ol (3c, 0.49 mL, 5.00 mmol) was converted to 236 mg (2.35 mmol, 47 %) of cyclohexanol (4c).<sup>[6]</sup>

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  3.49 (tt, *J* = 9.2, 4.1 Hz, 1H, CH), 3.14 (s, 1H, OH), 1.88 – 1.75 (m, 2H, CH<sub>2</sub>), 1.65 (m, 2H, CH<sub>2</sub>), 1.46 (m, 1H, CH<sub>2</sub>), 1.32 – 0.98 (m, 5H, CH<sub>2</sub>). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  70.0, 35.4 (2C), 25.4, 24.2 (2C). GC-MS: m/z calcd. for C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>12</sub>O: 100 [M]<sup>+</sup>; found: 100.



## Cyclohexylethylether (4d)

0.

Cyclohexylvinylether (**3d**, 0.71 mL, 5.00 mmol) was converted to 542 mg (4.30 mmol, 86 %) of cyclohexylethylether (**4d**).<sup>[10]</sup>

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 3.44 (q, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2H, O-CH<sub>2</sub>), 3.15 (m, 1H, CH), 1.85 (m, 2H), 1.67 (m, 2H), 1.52 – 1.43 (m, 1H), 1.21 – 1.10 (m, 8H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): δ 77.3, 62.9, 32.4 (2C), 25.7, 24.3 (2C), 15.7. GC-MS: m/z calcd. for C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>12</sub>O: 128 [M]<sup>+</sup>; found: 128.



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# 3-Octanone (4e)

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1-Octen-3-one (3e, 0.76 mL, 5.00 mmol) was converted to 606 mg (4.80 mmol, 96 %) of 3-octanone (4e).<sup>[8]</sup>

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  3.45 (bs, 1H, OH), 1.62 – 1.10 (m, 11H, CH<sub>2</sub> and CH), 0.87 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 3H, CH<sub>3</sub>), 0.83 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 3H, CH<sub>3</sub>). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  73.3, 36.9, 31.9, 31.9, 30.1, 25.3, 22.6, 14.0, 9.9. GC-MS: m/z calcd. for C<sub>8</sub>H<sub>16</sub>O: 128 [M]<sup>+</sup>; found: 128.



## Cyclohexanone (4f)

2-Cyclohexen-1-one (3f, 0.48 mL, 5.00 mmol) was converted to 275 mg (2.80 mmol, 56 %) of cyclohexanone (4f).<sup>[7]</sup>

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  2.27 (t, J = 6.7, 6.1 Hz, 4H, CH<sub>2</sub>), 1.90 – 1.73 (m, 4H, CH<sub>2</sub>), 1.72 – 1.56 (m, 2H, CH<sub>2</sub>). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  212.2, 42.0 (2C), 27.0 (2C), 25.0. GC-MS: m/z calcd. for C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>10</sub>O: 98 [M]<sup>+</sup>; found: 98.



## 3-Methyl-2-pentanone (4g)

3-Methyl-2-penten-2-one (3g, 0.56 mL, 5.00 mmol) was converted to 391 mg (3,90 mmol, 78 %) of 1-phenyl-1-propanol (4g).<sup>[9]</sup>

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 2.38 (h, J = 6.9 Hz, 1H, CH), 2.06 (s, 3H, CH<sub>3</sub>), 1.68 – 1.55 (m, 1H, CH<sub>2</sub>), 1.40 – 1.28 (m, 1H, CH<sub>2</sub>), 1.01 (d, J = 7.0 Hz, 3H, CH<sub>3</sub>), 0.82 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 3H, CH<sub>3</sub>). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  212.9, 48.7, 28.0, 25.8, 15.7, 11.6. GC-MS: m/z calcd. for C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>12</sub>O: 100 [M]<sup>+</sup>; found: 100.



## Isopropyl heptanoate (4h)

Methyl 6-heptenoate (**3h**, 0.78 mL, 5.00 mmol) was converted to 740 mg (4.30 mmol, 86 %) of isopropyl heptanoate (**4h**).

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 4.93 (hept, J = 6.3 Hz, 1H, CH), 2.29 – 2.13 (m, 2H, CH<sub>2</sub>), 1.60 – 1.47 (m, 2H, CH<sub>2</sub>), 1.35 – 1.14 (m, 12H, CH<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>3</sub>), 0.90 – 0.74 (m, 3H, CH<sub>3</sub>). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 173.4, 67.2, 34.7, 31.4, 28.7, 24.9, 22.4, 21.8 (2C), 13.9.



# n-Octane (4i)

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1-Octene (**3i**, 0.67 mL, 5.00 mmol) was converted to 531 mg (4.65 mmol, 93 %) of *n*-octane (**4i**).<sup>[7]</sup>

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>):  $\delta$  1.41 – 1.22 (m, 12H, CH<sub>2</sub>), 0.91 (t, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 6H, CH<sub>3</sub>). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl3):  $\delta$  31.9 (2C), 29.3 (2C), 22.7 (2C), 14.1 (2C). GC-MS: m/z calcd. for C<sub>8</sub>H<sub>18</sub>: 114 [M]<sup>+</sup>; found: 114.



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