Supporting Information

Improving Grubbs II Type Ruthenium Catalysts by Appropriately Modifying the N-Heterocyclic Carbene Ligand

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1. Synthesis and characterization of complexes of general formula [RuCl₂(NHC)(=CHPh)(PCy₃)] (2a-e) and of decomposition product 2c'.

1.1. General information

All manipulations were carried out under an inert atmosphere of nitrogen using Schlenk or glovebox (Mecaplex or Innovative Technology) techniques. Solvents were either distilled from appropriate drying agents or purged with argon and collected after passage through alumina columns in a solvent purification system (Innovative Technology). Deuterated NMR solvents were purchased from Armar Chemicals, degassed and dried over activated molecular sieves of appropriate size. NMR spectra were recorded using Bruker ARX-300, AV2-400 and AV-600 spectrometers and treated with MestReC. Mass spectra and elemental analyses were recorded by the of (UZH). analytical services the Institute of Organic Chemistry [RuCl₂(=CHPh)(PCy₃)₂] was purchased from Aldrich. [RuCl₂(SIMes)(=CH-Ph)(PCy₃)] (GII),¹ {RuCl₂[1,3-bis(o-tolyl)-imidazolin-2-ylidene](=CH-Ph)(PCy₃)} (GII'), ² and $[RuCl_2(2,7)-SIMeNap](=CH-Ph)(PCy_3)](11)^3$ were prepared according to literature procedures. Details on the synthesis and characterization of the imidazolinium salts and the free carbenes are available elsewhere.⁴ Crystals were mounted on a glass fibre and used for a low-temperature X-ray structure determination. All measurements were made on a *Nonius KappaCCD* area-detector diffractometer using graphite-monochromated Mo Ka radiation ($\lambda = 0.71073$ Å) and an Oxford Cryosystems Cryostream 700 cooler.

^{1 (}a) M. Scholl, S. Ding, C. W. Lee, and R. H. Grubbs, *Org. Lett.*, 1999, **1**, 953. (b) T. M. Trnka, J. P. Morgan, M. S. Sanford, T. E. Wilhelm, M. Sholl, T.-L. Choi, S. Ding, M. W. Day, and R. H. Grubbs, *J. Am. Chem. Soc.*, 2003, **125**, 2546.

² I. C. Stewart, T. Ung, A. A. Pletnev, J. M. Berlin, R. H. Grubbs, and Y. Schrodi, Org. Lett., 2007, 9, 1589.

³ X. Luan, R. Mariz, M. Gatti, C. Costabile, A. Poater, L. Cavallo, A. Linden, and R. Dorta, J. Am. Chem. Soc., 2008, 130, 6848.

⁴ L. Vieille-Petit, X. Luan, R. Mariz, S. Blumentritt, A. Linden, R. Dorta, *Eur. J. Inorg. Chem.*, 2009, Early View.

1.2. {RuCl₂[1,3-bis(2-isopropyl-naphthalen-1-yl)-imidazolin-2-ylidene](=CH-Ph)(PCy₃)} [RuCl₂{(2)-SIPrNap}(=CHPh)(PCy₃)] (2a)



In 80 mL of toluene, a mixture of free carbene (2)-SIPrNap (1a) (414 mg, 1.018 mmol) and [RuCl₂(=CHPh)(PCy₃)₂] (821 mg, 0.998 mmol) was stirred at room temperature. After 24 hours, the ³¹P NMR spectrum of the dark violet solution showed the presence of a small amount of starting complex, and an additional portion of the free carbene was added (121 mg, 0.298 mmol). The solution was stirred for another hour. After control of complete consumption of [RuCl₂(=CH-Ph)(PCy₃)₂], the solution was evaporated to dryness and dried overnight under vacuum. The dark-red residue was washed with 20 mL of methanol and dissolved in a minimum of CH₂Cl₂. Slow diffusion of MeOH into this concentrated solution gave 2a as dark red crystals suitable for X-ray structure analysis. Yield: 663 mg (70%). Spectroscopic data for 2a: ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C): δ 19.18 and 19.12 (2s, 1H, Ru=CH-Ph), 8.73-6.65 (m, 17H, H_{arom}), 4.38-3.42 (m, 6H, N(CH₂)₂N and ArCH(CH₃)₂), 1.96-0.49 (m, 45H, ArCH(CH₃)₂ and P(C₆H₁₁)₃). ³¹ P{¹H} (162 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C): δ 29.84 and 29.53 (2s). MS (ESI, MeOH-CH₂Cl₂): m/z = 913.7 [M-Cl]⁺. Elemental analysis: calcd. for C₅₄H₆₉Cl₂N₂PRu · 2MeOH: C 66.39 %, H 7.66 %, N 2.76 %; found : C 66.13 %, H 7.72 %, N 3.02 %.

1.3. {RuCl₂[1,3-bis(2,6-diisopropyl-naphthalen-1-yl)-imidazolin-2-ylidene](=CH-Ph)(PCy₃)} [RuCl₂{(2,6)-SIPrNap}(=CHPh)(PCy₃)] (2b)



In 80 mL of toluene, a mixture of free carbene (2,6)-SIPrNap (**1b**) (329 mg, 0.670 mmol) and $[RuCl_2(=CHPh)(PCy_3)_2]$ (540 mg, 0.656 mmol) was stirred at room temperature. After 24 hours, the ³¹P NMR spectrum of the dark violet solution

showed the presence of a small amount of starting complex, and an additional portion of the free carbene was added (32 mg, 0.065 mmol). The solution was stirred for another hour. After control of complete consumption of $[RuCl_2(=CH-Ph)(PCy_3)_2]$, the solution was evaporated to dryness and dried overnight under vacuum. The dark-red residue was washed with 20 mL of methanol and dissolved in a minimum of CH₂Cl₂. Slow diffusion of MeOH into this concentrated solution gave **2b** as dark red crystals suitable for X-ray structure analysis. Yield: 495 mg (73%). Spectroscopic data for **2b**: ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C): δ 19.20 and 19.10 (2s, 1H, Ru=CH-Ph), 8.67-6.64 (m, 15H, H_{arom}), 4.39-2.96 (m, 8H, N(CH₂)₂N and ArCH(CH₃)₂), 1.96-0.54 (m, 57H, ArCH(CH₃)₂ and P(C₆H₁₁)₃). ³¹ P{¹H} (162 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C): δ 30.09 and 29.80 (2s). MS (ESI, MeOH-CH₂Cl₂): m/z = 997.8 [M-Cl]⁺. Elemental analysis: calcd. for C₆₀H₈₁Cl₂N₂PRu · MeOH · ½CH₂Cl₂: C 66.68 %, H 7.83 %, N 2.53 %; found : C 66.72 %, H 7.67 %, N 2.74 %.

1.4. {RuCl₂[1,3-bis(2-isopropyl-6-adamantyl-naphthalen-1-yl)-imidazolin-2ylidene](=CH-Ph)(PCy₃)} [RuCl₂{(2,6)-SIPrAdNap)(=CHPh)(PCy₃)] (2c)



In 80 mL of toluene, a mixture of free carbene (2,6)-SIPrAdNap (1c) (602 mg, 0.892 mmol) and [RuCl₂(=CHPh)(PCy₃)₂] (699 mg, 0.850 mmol) was stirred at room temperature. After 24 hours, the solution was evaporated to dryness and dried overnight under vacuum. The dark-red residue was suspended in ether (60 mL) and MeOH (100 mL) was added. After centrifugation, the pink precipitate was collected and dried under vacuum. Another crop of clean compound was obtained by taking the mother liquor to dryness, redissolving it in ether/pentane and precipitating it at -35°C. Overall yield: 405 mg, (39%). Spectroscopic data for **2c** (one isomer only was isolated): ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C): δ 19.12 (s, 1H, Ru=CH-Ph), 8.74-6.63 (m, 15H, H_{arom}), 4.36-3.95 (m, 4H, N(CH₂)₂N), 2.16-0.52 (m, 77H, ArCH(CH₃)₂, ArCH(CH₃)₂, P(C₆H₁₁)₃ and Ar-Ad.). ³¹ P{¹H} (121 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C): δ 30.06 (s). MS (ESI, MeOH-CH₂Cl₂): *m/z* = 1181.9 [M-Cl]⁺. Elemental analysis: calcd. for C₇₄H₉₇Cl₂N₂PRu · MeOH · Et₂O: C 71.68 %, H 8.45 %, N 2.12 %; found : C 71.66 %, H 8.35 %, N 2.54 %.

1.5. {RuCl₂[1,3-bis(2,7-diisopropyl-naphthalen-1-yl)-imidazolin-2-ylidene](=CH-Ph)(PCy₃)} [RuCl₂{(2,7)-SIPrNap}(=CHPh)(PCy₃)] (2d)



In 140 mL of toluene, a mixture of free carbene (2,7)-SIPrNap (1d) (800 mg, 1.630 mmol) and [RuCl₂(=CHPh)(PCy₃)₂] (1.315 g, 1.600 mmol) was stirred at room temperature. After 24 hours, the ³¹P NMR spectrum of the dark violet solution showing the presence of a small amount of starting complex, and an additional portion of the free carbene was added (146 mg, 0.298 mmol). The solution was stirred for another hour. After control of complete consumption of [RuCl₂(=CHPh)(PCy₃)₂], the solution was evaporated to dryness and dried overnight under vacuum. The darkred residue was washed with 20 mL of methanol and dissolved in a minimum of CH₂Cl₂. Slow diffusion of MeOH into this concentrated solution gave 2d as dark red crystals suitable for X-ray structure analysis. Yield: 1.223 g (74%). Spectroscopic data for 2d: ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C): δ 19.23 and 19.20 (2s, 1H, Ru=CH-Ph), 8.56-6.66 (m, 15H, Harom), 4.42-3.14 (m, 8H, N(CH₂)₂N and ArCH(CH₃)₂), 1.98-0.56 (m, 57H, ArCH(CH₃)₂ and P(C₆H₁₁)₃). ³¹ P{¹H} (162 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C): δ 29.49 and 29.22 (2s). MS (ESI, MeOH-CH₂Cl₂): m/z = 997.8 [M-Cl]⁺. Elemental analysis: calcd. for C₆₀H₈₁Cl₂N₂PRu · 3/2MeOH: C 68.31 %, H 8.11 %, N 2.59 %; found : C 68.19 %, H 8.22 %, N 2.98 %.

1.6. {RuCl₂[1,3-bis(2-cyclohexyl-naphthalen-1-yl)-imidazolin-2-ylidene](=CH-Ph)(PCy₃)} [RuCl₂{(2)-SICyNap}(=CHPh)(PCy₃)] (2e)



In 60 mL of toluene, a mixture of free carbene (2)-SICyNap (1e) (414 mg, 0.851 mmol) and $[RuCl_2(=CH-Ph)(PCy_3)_2]$ (700 mg, 0.850 mmol) was stirred at room temperature. After 28 hours, the ³¹P NMR spectrum of the dark violet solution showed complete consumption of $[RuCl_2(=CHPh)(PCy_3)_2]$ and the solution was

evaporated to dryness and dried overnight under vacuum. Ether (ca. 20 mL) was added to the resulting dark red residue and the insoluble fraction was separated by centrifugation and collected. To the resulting clear solution was added MeOH (ca. 50 mL) and the resulting precipitate was filtered. Solid materials were combined and washed with MeOH (2 x 5 mL). After drying overnight under vacuum, **2e** was obtained as a fine pink powder. Yield: 612 mg (70%). Crystals suitable for X-ray structure analysis were obtained by slow diffusion of MeOH into a concentrated solution of **2e** in CH₂Cl₂. Spectroscopic data for **2e**: ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 0 °C): δ 19.23 and 19.11 (2s, 1H, Ru=CH-Ph), 8.77-6.31 (m, 17H, H_{arom}), 4.30-3.50 (m, 4H, N(CH₂)₂N), 2.54-0.38 (m, 55H, P(C₆H₁₁)₃ and Ar(C₆H₁₁)). ³¹ P{¹H} (162 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 0 °C): δ 30.29 and 29.73 (2s). MS (ESI, MeOH-CH₂Cl₂): *m/z* = 993.7 [M-Cl]⁺. Elemental analysis: calcd. for C₆₀H₇₇Cl₂N₂PRu · MeOH: C 69.04 %, H 7.69 %, N 2.64 %; found : C 69.14 %, H 7.58 %, N 3.00 %.

1.7. 14-electron decomposition product 2c'



2c'

To a saturated solution of $[RuCl_2\{(2,6)-SIPrAdNap)(=CHPh)(PCy_3)]$ (2c) in CH₂Cl₂ was slowly added MeOH. The initially formed microcrystalline material (1 day) dissolved over time and after 5 days, dark crystals of 2c' were obtained (50-65% yield depending on the sample). Spectroscopic data for 2c': ¹H NMR (600 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C): δ 8.88 (d, J = 1.7 Hz, 1H, H-7'), 8.00 (d, J = 1.4 Hz, 1H, H-5), 7.82 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 1H, H-4), 7.68 (dd, J_1 = 8.5 Hz, J_2 = 1.4 Hz, 1H, H-7), 7.46 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 1H, H-3), 7.44 (m, 1H, H-8), 7.40 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 1H, H-4'), 7.20 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 1H, H-5'), 5.05 (m, 1H, H-11'), 4.50 (m, 1H, H-11), 4.07 (m, 1H, H-11), 3.96 (m, 1H, H-11'), 3.68 (sept, ³J = 6.9 Hz, 1H, H-12), 3.41 (sept, ³J = 6.8 Hz, 3H, H-13'), 1.48 (d, ³J = 6.9 Hz, 3H, H-14), 1.43 (d, ³J = 6.9 Hz, 3H, H-13), 1.32 (d, ³J = 6.8 Hz, 3H, H-14'). ¹³C{¹H} (150 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C) *: δ 142.5 (C-2), 138.2 (C-7'), 135.6 (C-9'), 135.3 (C-7), 130.7 (C-2'), 129.9 (C-9), 128.5 (C-4), 126.6

(C-5), 126.3 (C-4'), 123.5 (C-3), 122.8 (C-3'), 114.6 (C-5'), 106.4 (C-8), 55.0 (C-11'), 52.3 (C-11), 51.0, 44.0, 43.8, 37.7, 37.5, 37.2, 36.6, 30.2, 30.0, 29.8, 29.6 (C-12'), 29.3, 28.7 (C-12), 27.9, 27.8, 27.6, 26.9, 26.9, 26.5, 25.9 (C-14'), 25.2 (C-13), 24.1 (C-13'), 22.2 (C14). ³¹ P{¹H} (162 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C): δ 77.63 (s).

* Due to the low solubility of the complex, quaternary carbons C-1', C-6', C-8', C-1, C-6, C-10', C-10 and N*C*-Ru do not appear on the spectrum, even after a prolonged time (2 days).

1.8. Analytical data of the Mother Liquor of 2c'

The supernatant solution containing crystalline 2c' is collected and dried under vacuum.

-) The ¹H NMR spectrum (CD₂Cl₂) can be found as Figure S16 below and does not show any signals belonging to metal-bound benzylidene or Ruthenium-H species.

-) The ³¹P NMR spectrum (CD₂Cl₂) is shown in Figure S17. A main signal at ca. 28 ppm is attributed to a phosphine-containing Ru-species. Previously identified $PCy_3HCl_{,5}^{5}$ is not detected (ca. 33.8 ppm). It is though of note that a solution of the mother liquor prepared in C₆D₆ decomposes over the course of 1 day and gives significant amounts of the phosphine salt.

-) GC-MS spectra of the mother liquor can be found in Figure S18. Comparison with an authentic sample (Figure S19) shows that the major organic fragment recovered from the mother liquor is stilbene.

1.9. X-ray data

	Ru-C(NHC)	Ru-alkylidene	Ru-P
GII	2.085(2)	1.835(2)	2.4245(5)
2a	2.074(2)	1.847(2)	2.4180(5)
2b	2.069(4)	1.830(4)	2.434(1)
2d	2.080(5)	1.846(5)	2.432(1)
2e	2.067(3)	1.834(4)	2.4191(9)

Table S1: Selected bond lengths in complexes 2a, 2b, 2d, 2e and GII

⁵ S. H. Hong, A. Chlenov, M. W. Day, R. H. Grubbs, *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.*, 2007, **46**, 5148.

2. Catalytic experiments (Ring-Closing Metathesis (RCM))

2.1. General remarks

All catalytic samples were prepared under an inert atmosphere of nitrogen using gloveboxes. C_6F_6 was distilled from P_2O_5 . Unless indicated otherwise, all reactions were run in NMR tubes equipped with a screw-cap septum top at 300K (27 °C) at a 0.1 M substrate/solvent ratio and the conversions were followed by ¹H NMR spectroscopy. The following substrates were synthesized according to literature procedures: **3**, ⁶**4**, ⁷**7**, **8**.⁸





2.2.1 Catalyst loading of 1 mol %: To get precisely the required quantity of catalyst, a solution of the appropriate ruthenium complex (4.10^{-3} mmol) in 2 mL of CH₂Cl₂ was prepared. 400 µL of this solution was transferred to a NMR tube, evaporated to dryness and the residue was dried for one hour under vacuum. The tube was then closed with a screw-cap septum top. Separately, in a small vial, substrates 3 and 4 (0.08 mmol, 18.9 mg and 19.2 mg, respectively) were dissolved in 0.8 mL (0.1 M) of CD₂Cl₂ and then transferred via syringe to the respective NMR tubes containing the catalyst. The tube was vigorously stirred for a few seconds (the reaction time was started at this point) and introduced to the spectrometer and conversions were followed by registration of the ¹H NMR spectra.

2.2.2 Catalyst loading of 0.1 mol%: To get the required quantity of catalyst, a solution of the appropriate ruthenium complex (8.10^{-3} mmol) in 10 mL of CH₂Cl₂ was prepared. 100 µL of this solution was transferred to a NMR tube, evaporated to dryness and the residue was dried for one hour under vacuum. The tube was then closed with a screw-cap septum top. Separately, in a small vial, substrates **3** and **4** (0.08 mmol, 18.9 mg and 19.2 mg, respectively) were dissolved in 0.8 mL (0.1 M) of

⁶ Y. Terada, M. Mitsuhiro, and A. Nishida, Angew. Chem. Int. Ed., 2004, 43, 4063.

⁷ T. Ritter, A. Hejl, A. G. Wenzel, T. W. Funk, and R. H. Grubbs, Organometallics 2006, 25, 5740.

⁸ J. M. Berlin, K. Campbell, T. Ritter, T. W. Funk, A. Chlenov, and R. H. Grubbs, Org. Lett., 2007, 9, 1339.

 CD_2Cl_2 and then transferred via syringe to the respective NMR tube containing the catalyst. The tube was vigorously stirred for a few seconds (the reaction time was started at this point) and introduced to the spectrometer and conversions were followed by registration of the ¹H NMR spectra.



Figure S1: Kinetic data for the RCM of **3** (0.1 mol %) *Figure S2:* Kinetic data for the RCM of **4** (0.1 mol %)

2.3. RCM of dimethallyltosylamide (7) (1 mol%)



To get the required quantity of catalyst, a solution of the appropriate ruthenium complex (4.10^{-3} mmol) in 2 mL of CH₂Cl₂ was prepared. 400 µL of this solution was transferred to a NMR tube, evaporated to dryness and the residue was dried for one hour under vacuum. The tube was then closed with a screw-cap septum top. Separately, in a small vial, substrate 7 (0.08 mmol, 21.2 mg) was dissolved in 0.8 mL (0.1 M) of C₆F₆ and then transferred via syringe to the NMR tube containing the catalyst. The tube was vigorously stirred for a few seconds (the reaction time was started at this point) and introduced to the spectrometer and conversions were followed by registration of the ¹H NMR spectra.

2.4. RCM of diethyldimethallyl malonate (8) with 5 mol % of catalyst



For practical reasons, the appropriate complex (4.10^{-3} mmol) was dissolved in the minimum amount of CH₂Cl₂. This solution was transferred to a NMR tube, evaporated to dryness and the residue was dried for one hour under vacuum. The tube was then closed with a screw-cap septum top. Separately, in a small vial, substrate **8** (0.08 mmol, 19.2 mg) was dissolved in 0.8 mL (0.1 M) of C₆F₆ and then transferred via syringe to the NMR tube containing the catalyst. The tube was vigorously stirred for a few seconds (the reaction time was started at this point) and introduced to an ultrasonic bath at room temperature. After 4 hours, the conversion was determined by ¹H NMR spectroscopy (temperature of the bath after 4 hours: 70 °C).

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Figure S3: Data for the RCM of 8





Figure S4: ¹H NMR spectrum of **2a** (400 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C)



Figure S5: ³¹P{¹H} NMR spectrum of **2a** (162 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C)



Figure S7: ³¹P{¹H} NMR spectrum of **2b** (162 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C)



Figure S9: ³¹P{¹H} NMR spectrum of **2c** (121 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C)



Figure S10: ¹H NMR spectrum of **2d** (400 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C)



Figure S11: ³¹P{¹H} NMR spectrum of **2d** (162 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C)









Figure S16: ¹H NMR spectrum of mother liquor of **2c'** (500 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C)



Figure S17: ³¹P{¹H} NMR spectrum of ML of 2c' (203 MHz, CD₂Cl₂, 27 °C)



Figure S18: GC-MS analysis of the mother liquor of 2c'.



Figure S19: GC-MS analysis of stilbene