Electronic Supplementary Material (ESI) for RSC Advances. This journal is © The Royal Society of Chemistry 2020

Supplement 1



S1. (a) Grains and SEM images of the natural zeolite NH at magnification (b) x500 and (c) x1000.



S2. Normalized X-ray diffraction patterns of the natural zeolitic tuff (NZ), natural zeolitic tuff treated with acid solution (NH), and the synthetic zeolites C and M. The marks at the bottom of the figure indicate different phases: low quartz (PDF: 00-005-0490), calcite (PDF: 01-085-1108), clinoptilolite (PDF: 01-080-1557), and mordenite (PDF: 04-014-3294). The peaks marked by arrows at 8.9 and 29.4 ° indicate impurities in NZ disappearing after acid treatment to yield NH.



S3. Comparison between the photocatalytic activity of the natural zeolite NH and TiO_2 particles (anatase phase) in the decomposition of caffeine in aqueous solution. Mass to volume ratio 10 g L⁻¹ for NH and 4 g L⁻¹ for TiO₂. Anatase (66 m²g⁻¹) was prepared hydrothermally using TiOSO₄·xH₂O as precursor.

Supplement 4



S4 (a) Caffeine microspecies distribution diagram and (b) DAD-HPLC chromatogram of an aqueous caffeine solution (50 mg L⁻¹) before and after 48 hours adsorption equilibrium.



S5. DTG curves of the studied samples NH, NFe and SH.



S6. Spectrum of the lamp in the UV-Vis range.



S7. UV-VIS-NIR diffuse reflectance spectra of the studied samples indicating band position.



S8. Band gap energies of synthetic (a-c) clinoptilolite and (d-f) mordenite.



S9. DAD-HPLC chromatograms of caffeine aqueous solutions at different times of the photocatalytic reaction on (a) NH, (b) NFe and (c) SH. Detection at 236 nm.



S10. Evolution of the photoproducts generated over NFe during 4 hours and of the compound 1,3,7-trimethyl-2,3,6,7,8,9-hexahydro-1H-purine-2,6-diol produced by photolysis.



S11. Proposed photocatalytic decomposition pathway of caffeine by natural zeolites. P indicates the peak number in Fig. 5.