## **Supporting Information**

# Hollow, mesoporous, eutectic $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$ nano-spheres as solid acid-base catalysts for the highly regio-selective Omethylation of 1, 2-diphenols

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# Table of contents

1. Image and particle size distribution of carbon sphere	S2.
2. Adsorption of Zn <sup>2+</sup> /Mg <sup>2+</sup> ions on carbon spheres	S2-4
3. Characterization of acid-base catalysts	S4-12
(1) Morphology	
(2) Structure	
(3) Textural property	
(4) Amount and strength of basic/acidic sites	
(5) Type of acid sites (Lewis or Brønsted)	
4. Regio-selective O-methylation	S13-18
(1) Optimization of reaction conditions	
(2) Catalytic performances of various acid-base catalysts	
(3) Reaction kinetics	
(4) Substrate scope	
(5) Reusability of catalyst	
5. Activation model of ZnO HMNSs and MgO HMNSs	.S19
6. <sup>1</sup> H NMR spectra of products	S20-29
7. GC spectra for the alkylations of various diphenols	S30-34



1. Image and particle size distribution of carbon sphere

Fig. S1 SEM image and particle size distribution of carbon spheres.

2. Adsorption of  $Zn^{2+}/Mg^{2+}$  ions on carbon spheres



Fig. S2 Loading capacities of Mg(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>/Zn(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> into carbon spheres (0.20 g) in aqueous mixed salt solutions (molar

Mg/Zn = 5/1, 250 mL) with different concentrations at 160°C for 6 h.



Fig. S3 Loading capacities of Mg(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>/Zn(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> into carbon spheres (0.20 g) during 14 h (molar Mg/Zn = 5/1, 160

°C, 250 mL of salt solution with 1.5 mol  $L^{-1}$ ).



Fig. S4 N<sub>2</sub> adsorption-desorption isotherms (a, c) and pore size distributions (b, d) of carbon spheres before (a, b)





Fig. S5 IR spectra of carbon spheres after (a) and before (b) the adsorption of  $Mg^{2+}$  and  $Zn^{2+}$  ions.



Fig S6 XRD pattern of Mg<sup>2+</sup>/Zn<sup>2+</sup> ions-adsorbed carbon spheres (a), carbon spheres (b) and standard spectrum of

 $Mg(NO_3)_2$  and  $Zn(NO_3)_2$  (c).



Fig. S7 XPS spectra of carbon spheres after the adsorption of Mg<sup>2+</sup> and Zn<sup>2+</sup> ions: C1s (a), O1s (b), Zn 2p (c), and Mg

1s (d).

- 3. Characterization of acid-base catalysts
- (1) Morphology



**Fig. S8** Morphology of  $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs (x = 0.052) under different calcination temperatures and heating rates.



**Fig. S9** TEM images of ZnO HMNSs (a), Zn<sub>1-x</sub>Mg<sub>x</sub>O HMNSs [*x* = 0.012 (b), *x* = 0.030 (c), *x* = 0.052 (d), *x* = 0.089 (e)], and



MgO HMNSs (f).

Fig. S10 HAADF image (a, c) with line scan profiles (d), EDX spectrum (b), and EDS maps (e:O, f:Zn) of ZnO HMNSs.



Fig. S11 HAADF image (a, c), EDX spectrum (b), and X-EDS maps (e: 0, f: Mg, g: Zn) with line scan profiles (d) of Zn<sub>1</sub>.

 $_{x}Mg_{x}O$  HMNSs (x = 0.052).



Fig. S12 HAADF image (a, c), EDX spectrum (b) and EDS maps (d, e) of MgO HMNSs.



Fig. S13 SEM of ZnO-MgO(1:5) Cs (a) and ZnO-MgO(0.948:0.052) Cs (b), HAADF images and EDS maps (c), and EDX

spectrum (d) of ZnO-MgO (1: 5) Cs.



**Fig. S14** Particle size distributions of Zn<sub>1-x</sub>Mg<sub>x</sub>O HMNSs (a: *x* = 0.012; b: *x* = 0.030; c: *x* = 0.052; d: *x* = 0.089), MgO NPs

(e), and ZnO NPs (f).

(2) Structure



**Fig. S15** Enlarged XRD patterns of  $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs (x = 0.012) (a),  $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs (x = 0.030) (b),  $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$ 

HMNSs (x = 0.052) (c), Zn<sub>1-x</sub>Mg<sub>x</sub>O HMNSs (x = 0.089) (d), and ZnO-MgO (0.948:0.052) Cs.



**Fig. S16** FT-IR spectra of ZnO HMNSs (a), Zn<sub>1-x</sub>Mg<sub>x</sub>O HMNSs (*x* = 0.012 (b), 0.030 (c), 0.052 (d), and 0.089 (e)), MgO HMNSs (f), ZnO-MgO(0.948:0.052) Cs (g), and ZnO-MgO(1:5) Cs (h).

Parameter	ZnO HMNSs	Zn <sub>1-x</sub> Mg <sub>x</sub> O HMNSs			
		X = 0.012	0.030	0.052	0.089
2θ (002) (°) D (nm)	34.42	34.42	34.44	34.45	34.40
	44.6	39.0	28.9	23.2	19.0
FWHM	0.21	0.29	0.32	0.34	0.43
c/a	1.606	1.602	1.600	1.598	1.595
ε (10 <sup>-4</sup> )	20.9	29.5	32.9	39.7	45.9
δ (10 <sup>-4</sup> /nm2)	5.0	6.6	12.0	18.6	27.7

**Table S1** Structural parameters of ZnO HMNSs, Zn<sub>1-x</sub>Mg<sub>x</sub>O HMNSs (*x* = 0.012, 0.030, 0.052, and 0.089), and MgO HMNSs

calcined at 500°.

(3) Textural Property



**Fig. S17** N<sub>2</sub> adsorption-desorption isotherms (left) and pore size distributions (right) of ZnO-MgO (1:5) Cs (a), ZnO-MgO (0.948:0.052) Cs (b), ZnO HMNSs (c),  $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs (x = 0.012 (d), 0.030 (e), 0.052 (f), 0.089 (g)), and MgO HMNSs (h).

_		Surface Area	Pore Volume	Average Pore Size	The Most Probable
Entry	Catalyst	$(m^2 g^{-1})^b$	(cc g <sup>-1</sup> ) <sup>c</sup>	(nm)	Pore Size (nm)
1	MgO HMNSs	45.9	0.31	27.0	17.3
2	$Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$ HMNSs (x = 0.012)	38.3	0.14	14.6	11.7
3	$Zn_{i-x}Mg_xO$ HMNSs (x = 0.030)	45.4	0.16	14.1	10.9
4	$Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$ HMNSs (x = 0.052)	46.2	0.18	15.6	6.3
5	$Zn_{i-x}Mg_xO$ HMNSs (x = 0.089)	39.7	0.18	18.1	5.9
6	ZnO HMNSs	22.7	0.13	22.9	3.8
7	ZnO-MgO (1:5) Cs	13.4	0.09	-	-
8	ZnO-MgO (0.948:0.052) Cs	10.8	0.07	-	-

### Table S2 Surface areas, average pore diameters and pore volumes of various catalysts.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> N2 adsorption-desorption is carried out at 77 K on a QUADRASORB SI020503 system, and the sample is degassed at 105 °C for 12 h before measurement. <sup>b</sup> Based on BET method. <sup>c</sup> Based on desorption data using DFT method ( $P/P_o$ =0.990).

## (4) Amount and strength of basic/acidic sites

## **Table S3** Amounts and strengths of basic/acidic sites of $Zn_{1-x}MgxO$ HMNSs (x = 0.012, 0.052 and 0.089) and ZnO-MgO(0.948:0.052) Cs.

Strength		Basic/ac	5-1)		
(°C)		Zn <sub>1-x</sub> Mg <sub>x</sub> O HMNSs	ZnO-MgO		
	X = 0.012	0.052	0.089	(0.948:0.052) Cs	
Medium (200-420)	0.58/0.64	1.39/0.66	2.27/2.27	0.42/0.63	
Strong (420-650)	0.09/0.09	0.18/0.18	0.17/0.17	0.18/0.15	
Super strong (650-820)	0.10/0.09	0.19/0.20	0.16/0.16	0.18/0.17	



**Fig. S18** CO<sub>2</sub>-TPD curves of Zn<sub>1-x</sub>Mg<sub>x</sub>O HMNSs (*x* = 0.012 (a), 0.052 (b), 0.089 (c)) and ZnO-MgO (0.948:0.052) Cs.



**Fig. S19** NH<sub>3</sub>-TPD curves of Zn<sub>1-x</sub>Mg<sub>x</sub>O HMNSs (*x* = 0.012 (a), 0.052 (b), 0.089 (c)) and ZnO-MgO (0.948:0.052) Cs.



**Fig. S20** TPD-MS curves of Zn<sub>1-x</sub>Mg<sub>x</sub>O HMNSs (*x* = 0.052).

(5) Type of acid sites (Lewis or Brønsted)



**Fig. S21** IR spectra of pyridine-adsorbed Zn<sub>1-x</sub>Mg<sub>x</sub>O HMNSs (*x* = 0.052) vacuumized at 150 °C for 12 h (a), pyridineadsorbed Zn<sub>1-x</sub>Mg<sub>x</sub>O HMNSs (*x* = 0.052) at r.t. (b), and Zn<sub>1-x</sub>Mg<sub>x</sub>O HMNSs (*x* = 0.052) (c).

#### 4. Regio-selective O-methylation

#### (1) Optimization of reaction conditions

The effect of reaction conditions on catechol conversion and guaiacol selectivity in the O-methylation of catechol with DMC is investigated in detail and monitored by GC. First, a bivariate analysis with respect to temperature and mass ratio of catechol/catalyst is used to screen the optimal catechol conversion and guaiacol yield (Fig. S22a and Table S4). At mass ratios of catechol/catalyst = 16 and 12 at 160 °C, 180 °C and 200 °C,  $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs (x = 0.030) promote the O-methylations of catechol in poor catechol conversion (< 22.1%) with low guaiacol yields (<14.7%). When the mass ratios decrease to 8 at 200 °C and 4 at 180 °C and 200 °C, a complete catechol conversion can be achieved. Among them, the best guaiacol yield (72.9%) is obtained at the mass ratio of catechol/catalyst = 4 at 180 °C. As the temperature increases to 200, veratrole is produced in 63.9% and 68.1% yields under the mass ratios at 6 and 4, respectively, indicating that a higher temperature is unfavorable for achieving high guaia-chol selectivity. Moreover, the C-alkylated products are not obtained in all the O-methylations, and other un-known by-products in 0.1-16.0% yields are detected.



**Fig. S22** Catechol conversion, guaiacol and by-product yields as functions of mass ratio of catechol/ $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$ HMNSs (x = 0.030) and temperature (a), and chemical composition (x) of  $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs and reaction time (b).

At the mass ratio of catechol/catalyst = 4 at 180 °C, the guaiachol selectivity is optimized as functions of chemical composition (x) and reaction time. From Fig. S22b and Table S5, it is found that the chemical composition (x) of  $Zn_{1,x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs have a great impact on catechol conversion and guaiacol yield. When the *x* values are set to 1.0 and 0, the corresponding MgO HMNSs and ZnO HMNSs promote the O-methylations in 65.9% and 57.1% of catechol conversions within 16 h, respectively. It is worth noting that ZnO HMNSs shows a significantly higher guaiacol yield (97.9%) than MgO HMNSs (61.5%). After Mg ion is introduced into wurtzite ZnO to form a eutectic structure, all the as-prepared  $Zn_{1,x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs with *x* = 0.030, 0.052 and 0.089 can achieve a complete catechol conversion within 16 h. Among them,  $Zn_{1,x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs (*x* = 0.052) affords the highest guaiachol selectivity (94.5%) together with only 3.3% yield of veratrole within 16 h. However, all catalysts show the low catechol con- versions (<45.1%) within 8 h. Moreover, the suitable molar ratio of DMC to catechol is further optimized. At the molar ratio of DMC/catechol = 4, the excellent guaiachol yield (95.5%) together with only 2.6% yield of veratrole and 1.9% yield of by-products is achieved (Table S6). Overall, the optimal conditions for highly regio-selective O- methylation of catechol with DMC to afford guaiachol in a complete catechol conversion with high guaiachol yield (95.5%) is summarized as follows: catechol (200.0 mg, 1.8 mmol), DMC (653.3 mg, 7.2 mmol), mass ratio of catechol/Zn<sub>1</sub>. <sub>x</sub>Mg<sub>x</sub>O HMNSs (*x* = 0.052) = 4, 180 °C, 16 h.

Table S4 Influence of mass ratio of catechol/catalyst and reaction temperature on catechol conversion, selectivity and
yield of product and by-product in the methylation of catechol. <sup>a</sup>

Entry	Catechol	Temp.	Catechol conv. <sup>c</sup>	Product selectivity/yield (%/%) <sup>c</sup>			
	/catalyst <sup>b</sup>	(°C)	(%)	Veratrole	Guaiachol	C-alkylated	Others
1	16	160	1,1	9.4 /o.1	82.8 /0.9	-	7.8/0.1
2	16	180	2.2	2.0 /<0.1	74.5/1.6	-	23.5 /0.5
3	16	200	18.0	0.9 /0.2	55.2/9.9	-	43.9/7.9
4	12	160	4.3	3.3/0.1	92.0/4.0	-	4.7/0.2
5	12	180	7.0	0.5/<0.1	98.7/6.9	-	0.8/<0.1
6	12	200	22.1	2.1/0.5	66.5/14.7	-	31.4/6.9
7	8	160	6.9	2.3/0.2	95.6/6.6	-	2.1/0.1
8	8	180	7.0	-	95.4/6.7	-	4.6/0.3
9	8	200	100	63.9/63.9	22.3/22.3	-	13.8/13.8
10	4	160	60.3	17.5/10.6	76.9/46.4	-	5.6/3.4
11	4	180	100	13.0/13.0	72.9/72.9	-	14.1/14.1
12	4	200	100	68.1/68.1	15.9/15.9	-	16.0/16.0

<sup>a</sup> Reaction conditions: Catechol (200.0 mg, 1.8 mmol), DMC (490 mg, 5.4 mmol),  $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs (x = 0.030), 16 h. <sup>b</sup> Mass ratio of catechol/Catalyst. c Determined by GC.

Entry	x	Time	Catechol conv. <sup>b</sup>	Product selectivity/Yield (%/%)b			
		(h)	(%)	Veratrole	Guaiachol	C-alkylated	Others
1	1.0 <sup>c</sup>	8	21.7	17.9/3.9	81.3/17.6	-	0.7/0.2
2	1.0 <sup>c</sup>	16	65.9	37.2/24.5	61.5/40.5	-	1.3/0.9
3	0.089	8	29.4	6.1/1.8	87.8/25.8	-	6.1/1.8
4	0.089	16	100	10.5/10.5	80.4/80.4	-	9.1/9.1
5	0.052	8	40.7	2.9/1.2	95.1/38.7		2.0/0.8
6	0.052	16	100	3.3/3.3	94.5/94.5	-	2.1/2.1
7	0.030	8	33.3	4.2 /1.4	89.4/29.8	-	6.4/2.1
8	0.030	16	100	3.0/3.0	92.9/92.9	-	4.1/4.1
9	0.012	8	20.6	4.0/0.8	95.2/19.6		0.8/0.2
10	0.012	16	68.2	3.1/2.1	94.1/64.2	-	2.8/1.9
11	$\mathbf{o}^{\mathrm{d}}$	8	45.1	6.1/2.7	92.0/41.5	-	2.0/0.9
12	o <sup>d</sup>	16	57.1	2.1/1.2	97.9/55.9	-	-

<sup>a</sup> Reaction conditions: Catechol (200.0 mg, 1.8 mmol), DMC (490 mg, 5.4 mmol), mass ratio of catechol/catalyst = 4, 180 °C. <sup>b</sup> Determined by GC. <sup>c</sup> MgO HMNPs. <sup>d</sup> ZnO HMNPs.

 Table S6 Effect of molar ratios of DMC to catechol on catechol conversions, product selectivities and product yields in the methylation reaction of catechol with DMC.<sup>a</sup>

Entry	Molar	Catechol conv. <sup>b</sup>	Product selectivity (%) <sup>b</sup>				
	DMC/catechol	(%)	Veratrole	Guaiachol	C-alkylated	Others	
1	1.0	100	39.2	38.0	-	22.8	
2	2.0	100	46.2	31.5	-	22.3	
3	3.0	100	3.3	94.5	-	2.1	
4	4.0	100	2.6	95.5	-	1.9	
5	5.0	100	10.7	81.4	-	7.9	

<sup>a</sup> Reaction conditions: Catechol (200.0 mg, 1.8 mmol), mass ratio of catechol/ $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs (x = 0.052) = 4:1, 180 °C, 16 h. <sup>b</sup> Determined by GC

## (2) Catalytic performances of various acid-base catalysts

Entry	Catalyst	Catechol conv. <sup>b</sup>	Product selectivity/Yield (%/%) <sup>b</sup>			
		(%)	Veratrole	Guaiachol	C-alkylated	Others
1	ZnO HMNSs	57.1	1.9/1.1	95.7/54.6	-	2.3/1.3
2	ZnO-MgO (1:5) Cs	83.9	46.2/38.8	51.4/43.1	-	2.5/2.0
3	ZnO-MgO (0.948:0.052) Cs	77.4	3.5/2.7	93.3/72.2		3.2/2.5
4	$Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$ HMNSs (x = 0.052)	100	2.6/2.6	95.5/95.5	-	1.9/1.9
5	MgO HMNSs	65.9	37.2/24.5	61.5/40.5		1.3/0.9
6 <sup>c</sup>	ZnO HMNSs + MgO HMNSs	56.7	2.8/1.6	94.0/53.3	-	3.2/1.8

## Table S7 Catechol conversions, product yields and product selectivities catalyzed by various catalysts in the methylation reactions of catechol.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Reaction conditions: Catechol (200.0 mg, 1.8 mmol), DMC (653.3 mg, 7.2 mmol), mass ratio of catechol/catalyst = 4:1, 180 °C, 16 h. <sup>b</sup> Determined by GC. <sup>c</sup> Molar ratio of ZnO HMNSs/MgO HMNSs = 0.948:0.052.

### (3) Reaction kinetics

Table S8         Concentrations of catechol, guaiachol and veratrole in the whole methylation process of catechol catalyzed by
various catalysts. <sup>a</sup>

Time	Catechol	concentration (mmo	l L-1) <sup>b</sup>	Guaiachol/vera	Guaiachol/veratrole concentration (mmol $L^{-1})^b$			
(h) –	Zn <sub>1-x</sub> Mg <sub>x</sub> O	ZnO-MgO	ZnO-MgO	Zn <sub>1-x</sub> Mg <sub>x</sub> O	ZnO-MgO	ZnO-MgO		
	HMNSs ( $x =$	(0.948:0.052) Cs	(1:5) Cs	HMNSs ( $x =$	(0.948:0.052) Cs	(1:5) Cs		
	0.052)			0.052)				
0	18	18	18	o/o	o/o	o/o		
2	15.6	16.9	17.3	2.1/0.1	0.9/0.0	0.7/0.0		
4	12.9	16.0	16.3	4.9/0.1	1.9/0.1	1.2/0.4		
6	12.0	15.1	15.3	5.8/0.2	3.5/0.1	1.4/0.5		
8	10.7	13.9	14.0	7.0/0.2	4.8/0.1	2.2/1.6		
10	7.8	12.7	12.3	9.6/0.3	6.4/0.1	3.0/2.7		
12	3.8	10.8	9.8	13.5/0.5	8.6/0.2	4.1/3.1		
14	2.0	6.9	6.3	15.2/0.6	10.8/0.2	6.2/5.2		
16	0	4.1	2.9	17.0/0.6	12.7/0.2	7.8/7.0		

<sup>a</sup> Reaction conditions: Catechol (200.0 mg, 1.8 mmol), DMC (653.3 mg, 7.2 mmol), mass ratio of catechol/catalyst = 4, 180 °C. <sup>b</sup> Determined by GC.

## (4) Substrate scope

Entres	Substrate			Product selectivity/Yield (%/%) <sup>b</sup>				
Entry	conv. (%)	) <sup>b</sup>	Mono-eth	er	Di-ether		Others	
1 <sup>a</sup>	HO HO	94.5	HO H <sub>3</sub> CO	94.3/89.1	H <sub>3</sub> CO H <sub>3</sub> CO	5.7/5.4	-	
2 <sup>a</sup>	HO HO	100	H <sub>3</sub> CO HO	95.3/95.3	H <sub>3</sub> CO H <sub>3</sub> CO	2.7/2.7	2.0/2.0	
3 <sup>a</sup>	HO HO	100	HO H <sub>3</sub> CO	89.0/89.0	H <sub>3</sub> CO H <sub>3</sub> CO	4.0/4.0	7.2/7.2	
4 <sup>a</sup>	HO Br HO	100	HO H <sub>3</sub> CO	92.8/92.8	H <sub>3</sub> CO H <sub>3</sub> CO	0.6/0.6	6.6/6.6	
5 <sup>ª</sup>	но	82.6	нзсо Он	67.8/56.0	H <sub>3</sub> CO	19.3/15.9	12.9/10.7	
6ª	но	94.6	H <sub>3</sub> CO OH	65.5/61.9	H <sub>3</sub> CO OCH <sub>3</sub>	33.6/31.8	0.9/0.9	
7 <sup>c</sup>	HOHO	49.8	HO OH	60.9/30.3	Eto Eto	0.6/0.3	38.5/19.2	
<b>8</b> <sup>c</sup>	НО	48.3	Eto	64.9/31.3	eto OEt	4.4/2.1	30.7/14.8	
9 <sup>c</sup>	но-ОН	54.1	Eto OH	59.7/32.3	Eto OEt	3.2/1.7	37.1/20.1	

### Table S9 Substrate conversions and product selectivities/yields in the alkylation of diphenols.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Reaction conditions: molar ratio of substrate/DMC= 1/4 ,  $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs (x = 0.052) , 180 °C, 16 h. <sup>b</sup> Determined by GC. <sup>c</sup> Reaction conditions: molar ratio of substrate/DEC= 1/4,  $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs (x = 0.052), 180 °C, 16 h

## (5) Reusability of catalyst

**Table S10** Catechol conversions, selectivities/yields of guaiachol and veratrole in the  $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs (x = 0.052)-promoted O-methylation of catechol with DMC in repeated test.<sup>a</sup>

Reuse	Catechol conv. <sup>b</sup>	Product selectivity <sup>b</sup> /Yield (%/%) <sup>c</sup>								
times	(%)	Veratrole	Guaiachol	C-alkylated	Others					
1	100	2.6/2.6	95.5/95.5	-	1.9/-					
	(88.9) <sup>d</sup>	(2.2/2.0) <sup>d</sup>	(96.2/85.5) <sup>d</sup>		(1.6/-) <sup>d</sup>					
2	99.5	7.5/7.4	92.1/91.8	-	0.4/-					
	(88.6) <sup>d</sup>	(6.8/6.0) <sup>d</sup>	(92.8/82.2) <sup>d</sup>		(0.4/-) <sup>d</sup>					
3	99.4	8.0/7.8	91.5/91.3	-	0.4/-					
	(88.4) <sup>d</sup>	(7.6/6.7) <sup>d</sup>	(92.1/81.4) <sup>d</sup>		(0.3/-) <sup>d</sup>					
4	97.9	10.6/10.1	87.9/86.5	-	1.5/-					
	(87.9) <sup>d</sup>	(10.3/9.1) <sup>d</sup>	(88.5/77.8) <sup>d</sup>		(1.2/-) <sup>d</sup>					

5	96.9	16.8/16.1	81.2/78.6		2.0/-
	(87.1) <sup>d</sup>	(16.5/14.4) <sup>d</sup>	(81.8/71.2) <sup>d</sup>		(1.7) <sup>d</sup>
6	95.9	26.5/24.5	71.0/68.7	-	2.5/-
	(86.4) <sup>d</sup>	(25.9/22.4) <sup>d</sup>	(71.8/62.0) <sup>d</sup>		(2.3/-) <sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Reaction conditions:  $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs (x = 0.052), catechol (1.00 g, 9.0 mmol), DMC (2.61 g, 28.8 mmol), molar ratio of catechol/DMC = 1/4 , 180 °C, 16 h. <sup>b</sup> Selectivity of product is calculated according to the percent of total peak areas of products, respectively. <sup>c</sup> Determined by GC: guaiachol and veratrole yields are determined quantitatively by internal standard method and area normalization, respectively. <sup>d</sup> Data collected at the reaction time of 14 h.



**Fig. S23** SEM images of fresh (a) and  $6^{\text{th}}$ -reused  $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs (x= 0.052) (b).



**Fig. S24** XRD patterns of fresh (a),  $4^{\text{th}}$ -reused (b) and  $6^{\text{th}}$ -reused (c)  $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$  HMNSs (x=0.052).



Fig. S25  $N_2$  adsorption-desorption isotherms and pore size distributions of the fresh (a) and  $6^{th}$ -reused  $Zn_{1-x}Mg_xO$ 

HMNSs (x= 0.052) (b).

5. Activation model of ZnO HMNSs and MgO HMNSs



Fig. S26 Proposed activation models of ZnO HMNSs (a) and MgO HMNSs (b) for catechol and DMC.



**Fig. S27** FT-IR spectra of Zn<sub>1-x</sub>Mg<sub>x</sub>O HMNSs (*x*= 0.052) (a) and DMC/catechol-adsorbed Zn<sub>1-x</sub>Mg<sub>x</sub>O HMNSs (*x*= 0.052).

#### 6. <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra of products





CH<sub>3</sub>

Parameter

1 Origin

2 Instrume

3 Solvent

7 Probe

8 Number of

Scans 9 Presaturation Frequency 10 Acquisition Time

11 Acquisition

12 Modification

Date

Date 13 Spectrometer Frequency

14 Nucleus

4 Temperature

5 Pulse Sequence zg30 6 Experiment

Ó CH3

CH<sub>3</sub> 0

spect

297.2

1D

16

2.7263

600.13

1H

CDC13

值

5 mm PABBO BB/ 19F-1H/ D Z-GRD Z114607/ 0142

2021-03-18T09:21:00

2021-03-18T09:21:34





H <sub>3</sub> C	он	7.26 CD	39. fid	6.75 6.73	5.91				3.91					1.56			00.0
Parameter 1 Origin 2 Instrument 3 Solvent 4 Temperature 5 Pulse Sequence 6 Experiment 7 Probe	位 Bruker BioSpin GmbH speet CDCI3 301.0 : 2g30 ID 5 mm PABEO BB/				İ									İ			
8 Number of Scans 9 Presaturation Frequency	19F-1H/ D Z-GRD Z114607/ 0142																
10 Acquisition Time 11 Acquisition	2.7263 2021-03-11T13:30:00		36	¥ 00	45-=				* 00					74-≈			
Date				÷		· .	· .	·	n.		• •	· .		- 9	• •	· .	
Date	2021-03-11113:30:46	7.5	7.0	6.5	6.0	5.5	5.0	4.5	4.0 fl (p	3.5 pm)	3.0	2.5	2.0	1.5	1.0	0.5	0.0
13 Spectrometer Frequency	600.13	<sup>1</sup> HNM	R (600 ]	MHz, Ch	lorofo	m-d) ô	7.12 - 7	.07 (m,	1H), 6.8	3-6.7	9 (m, 1)	ED, 6.78	- 6.72	(m, 1H)	5.91 (d	, 1H),	

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 7.12 – 7.07 (m, 1H), 6.83 – 6.79 (m, 1H), 6.78 – 6.72 (m, 1H), 5.91 (d, 1H), 3.90 (s, 3H), 1.56 (s, 3H).



14 Nucleus

IH











14 Nucleus

lH









14 Nucleus

14 Nucleus

1H

1H

















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1H

1H



7. GC spectra for the alkylations of various diphenols









