

*Supporting Information for*

**Base-Promoted Cascade  $\beta$ -F-Elimination/Electrocyclization/Diels-Alder/Retro-Diels-Alder Reaction: Efficient Access to  $\delta$ -Carboline Derivatives**

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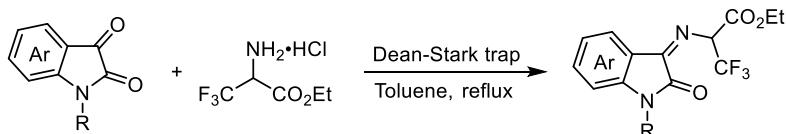
**Table of Contents**

1.	General remarks.....	S2
2.	General procedure for synthesis of isatin-activated ketoimine ester <b>1</b> .....	S2
3.	General procedure for cascade $\beta$ -F elimination/electrocyclization/Diels-Alder/retro-Diels-Alder reaction.....	S8
4.	General procedure for synthesis of intermediate <b>III</b> .....	S24
5.	Synthetic application.....	S25
6.	Photophysical data.....	S28
7.	X-ray Structure of <b>4a</b> and <b>III</b> .....	S29
8.	Reference.....	S31
9.	NMR and HPLC spectra.....	S32

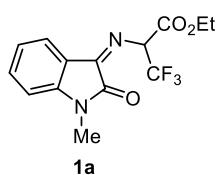
## 1. General remarks

<sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker 400 MHz spectrometer in Chloroform-d. Chemical shifts are reported in ppm with the internal TMS signal at 0.0 ppm as a standard. The data are reported as (s = single, d = double, t = triple, q = quarte, m = multiple or unresolved, brs = broad single, coupling constant(s) in Hz, integration). <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker 100 MHz spectrometer in Chloroform-d. <sup>19</sup>F NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker 376 MHz spectrometer in Chloroform-d. Chemical shifts are reported in ppm. Commercially obtained reagents were used without further purification. All reactions were monitored by TLC with silica gel-coated plates. UV-Vis absorption spectra were recorded on a Shimadzu UV-2501 recording spectrophotometer with the baseline correction. The fluorescence was recorded on a Hitachi F-4600 fluorescence spectrophotometer with the excitation wavelength of 365 nm and with a slit width of 1.0 nm.

## 2. General procedure for synthesis of isatin-activated ketoimine ester **1**



The substituted isatin was synthesized according to literature known procedures,<sup>1-2</sup> and isatin-activated ketoimine ester was synthesized by the reported procedure.<sup>3</sup> In a 100 mL round-bottom flask, substituted isatin (10.0 mmol, 1.0 equiv.) and α-trifluoromethyl α-amino ester hydrochloride (13.0 mmol, 1.3 equiv.) were dissolved in 40 mL toluene. Equipped with a reflux condenser, a magnetic stirring bar and Dean-Stark trap, the system was heated to reflux for 5 hours to ensure equivalent water was distilled out. After cooling to rt, toluene was evaporated in vacuo to give crude product **1**, which was purified by column chromatography (PE:EA = 5:1).



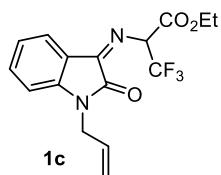
**Ethyl (Z)-3,3,3-trifluoro-2-((1-methyl-2-oxoindolin-3-ylidene)amino)propanoate:** Yellow solid; 89% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 7.80 – 7.75 (m, 1H), 7.52 – 7.44 (m, 1H), 7.17 – 7.09 (m, 1H), 6.84 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 6.22 (q, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 4.38 – 4.22 (m, 2H), 3.20 (s, 3H), 1.32 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 163.8 (d, *J* = 2.3 Hz), 158.5, 158.1, 146.7, 134.4, 123.7, 123.6, 123.3 (q, *J* = 280.3 Hz), 120.5, 108.9, 64.5 (q, *J* = 29.9 Hz), 62.6, 25.9, 14.0.

**<sup>19</sup>F NMR** (376 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ -71.85 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz).

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>14</sub>H<sub>14</sub>F<sub>3</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 315.0951, found: 315.0945.



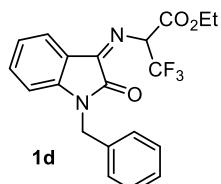
**Ethyl (Z)-2-((1-allyl-2-oxoindolin-3-ylidene)amino)-3,3,3-trifluoropropanoate:** Yellow solid; 93% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 7.82 – 7.75 (m, 1H), 7.50 – 7.36 (m, 1H), 7.17 – 7.08 (m, 1H), 6.84 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 6.21 (q, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 5.90 – 5.75 (m, 1H), 5.31 – 5.23 (m, 2H), 4.39 – 4.24 (m, 4H), 1.31 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 163.7 (d, *J* = 2.3 Hz), 158.2, 158.0, 146.0, 134.3, 130.5, 123.8, 123.6, 123.4 (q, *J* = 280.2 Hz), 120.6, 118.4, 109.8, 64.6 (q, *J* = 29.6 Hz), 62.6, 42.2, 14.0.

**<sup>19</sup>F NMR** (376 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ -71.85 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz).

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>16</sub>F<sub>3</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 341.1108, found: 341.1103.



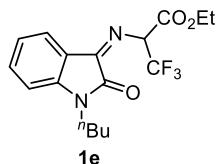
**Ethyl (Z)-2-((1-benzyl-2-oxoindolin-3-ylidene)amino)-3,3,3-trifluoropropanoate:** Yellow solid; 91% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 7.82 – 7.75 (m, 1H), 7.39 – 7.26 (m, 6H), 7.13 – 7.06 (m, 1H), 6.73 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 6.26 (q, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 4.88 (q, *J* = 15.7 Hz, 2H), 4.43 – 4.21 (m, 2H), 1.31 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 163.7 (d, *J* = 2.3 Hz), 158.6, 158.0, 145.9, 134.8, 134.3, 129.0, 128.1, 123.8, 123.6, 123.4 (q, *J* = 280.2 Hz), 120.7, 109.9, 64.7 (q, *J* = 29.9 Hz), 62.7, 43.7, 14.0.

**<sup>19</sup>F NMR** (376 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ -71.80 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz).

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>20</sub>H<sub>18</sub>F<sub>3</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 391.1264, found: 391.1262.



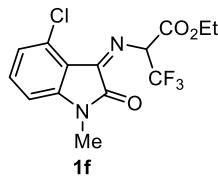
**Ethyl (Z)-2-((1-butyl-2-oxoindolin-3-ylidene)amino)-3,3,3-trifluoropropanoate:** Yellow solid; 98% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 7.81 – 7.73 (m, 1H), 7.50 – 7.41 (m, 1H), 7.15 – 7.07 (m, 1H), 6.85 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 6.22 (q, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 4.38 – 4.19 (m, 2H), 3.75 – 3.59 (m, 2H), 1.70 – 1.60 (m, 2H), 1.44 – 1.35 (m, 2H), 1.30 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 0.96 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 163.8 (d, *J* = 2.3 Hz), 158.5, 158.3, 146.2, 134.3, 123.8, 123.4 (q, *J* = 280.3 Hz), 123.4, 120.7, 109.2, 64.5 (q, *J* = 29.8 Hz), 62.6, 39.7, 29.4, 20.2, 14.0, 13.7.

**<sup>19</sup>F NMR** (376 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ -71.89 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz).

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>20</sub>F<sub>3</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 357.1421, found: 357.1418.



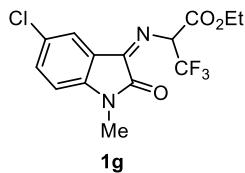
**Ethyl (Z)-2-((4-chloro-1-methyl-2-oxoindolin-3-ylidene)amino)-3,3,3-trifluoropropanoate:** Yellow solid; 76% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 7.41 – 7.33 (m, 1H), 7.14 – 7.06 (m, 1H), 6.77 – 6.71 (m, 1H), 6.13 (q, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 4.39 – 4.23 (m, 2H), 3.20 (s, 3H), 1.32 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 163.5 (d, *J* = 2.4 Hz), 157.6, 156.4, 148.0, 134.3, 132.6, 125.7, 123.4 (q, *J* = 280.4 Hz), 116.9, 107.2, 65.1 (q, *J* = 30.1 Hz), 62.6, 26.1, 14.0.

**<sup>19</sup>F NMR** (376 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ -72.03 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz).

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For  $C_{14}H_{13}ClF_3N_2O_3^+$  ( $[M+H]^+$ ): 349.0561, found: 349.0551.



**Ethyl (Z)-2-((5-chloro-1-methyl-2-oxoindolin-3-ylidene)amino)-3,3,3-trifluoropropanoate:**

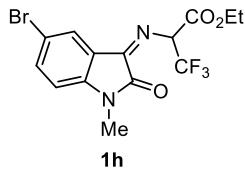
Yellow solid; 88% yield.

**$^1H$  NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d)  $\delta$  7.76 (d,  $J = 2.1$  Hz, 1H), 7.48 – 7.40 (m, 1H), 6.79 (d,  $J = 8.3$  Hz, 1H), 6.18 (q,  $J = 8.0$  Hz, 1H), 4.35 – 4.24 (m, 3H), 3.20 (s, 3H), 1.32 (t,  $J = 7.1$  Hz, 4H).

**$^{13}C$  NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)  $\delta$  163.4 (d,  $J = 2.4$  Hz), 158.1, 157.3, 145.0, 133.9, 129.4, 123.9, 123.2 (q,  $J = 280.3$  Hz), 121.7, 110.0, 64.7 (q,  $J = 30.2$  Hz), 62.8, 26.1, 14.0.

**$^{19}F$  NMR** (376 MHz, Chloroform-d)  $\delta$  -71.80 (d,  $J = 8.0$  Hz).

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For  $C_{14}H_{13}ClF_3N_2O_3^+$  ( $[M+H]^+$ ): 349.0561, found: 349.0555.



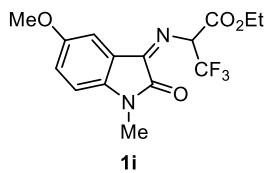
**Ethyl (Z)-2-((5-bromo-1-methyl-2-oxoindolin-3-ylidene)amino)-3,3,3-trifluoropropanoate:** Yellow solid; 68% yield.

**$^1H$  NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d)  $\delta$  7.90 (d,  $J = 2.0$  Hz, 1H), 7.64 – 7.54 (m, 1H), 6.74 (d,  $J = 8.3$  Hz, 1H), 6.17 (q,  $J = 7.9$  Hz, 1H), 4.36 – 4.25 (m, 2H), 3.19 (s, 3H), 1.32 (t,  $J = 7.1$  Hz, 3H).

**$^{13}C$  NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)  $\delta$  163.5 (d,  $J = 2.4$  Hz), 157.9, 157.1, 145.5, 136.8, 126.7, 123.2 (q,  $J = 280.3$  Hz), 122.0, 116.5, 110.5, 64.7 (q,  $J = 29.9$  Hz), 62.8, 26.0, 14.0.

**$^{19}F$  NMR** (376 MHz, Chloroform-d)  $\delta$  -71.79 (d,  $J = 8.0$  Hz).

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For  $C_{14}H_{13}BrF_3N_2O_3^+$  ( $[M+H]^+$ ): 393.0056, found: 393.0046.



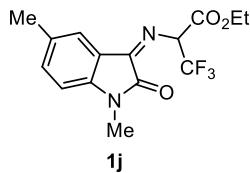
**Ethyl (Z)-3,3,3-trifluoro-2-((5-methoxy-1-methyl-2-oxoindolin-3-ylidene)amino)propanoate:** Yellow solid; 77% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 7.34 (d, *J* = 2.7 Hz, 1H), 7.07 – 7.00 (m, 1H), 6.75 (d, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 6.25 (q, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 4.37 – 4.23 (m, 2H), 3.83 (s, 3H), 3.17 (s, 3H), 1.32 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 163.8 (d, *J* = 2.5 Hz), 158.6, 156.6, 140.5, 123.3 (q, *J* = 280.3 Hz), 120.9, 109.8, 108.4, 64.4 (q, *J* = 29.8 Hz), 62.6, 56.0, 25.9, 14.0.

**<sup>19</sup>F NMR** (376 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ -71.80 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz).

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>15</sub>H<sub>16</sub>F<sub>3</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 345.1057, found: 345.1053.



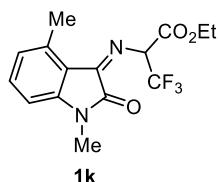
**Ethyl (Z)-2-((1,5-dimethyl-2-oxoindolin-3-ylidene)amino)-3,3,3-trifluoropropanoate:** Yellow solid; 87% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 7.63 – 7.58 (m, 1H), 7.26 (s, 1H), 6.72 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 6.23 (q, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 4.38 – 4.21 (m, 2H), 3.18 (s, 3H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 1.31 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 163.8 (d, *J* = 2.3 Hz), 158.6, 158.4, 144.5, 134.7, 133.4, 124.2, 123.4 (q, *J* = 280.3 Hz), 120.4, 108.7, 64.4 (q, *J* = 29.8 Hz), 62.6, 25.9, 20.8, 14.0.

**<sup>19</sup>F NMR** (376 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ -71.87 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz).

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>15</sub>H<sub>16</sub>F<sub>3</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 329.1108, found: 329.1109.



**Ethyl (Z)-2-((1,4-dimethyl-2-oxoindolin-3-ylidene)amino)-3,3,3-trifluoropropanoate:**

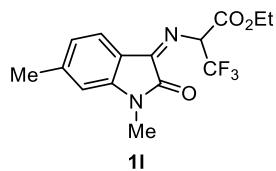
Yellow solid; 80% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 7.36 – 7.29 (m, 1H), 6.92 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 6.66 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 6.14 (q, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 4.42 – 4.18 (m, 2H), 3.18 (s, 3H), 2.60 (s, 3H), 1.32 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 164.0 (d, *J* = 2.5 Hz), 159.0, 158.4, 146.9, 139.6, 133.3, 126.3, 123.5 (q, *J* = 280.2 Hz), 117.8, 106.3, 64.8 (q, *J* = 29.9 Hz), 62.5, 25.8, 19.0, 14.0.

**<sup>19</sup>F NMR** (376 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ -72.29 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz).

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>15</sub>H<sub>16</sub>F<sub>3</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 329.1108, found: 329.1100.



**Ethyl (Z)-2-((1,6-dimethyl-2-oxoindolin-3-ylidene)amino)-3,3,3-trifluoropropanoate:**

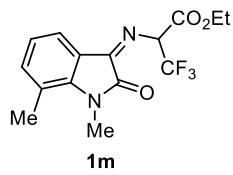
Yellow solid; 86% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 7.65 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 6.97 – 6.89 (m, 1H), 6.67 – 6.61 (m, 1H), 6.21 (q, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 4.34 – 4.23 (m, 2H), 3.18 (s, 3H), 2.43 (s, 3H), 1.31 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 164.0 (d, *J* = 2.3 Hz), 159.0, 157.9, 146.9, 145.8, 124.2, 123.6, 123.4 (q, *J* = 280.3 Hz), 118.0, 109.7, 64.4 (q, *J* = 29.8 Hz), 62.5, 25.8, 22.5, 14.0.

**<sup>19</sup>F NMR** (376 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ -71.88 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz).

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>15</sub>H<sub>16</sub>F<sub>3</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 329.1108, found: 329.1104.



**Ethyl (Z)-2-((1,7-dimethyl-2-oxoindolin-3-ylidene)amino)-3,3,3-trifluoropropanoate:**

Yellow solid; 90% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 7.70 – 7.55 (m, 1H), 7.20 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 7.04 – 6.96 (m, 1H), 6.23 – 6.17 (q, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 4.36 – 4.22 (m, 2H), 3.46 (s, 3H), 2.54 (s, 3H), 1.31

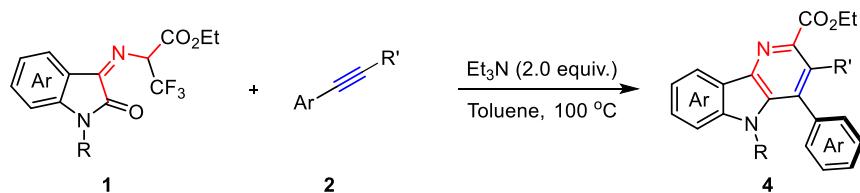
(t,  $J = 7.1$  Hz, 3H).

**$^{13}\text{C}$  NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)  $\delta$  163.8, 159.2, 158.1, 144.3, 142.3, 138.2, 123.5, 123.4 (q,  $J = 280.3$  Hz), 121.7, 120.6, 64.6 (q,  $J = 29.8$  Hz), 62.5, 29.2, 18.7, 14.0.

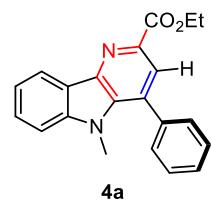
**$^{19}\text{F}$  NMR** (376 MHz, Chloroform-d)  $\delta$  -71.88 (d,  $J = 8.1$  Hz).

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For  $\text{C}_{15}\text{H}_{16}\text{F}_3\text{N}_2\text{O}_3^+$  ( $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ ): 329.1108, found: 329.1100.

### 3. General procedure for cascade $\beta$ -F elimination/electrocyclization/Diels-Alder/retro-Diels-Alder reaction.



In a 25 mL nitrogen-filled dry Schlenk tube, isatin-activated ketoimine ester **1** (0.2 mmol), Aryl alkyne **2** (0.4 mmol), Et<sub>3</sub>N (0.4 mmol) and degassed toluene (2 mL) were added. The reaction was stirred for 12 h at 100 °C until starting material was consumed (monitored by TLC, caution: the released COF<sub>2</sub> gas is toxic, please deal with the experiment in fume hood). The reaction mixture was concentrated via rotary evaporation under reduced pressure, and then purified by flash chromatography on silica gel (PE/EA = 10:1) to give product **4**.

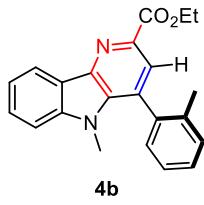


**Ethyl 5-methyl-4-phenyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 81% yield.

**$^1\text{H}$  NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d)  $\delta$  8.58 (d,  $J = 7.8$  Hz, 1H), 8.11 (s, 1H), 7.60 (t,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 1H), 7.52 (s, 5H), 7.45 – 7.33 (m, 2H), 4.53 (q,  $J = 7.1$  Hz, 2H), 3.44 (s, 3H), 1.49 (t,  $J = 7.1$  Hz, 3H).

**$^{13}\text{C}$  NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)  $\delta$  166.1, 143.6, 143.0, 139.5, 137.3, 133.5, 132.2, 129.5, 128.64, 128.56, 128.4, 124.1, 122.0, 120.7, 109.2, 61.7, 32.5, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For  $\text{C}_{21}\text{H}_{19}\text{N}_2\text{O}_2^+$  ( $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ ): 331.1441, found: 331.1443.

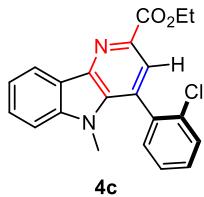


**Ethyl 5-methyl-4-(*o*-tolyl)-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 90% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.59 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 8.05 (s, 1H), 7.60 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 7.50 – 7.30 (m, 6H), 4.53 (q, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 2H), 3.35 (s, 3H), 2.08 (s, 3H), 1.49 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.2, 143.4, 142.7, 139.6, 136.6, 133.6, 131.5, 130.0, 129.8, 128.9, 128.6, 125.9, 123.8, 122.1, 122.0, 120.7, 109.1, 61.7, 30.9, 20.2, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>22</sub>H<sub>21</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 345.1597, found: 345.1595.

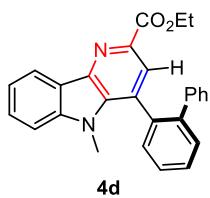


**Ethyl 4-(2-chlorophenyl)-5-methyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 99% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.59 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 8.06 (s, 1H), 7.69 – 7.53 (m, 2H), 7.53 – 7.33 (m, 5H), 4.53 (q, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2H), 3.42 (s, 3H), 1.49 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.0, 143.3, 142.9, 139.4, 136.2, 134.0, 133.5, 131.6, 130.3, 129.5, 128.9, 128.7, 127.0, 123.9, 122.0, 122.0, 120.7, 109.1, 61.7, 30.7, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>21</sub>H<sub>18</sub>ClN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 365.1051, found: 365.1048.



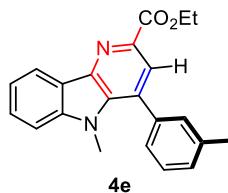
**Ethyl 4-([1,1'-biphenyl]-2-yl)-5-methyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 65% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.51 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 8.05 (s, 1H), 7.64 – 7.45 (m, 5H), 7.37 – 7.27 (m, 2H), 7.12 – 6.97 (m, 5H), 4.49 (q, *J* = 6.9 Hz, 2H), 3.40 (s, 3H), 1.47 (t, *J*

= 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 165.1, 142.3, 141.6, 140.6, 138.7, 138.1, 134.4, 132.8, 130.6, 129.9, 129.3, 128.2, 128.1, 127.5, 127.1, 126.2, 126.1, 124.0, 120.9, 120.9, 119.5, 108.0, 60.6, 30.3, 13.4.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>27</sub>H<sub>23</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 407.1754, found: 407.1751.

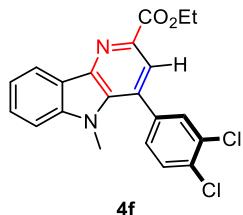


**Ethyl 5-methyl-4-(*m*-tolyl)-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 83% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.58 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 8.11 (s, 1H), 7.61 – 7.58 (m, 1H), 7.44 – 7.28 (m, 6H), 4.53 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.45 (s, 3H), 2.46 (s, 3H), 1.49 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.2, 143.6, 143.0, 139.5, 138.2, 137.2, 133.6, 132.4, 130.2, 129.3, 128.6, 128.2, 126.6, 124.1, 122.1, 122.0, 120.6, 109.2, 61.7, 32.6, 21.5, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>22</sub>H<sub>21</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 345.1597, found: 345.1596.

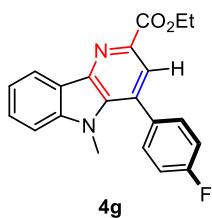


**Ethyl 4-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-5-methyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 87% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.53 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 8.02 (s, 1H), 7.68 (d, *J* = 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.66 – 7.57 (m, 2H), 7.44 – 7.34 (m, 3H), 4.53 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.44 (s, 3H), 1.49 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 165.8, 143.6, 143.3, 139.5, 137.2, 133.1, 133.0, 132.8, 131.4, 130.4, 129.3, 128.93, 128.89, 123.7, 122.0, 121.9, 121.0, 109.3, 61.8, 32.8, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>21</sub>H<sub>17</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 399.0662, found: 399.0658.



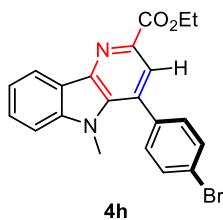
**Ethyl 4-(4-fluorophenyl)-5-methyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 62% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.56 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 8.07 (s, 1H), 7.62 – 7.60 (m, 1H), 7.55 – 7.46 (m, 2H), 7.44 – 7.34 (m, 2H), 7.23 (t, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 4.53 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.44 (s, 3H), 1.49 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.1, 162.9 (d, *J* = 249.7 Hz), 143.6, 143.1, 139.5, 133.5, 133.2 (d, *J* = 3.4 Hz), 131.3 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz), 131.1, 128.8, 124.2, 122.0, 122.0, 120.8, 115.5 (d, *J* = 21.7 Hz), 109.2, 61.7, 32.6, 14.5.

**<sup>19</sup>F NMR** (376 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ -112.75 – -112.82 (m).

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>21</sub>H<sub>18</sub>FN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 349.1347, found: 349.1343.

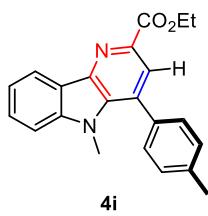


**Ethyl 4-(4-bromophenyl)-5-methyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 74% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.57 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 8.07 (s, 1H), 7.68 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.64 – 7.60 (m, 1H), 7.45 – 7.36 (m, 4H), 4.53 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.47 (s, 3H), 1.49 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.0, 143.6, 143.2, 139.6, 136.2, 133.3, 131.7, 131.1, 130.8, 128.8, 123.9, 123.0, 122.1, 122.0, 120.9, 109.2, 61.8, 32.7, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>21</sub>H<sub>18</sub>BrN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 409.0546, found: 409.0540.

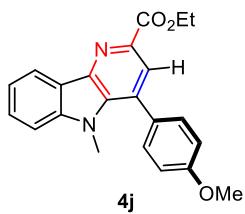


**Ethyl 5-methyl-4-(*p*-tolyl)-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 99% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.58 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 8.10 (s, 1H), 7.62 – 7.58 (m, 1H), 7.42 – 7.31 (m, 6H), 4.53 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.47 (s, 3H), 2.48 (s, 3H), 1.49 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.2, 143.6, 143.0, 139.5, 138.5, 134.3, 133.7, 132.4, 129.4, 129.1, 128.6, 124.3, 122.1, 122.0, 120.6, 109.2, 61.7, 32.6, 21.4, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>22</sub>H<sub>21</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 345.1597, found: 345.1594.

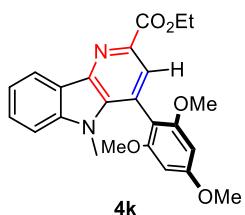


**Ethyl 4-(4-methoxyphenyl)-5-methyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 85% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.57 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 8.09 (s, 1H), 7.66 – 7.55 (m, 1H), 7.49 – 7.32 (m, 4H), 7.05 (d, *J* = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 4.53 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.91 (s, 3H), 3.47 (s, 3H), 1.49 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.2, 159.9, 143.6, 143.0, 139.6, 133.8, 132.1, 130.7, 129.4, 128.6, 124.4, 122.1, 122.0, 120.6, 113.8, 109.2, 61.7, 55.4, 32.6, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>22</sub>H<sub>21</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 361.1547, found: 361.1543.

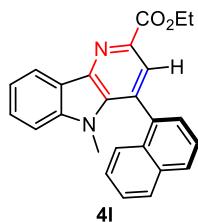


**Ethyl (r)-5-methyl-4-(2,4,6-trimethoxyphenyl)-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 90% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.58 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 8.02 (s, 1H), 7.57 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.43 – 7.30 (m, 2H), 6.27 (s, 2H), 4.51 (q, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2H), 3.92 (s, 3H), 3.67 (s, 6H), 3.48 (s, 3H), 1.48 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.5, 162.1, 158.9, 143.1, 142.5, 139.3, 135.3, 128.1, 126.3, 124.9, 122.1, 121.9, 120.2, 108.8, 106.8, 90.5, 61.5, 55.7, 55.5, 30.1, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>25</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 421.1758, found: 421.1758.

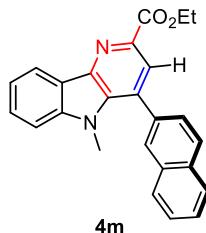


**Ethyl 5-methyl-4-(naphthalen-1-yl)-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 99% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.64 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 8.19 (s, 1H), 7.99 (dd, *J* = 18.8, 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.66 – 7.49 (m, 4H), 7.44 – 7.29 (m, 4H), 4.53 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.08 (s, 3H), 1.47 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.1, 143.3, 142.7, 139.7, 134.7, 134.4, 133.2, 132.4, 130.2, 129.2, 128.7, 128.5, 127.8, 127.0, 126.5, 125.8, 125.2, 124.8, 122.1, 122.0, 120.7, 109.1, 61.7, 31.1, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>21</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 381.1598, found: 381.1593.

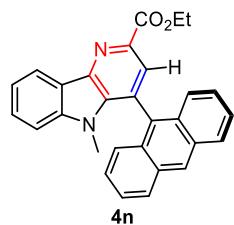


**Ethyl 5-methyl-4-(naphthalen-2-yl)-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 93% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.60 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 8.20 (s, 1H), 8.02 – 7.89 (m, 4H), 7.65 – 7.55 (m, 4H), 7.42 – 7.33 (m, 2H), 4.53 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.42 (s, 3H), 1.49 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.1, 143.7, 143.1, 139.5, 134.7, 133.7, 133.0, 132.9, 132.2, 128.7, 128.6, 128.2, 128.0, 127.9, 127.3, 127.0, 126.9, 124.4, 122.1, 120.8, 109.2, 61.7, 32.7, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>21</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 381.1598, found: 381.1593.

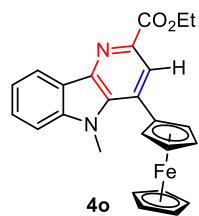


**Ethyl (r)-4-(anthracen-9-yl)-5-methyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 99% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.70 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 8.65 (s, 1H), 8.22 (s, 1H), 8.12 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 7.59 - 7.57 (m, 1H), 7.54 – 7.46 (m, 2H), 7.46 – 7.31 (m, 5H), 7.28 (s, 1H), 4.52 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 2.80 (s, 3H), 1.45 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.1, 143.3, 142.9, 139.9, 135.1, 131.1, 130.7, 130.3, 128.8, 128.7, 128.2, 126.7, 126.2, 125.7, 125.6, 122.2, 122.1, 120.8, 109.1, 61.7, 30.3, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>29</sub>H<sub>23</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 431.1754, found: 431.1753.

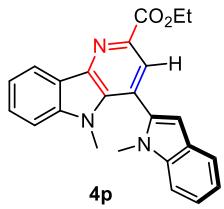


**Ethyl 5-methyl-4-ferrocene-5H-pyrido[3,2-b] indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 80% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.78 (s, 1H), 8.54 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 7.57 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.38 – 7.31 (m, 2H), 4.64 – 4.54 (m, 4H), 4.45 – 4.41 (m, 2H), 4.31 (s, 5H), 3.54 (s, 3H), 1.54 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.3, 143.8, 142.7, 139.0, 135.4, 129.2, 128.5, 126.9, 122.0, 120.6, 109.2, 85.6, 71.7, 69.9, 68.3, 61.7, 32.7, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>25</sub>H<sub>23</sub>FeN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 439.1104, found: 439.1096.

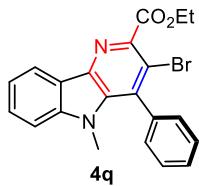


**Ethyl 5-methyl-4-(1-methyl-1H-indol-2-yl)-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 87% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.61 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 8.22 (s, 1H), 7.73 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.63 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.45 – 7.31 (m, 4H), 7.25 – 7.19 (m, 1H), 6.75 (s, 1H), 4.53 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.54 (s, 3H), 3.39 (s, 3H), 1.49 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 165.9, 143.6, 143.1, 139.5, 137.5, 134.7, 134.4, 129.0, 127.9, 125.1, 122.6, 122.2, 122.1, 122.0, 121.1, 121.1, 120.5, 109.7, 109.3, 104.3, 61.8, 30.8, 30.5, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>22</sub>N<sub>3</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 384.1707, found: 384.1702.

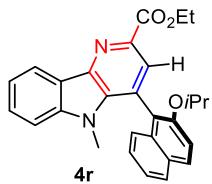


**Ethyl 3-bromo-5-methyl-4-phenyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 80% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.43 – 8.39 (m, 1H), 7.60 – 7.46 (m, 4H), 7.37 – 7.29 (m, 4H), 4.54 (q, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 3.15 (s, 3H), 1.48 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 167.1, 143.3, 142.7, 140.5, 136.2, 133.4, 133.2, 129.9, 129.0, 128.8, 128.5, 121.5, 121.1, 120.8, 116.1, 109.3, 62.2, 31.6, 14.3.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>21</sub>H<sub>18</sub>BrN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 409.0546, found: 409.0542.

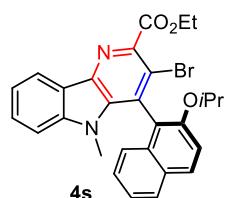


**Ethyl 4-(2-isopropoxynaphthalen-1-yl)-5-methyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 81% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.65 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 8.12 (s, 1H), 7.99 (d, *J* = 9.1 Hz, 1H), 7.88 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.62 – 7.54 (m, 1H), 7.44 – 7.29 (m, 5H), 7.21 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 4.63 – 4.47 (m, 3H), 3.22 (s, 3H), 1.47 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.10 (d, *J* = 6.1 Hz, 3H), 1.06 (d, *J* = 6.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.3, 153.3, 143.3, 142.7, 139.5, 135.3, 133.8, 130.5, 128.8, 128.4, 128.1, 127.3, 127.0, 125.8, 125.0, 124.2, 122.1, 122.0, 121.0, 120.4, 116.3, 109.0, 72.0, 61.6, 30.2, 22.5, 22.2, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>28</sub>H<sub>27</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 439.2016, found: 439.2011.

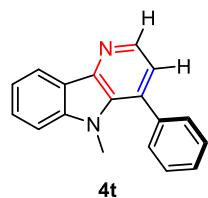


**Ethyl 3-bromo-4-(2-isopropoxynaphthalen-1-yl)-5-methyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 66% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 8.50 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 8.02 (d, *J* = 9.1 Hz, 1H), 7.91 – 7.82 (m, 1H), 7.63 – 7.49 (m, 1H), 7.42 – 7.26 (m, 5H), 7.10 – 7.01 (m, 1H), 4.71 – 4.61 (m, 1H), 4.55 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.04 (s, 3H), 1.48 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.17 (d, *J* = 6.1 Hz, 3H), 1.13 (d, *J* = 6.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 167.1, 153.5, 143.2, 142.8, 140.3, 134.6, 133.3, 131.1, 129.3, 128.5, 128.5, 128.2, 127.6, 124.4, 124.2, 121.6, 121.4, 120.6, 119.5, 118.0, 115.2, 109.2, 71.4, 62.1, 30.0, 22.6, 22.4, 14.3.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>28</sub>H<sub>26</sub>BrN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 517.1121, found: 517.1115.



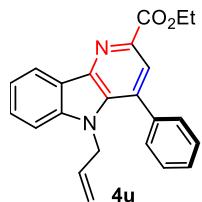
**5-methyl-4-phenyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole:** White solid; 46% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.54 (d, *J* = 4.8 Hz, 1H), 8.50 – 8.37 (m, 1H), 7.59 – 7.53 (m, 1H), 7.52 – 7.46 (m, 5H), 7.38 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.36 – 7.30 (m, 1H), 7.19 (d, *J* = 4.8 Hz,

1H), 3.40 (s, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 142.8, 142.6, 141.2, 137.9, 132.9, 132.0, 129.5, 128.3, 127.9, 122.0, 120.9, 120.1, 109.1, 32.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>15</sub>N<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 259.1230, found: 259.1224.

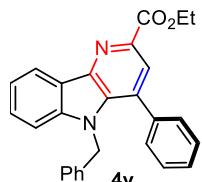


**Ethyl 5-allyl-4-phenyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 67% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.60 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 8.08 (s, 1H), 7.65 – 7.52 (m, 1H), 7.42 – 7.33 (m, 5H), 7.39 – 7.36 (m, 2H), 5.64 – 5.57 (m, 1H), 5.01 (d, *J* = 10.4 Hz, 1H), 4.76 – 4.41 (m, 5H), 1.49 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.1, 143.3, 143.1, 139.7, 137.2, 133.0, 132.5, 132.0, 129.3, 128.73, 128.68, 128.3, 124.3, 122.3, 122.1, 120.9, 116.7, 110.0, 61.7, 46.8, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>23</sub>H<sub>21</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 357.1598, found: 357.1592.

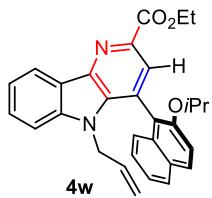


**Ethyl 5-benzyl-4-phenyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 85% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.69 – 8.54 (m, 1H), 8.05 (s, 1H), 7.57 – 7.49 (m, 1H), 7.42 – 7.34 (m, 2H), 7.33 – 7.26 (m, 3H), 7.25 – 7.20 (m, 2H), 7.17 – 7.05 (m, 3H), 6.58 – 6.45 (m, 2H), 5.18 (s, 2H), 4.53 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 1.48 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.1, 143.5, 143.4, 139.9, 136.9, 136.5, 133.1, 132.8, 129.2, 128.9, 128.5, 128.2, 127.2, 125.5, 124.4, 122.3, 122.2, 121.1, 109.9, 61.7, 48.0, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>27</sub>H<sub>23</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 407.1754, found: 407.1749.



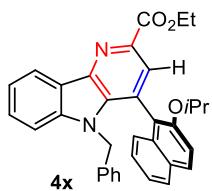
**Ethyl 5-allyl-4-(2-isopropoxynaphthalen-1-yl)-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:**

White solid; 98% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.65 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 8.10 (s, 1H), 7.98 (d, *J* = 9.1 Hz, 1H), 7.87 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.59 – 7.52 (m, 1H), 7.42 – 7.26 (m, 5H), 7.15 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 5.41 – 5.27 (m, 1H), 4.69 (dd, *J* = 10.3, 0.9 Hz, 1H), 4.63 – 4.41 (m, 4H), 4.39 – 4.21 (m, 2H), 1.47 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.11 (d, *J* = 6.1 Hz, 3H), 1.07 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.3, 153.2, 143.0, 142.8, 139.7, 134.6, 133.6, 132.1, 130.6, 128.7, 128.4, 128.1, 127.2, 127.1, 125.9, 125.1, 124.1, 122.5, 122.0, 120.6, 120.5, 116.7, 115.9, 109.8, 71.8, 61.6, 46.4, 22.5, 22.2, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>30</sub>H<sub>29</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 465.2173, found: 465.2166.



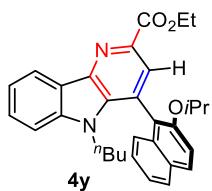
**Ethyl 5-benzyl-4-(2-isopropoxynaphthalen-1-yl)-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:**

White solid; 79% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.69 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 8.07 (s, 1H), 7.89 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 1H), 7.77 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.53 – 7.51 (m, 1H), 7.40 – 7.38 (m, 1H), 7.34 – 7.17 (m, 3H), 7.13 – 7.11 (m, 1H), 7.01 – 6.87 (m, 2H), 6.83 – 6.81 (m, 2H), 6.31 (d, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 2H), 4.95 (s, 2H), 4.51 (q, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2H), 4.39 – 4.33 (m, 1H), 1.46 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.02 (d, *J* = 6.1 Hz, 3H), 0.98 (d, *J* = 6.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.3, 153.2, 143.4, 143.2, 139.9, 136.8, 134.8, 133.7, 130.5, 128.7, 128.5, 128.0, 127.8, 127.5, 127.0, 126.8, 126.1, 125.4, 124.7, 123.9, 122.4, 122.1, 120.8, 120.2, 115.7, 109.7, 71.5, 61.6, 47.3, 22.5, 22.0, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>34</sub>H<sub>31</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 515.2329, found: 515.2322.



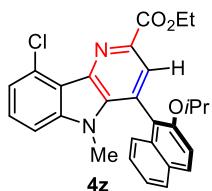
**Ethyl 5-butyl-4-(2-isopropoxynaphthalen-1-yl)-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:**

White solid; 93% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.65 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 8.10 (s, 1H), 7.99 (d, *J* = 9.1 Hz, 1H), 7.88 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.57 – 7.55 (m, 1H), 7.44 – 7.27 (m, 5H), 7.17 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 4.64 – 4.61 (m, 1H), 4.52 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.75 – 3.51 (m, 2H), 1.47 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.42 – 1.28 (m, 1H), 1.13 (d, *J* = 6.1 Hz, 3H), 1.09 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 3H), 1.06 – 0.95 (m, 1H), 0.74 – 0.59 (m, 1H), 0.59 – 0.43 (m, 1H), 0.37 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.4, 153.2, 143.0, 142.7, 139.4, 134.4, 133.6, 130.5, 128.7, 128.3, 128.1, 127.2, 126.9, 125.9, 124.9, 124.1, 122.3, 122.0, 120.8, 120.3, 115.7, 109.3, 71.7, 61.5, 44.1, 31.2, 22.5, 22.2, 19.8, 14.5, 13.2.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>31</sub>H<sub>33</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 481.2486, found: 481.2480.

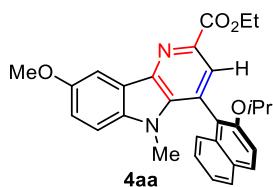


**Ethyl 9-chloro-4-(2-isopropoxynaphthalen-1-yl)-5-methyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 87% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.15 (s, 1H), 7.99 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 1H), 7.89 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 7.48 – 7.46 (m, 1H), 7.42 – 7.30 (m, 4H), 7.26 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 7.19 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 4.60 – 4.55 (m, 1H), 4.51 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.23 (s, 3H), 1.50 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.09 (d, *J* = 6.1 Hz, 3H), 1.04 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.2, 153.3, 144.2, 141.5, 140.2, 135.3, 133.7, 130.7, 129.6, 128.8, 128.3, 128.2, 127.4, 127.3, 125.8, 124.8, 124.2, 121.8, 120.8, 119.1, 116.2, 107.5, 72.1, 61.6, 30.5, 22.5, 22.2, 14.4.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>28</sub>H<sub>26</sub>ClN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 473.1626, found: 473.1624.

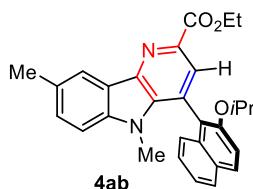


**Ethyl 4-(2-isopropoxynaphthalen-1-yl)-8-methoxy-5-methyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 87% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.11 (d, *J* = 10.6 Hz, 2H), 7.98 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 1H), 7.88 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 7.46 – 7.15 (m, 6H), 4.65 – 4.44 (m, 3H), 3.99 (s, 3H), 3.19 (s, 3H), 1.47 (t, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 3H), 1.10 (d, *J* = 6.1 Hz, 3H), 1.07 (d, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.3, 154.6, 153.3, 142.4, 139.0, 138.2, 135.6, 133.8, 130.5, 128.8, 128.1, 127.3, 127.0, 125.5, 125.0, 124.2, 122.4, 121.0, 118.7, 116.3, 110.0, 103.3, 72.0, 61.6, 56.1, 30.3, 22.5, 22.2, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>29</sub>H<sub>29</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 469.2122, found: 469.2119.

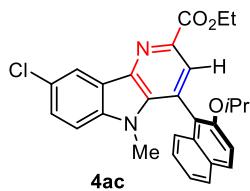


**Ethyl 4-(2-isopropoxynaphthalen-1-yl)-5,8-dimethyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 80% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.46 (s, 1H), 8.10 (s, 1H), 7.98 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 1H), 7.88 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.45 – 7.29 (m, 4H), 7.22 (dd, *J* = 8.3, 3.3 Hz, 2H), 4.62 – 4.46 (m, 3H), 3.19 (s, 3H), 2.57 (s, 3H), 1.47 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.09 (d, *J* = 6.1 Hz, 3H), 1.06 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.3, 153.3, 142.5, 141.6, 139.2, 135.4, 133.8, 130.4, 130.0, 129.8, 128.8, 128.1, 127.2, 126.7, 125.6, 125.0, 124.2, 122.2, 121.8, 121.1, 116.3, 108.7, 72.0, 61.5, 30.2, 22.5, 22.2, 21.3, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>29</sub>H<sub>29</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 453.2173, found: 453.2168.

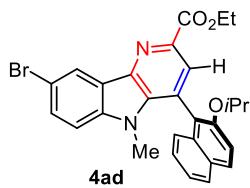


**Ethyl 8-chloro-4-(2-isopropoxynaphthalen-1-yl)-5-methyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 81% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.62 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 8.13 (s, 1H), 8.00 (d, *J* = 9.1 Hz, 1H), 7.89 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.52 (dd, *J* = 8.7, 2.1 Hz, 1H), 7.43 – 7.30 (m, 3H), 7.26 (d, *J* = 8.7 Hz, 1H), 7.21 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 4.64 – 4.47 (m, 3H), 3.21 (s, 3H), 1.47 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.10 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 3H), 1.06 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.1, 153.3, 141.6, 141.5, 140.0, 135.7, 133.7, 130.7, 128.8, 128.4, 128.2, 127.6, 127.4, 126.23, 126.19, 124.8, 124.2, 123.2, 121.6, 120.5, 116.1, 110.1, 72.0, 61.7, 30.4, 22.5, 22.2, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>28</sub>H<sub>26</sub>ClN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 473.1626, found: 473.1620.

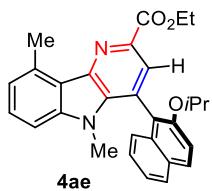


**Ethyl 8-bromo-4-(2-isopropoxynaphthalen-1-yl)-5-methyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 86% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.77 (s, 1H), 8.13 (s, 1H), 8.00 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 1H), 7.89 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 7.65 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.45 – 7.30 (m, 3H), 7.24 – 7.17 (m, 2H), 4.66 – 4.42 (m, 3H), 3.20 (s, 3H), 1.47 (t, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 3H), 1.10 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 3H), 1.06 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.1, 153.3, 141.8, 141.4, 140.1, 135.6, 133.7, 131.0, 130.7, 128.8, 128.2, 127.6, 127.4, 126.2, 124.8, 124.6, 124.2, 123.8, 120.5, 116.1, 113.5, 110.6, 72.0, 61.7, 30.4, 22.5, 22.2, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>28</sub>H<sub>26</sub>BrN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 517.1121, found: 517.1116.

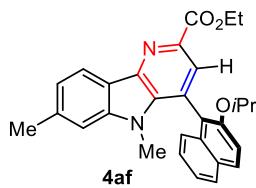


**Ethyl 4-(2-isopropoxynaphthalen-1-yl)-5,9-dimethyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 99% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.09 (s, 1H), 7.97 (d, *J* = 9.1 Hz, 1H), 7.87 (d, *J* = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 7.46 – 7.44 (m, 1H), 7.42 – 7.33 (m, 2H), 7.31 – 7.27 (m, 1H), 7.21 – 7.13 (m, 3H), 4.61 – 4.44 (m, 3H), 3.26 (s, 3H), 3.19 (s, 3H), 1.46 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.09 (d, *J* = 6.1 Hz, 3H), 1.06 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.5, 153.3, 144.0, 143.5, 139.3, 136.0, 135.1, 133.9, 130.4, 128.8, 128.1, 127.8, 127.2, 126.2, 125.1, 125.0, 124.2, 122.1, 121.4, 120.4, 116.3, 106.2, 72.0, 61.3, 30.2, 22.5, 22.2, 19.5, 14.4.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>29</sub>H<sub>29</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 453.2173, found: 453.2167.

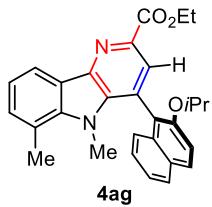


**Ethyl 4-(2-isopropoxynaphthalen-1-yl)-5,7-dimethyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 92% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.51 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.08 (s, 1H), 7.98 (d, *J* = 9.1 Hz, 1H), 7.88 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.43 – 7.28 (m, 3H), 7.21 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 7.13 (s, 1H), 4.62 – 4.46 (m, 3H), 3.18 (s, 3H), 2.56 (s, 3H), 1.47 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.10 (d, *J* = 6.1 Hz, 3H), 1.06 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.4, 153.3, 143.8, 142.9, 139.3, 139.0, 135.3, 133.8, 130.5, 128.8, 128.1, 127.2, 126.6, 125.4, 125.0, 124.2, 122.1, 121.7, 121.2, 119.8, 116.3, 109.2, 72.0, 61.5, 30.1, 22.5, 22.4, 22.2, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>29</sub>H<sub>29</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 453.2173, found: 453.2170.

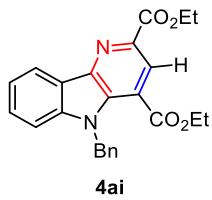


**Ethyl 4-(2-isopropoxynaphthalen-1-yl)-5,6-dimethyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** White solid; 89% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.51 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 8.09 (s, 1H), 7.97 (d, *J* = 9.1 Hz, 1H), 7.88 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.43 – 7.19 (m, 6H), 4.67 – 4.45 (m, 3H), 3.49 (s, 3H), 2.71 (s, 3H), 1.46 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.14 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 3H), 1.08 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 166.3, 153.1, 143.1, 142.3, 139.6, 136.1, 133.6, 131.9, 130.4, 128.8, 128.1, 127.3, 127.0, 126.1, 125.0, 124.2, 123.3, 121.4, 121.0, 120.7, 120.0, 116.2, 71.9, 61.5, 33.6, 22.5, 22.2, 20.6, 14.5.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>29</sub>H<sub>29</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 453.2173, found: 453.2170.



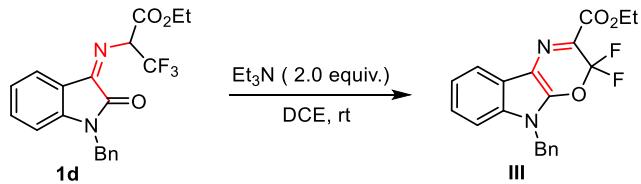
**Diethyl 5-benzyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2,4-dicarboxylate:** It was obtained through the Diels-Alder reaction between the intermediate **III** with methyl propiolate. Yellow solid; 93% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.65 – 8.54 (m, 1H), 8.44 (s, 1H), 7.66 – 7.55 (m, 1H), 7.47 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.45 – 7.39 (m, 1H), 7.23 – 7.16 (m, 3H), 6.95 – 6.88 (m, 2H), 5.82 (s, 2H), 4.54 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 4.25 (q, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 1.50 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H), 1.21 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H).

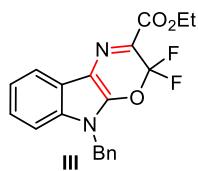
**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 165.9, 165.5, 145.3, 144.0, 139.4, 136.4, 131.9, 129.6, 128.8, 127.5, 126.1, 122.2, 122.2, 122.1, 121.9, 121.7, 110.1, 62.3, 61.9, 48.6, 14.5, 13.9.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>24</sub>H<sub>23</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 403.1651, found: 403.1641.

#### 4. General procedure for synthesis of intermediate III



In a 25 mL nitrogen-filled dry Schlenk tube, isatin-activated ketoimine ester **1d** (0.2 mmol), Et<sub>3</sub>N (0.4 mmol) and degassed DCE (2 mL) were added. The reaction was stirred for 12 h at room temperature until starting material was consumed (monitored by TLC). The reaction mixture was concentrated via rotary evaporation under reduced pressure, and then purified by flash chromatography on silica gel (PE/EA = 10:1) to give the compound **III**.



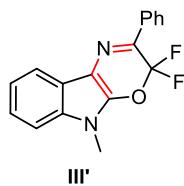
**Ethyl 5-benzyl-3,3-difluoro-3,5-dihydro-[1,4]oxazino[2,3-b]indole-2-carboxylate:** Green solid; 99% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.95 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1H), 7.37 – 7.27 (m, 4H), 7.26 – 7.20 (m, 4H), 5.31 (s, 2H), 4.47 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2H), 1.44 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 161.0, 140.3, 134.5, 132.5, 129.2, 128.5 (t, *J* = 29.8 Hz), 128.4, 127.1, 123.5, 123.2, 121.8, 118.4, 117.7 (t, *J* = 269.7 Hz), 110.6, 107.6, 62.1, 45.8, 14.3.

**<sup>19</sup>F NMR** (376 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ -47.10.

**HRMS (ESI+)** Calcd. For  $C_{20}H_{17}F_2N_2O_3^+$  ( $[M+H]^+$ ): 371.1202, found: 371.1196.



**3,3-difluoro-5-methyl-2-phenyl-3,5-dihydro-[1,4]oxazino[2,3-b]indole:** It was obtained through using ethyl (Z)-2-((1-methyl-2-oxoindolin-3-ylidene)amino)-2-phenylacetate as the substrate. Yellow solid; 75% yield.

<sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.06 – 8.00 (m, 2H), 7.91 – 7.85 (m, 1H), 7.48 – 7.41

(m, 3H), 7.30 – 7.21 (m, 3H), 3.68 (s, 3H).

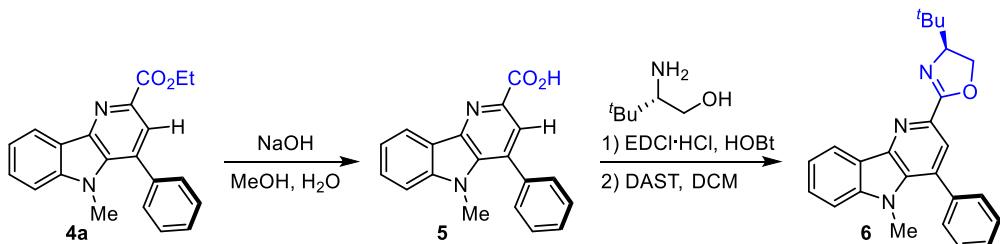
**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 139.5 (t, *J* = 29.4 Hz), 138.3, 133.1, 132.1, 129.9, 128.6, 127.4, 122.0, 121.8, 118.3 (t, *J* = 267.8 Hz), 117.5, 109.4, 106.5, 27.81.

**<sup>19</sup>F NMR** (376 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ -49.70.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>13</sub>F<sub>2</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 299.0990, found: 299.0981.

## 5. Synthetic application

### (a) General procedure for synthesis of Py-box-type ligand **6**

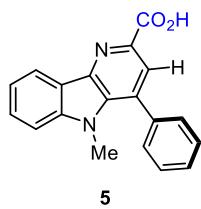


Compound **6** was synthesized according to reported procedure.<sup>4</sup>

**Step 1,** To a stirred suspension of **4a** (1 mmol) was added methanol (10 mL). Aqueous sodium hydroxide solution (3 mL, 1 M) was added dropwise at 0 °C. The heterogeneous mixture was immersed in a preheated oil bath (50 °C) and was stirred until the full consumption of the starting material was detected by thin layer chromatography (TLC). The mixture was concentrated under vacuum to remove methanol, and was adjusted to pH 6-7 with hydrochloric acid, from which the acid (intermediate **5**) was precipitated, the heterogeneous mixture was filtered, and the intermediate **5** was collected and dried as a white solid in 66% yield.

**Step 2,** To a dried Schlenk flask charged with **5** (1 mmol) and the chiral amino alcohol (1 mmol), was added anhydrous dichloromethane (5 mL) for dissolution. Hydroxybenzotriazole (HOBt) (175 mg, 1.3 mmol) and *N*-(3-(dimethyl amino)propyl)-*N'*-ethylcarbodiimide hydrochloride (EDCl·HCl) (0.25 g, 1.3 mmol) were then added while the reaction flask was in an ice bath. The mixture was allowed to gradually warm to room temperature, and it was stirred overnight until full consumption of the acid detected by TLC. The mixture was quenched by the addition of a saturated aqueous solution of NaHCO<sub>3</sub> (20 mL) and separated. The water phase was extracted with dichloromethane (10 mL × 3), and the combined organic phase was sequentially washed with water (10 mL × 2) and saturated aqueous NaCl (10 mL), dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate, and concentrated under vacuum. Purification by silica gel column

chromatography with hexane/EtOAc (2:1, v/v) as the eluent gave the amide intermediate. To a Schlenk tube charged the amide intermediate (1 mmol) was added anhydrous DCM (5.0 mL) under N<sub>2</sub> atmosphere. Diethylaminosulfur trifluoride (DAST) (160 mg, 1mmol) was added dropwise at -78 °C. The reaction mixture was stirred at -78 °C until the full consumption of the starting material was detected by TLC. The mixture was quenched by the addition of a saturated aqueous solution of NaHCO<sub>3</sub> (10 mL) and separated. The water phase was extracted with dichloromethane (10 mL × 3), and the combined organic phase was sequentially washed with water (10 mL × 2) and saturated aqueous NaCl (10 mL), dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate, and concentrated under vacuum, which was purified by silica gel column chromatography with PE/EA (2:1, v/v) as the eluent to give the chiral ligand **6** as a white solid in 52% yield.

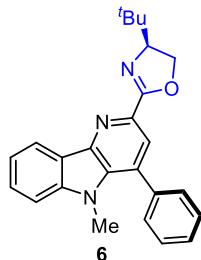


**5-methyl-4-phenyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indole-2-carboxylic acid:** White solid; 66% yield.

**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.41 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 8.19 (s, 1H), 7.72 – 7.63 (m, 1H), 7.58 – 7.38 (m, 7H), 3.49 (s, 3H).

**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 165.3, 143.9, 141.3, 137.3, 136.7, 134.4, 133.8, 129.4, 129.3, 128.9, 128.5, 122.4, 121.3, 121.3, 121.05, 109.7, 32.7.

**HRMS (ESI+)** Calcd. For C<sub>19</sub>H<sub>15</sub>N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> ([M+H]<sup>+</sup>): 303.1128, found: 303.1126.



**(S)-4-(tert-butyl)-2-(5-methyl-4-phenyl-5H-pyrido[3,2-b]indol-2-yl)-4,5-dihydrooxazole:** White solid; 52% yield.

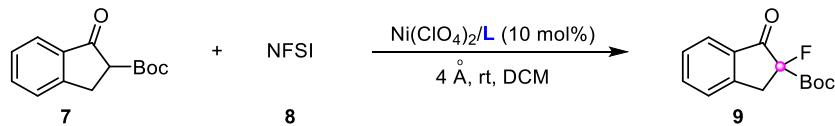
**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d) δ 8.57 (d, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1H), 8.14 (s, 1H), 7.61 – 7.55 (m, 1H), 7.55 – 7.46 (m, 5H), 7.42 – 7.32 (m, 2H), 4.55 (t, *J* = 9.4 Hz, 1H), 4.40 (t, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H),

4.16 (dd,  $J = 10.1, 8.1$  Hz, 1H), 3.44 (s, 3H), 1.00 (s, 9H).

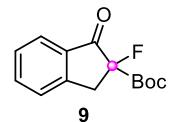
**$^{13}\text{C}$  NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)  $\delta$  163.5, 143.3, 142.6, 138.3, 137.4, 132.9, 132.6, 129.6, 128.5, 128.3, 128.3, 123.1, 122.0, 121.9, 120.4, 109.1, 76.3, 69.4, 34.1, 32.5, 26.0.

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For  $\text{C}_{25}\text{H}_{26}\text{N}_3\text{O}^+$  ( $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ ): 384.2070, found: 384.2063.

(b) General procedure for synthesis of compound **9**



Compound **9** was synthesized according to reported procedure.<sup>5</sup> In a 25 mL dry Schlenk tube, ligand **6** (or <sup>t</sup>Bu-Pyrbox) (0.02 mmol),  $\text{Ni}(\text{ClO}_4)_2$  (0.02 mmol), 50 mg 4Å MS and DCM (1 mL) were added and stirred for 1 h at room temperature. Indanone **7** and NFSI was then added, and the reaction was stirred until starting material was consumed (monitored by TLC). The reaction mixture was concentrated via rotary evaporation under reduced pressure, and then purified by flash chromatography on silica gel (PE/EA = 10:1) to give the product **9** as a colorless oil in 84% yield and 60% ee (10% ee using <sup>t</sup>Bu-Pybox as the ligand).



**Tert-butyl 2-fluoro-1-oxo-2,3-dihydro-1H-indene-2-carboxylate:** Colorless oil; 84% yield and 60% ee (91% yield and 10% ee if <sup>t</sup>Bu-Pybox was used);  $[\alpha]_D^{25} = -1.8$  ( $c$  0.45,  $\text{CHCl}_3$ ).

HPLC conditions: Chiralpak AD-H, isopropanol/hexane = 10:90, flow: 1.0 mL/min,  $\lambda = 254$  nm,  $t_{(\text{minor})} = 5.8$  min,  $t_{(\text{major})} = 6.3$  min.

**$^1\text{H}$  NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d)  $\delta$  7.83 (d,  $J = 7.7$  Hz, 1H), 7.75 – 7.62 (m, 1H), 7.54 – 7.40 (m, 2H), 3.73 (dd,  $J = 17.5, 10.8$  Hz, 1H), 3.40 (dd,  $J = 22.9, 17.5$  Hz, 1H), 1.43 (s, 9H).

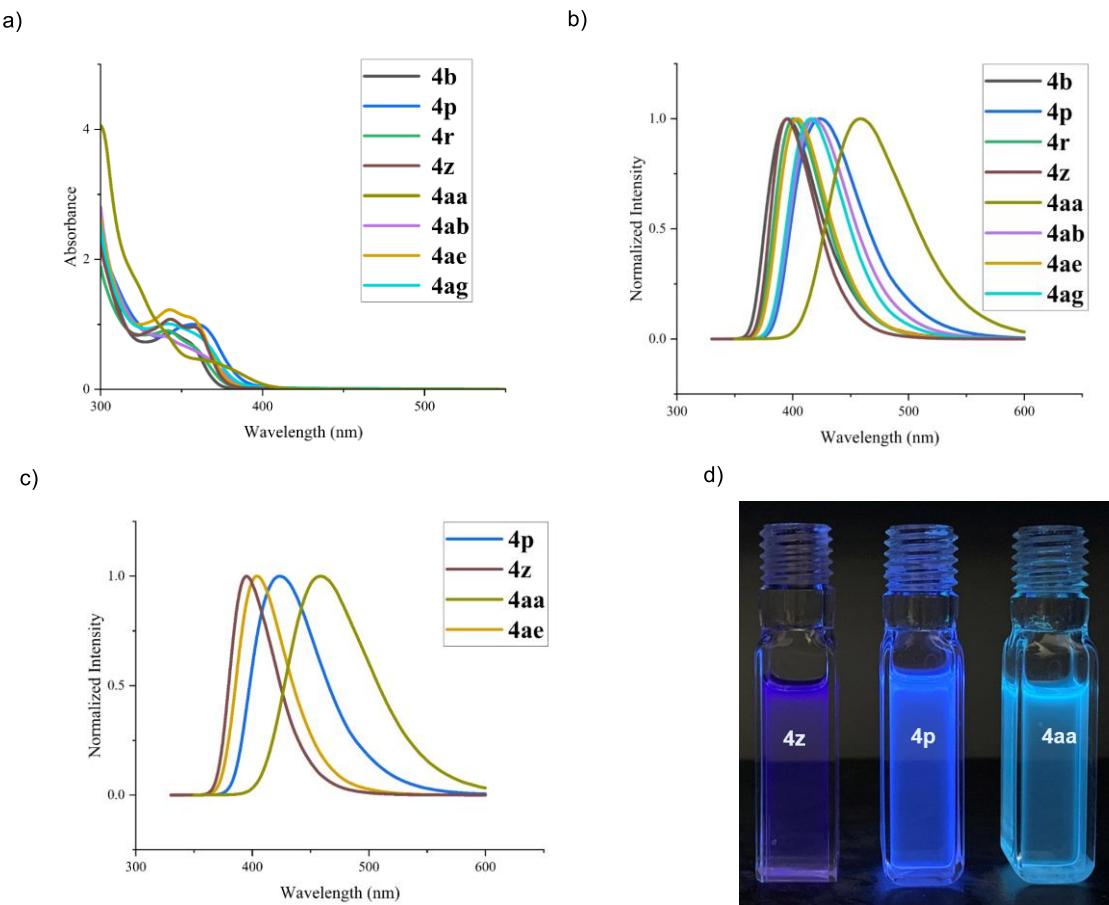
**$^{13}\text{C}$  NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)  $\delta$  195.8 (d,  $J = 18.4$  Hz), 166.3 (d,  $J = 27.3$  Hz), 151.0 (d,  $J = 4.2$  Hz), 136.5, 133.6, 128.5, 126.5, 125.5, 94.4 (d,  $J = 201.7$  Hz), 84.2, 38.3 (d,  $J = 24.1$  Hz), 27.8.

**$^{19}\text{F}$  NMR** (376 MHz, Chloroform-d)  $\delta$  -163.94 – 164.03 (m).

**HRMS** (ESI+) Calcd. For  $\text{C}_{14}\text{H}_{15}\text{FO}_3\text{Na}^+$  ( $[\text{M}+\text{Na}]^+$ ): 273.0897, found: 273.0893.

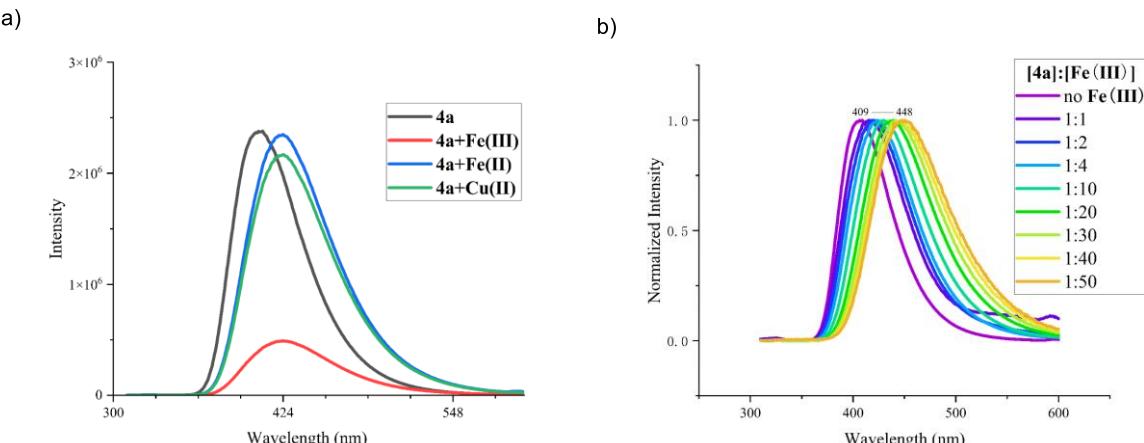
## 6. Photophysical data

a) Absorption and emission spectra.



**Figure S1.** Compounds **4** was dissolved in DCM and diluted to  $5 \times 10^{-5}$  M. a) UV-Vis absorption spectra (slits: 0.5 nm). b) Fluorescence spectra ( $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 365$  nm, slits: 1 nm). c) Fluorescence spectra of **4p**, **4z**, **4aa** and **4ae**. d) Photographs of  $\delta$ -carboline derivatives under irradiation with UV light ( $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 365$  nm) in DCM.

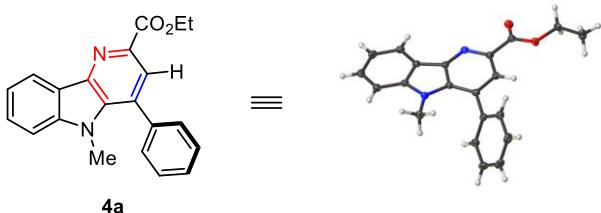
b) Emission spectra of metal ion recognition



**Figure S2.** Fluorescence spectra ( $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 365$  nm, slits: 1 nm). a) The samples were prepared by mixing **4a** (50

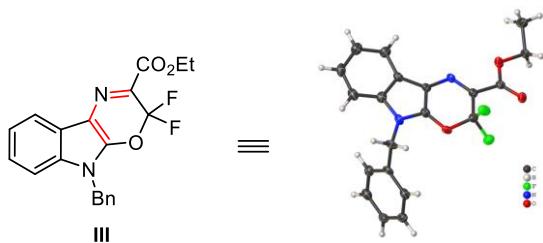
$\mu\text{L}$ ,  $5 \times 10^{-3}$  M in  $\text{CH}_3\text{CN}$ ) and metal precursors (200  $\mu\text{L}$ ,  $5 \times 10^{-3}$  M in  $\text{CH}_3\text{CN}$ ) and diluted to 5 mL at 25 °C. b) The samples were prepared by mixing 1, 2, 4, 10, 20, 30, 40 and 50 equiv. of  $\text{Fe}(\text{OTf})_3$  with **4a** (50  $\mu\text{L}$ ,  $5 \times 10^{-3}$  M in  $\text{CH}_3\text{CN}$ ) and diluted to 5 mL.

## 7. X-ray Structure of **4a** and **III**



**Figure S1.** X-ray Structure of **4a**.

To a 10 mL oven-dried glass sample bottle was added 50 mg pure **4a** with DCM to get clear solution, then petroleum ether was slowly added to become muddy. The mixture solution was sealed with filter paper to slowly grow crystals at room temperature. Crystal data for **4a**:  $\text{C}_{21}\text{H}_{18}\text{N}_2\text{O}_2$ ,  $M_r = 330.37$ ,  $T = 100$  K, orthorhombic, space group P -1,  $a = 8.0404(2)$ ,  $b = 9.2472(3)$ ,  $c = 11.6115(4)$  Å,  $V = 812.47(5)$  Å $^3$ ,  $Z = 2$ . CCDC 2163875 contains the supplementary crystallographic data for this paper. These data can be obtained free of charge via [www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/conts/retrieving.html](http://www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/conts/retrieving.html).



**Figure S2.** X-ray Structure of **III**.

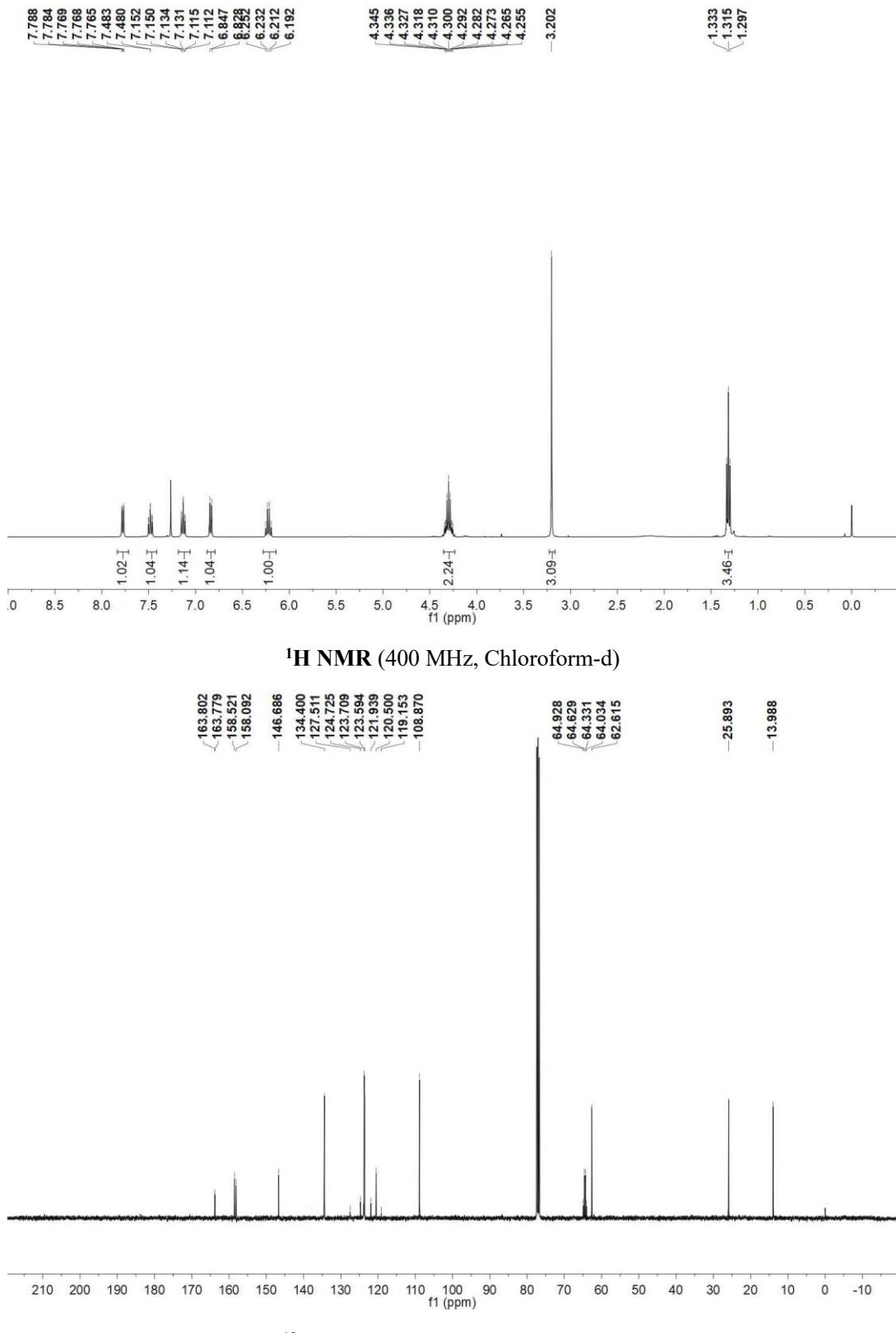
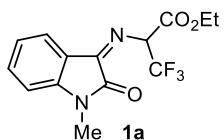
To a 10 mL oven-dried glass sample bottle was added 50 mg pure **III** with DCM to get clear solution, then petroleum ether was slowly added to become muddy. The mixture solution was sealed with filter paper to slowly grow crystals at room temperature. Crystal data for **III**:  $\text{C}_{20}\text{H}_{16}\text{F}_2\text{N}_2\text{O}_3$ ,  $M_r = 370.35$ ,  $T = 100$  K, orthorhombic, space group P -1,  $a = 108.139(6)$ ,  $b = 90.02(2)$ ,  $c = 107.606(2)$  Å,  $V = 3403.1(4)$  Å $^3$ ,  $Z = 8$ . CCDC 2163876 contains the

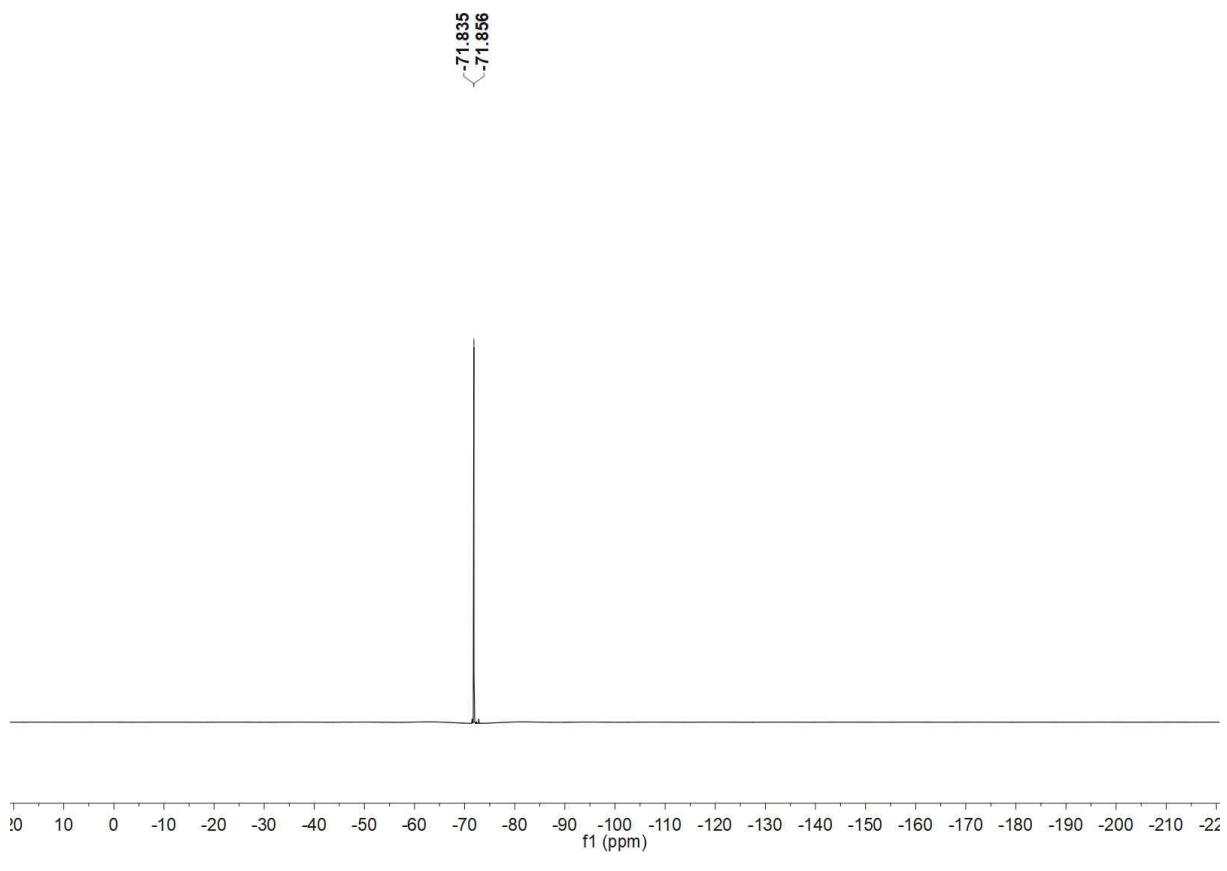
supplementary crystallographic data for this paper. These data can be obtained free of charge via [www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/conts/retrieving.html](http://www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/conts/retrieving.html).

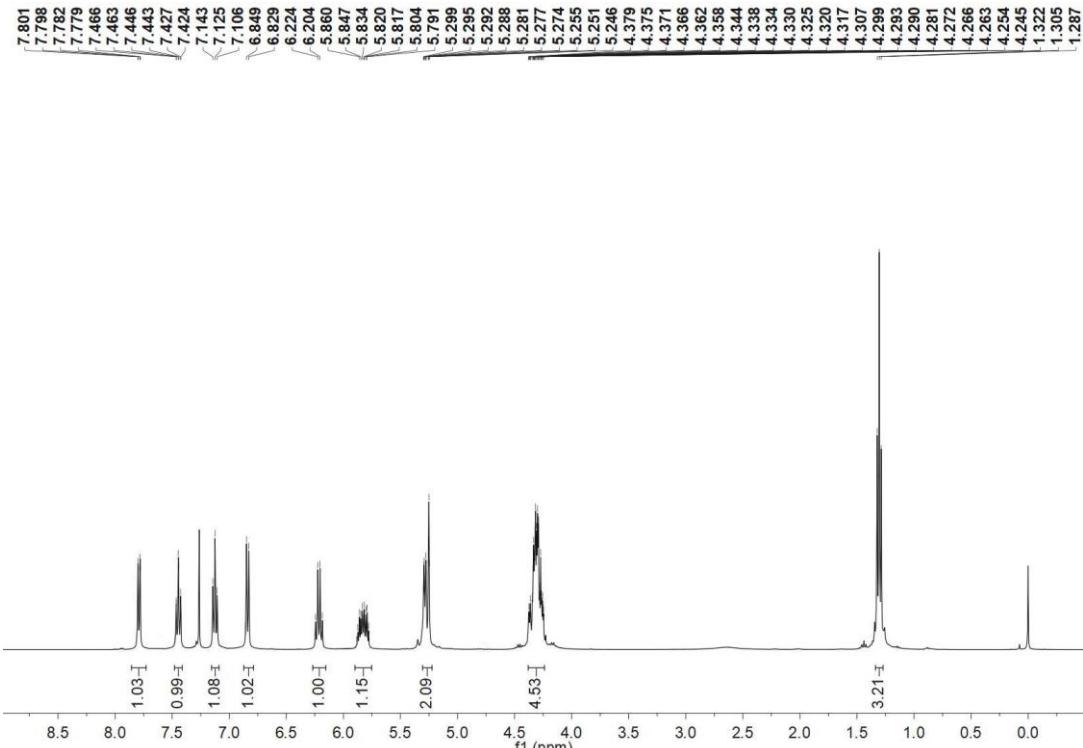
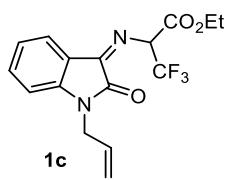
## **8. Reference**

1. N. Kaila, K. Janz, A. Huang, A. Moretto, S. DeBernardo, P. W. Bedard, S. Tam, V. Clerin, J. C. Keith, D. H. H. Tsao, N. Sushkova, G. D. Shaw, R. T. Camphausen, R. G. Schaub, Q. Wang, *J. Med. Chem.* **2007**, *50*, 40-64.
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4. J. Lai, W. Li, S. Wei, S. Li, *Org. Chem. Front.* **2020**, *7*, 2263-2268.
5. K. Shibatomi, Y. Tsuzuki, S.-i. Nakata, Y. Sumikawa, S. Iwasa, *Synlett.* **2007**, *2007*, 551.

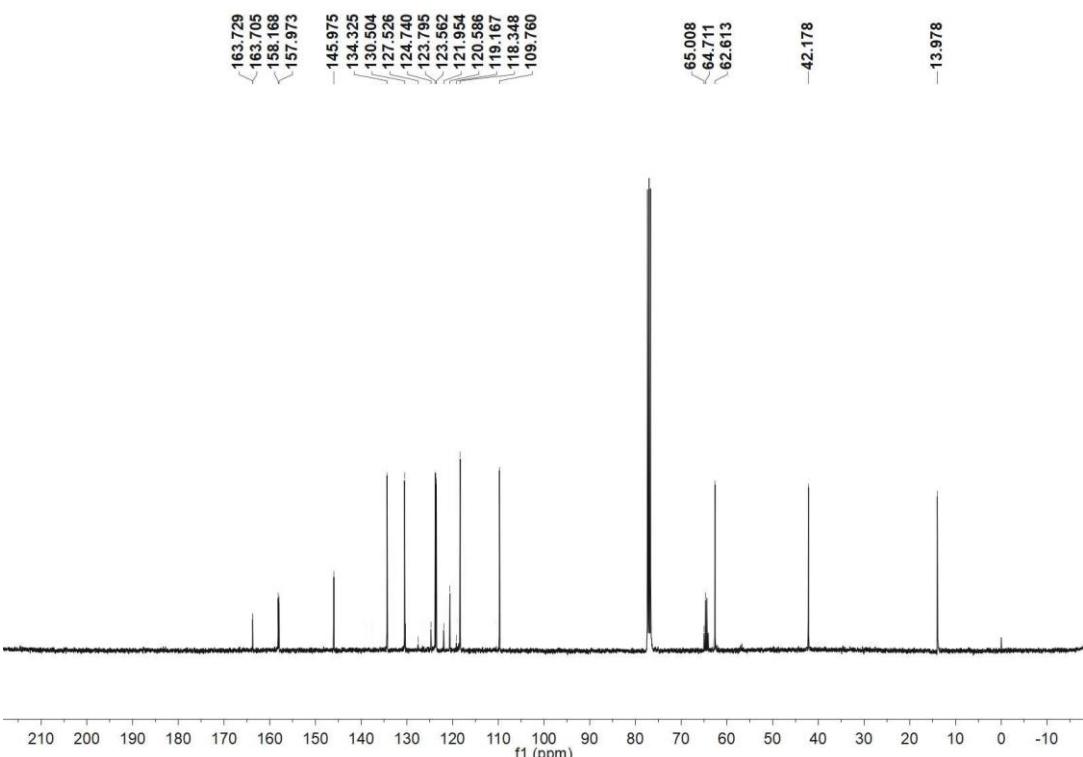
## 9. NMR and HPLC spectra



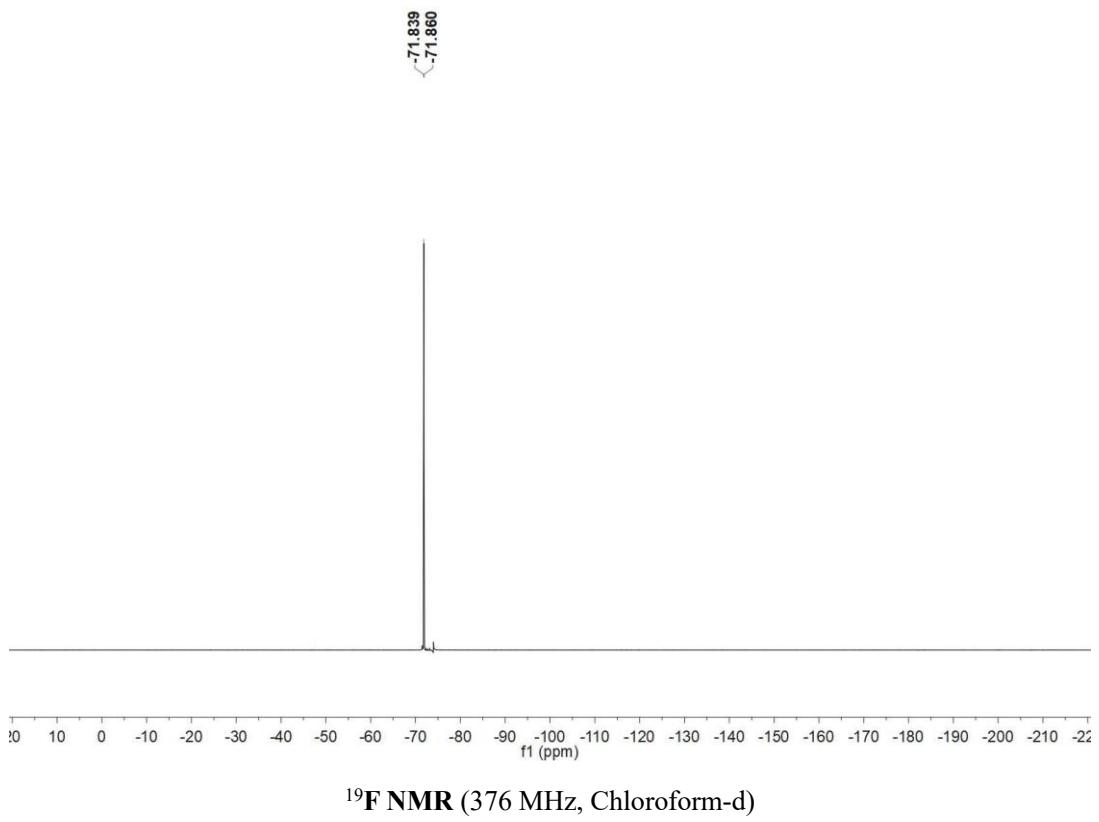


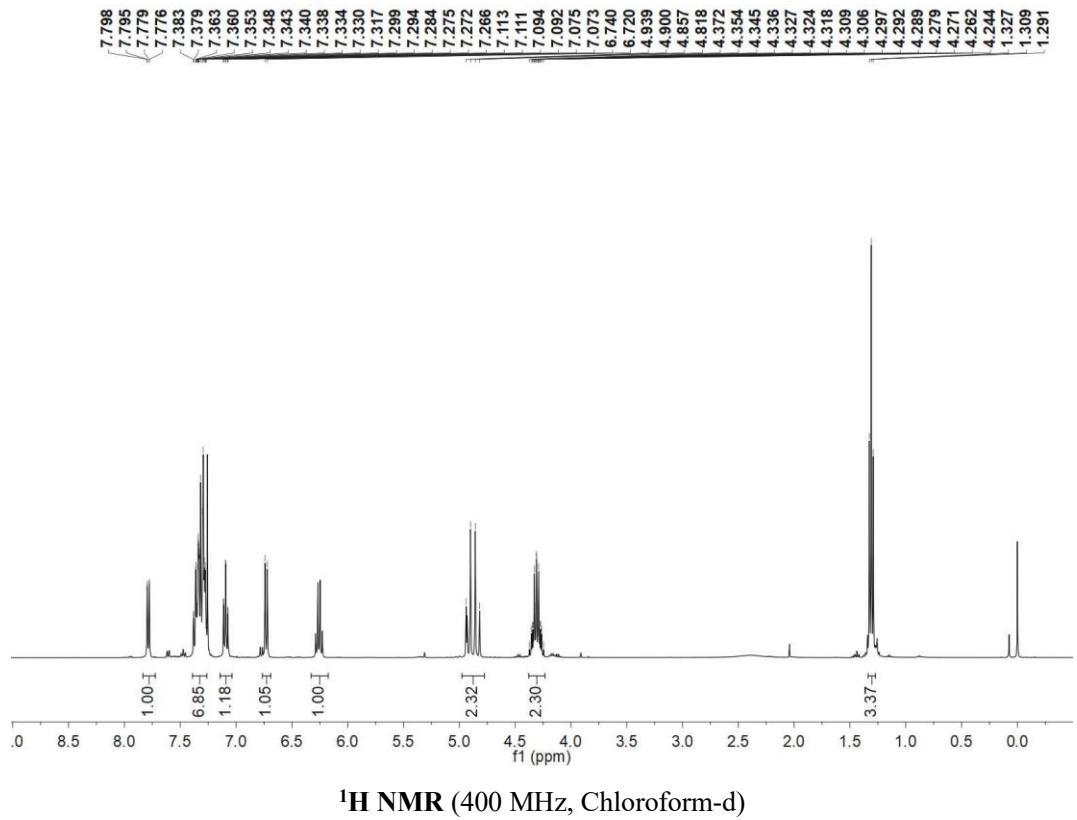
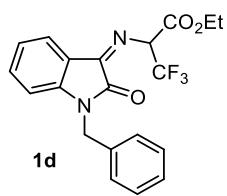


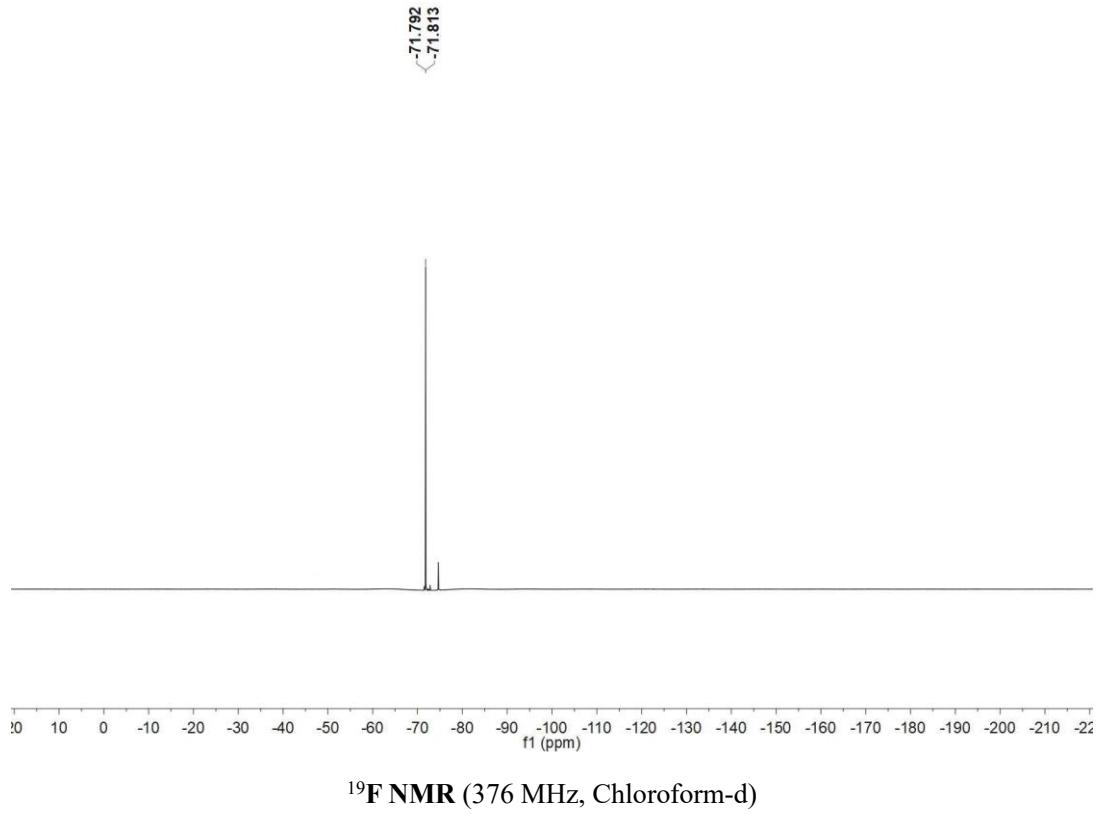
<sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-d)

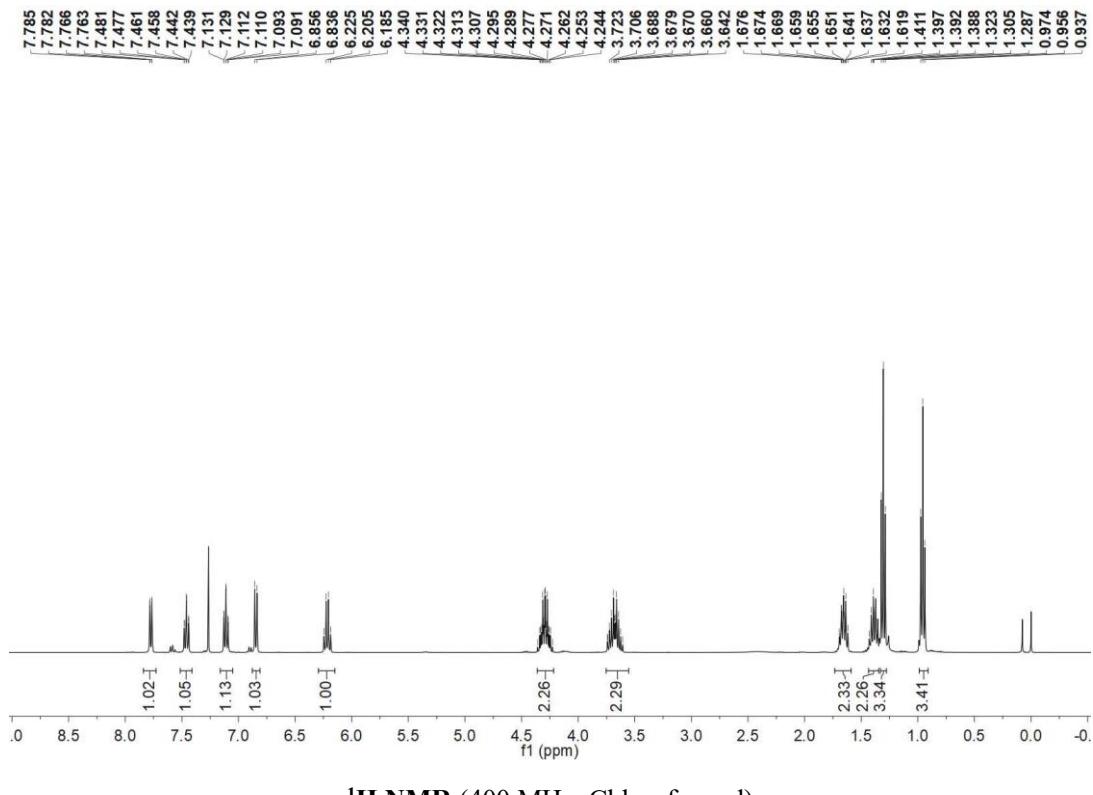
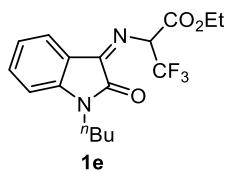


<sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)

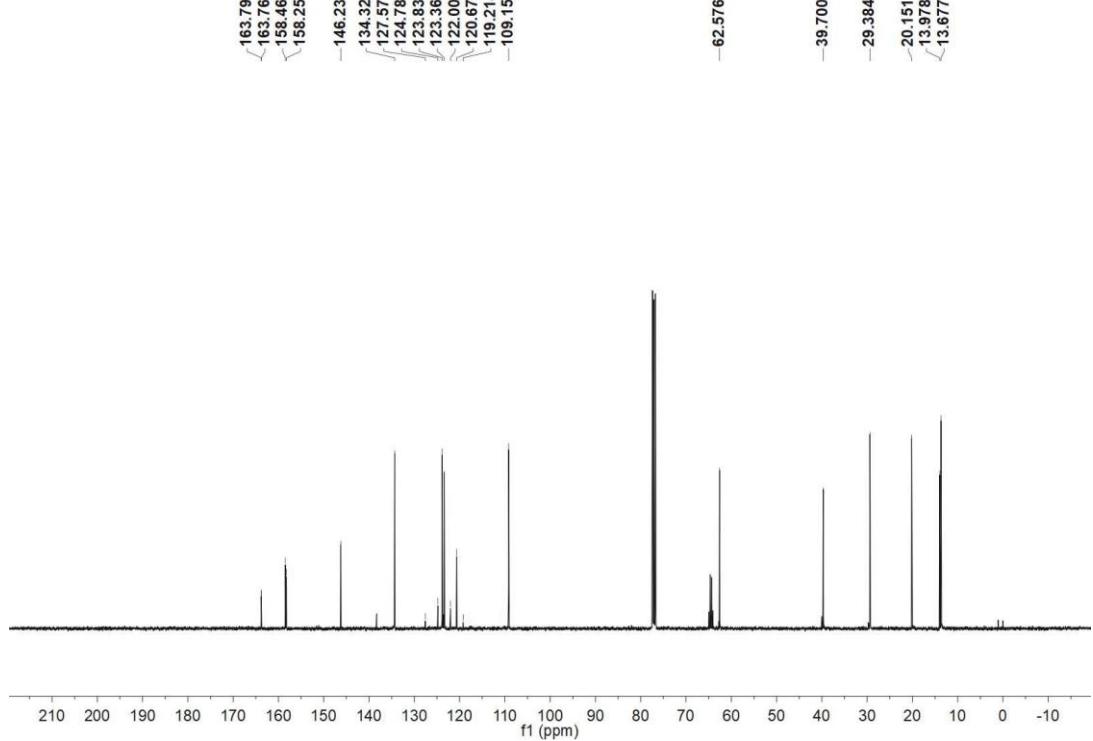




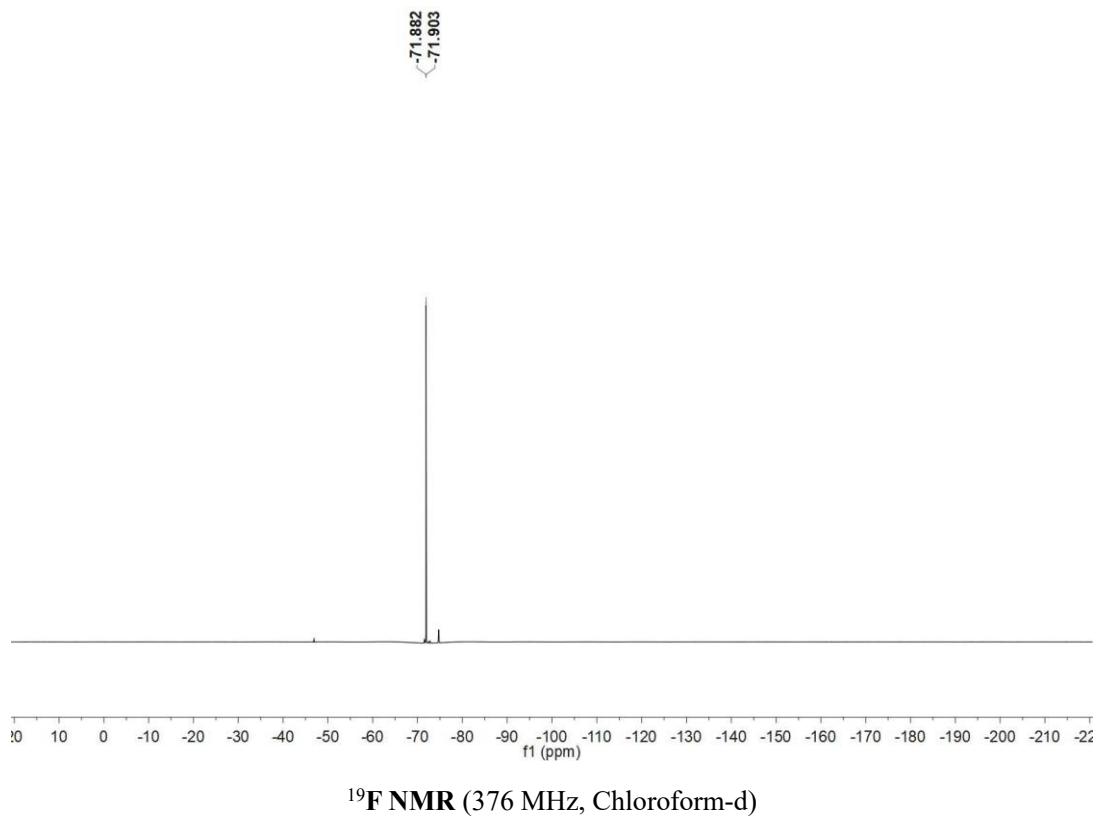


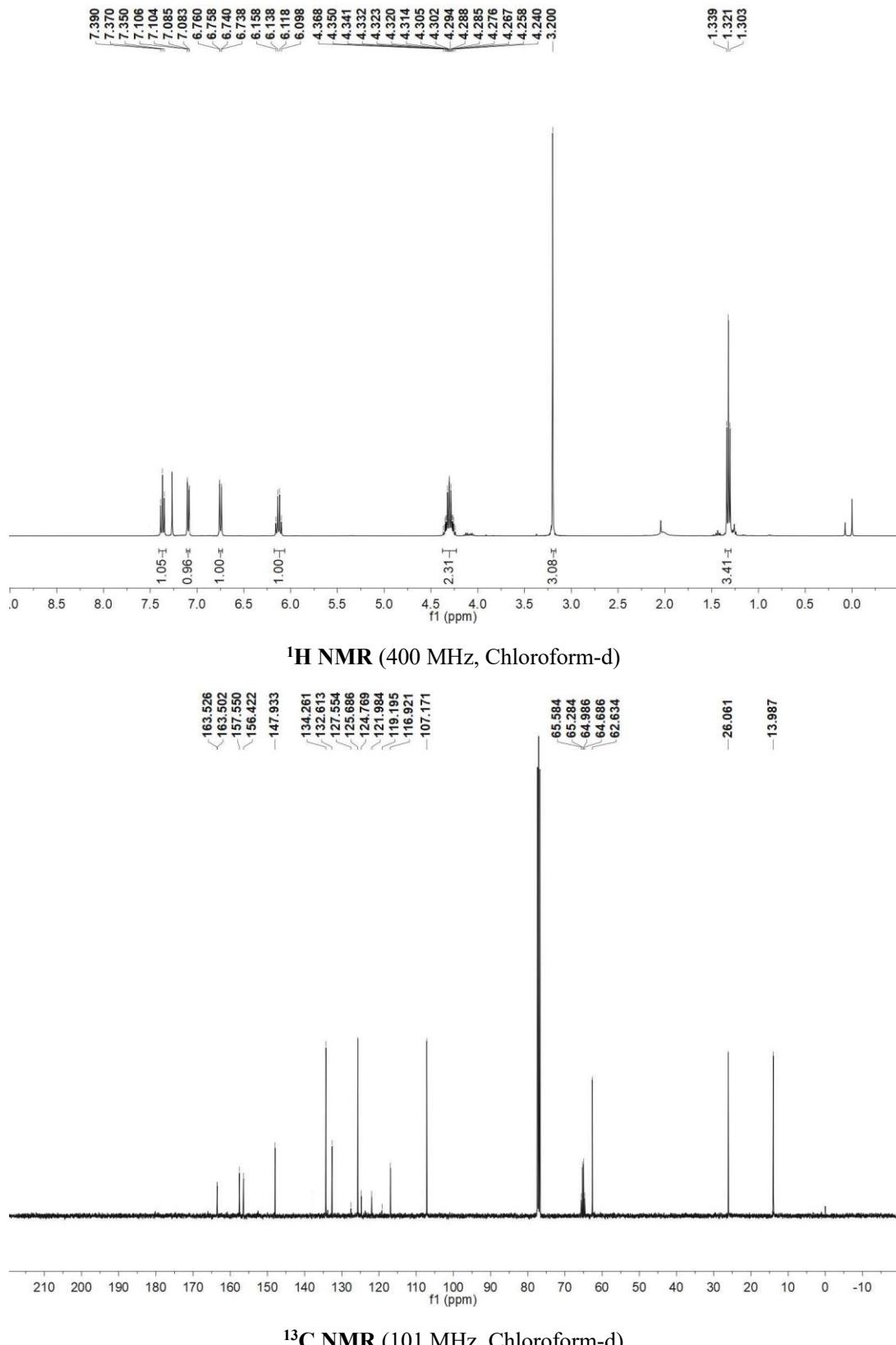
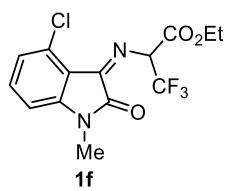


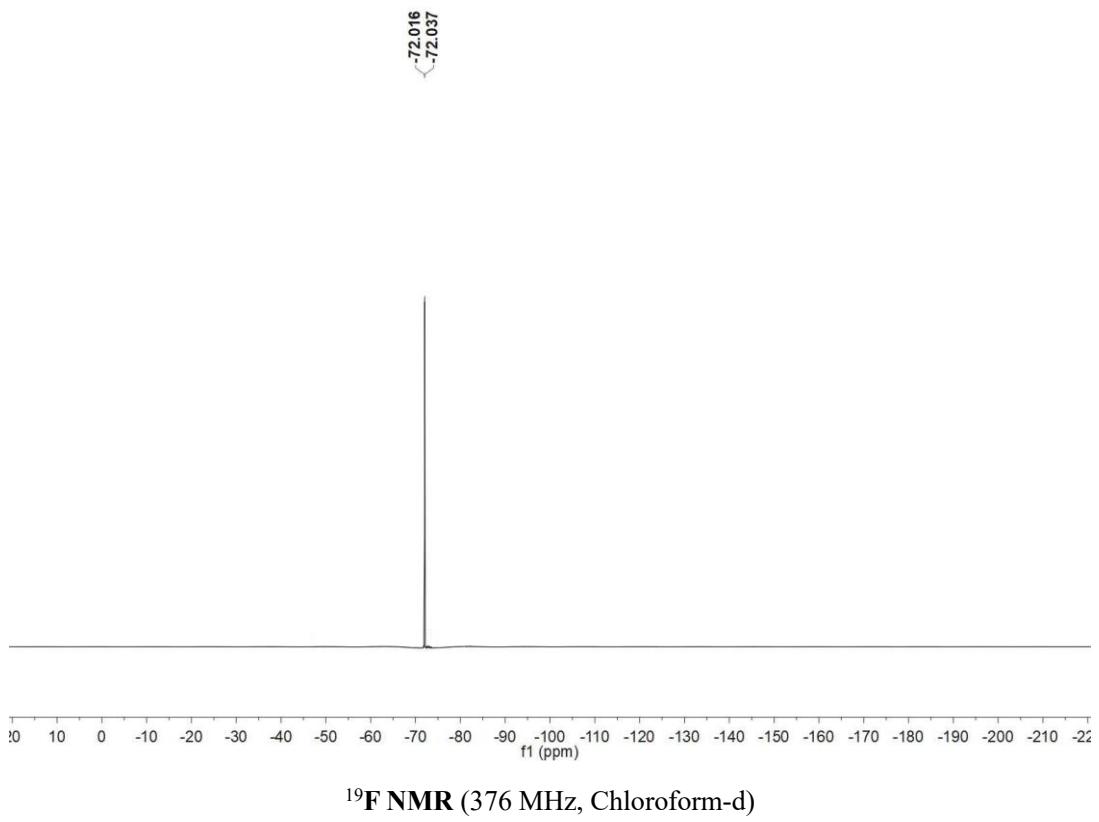
<sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-d)

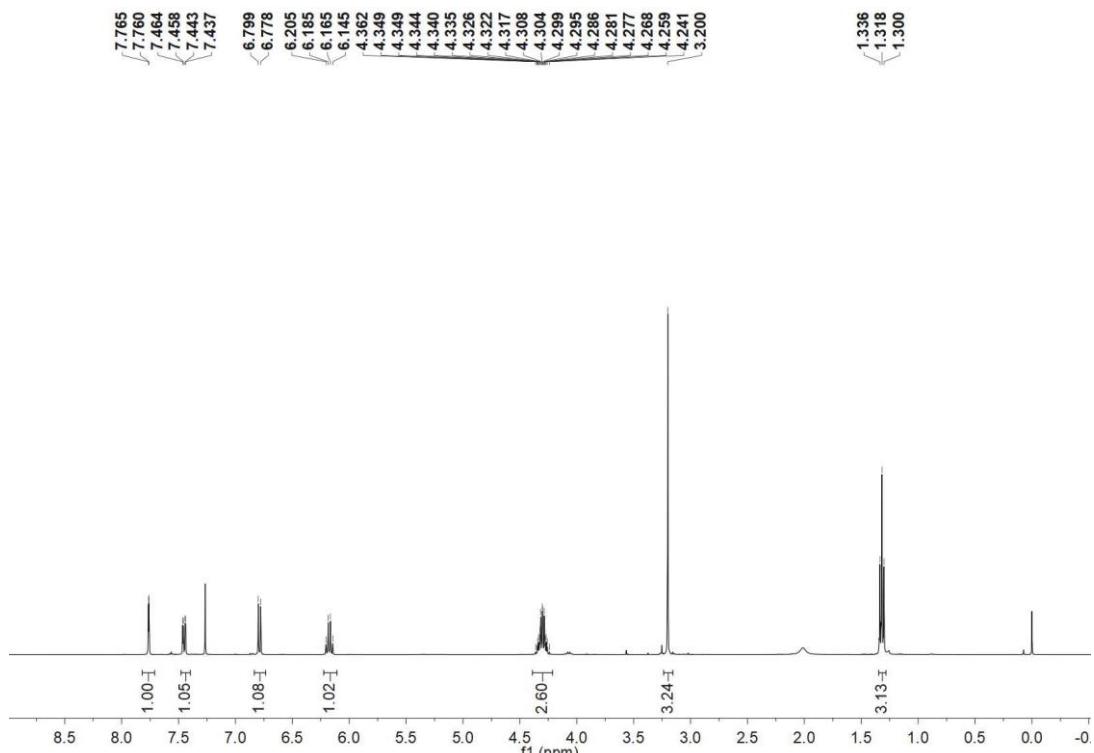
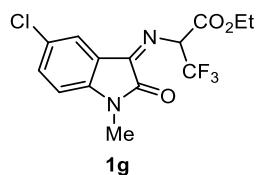


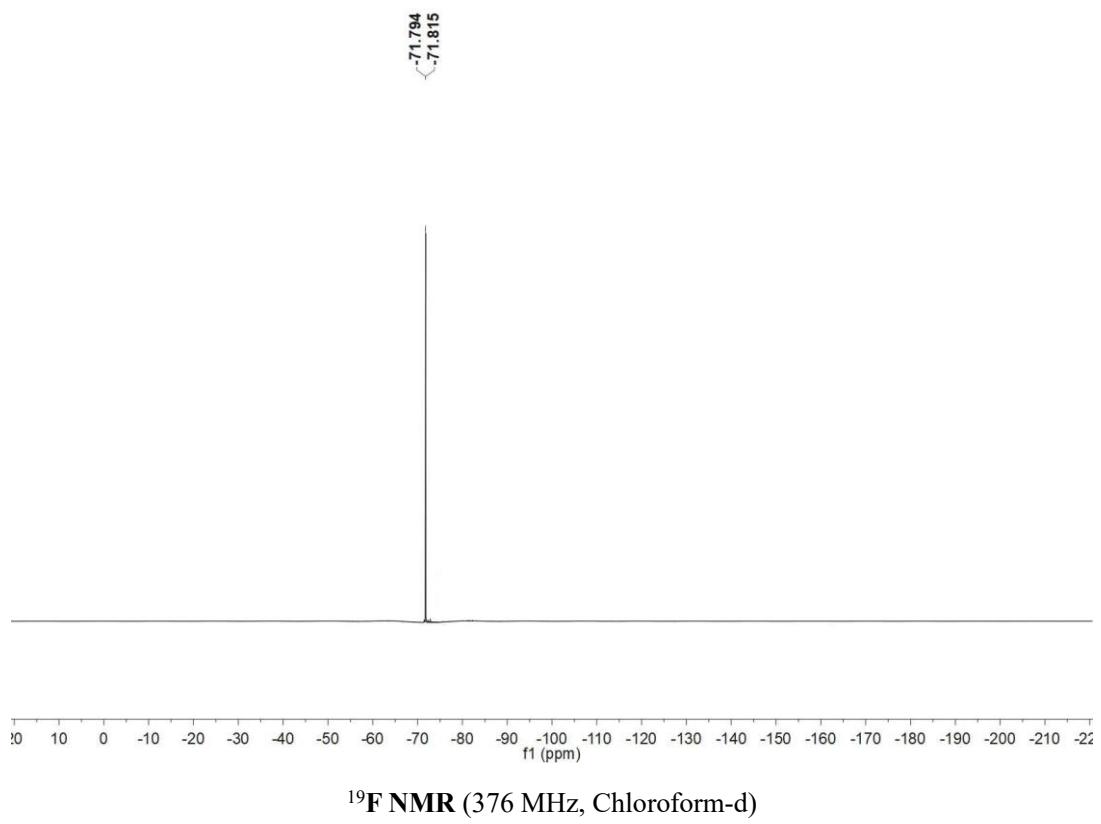
### <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)

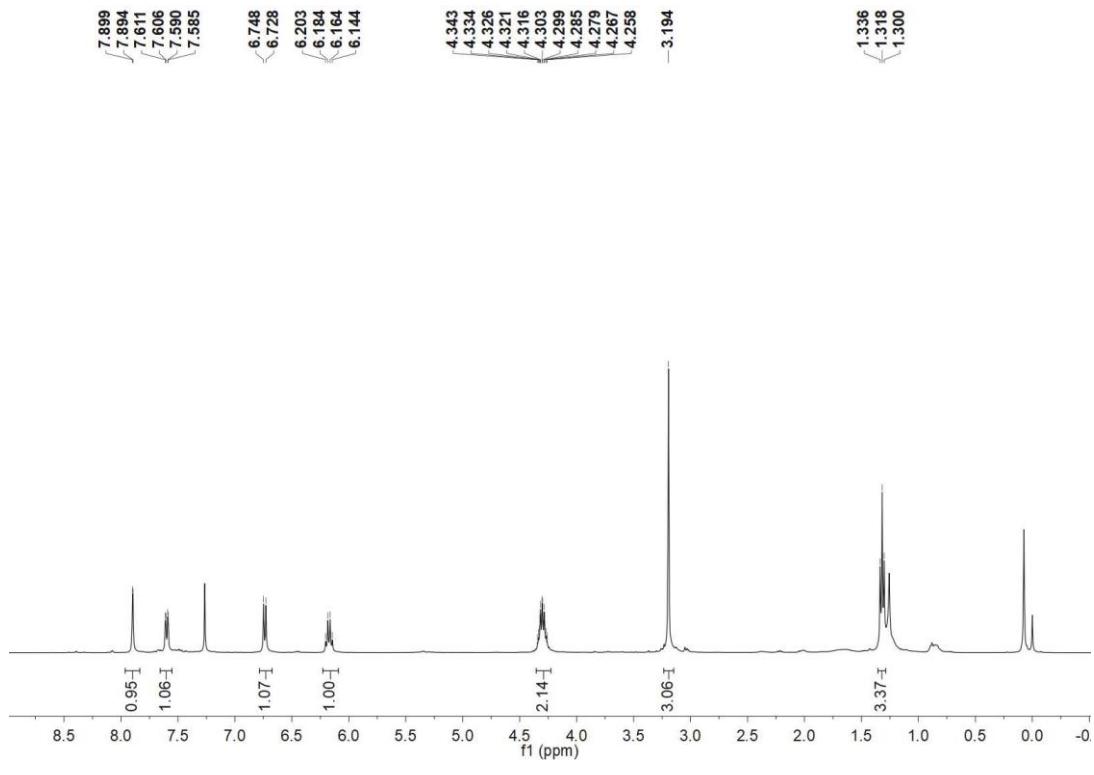
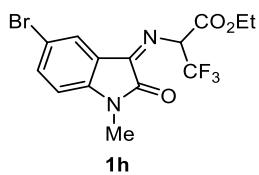


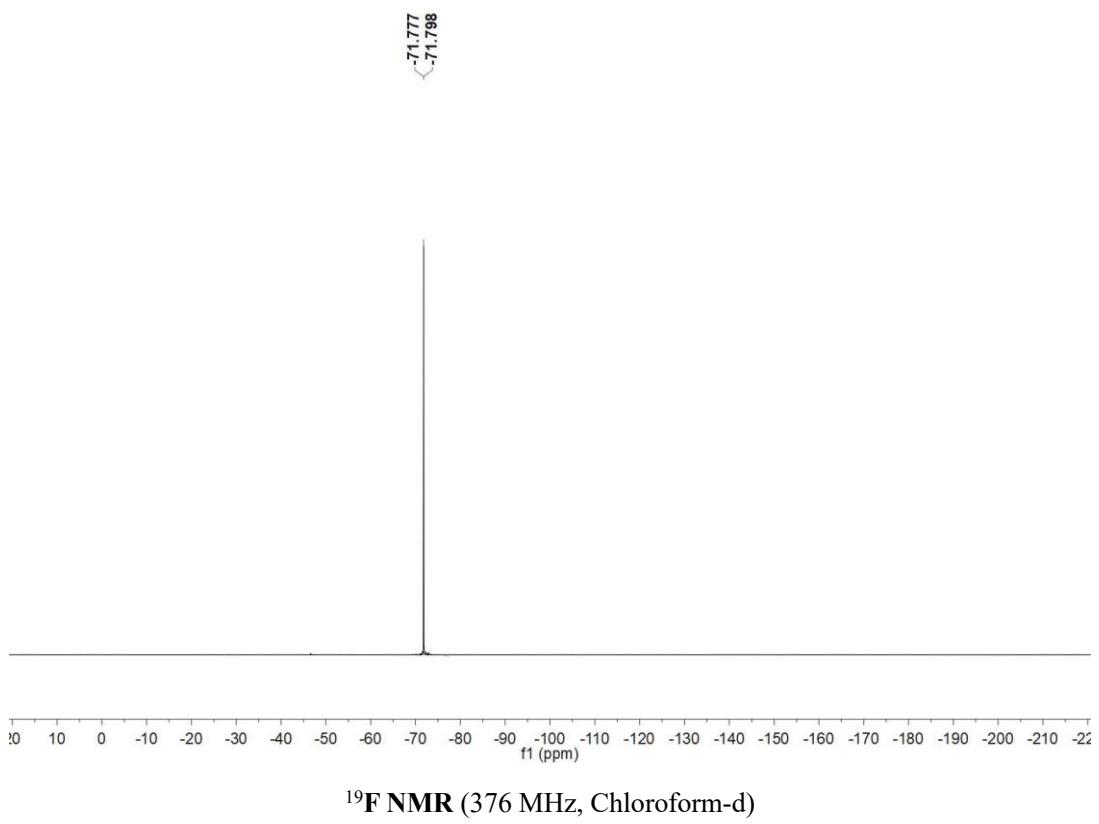


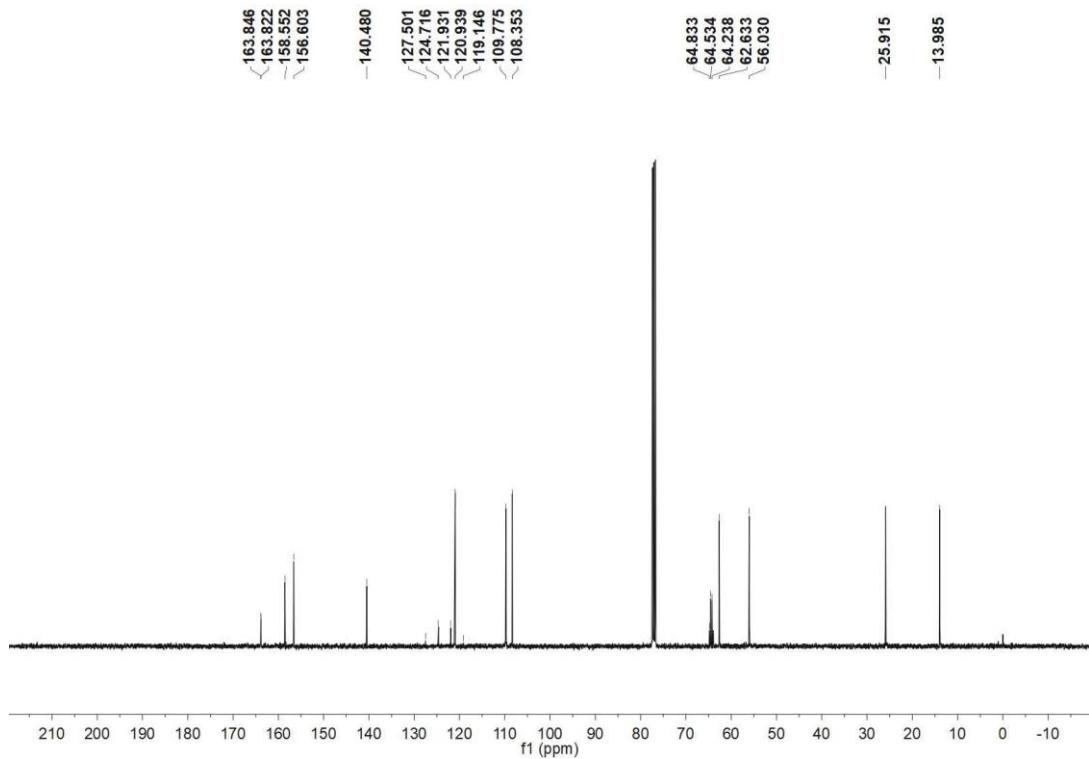
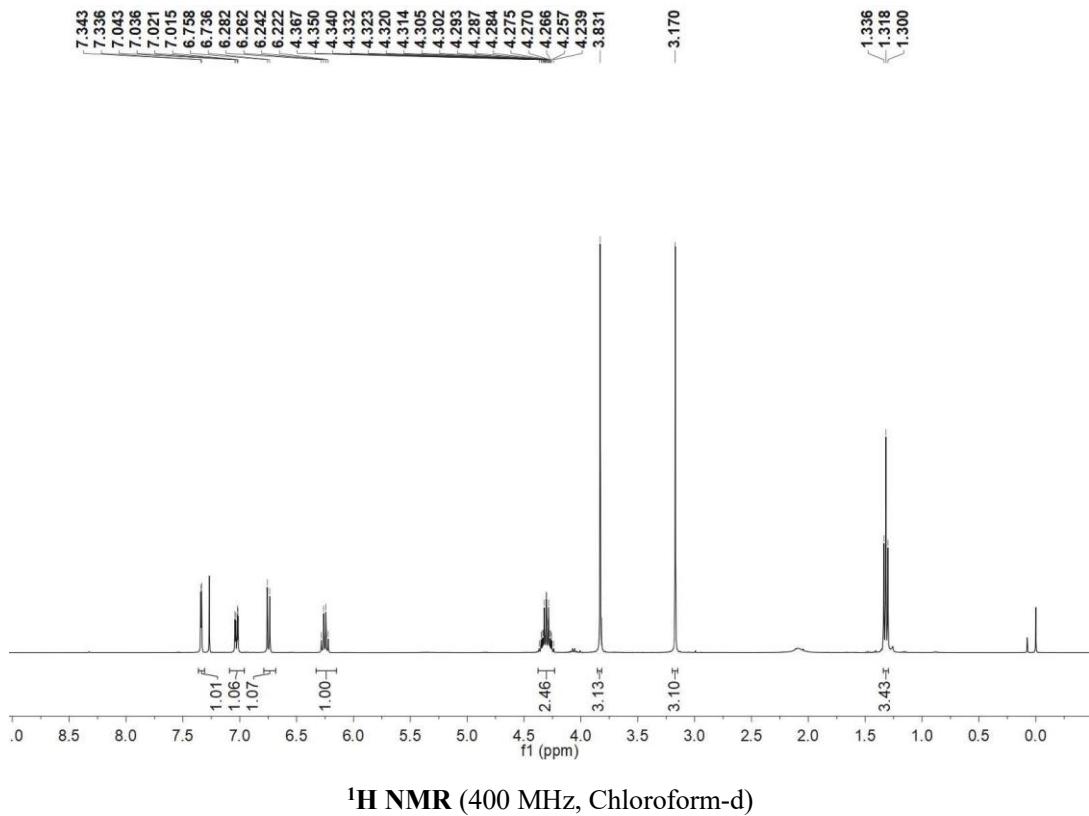
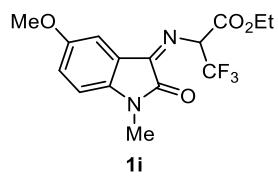


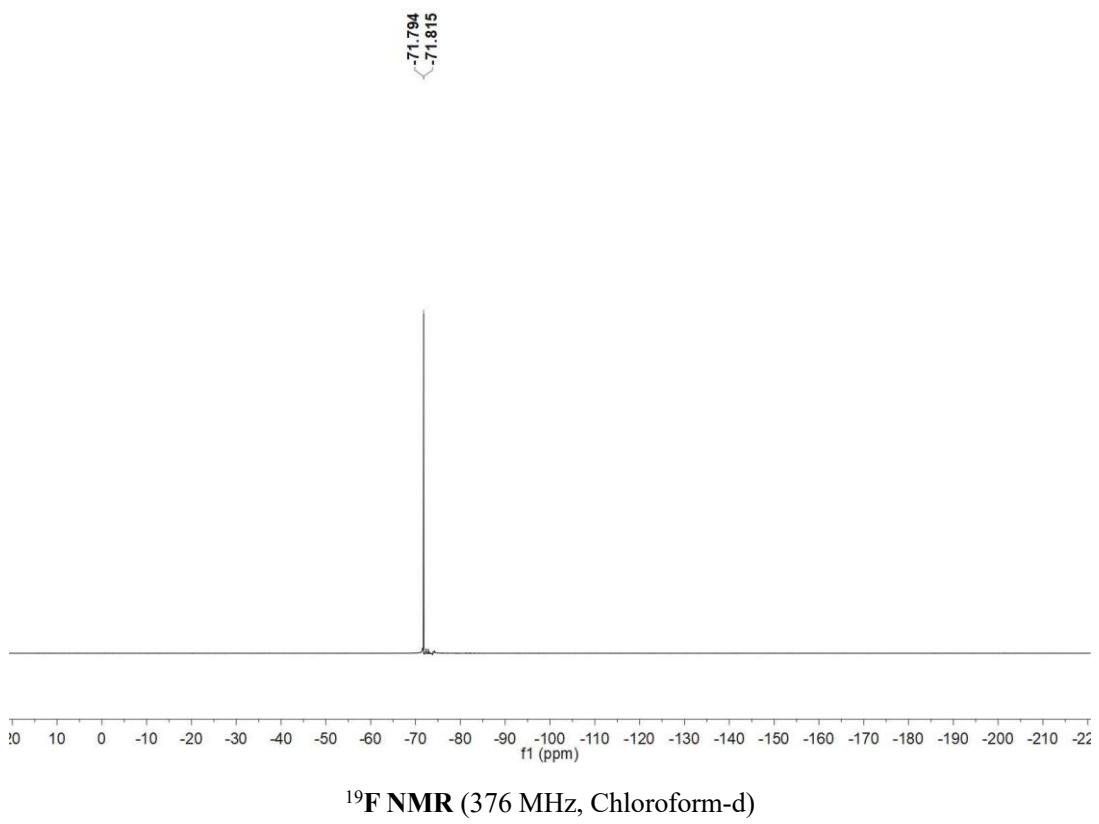


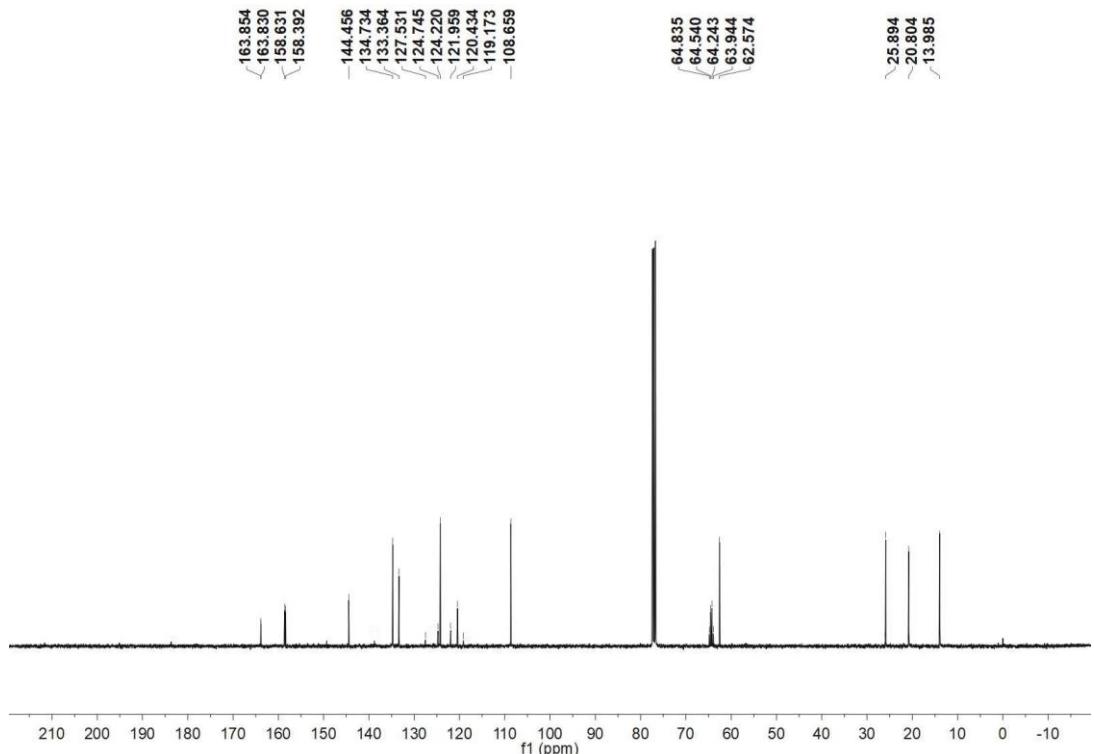
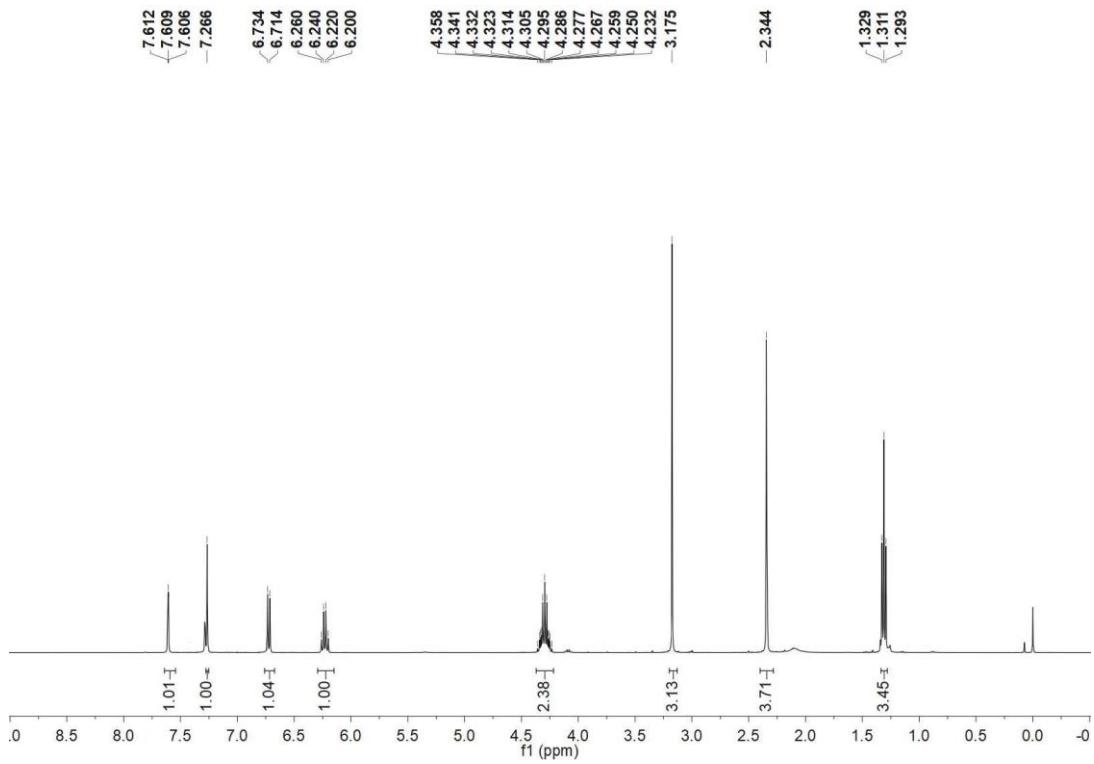
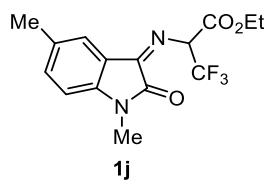


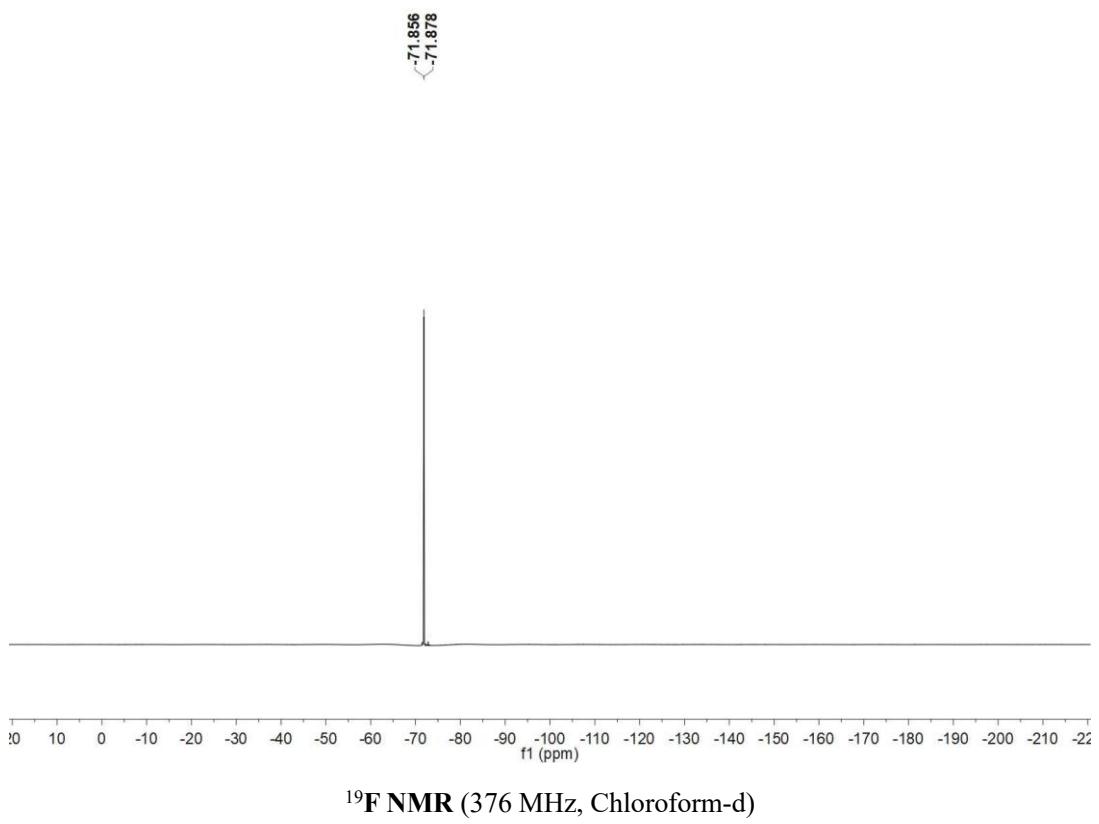


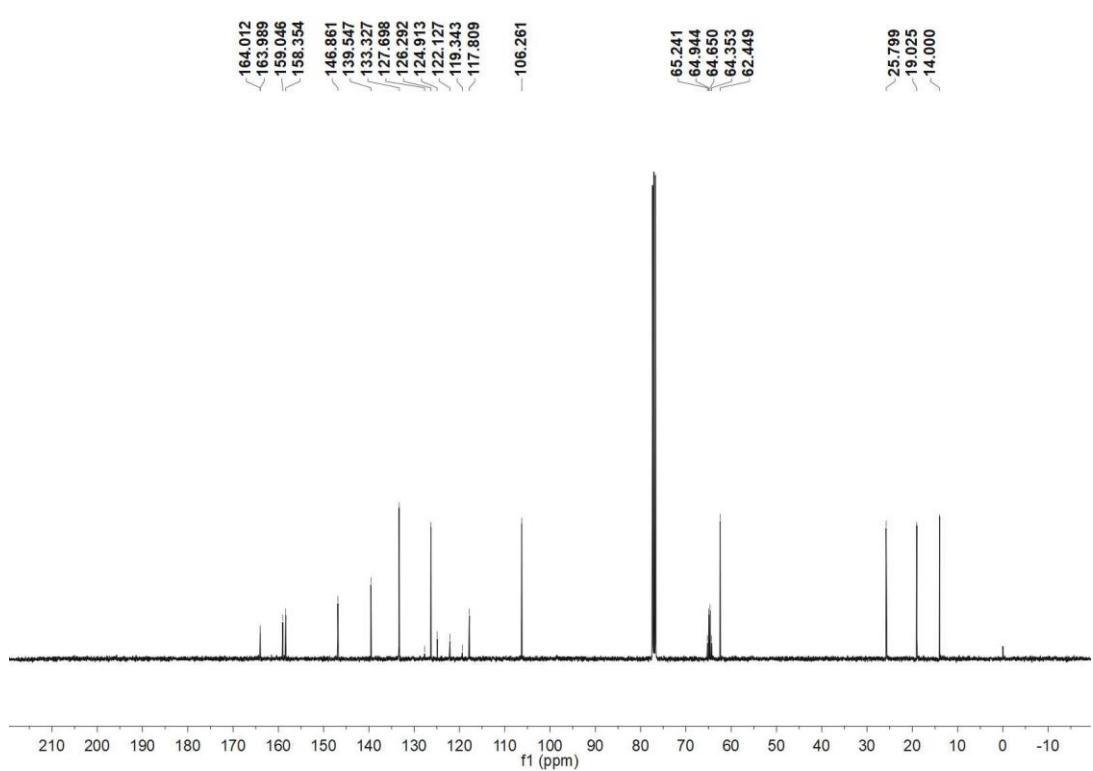
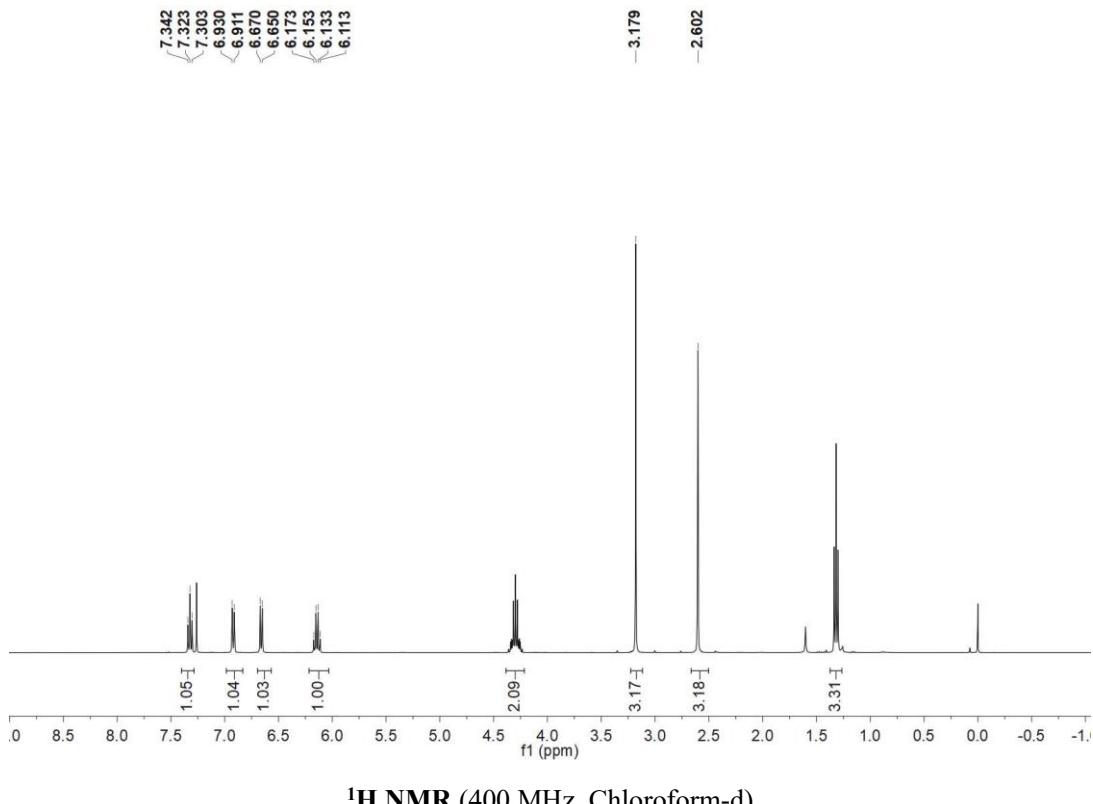
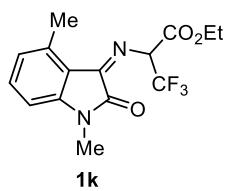


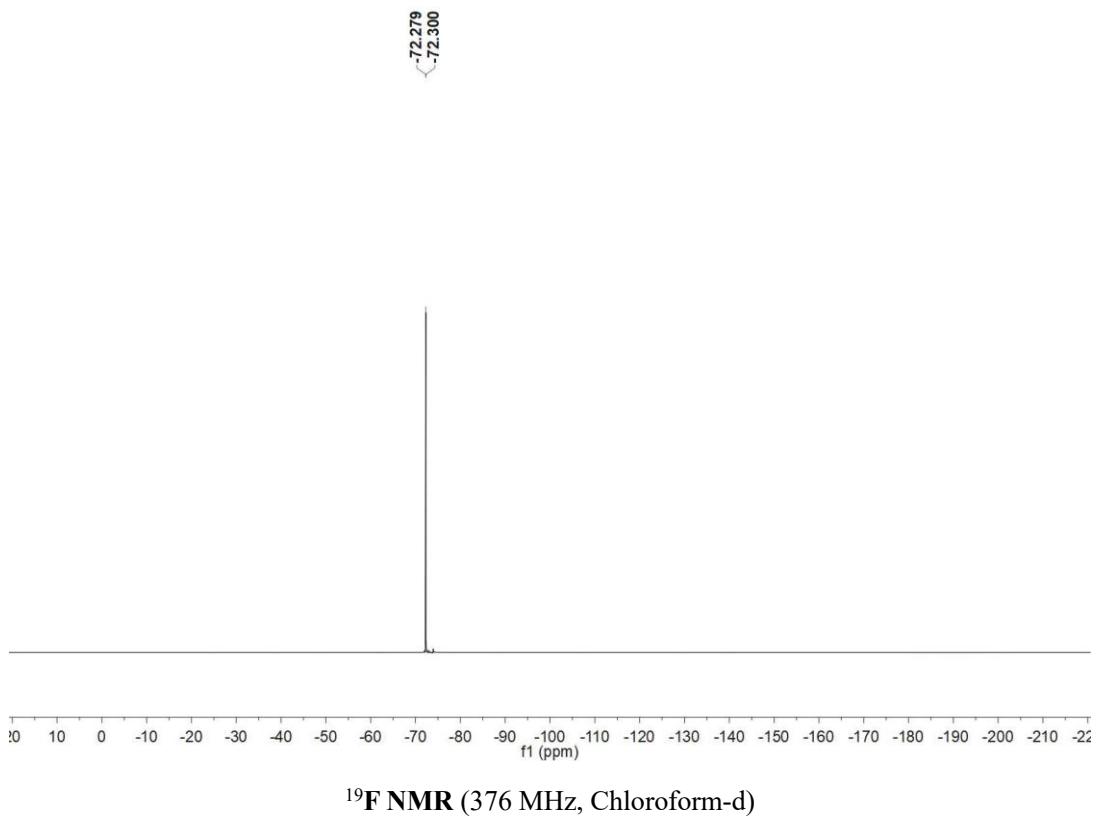


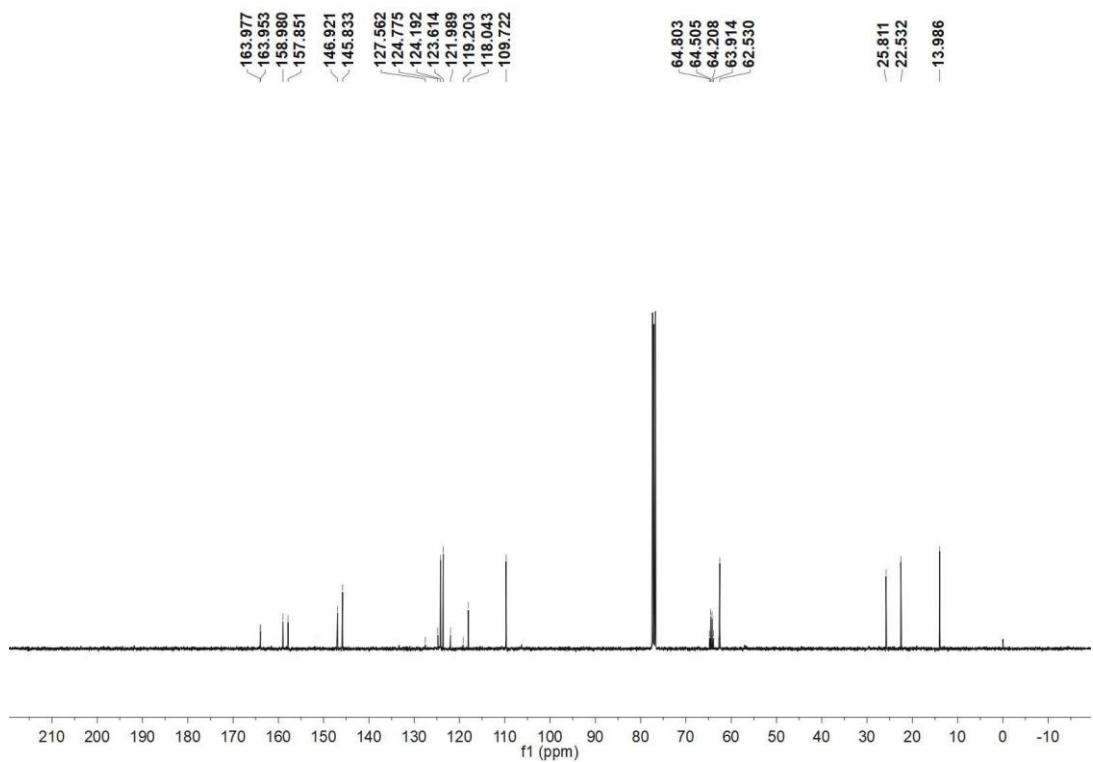
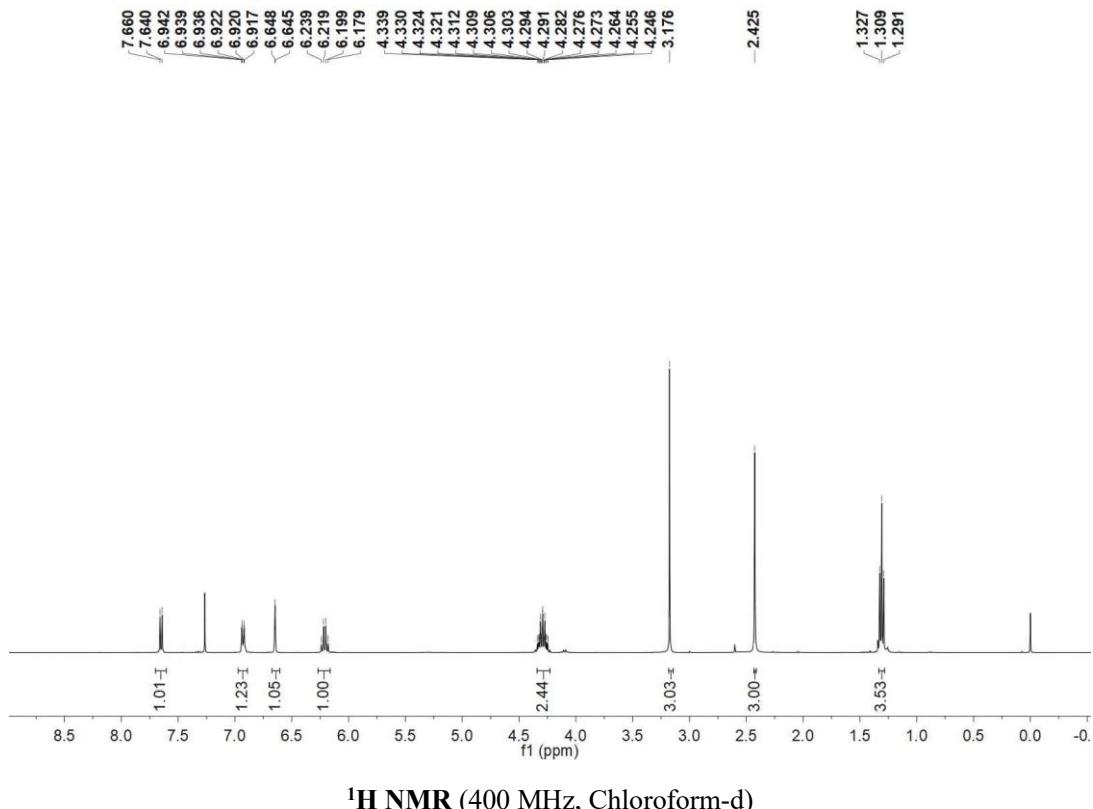
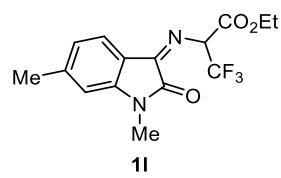


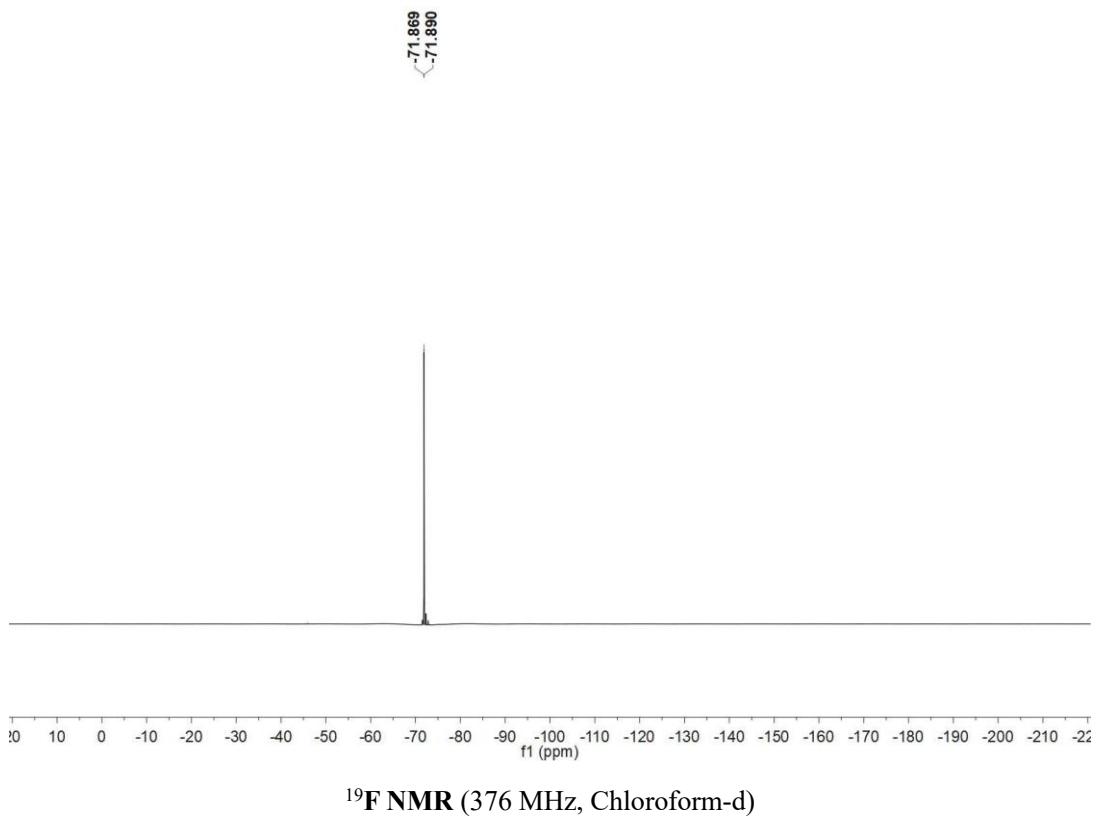


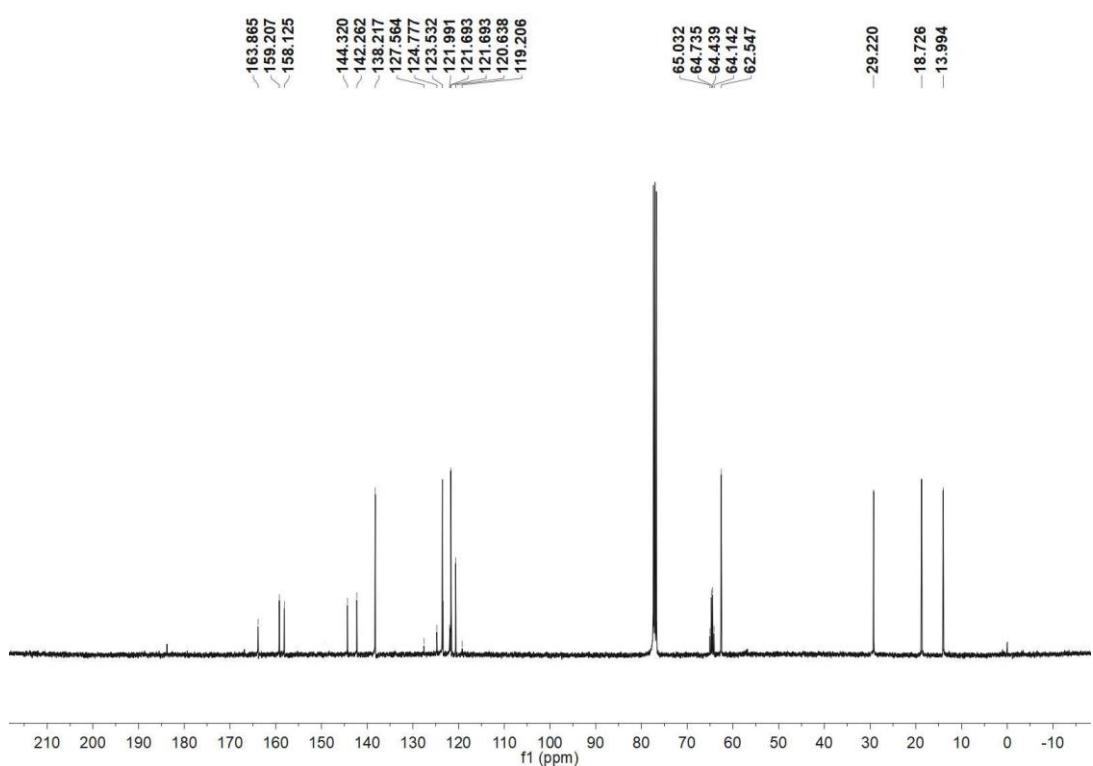
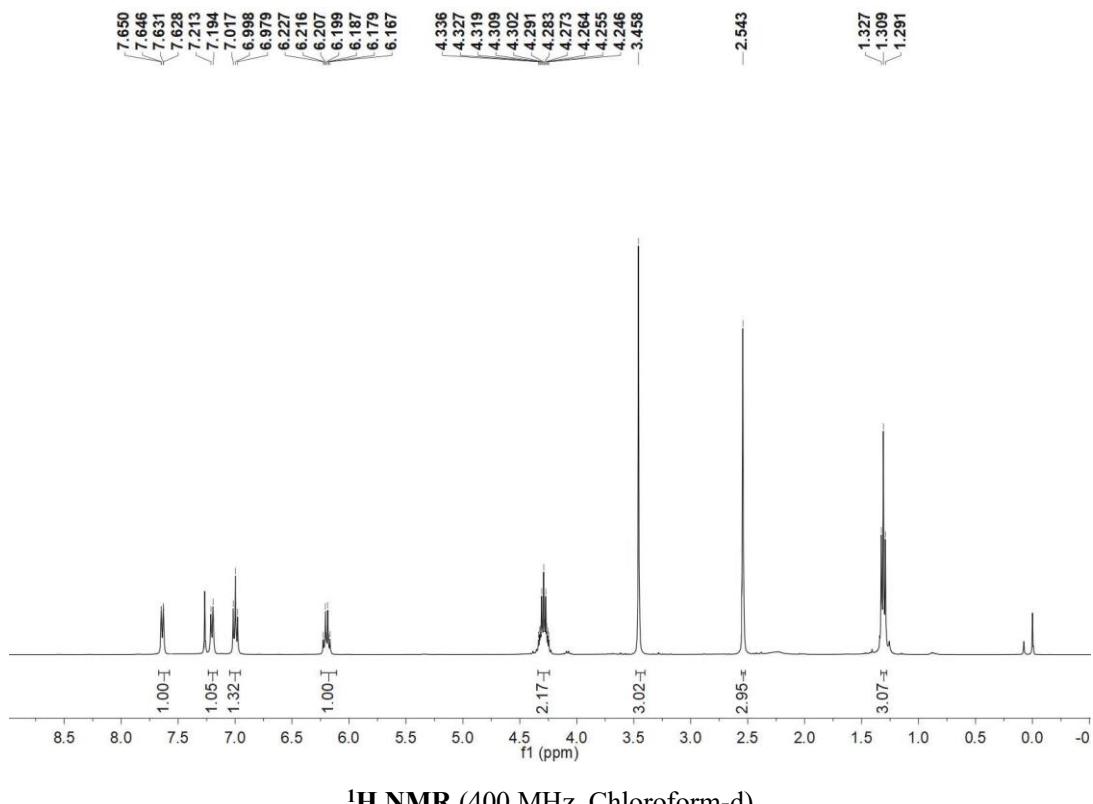
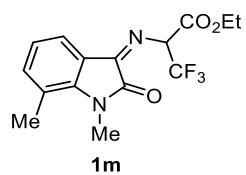


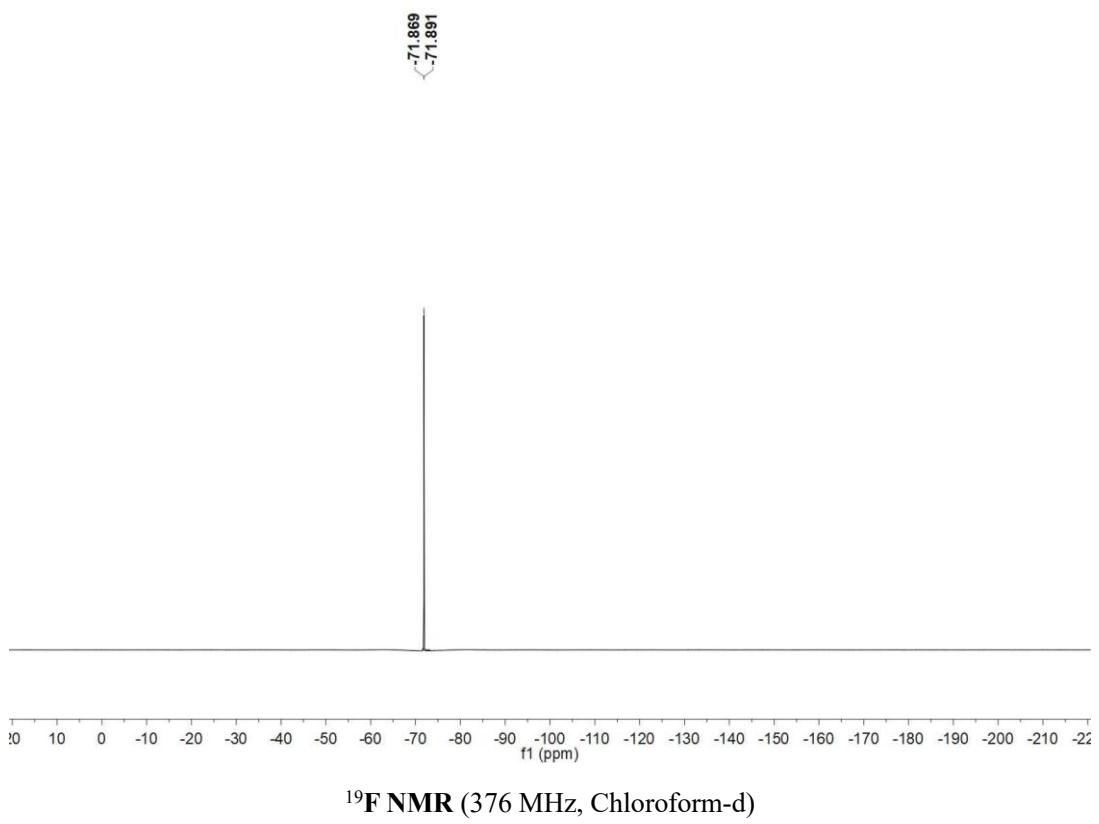


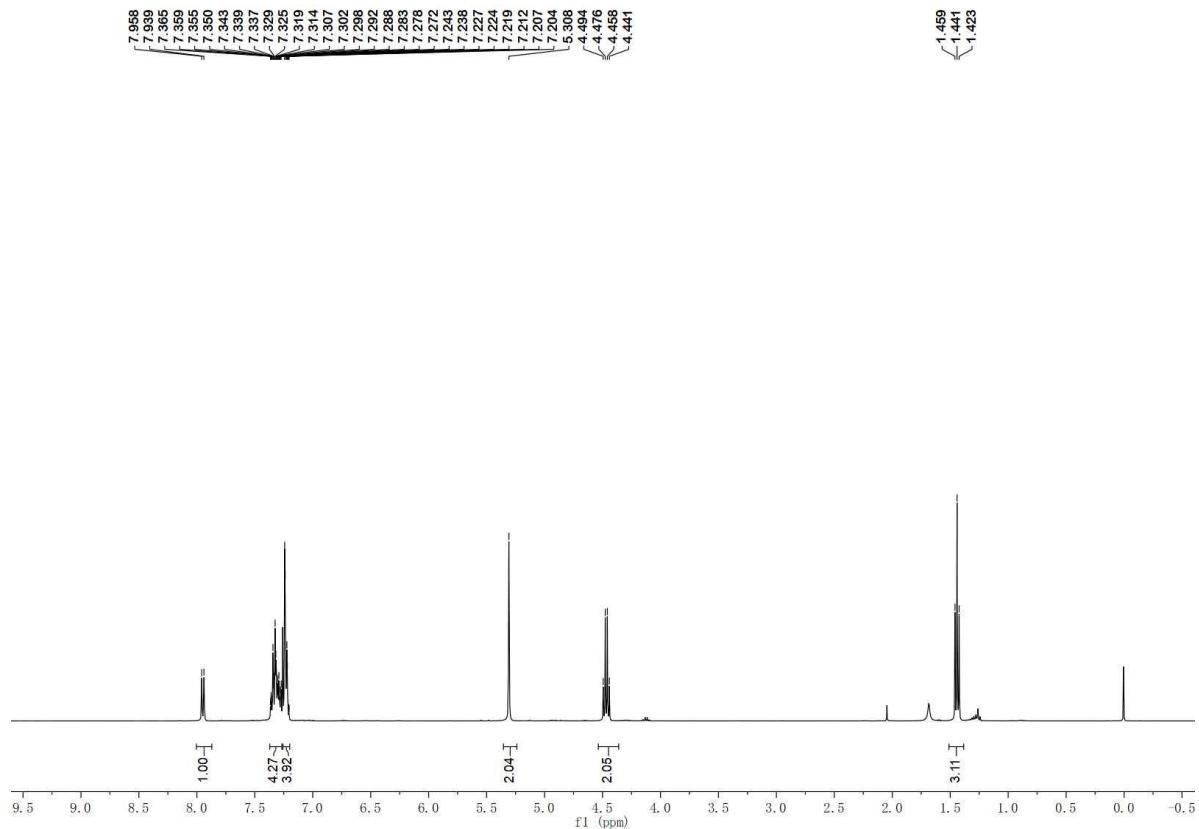
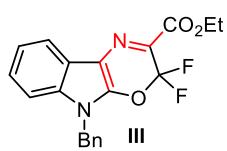




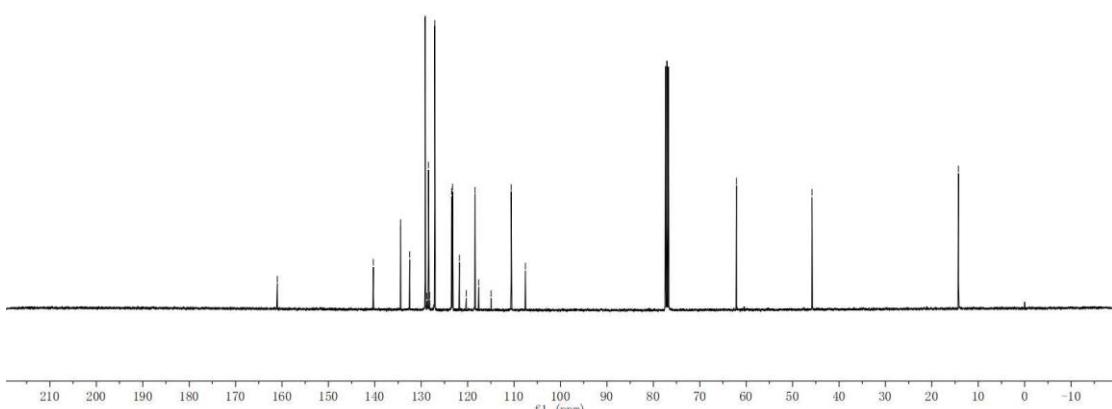




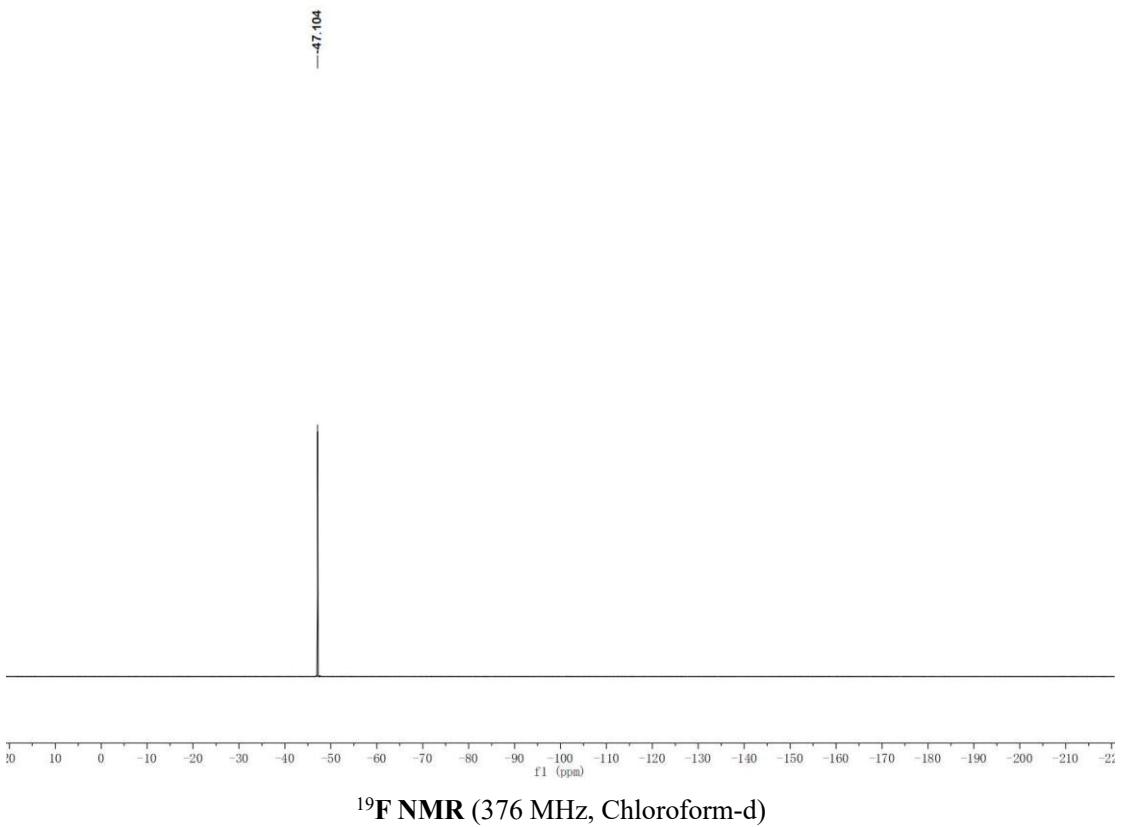


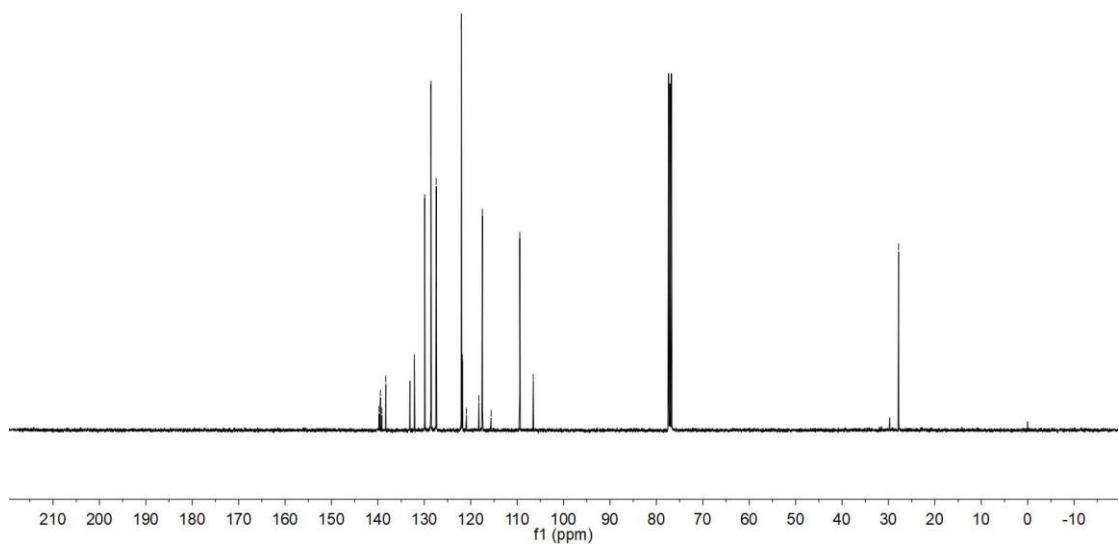
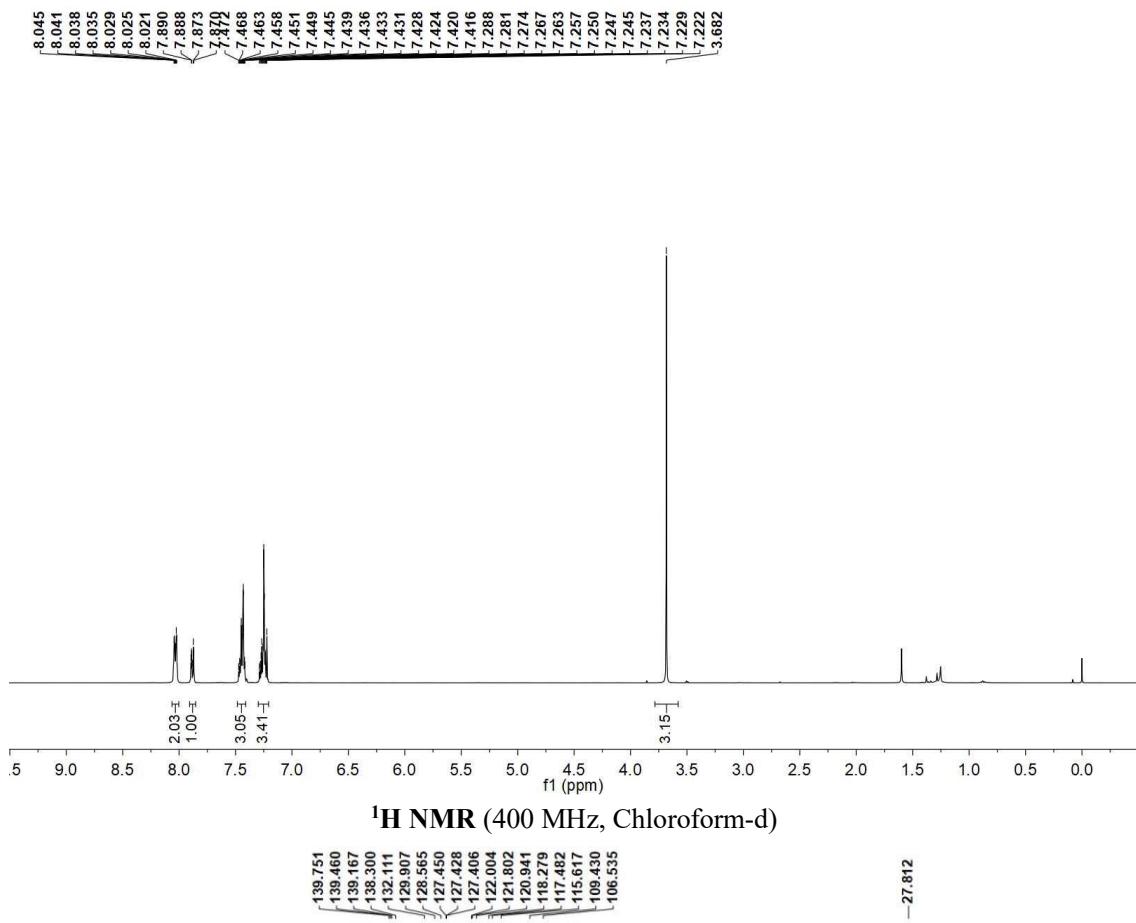
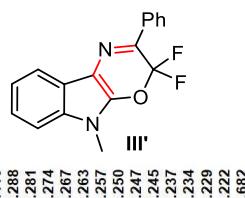


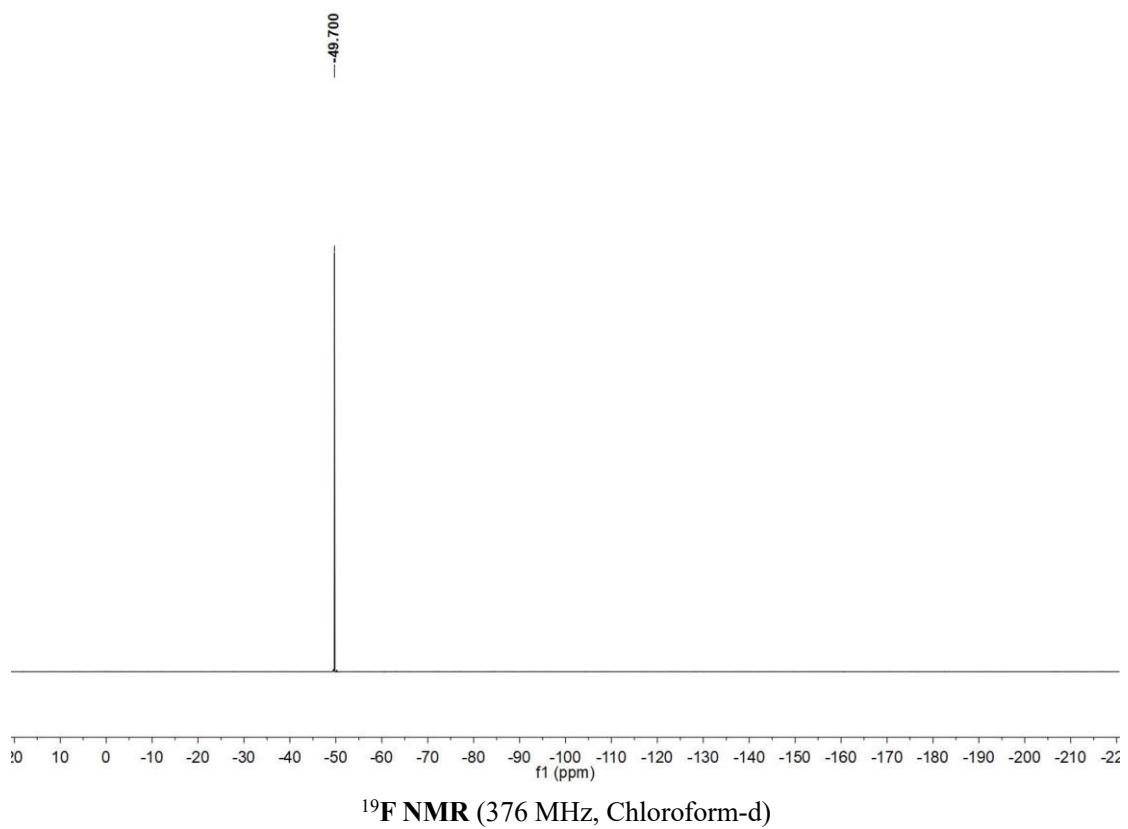
**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d)

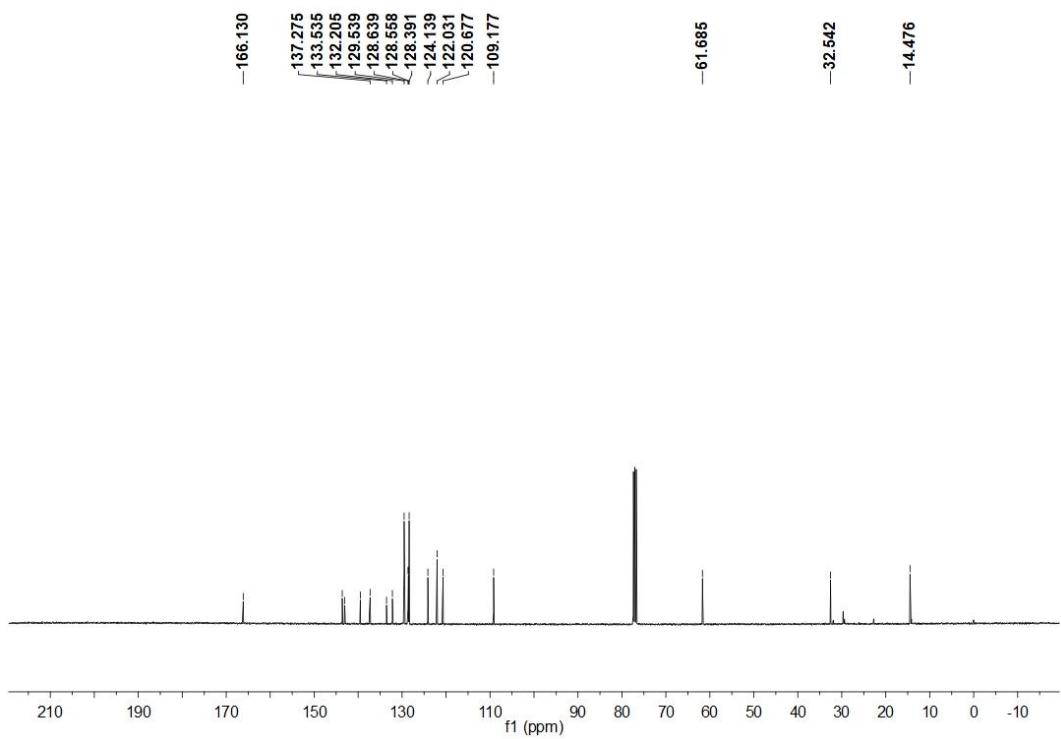
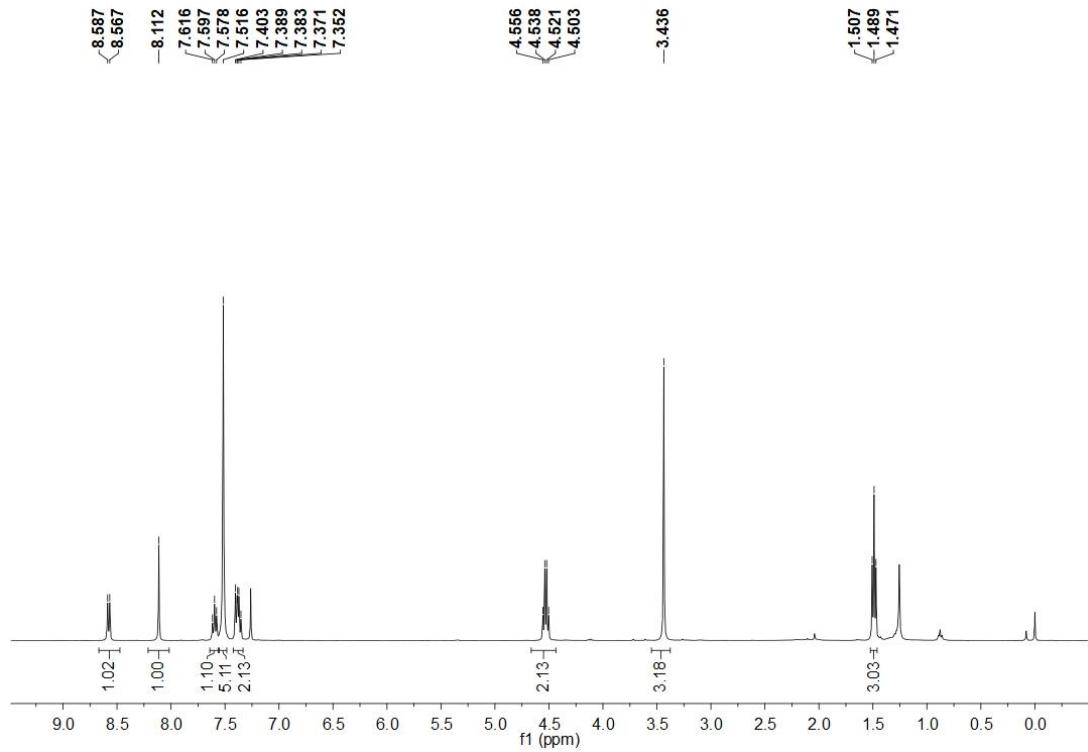
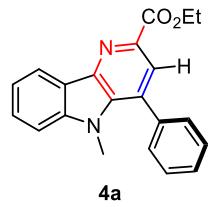


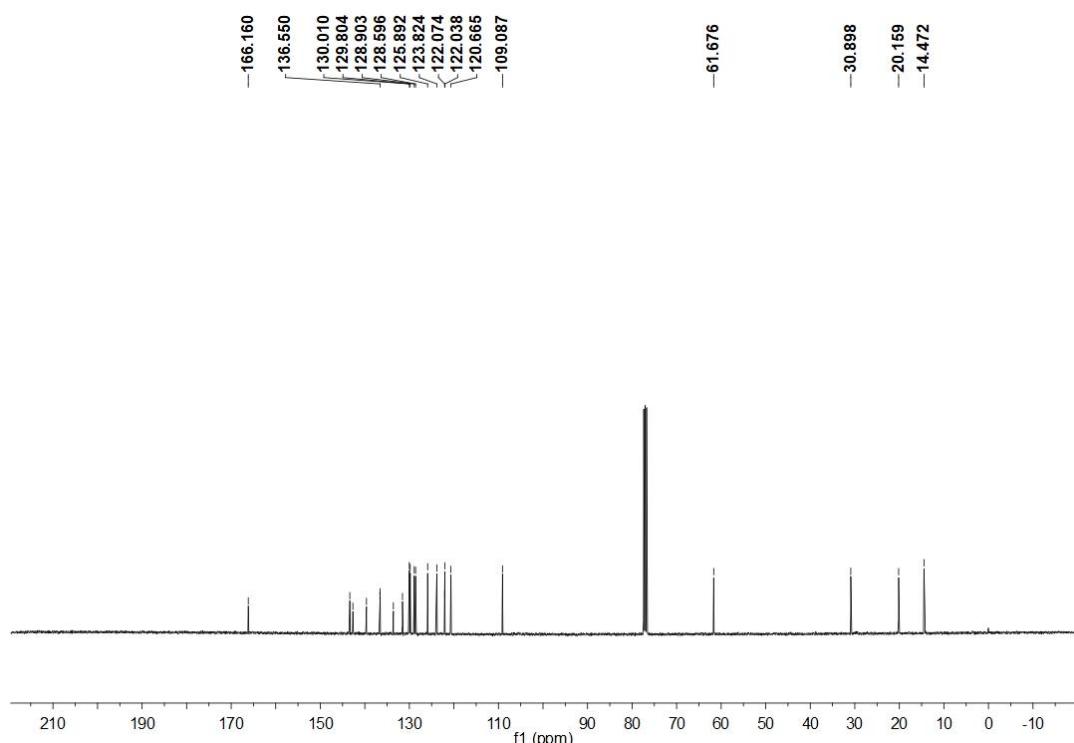
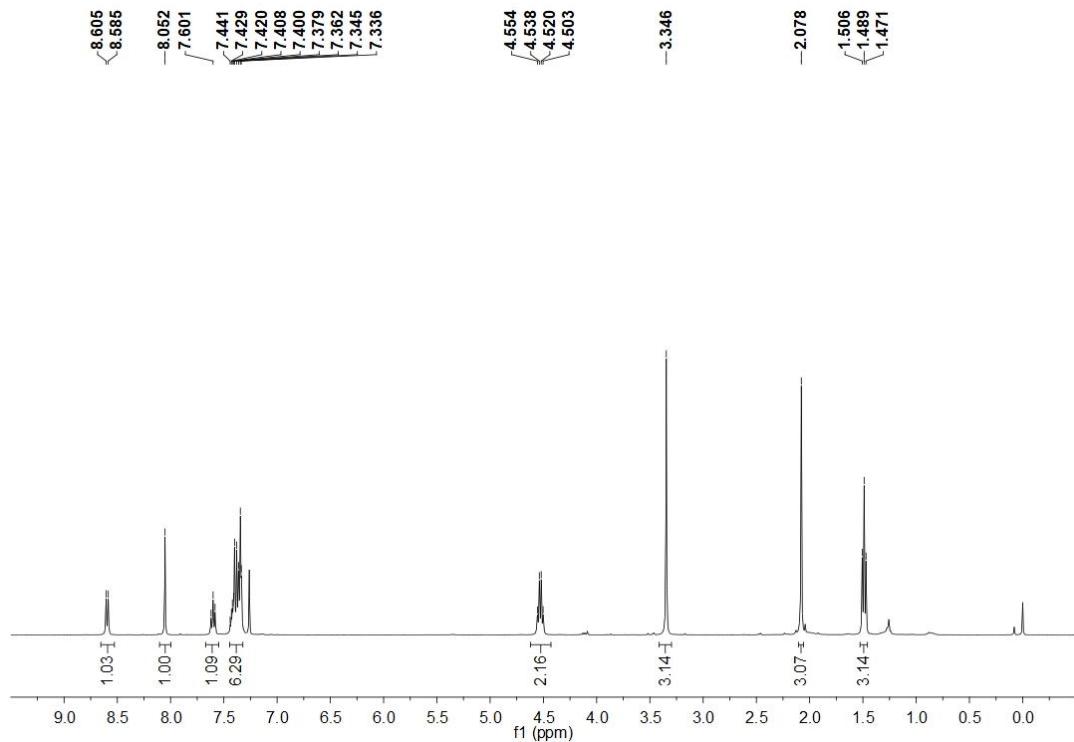
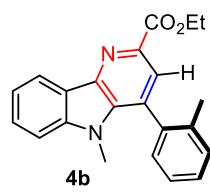
**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)

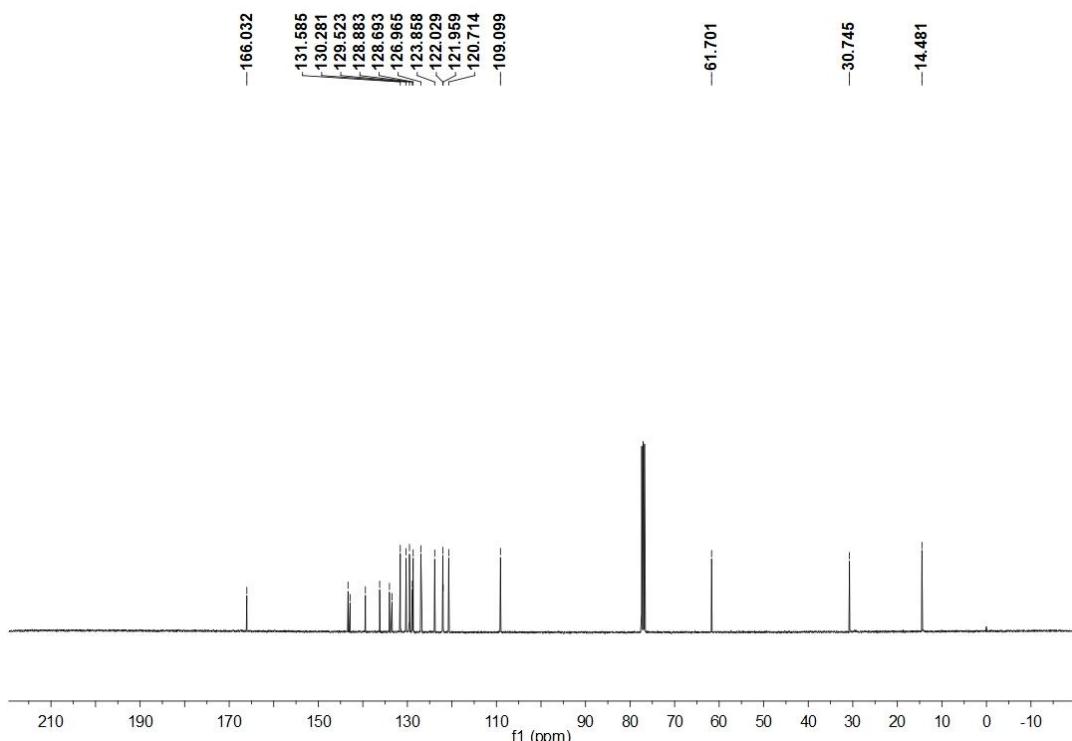
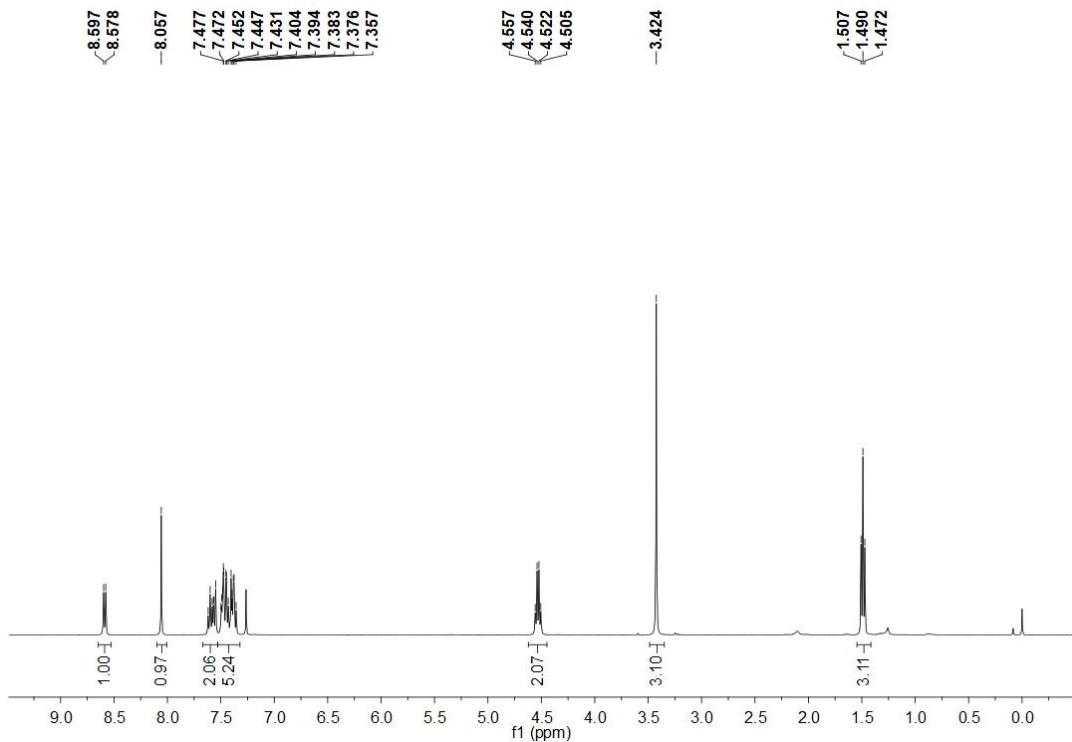
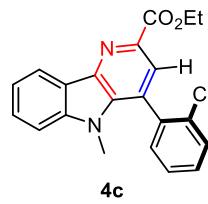


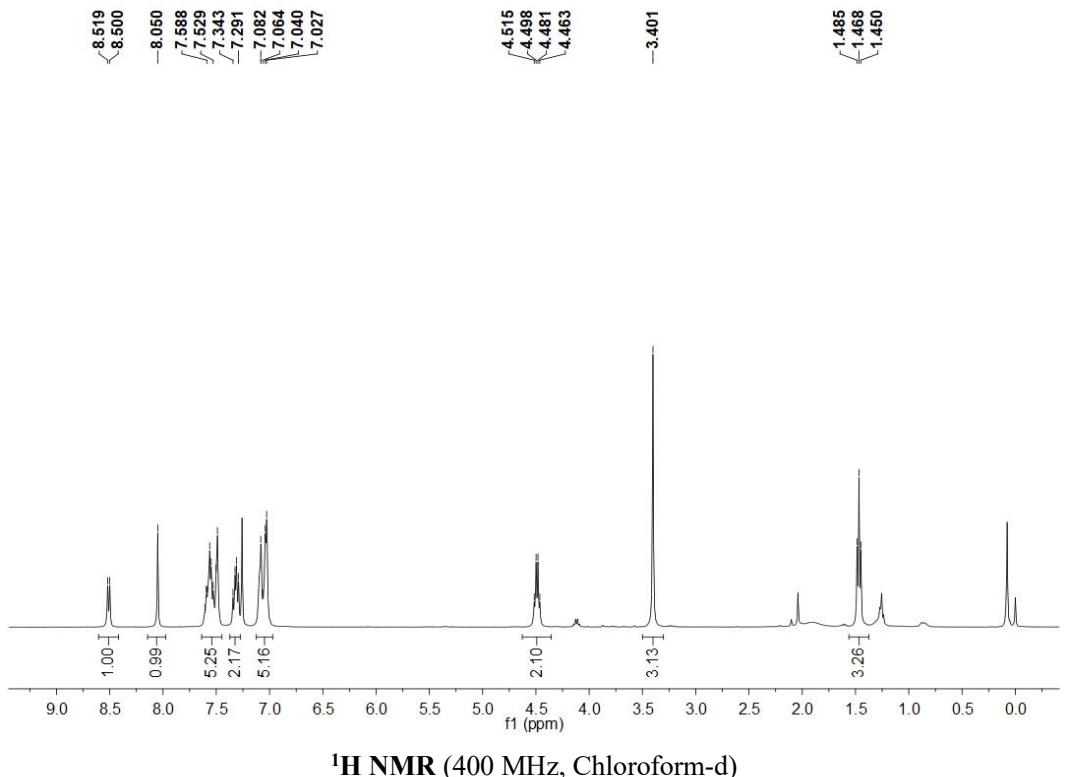
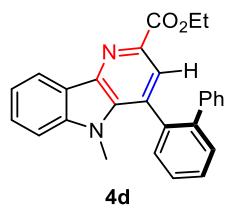


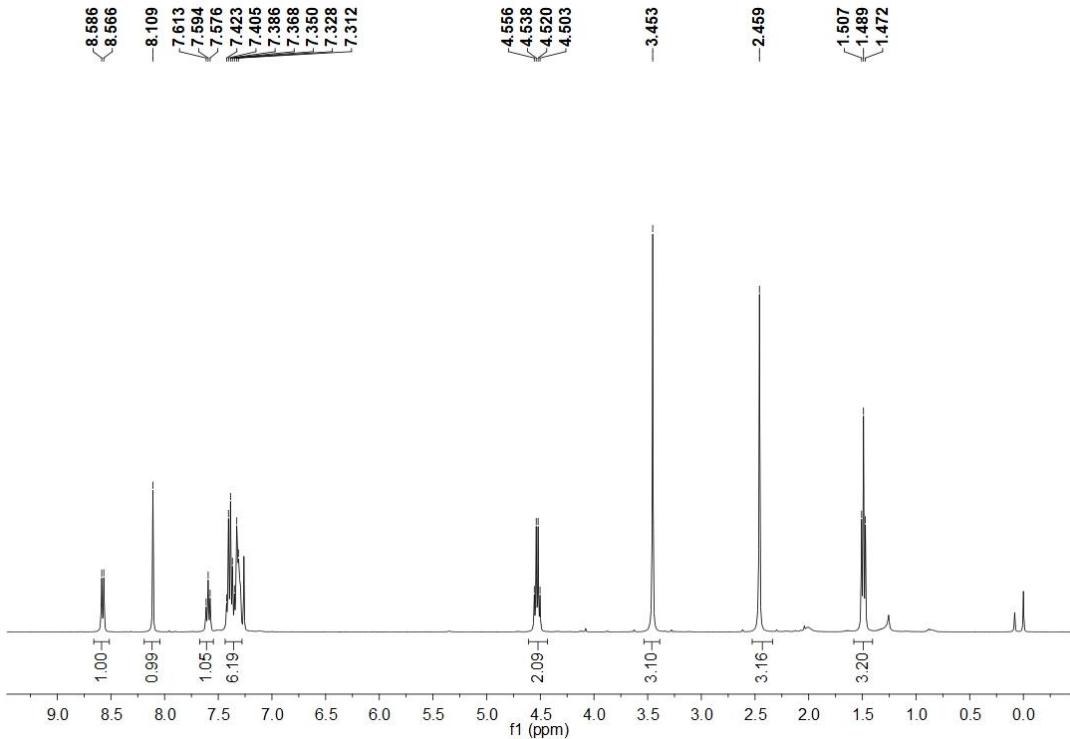
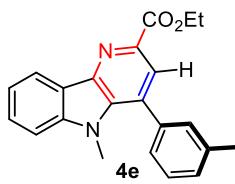




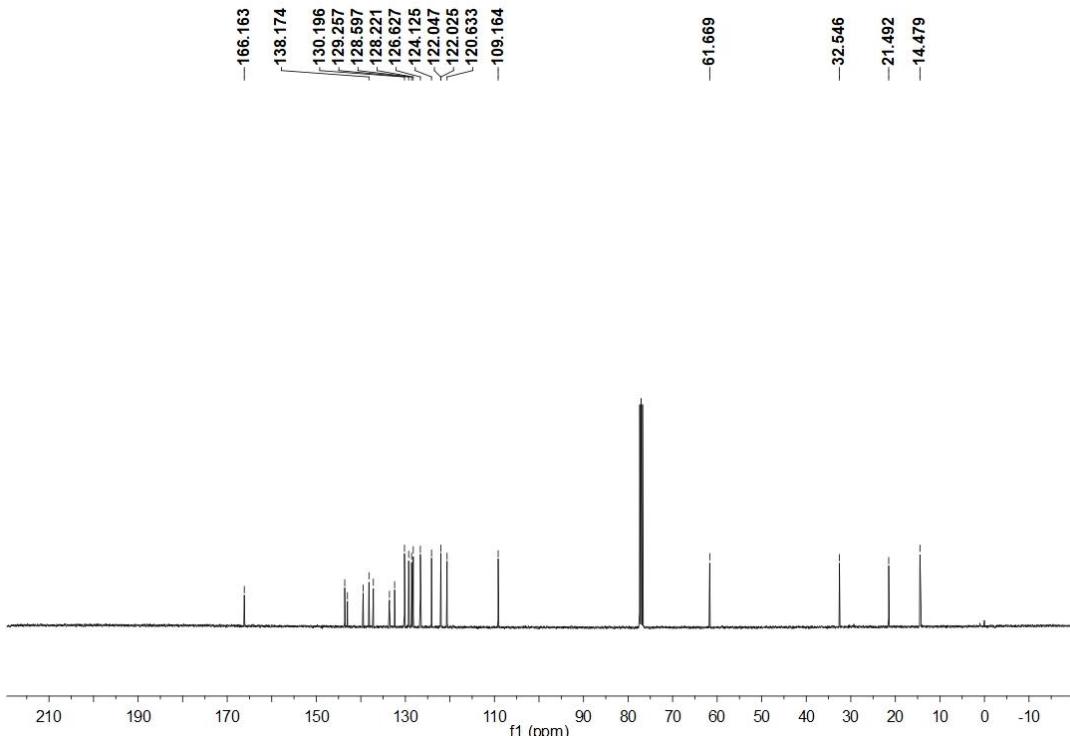




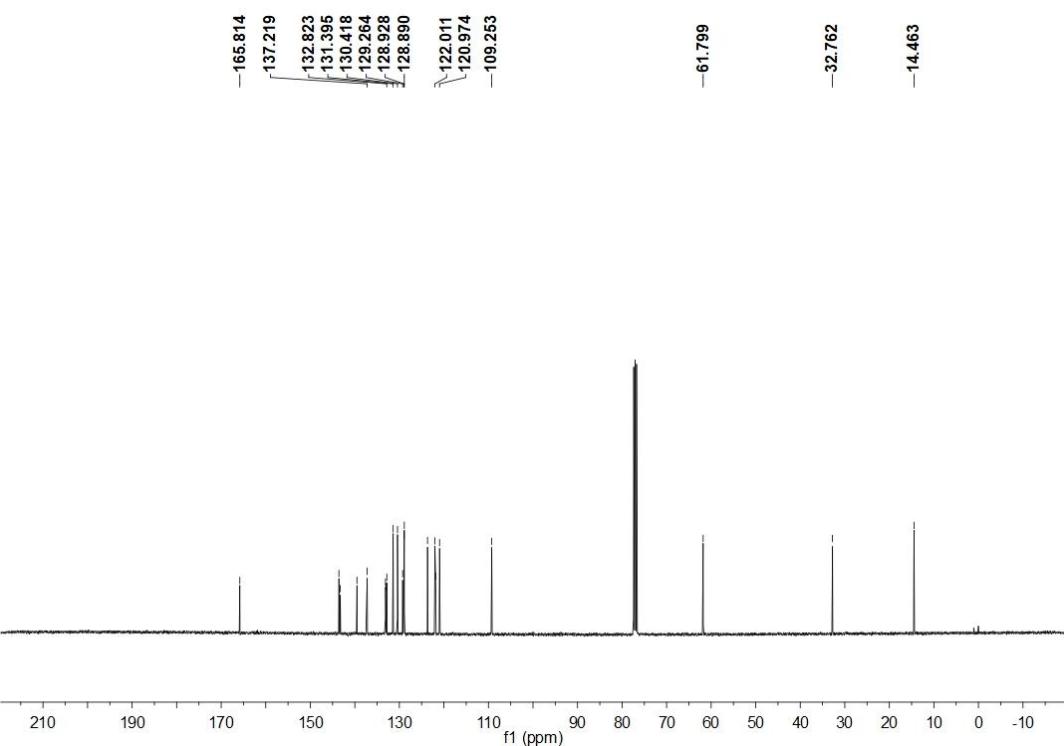
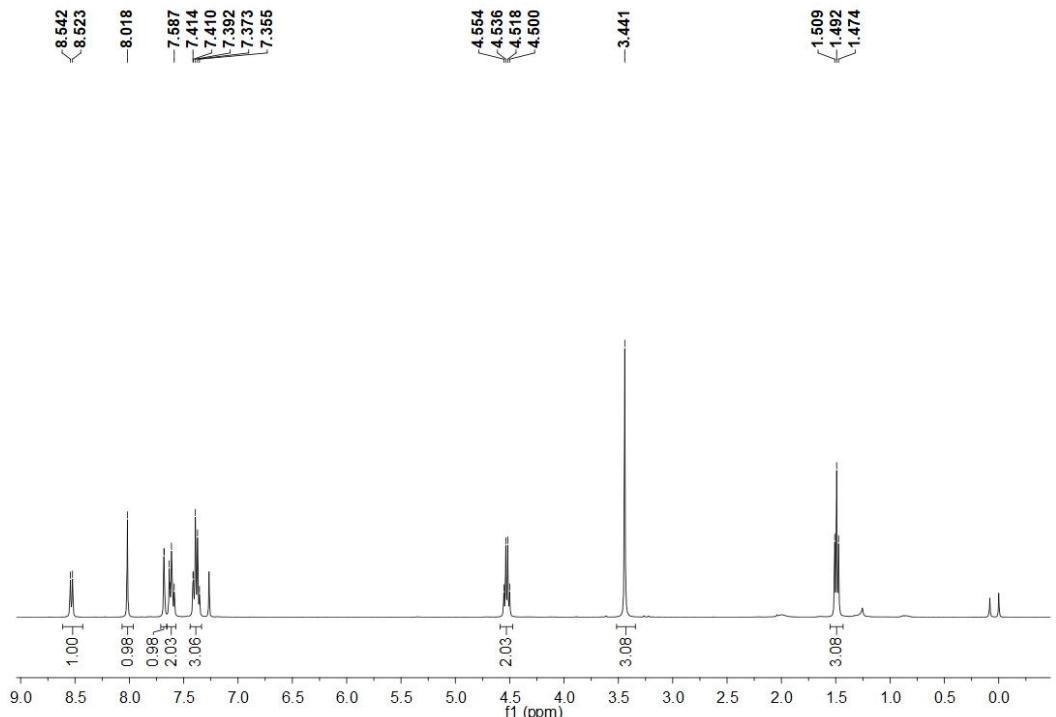
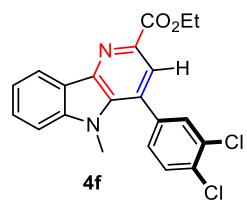


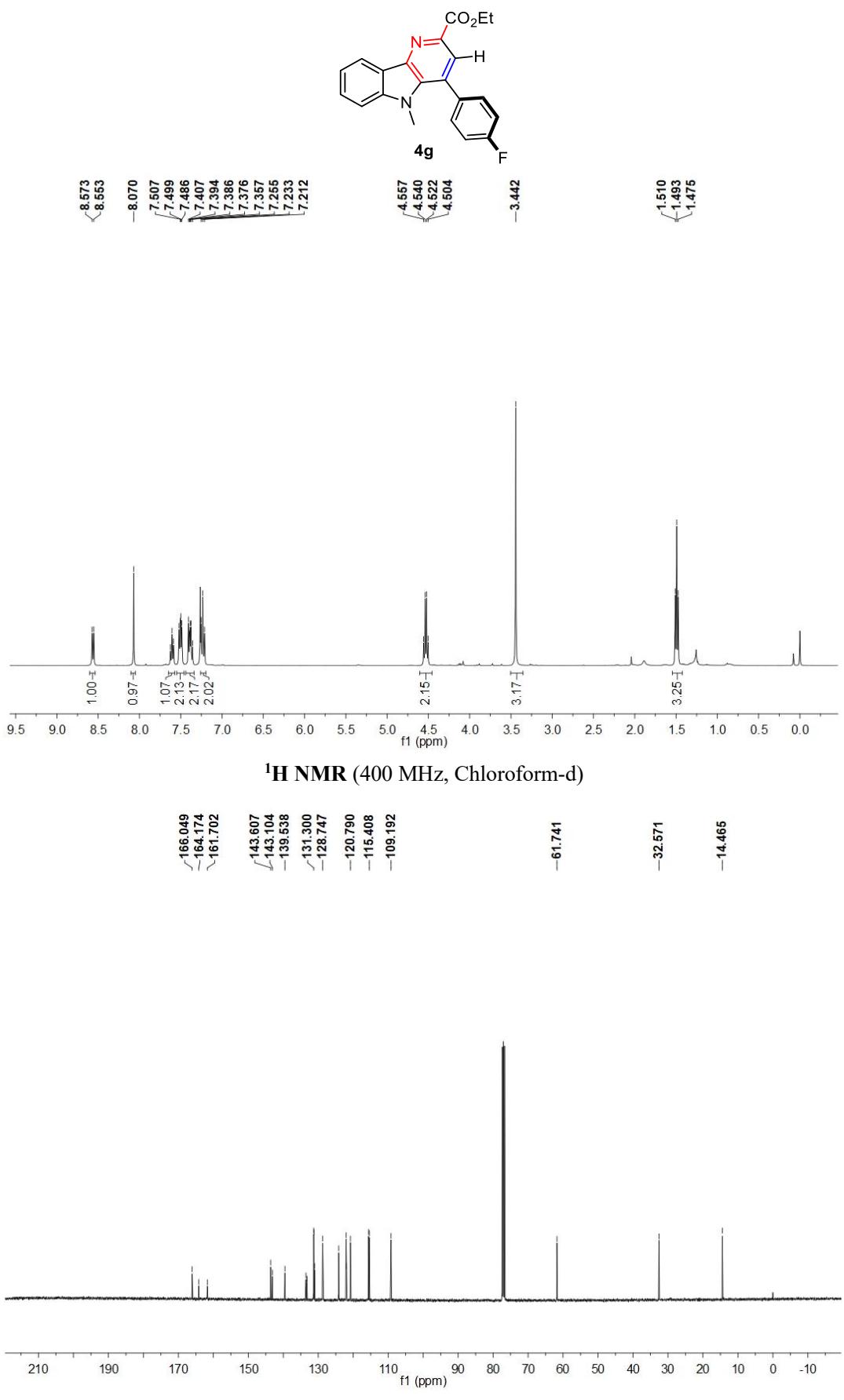


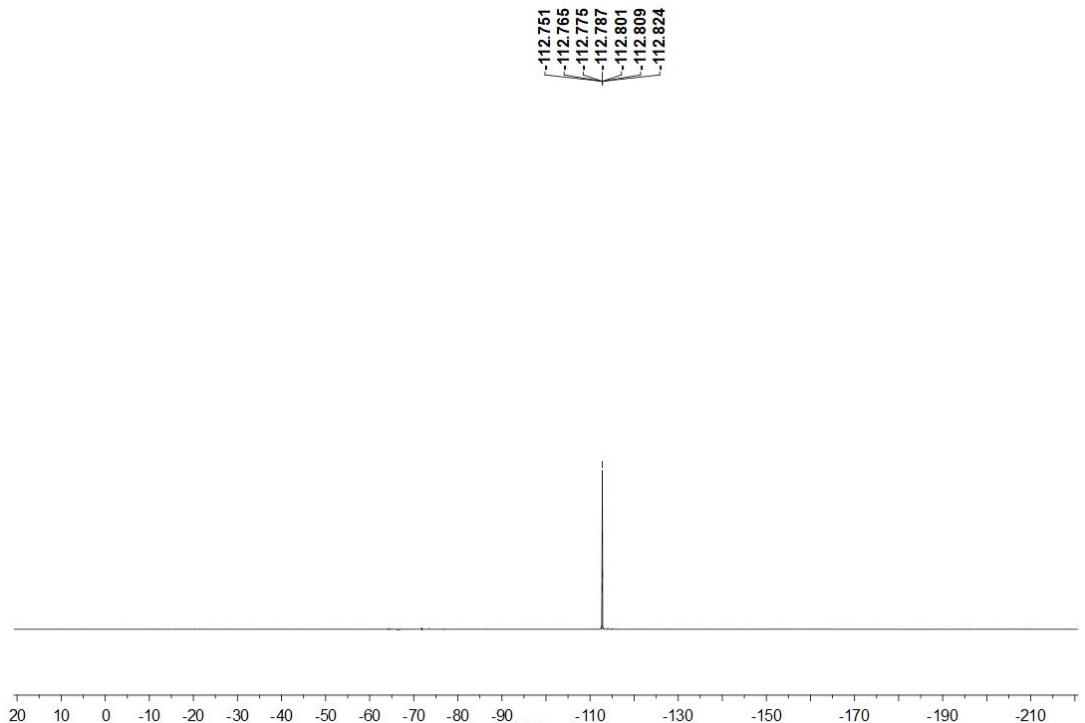
**<sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-d)**



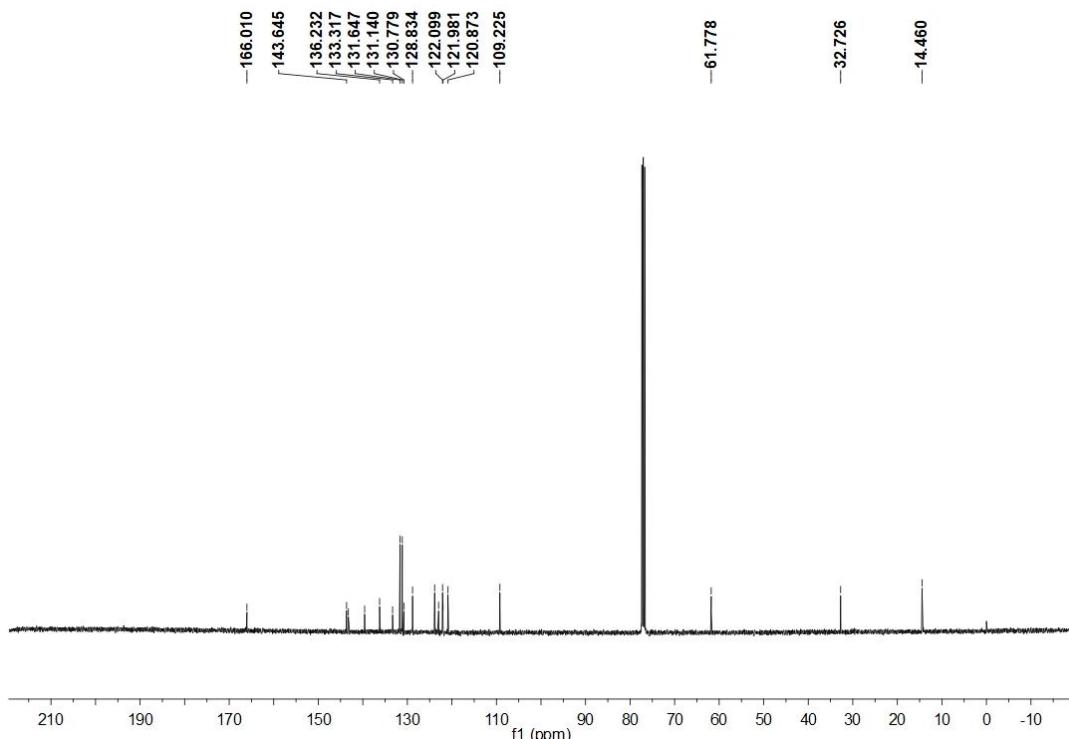
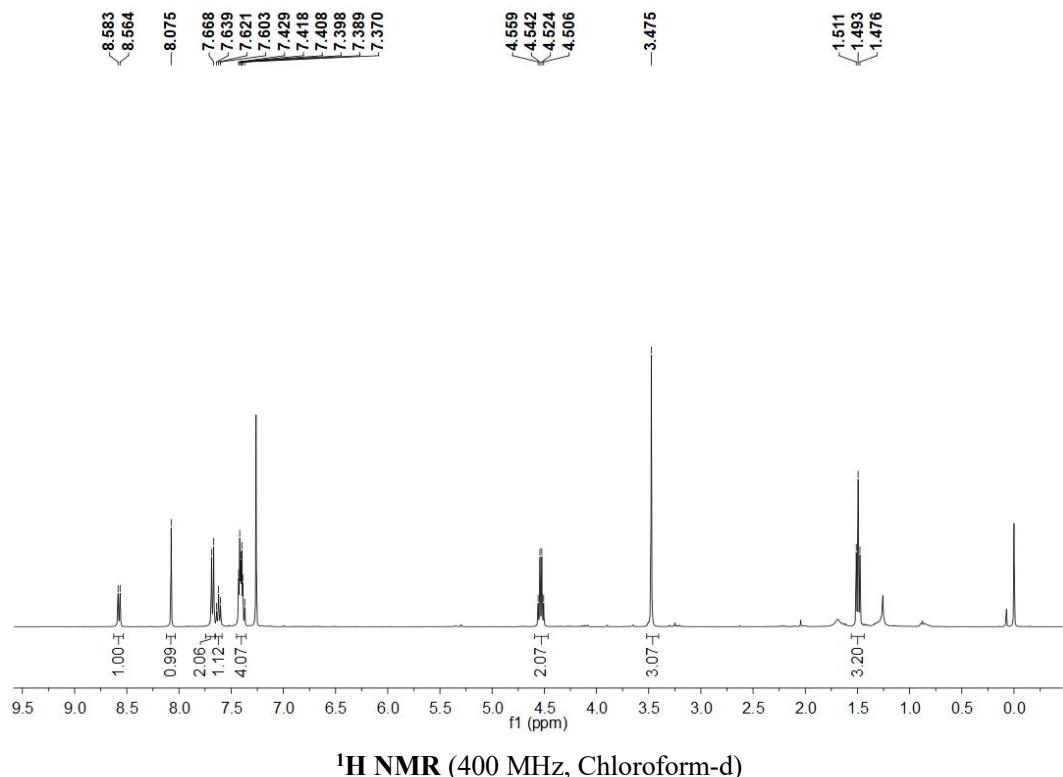
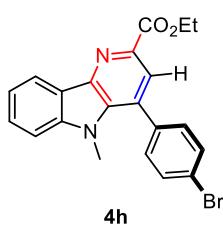
**<sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)**

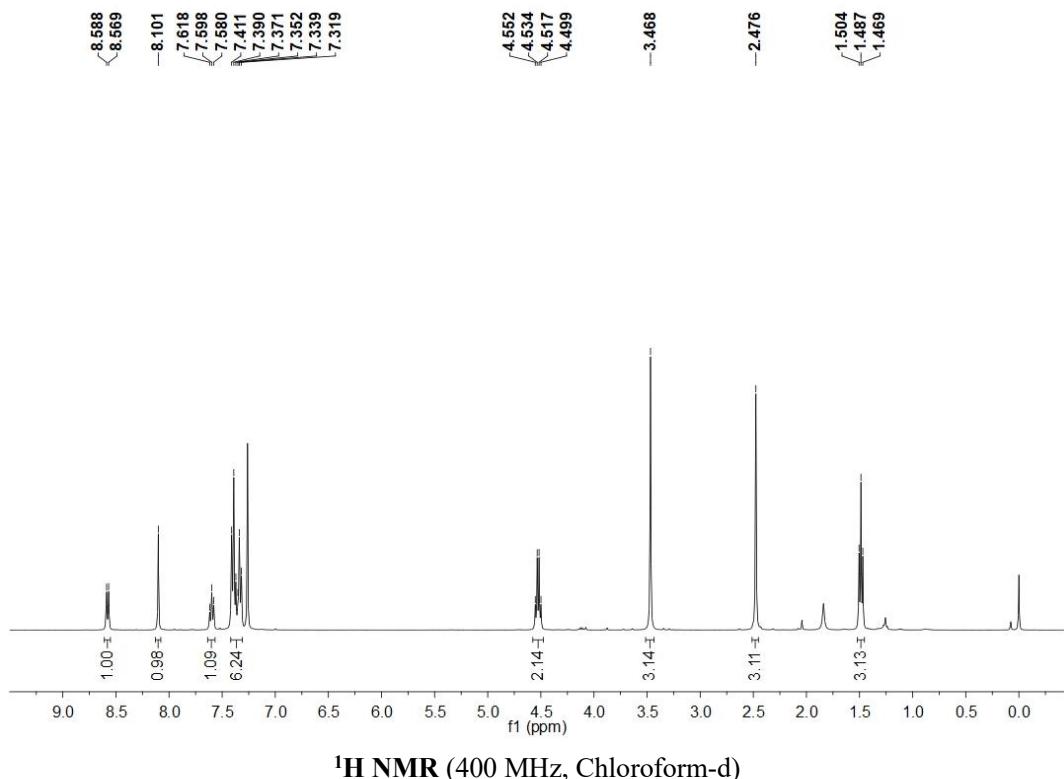
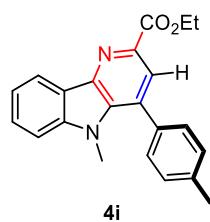




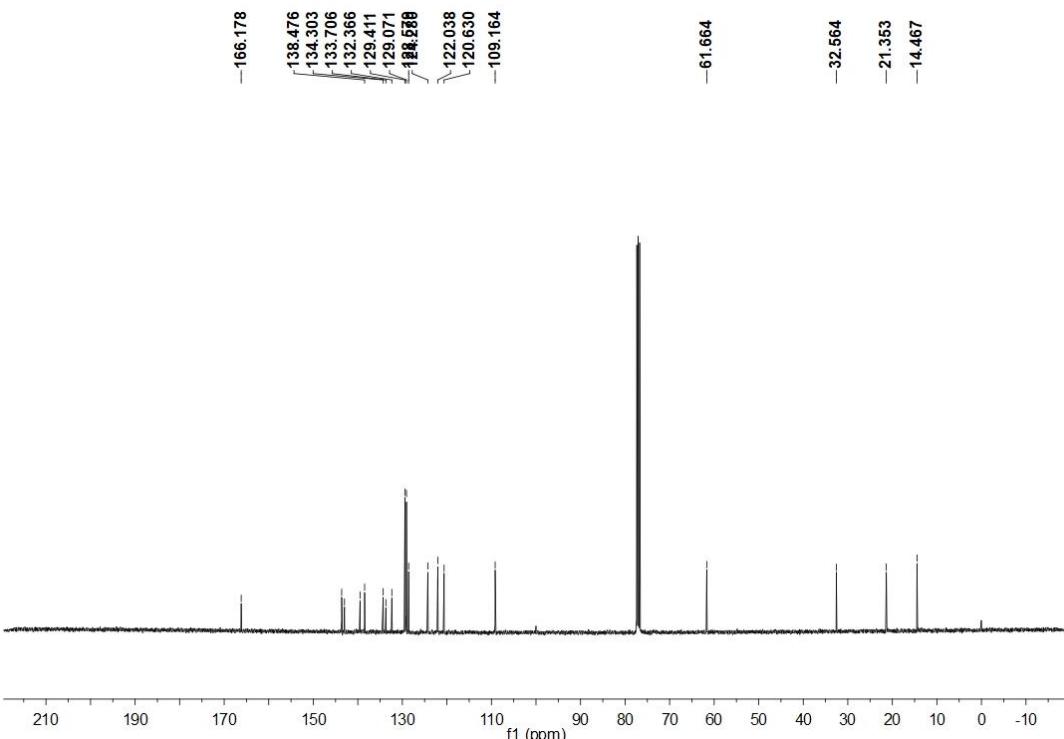


$^{19}\text{F}$  NMR (376 MHz, Chloroform-d)

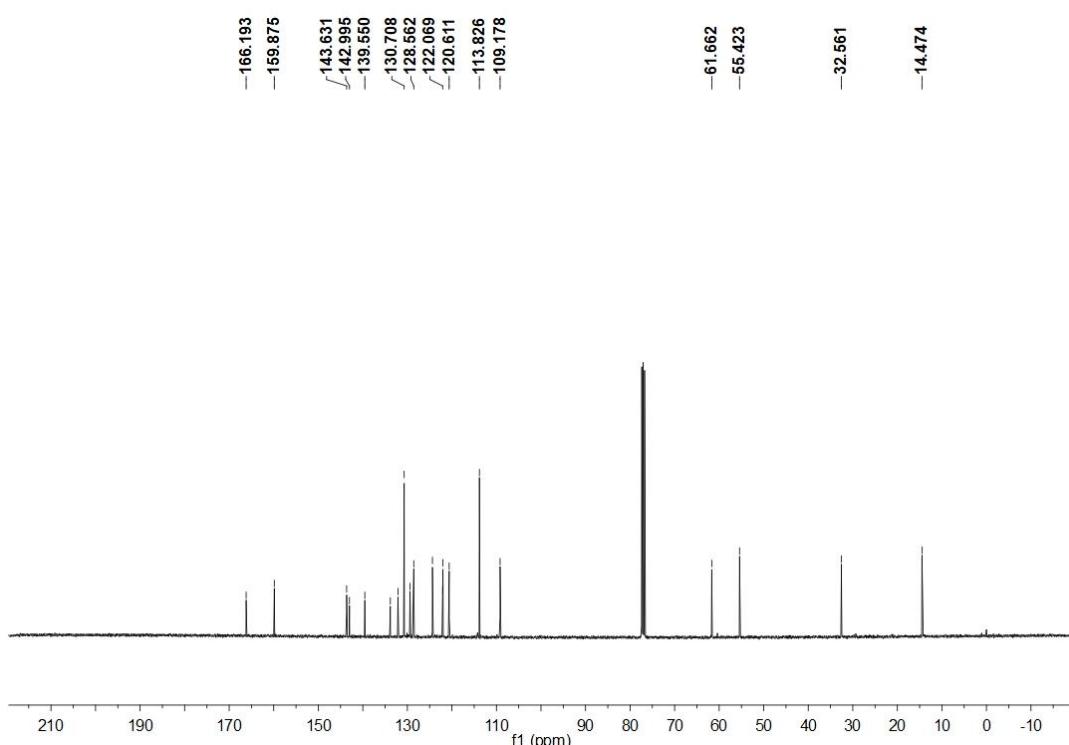
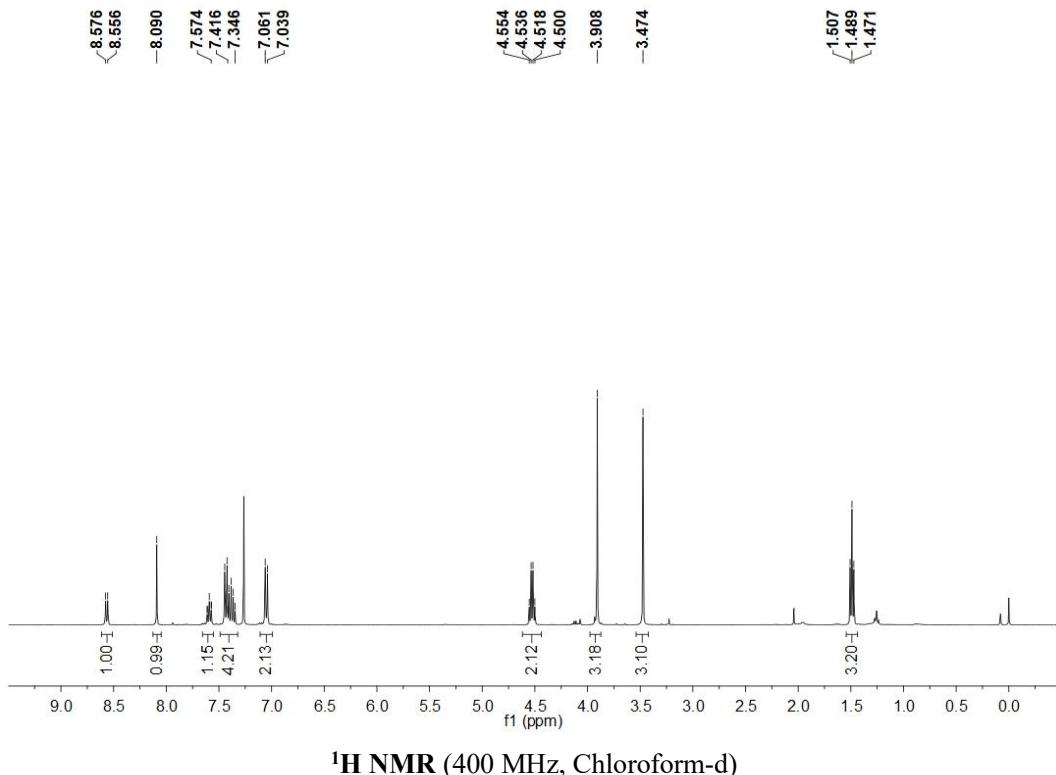
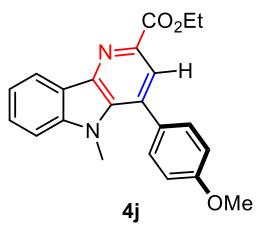




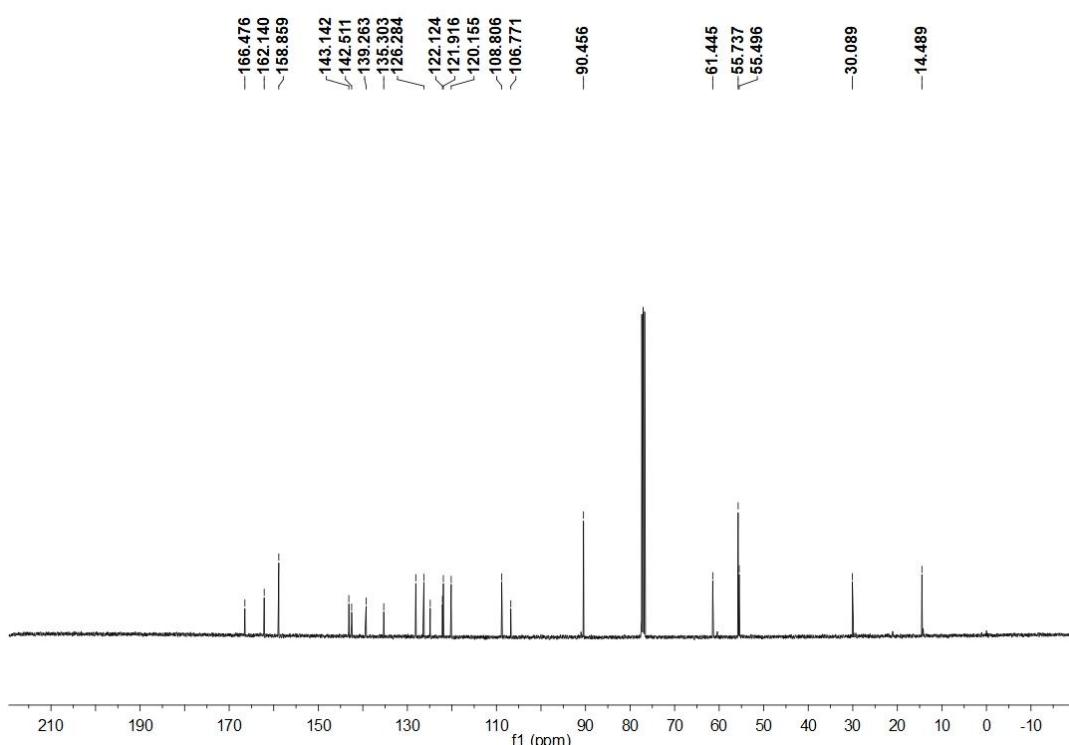
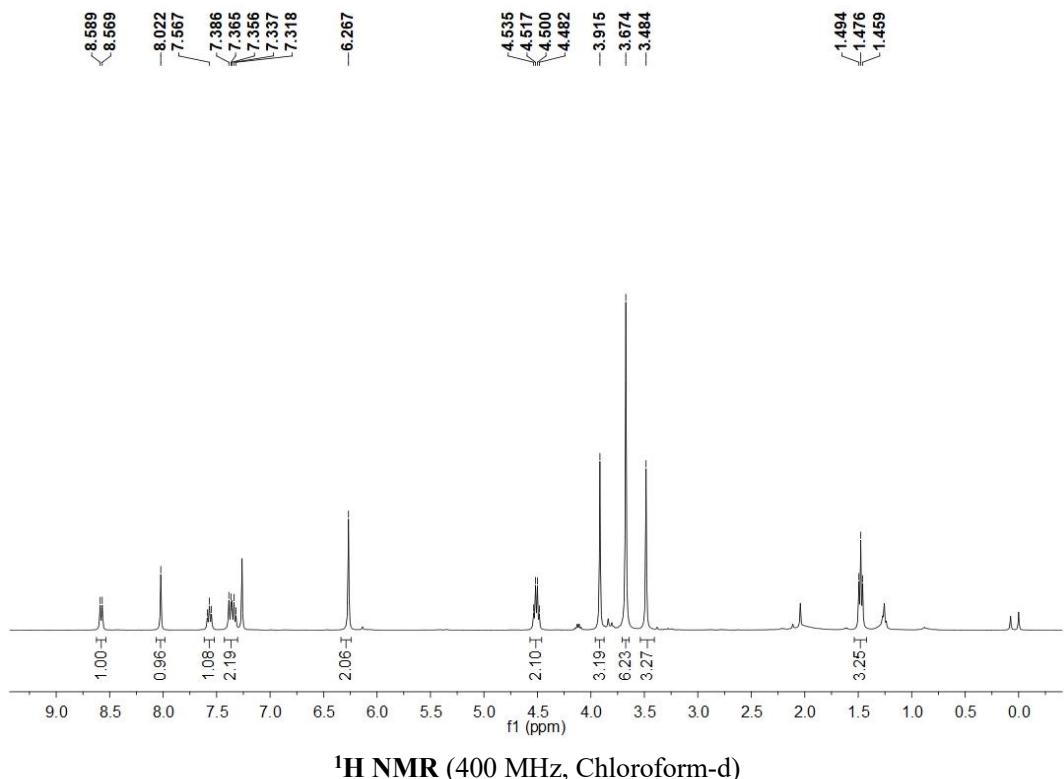
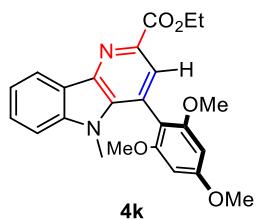
**1H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d)

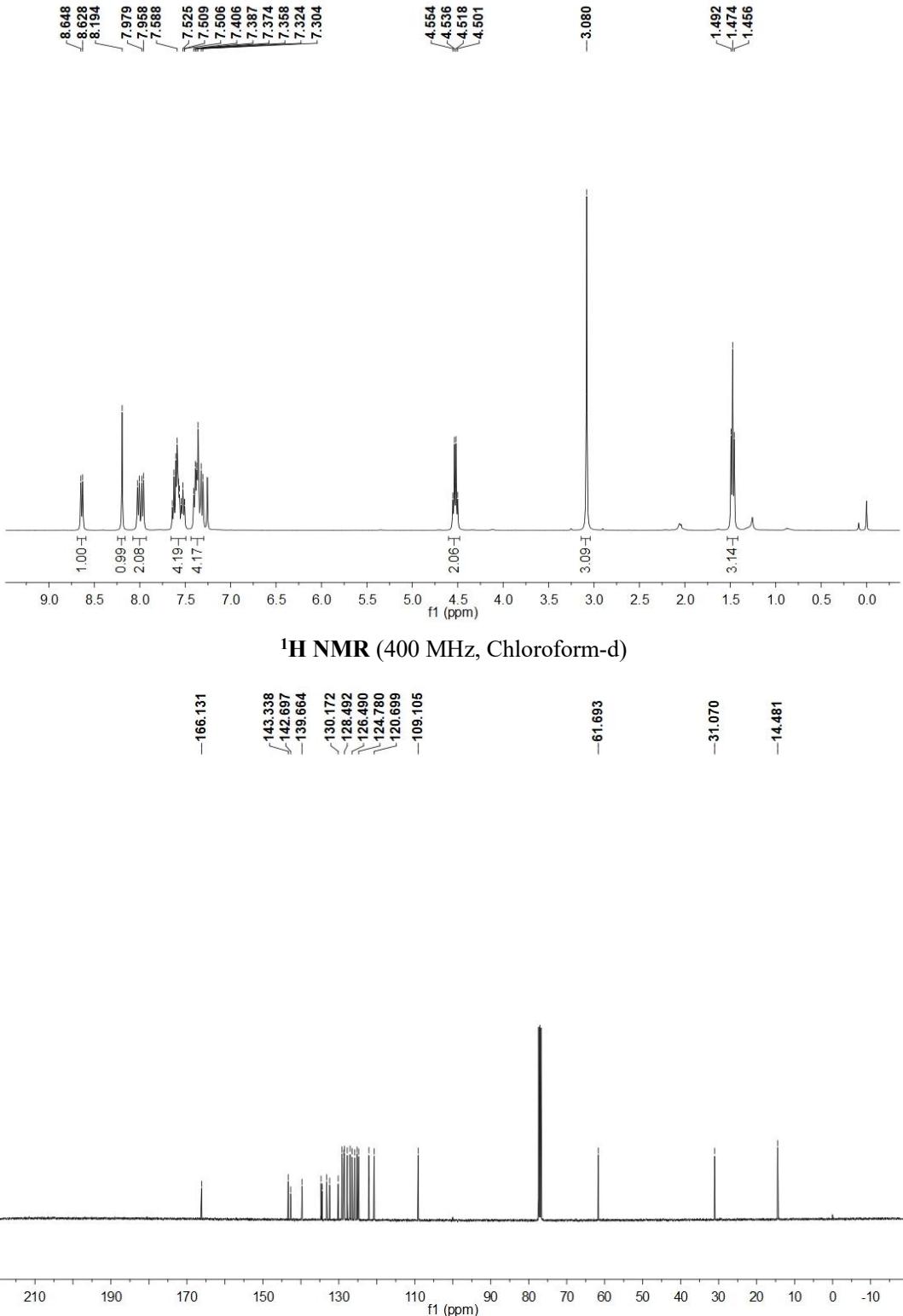
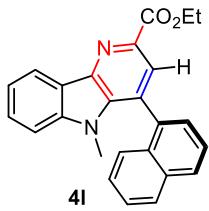


**13C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)

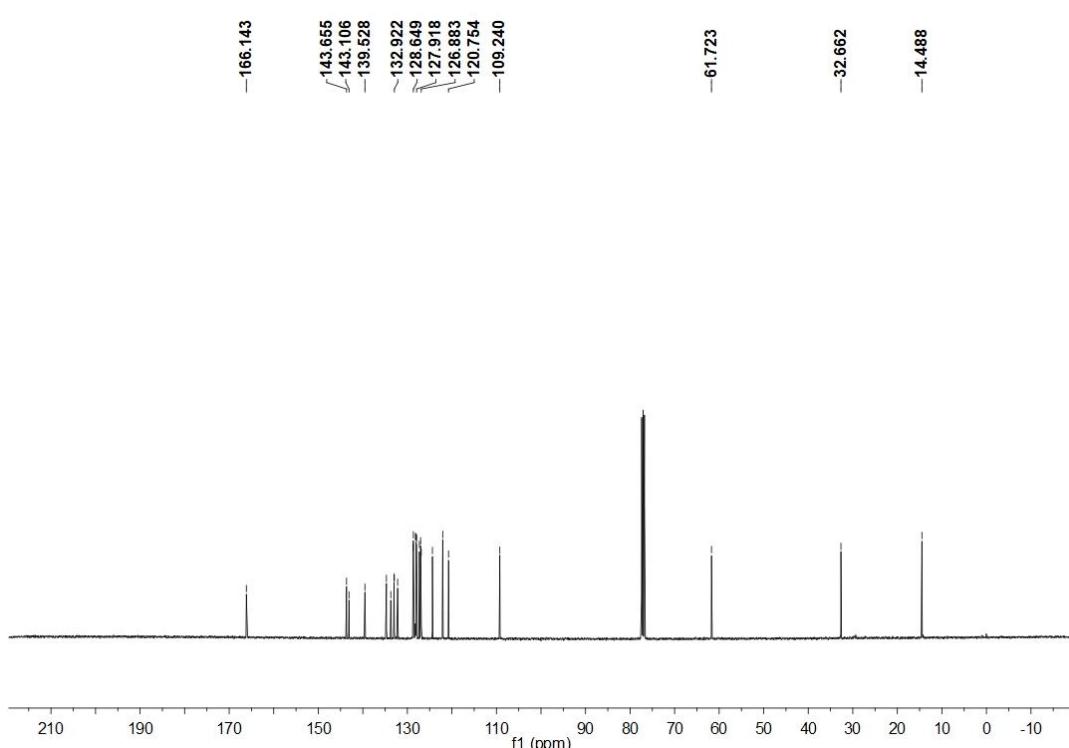
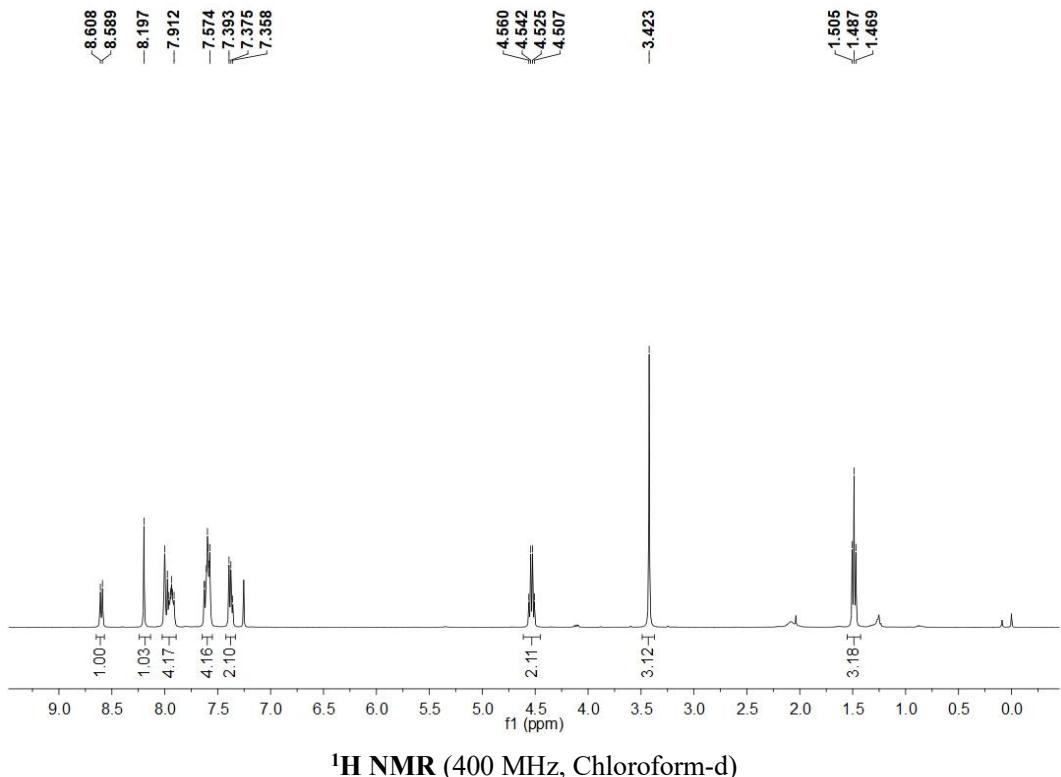
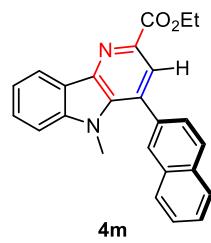


**<sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)**

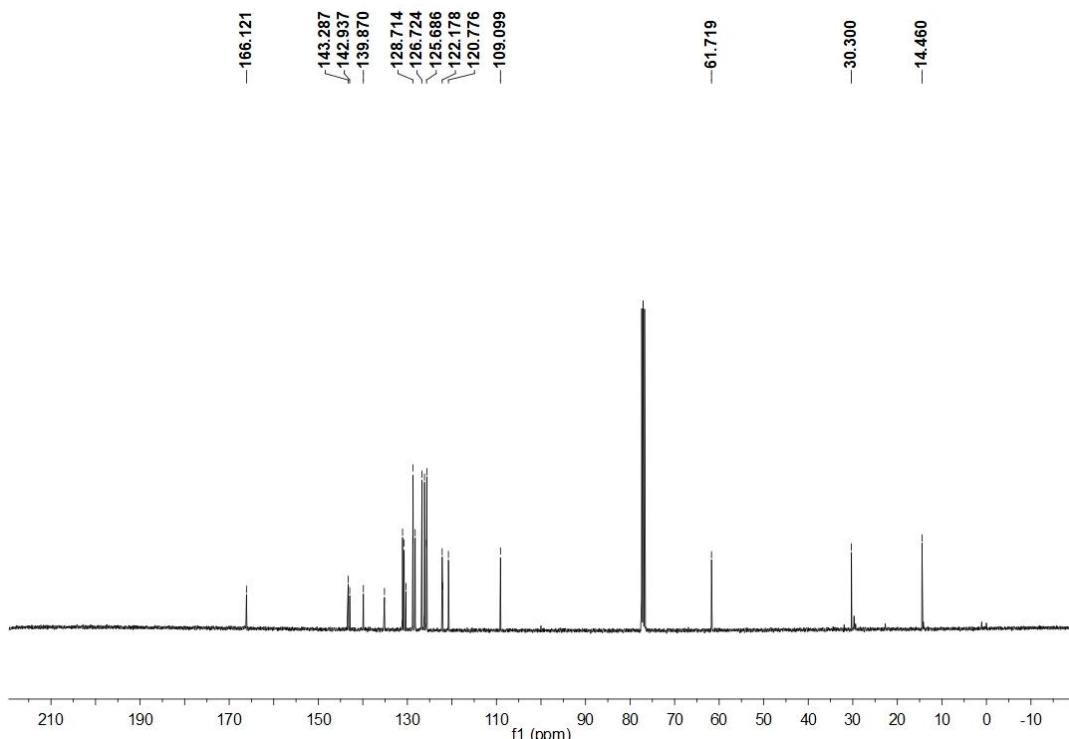
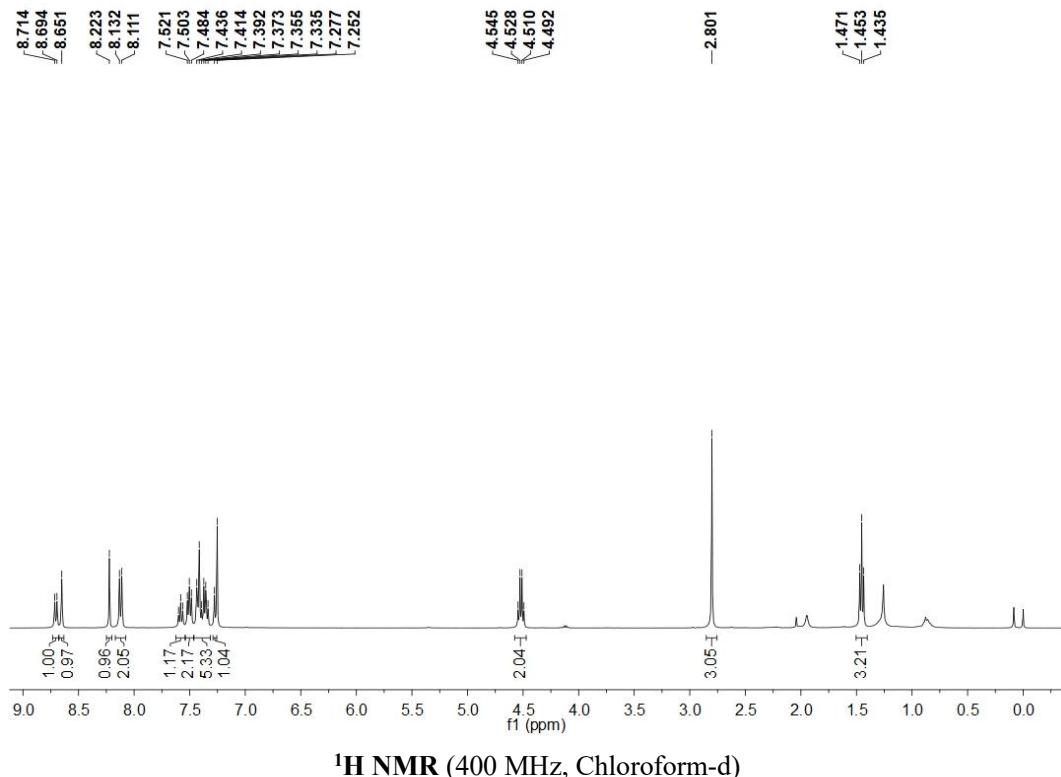
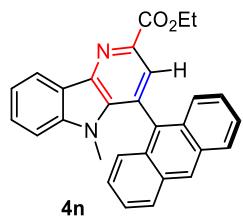


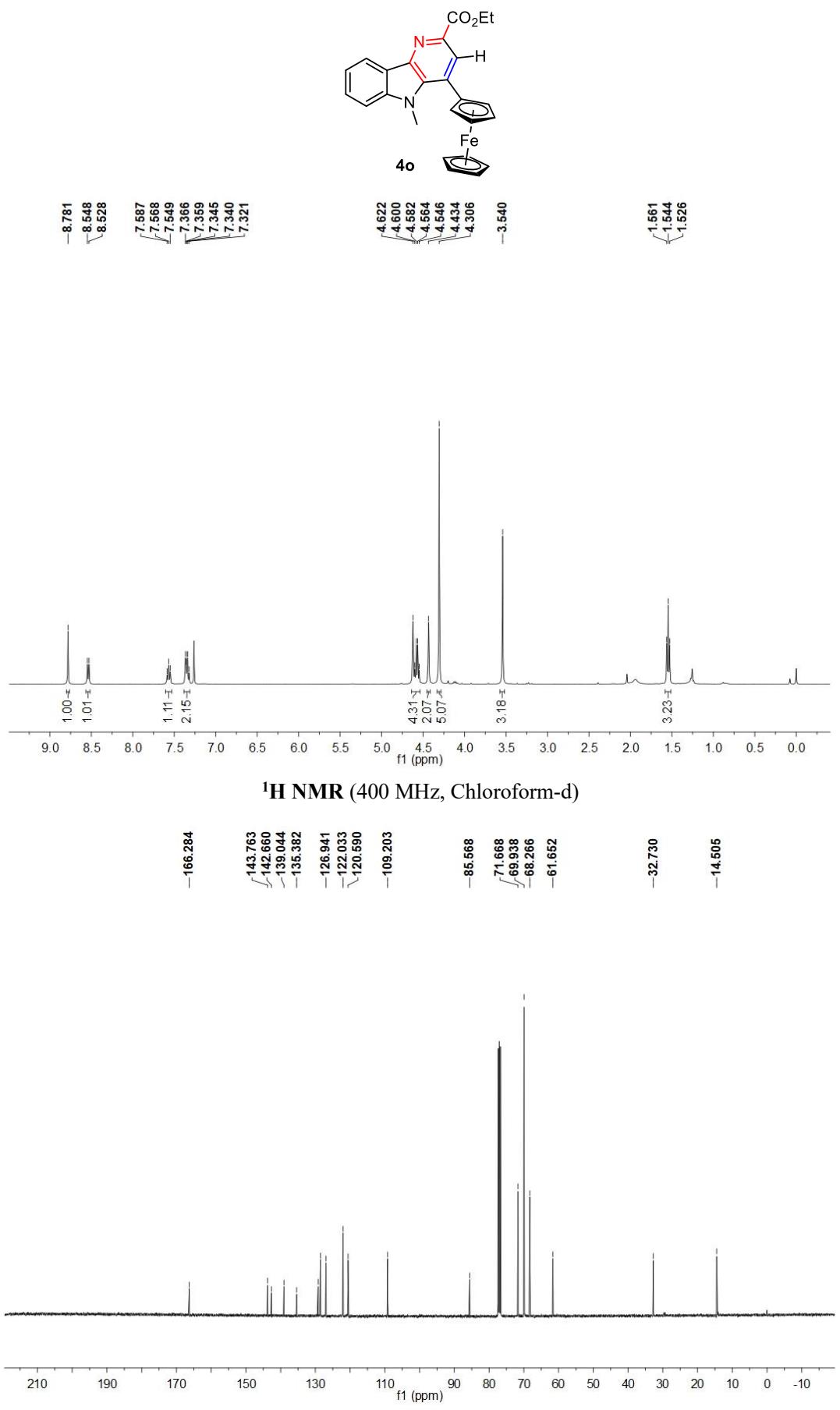


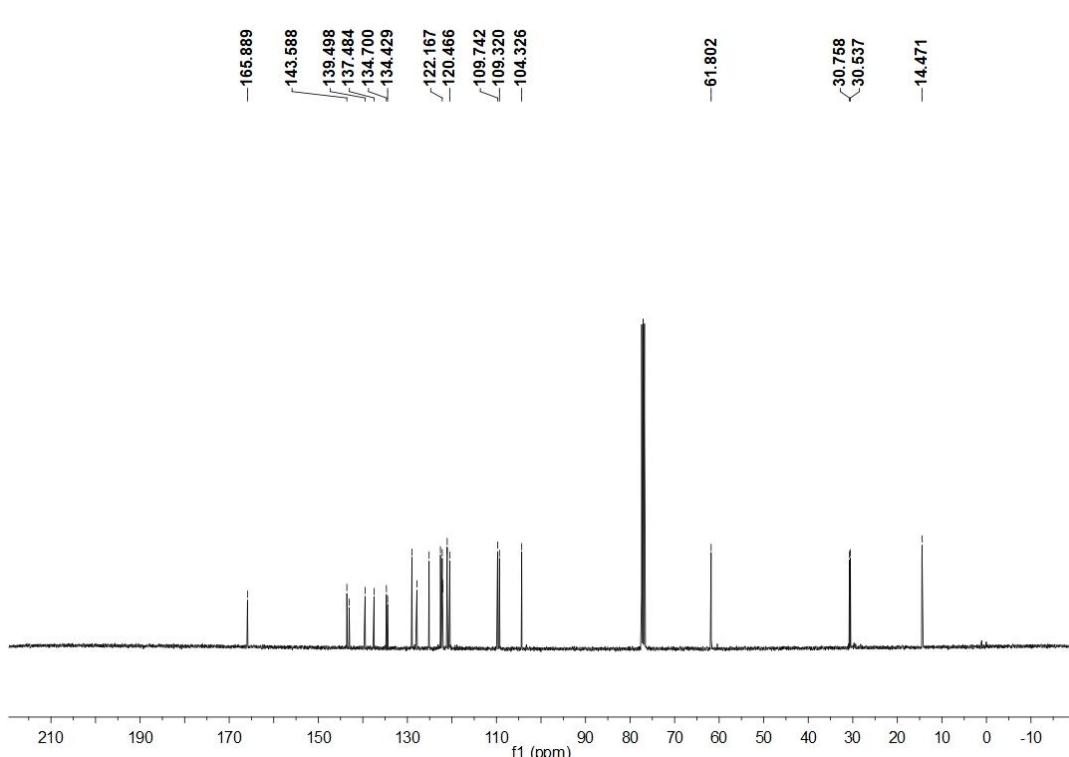
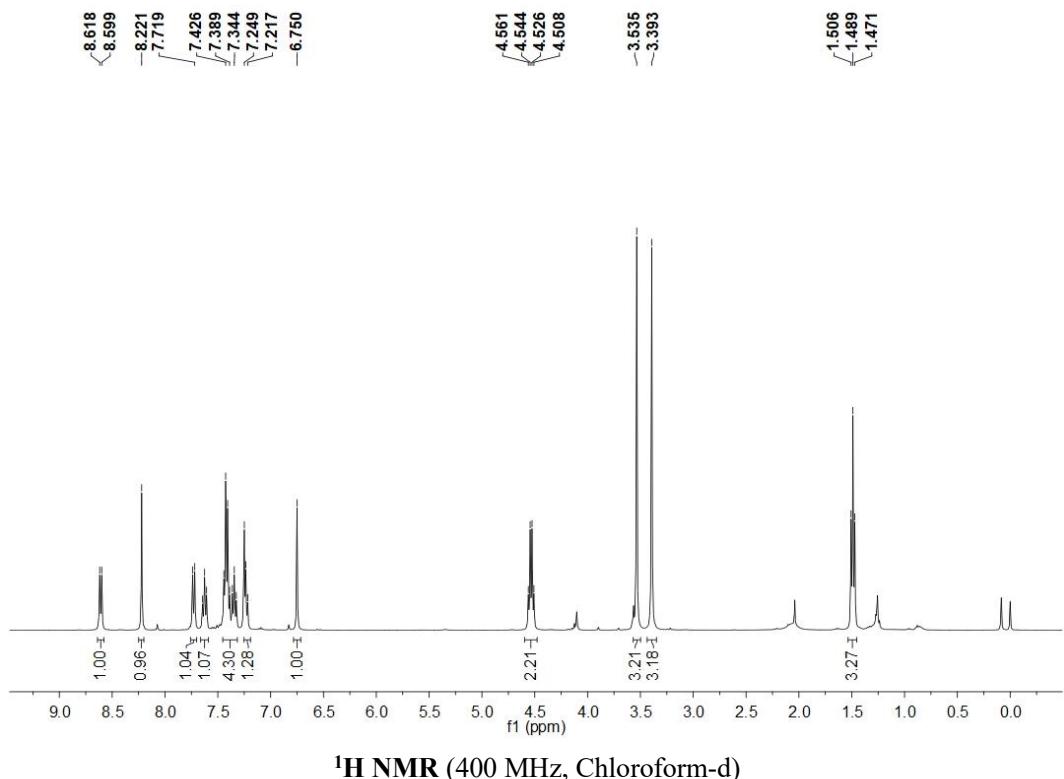
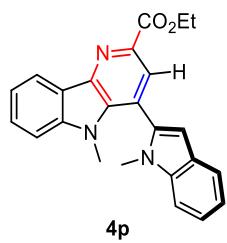
**<sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)**

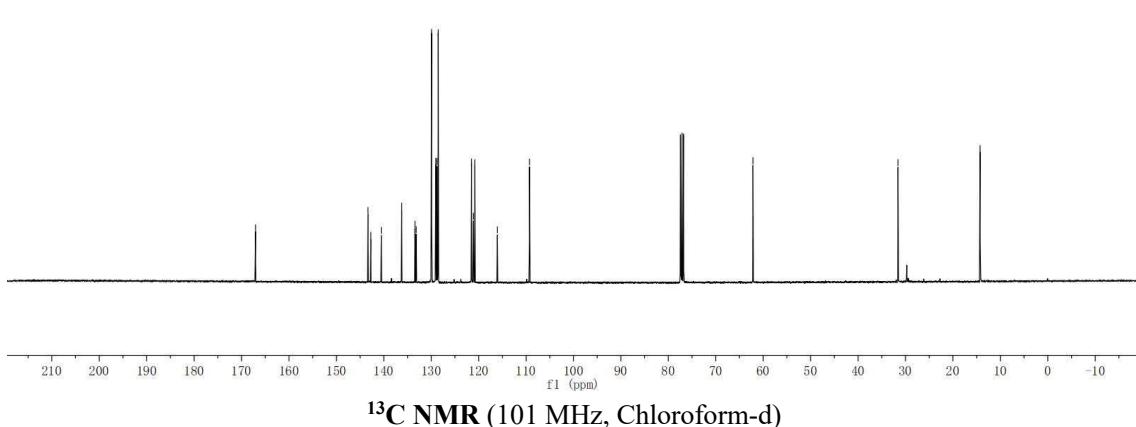
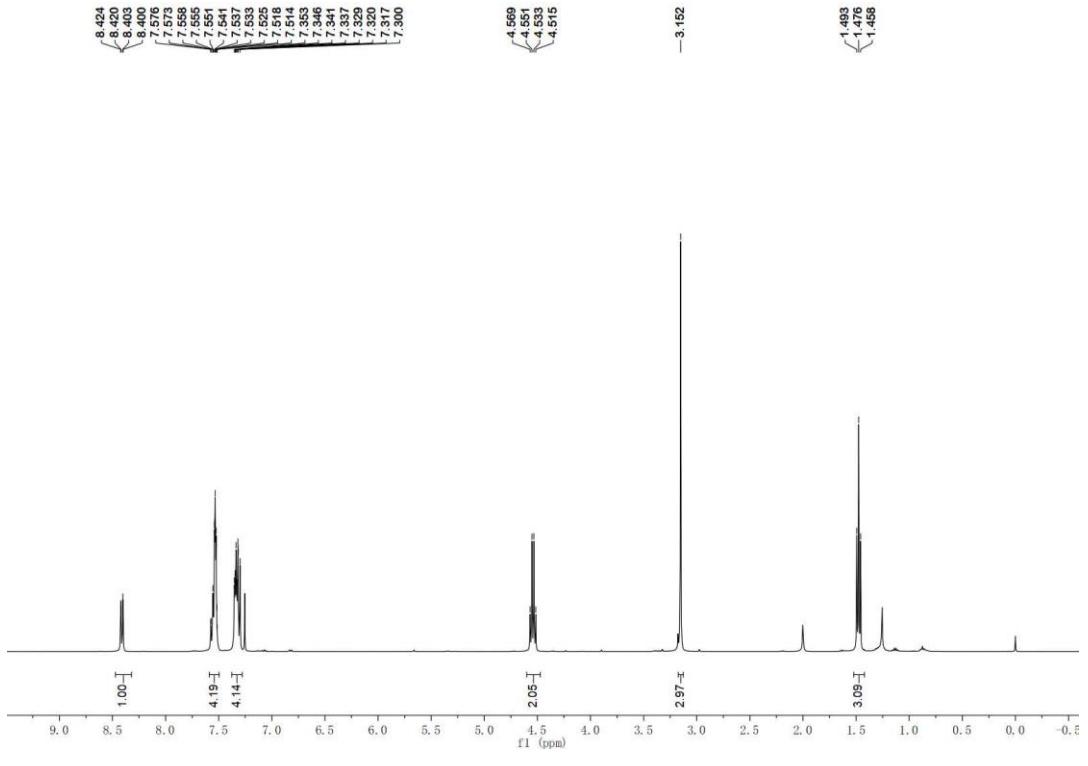
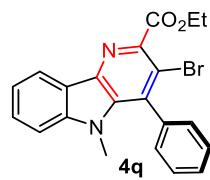


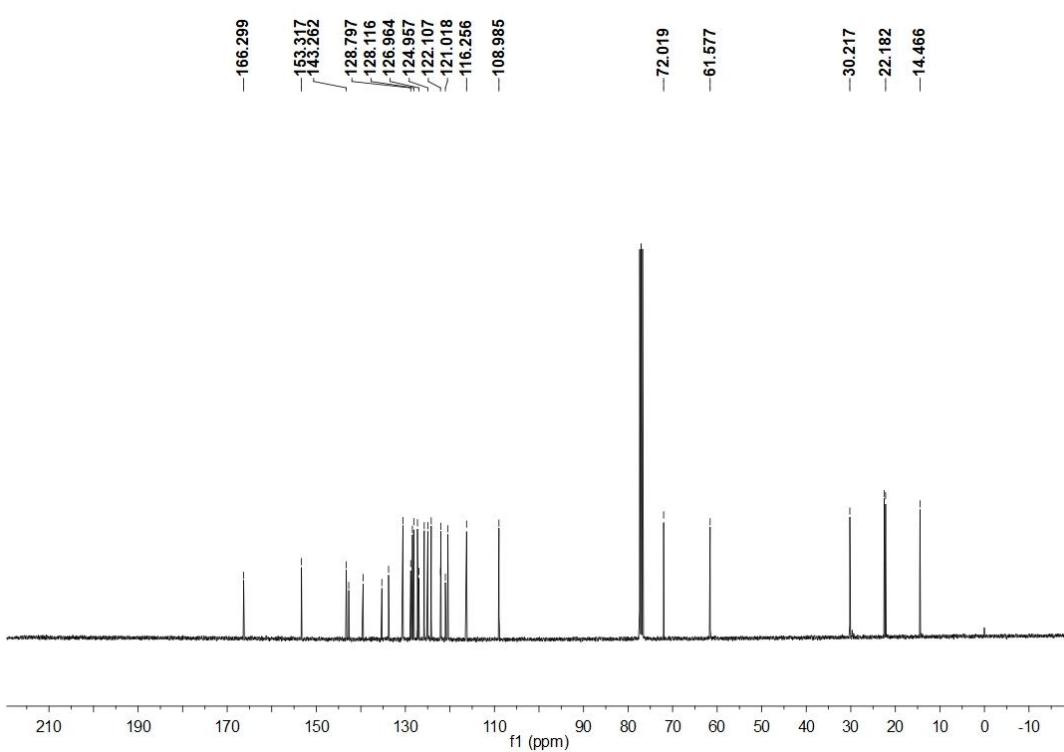
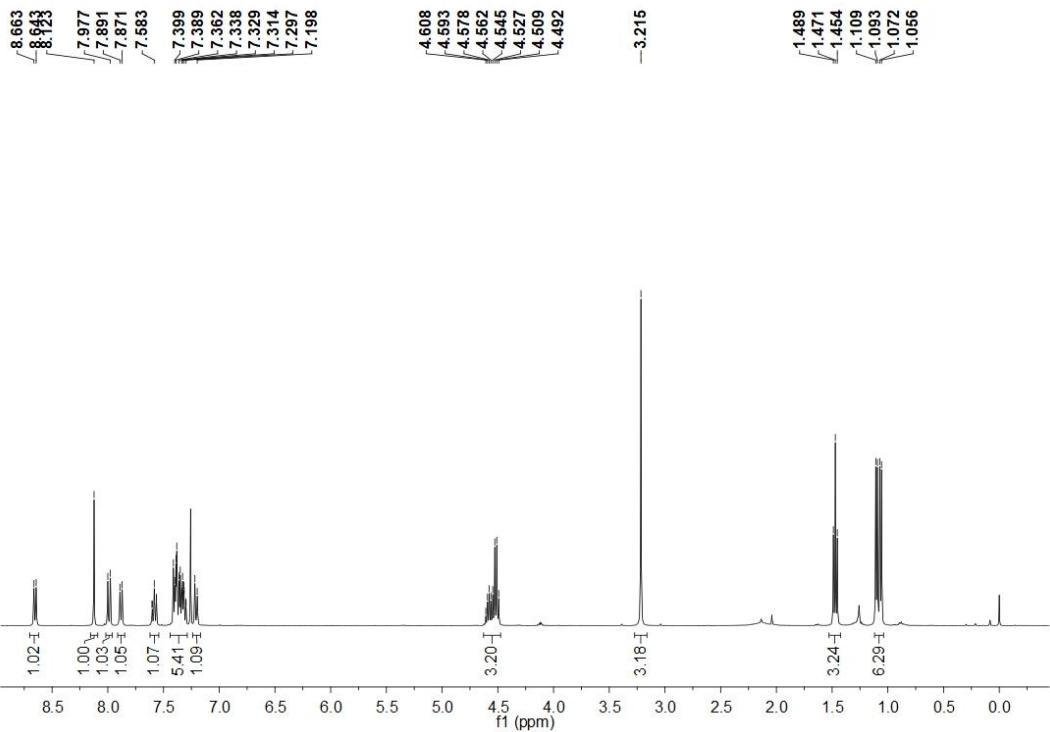
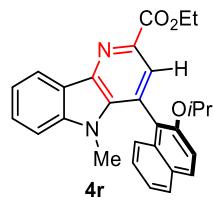
**<sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)**

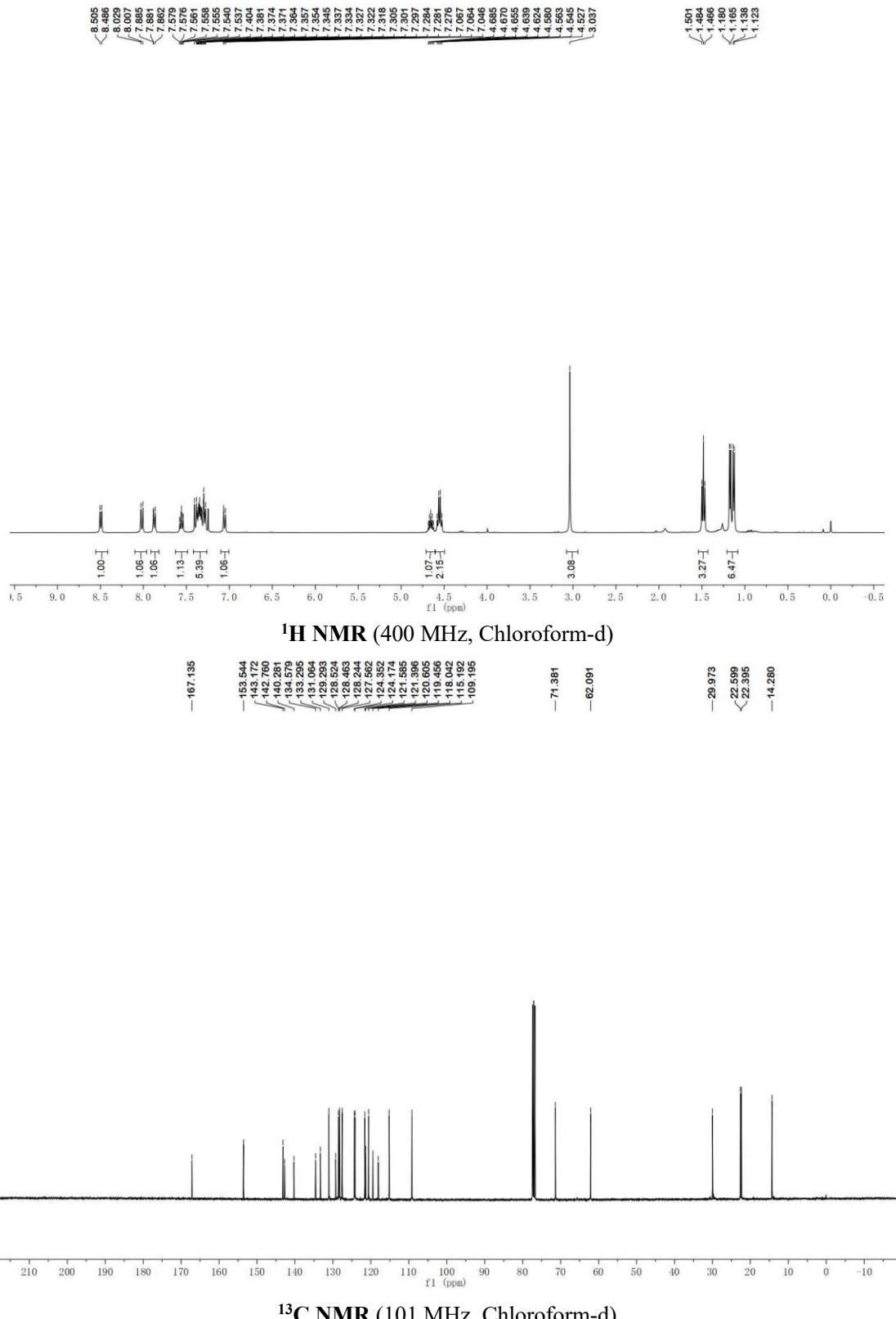
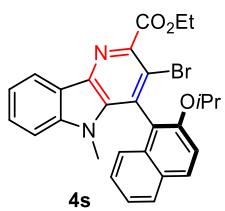


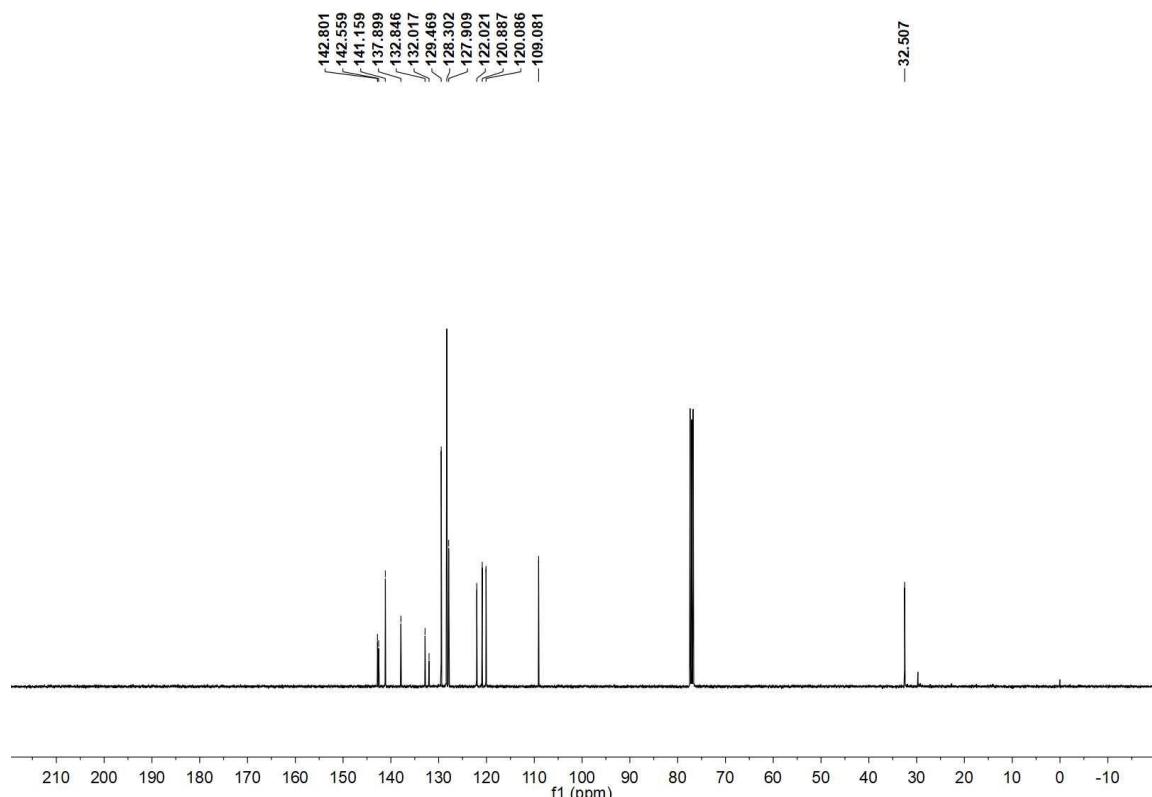
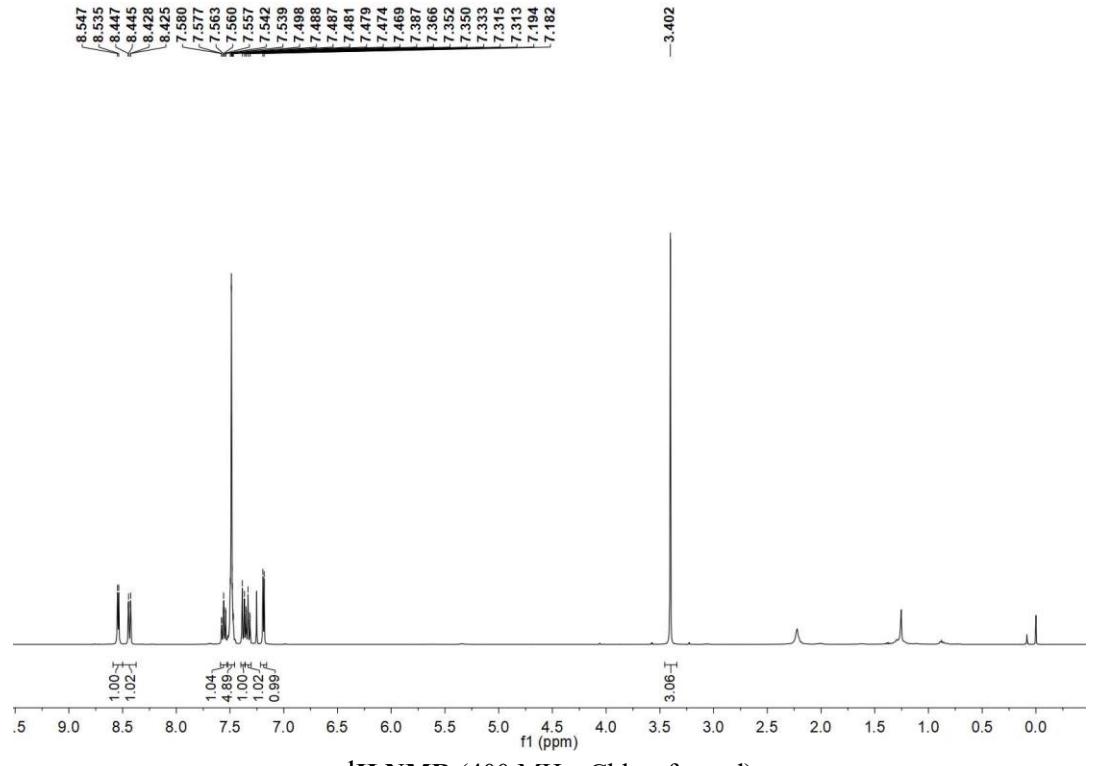
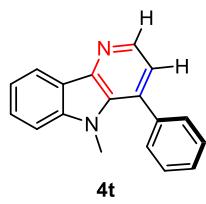




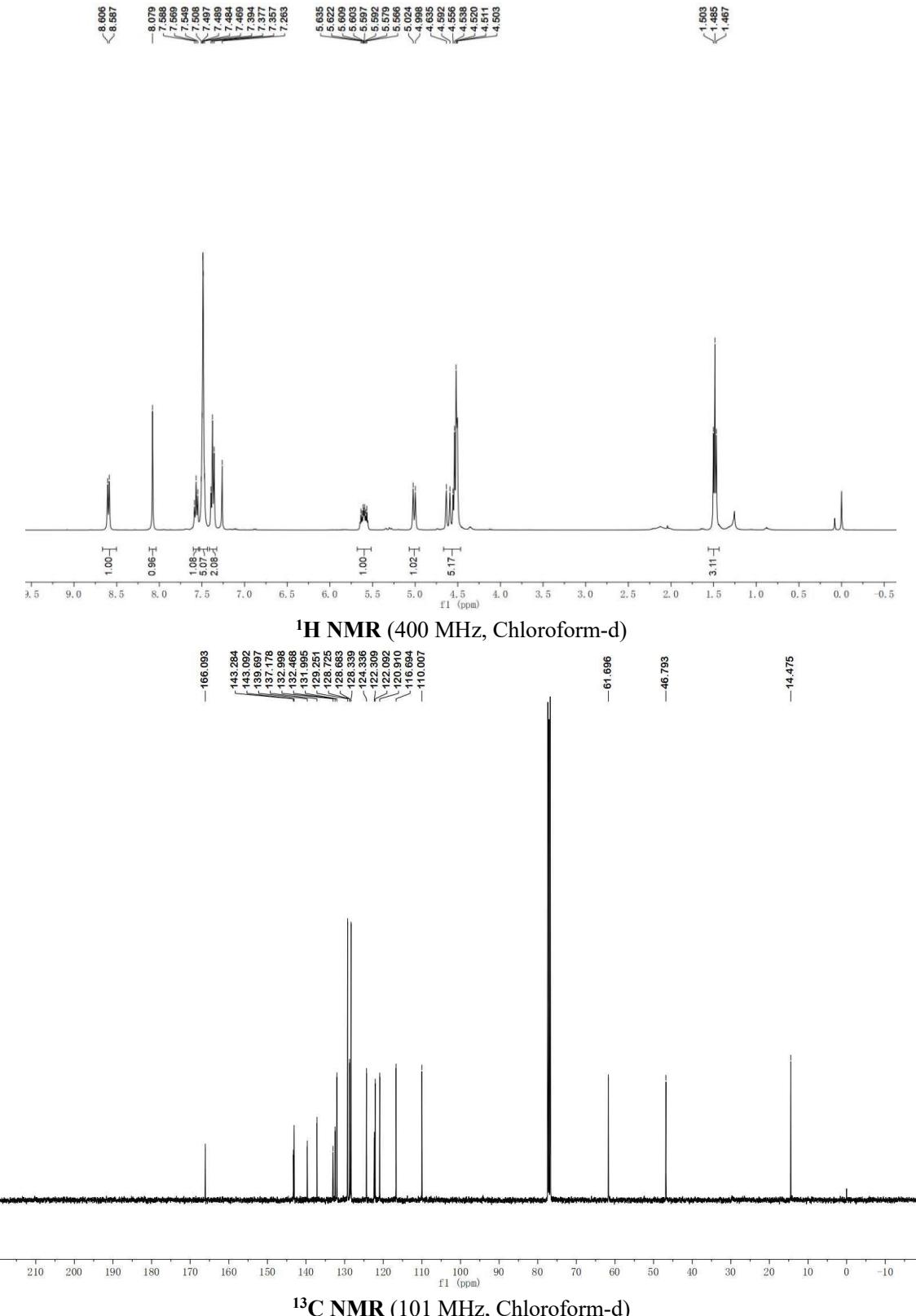
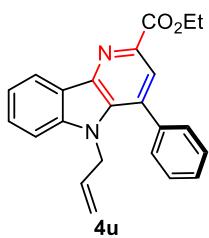


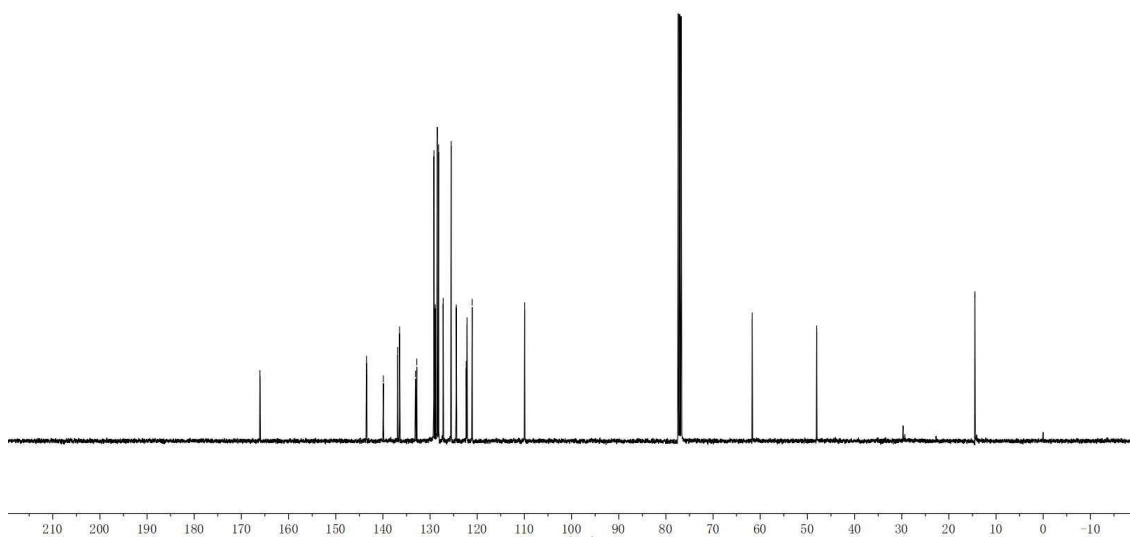
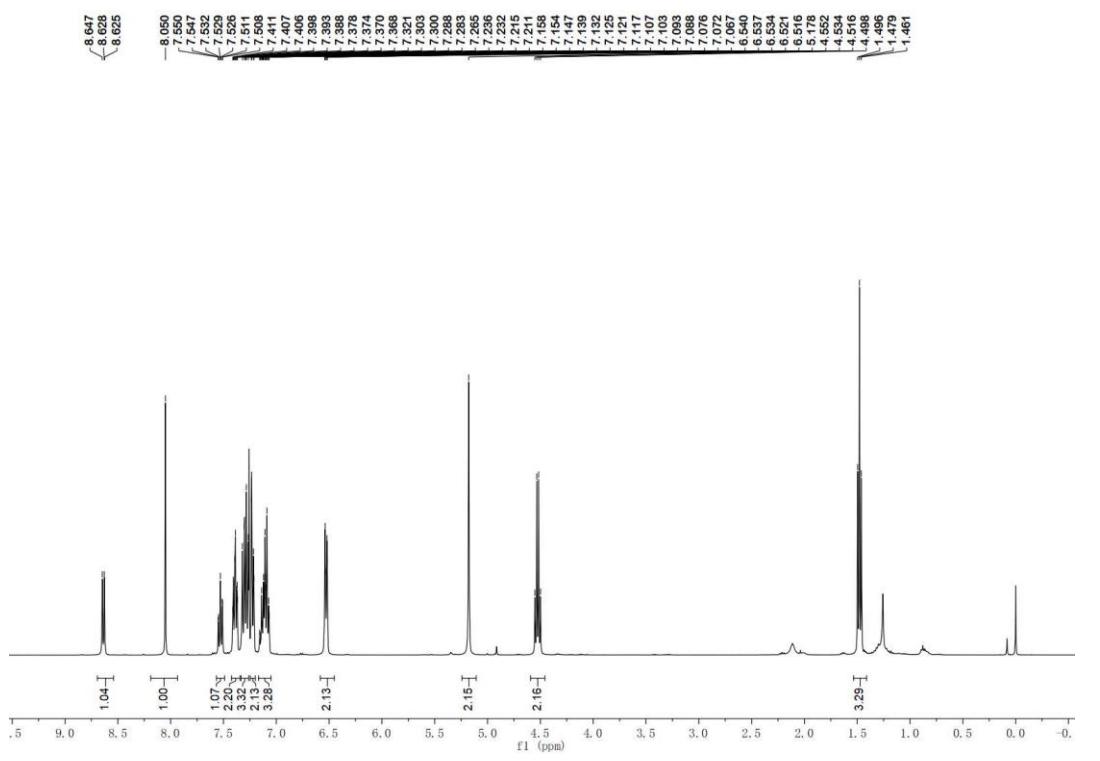
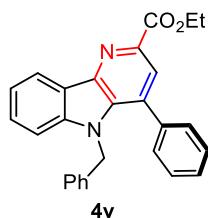


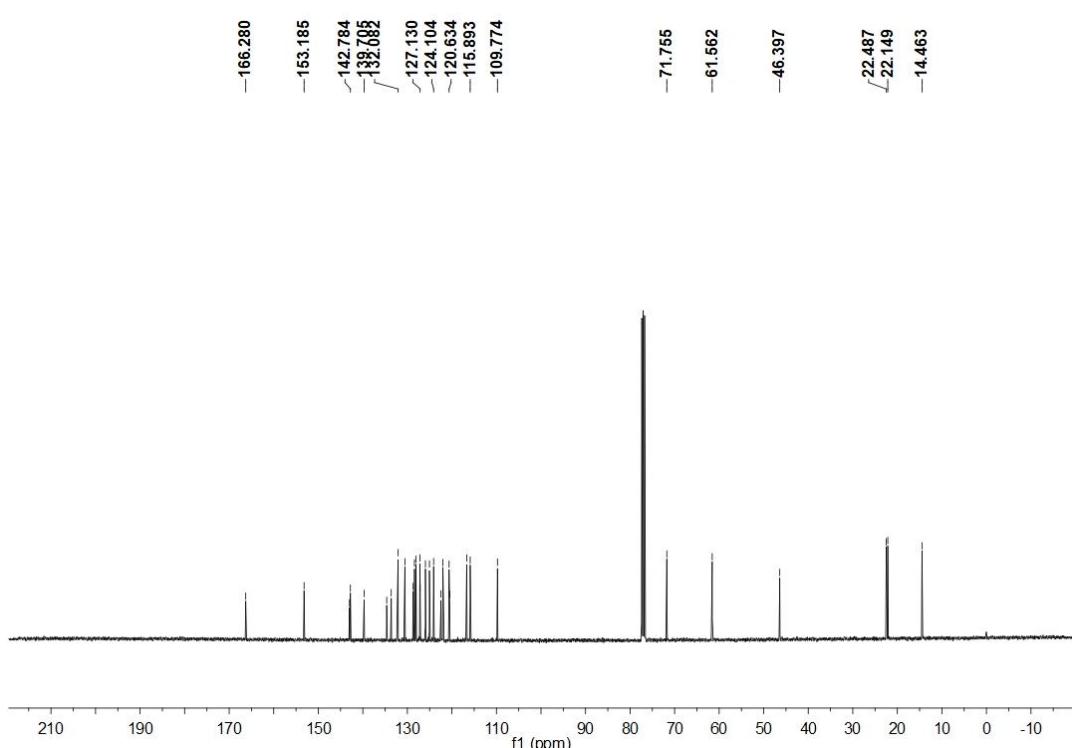
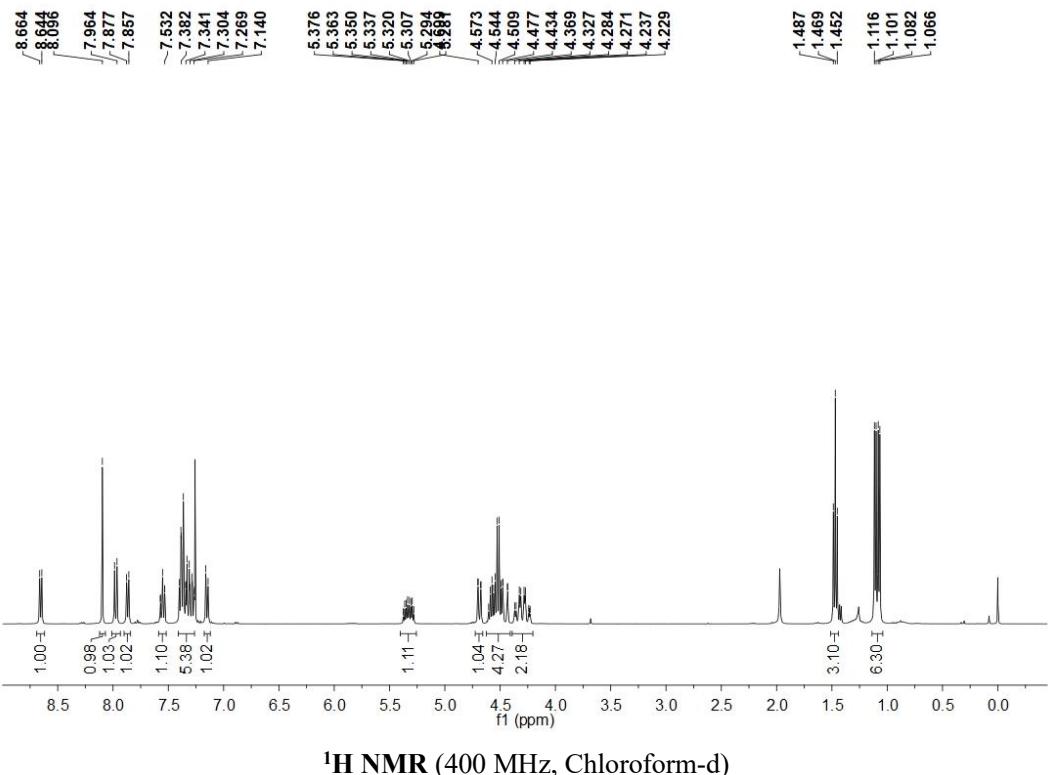
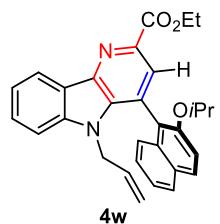


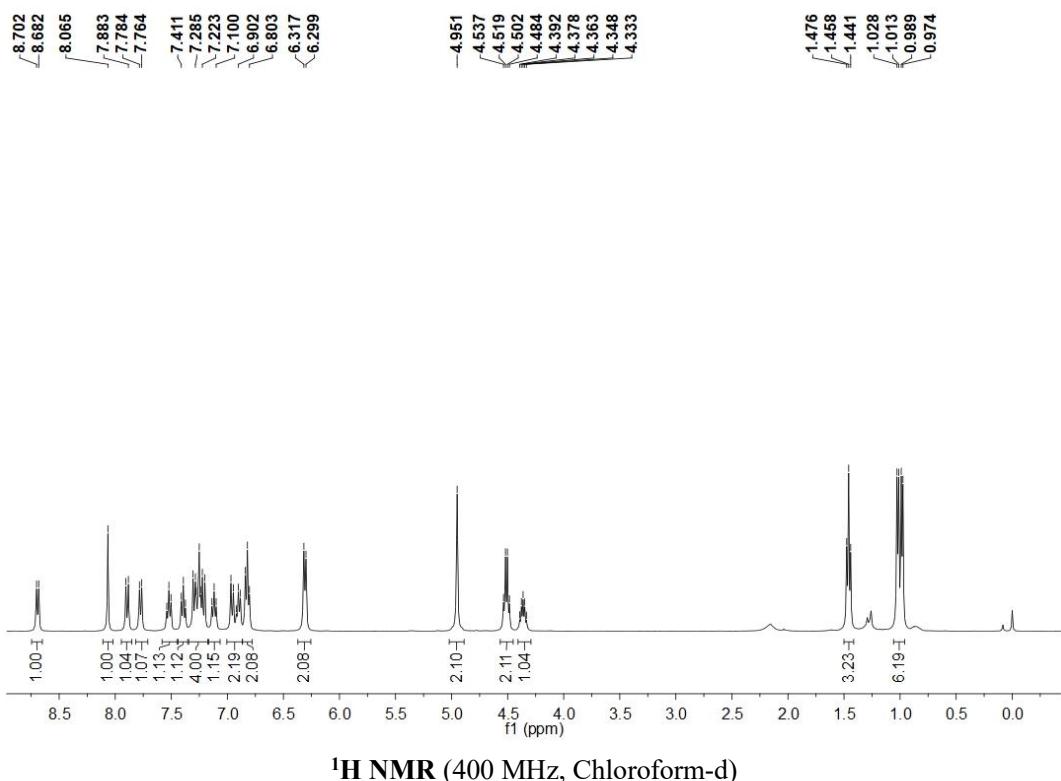
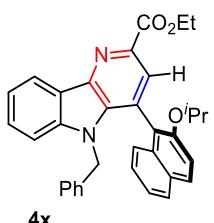


**<sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)**

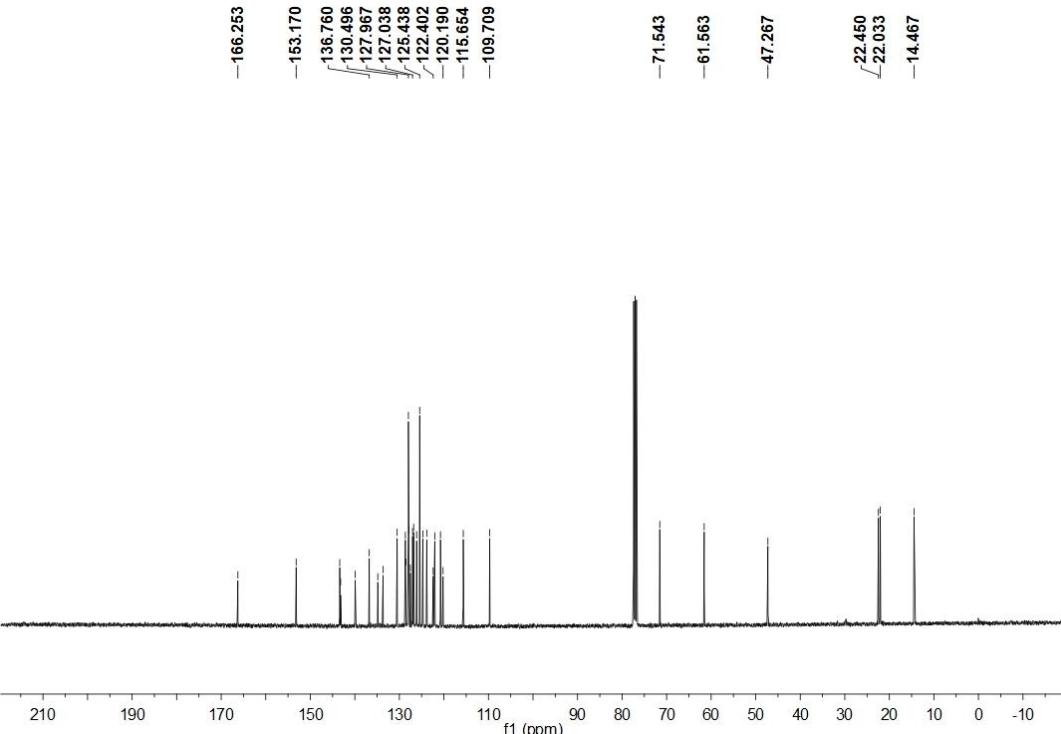




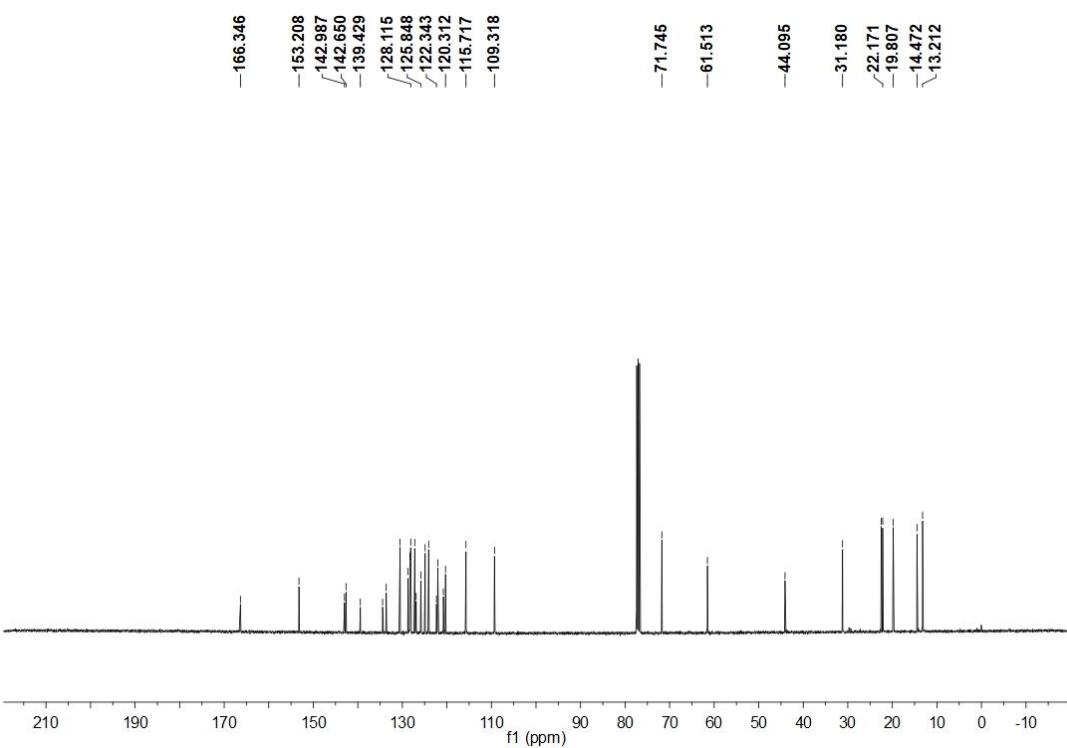
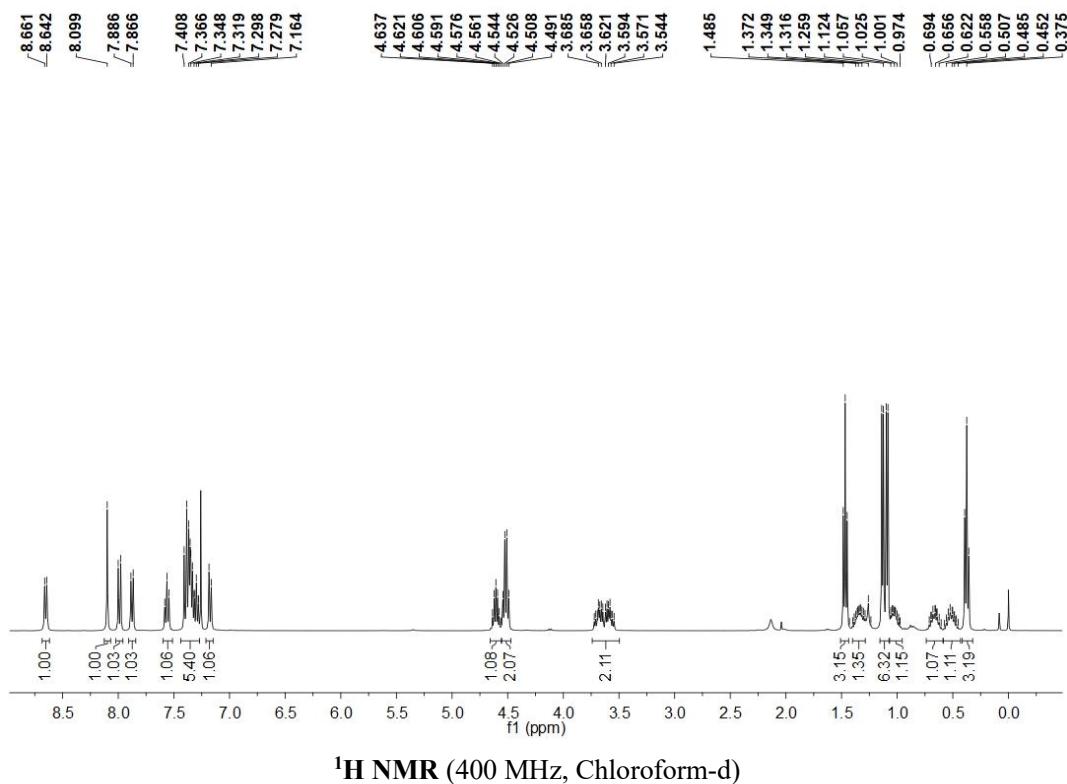
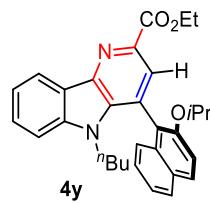


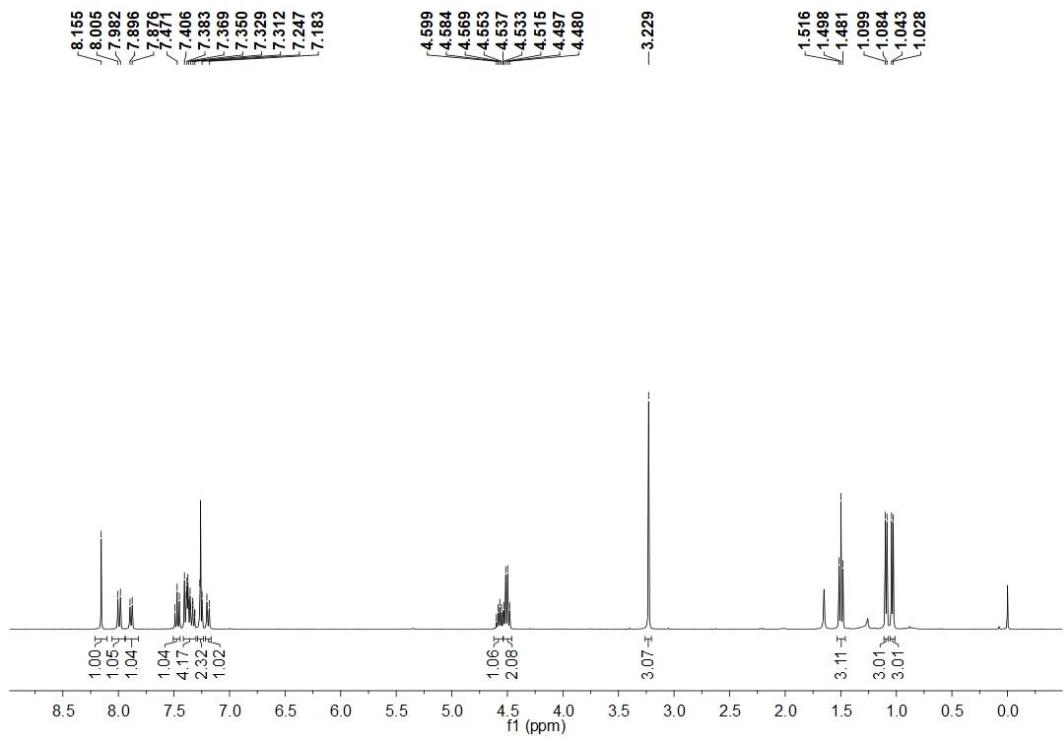
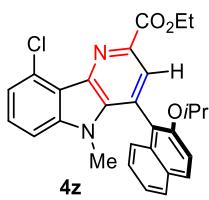


**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d)

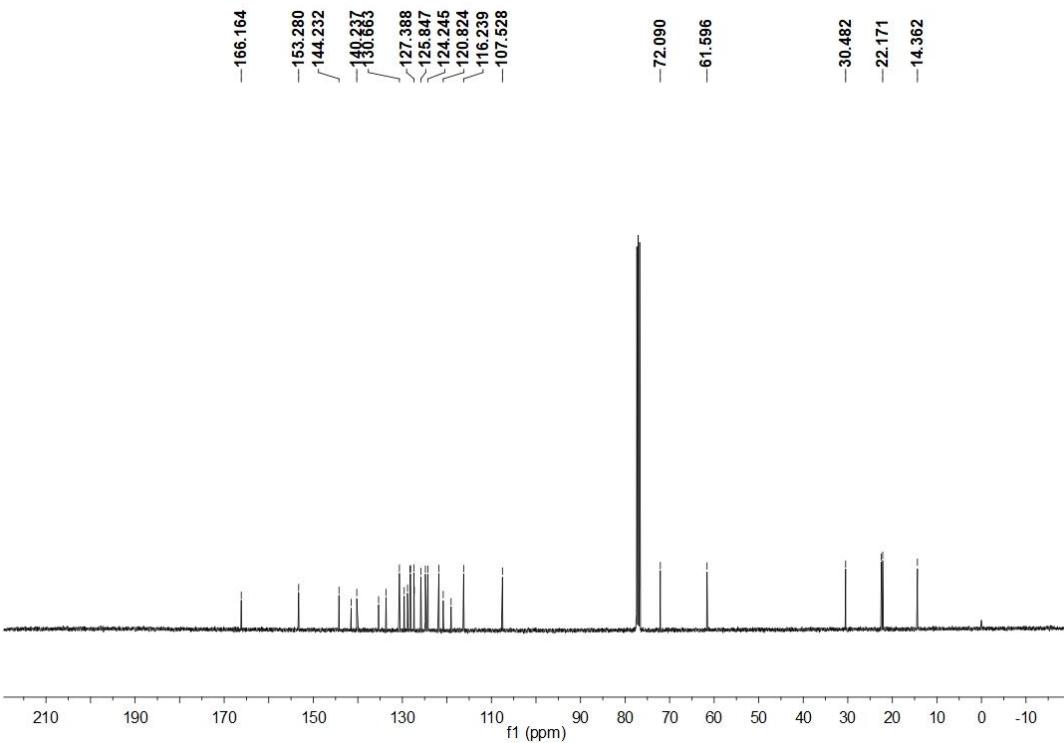


**<sup>13</sup>C NMR** (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)

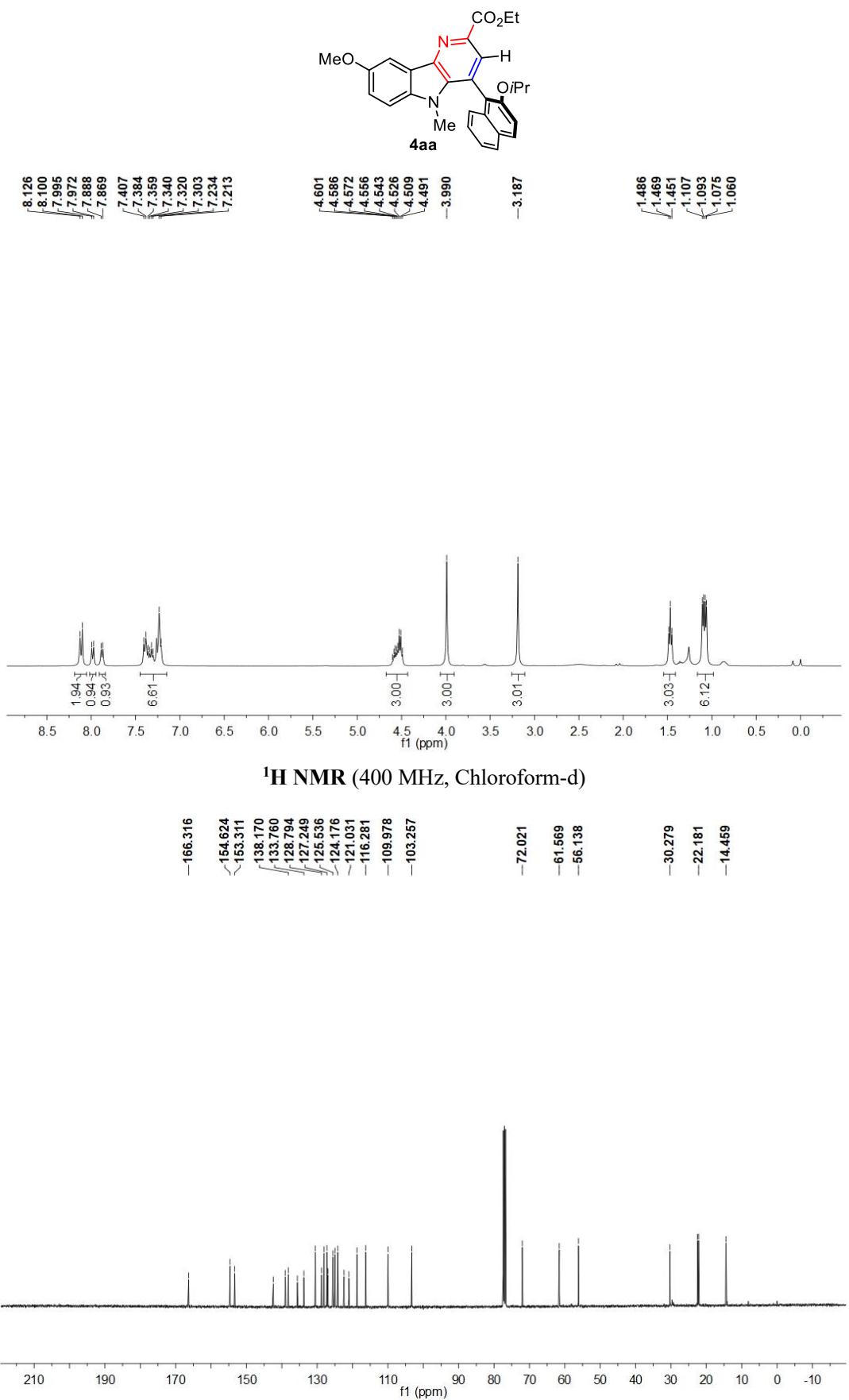


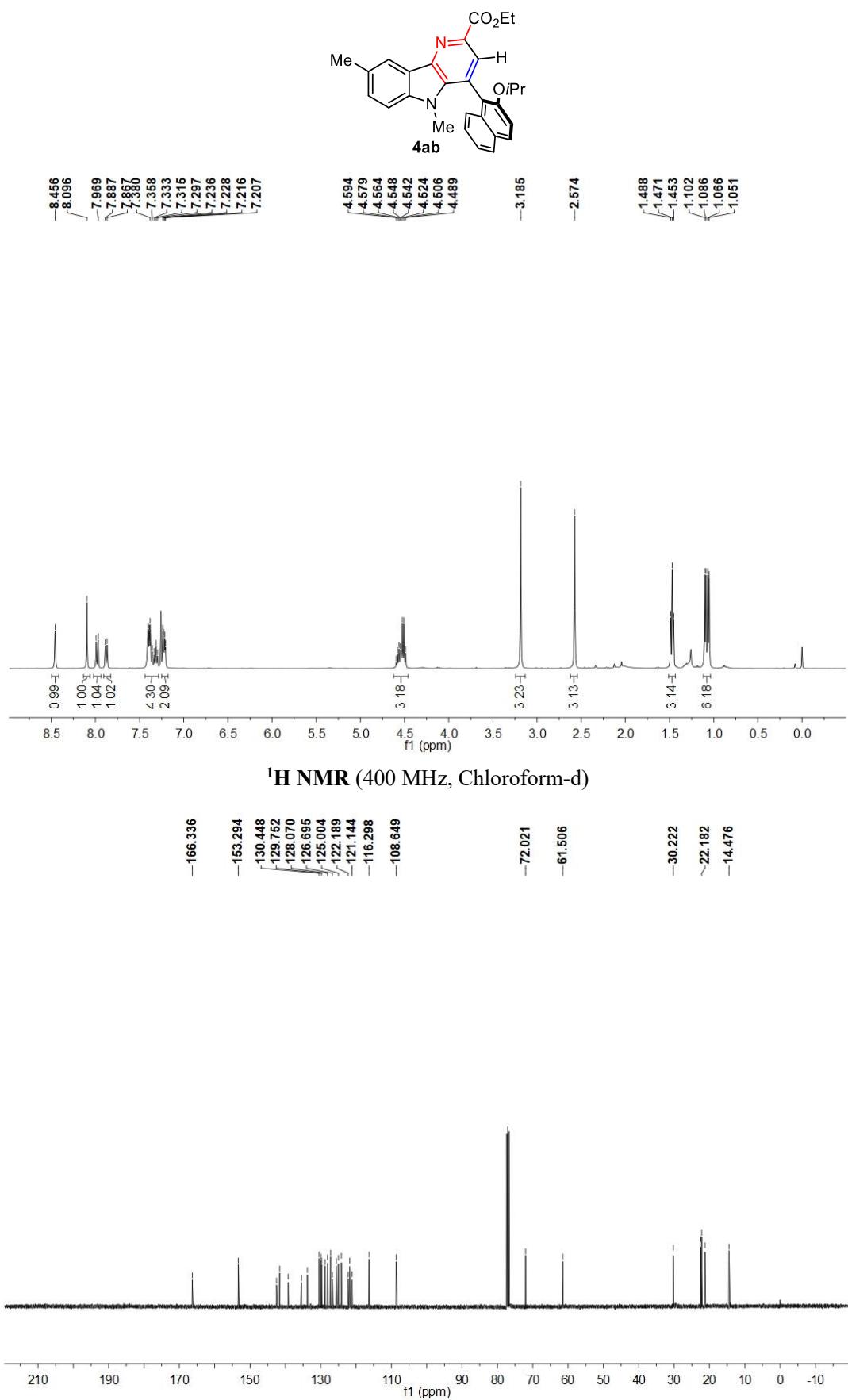


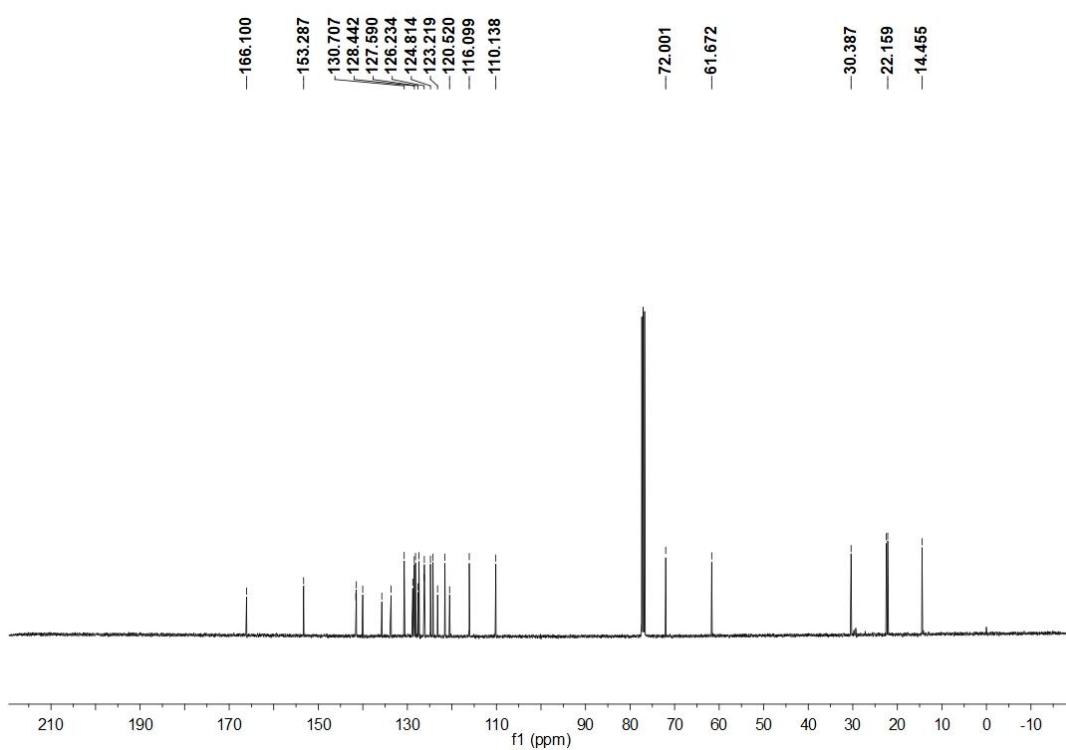
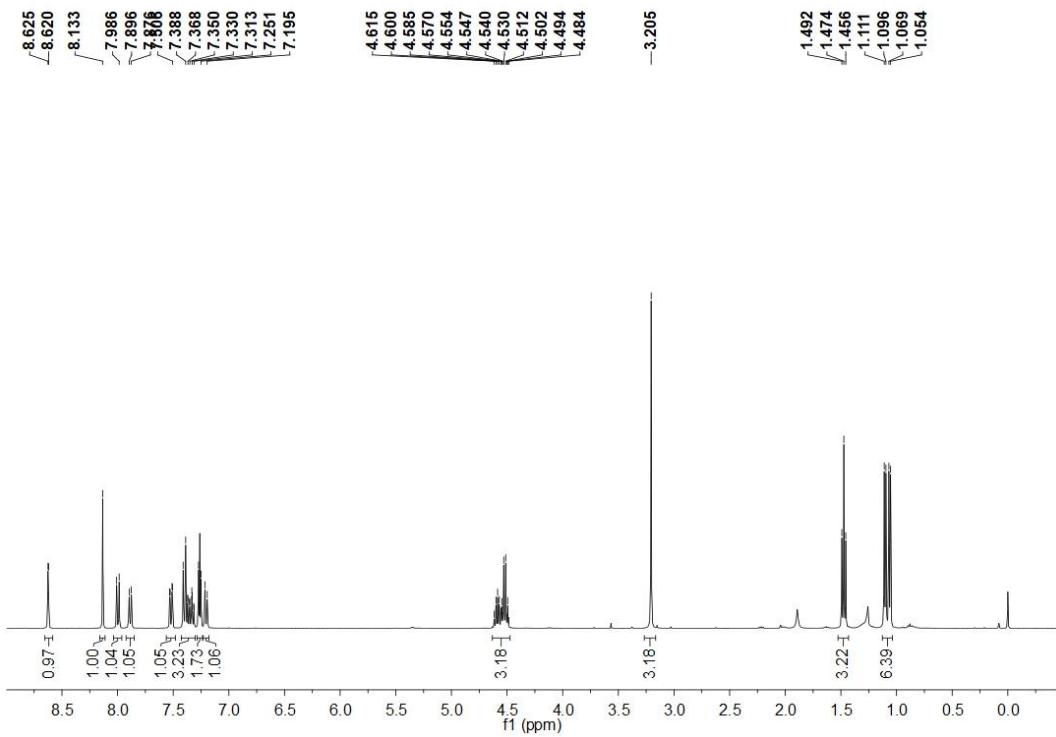
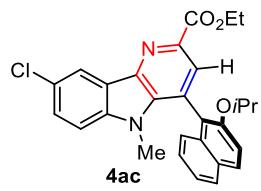
**<sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-d)**

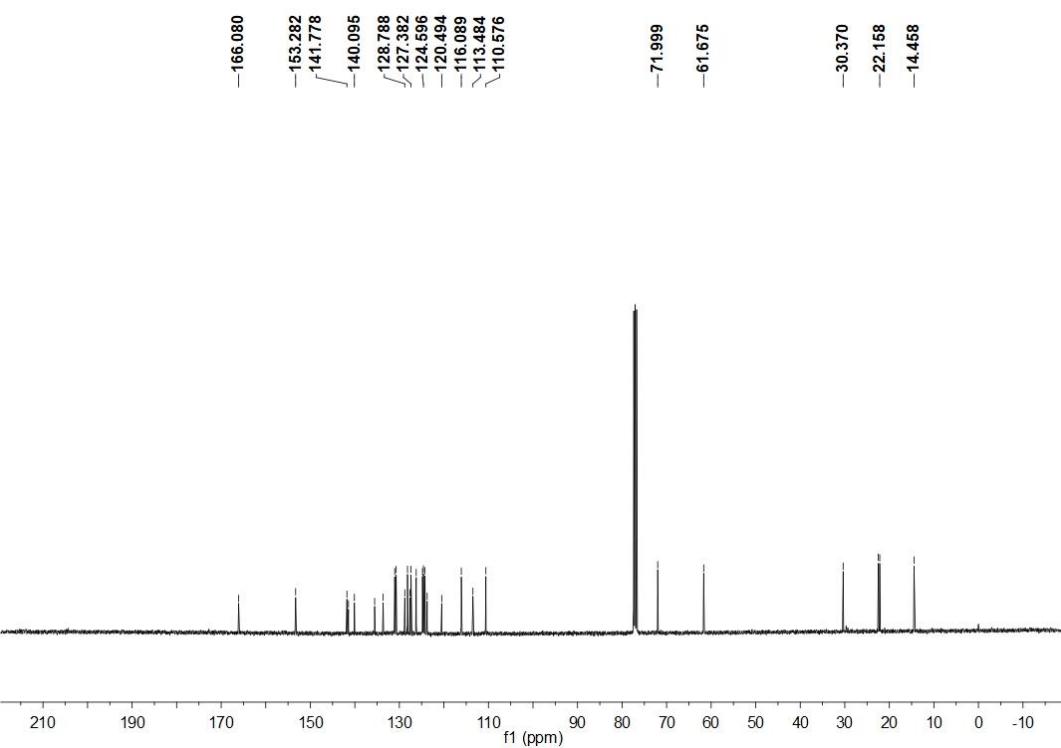
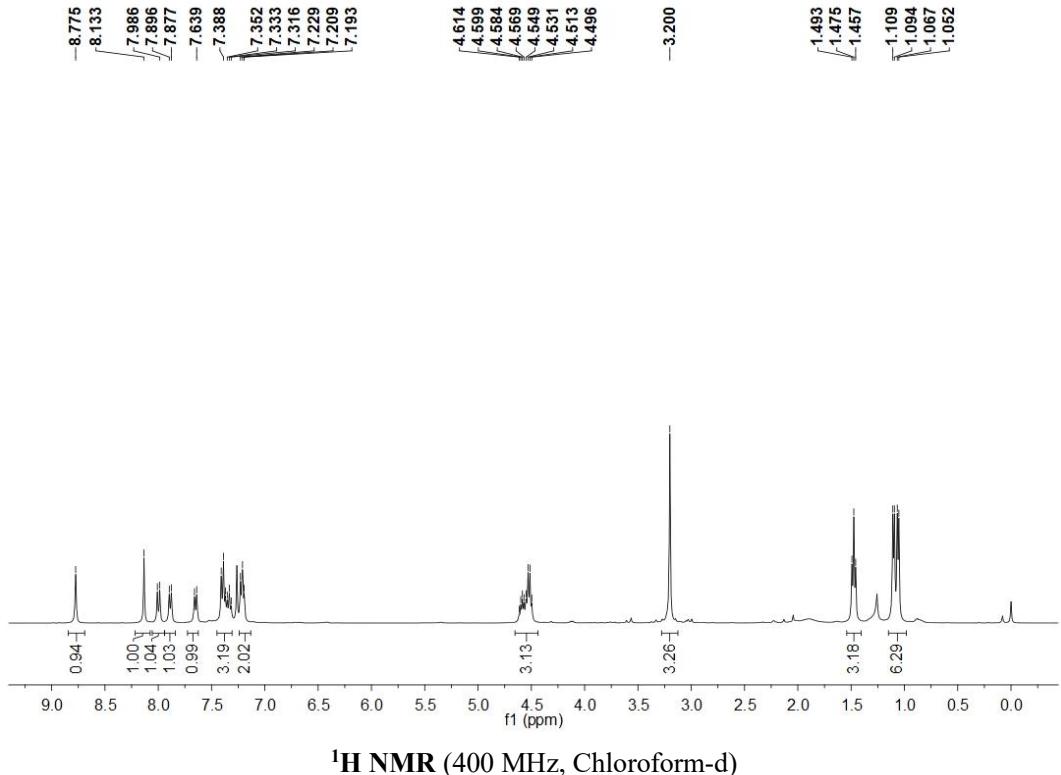
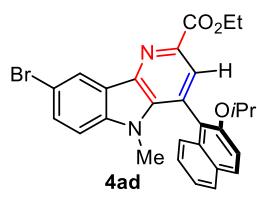


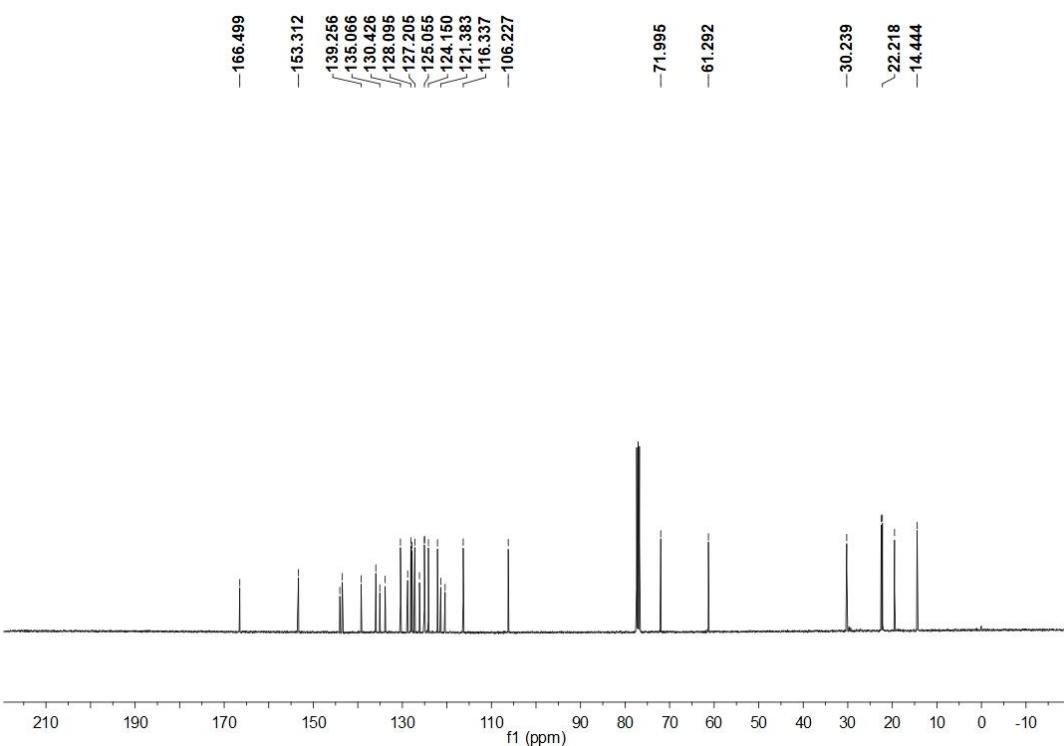
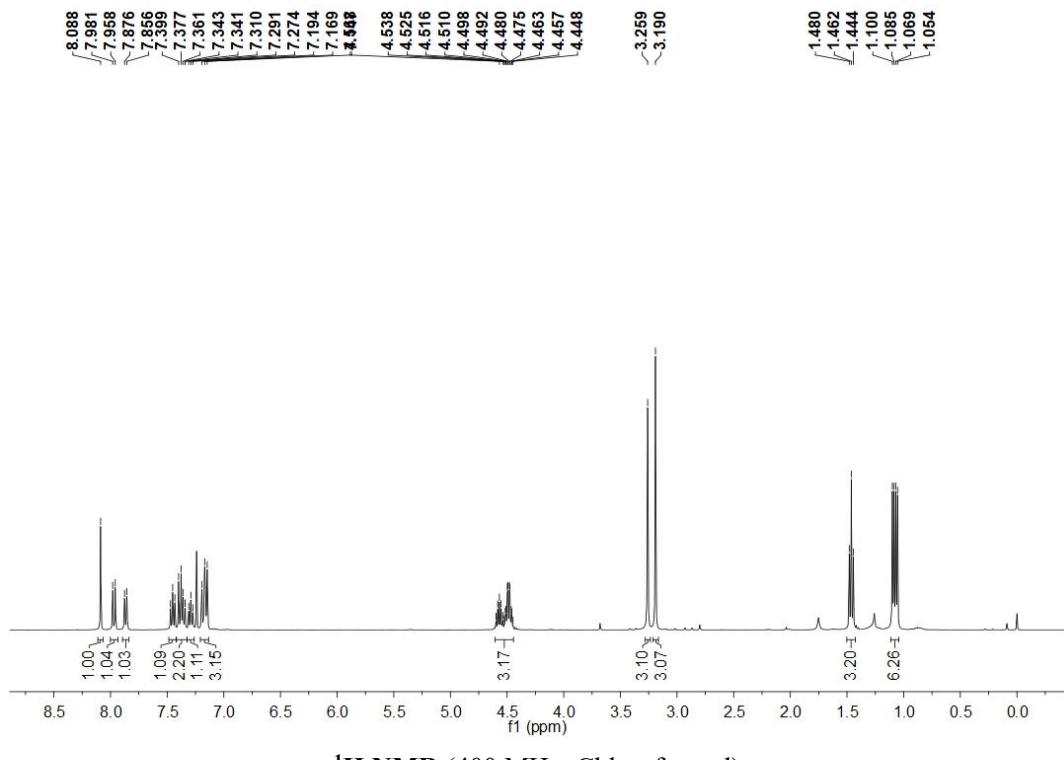
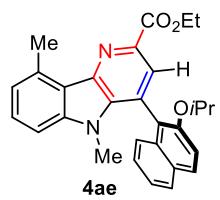
**<sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)**

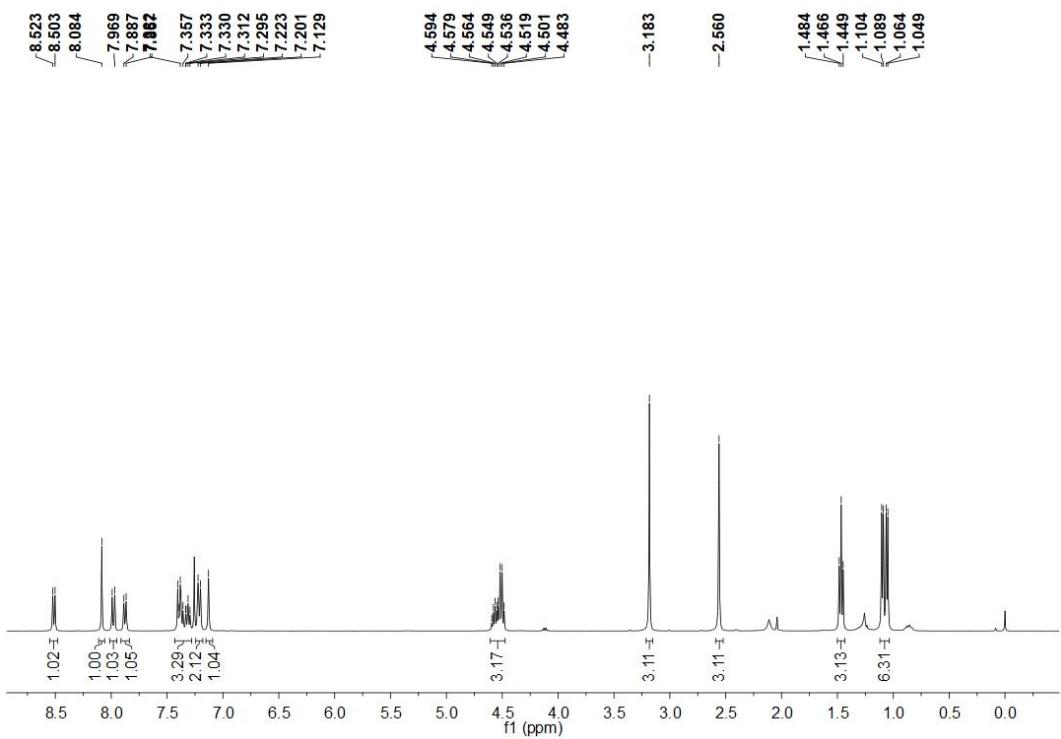
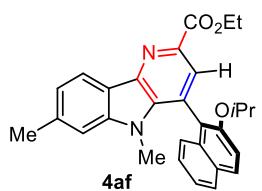




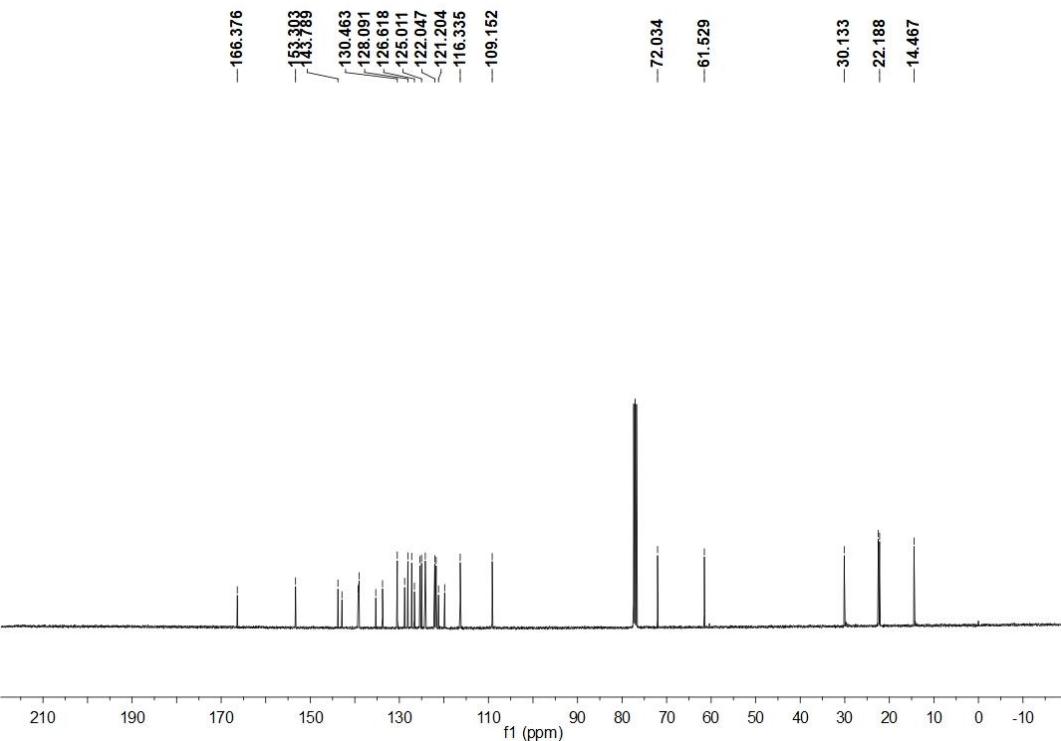




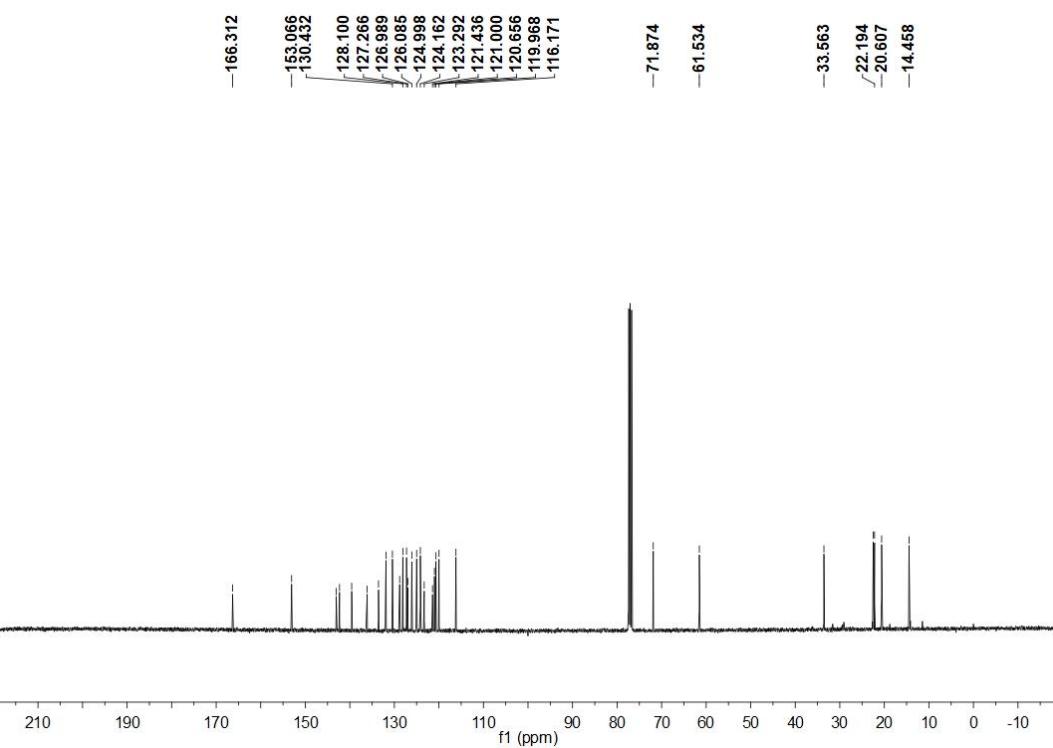
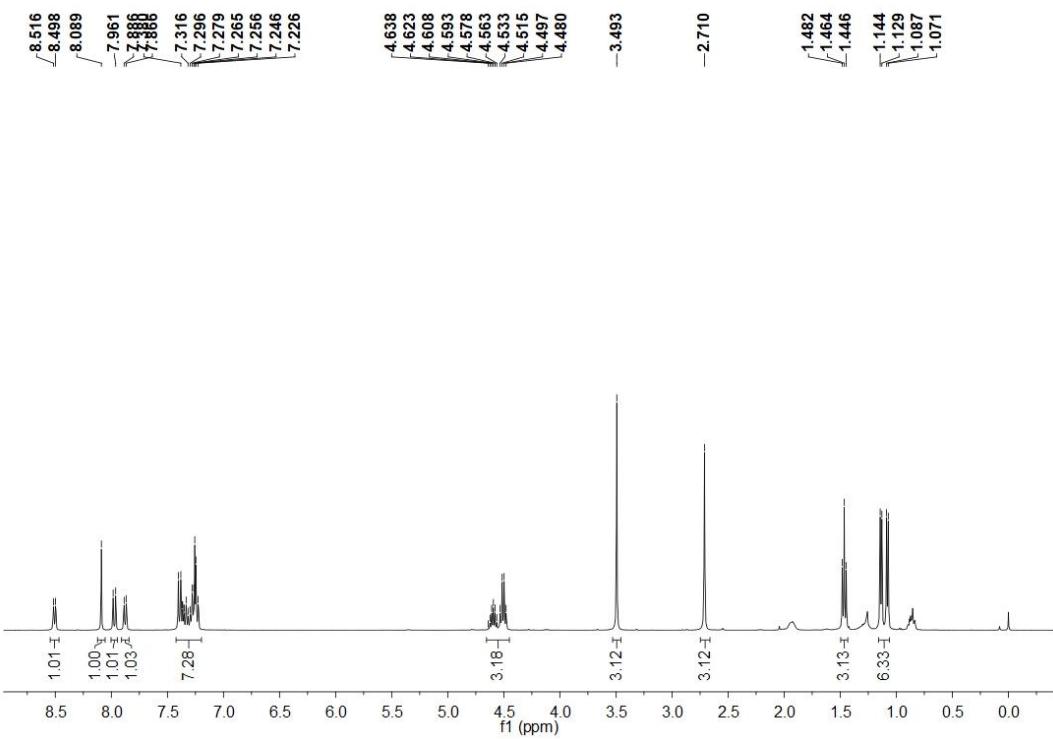
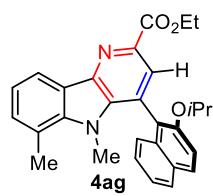


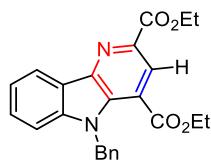


**<sup>1</sup>H NMR** (400 MHz, Chloroform-d)

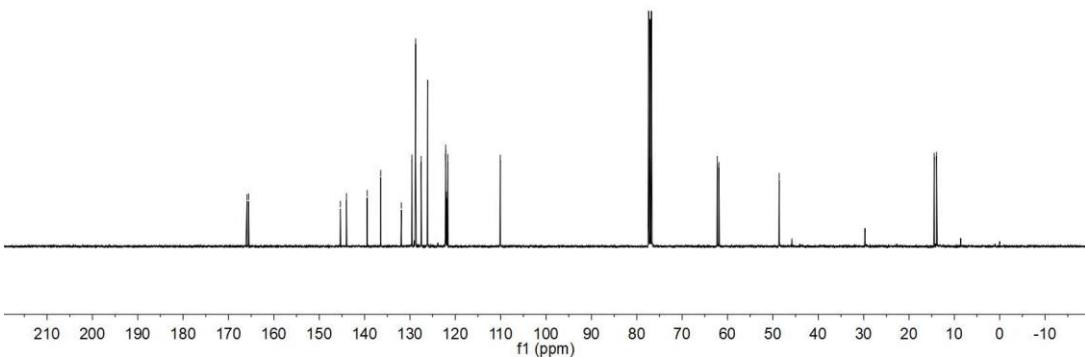
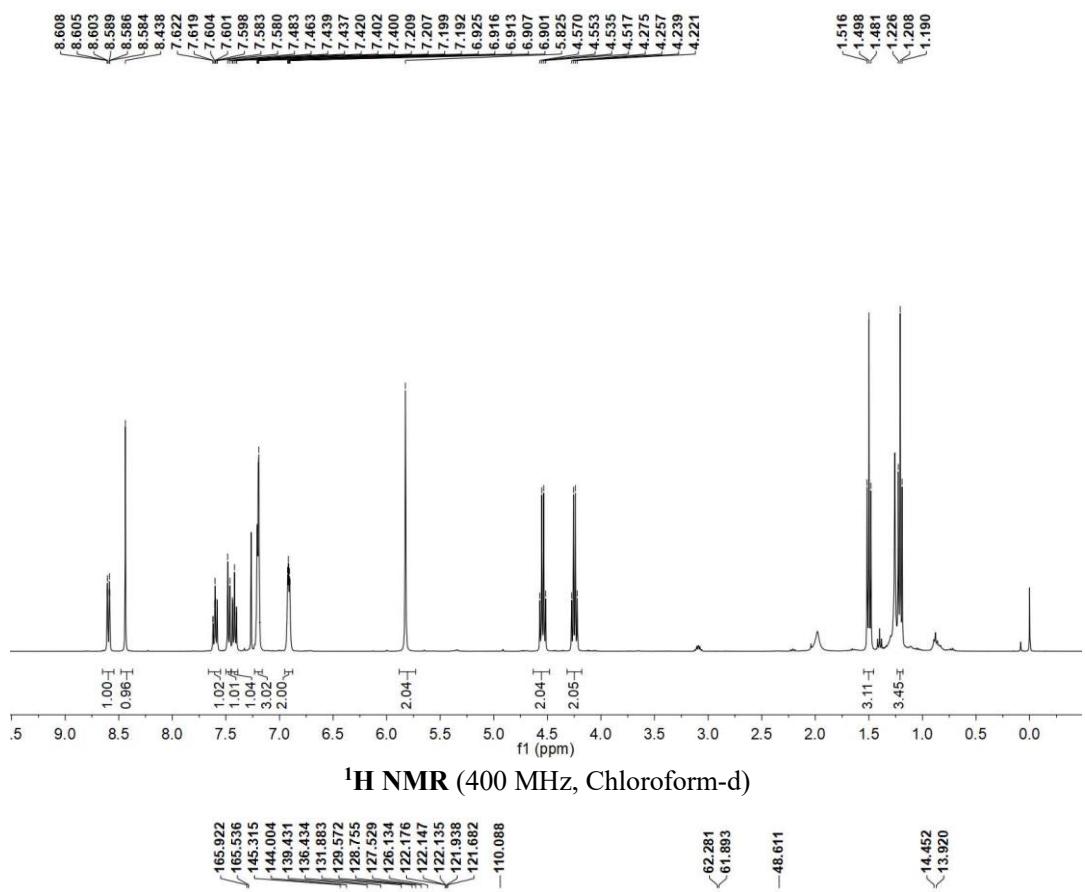


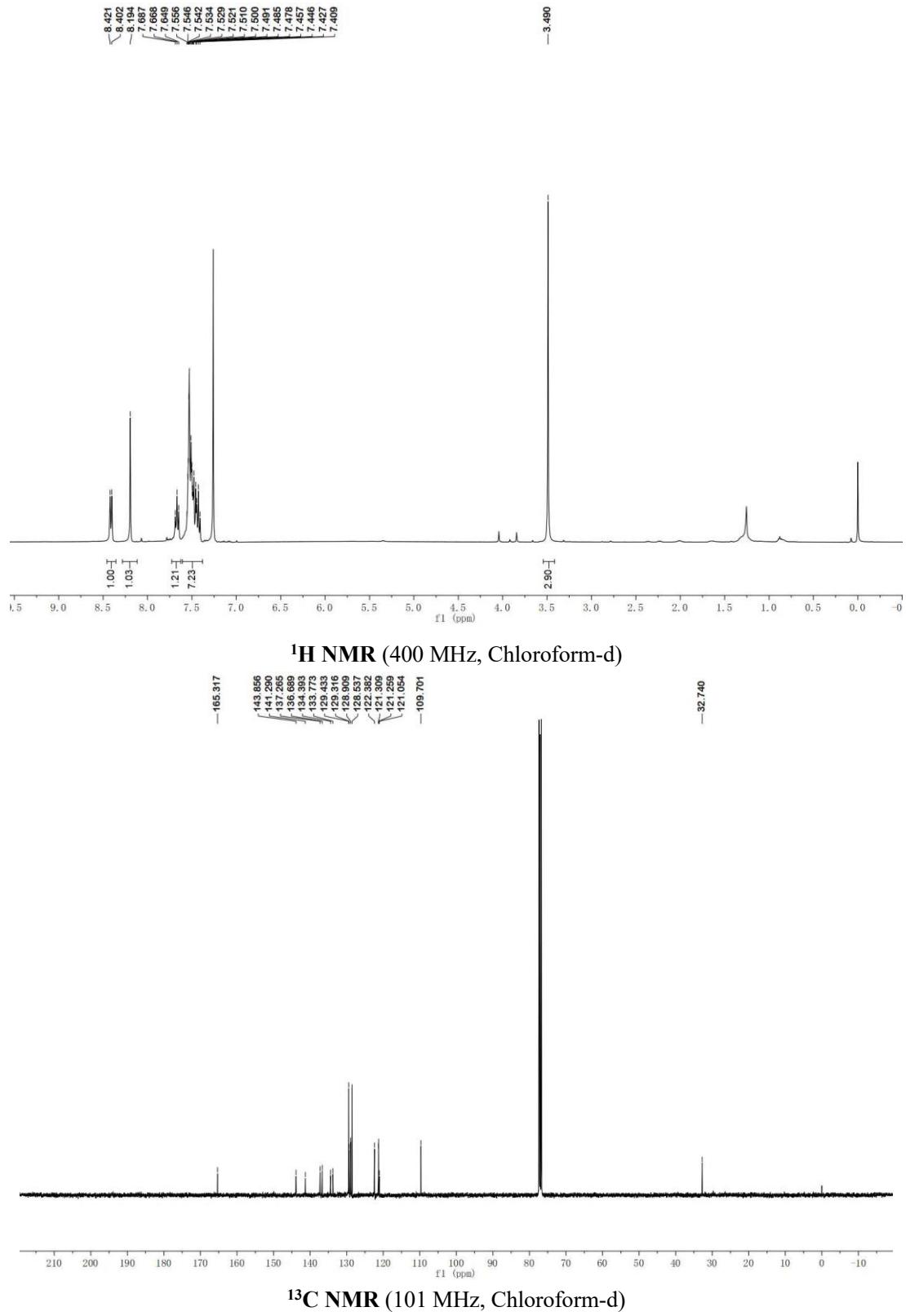
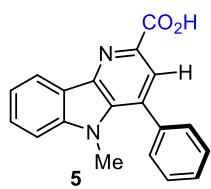
**<sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)**

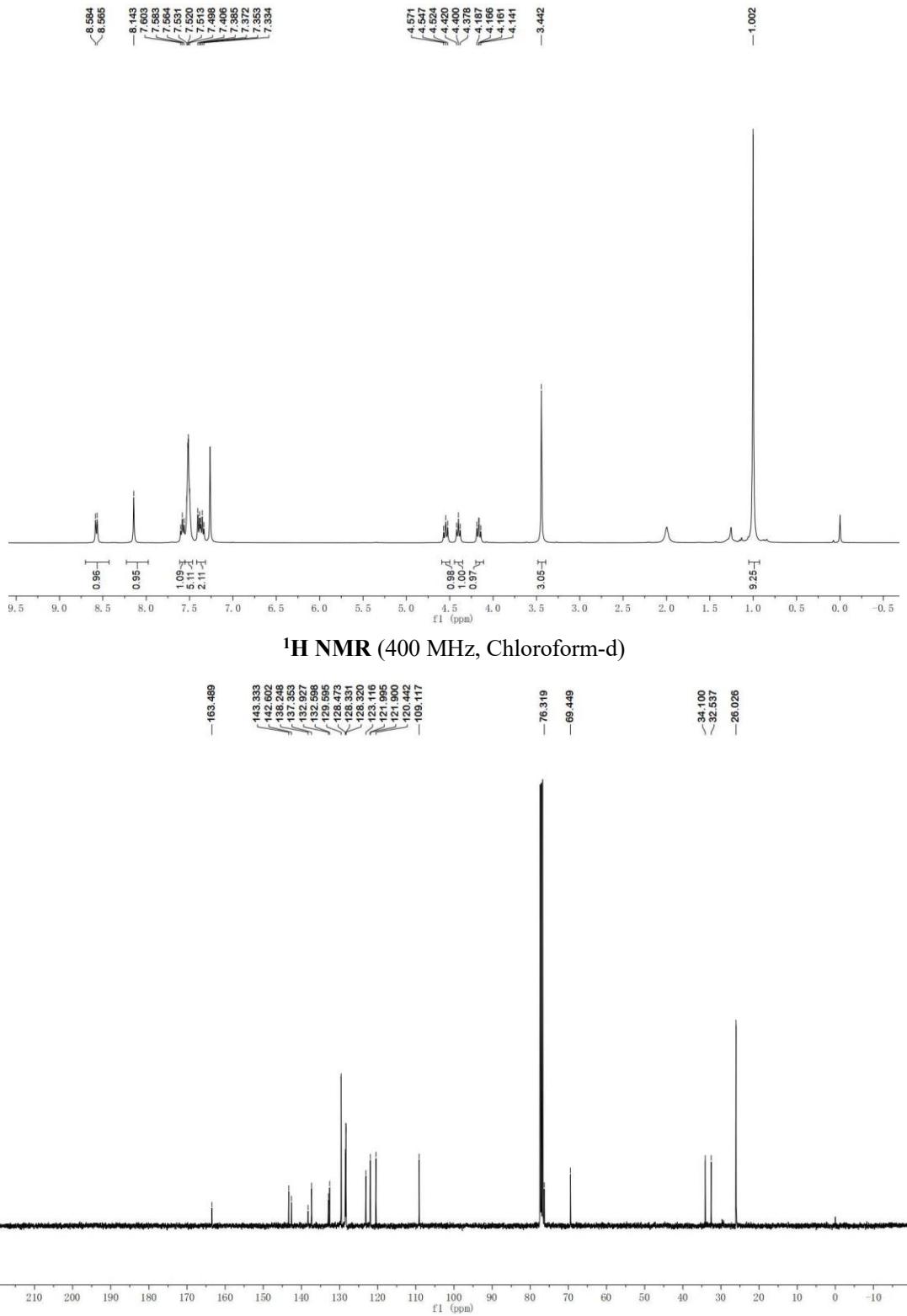
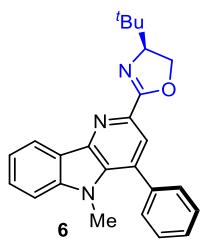




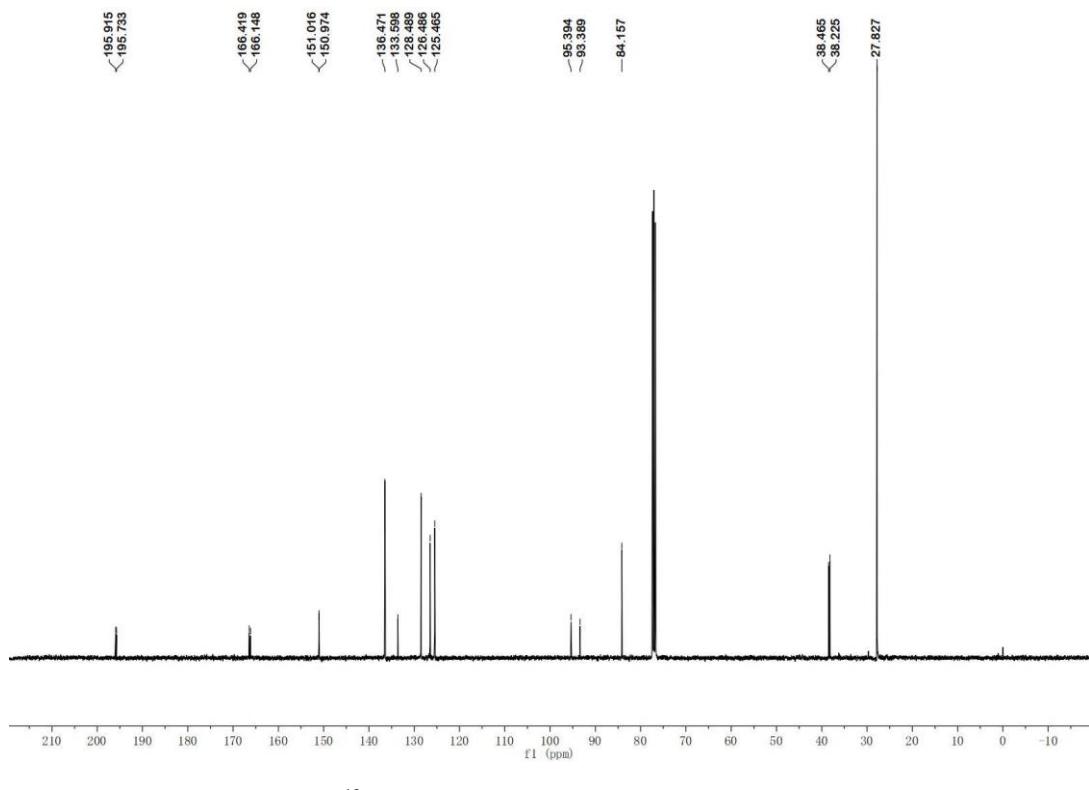
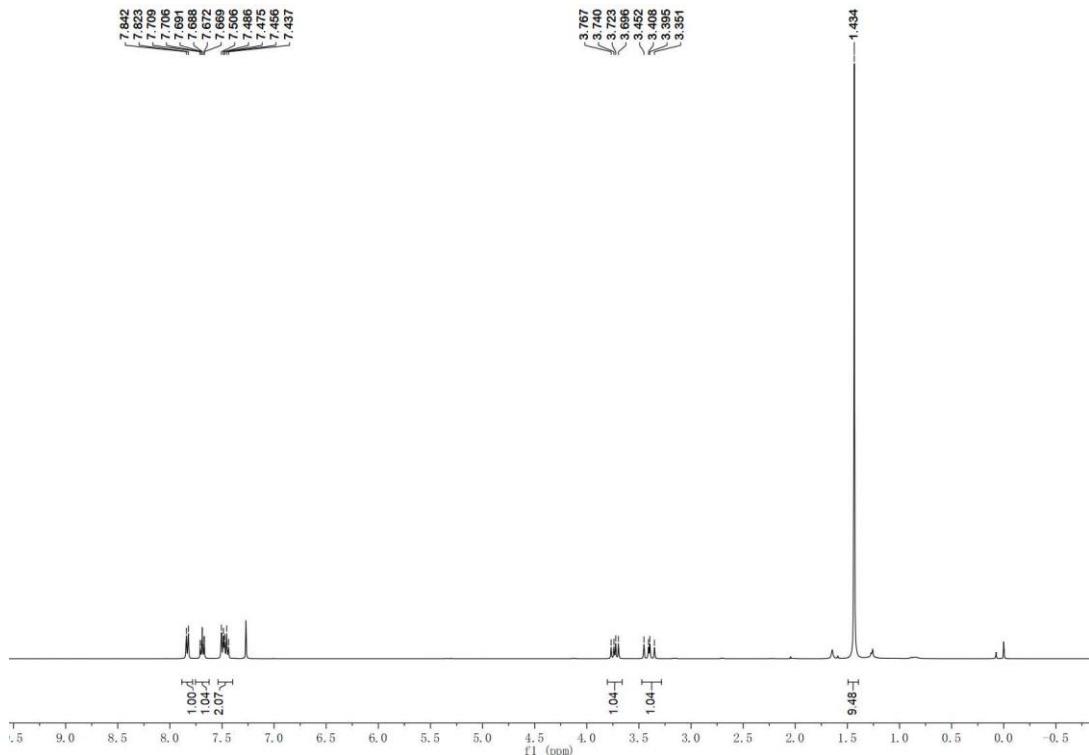
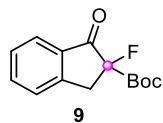
**4ai**

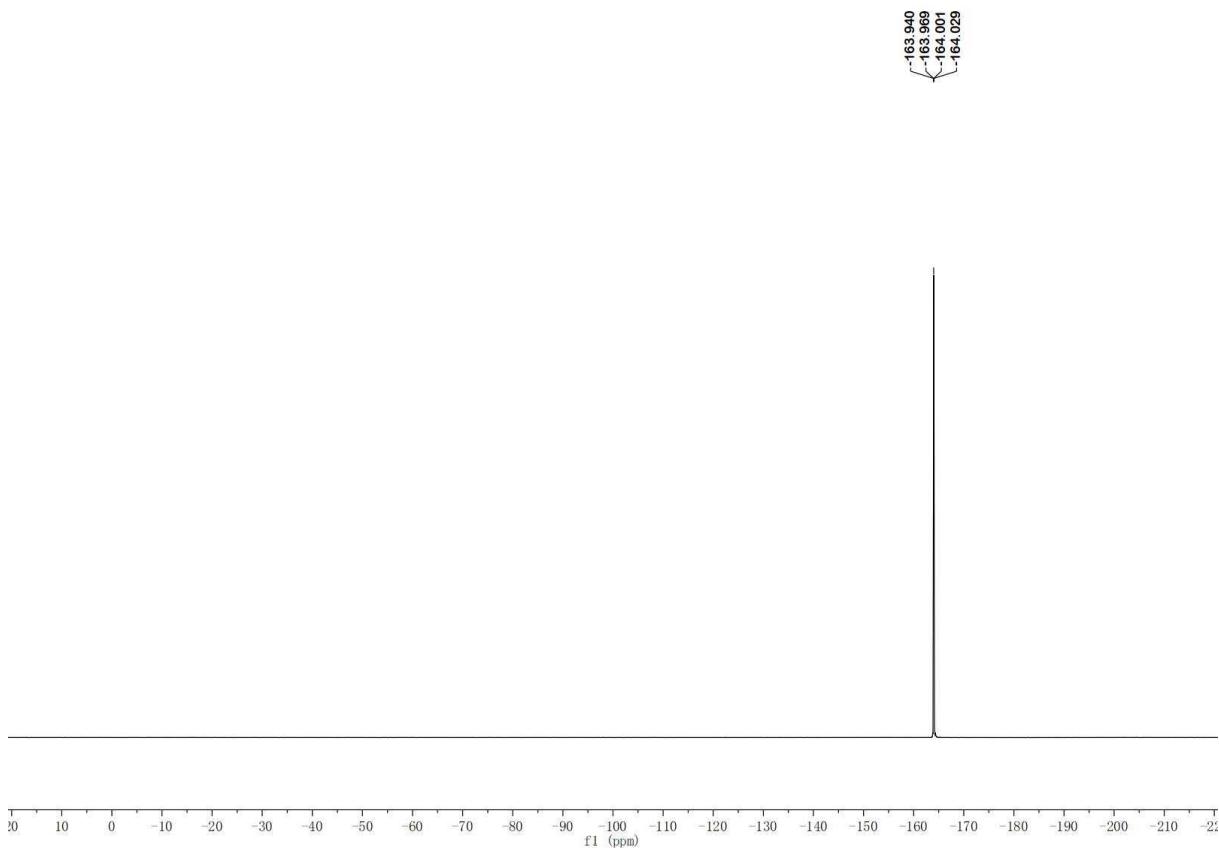




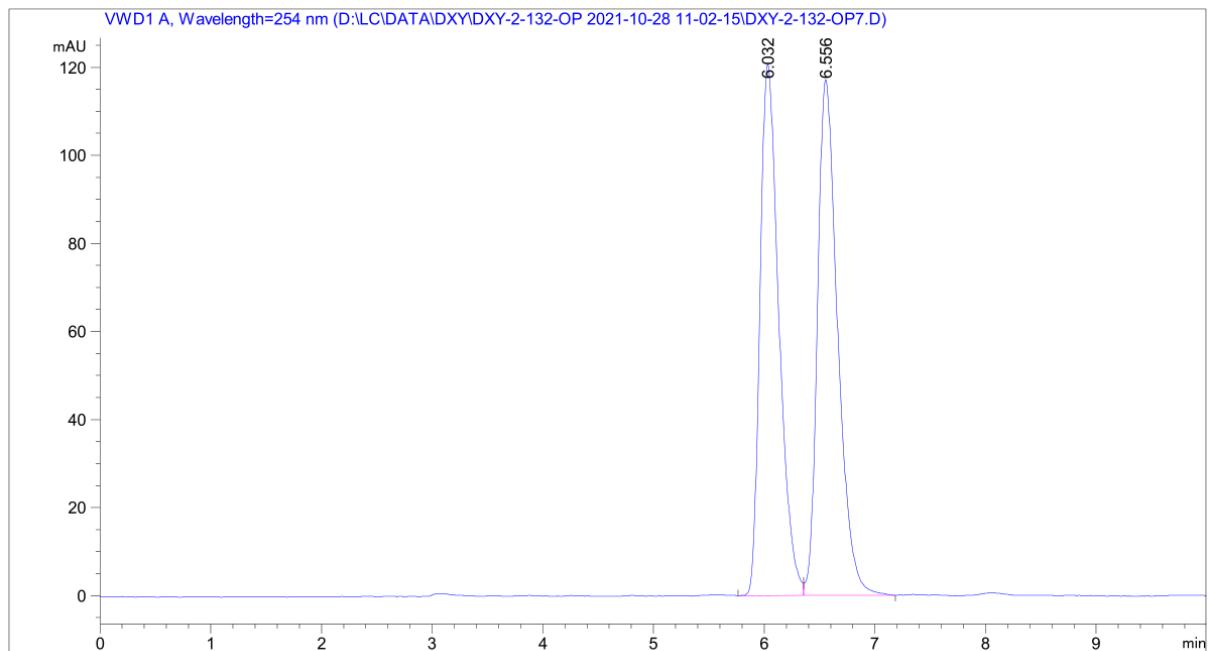


### **<sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-d)**



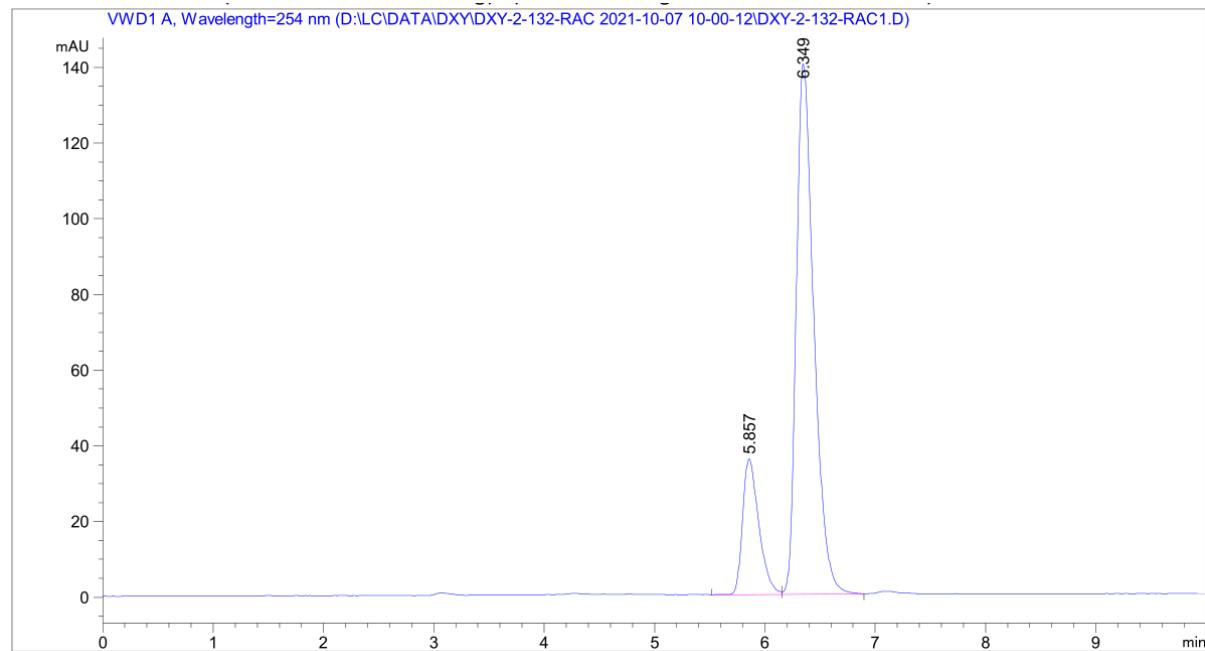


<sup>19</sup>F NMR (376 MHz, Chloroform-d)



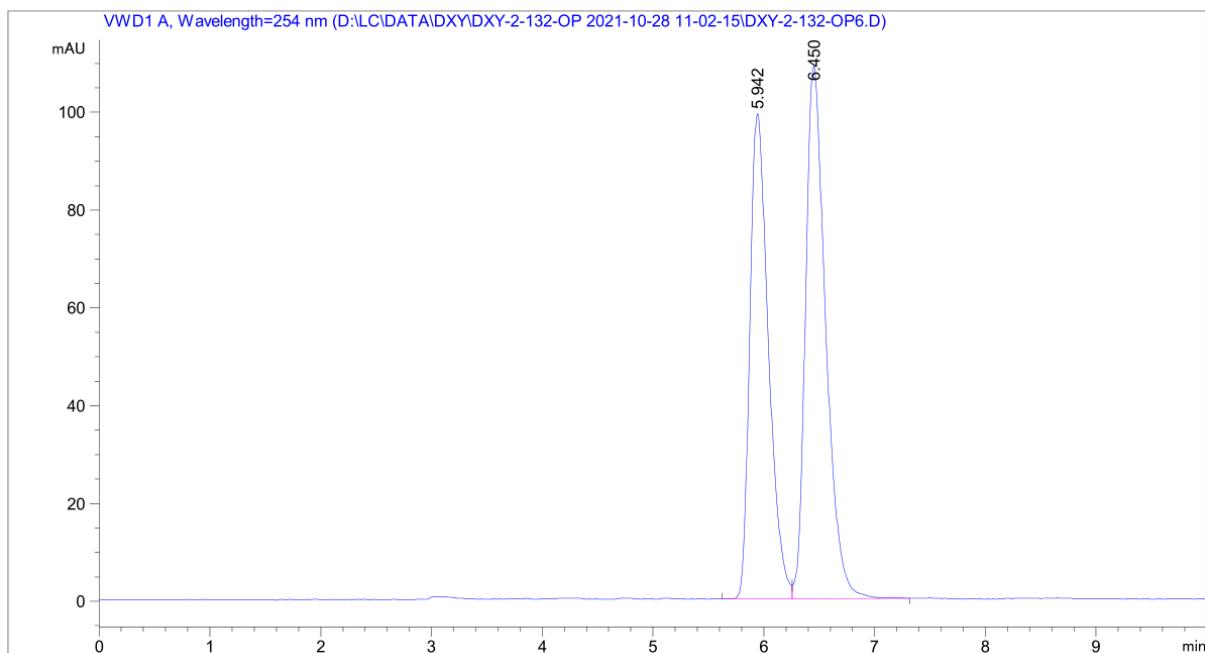
Peak #	RetTime [min]	Type	Width [min]	Area [mAU*s]	Height [mAU]	Area %
1	6.032	BV	0.1805	1430.65918	120.71239	49.0712
2	6.556	VB	0.1915	1484.81628	117.20554	50.9288

#### HPLC chromatogram of compound (*rac*)-9



Peak #	RetTime [min]	Type	Width [min]	Area [mAU*s]	Height [mAU]	Area %
1	5.857	BV	0.1560	367.71194	35.86565	19.1706
2	6.349	VB	0.1684	1550.39331	140.08653	80.8294

HPLC chromatogram of chiral compound 9 (ligand 6 was used)



Peak #	RetTime [min]	Type	Width [min]	Area [mAU*s]	Height [mAU]	Area %
1	5.942	BV	0.1786	1160.30664	99.24376	45.6307
2	6.450	VV R	0.1918	1382.51416	108.87755	54.3693

HPLC chromatogram of chiral compound 9 ('Bu-Pyrbox was used)