

Catalytic Synthesis of Methylmalonate Salt from Ethylene and Carbon Dioxide through Photo-induced Activation and Photoredox-catalyzed Reduction of Nickelalactones

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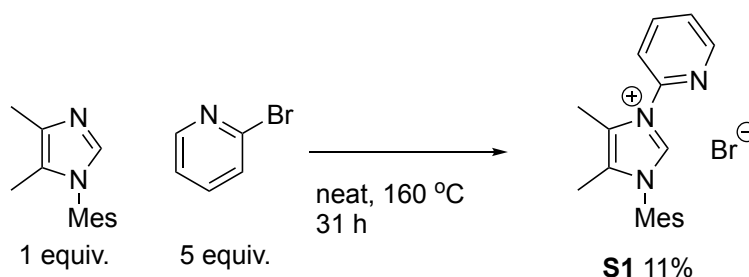
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General methods

^1H , ^{13}C , ^{31}P NMR spectra were recorded on a JEOL ECZ-500 (500 MHz for ^1H , 125 MHz for ^{13}C and 202 MHz for ^{31}P), a JEOL ECX-500 (500 MHz for ^1H , 125 MHz for ^{13}C and 202 MHz for ^{31}P) or a JEOL ECS-400 (400 MHz for ^1H , 100 MHz for ^{13}C and 160 MHz for ^{31}P) in CDCl_3 , CD_2Cl_2 , C_6D_6 , D_2O or $\text{THF-}d_8$. Chemical shifts are expressed in parts per million (ppm) using residual solvent signals for ^1H (7.26 ppm for CDCl_3 , 5.32 ppm for CD_2Cl_2 , 7.15 for C_6D_6 , 4.79 for D_2O , and 1.73 ppm for $\text{THF-}d_8$) and the solvent signal for ^{13}C (77.16 ppm for CDCl_3 , 53.84 ppm for CD_2Cl_2 , 128.06 for C_6D_6 , and 25.31 ppm for $\text{THF-}d_8$) as internal standards, and 85% H_3PO_4 aq. as an external standard for ^{31}P . IR spectra were recorded on a Cary 630 (Agilent Technologies) spectrometer. Mass spectra were recorded on a Bruker micrOTOF-QII (ESI-mass) mass spectrometer. Crystal data were collected by a Rigaku XtaLAB Synergy R-DW system. Photoirradiation was conducted by using Relyon Twin LED Light with sockets of 365, 395 or 425 nm light or anUSHIO Optical Modulex OPM2-502XQ Hg lamp without optical filter, in a water bath (for the reactions at room temperature) or in an oil bath (for the reactions with heating). Silica Gel 60 (Kanto Chemical Co., Inc.) was used for flash column chromatography. Merck Kiesegel 60 F254 (0.25 mm thickness, coated on glass $20\times 20\text{ cm}^2$) plate was used for analytical thin layer chromatography (TLC). Dehydrated THF, Et_2O , *n*-hexane and toluene were purchased from Kanto Chemicals and purified by solvent purification system of Glass-Contour. Dehydrated CH_2Cl_2 and DMA (*N,N*-dimethylacetamide) were purchased from Kanto Chemicals. CH_2Cl_2 was degassed by three freeze-pump-thaw cycles and DMA was degassed by Ar bubbling. Benzene- d_6 and $\text{THF-}d_8$ were purchased from Kanto Chemicals, and dried and degassed by benzophenone ketyl. CD_2Cl_2 was dried over 4 Å molecular sieves and degassed by three freeze-pump-thaw cycles. Other deuterated solvents were purchased from Kanto Chemicals and used as received. DIPEA (*N,N*-diisopropylethylamine) was purchased from TCI, distilled, dried over 4 Å molecular sieves and degassed by three freeze-pump-thaw cycles. Ethylene/ CO_2 (1 : 1) cylinder was purchased from Kayama Sanso. Other reagents were purchased from TCI, Kanto Chemicals, Aldrich, or Fujifilm Wako Chemicals and used as received. 5-membered nickelalactone bearing dcype **2**¹ (dcype = 1,2-bis(dicyclohexylphosphino)ethane) and 4-membered nickelalactone bearing dcype **7**² were prepared according to the literature procedure. NMR spectra of nickelalactones bearing an NHC-P ligand were collected quickly after preparing an NMR sample (within 1 day) in thoroughly dried and degassed $\text{THF-}d_8$ since isomerization to their geometrical isomers slowly takes place at room temperature and a small amount of water facilitates the isomerization. The effect of water in isomerization of nickelalactone was described in our previous report.³ Diisopropylphosphonylmethanol⁴ was prepared by the same method reported for the synthesis of Di-*tert*-butylphosphonylmethanol⁵, and the spectral data was matched with the literature report of Diisopropylphosphonylmethanol prepared by another method. $\text{Ni}(\text{NHC}^{\text{Me}}\text{-P}^{\text{Cy}})(\text{cod})$ (starting material of **4/4'**) was prepared by our previously reported method.³ Data of X-ray single crystal analysis of **8** is available on the Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre (CCDC deposition numbers is 2121037).

Synthesis of NHC-P nickel complexes

1-(2-pyridyl)-3-mesityl-4,5-dimethylimidazolium bromide (**S1**)



To a test tube were added 1-mesityl-4,5-dimethylimidazole (0.600 g, 2.80 mmol)⁶ and 2-bromopyridine (2.23 g, 14.1 mmol), and the mixture was heated at 160 °C for 31 h. To the mixture was added Et₂O and the resulting solid was collected by filtration and washed with Et₂O to give **S1** as a brown solid (117 mg, 0.31 mmol, 11% yield).

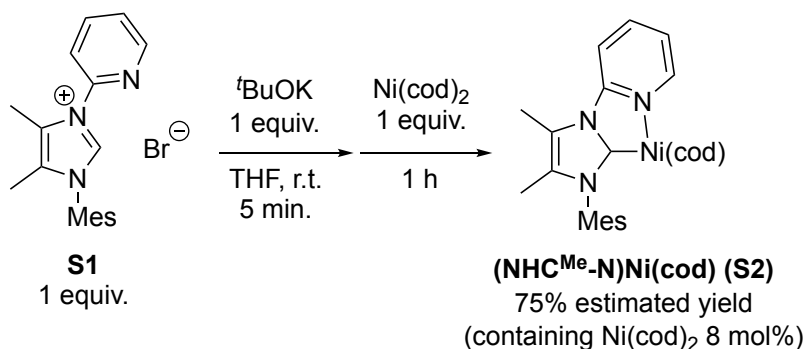
¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 500 MHz): δ = 2.04 (s, 3H), 2.15 (s, 6H), 2.36 (s, 3H), 2.57 (s, 3H), 7.05 (s, 2H), 7.51 (dd, J = 5.0, 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.13 (dt, J = 1.5, 7.5 Hz, 1H), 8.59 (d, J = 5.0 Hz, 1H), 8.89 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 10.6 (s, 1H).

¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 125 MHz): δ = 8.4, 11.0, 18.1, 21.3, 121.1, 125.6, 127.8, 128.1, 128.7, 130.1, 134.9, 136.1, 140.8, 141.5, 147.2, 148.9.

IR (ATR): 3075, 2995, 2980, 2917, 2857, 2756, 1589, 1528, 1476, 1437, 1325, 1288, 1232, 1042, 995, 915, 863, 814, 792, 762, 747, 669 cm⁻¹

HRMS (ESI): m/z Calcd. for C₁₉H₂₂N₃⁺ : 292.1808, Found: 292.1810.

Synthesis of (NHC^{Me}-N)Ni(cod) (**S2**)



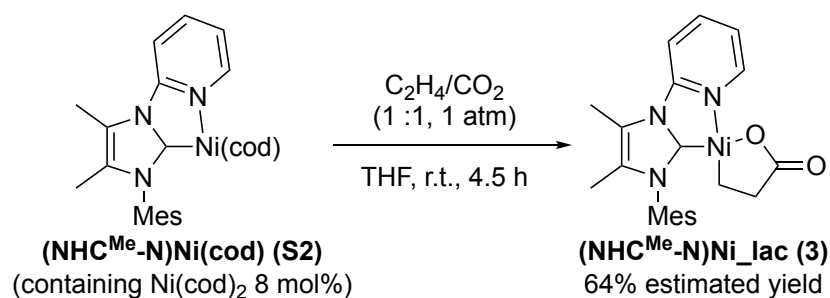
In an Ar filled glove box, to a 20 mL vial with a magnetic stirring bar were added **S1** (100 mg, 0.269 mmol) and THF (4.0 mL). To the solution was added a solution of ^tBuOK (33.2 mg, 0.296 mmol) in THF (1.0 mL) and the resulting solution was stirred for 5 minutes at room temperature to generate NHC carbene. In another 30 mL round bottomed flask, a solution of Ni(cod)₂ (74.0 mg, 0.269 mmol) in THF (6 mL) was prepared and the solution of the NHC carbene was added dropwise to the solution of Ni(cod)₂ with washing with 1 mL of THF. After the mixture was stirred for 1 h, the solvent was evaporated and the resulting solid was dissolved in a mixture of hexane and Et₂O (c.a. 1 : 1), and the remaining solids were removed by filtration. The solvent was evaporated to give **S2** as a purple solid (98.0 mg,

containing 8 mol% of Ni(cod)₂ judging from ¹H NMR. Estimated amount and yield of **S2** were 0.20 mmol and 75%, respectively). The resulting mixture was used in the next step without further purification. For NMR analyses, pure sample of **S2** was prepared by recrystallization from hexane at −30 °C.

¹H NMR (C₆D₆, 500 MHz): δ = 1.57 (s, 3H), 1.82-1.94 (m, 4H), 1.94 (s, 3H), 2.12 (s, 6H), 2.20 (s, 3H), 2.34-2.43 (m, 2H), 2.90-3.00 (m, 2H), 3.92-4.02 (m, 2H), 4.36-4.48 (m, 2H), 6.64 (t, *J* = 6.5 Hz, 1H), 6.92 (s, 2H), 7.08 (t, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 9.76 (d, *J* = 5.0 Hz, 1H). (One aromatic proton is missing probably due to overlapping with C₆D₅H).

¹³C NMR (C₆D₆, 125 MHz): δ = 8.9, 12.6, 18.1, 21.2, 32.0, 32.8, 76.9, 80.1, 111.6, 118.5, 118.6, 126.8, 127.2, 129.1, 137.1, 137.3, 138.1, 146.4, 151.6, 200.8.

Synthesis of (NHC-N)Ni_lac (**2**)



In an Ar filled glovebox, to a Schlenk tube equipped with a J. Young valve were added **S2** (41.5 mg, containing 8 mol% of Ni(cod)₂, estimated amount of **S2** was 0.086 mmol) and THF (3.0 mL). The Schlenk tube was degassed by a freeze-pump-thaw cycle and filled with an atmospheric pressure of ethylene/CO₂ (1 : 1). After the mixture was stirred for 4.5 h, the solvent was evaporated, and the resulting solid was re-dissolved in THF and filtered to remove solids. After evaporation of the solvent, the resulting solid was washed with Et₂O to give **3** as a yellow solid (23.1 mg, 0.0547 mmol, estimated yield was 64%). Concerning the geometry on the Ni atom, we assume the isomer indicated in the scheme (Carbene carbon is located *trans* to the oxygen atom of the lactone moiety) is generated by the similarity of NMR chemical shifts of the lactone part with **1** (¹H NMR chemical shifts of NiCH₂ (**3** : 0.36, **1** : 0.36) and ¹³C NMR chemical shift of NiOCO (**3** : 178.3, **1** : 177.8)).

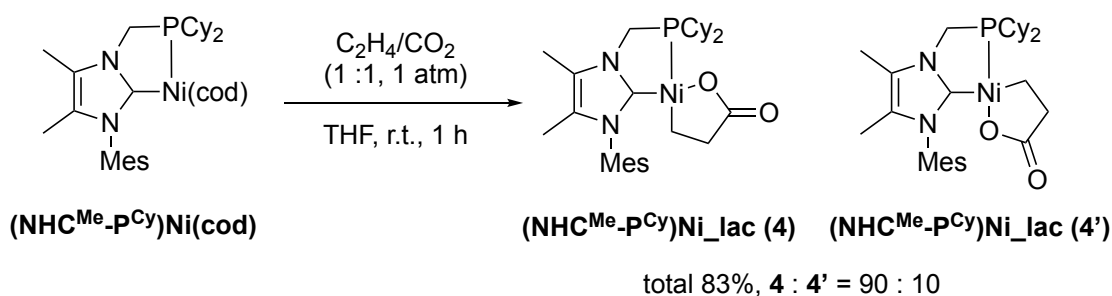
¹H NMR (THF-*d*₈, 500 MHz): δ = 0.36 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 1.68 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 1.76 (s, 3H), 2.08 (s, 6H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 2.59 (s, 3H), 7.02 (s, 2H), 7.38 (t, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 1H), 7.81 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.03 (t, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 1H), 9.00 (d, *J* = 4.5 Hz, 1H).

¹³C NMR (THF-*d*₈, 125 MHz): δ = 0.6, 8.4, 11.8, 17.9, 21.2, 39.0, 111.6, 122.6, 123.8, 129.2, 129.9, 134.7, 135.8, 140.0, 140.2, 149.8, 151.9, 178.3, 185.4.

IR (ATR): 3124, 2920, 1633, 1605, 1569, 1489, 1472, 1446, 1402, 1375, 1327, 1318, 1302, 1262, 1224, 1202, 1154 913, 846, 766 cm^{−1}

HRMS (ESI): *m/z* Calcd. for C₂₂H₂₅N₃NiO₂ + H⁺: 422.1373, Found: 422.1387.

Synthesis of a mixture of (NHC^{Me}-P^{Cy})Ni_{lac} **4** and **4'**



In an Ar-filled glovebox, to a Schlenk tube equipped with a J. Young valve were added (NHC^{Me}-P^{Cy})Ni(cod)³ (30.4 mg, 0.0514 mmol) and THF (3.0 mL). The Schlenk tube was degassed by a freeze-pump-thaw cycle and filled with an atmospheric pressure of ethylene/CO₂ (1:1). After the mixture was stirred for 1 h, the solvent was evaporated. The resulting solid was washed with Et₂O to give a mixture of **4** and **4'** as a yellow solid (23.6 mg, 0.0425 mmol, 83% yield, **4** : **4'** = 90 : 10 by ³¹P NMR). **4** and **4'** were assigned by the similarity of the ¹H, ¹³C and ³¹P NMR spectra with those of **1** and **1'**, which had been characterized by X-ray and NMR analysis in our previous report.³

Spectral data of **4**

¹H NMR (THF-*d*₈, 500 MHz): δ = 0.29 (q, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H, NiCH₂), 1.26-1.44 (m, 6H), 1.48-1.66 (m, 6H), 1.60 (s, 3H), 1.66-1.88 (m, 8H), 2.00-2.12 (m, 2H), 2.03 (s, 6H), 2.18-2.28 (m, 2H), 2.21 (s, 3H), 2.31 (s, 3H), 3.90 (d, *J* = 4.0 Hz, 2H, PCH₂N), 6.95 (s, 2H, mesityl group).

¹³C NMR (THF-*d*₈, 125 MHz): δ = 8.6, 8.8, 9.2, 9.8, 18.3, 21.1, 27.1, 27.5-27.9 (overlapped signals), 29.0 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz), 29.2, 32.4 (d, *J* = 12.0 Hz), 37.0 (d, *J* = 4.8 Hz), 39.7 (d, *J* = 21.5 Hz), 125.5, 125.6, 127.0, 129.6, 136.0, 139.1, 174.3 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz), 189.3 (d, *J* = 19.1 Hz).

³¹P NMR (THF-*d*₈, 200 MHz): δ = 50.5

IR (ATR): 2919, 2848, 1612, 1490, 1443, 1374, 1333, 1247, 1005, 911, 854, 744 cm⁻¹

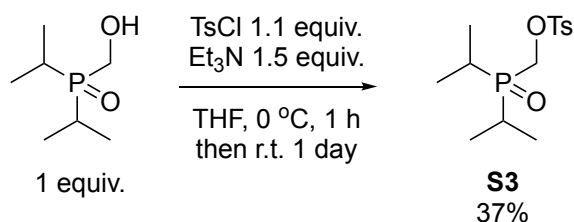
HRMS (ESI): *m/z* Calcd. for C₃₀H₄₅N₂NiO₂P + H⁺: 555.2645, Found: 555.2642.

Selected NMR signals of **4'**

¹H NMR (THF-*d*₈, 500 MHz): 0.22 (q, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H, NiCH₂), 3.97 (d, *J* = 6.5 Hz, 2H, PCH₂N), 6.84 (s, 2H, mesityl group).

³¹P NMR (THF-*d*₈, 200 MHz): δ = 68.4

Synthesis of diisopropylphosphinoylmethyl tosylate (**S3**)



To a two-necked, round-bottomed flask were added diisopropylphosphorylmethanol⁴ (1.39 g, 8.47 mmol), triethylamine (1.8 mL, 13 mmol) and THF (23 mL). The solution was cooled with an ice/water bath and a solution of *p*-toluenesulfonyl chloride (1.78 g, 9.34 mmol) in THF (5.3 mL) was added dropwise to the solution over 15 minutes. After the mixture was stirred at the same temperature for 1 h, the stirring was continued for 1 day at room temperature. Water (18 mL) was added to the mixture and the organic components were extracted three times with EtOAc, and washed with water and brine. After dried over Na₂SO₄, the solvent was evaporated and the resulting mixture was purified by silica gel column chromatography (CH₂Cl₂ : MeOH = 19 : 1) to give **S3** as a yellow oil (0.999 g, 3.14 mmol, 37% yield).

¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 500 MHz): δ = 1.15 (dd, *J* = 7.0, 16.0 Hz, 6H), 1.23 (dd, *J* = 7.0, 16.0 Hz, 6H), 2.11-2.22 (m, 2H), 2.47 (s, 3H), 4.20 (d, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 7.39 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.79 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H).

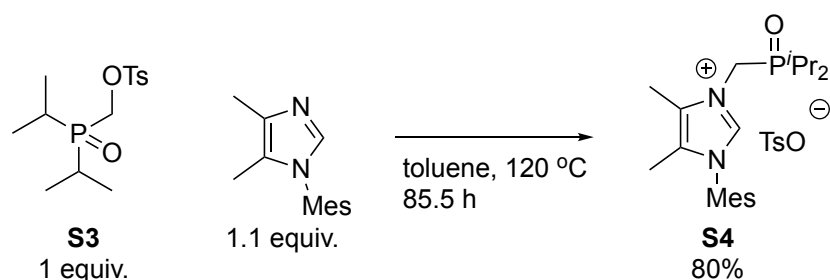
¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 125 MHz): δ = 14.9, 15.6, 21.9, 24.4 (d, *J* = 62.5 Hz), 60.3 (d, *J* = 66.3 Hz), 128.4, 130.3, 131.2, 146.0.

³¹P NMR (CDCl₃, 200 MHz): δ = 55.2

IR (ATR): 3420, 2965, 2933, 2876, 1733, 1595, 1463, 1429, 1364, 1306, 1174, 1152, 1094, 1042, 1025, 990, 930, 887, 816, 753, 680, 662 cm⁻¹

HRMS (ESI): *m/z* Calcd. for C₁₄H₂₃O₄PS + H⁺: 319.1127, Found: 319.1130.

Synthesis of 1-(diisopropylphosphinoylmethyl)-3-mesityl-4,5-dimethylimidazolium tosylate (**S4**)



To a test tube were added 1-mesityl-4,5-dimethylimidazole (0.492 g, 2.30 mmol), **S3** (0.662 g, 2.08 mmol) and toluene (1.7 mL), and the mixture was heated at 120 °C for 85.5 h. After evaporation of the solvent, Et₂O was added. The resulting solid was collected by filtration and washed with Et₂O. The resulting solid was purified by silica gel column chromatography (EtOAc 100%, then CH₂Cl₂ : MeOH = 9 : 1) to give **S4** as a dark oil (886.5 mg, 1.66 mmol, 80% yield).

¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 500 MHz): δ = 1.18-1.36 (m, 12H), 1.93 (s, 3H), 1.96, (s, 6H), 2.24-2.40 (m, 2H), 2.32 (s, 3H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 2.54 (s, 3H), 5.21 (d, *J* = 4.0 Hz, 2H), 7.00 (s, 2H), 7.08 (d, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2H), 7.68 (d, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 9.68 (s, 1H),

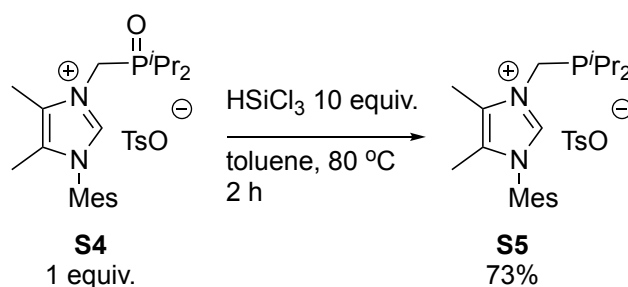
¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 125 MHz): δ = 8.5, 9.7, 15.6 (d, *J* = 2.5 Hz), 15.8 (d, *J* = 2.5 Hz), 17.6, 21.3, 21.4, 25.9 (d, *J* = 64.6 Hz), 42.5 (d, *J* = 52.8 Hz), 126.1, 126.9, 128.6, 129.0, 129.6, 130.0, 135.0, 136.9, 139.5, 141.4, 143.3.

³¹P NMR (CDCl₃, 200 MHz): δ = 54.1

IR (ATR): 3459, 2967, 2932, 2876, 1551, 1459, 1215, 1187, 1148, 1120, 1034, 1012, 885, 816, 711, 680 cm⁻¹

HRMS (ESI): *m/z* Calcd. for C₂₁H₃₄N₂OP⁺: 361.2403, Found: 361.2403.

Synthesis of 1-(diisopropylphosphinomethyl)-3-mesityl-4,5-dimethyl imidazolium tosylate (**S5**)



Under a N_2 atmosphere, to a well-dried 50 mL two-necked, round-bottomed flask were added **S4** (0.881 g, 1.65 mmol), toluene (11 mL) and trichlorosilane (1.7 mL, 17 mmol). After the mixture was stirred at 80 $^\circ\text{C}$ for 2 h, the volatile components were removed under vacuum. To the mixture was added degassed water and the organic components were extracted three times with degassed CH_2Cl_2 under N_2 . The combined organic extracts were dried over Na_2SO_4 . The flask was brought into a N_2 filled glove box, and the extracts were filtered through a celite short pad. Evaporation of the solvent gave **S5** as a beige solid (0.619 g, 1.20 mmol, 73% yield).

^1H NMR (C_6D_6 , 500 MHz): δ = 1.02-1.14 (m, 6H), 1.16-1.26 (m, 6H), 1.26 (s, 3H), 1.87 (s, 6H), 2.00 (s, 3H), 2.03 (s, 3H), 2.11 (s, 3H), 2.27-2.42 (m, 2H), 5.17 (s, 2H), 6.61 (s, 2H), 6.89 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 8.17 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 10.6 (s, 1H).

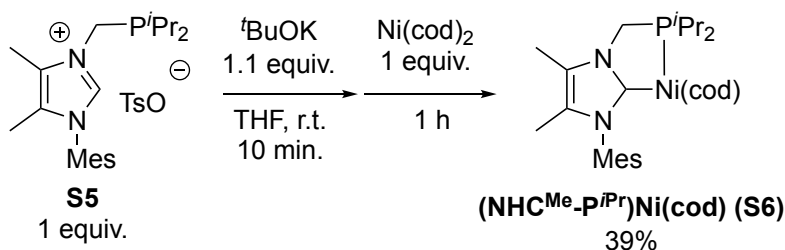
^{13}C NMR (C_6D_6 , 125 MHz): δ = 7.8, 9.9 (d, J = 10.8 Hz), 17.6, 19.5 (d, J = 9.5 Hz), 20.0 (d, J = 13.1 Hz), 21.1, 21.2, 23.6 (d, J = 10.8 Hz), 44.2 (d, J = 20.4 Hz), 126.8, 126.9, 128.3, 128.4, 128.7, 129.86, 129.95, 135.5, 137.7 (d, J = 4.8 Hz), 140.3, 147.2.

^{31}P NMR (C_6D_6 , 200 MHz): δ = 5.9

IR (ATR): 3099, 2948, 2920, 2863, 1634, 1606, 1541, 1457, 1443, 1211, 1189, 1150, 1116, 1031, 1010, 867, 850, 814, 798, 677 cm^{-1}

HRMS (ESI): m/z Calcd. for $\text{C}_{21}\text{H}_{34}\text{N}_2\text{P}^+$: 345.2454, Found: 345.2458.

Synthesis of $[\text{Ni}(\text{NHC}^{\text{Me}}\text{-P}^i\text{Pr})(\text{cod})]$ (**S6**)



In an Ar-filled glove box, to a 20 mL vial with a magnetic stirring bar were added **S5** (100 mg, 0.194 mmol) and THF (3.0 mL). To the solution was added $t\text{BuOK}$ (23.9 mg, 0.213 mmol) and the resulting solution was stirred for 10 minutes at room temperature to generate NHC carbene. In another 50 mL round bottomed flask, a solution of $\text{Ni}(\text{cod})_2$ (52.8 mg, 0.192 mmol) in THF (4 mL) was prepared and the solution of the NHC carbene was added dropwise to the

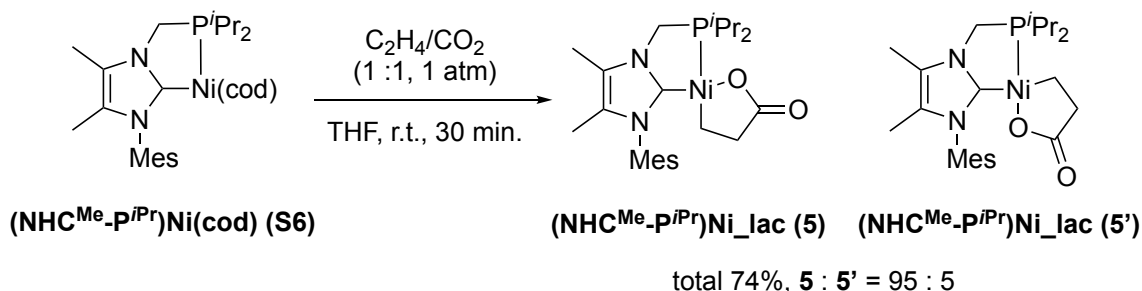
solution of Ni(cod)₂ over 10 minutes. After the mixture was stirred for 1 h, the solvent was evaporated and the resulting solid was dissolved in hexane. The remaining solids were removed by filtration. The solvent was evaporated and the resulting solid was purified by recrystallization from hexane at -30 °C to give **S6** as a brown solid (38.9 mg, 0.0761 mmol, 39% yield).

¹H NMR (C₆D₆, 500 MHz): δ = 1.02 (dd, *J* = 6.5, 12.0 Hz, 6H), 1.09 (dd, *J* = 6.5, 13 Hz, 6H), 1.43 (s, 3H), 1.75 (s, 3H), 1.76-1.84 (m, 2H), 1.92-2.00 (m, 2H), 2.06 (s, 6H), 2.16 (s, 3H), 2.16-2.24 (m, 2H), 2.36-2.44 (m, 2H), 2.54-2.62 (m, 2H), 3.27 (d, *J* = 3.5 Hz, 2H), 4.24-4.34 (m, 2H), 4.50-4.60 (m, 2H), 6.85 (s, 2H).

¹³C NMR (C₆D₆, 125 MHz): δ = 9.2, 10.3, 18.3, 18.5 (d, *J* = 2.4 Hz), 18.9 (d, *J* = 7.3 Hz), 21.2, 25.4 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz), 31.7 (d, *J* = 7.3 Hz), 33.2, 43.2 (d, *J* = 15.5 Hz), 74.6 (d, *J* = 3.6 Hz), 77.2 (d, *J* = 12 Hz), 121.6, (d, *J* = 4.8 Hz), 123.2, 129.1, 137.0, 137.5, 137.9, 201.7.

³¹P NMR (C₆D₆, 200 MHz): δ = 63.0.

Synthesis of a mixture of (NHC^{Me}-PⁱPr)₂Ni₂lac **5** and **5'**



In an Ar-filled glovebox, to a Schlenk tube equipped with a J. Young valve were added **S6** (30.8 mg, 0.0602 mmol) and THF (3.1 mL). The Schlenk tube was degassed by a freeze-pump-thaw cycle and filled with an atmospheric pressure of ethylene/CO₂ (1:1). After the mixture was stirred for 30 minutes, the solvent was evaporated. The resulting solid was washed with Et₂O to give a mixture of **5** and **5'** as a yellow solid (21.3 mg, 0.0448 mmol, 74% yield, **5** : **5'** = 95 : 5 by ³¹P NMR). **5** and **5'** were assigned by the similarity of the ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra with those of **1** and **1'**, which had been characterized by X-ray and NMR analysis in our previous report.³

Spectral data of **5**

¹H NMR (THF-*d*₈, 500 MHz): δ = 0.31 (q, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2H, NiCH₂), 1.22 (dd, *J* = 10.0, 15.0 Hz, 6H), 1.37 (dd, *J* = 10.0, 15.0 Hz, 6H), 1.54 (q, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 1.62 (s, 3H), 2.04 (s, 6H), 2.22 (s, 3H), 2.20-2.30 (m, 2H), 2.31 (s, 3H), 3.89 (d, *J* = 4.0 Hz, 2H, PCH₂N), 6.96 (s, 2H, mesityl group).

¹³C NMR (THF-*d*₈, 125 MHz): δ = 8.8, 9.4, 9.8, 18.4 (d, *J* = 18.0 Hz), 18.8 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz), 21.1, 23.2 (d, *J* = 12.0 Hz), 37.0 (d, *J* = 4.8 Hz), 39.6 (d, *J* = 20.4 Hz), 125.58, 125.64, 127.0, 129.7, 136.0, 139.1, 174.4 (d, *J* = 5.9 Hz), 189.2 (d, *J* = 19.1 Hz) (One aliphatic carbon is missing probably due to overlapping).

³¹P NMR (THF-*d*₈, 200 MHz): δ = 59.0

IR (ATR): 2948, 2920, 2887, 1629, 1489, 1459, 1437, 1372, 1303, 1249, 1230, 1029, 903, 882, 863, 660 cm⁻¹

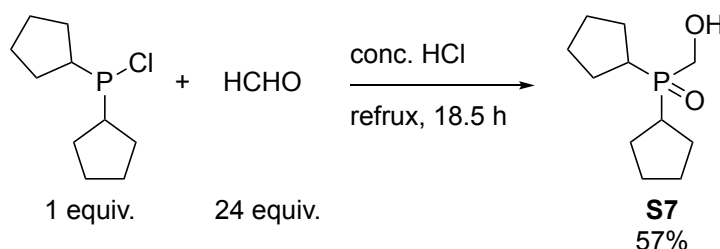
HRMS (ESI): *m/z* Calcd. for C₂₄H₃₇N₂NiO₂P + H⁺: 475.2019, Found: 475.2028.

Selected NMR signals of **5'**

^1H NMR (THF- d_8 , 500 MHz): 0.24 (q, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 2H, NiCH_2), 3.95 (d, $J = 5.5$ Hz, 2H, PCH_2N), 6.85 (s, 2H, mesityl group).

^{31}P NMR (THF- d_8 , 200 MHz): $\delta = 77.3$

Synthesis of dicyclopentylphosphinoylmethanol (**S7**)



To a 100 mL two-necked, round-bottomed flask were added chlorodicyclopentylphosphine (2.27 g, 11.1 mmol) and concentrated hydrochloric acid (22 mL), followed by aqueous solution of formaldehyde (37 wt% in water, 22 mL, 270 mmol). The resulting mixture was refluxed for 18.5 h. The resulting solution was neutralized with solid NaOH and NaHCO_3 , and the organic components were extracted three times with CHCl_3 and dried over Na_2SO_4 . After evaporation of the solvent, hexane was added to the resulting oil to give **S7** as a white solid (1.38 g, 6.38 mmol, 57% yield).

^1H NMR (CDCl_3 , 500 MHz): $\delta = 1.56$ – 1.70 (m, 4H), 1.68 – 2.00 (m, 12H), 2.13 – 2.25 (m, 2H), 4.02 (s, 2H).

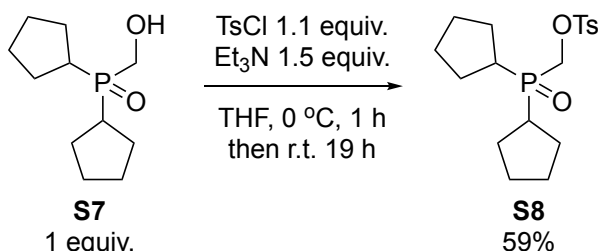
^{13}C NMR (CDCl_3 , 125 MHz): $\delta = 26.3$ – 26.7 (overlapped signals for cyclopentyl groups), 35.4 (d, $J = 65.9$ Hz), 57.9 (d, $J = 75.4$ Hz).

^{31}P NMR (CDCl_3 , 200 MHz): $\delta = 54.8$

IR (ATR): 3125, 2945, 2909, 2865, 2816, 1450, 1422, 1185, 1124, 1049, 904, 863, 792, 718 cm^{-1}

Anal. Calcd for $\text{C}_{11}\text{H}_{21}\text{O}_2\text{P}$: C, 61.09; H, 9.79; Found: C, 61.08; H, 9.87.

Synthesis of dicyclopentylphosphinoylmethyl tosylate (**S8**)



To a 100 mL two-necked, round-bottomed flask were added **S7** (70.6 mg, 0.326 mmol), triethylamine (68 μL , 0.49 mmol) and THF (1 mL). The solution was cooled with an ice/water bath and a solution of *p*-toluenesulfonyl chloride (68.6 mg, 0.359 mmol) in THF (0.3 mL) was added dropwise to the solution over 10 minutes. After the mixture was stirred at the same temperature for 1 h, the stirring was continued for 19 hours at room temperature. Water (1 mL) was

added to the mixture and the organic components were extracted three times with EtOAc, and washed with water and brine. After the extracts were dried over Na₂SO₄, the solvent was evaporated and the resulting mixture was purified by silica gel column chromatography (CH₂Cl₂ : MeOH = 19 : 1) to give **S8** as a yellow oil (71.3 mg, 0.192 mmol, 59% yield).

¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 500 MHz): δ = 1.50-1.96 (m, 16H), 2.08-2.20 (m, 2H), 2.48 (s, 3H), 4.16 (d, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 7.39 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.79 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H).

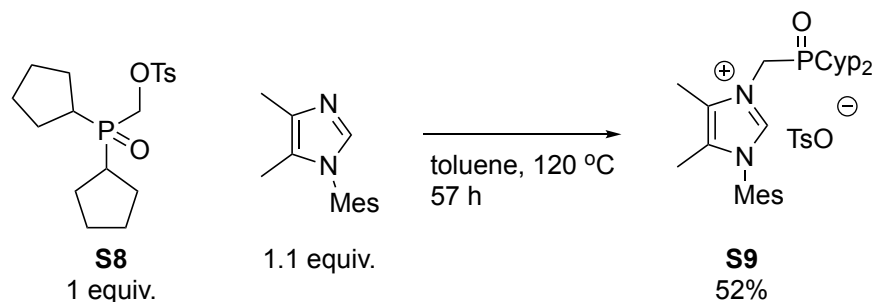
¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 125 MHz): δ = 21.9, 25.8, 26.1 (d, *J* = 10.8 Hz), 26.3, 26.8 (d, *J* = 10.8 Hz), 35.8 (d, *J* = 69.4 Hz), 62.7 (d, *J* = 70.6 Hz), 128.4, 130.3, 131.3, 145.9.

³¹P NMR (CDCl₃, 200 MHz): δ = 50.8.

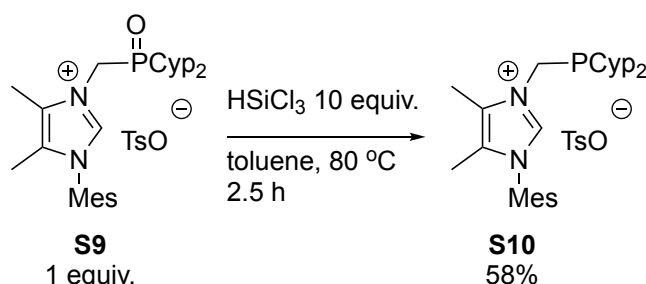
IR (ATR): 2950, 2866, 1595, 1493, 1448, 1429, 1400, 1366, 1299, 1187, 1172, 1094, 990, 906, 814, 751, 662 cm⁻¹

HRMS (ESI): *m/z* Calcd. for C₁₈H₂₇O₄PS + H⁺: 371.1440, Found: 371.1443.

Synthesis of 1-(dicyclopentylphosphinoylmethyl)-3-mesityl-4,5-dimethylimidazolium tosylate (**S9**)



Synthesis of 1-(dicyclopentylphosphinomethyl)-3-mesityl-4,5-dimethylimidazolium tosylate (**S10**)



Under a N_2 atmosphere, to a well-dried 30 mL two-necked, round-bottomed flask were added **S9** (0.332 g, 0.568 mmol), toluene (4 mL) and trichlorosilane (0.57 mL, 5.6 mmol). After stirring the mixture at 80 °C for 2.5 h, the volatile components were removed under vacuum. To the mixture was added degassed water and organic components were extracted three times with degassed CH_2Cl_2 under N_2 . The combined organic extracts were dried over Na_2SO_4 . The flask was brought into a N_2 -filled glovebox, and the mixture was filtered through a celite short pad. Evaporation of the solvent gave **S10** as a white solid (0.1861 g, 0.327 mmol, 58% yield).

1H NMR (C_6D_6 , 500 MHz): δ = 1.16 (s, 3H), 1.18-1.64 (m, 12H), 1.78-1.88 (m, 2H), 1.85 (s, 9H), 1.96 (s, 3H), 2.00 (s, 3H), 2.02-2.10 (m, 2H), 2.18-2.30 (m, 2H), 5.07 (s, 2H), 6.56, (s, 2H), 6.86, (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 8.28 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 10.9 (s, 1H).

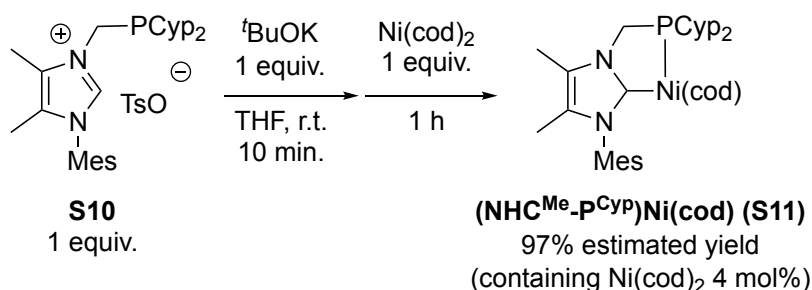
^{13}C NMR (C_6D_6 , 125 MHz): δ = 7.6, 9.8 (d, J = 12 Hz), 17.6, 21.1, 21.2, 26.4 (d, J = 7.3 Hz), 26.6 (d, J = 7.3 Hz), 30.1 (d, J = 14.4 Hz), 31.7 (d, J = 16.8 Hz), 36.2 (d, J = 10.8 Hz), 47.2 (d, J = 19.1 Hz), 126.3, 126.9, 128.3, 128.4, 129.9, 135.5, 137.7, 138.3, 140.3, 147.2 (One aromatic carbon is missing due to overlapping).

^{31}P NMR (C_6D_6 , 200 MHz): δ = -1.4

IR (ATR): 3103, 3032, 2948, 2863, 1627, 1608, 1541, 1489, 1448, 1224, 1183, 1153, 1116, 1034, 1012, 861, 814, 798, 677 cm^{-1}

HRMS (ESI): m/z Calcd. for $C_{25}H_{37}N_2P^+$: 397.2767, Found: 397.2770.

Synthesis of $[Ni(NHC^{Me-P^{Cyp}})(cod)]$ (**S11**)



In an Ar-filled glove box, to a 20 mL vial with a magnetic stirring bar were added **S10** (86.0 mg, 0.151 mmol) and THF (2.0 mL). To the solution was added a solution of $tBuOK$ (17.0 mg, 0.152 mmol) in THF (1.0 mL) and the resulting solution was stirred for 10 minutes at room temperature to generate NHC carbene. In another 30 mL round bottomed

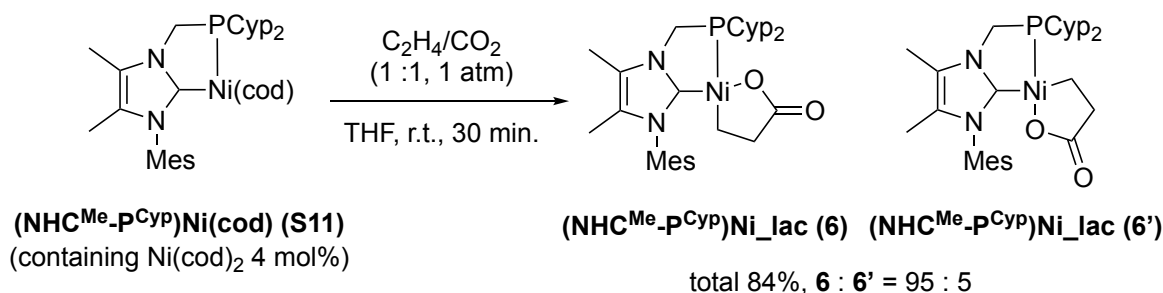
flask, a solution of Ni(cod)₂ (41.6 mg, 0.151 mmol) in THF (4 mL) was prepared and the solution of the NHC carbene was added dropwise to the solution of Ni(cod)₂ over 10 minutes. After the mixture was stirred for 1 h, solvent was evaporated and the resulting solid was dissolved in hexane and the remaining solids were removed by filtration. The solvent was evaporated to give **S11** as a yellow solid (84.1 mg, containing 4 mol% of Ni(cod)₂ judging from ¹H NMR. Estimated amount and yield of **S11** were 0.15 mmol and 97%, respectively). The resulting mixture was used in the next step without further purification. For NMR analyses, pure sample of **S11** was prepared by recrystallization from hexane at -30 °C.

¹H NMR (C₆D₆, 500 MHz): δ = 1.42-1.88 (m, 18H), 1.46 (s, 3H), 1.78 (s, 3H), 2.04-2.24 (m, 4H), 2.10 (s, 6H), 2.17 (s, 3H), 2.34-2.46 (m, 2H), 2.50-2.60 (m, 2H), 3.34 (d, *J* = 3.5 Hz, 2H), 4.26-4.34 (m, 2H), 4.52-4.62 (m, 2H), 6.87 (s, 2H).

¹³C NMR (C₆D₆, 125 MHz): δ = 9.2, 10.4, 18.4, 21.2, 27.0 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz), 27.3 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz), 29.5-29.9 (overlapped), 31.6 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz), 33.4, 38.9 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz), 46.1 (d, *J* = 17.9 Hz), 74.1 (d, *J* = 3.6 Hz), 77.0 (d, *J* = 13.1 Hz), 121.7 (d, *J* = 4.8 Hz), 123.1, 129.1, 137.1, 137.5, 137.9, 201.7.

³¹P NMR (C₆D₆, 200 MHz): δ = 58.1

Synthesis of a mixture of (NHC^{Me}-P^{Cyp})Ni_{lac} **6** and **6'**



In an Ar-filled glovebox, to a Schlenk tube equipped with a J. Young valve were added **S11** (34.3 mg, containing 4 mol% of Ni(cod)₂. Estimated amount of **S11** was 0.060 mmol) and THF (3.4 mL). The Schlenk tube was degassed by a freeze-pump-thaw cycle and filled with an atmospheric pressure of ethylene/CO₂ (1:1). After the mixture was stirred for 30 minutes, the solvent was evaporated. The resulting solid was washed with Et₂O to give a mixture of **6** and **6'** as a yellow solid (26.6 mg, 0.0504 mmol, estimated yield was 84%, **6** : **6'** = 95 : 5 by ³¹P NMR). **6** and **6'** were assigned by the similarity of the ¹H, ¹³C and ³¹P NMR spectra with those of **1** and **1'**, which had been characterized by X-ray and NMR analysis in our previous report.³

Spectral data of **6**

¹H NMR (THF-*d*₈, 500 MHz): δ = 0.29 (q, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2H, NiCH₂), 1.53 (q, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 1.56-1.66 (m, 4H), 1.62 (s, 3H), 1.70-2.04 (m, 12H), 2.05 (s, 6H), 2.20 (s, 3H), 2.25-2.38 (m, 2H), 2.31 (s, 3H), 3.92 (d, *J* = 3.5 Hz, 2H, PCH₂N), 6.95 (s, 2H, mesityl group).

¹³C NMR (THF-*d*₈, 125 MHz): δ = 8.7, 8.8, 9.3, 9.8, 18.3, 21.1, 27.0-27.6 (overlapped signals for cyclopentyl groups), 29.8 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz), 30.2 (d, *J* = 2.5 Hz), 35.1 (d, *J* = 13.8 Hz), 37.0 (d, *J* = 5.0 Hz), 42.2 (d, *J* = 23.8 Hz), 125.6, 125.7, 127.0, 129.6, 135.9, 139.1, 174.7 (d, *J* = 5.0 Hz), 189.1 (d, *J* = 21.3 Hz).

^{31}P NMR (THF- d_8 , 200 MHz): δ = 51.2.

IR (ATR): 2952, 2917, 2889, 2865, 1620, 1489, 1437, 1372, 1321, 1239, 1204, 908, 850, cm^{-1}

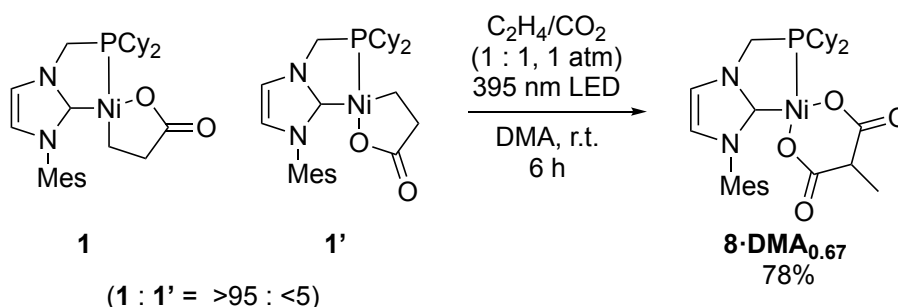
HRMS (ESI): m/z Calcd. for $\text{C}_{28}\text{H}_{41}\text{N}_2\text{NiO}_2\text{P} + \text{H}^+$: 527.2332, Found: 527.2343.

Selected NMR signals of **6'**

^1H NMR (THF- d_8 , 500 MHz): δ = 3.97 (d, J = 6.3 Hz, 2H, PCH_2N), 6.85 (s, 2H, mesityl group).

^{31}P NMR (THF- d_8 , 200 MHz): δ = 68.5

Synthesis of methylmalonate complex bearing an NHC-P ligand (**8**)



In an Ar-filled glovebox, to a Schlenk tube were added a mixture of **1** and **1'** (**1** : **1'** = >95 : <5, 21.5 mg, 0.0408 mmol) and DMA (1.5 mL). The Schlenk tube was degassed by a freeze-pump-thaw cycle and filled with an atmospheric pressure of ethylene/ CO_2 (1 : 1). After stirring the mixture under irradiation with 2 sockets of 395 nm LED light for 6 h, the solvent was removed under reduced pressure. The resulting solid was purified by reprecipitation with THF and hexane, and washed with a minimum amount of THF to give **8** as a pale yellow solid (20.0 mg, containing 0.67 equiv. of DMA, 0.0318 mmol, 78% yield). A single crystal suitable for X-ray analysis was grown by DMA/hexane at room temperature. DMA was difficult to remove because it co-crystallizes with **8**.

^1H NMR (CD_2Cl_2 , 500MHz): δ = 1.18 (d, J = 7.5 Hz, 3H), 1.26–1.52 (m, 6H), 1.56–1.99 (m, 12H), 2.01 (s, 2H, $\text{DMA}_{0.67}$), 2.02–2.20 (m, 2H), 2.09 (s, 3H), 2.15 (s, 3H), 2.31 (s, 3H), 2.34–2.42 (m, 1H), 2.48–2.58 (m, 1H), 2.87 (s, 2H, $\text{DMA}_{0.67}$), 2.97 (s, 2H, $\text{DMA}_{0.67}$), 3.28 (q, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 4.00 (d, J = 5.0 Hz, 2H), 6.74 (s, 1H), 6.93 (s, 1H), 6.95 (s, 1H), 7.18 (s, 1H).

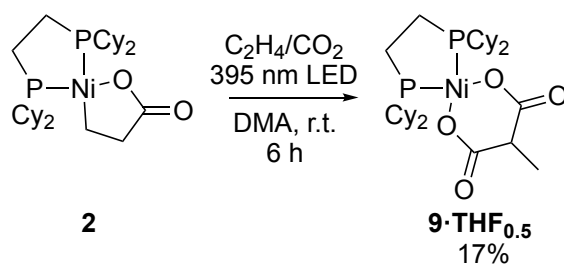
^{13}C NMR: (CD_2Cl_2 , 125 MHz): δ = 15.2, 18.0, 18.2, 21.2, 21.8 (DMA), 26.2, 26.6–27.1 (overlapped signals for cyclohexyl groups), 28.28, 28.33, 28.5 (d, J = 3.6 Hz), 28.7, 31.5 (d, J = 21.5 Hz), 31.6 (d, J = 21.6 Hz), 35.1 (DMA), 38.2 (DMA), 42.0 (d, J = 31.1 Hz), 51.8, 120.4, 120.5, 127.1, 128.8, 128.9, 134.2 135.5, 139.0, 160.5 (d, J = 35.9 Hz), 170.5 (DMA), 174.7, 176.6.

^{31}P NMR (CD_2Cl_2 , 160 MHz): δ = 69.0.

IR (ATR): 2926, 2851, 1644, 1621, 1554, 1489, 1448, 1413, 1377, 1344, 1273, 1197, 1183, 1161, 1120, 1098, 1072, 1033, 1010, 967, 936, 895, 872, 852, 775, 740, 721, 691 cm^{-1}

HRMS (ESI): m/z Calcd. for $\text{C}_{29}\text{H}_{41}\text{N}_2\text{NiO}_4\text{P} + \text{H}^+$: 571.2230, Found: 571.2240.

Synthesis of methylmalonate complex bearing dcype ligand **9**



In an Ar-filled glovebox, to a Schlenk tube were added **2** (35.3 mg, 0.0638 mmol) and DMA (2.0 mL). The Schlenk tube was degassed by a freeze-pump-thaw cycle and filled with an atmospheric pressure of ethylene/CO₂ (1 : 1). After stirring the mixture under irradiation with 2 sockets of 395 nm LED light for 6 h, the solvent was removed under reduced pressure. The resulting solid was purified by reprecipitation with THF and hexane and washed with a minimum amount of THF to give **9** as a pale yellow solid (7.0 mg, containing 0.5 equiv. of THF, 0.011 mmol, 17% yield). THF could not be removed even after long time of drying under vacuum.

¹H NMR (CD₂Cl₂, 500MHz): δ = 1.26 (d, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 3H), 1.26–2.16 (m, 44H), 1.82 (m, 2H, THF_{0.5}), 2.32–2.40 (m, 2H), 2.48–2.56 (m, 2H), 3.36 (q, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 1H), 3.68 (m, 2H, THF_{0.5}).

¹³C NMR: (CD₂Cl₂, 125 MHz): δ = 15.1, 20.6 (t, *J* = 20.4 Hz), 26.0 (THF), 26.3, 27.0–27.2 (m), 27.2–27.5 (m), 28.7, 29.2, 29.7 (d, *J* = 10.8 Hz), 33.9 (t, *J* = 9.5 Hz), 34.3 (t, *J* = 10.8 Hz) 51.8, 68.2 (THF), 176.2.

³¹P NMR (CD₂Cl₂, 160 MHz): δ = 79.1.

IR (ATR): 2924, 2850, 1649, 1623, 1444, 1374, 1344, 1269, 1202, 1180, 1115, 1066, 1005, 893, 870, 850, 824, 800, 747, 719, 678, 656 cm⁻¹

HRMS (ESI): *m/z* Calcd. for C₃₀H₅₃NiO₄P₂ + H⁺: 597.2767, Found: 597.2787.

General procedure for the synthesis of sodium methylmalonate

In an Ar-filled glovebox, to a test tube equipped with a stirring bar were added nickel complex, ligand, photosensitizer, additive, sacrificial reductant and solvent (1.0 mL). The test tube was closed with three-way stop cock and atmospheric pressure of ethylene and CO₂ (1 : 1) was introduced by two freeze-pump-thaw cycles. Then the mixture was subjected to the desired reaction conditions. Under air, the mixture was transferred to a separatory funnel and added with 5% NaOH aq. (2 mL). The water layer was washed with c.a. 5 mL of Et₂O (When NMP or DMPU was used as a solvent, the water layer was further washed 4 times with c.a. 5 mL of CH₂Cl₂) and evaporated under reduced pressure. To the resulting solid was added sodium 3-(trimethylsilyl)-1-propanesulfonate (~11 mg) as internal standard and D₂O (2.0 mL), and submitted for ¹H NMR experiment after filtration through cotton plug. The turnover numbers (TON) of sodium methylmalonate and sodium propionate were determined by the integral ratios of signal of SiMe₃ group of sodium 3-(trimethylsilyl)-1-propanesulfonate and signals of CH₃ group of sodium methylmalonate ($\delta = 1.1$ ppm, d, $J = 7$ Hz) and that of sodium propionate ($\delta = 0.9$ ppm, t, $J = 8$ Hz).

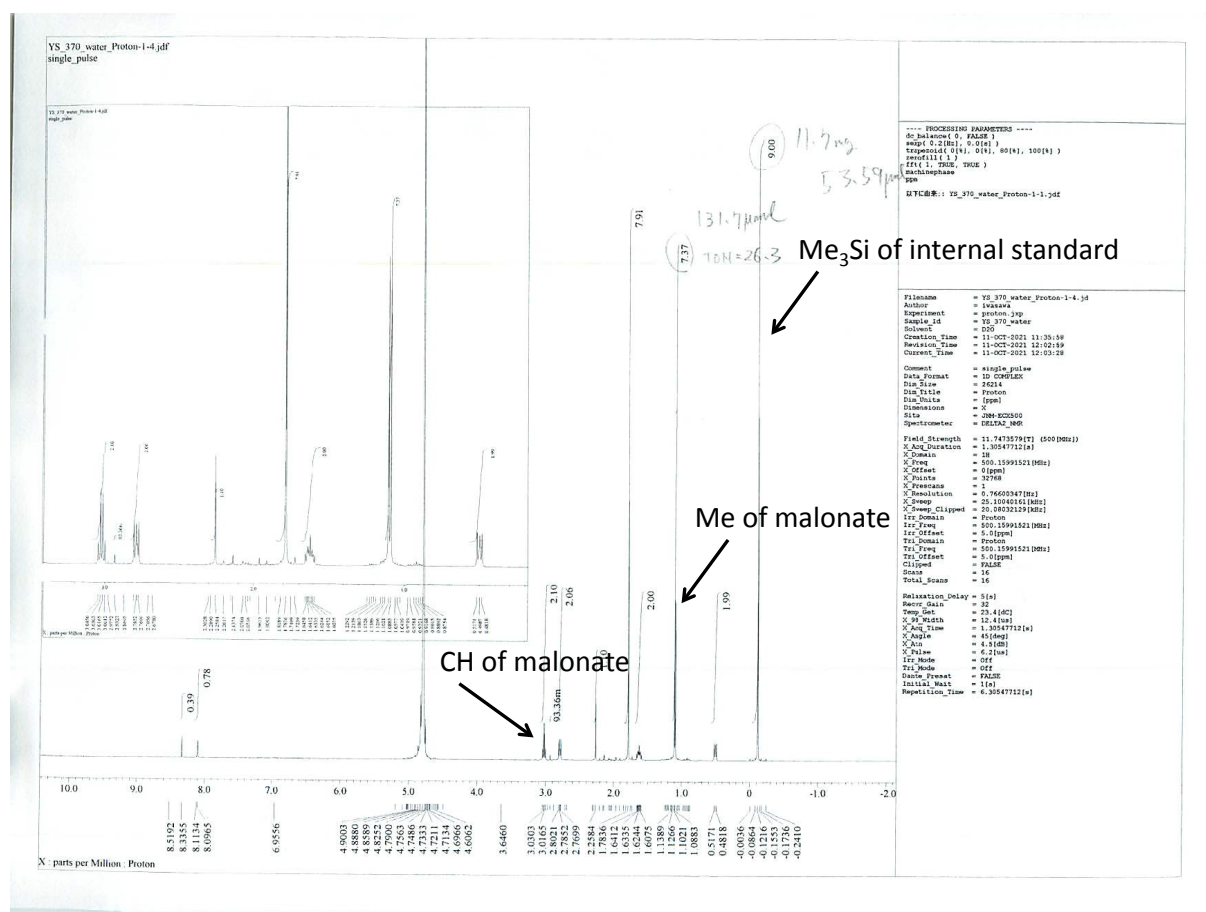
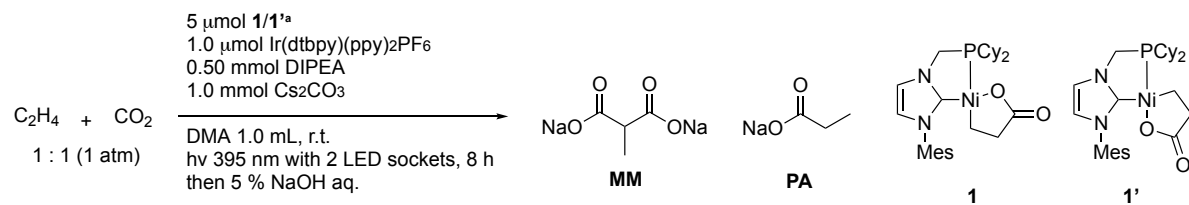


Figure S1. Representative ¹H NMR spectrum of synthesis of methylmalonate salt.

Control experiments

Control experiments were performed in the absence of each component as indicated below. In every case, methylmalonate salt was not obtained catalytically.

Table S1. Control experiments

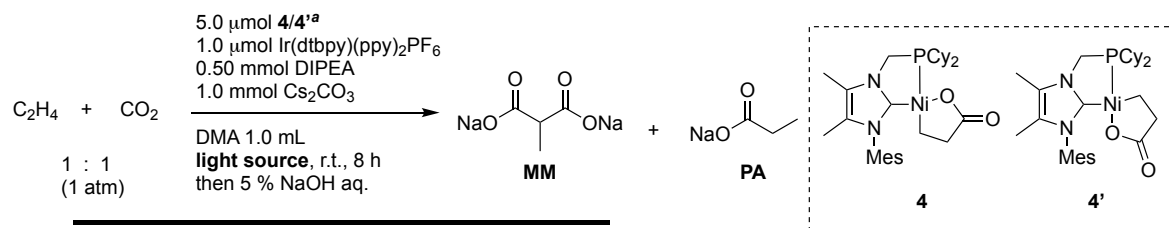


entry	condition	TON	
		MM	PA
1		8.1	0
2	without 1/1'	0	0
3	without Ir	0.9	0
4	without DIPEA	1.1	0
5	Under dark	0	0

^a1 : 1' = 95 : 5 for entry 1 and >95 : <5 for entries 2-5

Screening of reaction conditions

Table S2. Screening of light sources



Entry	light source (number of socket)	TON	
		MM	PA
1	395 nm × 2	8.2	0
2	365 nm × 2	8.0	0
3	365 nm × 2 and 425 nm × 2	8.7	0
4	Hg lamp (without optical filter)	3.5	2.5
5 ^b	395 nm × 2	6.6	0

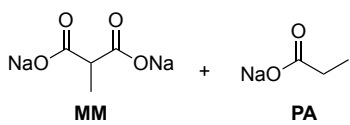
^aRatio was not determined. ^b70 °C.

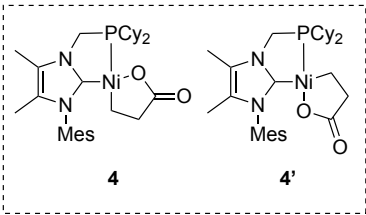
Table S3. Screening of electron donors

$\text{C}_2\text{H}_4 + \text{CO}_2$
 1 : 1
 (1 atm)

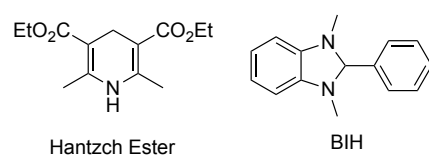
5 μmol **4/4'**^a
 1.0 μmol $\text{Ir}(\text{dtbpy})(\text{ppy})_2\text{PF}_6$
 0.50 mmol **Electron donor**
 1.0 mmol Cs_2CO_3

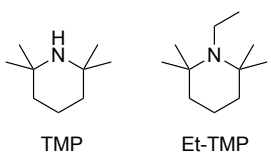
DMA 1.0 mL, r.t.
 hv 395 nm with 2 LED sockets, 8 h
 then 5 % NaOH aq.





Entry	Electron donor	TON	
		MM	PA
1	DIPEA	8.2	0
2	Cy_2NMe	2.0	0
3	Et_3N	7.3	0
4	Hantzch Ester	0	0.2
5	BIH	6.5	0
6	TMP	1.0	0
7	Et-TMP	8.9	0
8 ^b	Zn	1.1	trace





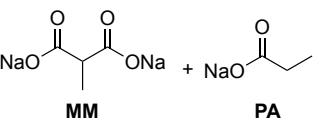
^aRatio was not determined. ^bWithout $\text{Ir}(\text{dtbpy})(\text{ppy})_2\text{PF}_6$

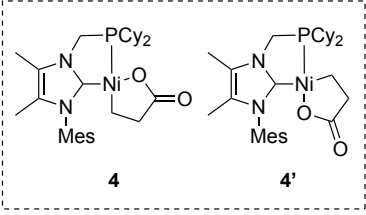
Table S4. Screening of solvents

$\text{C}_2\text{H}_4 + \text{CO}_2$
 1 : 1
 (1 atm)

5 μmol **4/4'**^a
 1.0 μmol $\text{Ir}(\text{dtbpy})(\text{ppy})_2\text{PF}_6$
 0.50 mmol DIPEA
 1.0 mmol Cs_2CO_3

Solvent 1.0 mL in Test tube, r.t.
 hv 395 nm with 2 LED sockets, 8 h
 then 5 % NaOH aq.

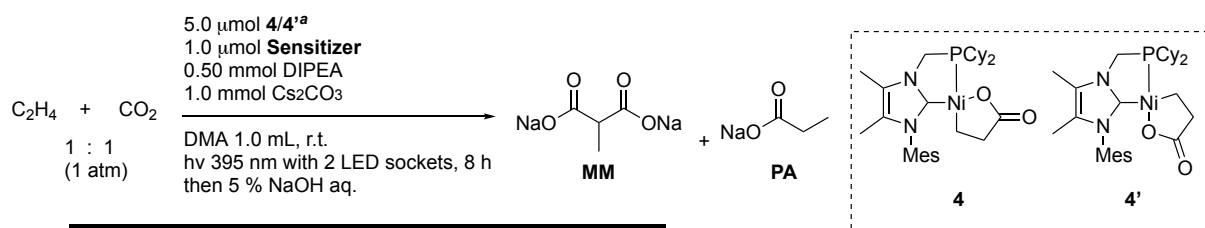




Entry	Solvent	TON	
		MM	PA
1	DMA	8.2	0
2	DME	0.4	0
3	DMSO	< 2.0	0
4	NMP	6.9	0
5	MeCN	3.6	0.5
6	DMPU	4.3	0.2
7	Propylene Carbonate	4.5	0

^aRatio was not determined.

Table S5. Screening of photo sensitizer



Entry	Sensitizer	TON	
		MM	P
1	$\text{Ir}(\text{dtbpy})(\text{ppy})_2\text{PF}_6$	8.2	0
2	$\text{Ir}(\text{dF}(\text{CF}_3)\text{ppy})_2(\text{dtbpy})\text{PF}_6$	7.6	0
3	$\text{Ir}(\text{dF}(\text{CF}_3)\text{ppy})_2(\text{bpy})\text{PF}_6$	7.0	0
4	$\text{Ir}(\text{ppy})_3$	1.2	0
5	$\text{Ru}(\text{dmbpy})_3(\text{PF}_6)_2$	4.9	0
6	4CzIPN	6.6	1.0
7	4DPAIPN	6.2	3.1

^aRatio was not determined.

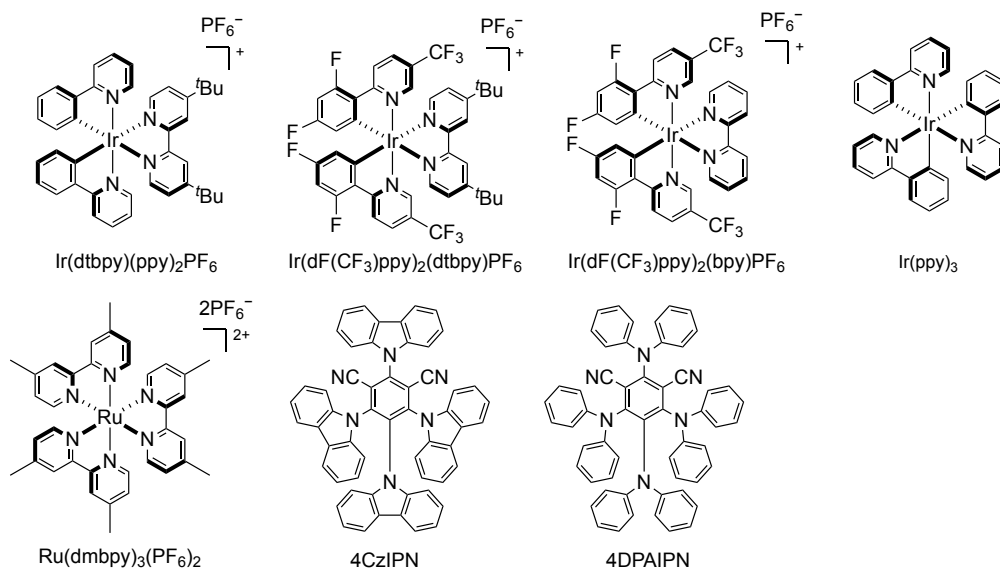
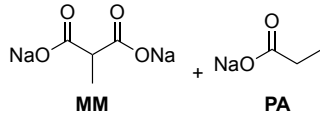
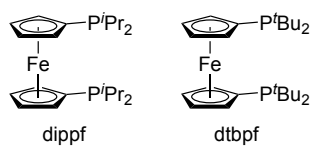
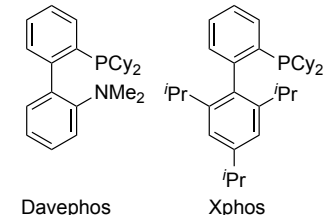
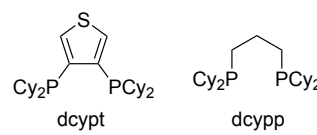
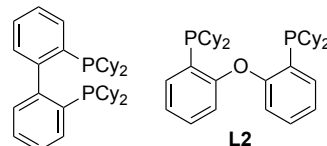
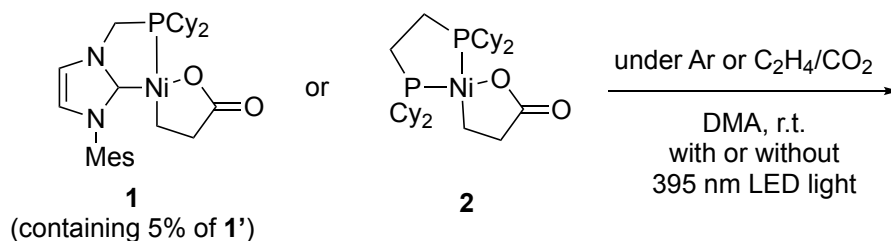


Table S6. Screening of metal precursors and phosphine ligands

C_2H_4 + CO_2		5.0 μmol Catalyst 5.0 μmol Ligand 1.0 μmol $\text{Ir}(\text{dtbpy})(\text{ppy})_2\text{PF}_6$ 0.50 mmol DIPEA 1.0 mmol Cs_2CO_3			
1 : 1 (1 atm)		DMA 1.0 mL, 100 $^\circ\text{C}$ $h\nu$ 395 nm with 2 LED sockets, 8 h then 5 % NaOH aq.	MM	PA	
Entry	Catalyst	Ligand	TON		
			MM	PA	
1	$\text{Ni}(\text{glyme})\text{Cl}_2$	dcype	6.3	0	
2	$\text{Ni}(\text{glyme})\text{Br}_2$	dcype	8.7	0	
3	$\text{Ni}(\text{OTf})_2$	dcype	6.0	0	
4	$\text{Ni}(\text{acac})_2$	dcype	3.4	0	
5	$\text{Pd}(\text{OAc})_2$	dcype	0	0	
6	PdBr_2	dcype	0	trace	
7	PtBr_2	dcype	0	0	
8	$(\text{DMSO})_4\text{RuCl}_2$	dcype (10.0 μmol)	0	1.6	
9	$\text{Ni}(\text{glyme})\text{Cl}_2$	PCy_3 (10.0 μmol)	0	0.7	
10	$\text{Ni}(\text{glyme})\text{Br}_2$	-	0	0	
11	$\text{Ni}(\text{glyme})\text{Br}_2$	dippf	0	0	
12	$\text{Ni}(\text{glyme})\text{Br}_2$	dtbpf	0	trace	
13	$\text{Ni}(\text{glyme})\text{Br}_2$	Davephos (10.0 μmol)	0	0	
14	$\text{Ni}(\text{glyme})\text{Br}_2$	Xphos (10.0 μmol)	0	0	
15	$\text{Ni}(\text{glyme})\text{Br}_2$	dcypt	4.0	0	
16	$\text{Ni}(\text{glyme})\text{Br}_2$	L1	0	0.4	
17	$\text{Ni}(\text{glyme})\text{Br}_2$	L2	0	0	
18	$\text{Ni}(\text{glyme})\text{Br}_2$	dcypp (7.5 μmol)	1.3	0	
19	$\text{Ni}(\text{glyme})\text{Br}_2$	dcype (7.5 μmol)	10.7	0	
20	$\text{Ni}(\text{glyme})\text{Br}_2$	dcype (15 μmol)	10.9	0	
21	$\text{Ni}(\text{glyme})\text{Br}_2$ (10 μmol)	dcype (15 μmol)	12.0	0	

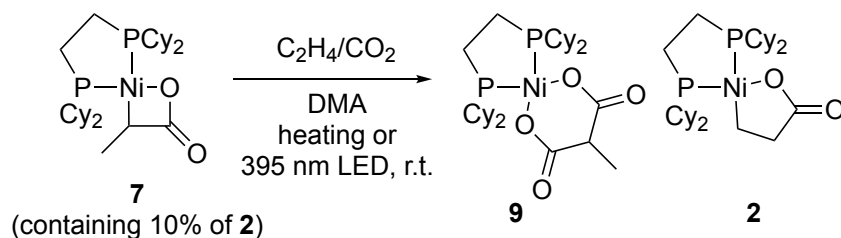
NMR experiments for the investigation of the stoichiometric reactivity of the nickelalactones

General procedure of NMR experiment using **1** or **2** (Figure 2, main text)



Under an Ar atmosphere, to an NMR tube equipped with a J. Young valve were added a mixture of **1** and **1'** (**1** : **1'** = 95 : 5, 1.3 mg, 2.5 μ mol in total) or **2** (1.4 mg, 2.5 μ mol), capillary tube containing benzene-*d*₆ solution of P(OPh)₃ as an internal standard and DMA (0.5 mL). The initial ratio of the total amount of **1** and **1'** or **2** and the internal standard was determined by ³¹P NMR analysis. If needed, an atmospheric pressure of ethylene and CO₂ (1:1) was introduced by a freeze-pump-thaw cycle. Then the mixture was subjected to the desired reaction conditions and the reaction progress was followed by ³¹P NMR analysis.

NMR experiment using **7** (Table 2, main text)



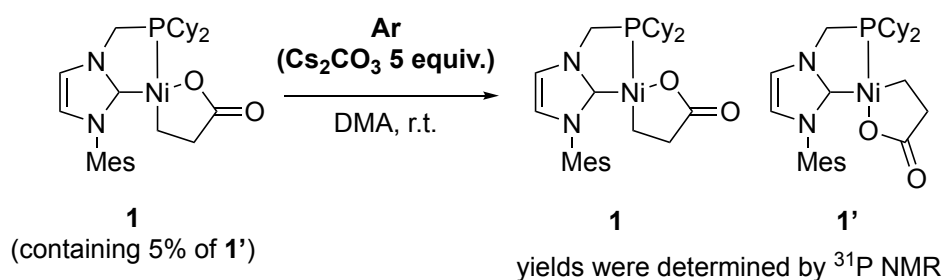
Under an Ar atmosphere, to an NMR tube equipped with a J. Young valve were added a mixture of **7** and **2** (**7** : **2** = 90 : 10, 1.4 mg, 2.5 μ mol in total), capillary tube containing benzene-*d*₆ solution of P(OPh)₃ as an internal standard and DMA (0.5 mL). The initial ratio of the total amount of **7** and **2** and the internal standard was determined by ³¹P NMR analysis. An atmospheric pressure of ethylene and CO₂ (1 : 1) was introduced by a freeze-pump-thaw cycle. Then the mixture was subjected to the desired reaction conditions and the reaction progress was followed by ³¹P NMR analysis.

NMR experiments to test the effect of Cs cation

In our system, the TON of methylmalonate salt was improved by using Cs_2CO_3 as an additive. Although we have obtained experimental supports that the isomerization of 5-membered nickelalactones to 4-membered ones and the conversion to methylmalonate complexes were accelerated by the photoirradiation, possibilities that Cs cation is more crucial than photoirradiation in these elementary step were still remained. To test the possibilities, we conducted following NMR experiments.

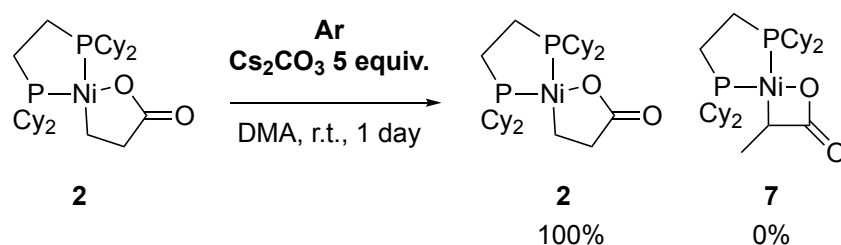
The effect of Cs cation on the isomerization of 5-membered nickelalactones

NHC-P nickelalactone (**1**) was treated under Ar atmosphere with 5 equivalents of Cs_2CO_3 in the dark and the reaction progress was followed. However, the isomerization to **1'** proceeded similar rate to the case without Cs_2CO_3 .



	with Cs_2CO_3		without Cs_2CO_3	
	1	1'	1	1'
1 h	95%	5%	95%	5%
1 day	70%	25%	60%	35%
3 days	50%	50%	40%	45%

Nickelalactone bearing dcype (**2**) was treated under Ar atmosphere with 5 equivalents Cs_2CO_3 in the dark and the isomerization to **7** was monitored. In this case, isomerization to 4-membered nickelalactone did not proceed at all after 1 day.

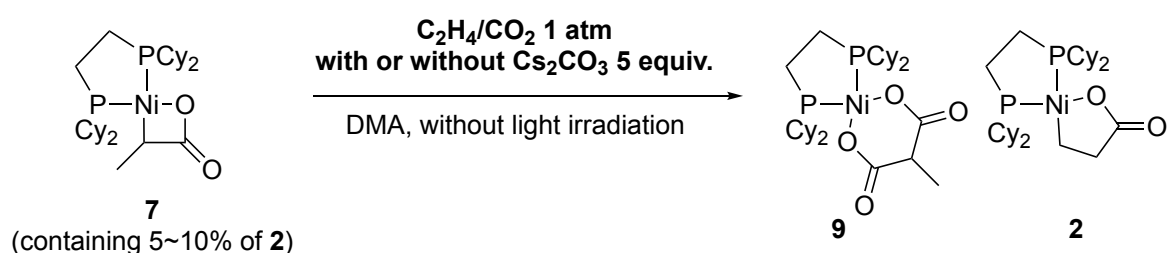


These results suggested that Cs_2CO_3 is not effective for the acceleration of isomerization of 5-membered nickelalactone to 4-membered ones.

The effect of Cs cation on the insertion of CO₂ to 4-membered nickelalactone

4-membered nickelalactone **7** was treated under ethylene/CO₂ (1:1) atmosphere in the presence of 5 equivalents of Cs₂CO₃ at room temperature and then 100 °C in the dark. Reactivity of 4-membered nickelalactone **7** at room temperature under ethylene/CO₂ (1:1) atmosphere in the absence of Cs₂CO₃ was also tested (**7** contained 5% of **2** was used).

After 1 day at room temperature, total 75% of nickelalactones (60% of 4-membered (**7**) and 15% of 5-membered (**2**) nickelalactone) remained and 10% of malonate complex was generated accompanied by the formation of several unknown species. Even after heating at 100 °C for 1 hour, still 50% of nickelalactones (15% of 4-membered (**7**) and 35% of 5-membered (**2**) nickelalactone) remained and only 5% of malonate complex was observed. Since close to full consumption (95%) of nickelalactones (5% of **2** remained) and 85% yield of malonate complex **9** was achieved by the irradiation of 395 nm LED light at room temperature for 10 minutes (Table 2, in the main text), photoirradiation is confirmed to be more crucial to the insertion of second molecule of CO₂ than Cs₂CO₃. Although small amount of malonate complex **9** was generated at room temperature, it was also observed in the absence of Cs₂CO₃ at room temperature after 6 h. It also denies the participation of Cs cation to the formation of **9**.



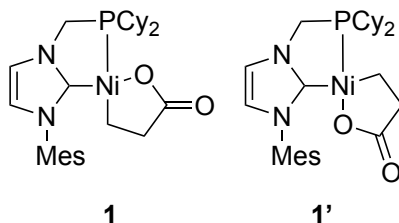
Cs ₂ CO ₃	conditions	results ^a
○	r.t. 1 day ^b	7 60%, 9 10%, 2 15% + multiple compounds
	r.t. 1 day then 100 °C, 1 h ^b	7 15%, 9 5%, 2 35% + multiple compounds

×	r.t. 6 h ^c	7 85%, 9 10%, 2 5%

^aYields were calculated based on the sum of initial amount of **7** and **2** determined by ³¹P NMR. ^bStarting from **7** containing 5% of **2**. ^cStarting from **7** containing 10% of **2**

Previously reported NMR data of **1** and **1'**³

Previously we reported ¹H, ³¹P, and ¹³C NMR spectra of almost pure **1** (**1** : **1'** = 97 : 3) and a mixture of **1** and **1'** (**1** : **1'** = 60 : 40). Also, we confirmed the structures of these two isomers by X-ray single crystal analysis (CCDC deposition numbers are **1**: 1945817 and **1'**: 1903155).



NMR data of **1** (picked from 97 : 3 mixture of **1** and **1'**)

¹H NMR (THF-*d*₈, 500 MHz): δ = 0.36 (q, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2H, NiCH₂), 1.20-1.42 (m, 8H), 1.44-1.65 (m, 6H), 1.65-1.91 (m, 6H), 1.94-2.24 (m, 4H), 2.14 (s, 6H), 2.30 (s, 3H), 4.08 (d, *J* = 4.0 Hz, 2H, PCH₂N), 6.83 (s, 1H), 6.94 (s, 2H, mesityl group), 7.30 (s, 1H)

¹³C NMR (THF-*d*₈, 125 MHz): δ = 9.1, 9.6, 18.5, 21.1, 27.1, 27.3-28.1 (overlapped signals for Cy groups), 28.8-29.4 (overlapped signals for Cy groups), 32.4 (d, *J* = 12.0 Hz), 37.1 (d, *J* = 5.9), 42.2 (d, *J* = 20.3 Hz), 121.3, 125.4, 129.0, 135.4, 137.9, 139.1, 177.8, 188.9 (d, *J* = 19.3 Hz)

³¹P NMR (THF-*d*₈, 160 MHz): δ = 52.0 (s)

NMR data of **1'** (picked from 60 : 40 mixture of **1** and **1'**)

¹H NMR (THF-*d*₈, 500 MHz): δ = 0.26 (q, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H, NiCH₂), 1.20-2.23 (m, 24H, signals for Cy groups and α-proton of carbonyl were overlapped with those of **1** and solvent), 2.02 (s, 6H), 2.27 (s, 3H), 4.14 (d, *J* = 5.0 Hz, 2H, PCH₂N), 6.80-6.85 (m, 3H, overlapped signals for mesityl and backbone of NHC moiety), 7.33 (s, 1H)

¹³C NMR (THF-*d*₈, 125 MHz): δ = 5.3, 5.5, 18.3, 21.5, 26.4, 27.3-28.1 (overlapped signals for Cy groups), 28.8 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz), 28.9-29.2 (overlapped signals for Cy groups), 29.4, 33.4 (d, *J* = 25.1 Hz), 37.9, 45.3 (d, *J* = 26.4 Hz), 119.7 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz), 125.0, 135.4, 137.2 (two aromatic carbons are missing probably due to overlapping with those of **1**), 187.2, 187.9 (d, *J* = 10.8 Hz).

³¹P NMR (THF-*d*₈, 160 MHz): δ = 69.1 (s)

Comparison of ^1H and ^{31}P NMR chemical shifts of geometrical isomers of nickelalactones

On the basis of spectral data of **1/1'**, newly synthesized nickelalactones **4/4'**, **5/5'** and **6/6'** were characterized. On ^1H NMR, signals for mesityl, PCH_2N and NiCH_2 of any **X** and **X'** were separately observed (except NiCH_2 of **6** and **6'**), and the chemical shifts of those of **4/4'**, **5/5'** and **6/6'** were similar to those of **1/1'** (Table S7). Furthermore, in all the cases, the chemical shifts of PCH_2N of **X'** were 0.05~0.07 ppm down field compared to **X** and those of mesityl and NiCH_2 of **X'** were 0.11 ppm and 0.07 ~ 0.1 ppm (except **6** and **6'**) high field compared to **X**. ^{31}P NMR chemical shifts of **X'** were 17.3~18.3 ppm down field compared to **X**. Those similarities reasonably supported our assignment of **4/4'**, **5/5'** and **6/6'**.

Table S7. Comparison of selected ^1H and ^{31}P NMR chemical shifts of geometrical isomers of nickelalactones

		R = Cy, R' = H		R = Cy, R' = Me		R = <i>i</i> Pr, R' = Me		R = Cyp, R' = Me	
Assignments		1	1'	4	4'	5	5'	6	6'
^1H NMR	NiCH_2	0.36	0.26	0.29	0.22	0.31	0.24	0.29 ^b	0.29 ^b
	PCH_2N	4.08	4.14	3.90	3.97	3.89	3.95	3.92	3.97
	mesityl	6.94	6.80-6.85 ^a	6.95	6.84	6.96	6.85	6.95	6.85
^{31}P NMR		52.0	69.1	50.5	68.4	59.0	77.3	51.2	68.5

^aOverlapped with other signals. ^bSignals for **6** and **6'** were overlapped

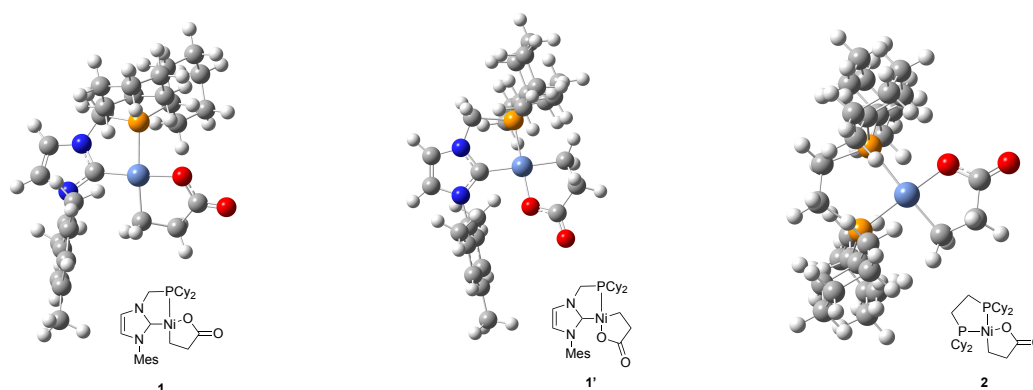
DFT analysis

All calculations were performed with Gaussian 16 program,⁷ by using B3LYP⁸ method with 6-31+G*⁹ basis set for all atoms. Solvent effect in DMA by CPCM model was applied for all calculations.

Comparison of Ni-O bond lengths and relative energies of nickelalactones **1**, **1'**, **2** and excited triplet states of them.

For **1** and **1'**, 4 isomers of triplet state existed because the plane of P-Ni-C_{carbene} and O_{lactone}-Ni-C_{lactone} are perpendicular to each other in the excited state.

a) Ground states (S_0) of **1**, **1'** and **2**.



b) Triplet states (T_1) **1**, **1'** and **2**

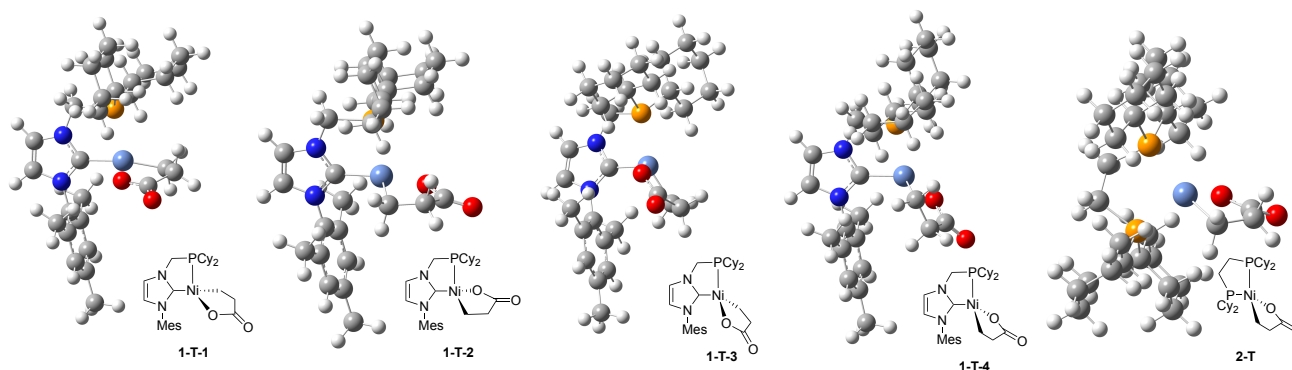


Figure S2. Optimized structures of a) ground states (S_0) of **1**, **1'** and **2**, and b) triplet states (T_1) of **1**, **1'** and **2**.

Table S8. Summary of Ni-O bond lengths and relative free energies of singlet (S_0) and triplet (T_1) states of **1**, **1'** and **2**.

	1	1'	1-T-1	1-T-2	1-T-3	1-T-4	2	2-T
bond length of Ni-O (Å)	1.87483	1.87573	1.97059	1.94787	1.95997	1.9464	1.87989	1.96409
Relative free energy (kcal/mol)	1.4	0	15.8	13.2	16.4	13.9	0	15.6

DFT analysis for the insertion of CO₂ to 4-membered nickelalactones to form methylmalonate complexes

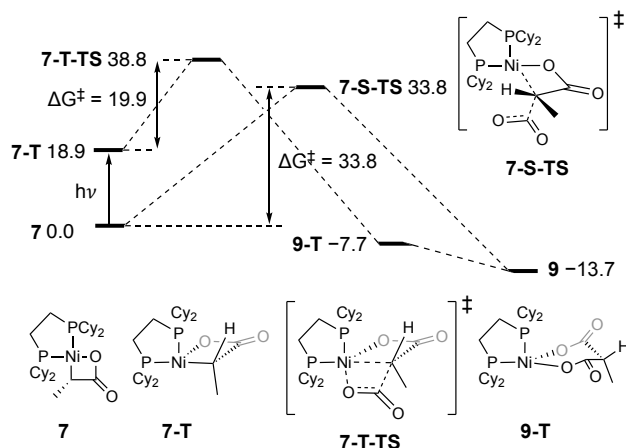


Figure S3. DFT analysis for the reaction of 4-membered nickelalactone bearing dcype **7** with CO₂ at excited triplet state and singlet ground state (Relative energies are described in kcal/mol).

DFT analysis for the evaluation of the energies required for structural change to form transition states at singlet and triplet states.

From both of the transition state structures of **7-S-TS** and **7-T-TS**, the CO₂ molecules were deleted and frequency calculations without structural optimizations were conducted for the resulting structures (**7-S-TS** – CO₂ and **7-T-TS** – CO₂). The free energy of **7-S-TS** – CO₂ relative to **7** was 19.9 kcal/mol and that of **7-T-TS** – CO₂ relative to **7-T** was 8.5 kcal/mol, respectively. Therefore, the energy required for the structural change of **7-T** to form the corresponding transition state is 11.4 kcal/mol less than that of **7-T**.

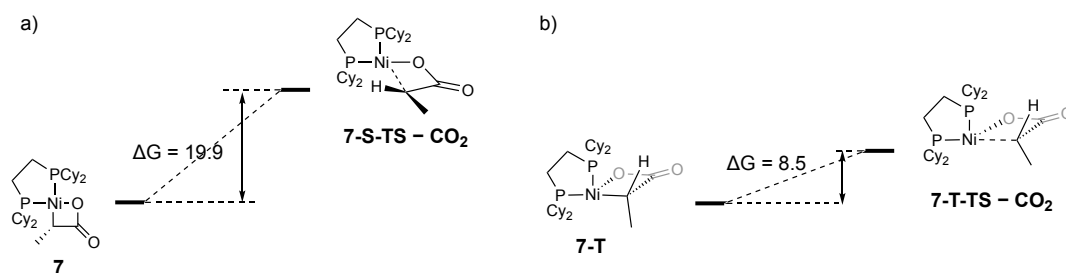


Figure S4. DFT analysis for the evaluation of the energies required for the structural change to form the transition states at a) singlet ground state and b) excited triplet state (Relative energies are described in kcal/mol).

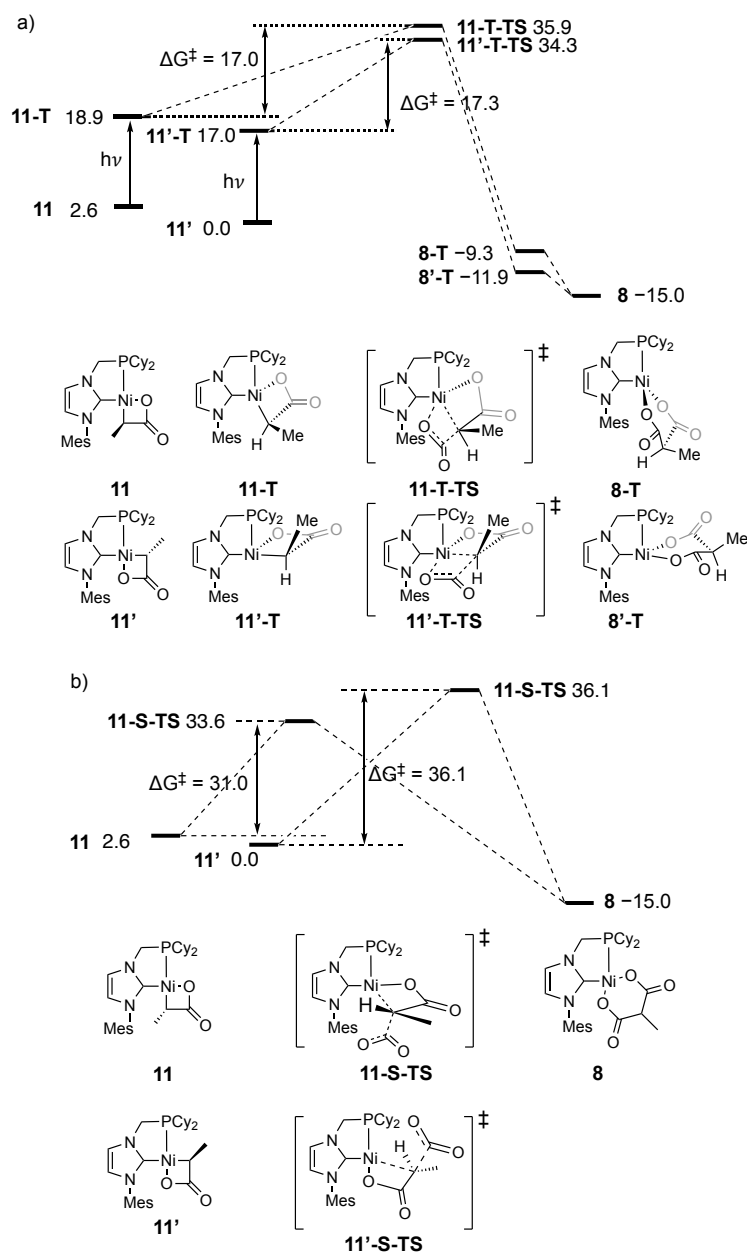


Figure S5. DFT analysis for the reaction of 4-membered nickelalactones bearing an NHC-P ligand **11** and **11'** with CO₂ at a) excited triplet states and b) singlet ground states (Relative energies are described in kcal/mol).

Table S9. Crystal data and structure refinement for (NHC-P)Ni malonate complex 8

	8 • DMA
Empirical formula	C ₃₃ H ₅₀ N ₃ NiO ₅ P
Formula weight	658.44
Temperature (K)	123
Wavelength (Å)	0.71075
Crystal system	monoclinic
Space group	P2 ₁ /n
Unit cell dimensions	$a = 16.5365(9) \text{ Å}$ $b = 15.9821(6) \text{ Å}$ $c = 12.9995(6) \text{ Å}$ $\alpha = 90^\circ$ $\beta = 97.271(5)^\circ$ $\gamma = 90^\circ$
Volume (Å ³)	3408.0(3)
Z	4
Density (calculated)	1.283
Absorption coefficient	1.605
$F(000)$	1408.0
Crystal size (mm ³)	0.263 × 0.041 × 0.023
2 θ range for data collection	7.724° to 136.492°
Index ranges	-19 ≤ h ≤ 19, -19 ≤ k ≤ 15, -15 ≤ l ≤ 15
Reflections collected	21916
Independent reflections	6223
Data / restraints / parameters	6223/0/395
Goodness-of-fit on F^2	1.075
Final R indices [$I > 2\sigma(I)$]	$R_1 = 0.0608$ $wR_2 = 0.1585$
Final R indices (all data)	$R_1 = 0.0849$ $wR_2 = 0.1731$
Largest diff. peak and hole (e Å ⁻³)	0.65/-0.45

NMR spectra

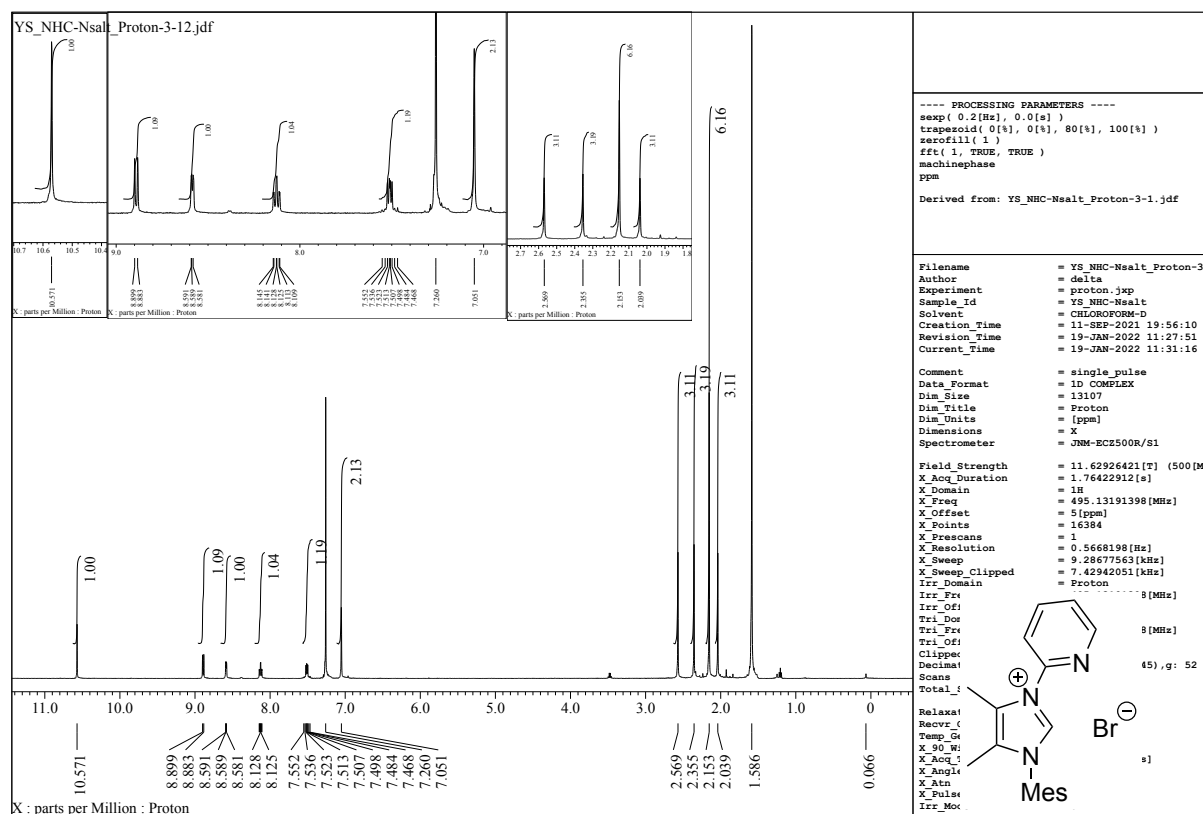


Figure S6. ¹H NMR spectrum of S1.

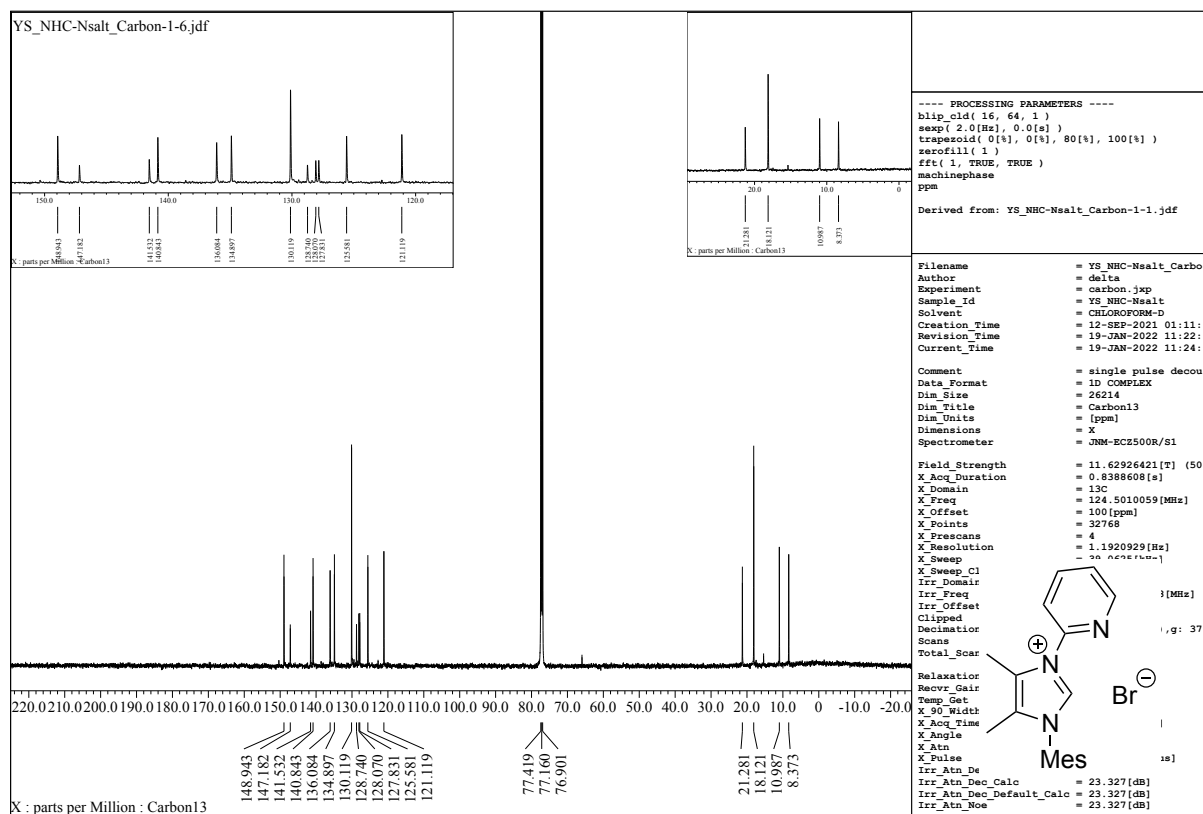


Figure S7. ¹³C NMR spectrum of S1.

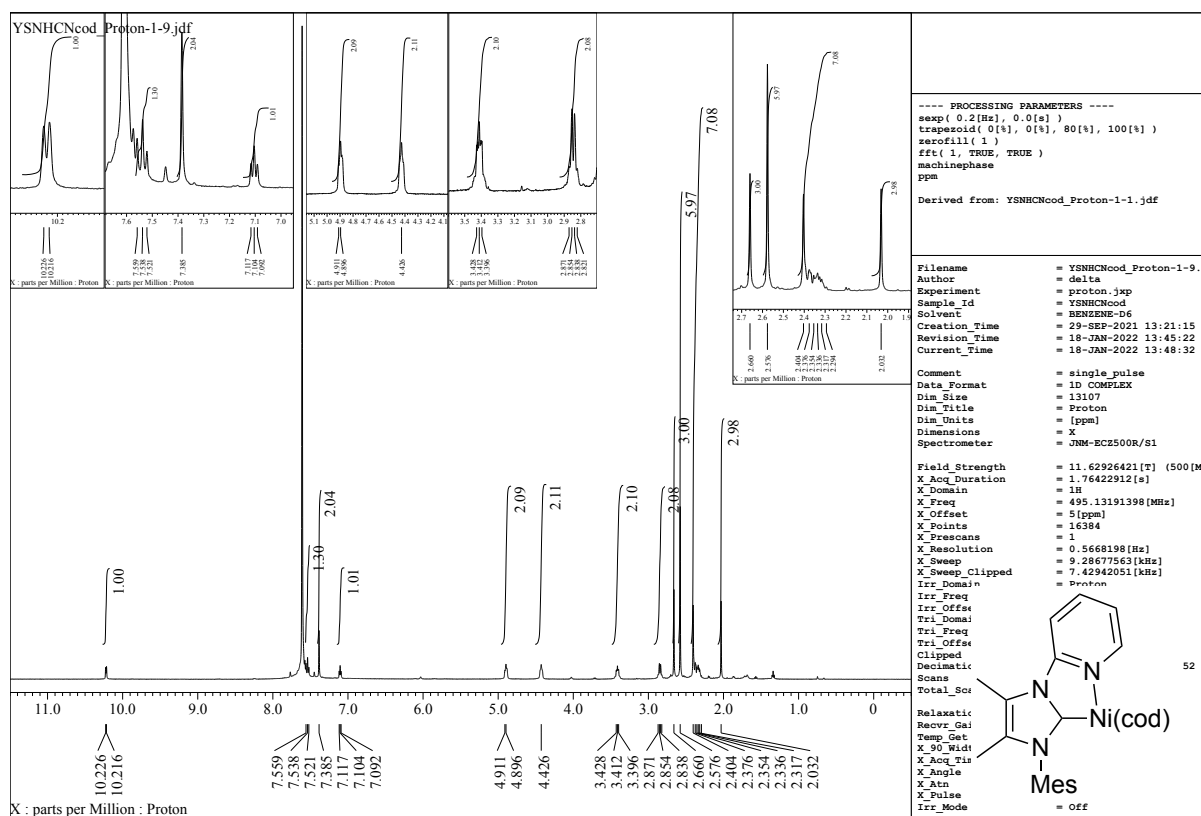


Figure S8. ¹H NMR spectrum of S2.

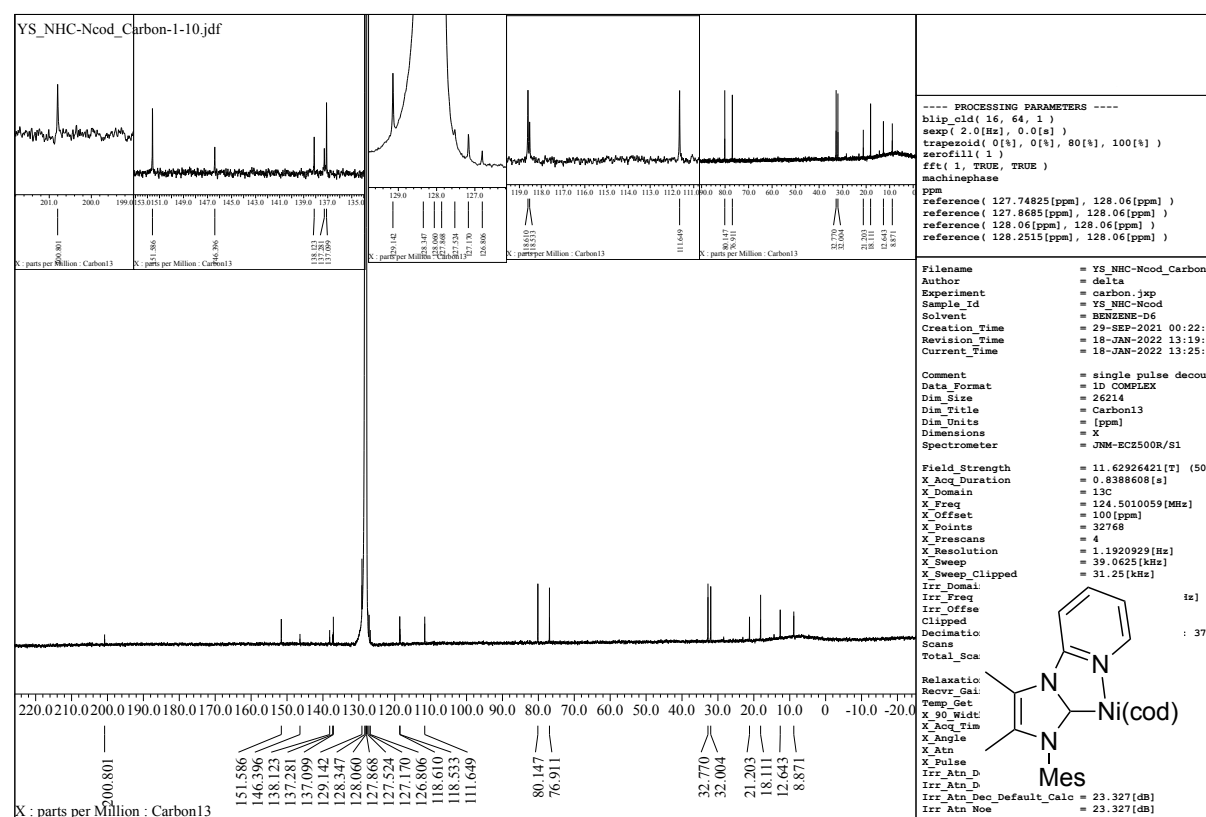
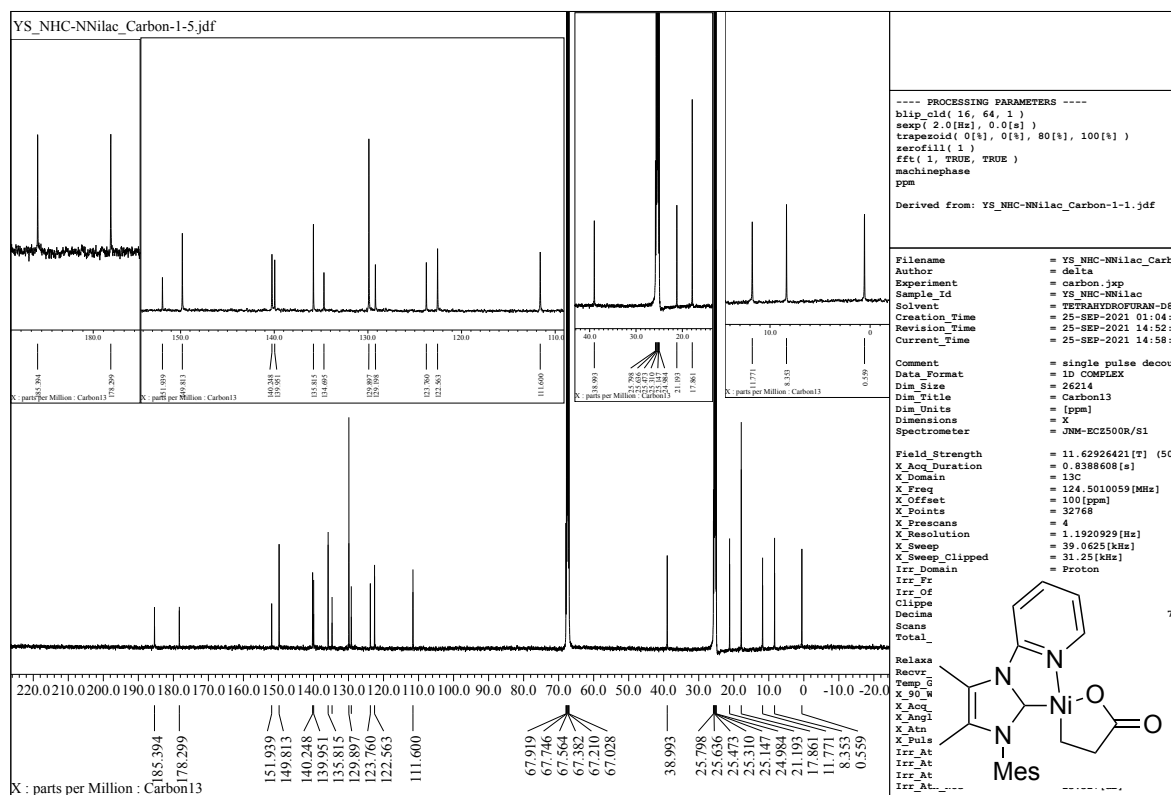
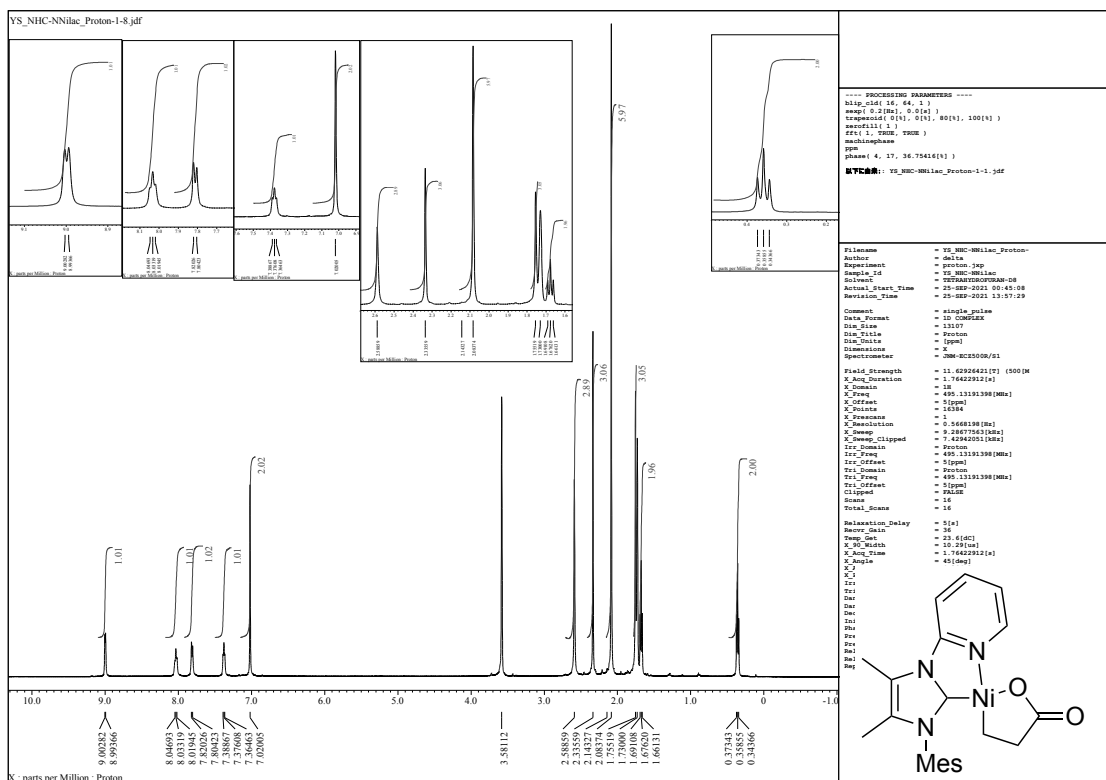


Figure S9. ¹³C NMR spectrum of S2.



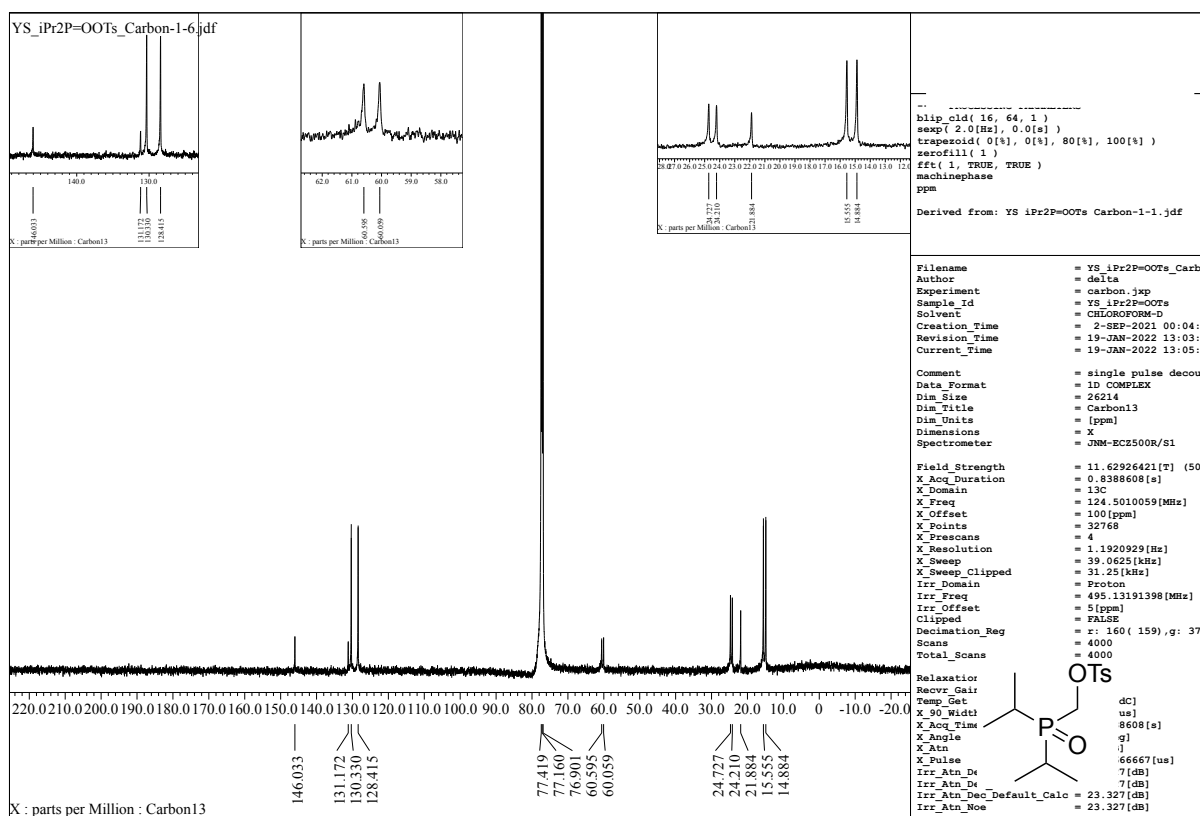


Figure S16. ^{13}C NMR spectrum of S3.

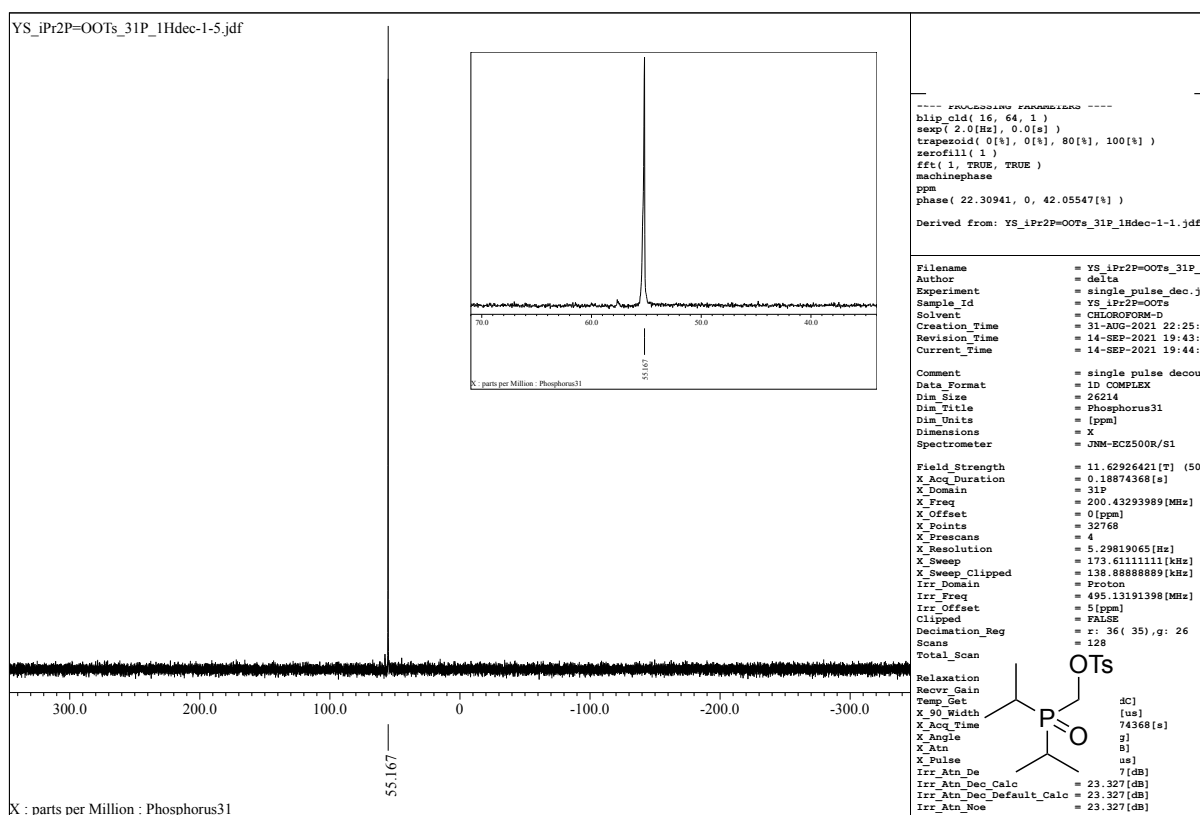


Figure S17. ^{31}P NMR spectrum of S3.

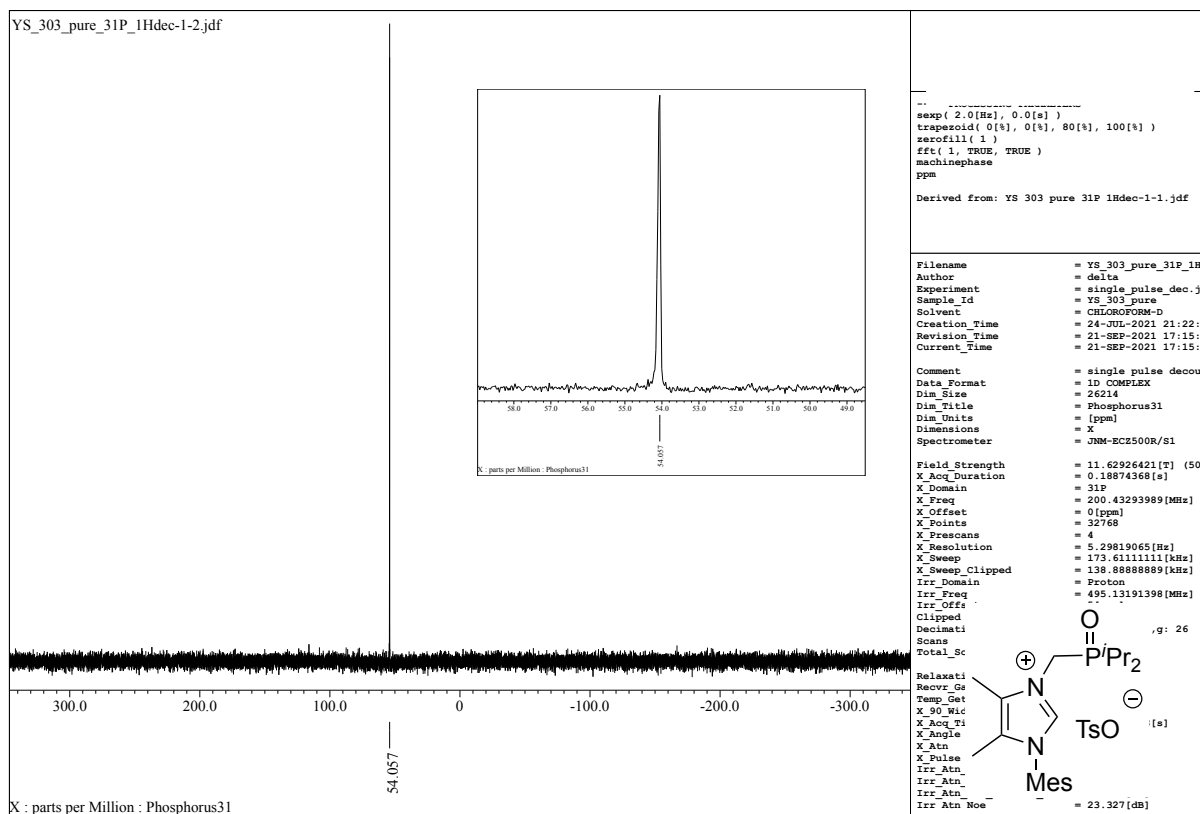


Figure S20. ³¹P NMR spectrum of S4.

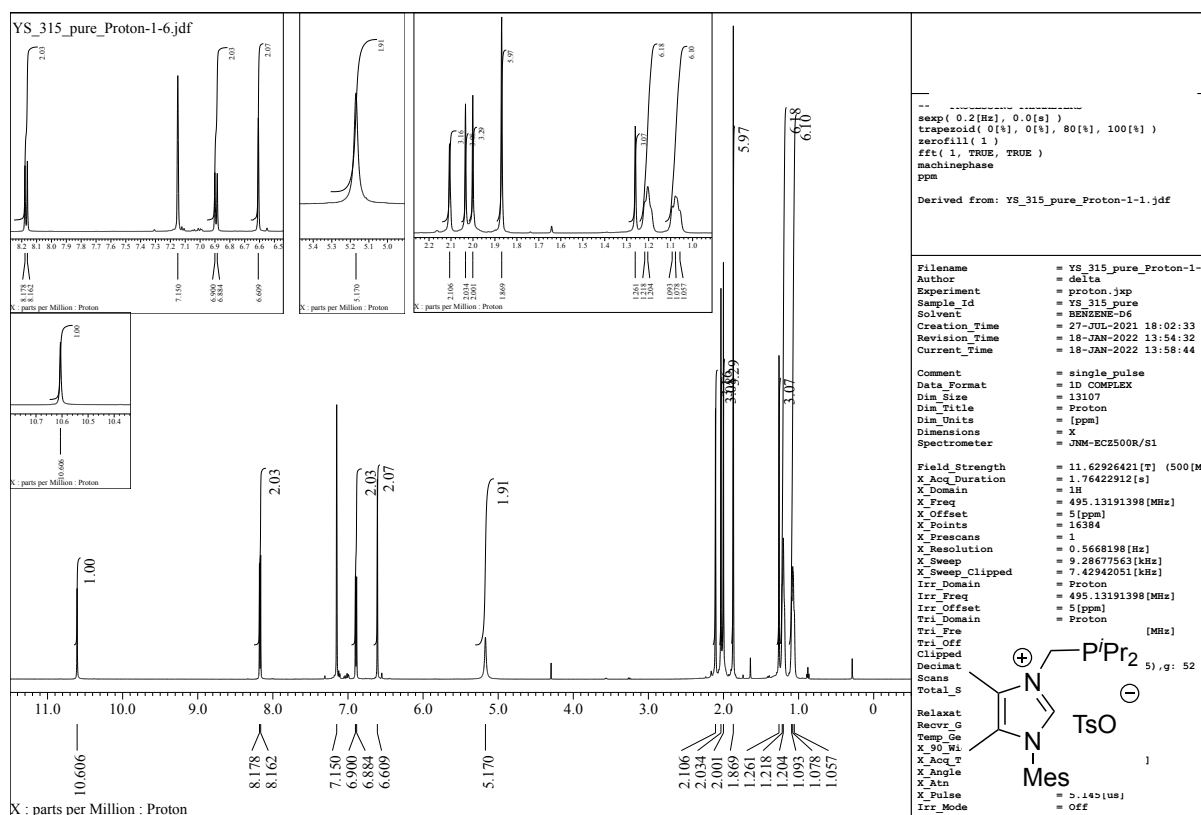


Figure S21. ¹H NMR spectrum of S5.

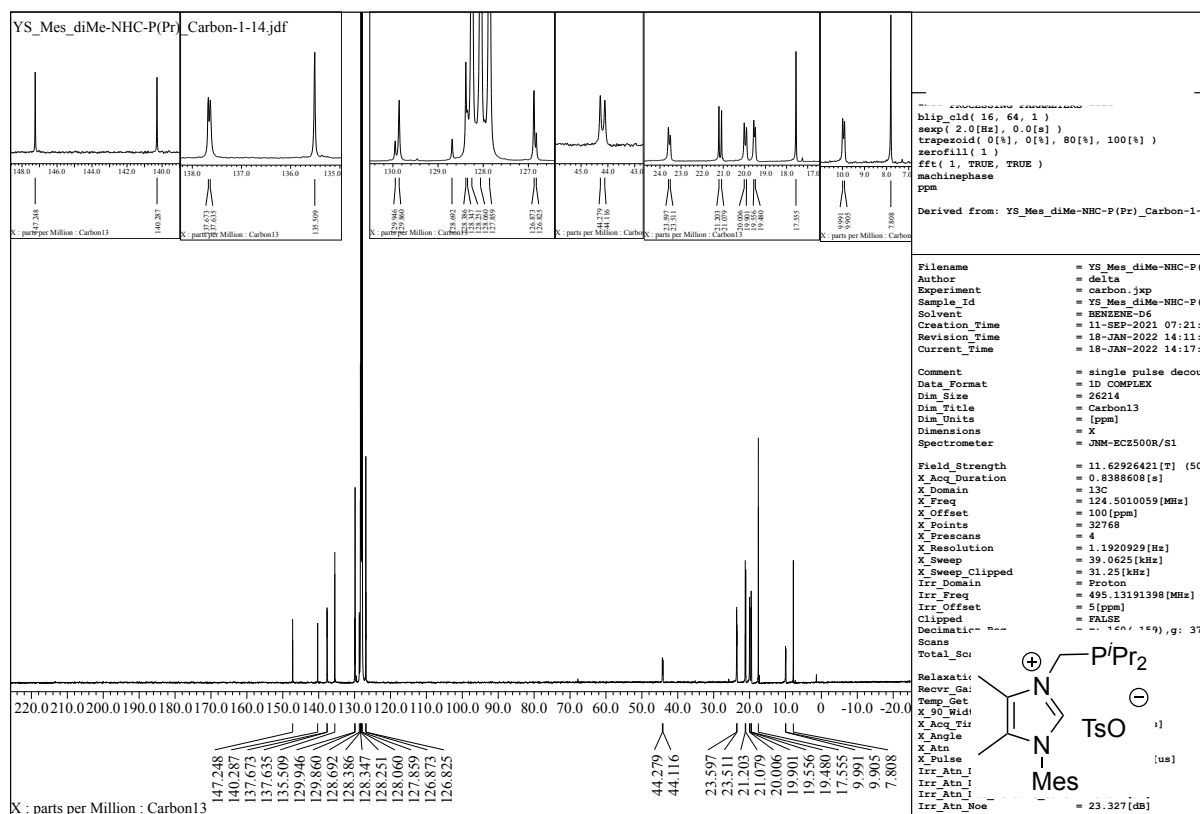


Figure S22. ¹³C NMR spectrum of S5.

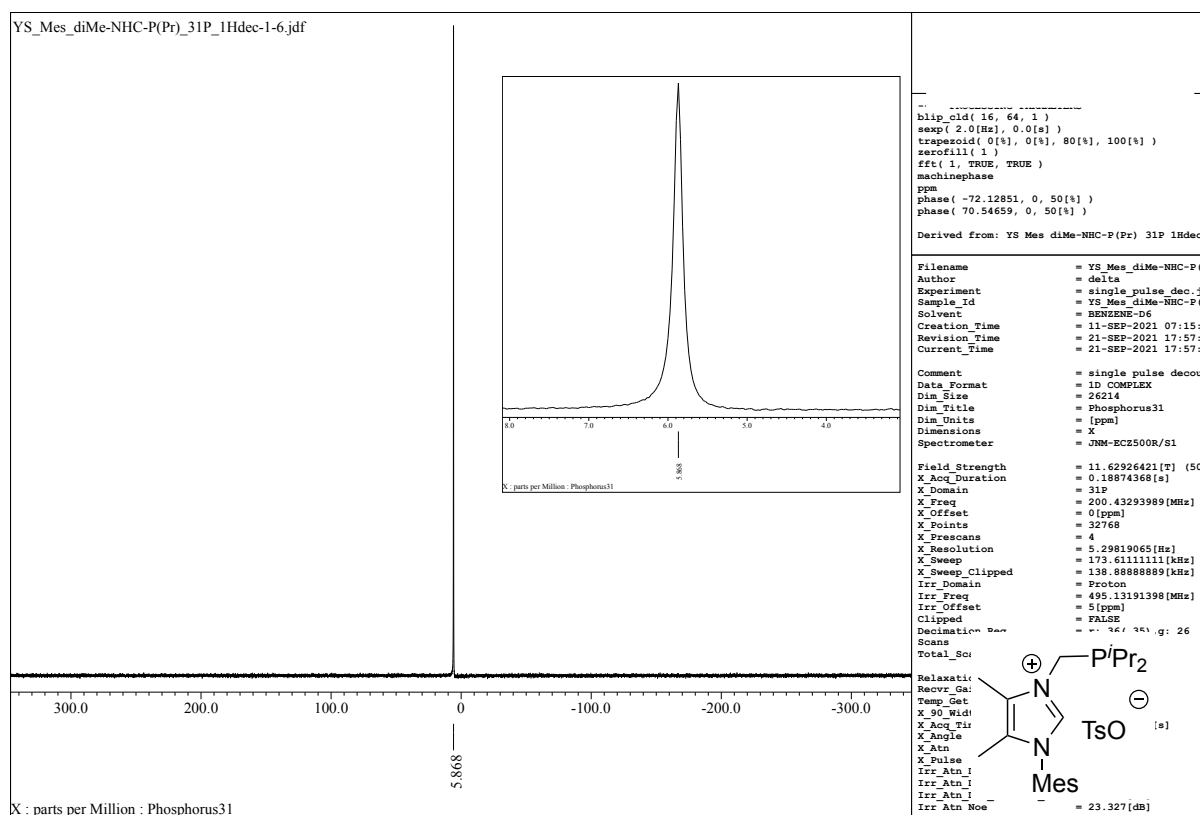


Figure S23. ³¹P NMR spectrum of S5.

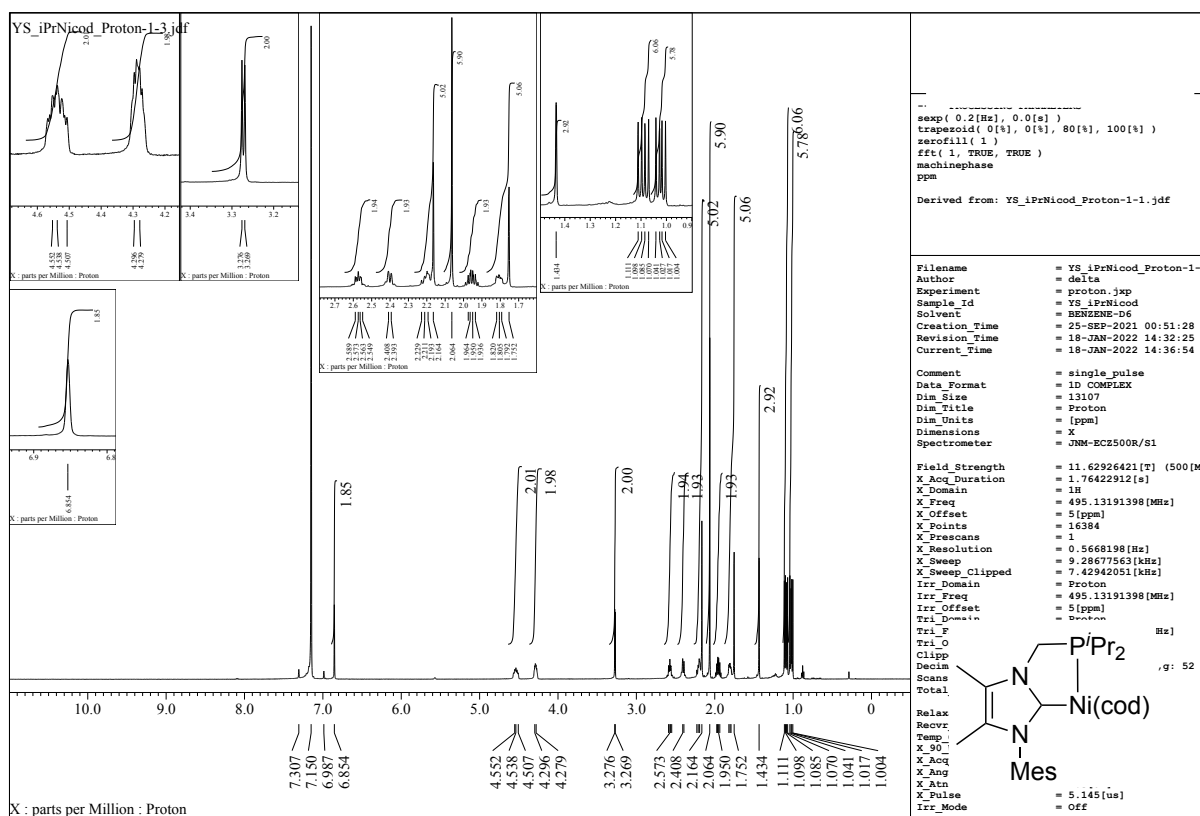


Figure S24. ¹H NMR spectrum of S6.

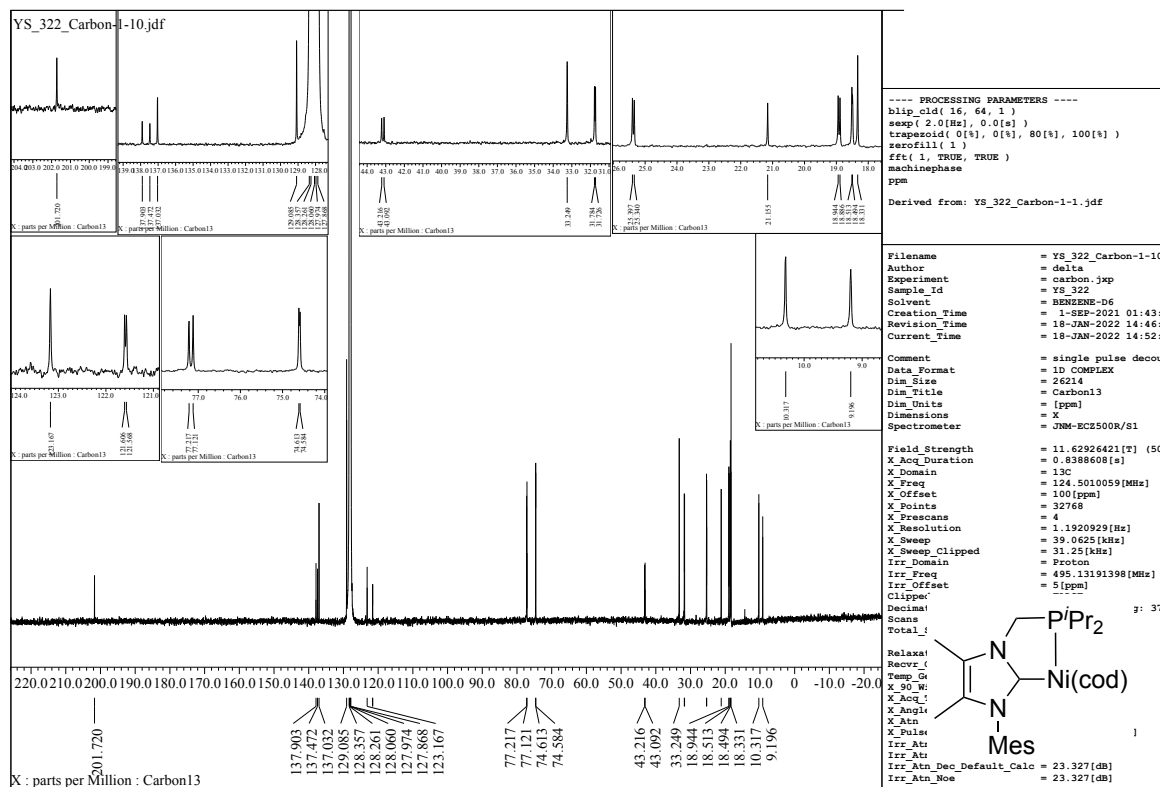


Figure S25. ¹³C NMR spectrum of S6.

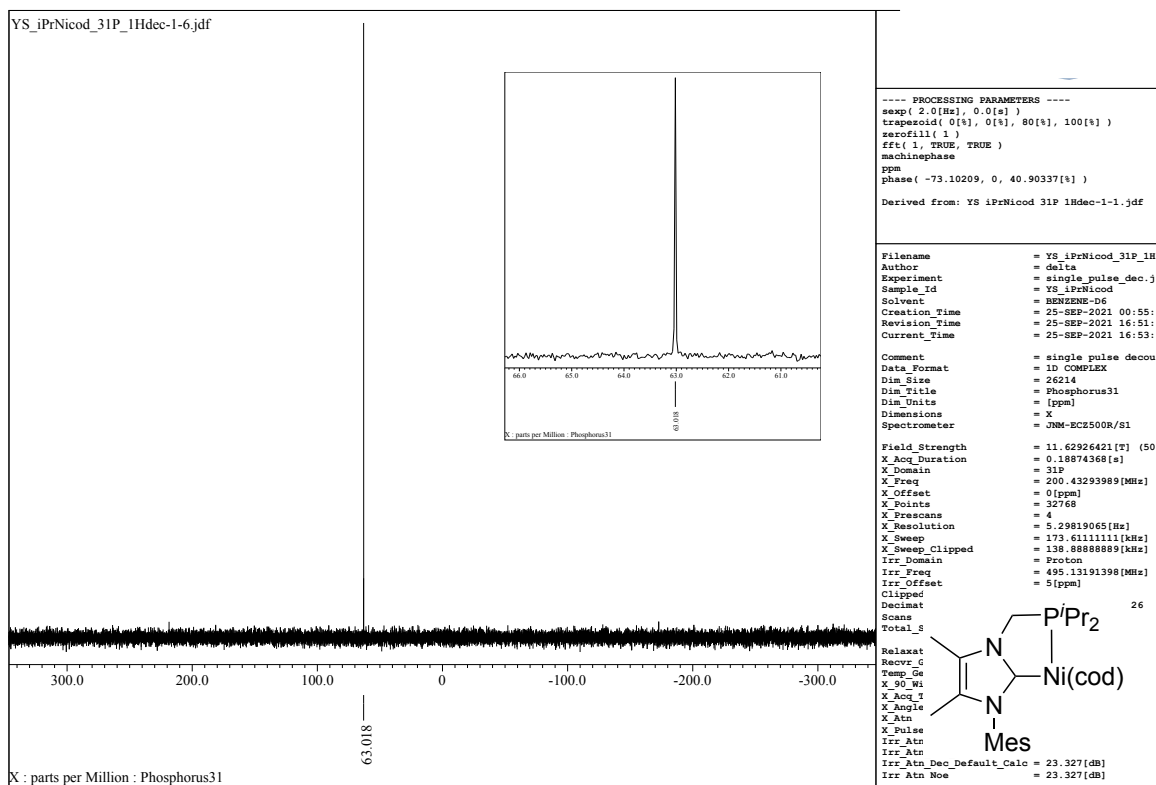


Figure S26. ^{31}P NMR spectrum of S6.

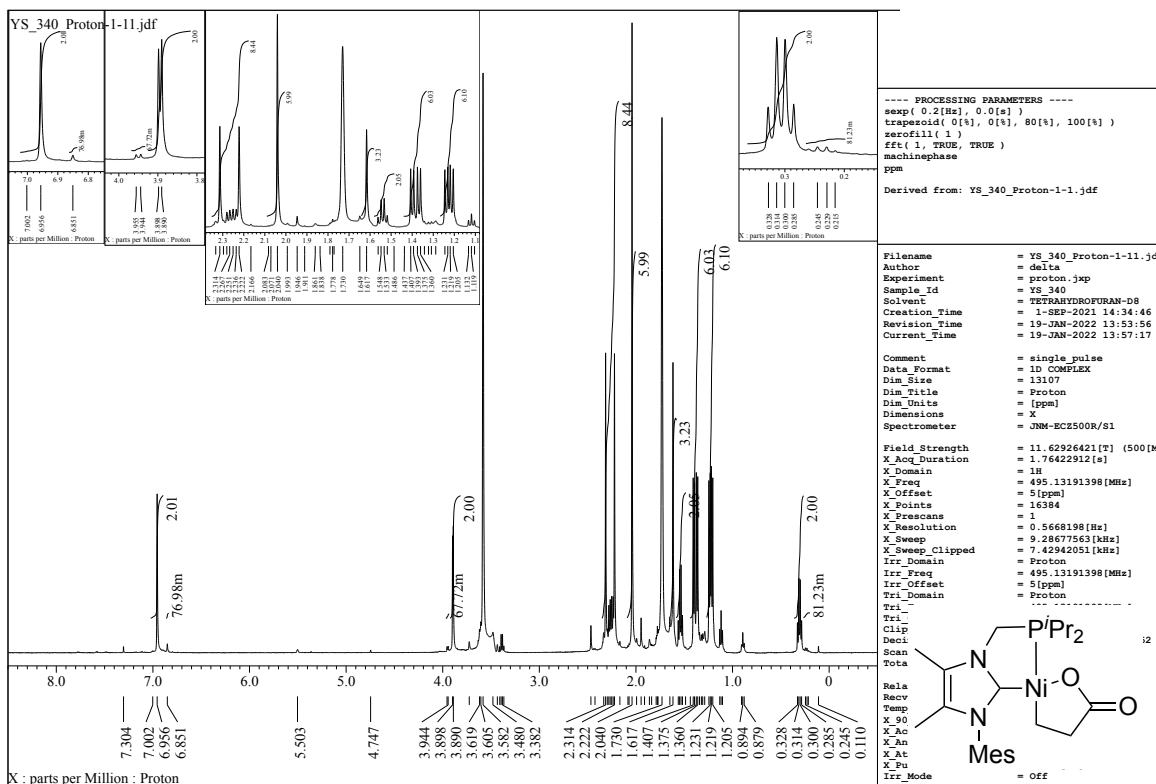
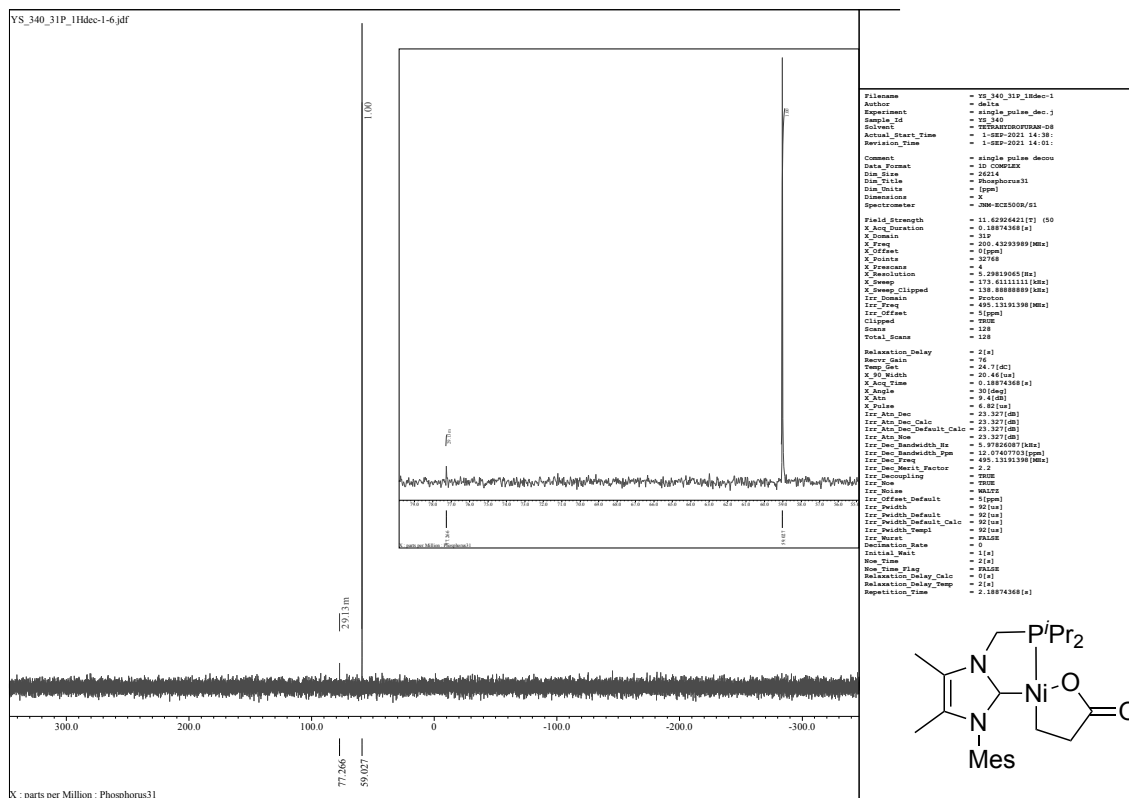
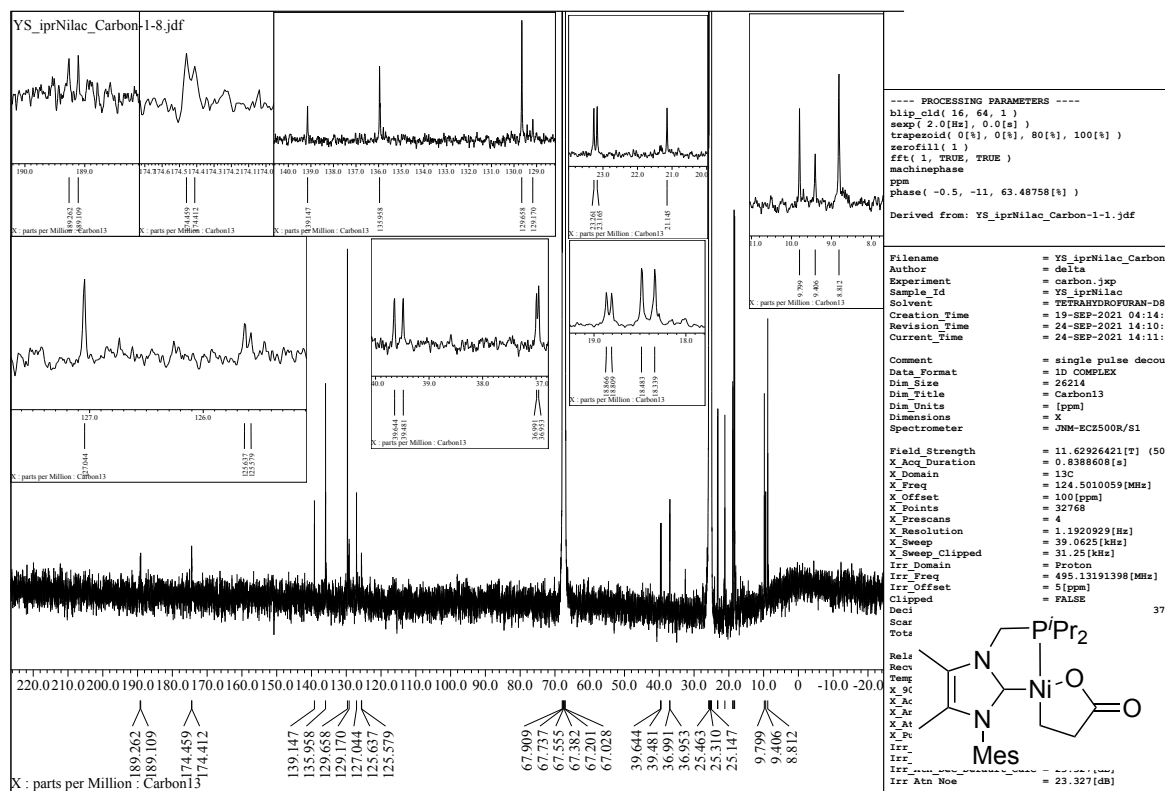
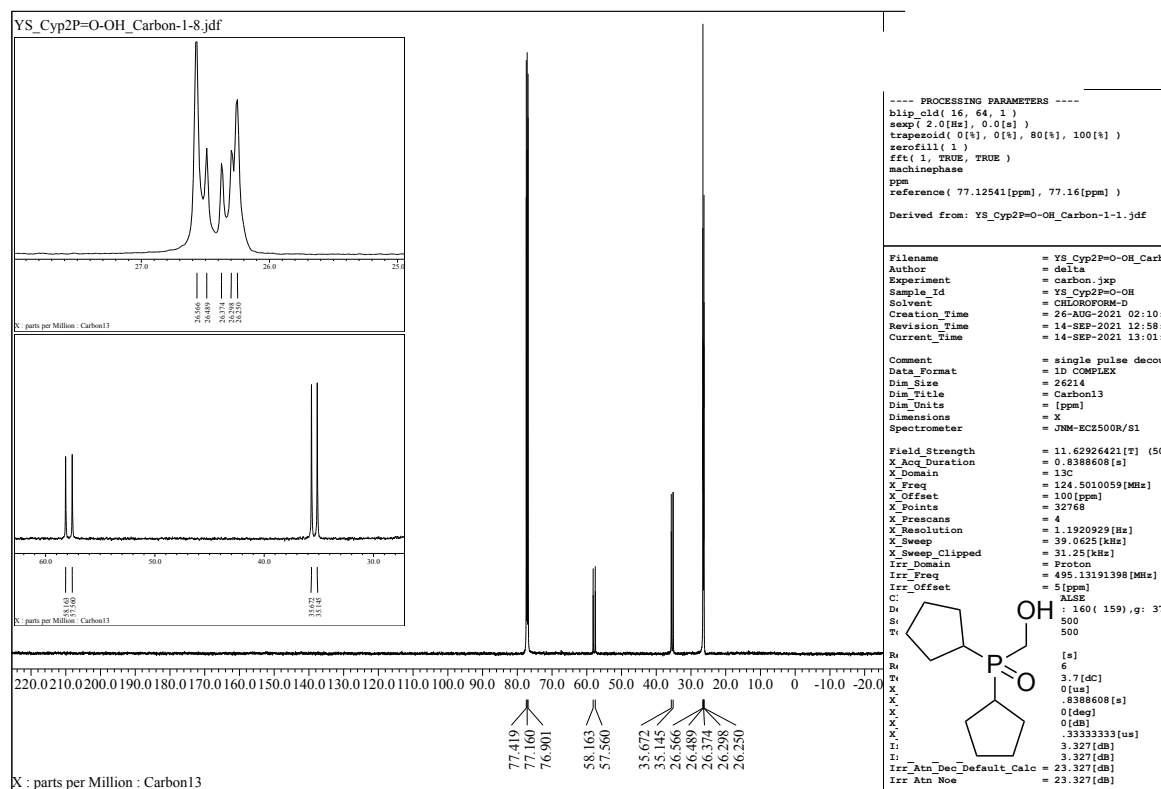
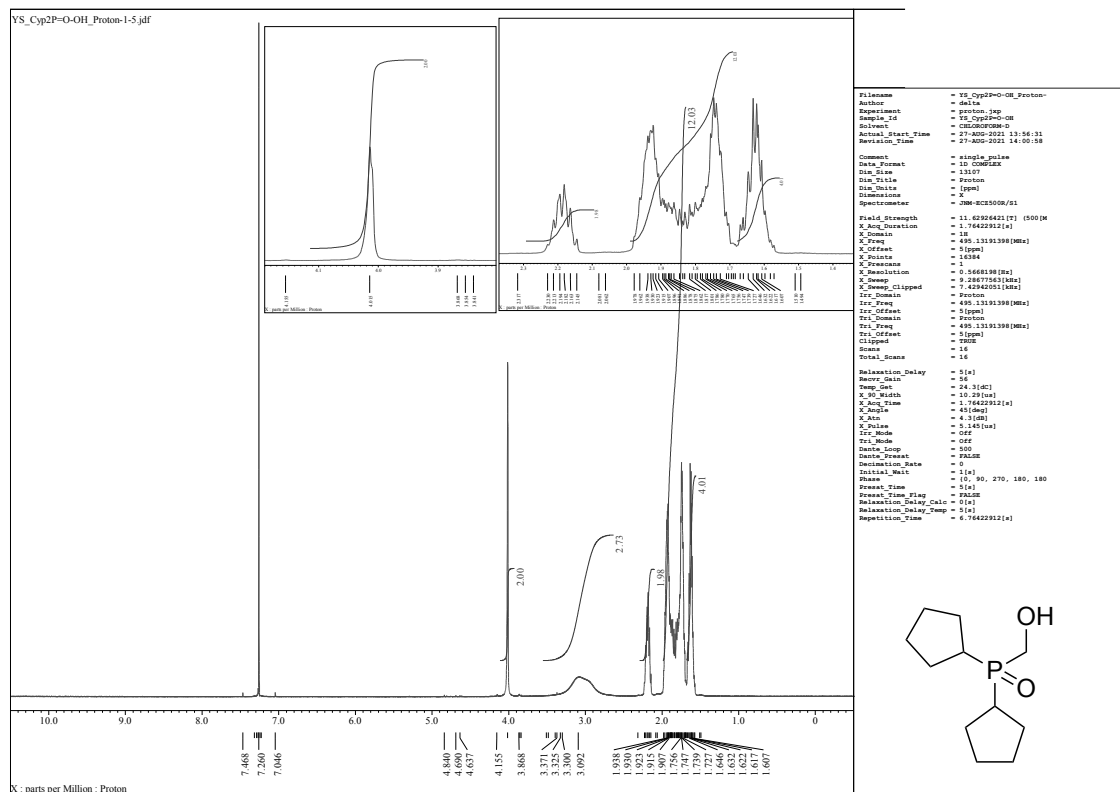


Figure S27. ^1H NMR spectrum of 5.





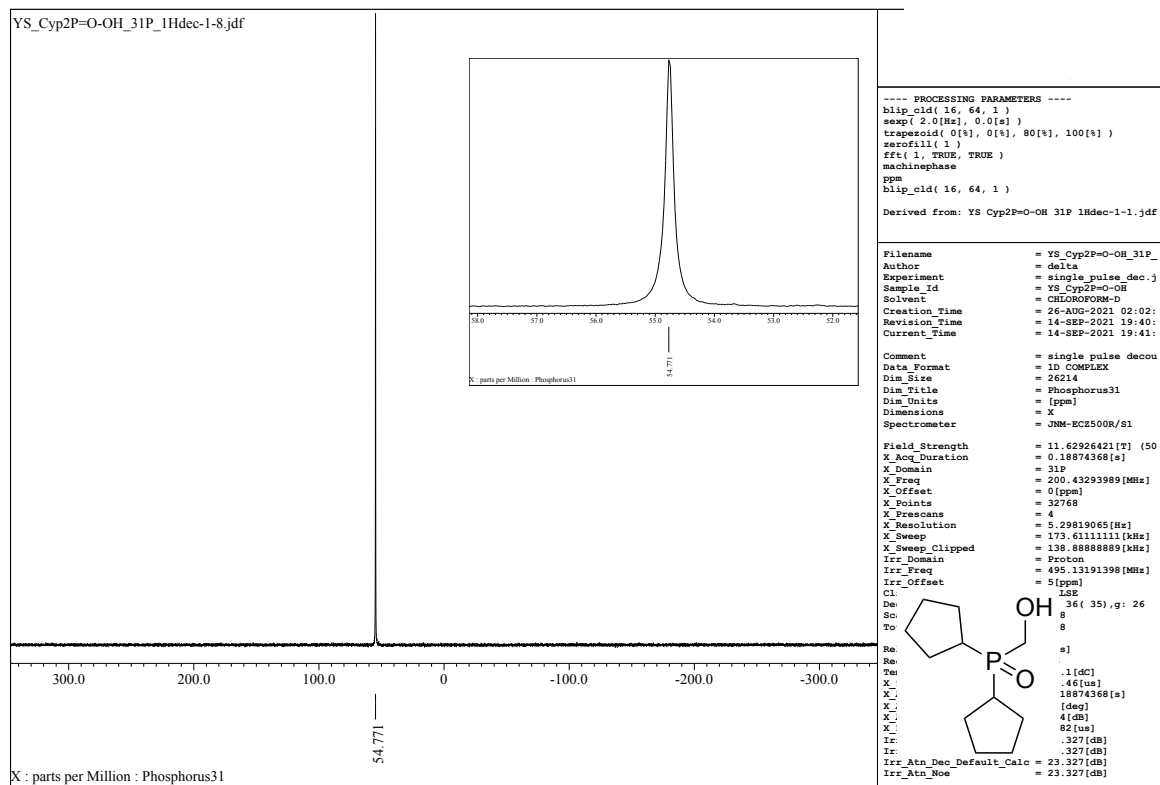


Figure S32. ^{31}P NMR spectrum of S7.

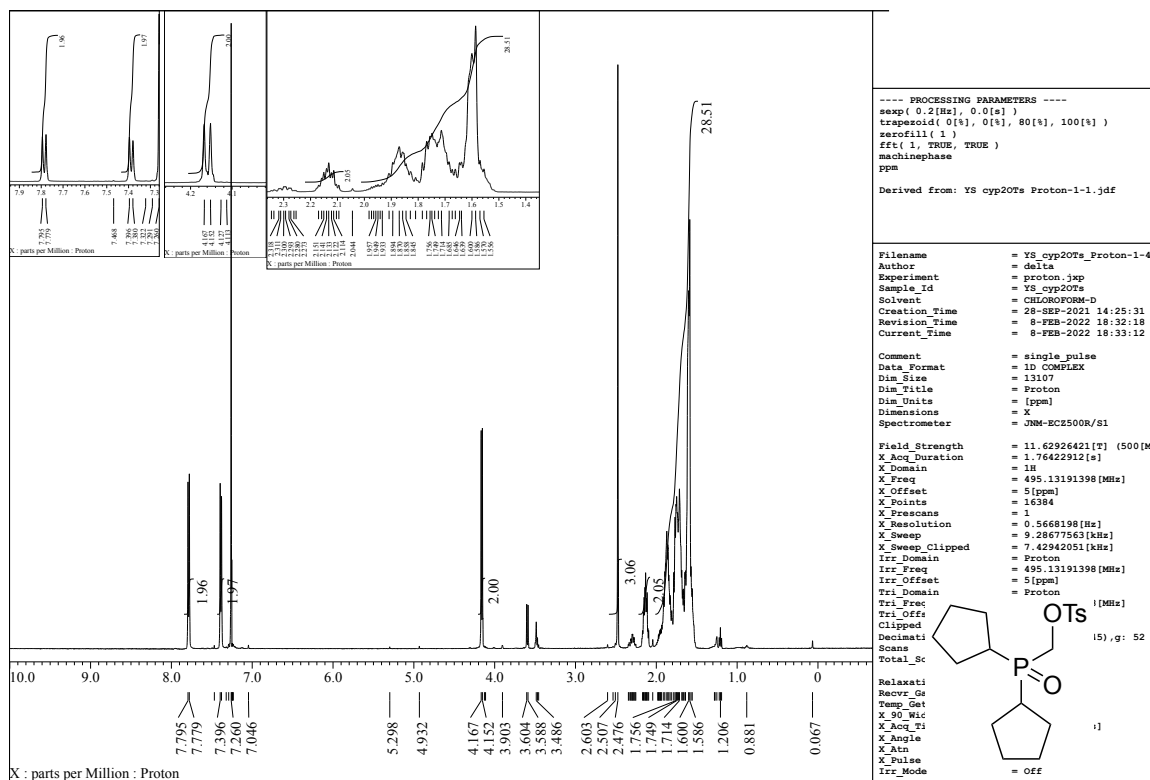
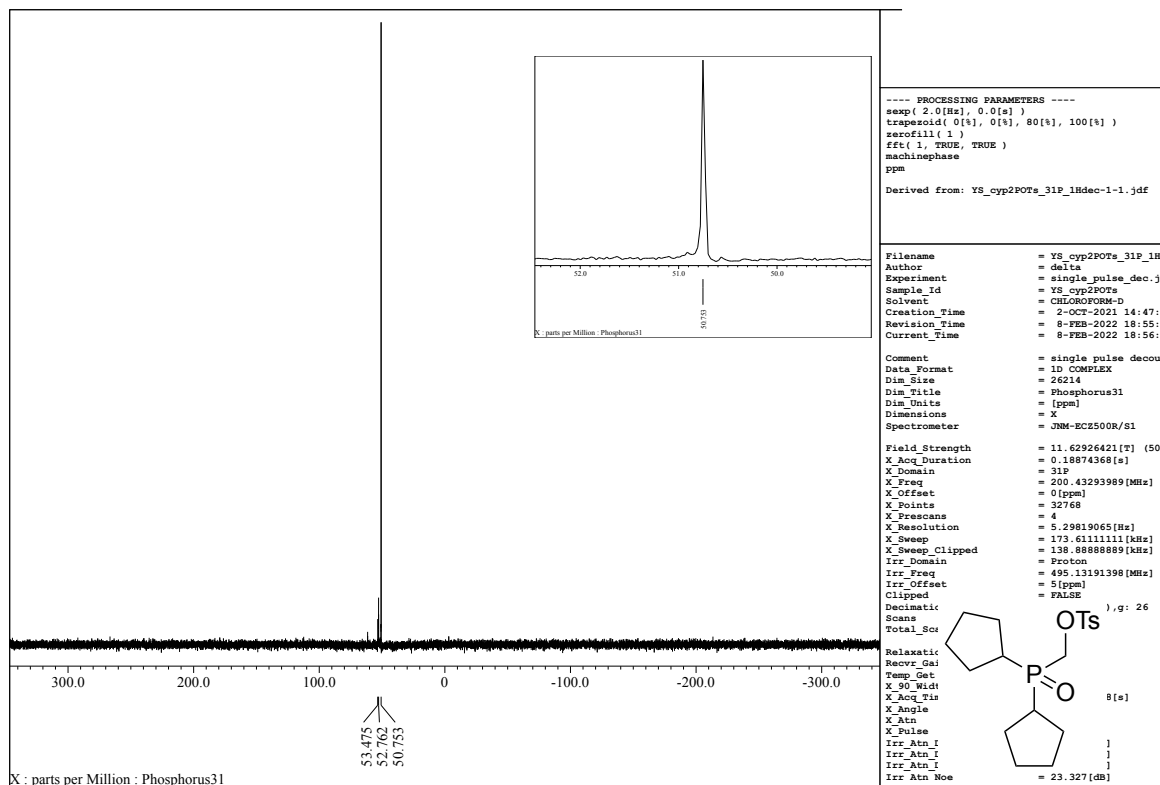
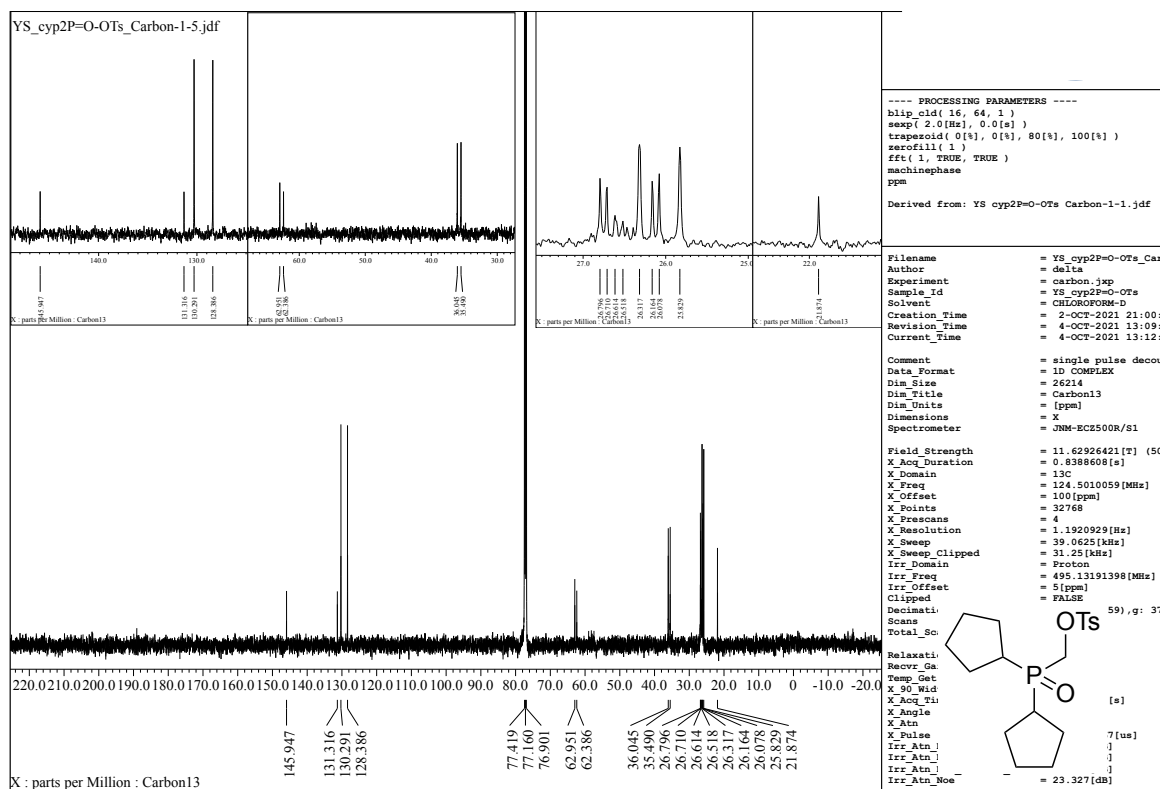


Figure S33. ^1H NMR spectrum of S8.



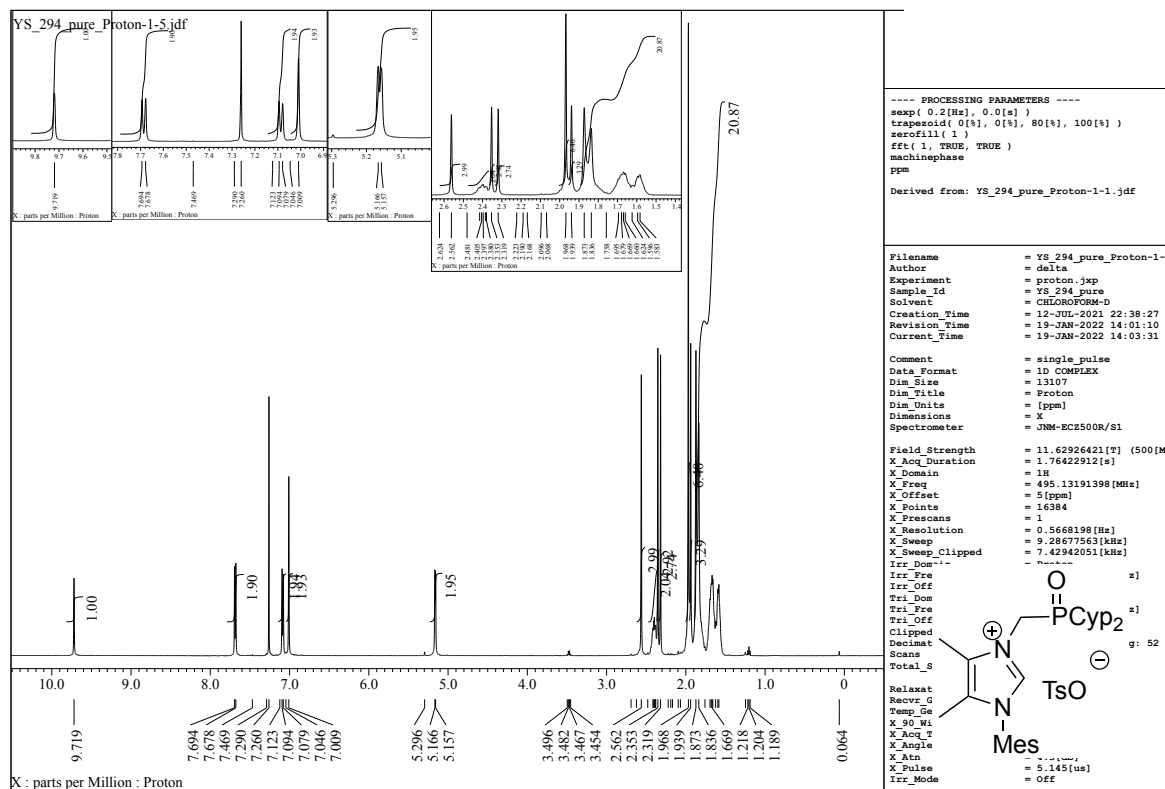


Figure S36. ¹H NMR spectrum of S9.

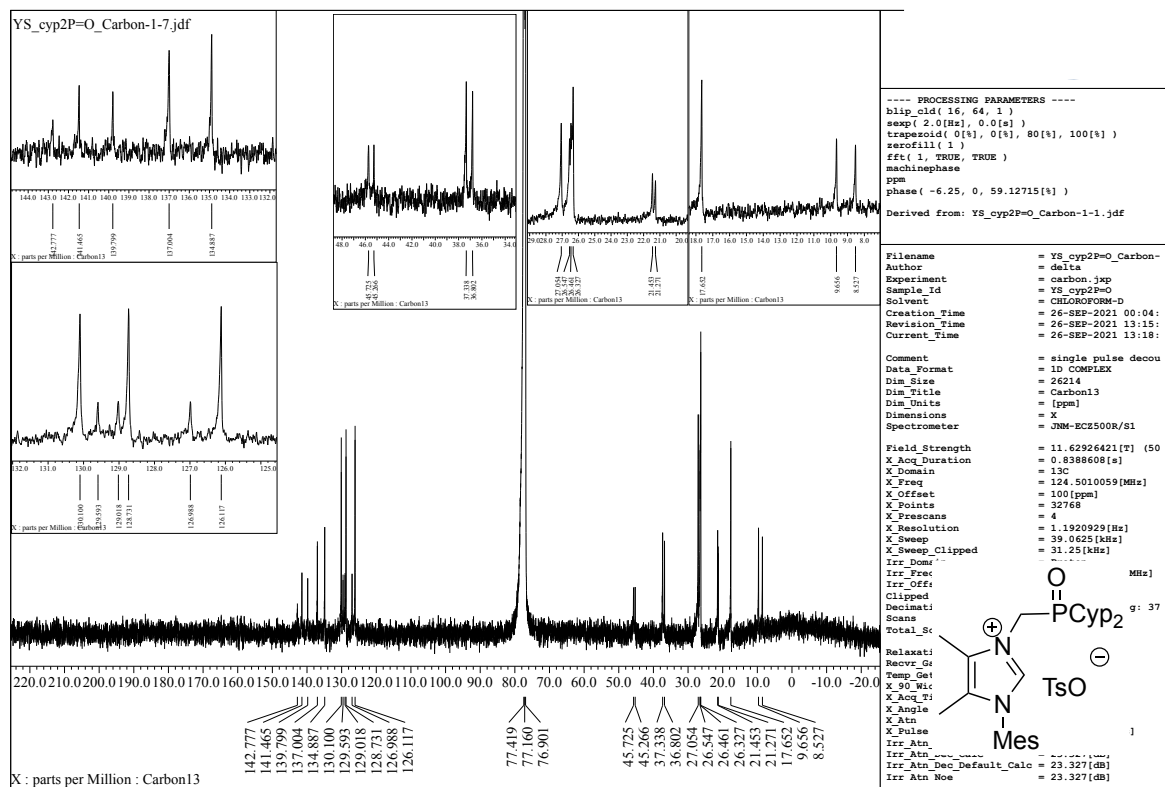


Figure S37. ¹³C NMR spectrum of S9.

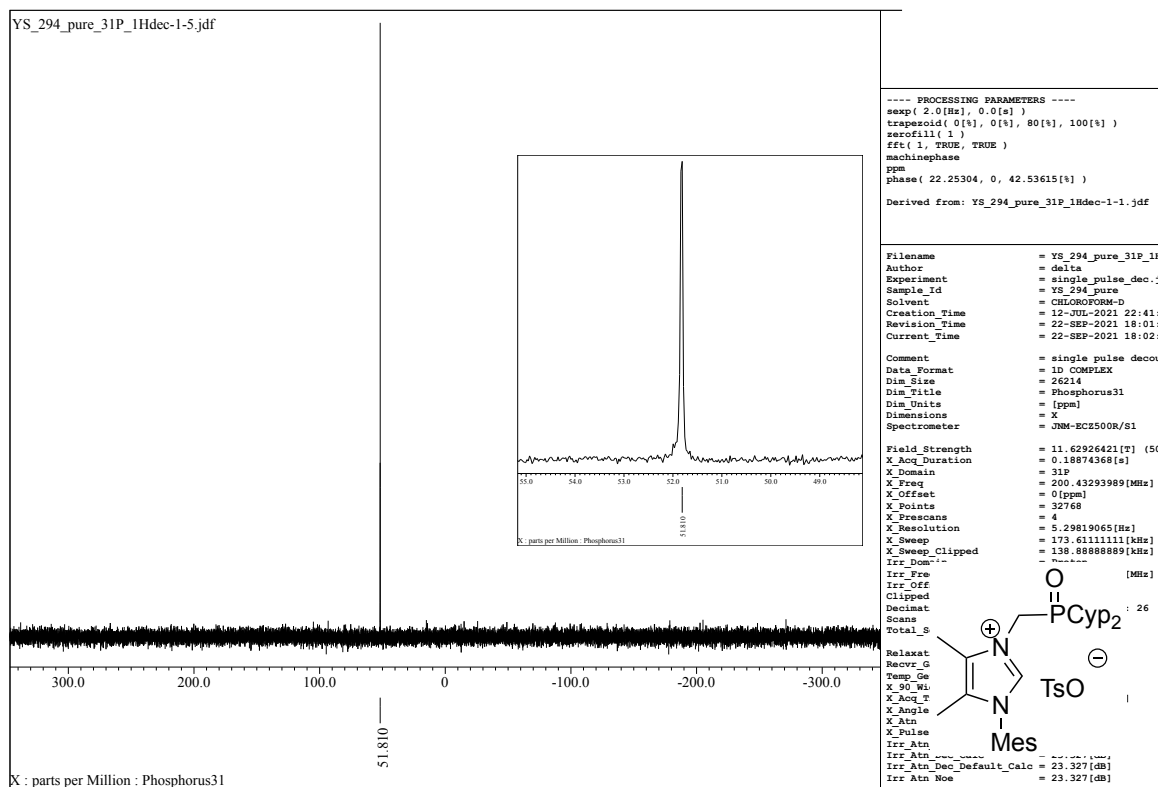


Figure S38. ³¹P NMR spectrum of S9.

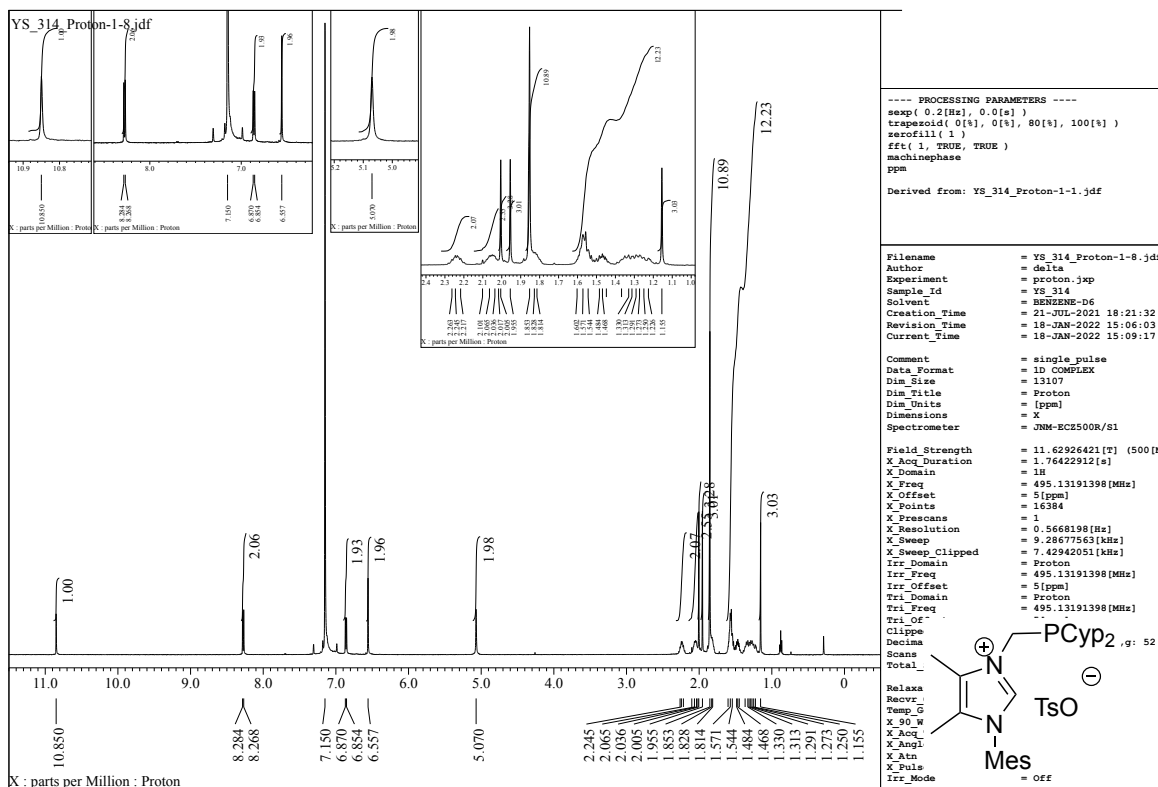


Figure S39. ¹H NMR spectrum of S10.

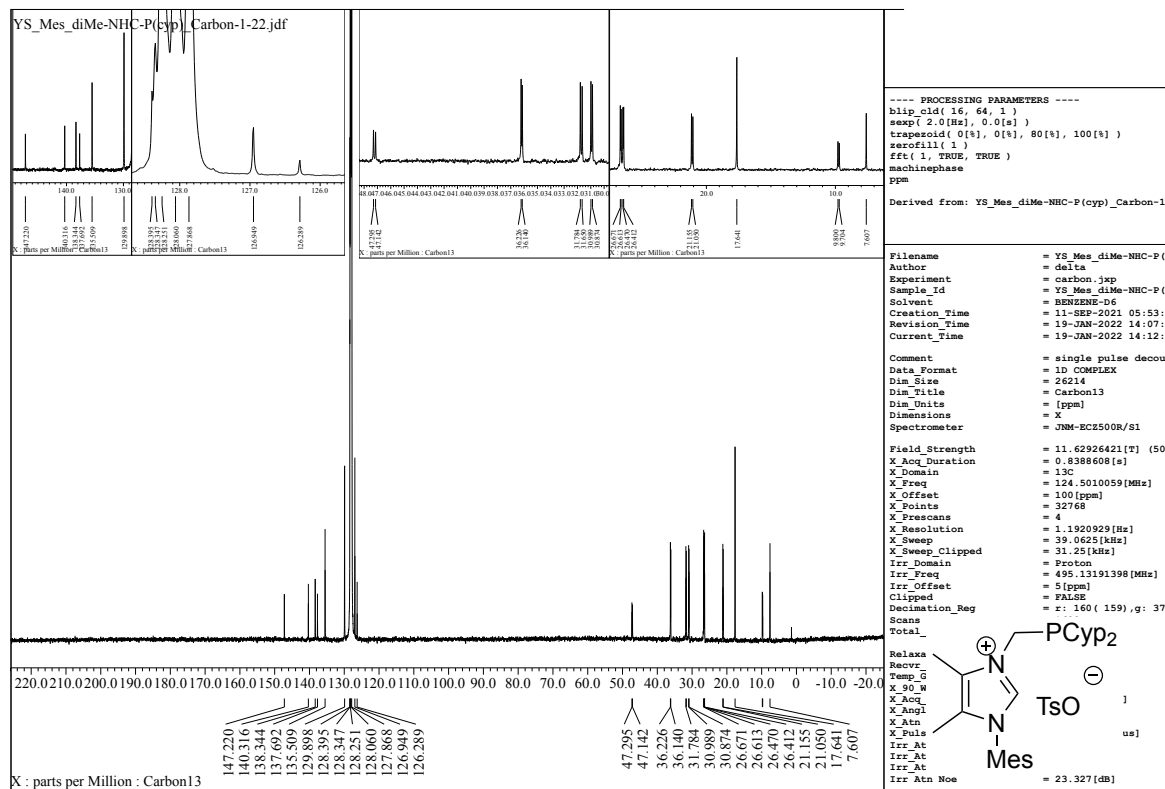


Figure S40. ^{13}C NMR spectrum of S10.

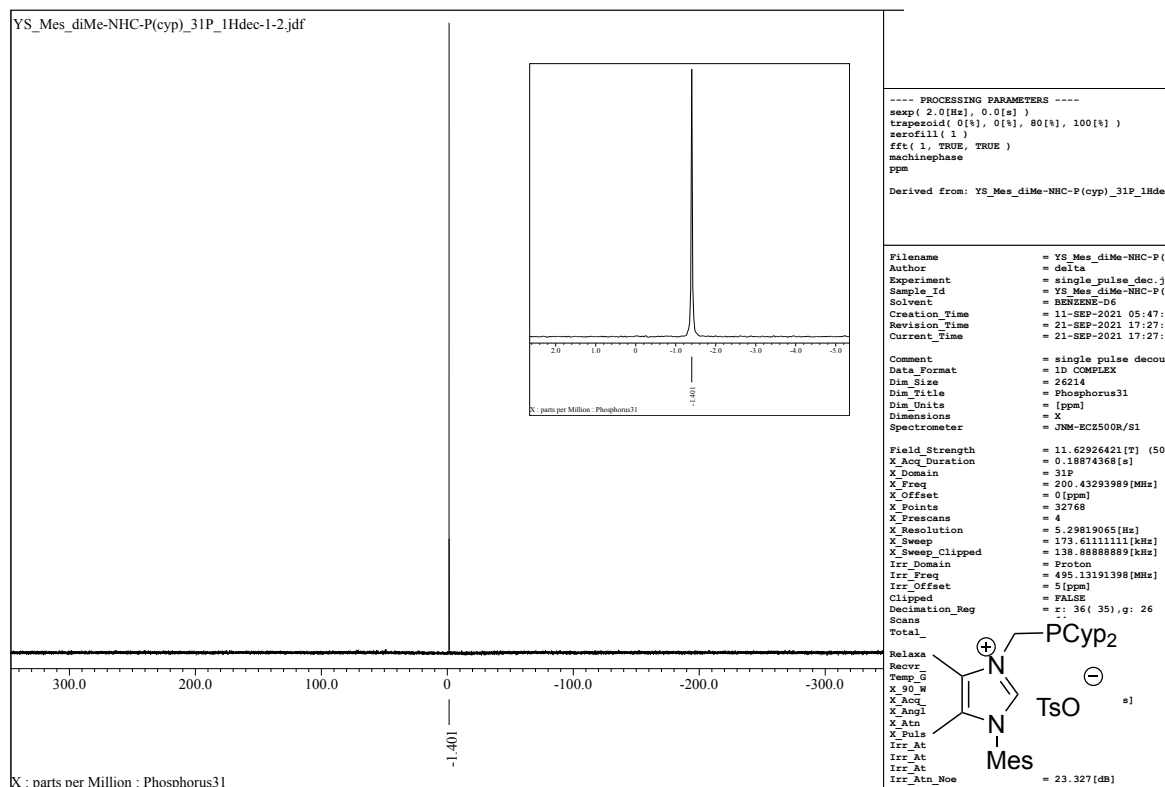


Figure S41. ^{31}P NMR spectrum of S10.

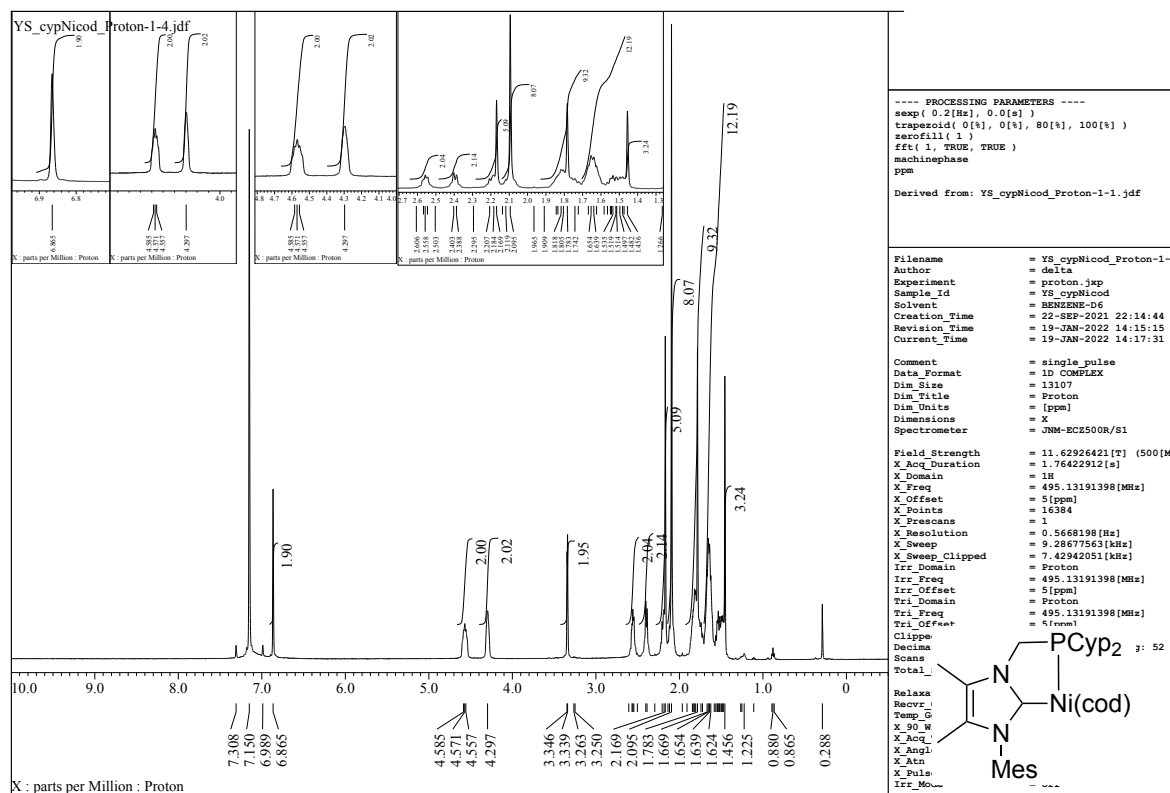


Figure S42. ¹H NMR spectrum of S11.

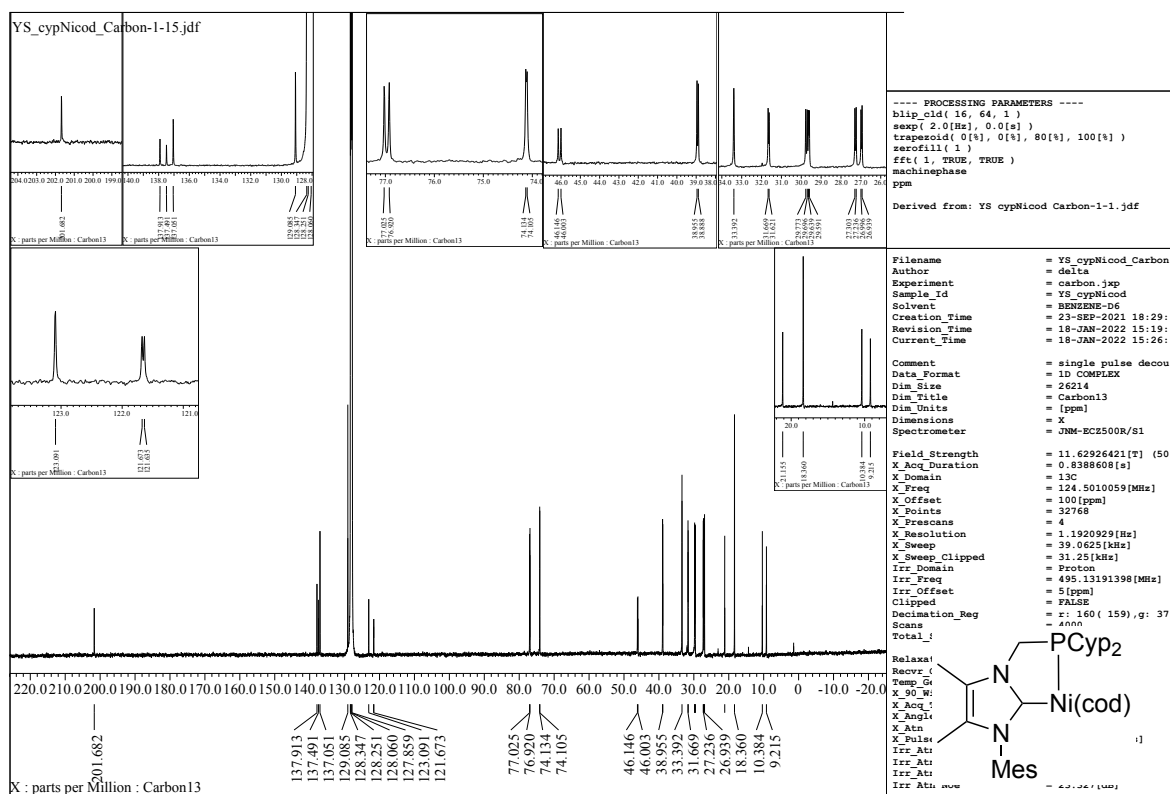


Figure S43. ¹³C NMR spectrum of S11.

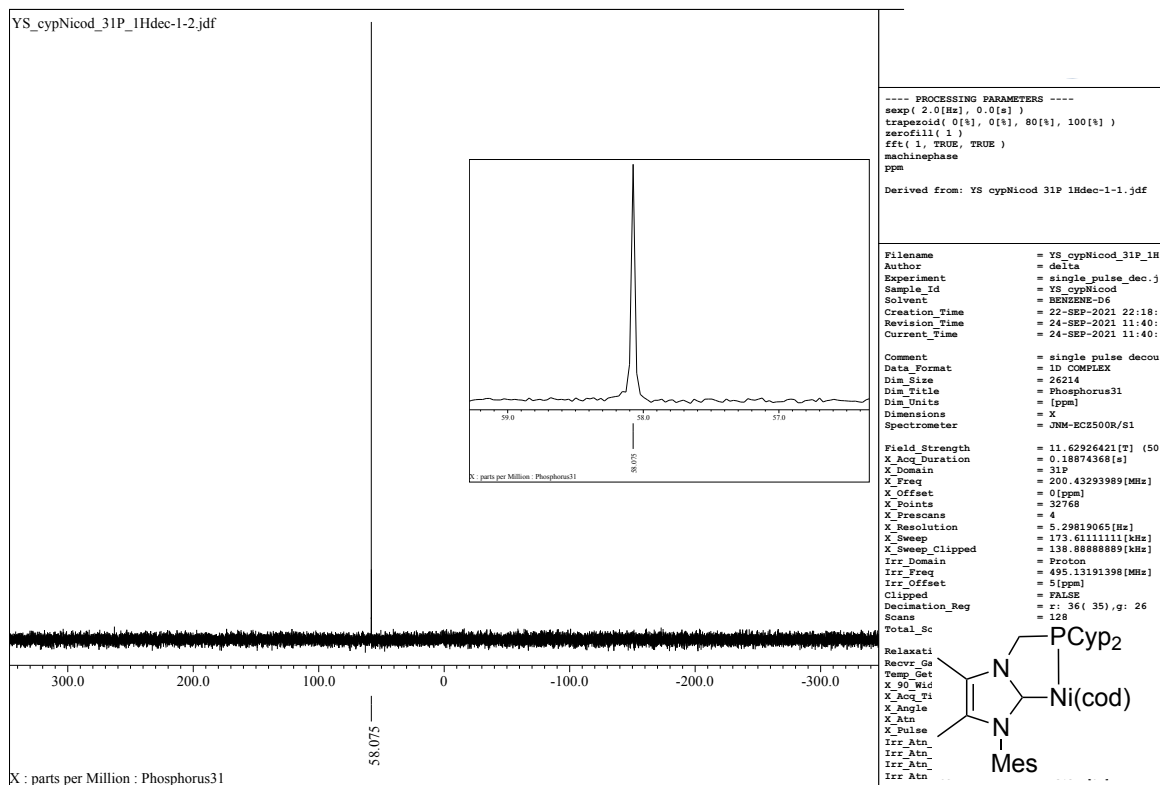


Figure S44. ³¹P NMR spectrum of S11.

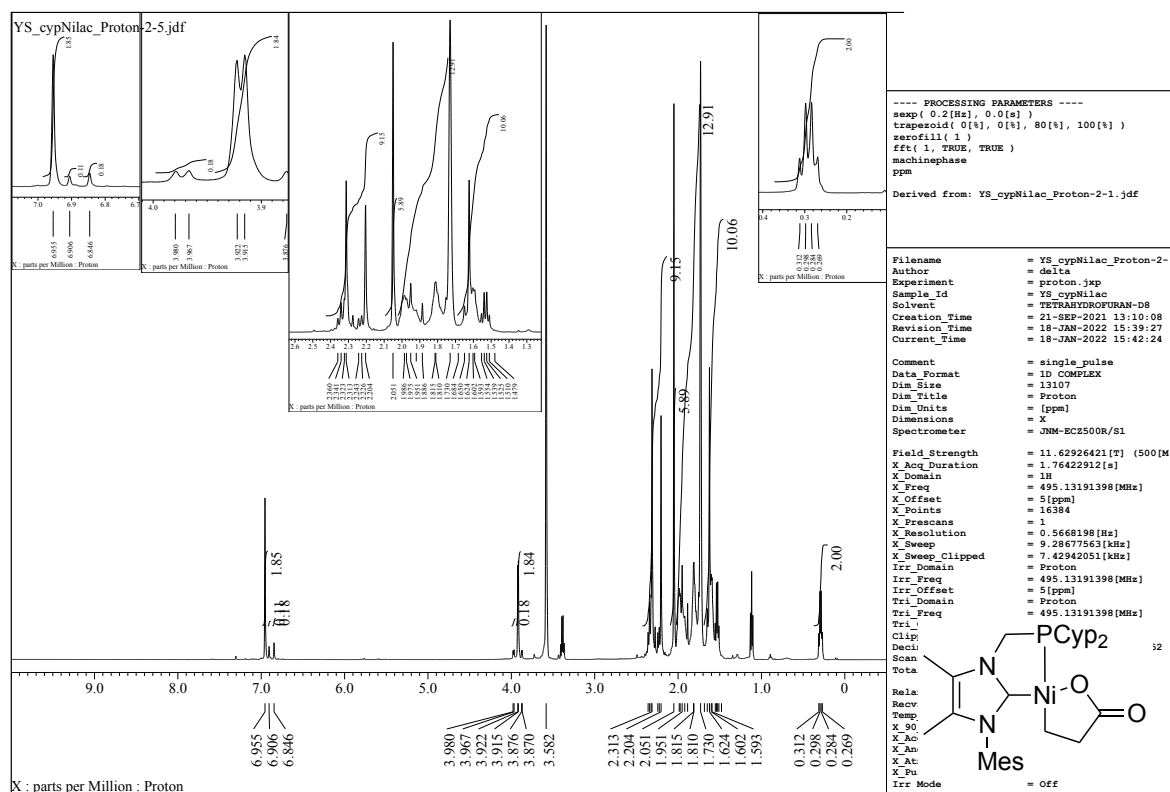
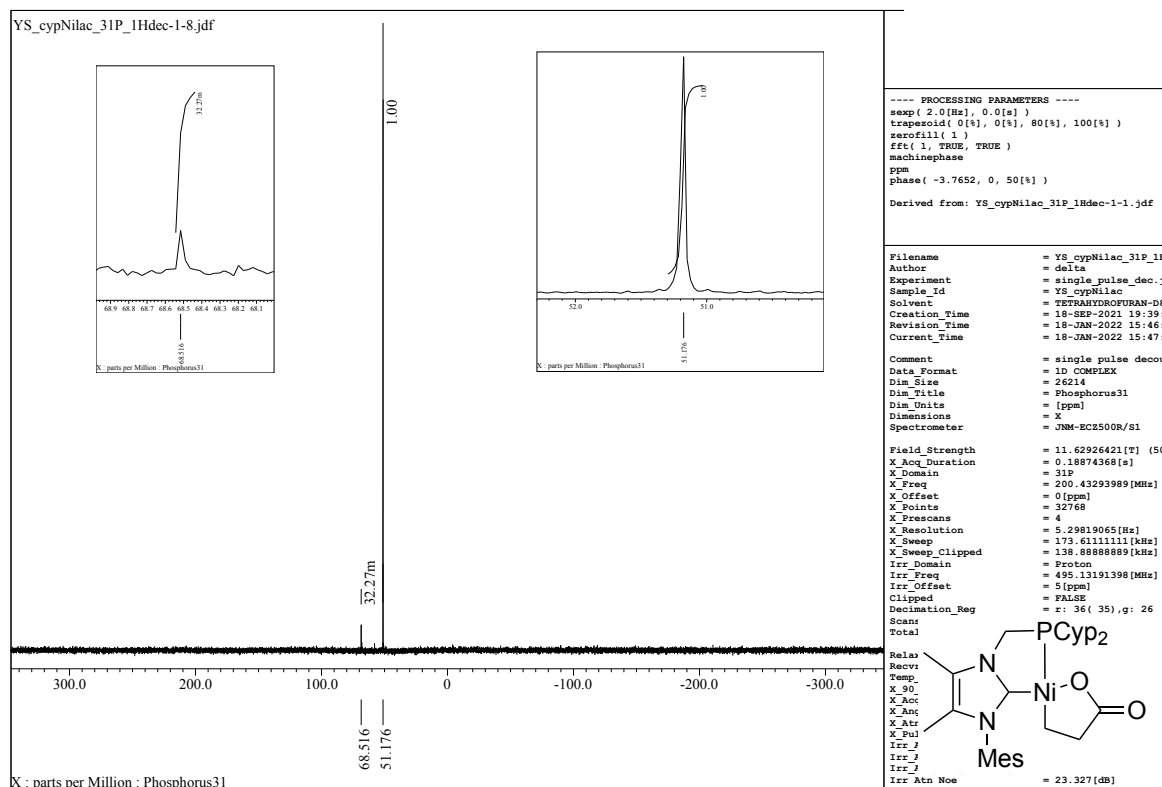
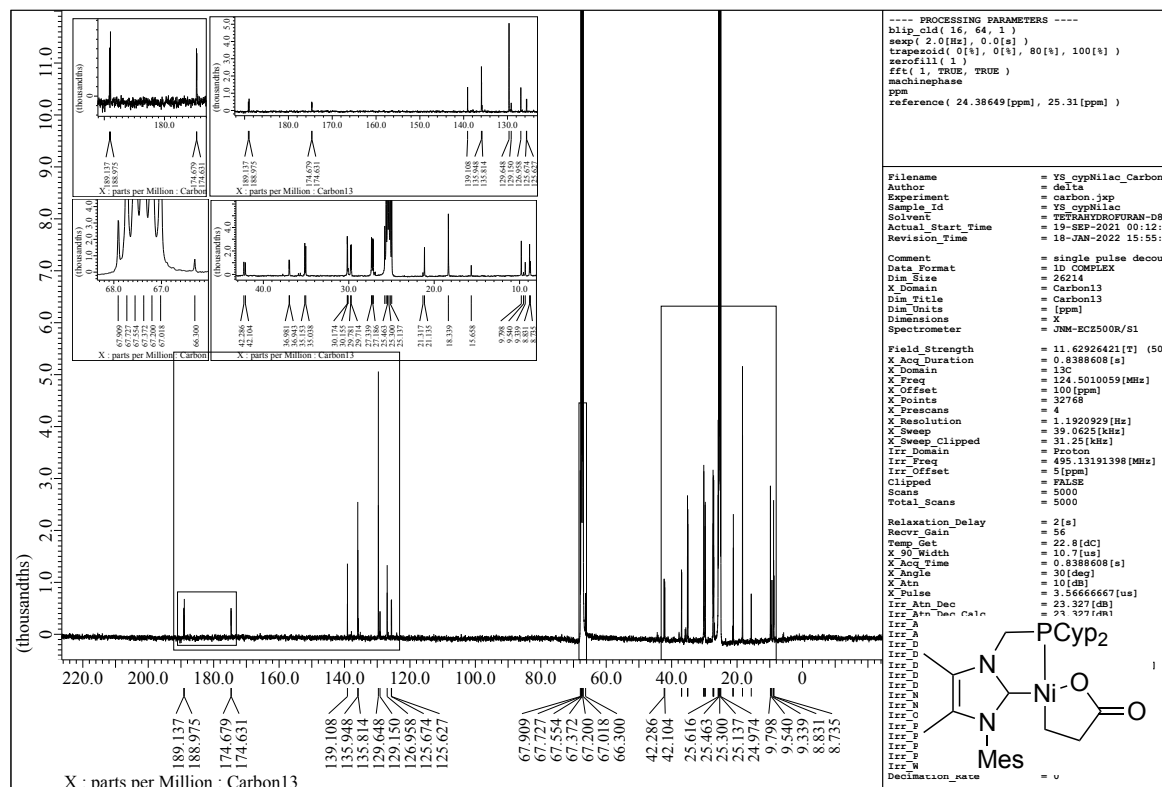
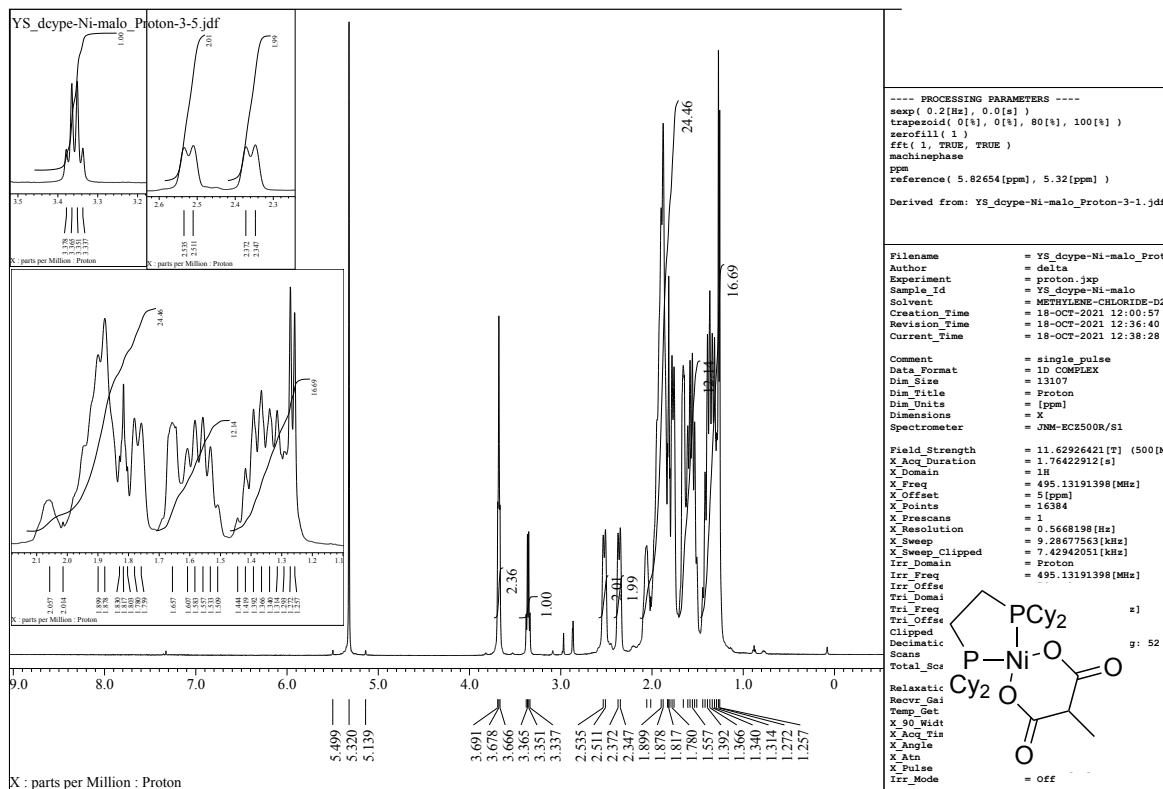
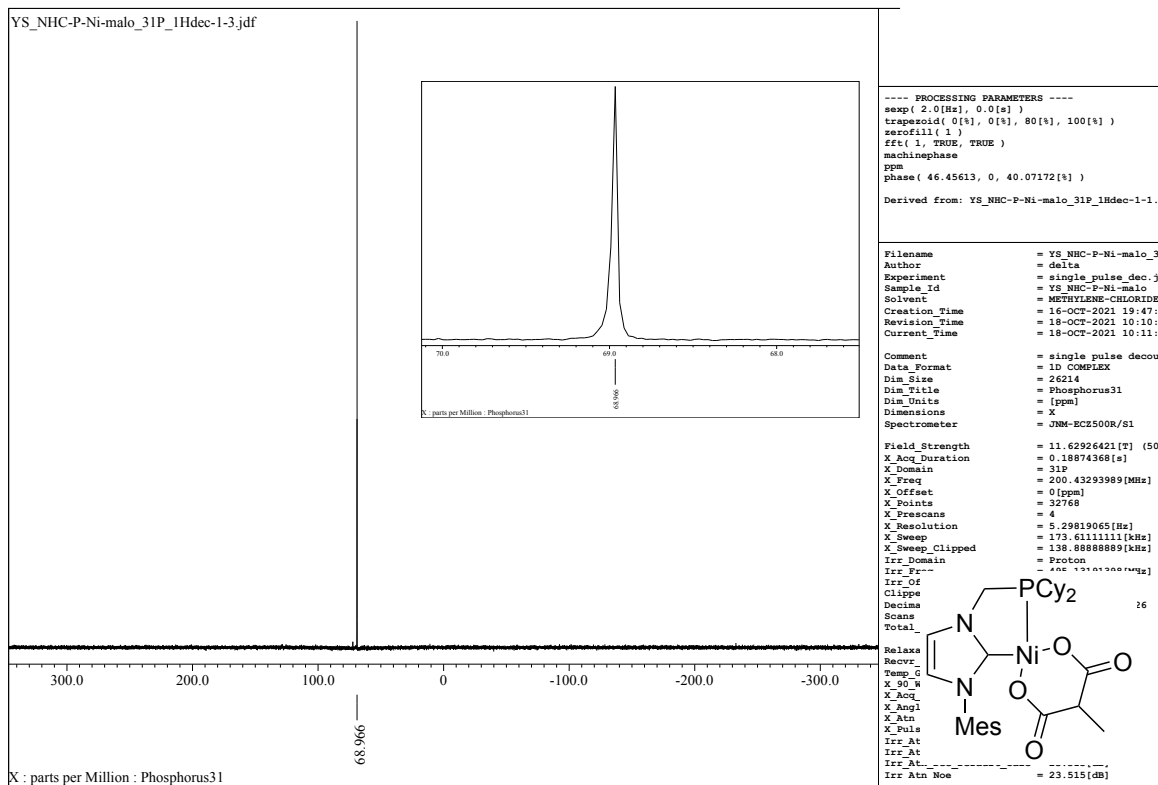
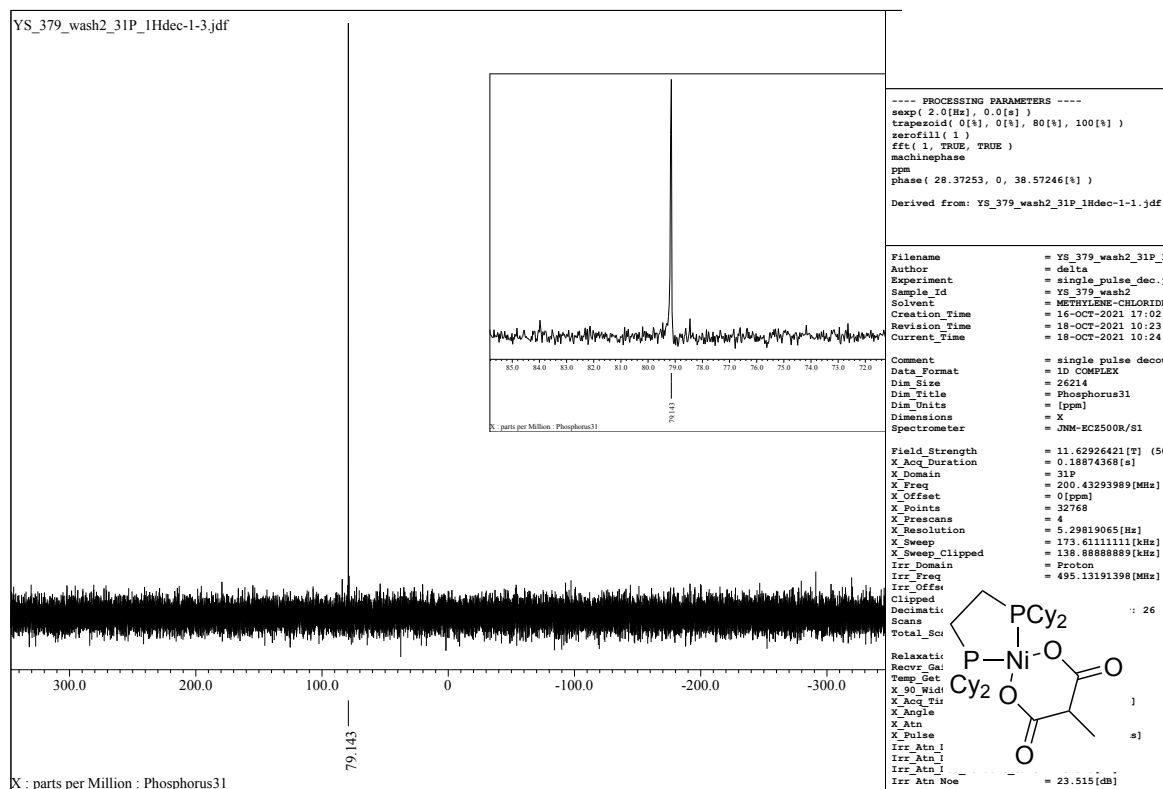
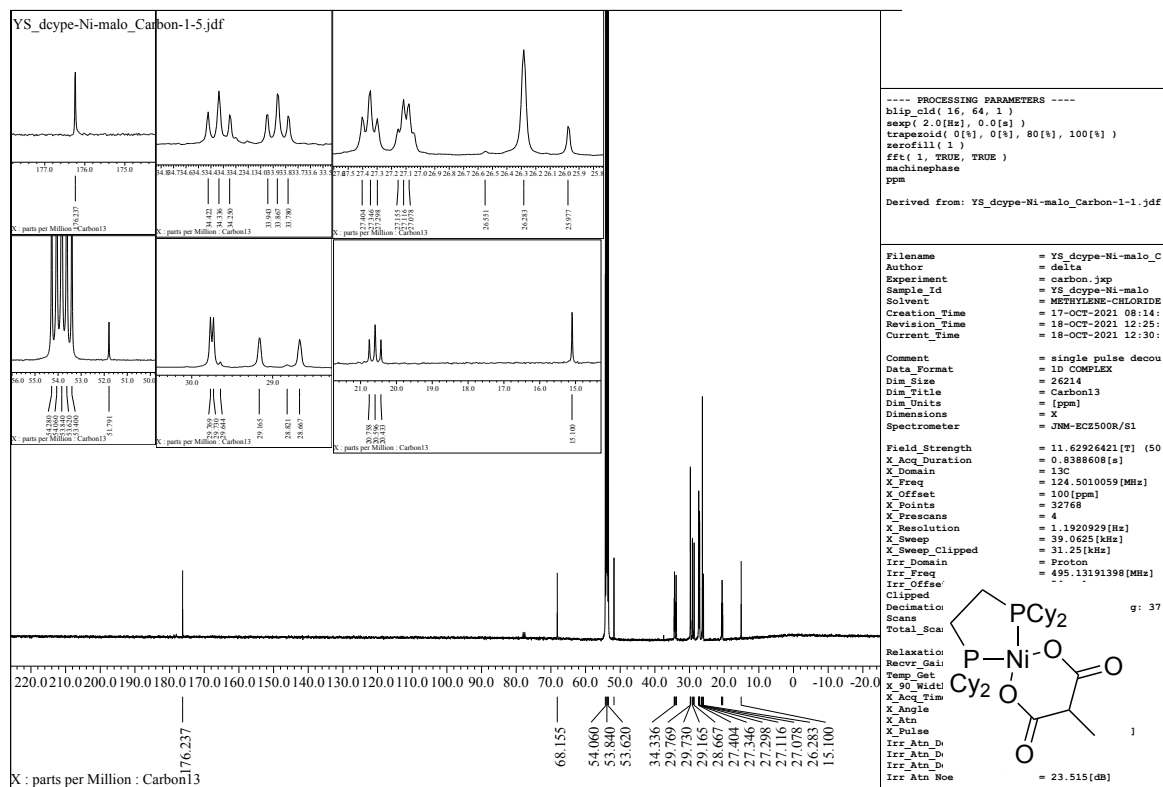


Figure S45. ¹H NMR spectrum of 6.







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