Cycloisomerization of Aromatic Homo- and bis-Homopropargylic Alcohols via Catalytic Ru-Vinylidenes: Formation of Benzofuranes and Isochromenes

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Supporting Information

Index

I. General	S2
II. Preparation of starting materials and catalysts	S2
III. Optimization of the Ru-catalyzed cycloisomerization conditions	S 3
IV. General procedure for the Ru-catalyzed reaction	S3
V. Isotopic labeling experiments	S3
VI. Spectral data	S5
VII. Spectra	S11

I. General

Solvents THF, Et₃N, ⁱPr₂NH and MeOH were used after distillation. All other reagents were used as received without further purification, unless otherwise noted. All reactions were carried out under argon atmosphere in flame-dried glassware with magnetic stirring, unless otherwise indicated.

II. Preparation of starting materials and catalysts

- Aromatic alkynols 1a, 1d, 9b, 9d were prepared following published procedures or with appropriate modifications.
- Aromatic alkynols **1b** and **1c** were prepared in three steps in 71% and 61% overall yields, respectively: a) Sonogashira coupling of methyl-2-bromo-5-chlorobenzoate and methyl-2-bromo-5-methoxybenzoate with trimethylsilylacetylene (1.5 equiv) using Pd(OAc)₂ (0.02 equiv), Ph₃P (0.05 equiv) and CuI (0.03 equiv) in Et₃N at 90°C; b) reduction with LiAlH₄ (1.4 equiv) in THF; c) desilylation with TBAF (1.25 equiv) in THF.
- Aromatic alkynol **1e** was prepared in three steps in 86% overall yield: a) Sonogashira coupling of 1-(2-iodophenyl)ethanone with trimethylsilylacetylene (1.5 equiv) using Pd(PPh₃)₂Cl₂ (0.02 equiv) and CuI (0.03 equiv) in THF/Et₃N at rt; b) reduction with NaBH₄ (1 equiv) in MeOH; c) desilylation with TBAF (1.25 equiv) in THF.
- Aromatic alkynols **1f** and **1g** were prepared in three steps in 48% and 86% overall yields, respectively: a) Sonogashira coupling of 2-iodobenzaldehyde and 1-(2-iodophenyl)ethanone with trimethylsilylacetylene (1.5 equiv) using Pd(PPh₃)₂Cl₂ (0.02 equiv) and CuI (0.03 equiv) in THF/Et₃N at rt; b) desilylation with TBAF (1.25 equiv) in THF; c) addition of allylmagnesium chloride (1.5 equiv) and methylmagnesium iodide (2 equiv) in THF, respectively.
- 2-Ethynylbenzoic acid **3** was prepared in three steps in 20% overall yield: a) esterification of 2-iodobenzoic acid in MeOH with H₂SO₄; b) Sonogashira coupling of the ester obtained with trimethylsilylacetylene (1.5 equiv) using Pd(PPh₃)₂Cl₂ (0.02 equiv) and CuI (0.03 equiv) in THF/Et₃N at rt; c) ester saponification and desilylation with NaOH in MeOH.
- Alkynol 5 was prepared in three steps in 32% overall yield: a) silylation of pent-4-yn-1-ol by treatment with n-BuLi (2.1 equiv) and TMSCl (2.2 equiv) in THF;
 b) Swern oxidation of the resulting alcohol; c) addition of hexylmagnesium chloride (1 equiv) in THF.
- 2,2-Di(prop-2-ynyl)propane-1,3-diol **7** was prepared in 70% overall yield by reduction of dimethyl 2,2-di(prop-2-ynyl)malonate² with LiAlH₄ (2.8 equiv) in THF.

¹ Kabalka, G. W.; Wang, L.; Pagni, R. M. Tetrahedron **2001**, 57, 8017.

² Trost, B. M.; Rudd, M. T. J. Am. Chem. Soc. **2005**, 127, 4763.

- Phenol **9a** was prepared in three steps in 34% overall yield: a) Sonogashira coupling of 3-hydroxy-2-iodo-4-methoxybenzaldehyde with trimethylsilylacetylene (1.5 equiv) using Pd(PPh₃)₂Cl₂ (0.10 equiv) and CuI (0.10 equiv) in THF/ⁱPr₂NH at 40°C; b) reduction with NaBH₄ (1.5 equiv) in MeOH; c) desilylation with TBAF (1.25 equiv) in THF.
- Phenol 9c was prepared in three steps in 50% overall yield: a) iodination of 4-hydroxybenzonitrile with KI (2 equiv), I₂ (1 equiv), NH₄OH (1 equiv) in H₂O;³ b) Sonogashira of the resulting aryl iodide with trimethylsilylacetylene (1.5 equiv) using Pd(PPh₃)₂Cl₂ (0.02 equiv) and CuI (0.03 equiv) in THF/Et₃N at rt; c) desilylation with TBAF (1.25 equiv) in THF.
- CpRuCl(PPh₃)₂, ⁴ CpRuCl(dppm)⁵ and [Cp*Ru(CH₃CN)₃]PF₆⁶ were prepared following literature procedures. Cp*RuCl(PPh₃)₂, (η⁵-indenyl)RuCl(PPh₃)₂ and TpRuCl(PPh₃)₂ were used as received from commercial suppliers.

III. Optimization of the Ru-catalyzed cycloisomerization conditions

- Catalyst: Ru-catalyzed reaction of bis-homopropargylic alcohol 1a using 10% of Cp*RuCl(PPh₃)₂, TpRuCl(PPh₃)₂, CpRuCl(dppm) or [Cp*Ru(CH₃CN)₃]PF₆ failed to give the cycloisomerized product, with recovery of 1a unaltered. When η⁵-(indenyl)RuCl(PPh₃)₂ was used as catalyst, isochromene 2a was obtained in a low 15% yield.
- *Amines*: Ru-catalyzed cycloisomerization of **1a** in *i*PrNH₂ gave a low 25% yield of **2a**. Secondary amines like *i*Pr₂NH and pirrolidine, tertiary amines like Et₃N and 2,2'-bipyridine failed to afford **2a**, with recovery of **1a** unaltered.

IV. General conditions for the Ru-catalyzed reaction

Aromatic alkynols were added to a suspension of the Ru catalyst (10% mmol) in the solvent (0.15 M) and the mixture heated in an oil-bath at 90-130°C until disappearance of the starting alkynol (GC and TLC monitoring). After reaching rt, the mixture was concentrated and the resulting residue was chromatographed on silica gel using Et₂O/hexane as eluents to afford the final cycloisomerized products.

V. Isotopic labeling experiments

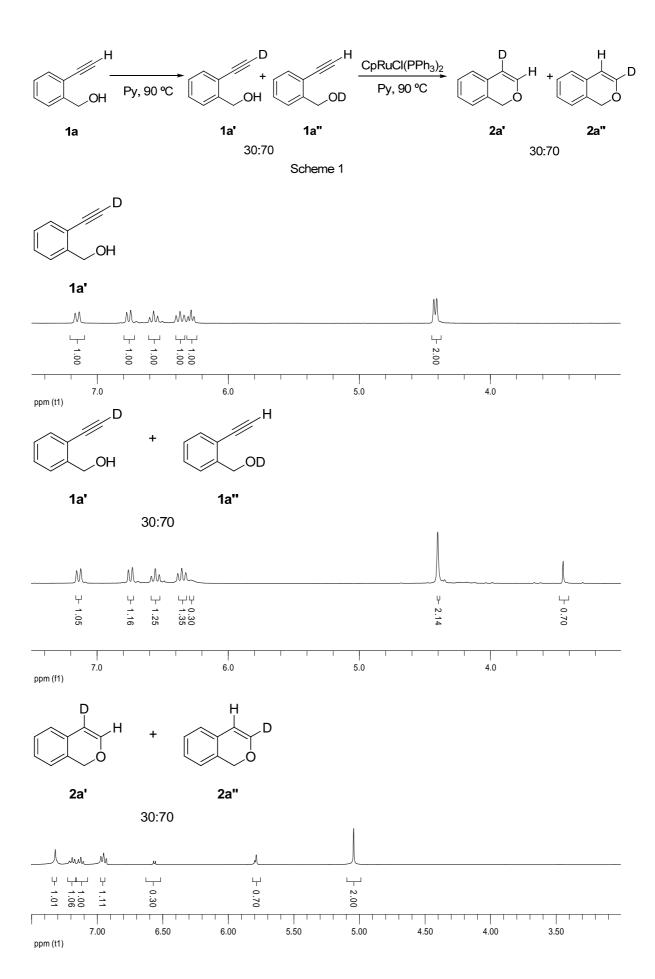
Deuterated alkyne **1a'** (obtained by reaction of **1a** with NaH in THF followed by sequential quenching with D₂O and MeOH) was heated in pyridine for 30 min at 90 °C until a stationary mixture of **1a'** and deuterated alcohol **1a''** was obtained in 3:7 ratio (Scheme 1). Then, CpRuCl(PPh₃)₂ was added to the reaction mixture to give a 3:7 mixture of isochromenes **2a'** and **2a''** (Scheme 1).

⁴ Bruce, M. I.; Windsor, N. J. Aust. J. Chem. **1977**, *30*, 1601.

³ Sun, M.; Cowart, M. J. Med. Chem. 2005, 48, 6482.

⁵ Ashby, G. S.; M. I. Tomkins, I. B.; Wallis, R. C. Aust. J. Chem. 1979, 32, 1003.

⁶ a) Trost, B. M.; Older, C. M. *Organometallics* **2002**, *21*, 2544. b) Schrenk, J. L.; McNair, A. M.; McCormick, F. B. Mann, K. R. *Inorg. Chem.* **1986**, *25*, 3501.



VI. Spectral data

1H-isochromene (2a)

Brown oil. ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 7.28-7.09 (m, 2H), 6.96 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 6.57 (d, J = 5.7 Hz, 1H), 5.80 (d, J = 5.7 Hz, 1H), 5.05 (s, 2H). ¹³C NMR, DEPT (75 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 146.2 (CH), 130.4 (C), 128.1 (CH), 128.0 (C), 126.6 (CH), 123.9 (CH), 122.8 (CH), 105.4 (CH), 68.1 (CH₂). MS, m/z (% relative intensity): 133 (M⁺+1, 100), 132 (16), 105 (39). HRMS (CI) calculated for C₉H₉O [M⁺+1]: 133.0653; found: 133.0653.

7-chloro-1H-isochromene (2b)

Yellow solid (mp: 48-50°C). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 7.17 (dd, J = 7.9, 1.9 Hz, 1H), 6.98 (s, 1H), 6.88 (d, J = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 6.57 (d, J = 5.7 Hz, 1H), 5.77 (d, J = 5.7 Hz, 1H), 5.01 (s, 2H). ¹³C NMR, DEPT (75 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 146.4 (CH), 131.7 (C), 129.5 (C), 128.9 (C), 128.1 (CH), 124.2 (CH), 124.0 (CH), 104.7 (CH), 67.5 (CH₂). MS, m/z (% relative intensity): 167 (M⁺+1, 100), 166 (39), 139 (38), 141 (12), 131 (32). HRMS (CI) calculated for C₉H₈ClO [M⁺+1]: 167.0264; found: 167.0264.

7-methoxy-1H-isochromene (2c)

White solid (mp: 52-54°C). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 6.91 (d, J = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 6.76 (dd, J = 8.3, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 6.58 (s, 1H), 6.51 (d, J = 5.7 Hz, 1H), 5.78 (d, J = 5.7 Hz, 1H), 5.03 (s, 2H), 3.79 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR, DEPT (75 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 158.6 (C), 144.1 (CH), 129.7 (C), 124.0 (CH), 123,2 (C), 112.9 (CH), 110.2 (CH), 105.0 (CH), 68.0 (CH₂), 55.3 (CH₃). MS, m/z (% relative intensity): 163 (M⁺+1, 27), 149 (22), 137 (31), 123 (46), 109 (61), 95 (74), 83 (100). HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₁₀H₁₁O₂ [M⁺+1]: 163.0756; found: 163.0754.

1-methyl-1H-isochromene (2e)

Yellowish oil. ¹H NMR (250 MHz, CDCl₃), δ ppm 7.25-7.09 (m, 2H), 7.04-6.89 (m, 2H), 6.51 (d, J = 5.7 Hz, 1H), 5.76 (d, J = 5.7 Hz, 1H), 5.21 (q, J = 6.5 Hz, 1H), 1.59 (d, J = 6.5 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR, DEPT (75 MHz, CDCl₃) δ (ppm): 144.8 (CH), 132.4 (C), 129.7 (C), 127.8 (CH), 126.6 (CH), 123.3 (CH), 123.0 (CH), 104.7 (CH), 73.5 (CH), 19.7 (CH₃). MS, m/z (% relative intensity): 147 (M⁺+1, 100), 146 (24), 131 (13), 129 (15), 119 (35). HRMS (EI) calculated for $C_{10}H_{10}O$ [M⁺]: 146.0732; found: 146.0732.

1-allyl-1H-isochromene (2f)

Yellowish oil. 1 H NMR (250 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 7.23-7.10 (m, 2H), 6.96 (d, J = 7.0 Hz, 2H), 6.49 (d, J = 5.7 Hz, 1H), 5.99-5.80 (m, 1H), 5.75 (d, J = 5.7 Hz, 1H), 5.21-5.06 (m, 3H), 2.87-2.71 (m, 1H), 2.56-2.44 (m, 1H). 13 C NMR, DEPT (75 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 144.1 (CH), 134.1 (CH), 130.8 (C), 129.6 (C), 127.9 (CH), 126.4 (CH), 124.2 (CH), 123.3 (CH), 117.6 (CH₂), 104.6 (CH), 76.9 (CH), 38.5 (CH₂). MS, m/z (% relative intensity): 173 (M⁺+1, 18), 159 (13), 155 (11), 145 (26), 131 (100), 129 (5), 117 (5). HRMS (EI) calculated for $C_{12}H_{12}O$ [M⁺]: 172.0888; found: 172.0888.

1,1-dimethyl-1H-isochromene (2g)

Yellowish oil. 1 H NMR (250 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 7.19-7.12 (m, 2H), 7.08-7.03 (m, 1H), 6.93 (dd, J = 6.1, 2.7 Hz, 1H), 6.45 (d, J = 5.7 Hz, 1H), 5.72 (d, J = 5.7 Hz, 1H), 1.61 (s, 6H). 13 C NMR, DEPT (75 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 143.4 (CH), 137.0 (C), 136.0 (C), 127.4 (CH), 126.8 (CH), 123.4 (CH), 122.6 (CH), 104.0 (CH), 77.9 (C), 27.3 (2xCH₃). MS, m/z (% relative intensity): 161 (M⁺+1, 100), 160 (42), 145 (29), 143 (86), 133 (21). HRMS (EI) calculated for $C_{11}H_{12}O$ [M⁺]: 160.0888; found: 160.0888.

3-methyleneisobenzofuran-1(3H)-one (4)

Brown oil. H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 7.92 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.73 (d, J = 3.7 Hz, 2H), 7.63-7.54 (m, 1H), 5.24 (s, 2H). HC NMR, DEPT (75 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 169.6 (C), 166.8 (C), 151.8 (C), 139.1 (C), 134.4 (CH), 130.4 (CH), 125.4 (CH), 120.6 (CH), 91.2 (CH₂). MS, m/z (% relative intensity): 147 (M⁺+1, 100), 131 (1), 103 (2). IR (KBr), cm⁻¹: 2924, 1774, 1657. HRMS (CI) calculated for $C_9H_7O_2$ [M⁺+1]: 147.0446; found: 147.0446.

2-hexyl-3,4-dihydro-2H-pyran (6)

Dark brown oil. H NMR (250 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 6.33 (d, J = 6.2 Hz, 1H), 4.66-4.56 (m, 1H), 3.78-3.65 (m, 1H), 2.05-1.20 (m, 14H), 0.84 (t, J = 6.7 Hz, 3H). 13 C NMR, DEPT (75 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 143.8 (CH), 100.4 (CH), 75.2 (CH), 35.3 (CH₂), 31.9 (CH₂), 29.3 (CH₂), 27.8 (CH₂), 25.3 (CH₂), 22.6 (CH₂), 19.9 (CH₂), 14.1 (CH₃). MS, m/z (% relative intensity): 169 (M⁺+1, 100), 151 (45), 141 (31), 137 (25), 123 (35), 109 (43), 97 (50), 83 (78), 71 (91). HRMS (CI) calculated for C₁₁H₂₁O [M⁺+1]: 169.1592; found: 169.1592

(\pm) -2,8-dioxaspiro[5.5]undeca-3,9-diene (8)

Brown oil. ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 6.36 (td, J = 6.1, 2.0 Hz, 2H), 4.67 (td, J = 6.1, 3.7 Hz, 2H), 3.82 (d, J = 10.7 Hz, 2H), 3.62 (d, J = 10.7 Hz, 2H), 1.82 (bs, 4H). ¹³C NMR, DEPT (75 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 143.3 (CH), 98.6 (CH), 69.2 (CH₂), 30.0 (C), 29.2 (CH₂). MS, m/z (% relative intensity): 153 (M⁺+1, 91), 175 (68), 123 (19), 107 (79), 97 (100). HRMS (CI) calculated for C₉H₁₃O₂ [M⁺+1]: 153.0916; found: 153.0916.

(7-methoxybenzofuran-4-yl)methanol (10a)

Yellowish solid (mp: 61-63°C). ¹H NMR (250 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 7.60 (d, J = 2.1 Hz, 1H), 7.06 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 6.86 (d, J = 2.1 Hz, 1H), 6.70 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 4.78 (s, 2H), 3.96 (s, 3H), 1.94 (s, 1H). ¹³C NMR, DEPT (75 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 145.2 (C), 145.1 (CH), 144.3 (C), 127.7 (C), 125.8 (C), 122.3 (CH), 105.8 (CH), 105.5 (CH), 63.3 (CH₂), 56.0 (CH₃). MS, m/z (% relative intensity): 179 (M⁺+1, 45), 177 (37), 163 (93), 161 (100), 149 (35). HRMS (EI) calculated for $C_{10}H_{10}O_3$ [M⁺]: 178.0630; found: 178.0630.

(7-methoxybenzofuran-4-yl)methyl acetate

¹H NMR (250 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 7.67 (d, J = 2.1 Hz, 1H), 7.18 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 6.87 (d, J = 2.1 Hz, 1H), 6.78 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 1H), 5.29 (s, 2H), 4.02 (s, 3H), 2.09 (s, 3H).

10b

5-phenylbenzofuran (10b)

White solid (mp: 58-60°C). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$), δ (ppm): 7.81-7.79 (bs, 1H), 7.66 (d, J = 2.2 Hz, 1H), 7.64 (t, J = 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.62 (d, J = 0.9 Hz, 1H), 7.59-7.52 (m, J = 8.55, 2H), 7.48-7.43 (m, 2H), 7.36 (dd, J = 4.84, 3.60 Hz, 1H), 6.83 (dd, J = 2.17, 0.88 Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR, DEPT (75 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 154.5 (C), 145.5 (CH), 141.6 (C), 136.5 (C), 128.7 (2xCH), 128.0 (C), 127.4 (2xCH), 126.8 (CH), 123.9 (CH), 119.7 (CH), 111.5 (CH), 106.8 (CH). MS, m/z (% relative intensity): 195 (M⁺+1, 100), 194 (9). HRMS (CI) calculated for $C_{14}H_{11}O$ [M⁺+1]: 195.0810; found: 195.0810.

1-benzofuran-5-carbonitrile (10c)

White solid (mp: 81-82°C). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 7.95 (s, 1H), 7.74 (d, J = 2.2 Hz, 1H), 7.65-7.47 (bs, 2H), 6.84 (d, J = 2.2 Hz, 1H). ¹³C NMR, DEPT (75 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 156.4 (C), 147.1 (CH), 128.0 (C), 127.9 (CH), 126.3 (CH), 119.4 (C), 112.6 (CH), 106.7 (C), 106.6 (CH). MS, m/z (% relative intensity): 144 (M⁺+1, 100), 137 (30), 123 (46), 109 (62), 95 (74), 83 (98). HRMS (CI) calculated for C₉H₆NO [M⁺+1]: 144.0449; found: 144.0449.

Methyl benzofuran-5-carboxylate (10d)

Yellow solid (mp: 69-70°C). 1 H NMR (250 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 8.35 (d, J = 1.3 Hz, 1H), 8.03 (dd, J = 8.7, 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.68 (d, J = 2.1 Hz, 1H), 7.52 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 1H), 6.84 (d, J = 1.3 Hz, 1H), 3.94 (s, 3H). 13 C NMR, DEPT (75 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 167.2 (CO), 157.4 (C), 146.2 (CH), 127.5 (C), 126.0 (CH), 125.1 (C), 123.7 (CH), 111.2 (CH), 107.1 (CH), 52.1 (CH₃). MS, m/z, (% relative intensity): 177 (M⁺+1, 100), 145 (7), 133 (5), 105 (5). HRMS (ESI) calculated for $C_{10}H_{9}O_{3}$ [M⁺+1]: 177.0552; found: 177.0552.

12

1,1'-but-1-en-3-yne-1,4-diylbis(2-methoxybenzene) $(12)^7$

Dark brown oil. 1 H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ (ppm): 7.44 (td, J = 7.6, 1.5 Hz), 7.36 (d, J = 16.4 Hz), 7.29-7.22 (m), 7.16 (dd, J = 13.4, 6.2 Hz), 7.06 (t, J = 7.31), 6.97-6.84 (m), 6.53 (d, J = 16.4 Hz), 5.98 (d, J = 12.1 Hz), 3.90 (s), 3.86 (s). 13 C NMR, DEPT (75 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 159.7 (C), 157.0 (C), 136.3 (CH), 133.5 (CH), 133.4 (CH), 129.5 (CH), 129.4 (CH), 128.2 (CH), 126.8 (CH), 125.5 (C), 120.7 (CH), 120.5 (CH), 120.2 (CH), 112.8 (C), 111.0 (CH), 110.6 (CH), 109.0 (CH), 93.8 (C), 87.5 (C), 85.1 (CH), 55.8 (CH₃), 55.4 (CH₃). MS, m/z (% relative intensity): 265 (M⁺+1, 100), 250 (7), 135 (5), 121 (10°), 109 (6).

⁷ Bassetti, M.; Pasquini, C.; Raneri, A.; Rosato, D. J. Org. Chem. **2007**, 72, 4558

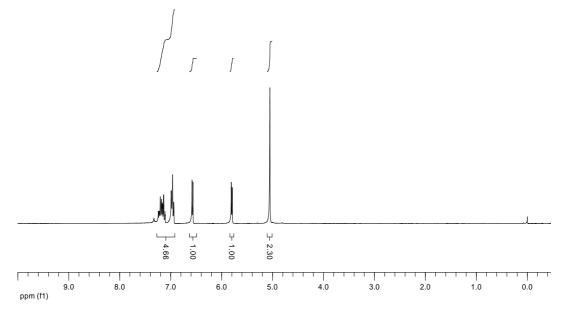
2,2-diphenyl-2,3-dihydrofuran

White oil. ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 7.60-7.08 (m, 10H), 6.51 (d, J=2.8 Hz, 1H), 5.00-4.89 (m, 1H), 3.33 (t, J=2.4, 2H). ¹³C NMR, DEPT (75 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 146.2 (CH), 144.2 (2xC), 128.2 (4xCH), 127.1 (2xCH), 125.8 (4xCH), 99.0 (CH), 90.8 (C), 43.8 (CH₂). MS, m/z (% relative intensity): 223 (M⁺+1, 94), 205 (83), 193 (15), 145 (100), 105 (40). HRMS (ESI) calculated for C₁₆H₁₅O [M⁺+1]: 223.1113; found: 223.1117.

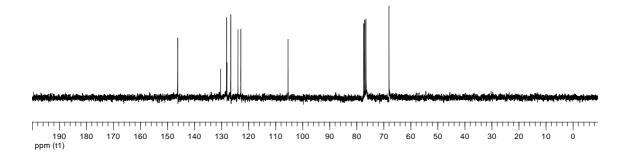


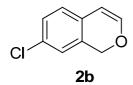


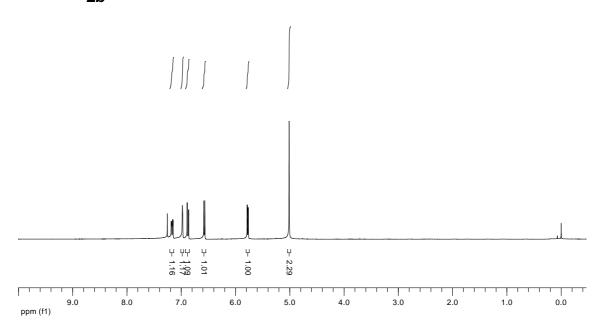
2a

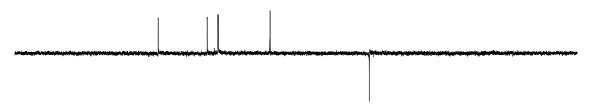


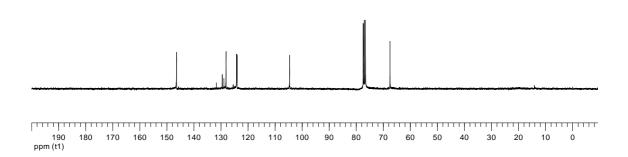


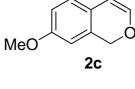


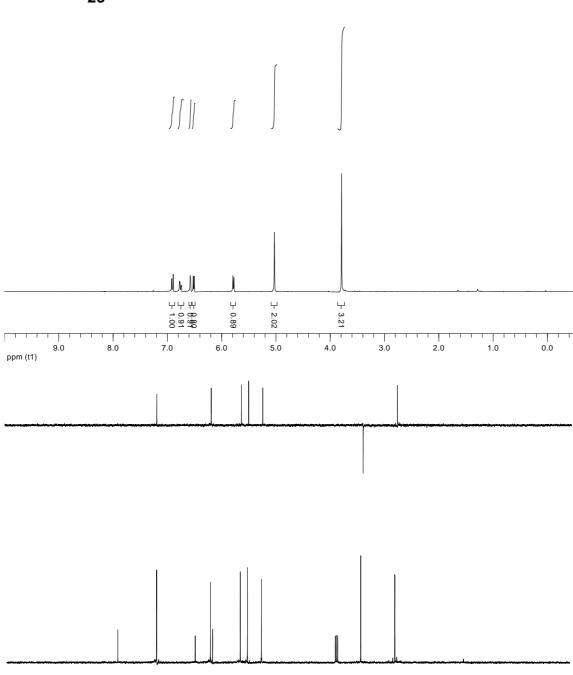






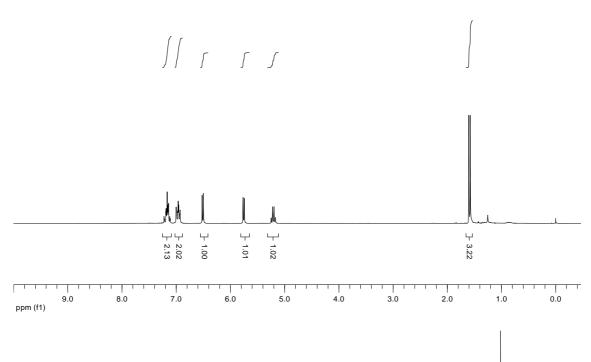


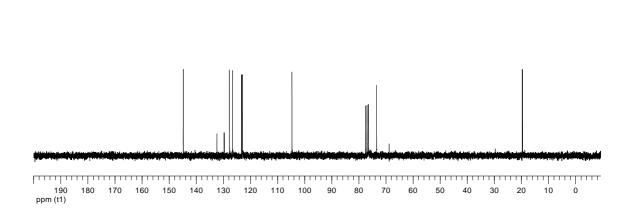


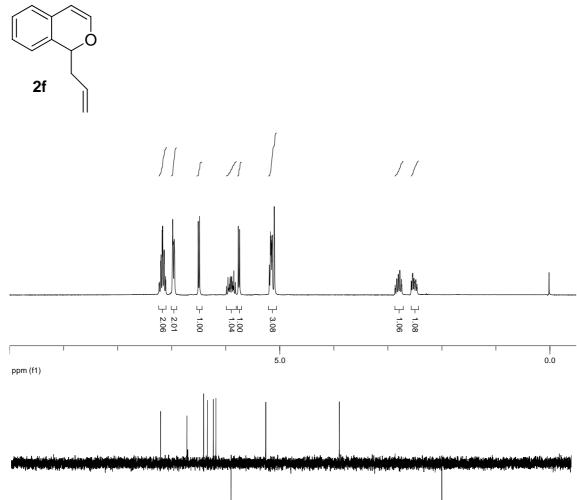


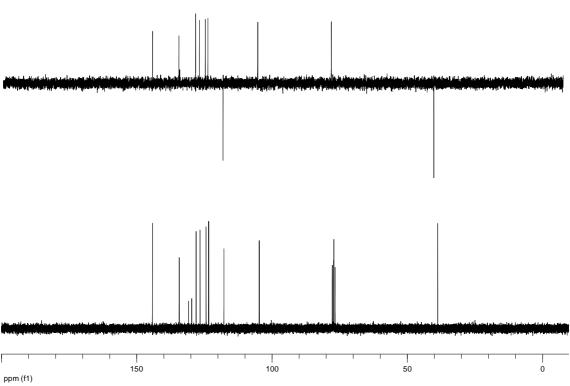
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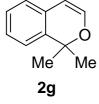


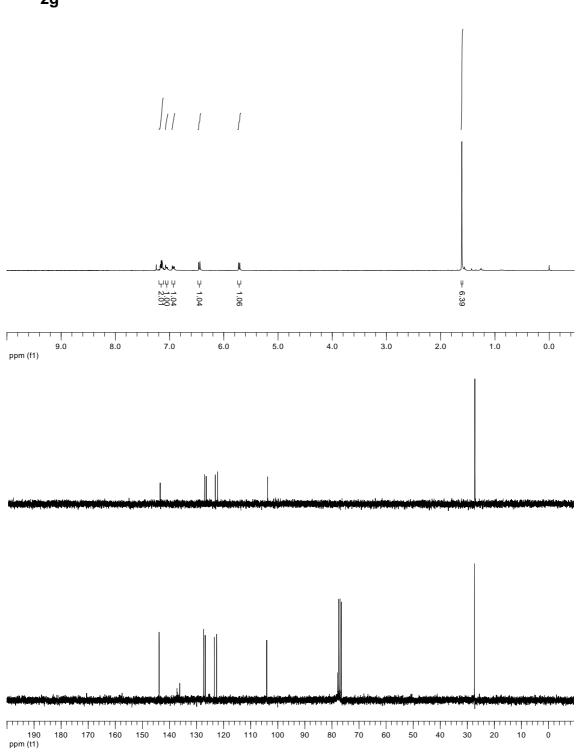


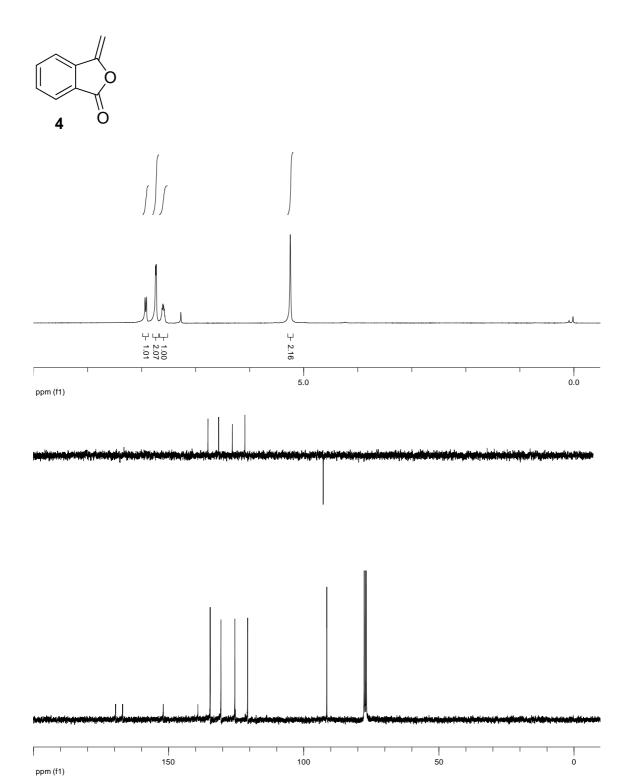


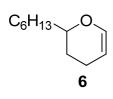


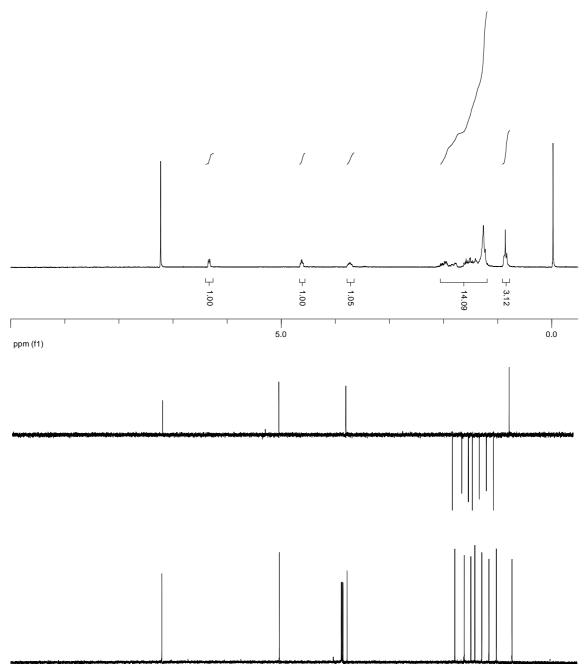












100

150

ppm (f1)

50

