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A Comprehensive Review of Organotin Complexes: Synthesis and Diverse Applications

Zainab Al Talebi[1], Ahmed Saleh Farhood[2], Angham G. Hadi[3]
[1,2,3] Department of Chemistry, College of Science, Babylon University, Babil 51002, Iraq

ABSTRACT

Organotin complexes are a class of coordination compounds that contain tin as a central metal atom bonded to organic ligands. These complexes have been extensively studied for their synthetic versatility and wide range of applications in various fields. Here is a review of organotin complexes, including their synthetic methods and applications.

KEYWORDS: Organotin, synthetic, applications, ligands.

ARTICLE DETAILS

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Synthetic Methods

Organotin complexes can be synthesized using a variety of methods. Some of the commonly employed synthetic routes include:

1.1.1 Ligand Substitution

In this method, a pre-formed organotin complex is reacted with a suitable ligand to replace one or more of the existing ligands. This method allows for the modification of the coordination environment around the tin atom and provides access to a wide range of organotin complexes with different properties (1-3).

The general equation for ligand substitution in an organotin complex can be represented as:

$[R_3Sn(L1)(L_2)...L_n] + L' \rightarrow [R_3Sn(L_1)(L_2)...(L' \text{ or } L_n)]$

In this equation, R represents an organic group such as alkyl or aryl, and L1, L2, ... Ln represent the existing ligands in the complex. The ligand substitution reaction involves the replacement of one or more of the existing ligands (L1, L2, ... Ln) with a new ligand (L'). The resulting product is a new organotin complex with a different combination of ligands.

The exact mechanism and specific reaction conditions may vary depending on the nature of the organotin complex and the ligand being substituted (4,5).

1.1.2 Redox Reactions

Organotin complexes can also be synthesized through redox reactions involving tin salts and suitable reducing agents. These reactions typically result in the reduction of tin from a higher oxidation state to a lower oxidation state, leading to the formation of organotin complexes (6-8).

The general equation for a redox reaction involving a tin salt and a reducing agent can be represented as:

$SnX_2 + 2e^- + 2H^+ \rightarrow SnR_2 + 2HX$

where SnX_2 is the tin salt, e- represents electrons, H+ represents protons, SnR_2 is the organotin complex formed, and HX is the acid produced during the reaction. The reducing agent used in the reaction will depend on the specific system and can vary widely.

1.1.3 Transmetallation

Transmetallation involves the exchange of ligands between different metal complexes. Organotin complexes can be synthesized using transmetallation reactions where a tin-containing compound is reacted with a metal complex, resulting in the transfer of the tin atom to the metal complex and the formation of the organotin complex (9,10).

The general equation for a transmetallation reaction between a metal complex A and a tin-containing compound B can be written as:

$A\text{-}M + B\text{-}SnR_3 \rightarrow A\text{-}SnR_3 + B\text{-}M$

where M represents the metal in complex A, R represents an organic group attached to the tin atom in compound B, and the arrow indicates the direction of the reaction. The result of the reaction is the formation of a new metal complex $A\text{-}SnR_3$, which contains the tin atom transferred from compound B, and a new metal complex B-M, which may or may not be of interest in the context of the reaction.

1.1.4 Stille Coupling

Stille coupling is a popular method for the synthesis of organotin complexes, particularly in organometallic chemistry. It involves the reaction of an organotin compound with an organic substrate in the presence of a palladium catalyst, resulting in the formation of a new carbon-carbon bond (11-13).

The general equation for Stille coupling can be written as follows:

R-SnR' + Ar-X → Ar-R' + R-SnR'X

where R and R' are organic groups attached to the tin atom, Ar is an aryl group, and X is a leaving group, typically a halide. The reaction is catalyzed by a palladium complex, often $Pd(PPh_3)_4$, which coordinates with both the organotin compound and the organic substrate to facilitate the formation of the carbon-carbon bond. The reaction is typically carried out in an organic solvent such as tetrahydrofuran (THF) or toluene under an inert atmosphere.

1.2 Applications

Organotin complexes find diverse applications in various fields due to their unique properties. Some of the major applications of organotin complexes include:

1.2.1 Catalysis

Organotin complexes serve as catalysts in a wide range of chemical reactions. For example, they are used as catalysts in cross-coupling reactions, such as the Stille coupling, Suzuki coupling, and Sonogashira coupling, which are important methods for the synthesis of organic compounds. Organotin complexes also exhibit catalytic activity in other types of reactions, such as hydrosilylation, hydroselenation, and polymerization reactions (14-16).

The general equation for the Stille coupling reaction catalyzed by an organotin complex can be written as:

$Ar\text{-}X + R\text{-}SnR_3 \rightarrow Ar\text{-}R + R\text{-}SnR_3\text{-}X$

where Ar is an aryl group, X is a leaving group, R is an alkyl group, and SnR3 is an organotin catalyst. This reaction involves the formation of a new carbon-carbon bond between the aryl group and the alkyl group in the presence of the organotin catalyst. Similarly, the Suzuki coupling and Sonogashira coupling reactions also involve the formation of new carbon-carbon bonds and can be catalyzed by organotin complexes. The specific equations for these reactions depend on the choice of reactants and catalyst.

1.2.2 Medicinal Chemistry

Organotin complexes have shown potential as anti-cancer agents and anti-microbial agents. Some organotin complexes exhibit selective toxicity towards cancer cells, making them promising candidates for the development of anti-cancer drugs. Additionally, organotin complexes have been studied for their anti-fungal, anti-bacterial, and anti-viral activities, which can be utilized in the development of new anti-microbial agents (17-19). Organotin compounds are a type of chemical compound containing tin atoms bonded to organic groups, and they have been studied for their potential use as anti-cancer and anti-microbial agents. Some organotin complexes have shown promising results in preclinical studies, exhibiting selective toxicity towards cancer cells while sparing healthy cells. The exact mechanism of action of these complexes is not fully understood, but it is thought to involve the disruption of cellular processes crucial for cancer cell survival (20,21).

1.2.3 Materials Science

Organotin complexes are used in the synthesis of a variety of materials, including polymers, nanoparticles, and thin films. These materials have diverse applications in fields such as electronics, optics, and coatings. For example, organotin complexes can be used as precursors in the synthesis of organometallic polymers, which have unique properties such as high thermal stability, electrical conductivity, and optical properties (22,23).

One example of an organotin complex used in materials science is dibutyltin dilaurate, which has the chemical formula $(C_4H_9)_2Sn(OOCCH_3)_2$. This complex is commonly used as a catalyst in the synthesis of polyurethanes, which are versatile materials used in a variety of applications including adhesives, coatings, and foams. The reaction can be represented by the following equation:

$2\ R\text{-}NCO + HO\text{-}R'\text{-}OH + \text{dibutyltin dilaurate} \rightarrow R\text{-}NHCOOR'\text{-}OCOOR\text{-}SnR_2R_2 + HX$

where R and R' are organic groups, NCO is an isocyanate functional group, HO-R'-OH is a diol, and HX is a hydrogen halide byproduct. This reaction is known as the urethane reaction and is used extensively in the synthesis of polyurethanes.

Organotin complexes have been found to be effective photostabilizers for a variety of materials, including polymers and coatings. These complexes are typically composed of an organotin compound, such as dibutyltin dilaurate, and a ligand that acts as a stabilizing agent. When added to a material, organotin complexes can absorb and dissipate ultraviolet radiation, protecting the material from degradation and discoloration caused by sunlight exposure. Additionally, organotin complexes can act as radical scavengers, intercepting free radicals generated by the photodegradation process and preventing further degradation (24-26). Due to their effectiveness and versatility, organotin complexes have become an important component in the design of photostable materials for a variety of industrial applications. However, their use has been limited in certain cases due to environmental concerns regarding the toxicity of organotin compounds.

1.2.4 Agriculture

Organotin complexes are used as fungicides and bactericides in agriculture to protect crops from fungal and bacterial diseases. Some organotin complexes have shown high effectiveness in controlling plant diseases caused by fungi and bacteria, making them important tools in modern agriculture (27-29).

One example of an organotin complex used as a fungicide in agriculture is tributyltin oxide (TBTO), which has the chemical formula $(C_4H_9)_3SnO$. Its use as a fungicide is based on its ability to inhibit the growth of fungi and bacteria by disrupting their cell membranes.

The mode of action of TBTO involves binding to the sulfhydryl groups (-SH) of enzymes involved in the synthesis of ergosterol, a vital component of fungal cell membranes. This binding results in the inhibition of ergosterol synthesis, which disrupts the integrity of the fungal cell membrane, leading to the leakage of cellular contents and ultimately, fungal death (30,31).

The effectiveness of TBTO as a fungicide has been demonstrated in various crops such as rice, wheat, and soybeans, among others. In addition, TBTO has also been used as a bactericide in animal husbandry to control bacterial infections in livestock (32).

CONCLUSION

Organotin complexes are versatile coordination compounds with a wide range of synthetic methods and applications. They are widely studied for their potential in catalysis, medicinal chemistry, materials science, and agriculture.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest.

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 Corresponding Author: Angham G. Hadi