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## Title

# ***Air-Stable Cobalt(III) and Chromium(III) Complexes as Single-Component Catalysts for the Activation of Carbon Dioxide and Epoxides***

## Abstract

Cobalt(III) and chromium(III) salophen chloride complexes were synthesized and tested for the cycloaddition of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) with epoxides to obtain cyclic carbonates. The cat1, cat2, cat4, and cat5 complexes presented high catalytic activity without cocatalysts and are solvent-free at 100 °C, 8 bar, and 9 h. At these conditions, the terminal epoxides (1a-1k) were successfully converted into the corresponding cyclic carbonates with a maximum conversion of ~99%. Moreover, cat5 was highlighted due to its capability of opening internal epoxides such as limonene oxide (1l) with a 36% conversion to limonene carbonate (2l), and from cyclohexene oxide (1m), cyclic trans-cyclohexene carbonate (2m) and poly(cyclohexene carbonate) were obtained with 15% and 85% selectivity, respectively. A study of the coupling reaction mechanism was proposed with the aid of electrospray ionization mass spectrometry (ESI-MS) analysis, confirming the single-component behavior of the complexes through their ionization due to epoxide coordination. In addition, crystallographic analysis of cat1 single crystals grown in a saturated solution of pyridine helped to demonstrate that the substitution of chloride ion by pyridine ligands to form an octahedral coordination occurs (Py-cat1), supporting the proposed mechanism. Also, a recyclability study was performed for cat5, and a total turnover number of 952 was obtained with only minor losses in catalytic activity after five cycles. © 2024 American Chemical Society.

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Carbonates; Carbonation; Catalyst activity; Chlorine compounds; Chromium compounds; Cobalt compounds; Coordination reactions; Electrodeposition; Electrospray ionization; Mass spectrometry; Monoterpenes; Olefins; Pyridine; Single crystals; Synthesis (chemical); acetaminosalol; carbon dioxide; carbonic acid; carbonic acid derivative; chloride; chloride ion; chromium; cobalt; cyclohexane oxide; epoxide; limonene; pyridine; solvent; Air stable; Chloride complexes; Chromium III; Co catalysts; Cyclic carbonates; Cycloadditions; Cyclohexenes; Salophen; Single-component catalysts; Synthesised; article; catalysis; catalyst; controlled study; cycloaddition; Diels Alder reaction; electrospray mass spectrometry; ionization; reaction analysis; turnover number; Carbon dioxide

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acetaminosalol, 118-57-0; carbon dioxide, 124-38-9, 58561-67-4; carbonic acid, 3812-32-6, 463-79-6; chloride, 16887-00-6; chromium, 16065-83-1, 7440-47-3, 14092-98-9; cobalt, 7440-48-4; cyclohexane oxide, 286-20-4; limonene, 138-86-3, 5989-27-5; pyridine, 110-86-1

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