Second generation *N*-heterocyclic carbene–Pt(0) complexes as efficient catalysts for the hydrosilylation of alkenes[†]

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A new class of benzimidazolylidene carbene–Pt(0) complexes was developed and used to efficiently catalyse the hydrosilylation of alkenes.

The hydrosilylation of alkenes, the second most important C-Si bond forming reaction after the Rochow process,¹ is of paramount importance for the silicon industry.² This transformation is efficiently catalysed by platinum complexes, such as the Speier catalyst $(H_2PtCl_6 - iPrOH)^3$ or the Karstedt catalyst $(Pt_2 + iPrOH)^3$ $ViSiMe_2_2O_3$ where Vi = vinyl.⁴ Although this reaction requires only ppm quantities of these platinum-containing species, it is plagued by numerous undesired side-reactions, such as isomerisation of the terminal alkene, hydrogenation of the C-C double bond and coloration of the reaction medium by formation of platinum colloids. It has therefore been a longstanding endeavour to minimize the formation of these unwanted by-products, and several efforts in this direction, employing modified platinum(0) complexes have been reported.⁵⁻⁷ We have previously described a new class of N-heterocyclic carbene platinum(0) complexes which catalyse efficiently the hydrosilylation of alkenes.⁸ These novel organometallic derivatives tolerate a wide range of functionalities and protecting groups, produce low amounts of isomerised olefins (<1%) and lead to no detectable formation of colloids.9

As part of an ongoing research effort aimed at exploring the vast potential offered by *N*-heterocyclic carbene-derived ligands in the hydrosilylation of alkenes, we investigated the use of the analogous benzimidazolylidene substituents in this transformation. Although a plethora of imidazolylidene ligands have been synthesised and used in homogeneous catalysis,¹⁰ the applications of their benzimidazolylidene¹¹ counterparts in metal-catalysed processes have remained relatively unexplored.^{12,13} These *N*-heterocyclic carbene derivatives display several interesting features. From an electronic point of view, they possess a σ -donating ability which is intermediate between that of imidazolylidene and imidazolinylidene carbenes. In addition,

benzimidazolylidene carbenes exhibit the topology of unsaturated N-heterocyclic carbenes but show structural properties and reactivity akin to those of carbenes containing a saturated *N*-heterocyclic ring system.¹⁴

Complexes **3a–d** were synthesised (Scheme 1, Table 1) in good to high yields, by *in situ* deprotonation of the corresponding benzimidazolium salts, in the presence of 'BuOK, followed by reaction of the carbene with Karstedt's catalyst. Complex **3e** was prepared in a different manner. The benzimidazolylidene carbene was generated from the corresponding thiourea by reduction over Na–K amalgam, in toluene, for 20 days then reacted with Karstedt's catalyst.¹⁴

Crystals of complex 3e[±] suitable for X-ray diffraction analysis were grown by slow evaporation of a dichloromethane solution. The molecular structure is shown in Fig. 1. Complex 3e crystallises as a pair of enantiomers. The folding of the neopentyl arms around the benzimidazole core defines a C_2 symmetric environment. The divinyltetramethylsiloxane (dvtms) ligand and the carbene fragment adopt a trigonal planar geometry around the platinum(0) centre. The bidentate dvtms ligand exists in a pseudochair conformation which is a common coordination mode for this ligand.^{15–18} This complex owes its chirality to the fact that the C_2 symmetry of the carbene ligand is broken by the pseudochair conformation adopted by the dvtms ligand. The benzimidazole carbene is tilted by 68° (C20-Pt1-C1-N9 torsion angle) from the plane formed by the Pt centre and the alkene ligands. The strong σ -donating ability of the carbene substituent is evidenced by the amount of backbonding exerted on the dvtms ligand C20-C21 1.432(6) Å vs. 1.39(2) in the parent complex 1.18 This strong backbonding, which is responsible for the remarkable activity of these complexes, renders them also inactive at room temperature.

Having obtained the desired carbene–platinum complexes, we next investigated their catalytic activity. As a model reaction, the hydrosilylation of 1-octene by silane **5** (a suitable polysiloxane backbone mimic) was selected [eqn (1)]. The reaction was performed at a concentration of 0.5 M and with a catalyst loading of 5×10^{-3} mol%.

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{Ce}_{\text{G}}\text{H}_{11} & \text{+} (\text{Me}_{3}\text{SiO})_{2}\text{MeSiH} \\ \textbf{4} & \textbf{5} \end{array} \xrightarrow{\begin{array}{c} \text{Cat. 3a-e} \\ (5^{*}10^{-3} \text{ mol}/\%) \\ \text{Toluene, 70^{\circ}C} \end{array} n \cdot \text{Ce}_{\text{G}}\text{H}_{11} & \text{SiMe}(\text{OSIMe}_{3})_{2} \end{array} (1)$$

Representative curves of the catalytic activity of selected complexes are displayed in Fig. 2. Examination of Fig. 2 reveals that, apart from **3e**, all the other benzimidazolylidene carbene complexes **3a–d** are more active than the parent

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Scheme 1 Synthesis of complexes 3a–d.

 Table 1
 Synthesis of benzimidazolylidene Pt(0) complexes^a



^{*a*} Reaction conditions: benzimidazolium salt (1 mmol), **1** (1 mmol), ^{*i*}BuOK (2 mmol), THF (50 ml), RT. ^{*b*} The carbene was obtained by reduction of the corresponding thio benzimidazolidinone over Na–K in toluene for 20 days.¹⁴

Me-imidazolylidene-Pt(dvtms) catalyst. For example, after 100 min reaction, only 65% conversion is observed for the latter catalyst whilst 83% conversion is obtained in the case of **3b** and **3c**. The initial reaction rate is also faster for the benzimidazole-containing complexes **3a–d** as compared with their imidazole counterpart. Interestingly, the complex that displayed the highest activity contains the *n*-propyl substituted benzimidazolylidene ligand (**3b**). This is seemingly due to a good compromise between the steric and the electronic properties of the NHC substituent. In the second most active complex, **3d**, the remote ester function on the 6-position of the benzimidazole ring effectively reduces the electron density on the platinum centre, thus weakening the coordination of the dvtms ligand.

Of the complexes described above, both **3c** and **3e** display a slightly different catalytic behaviour, involving a prolonged induction period. For **3c**, this induction period can be attributed to the presence of the pendant alkene side-chains, which



Fig. 1 Solid-state molecular structure of complex 3e. Hydrogen atoms are omitted for clarity, thermal ellipsoids at 40% probability. Selected bond lengths (Å) and angles (°): C(1)–Pt(1) 2.059(4), C(20)–Pt(1) 2.143(4), C(21)–Pt(1) 2.147(4), C(22)–Pt(1) 2.150(4), C(23)–Pt(1) 2.144(4), C(26)–C(25) 1.432(6), C(22)–C(23) 1.415(7), C(1)–N(2) 1.365(5), C(1)–N(9) 1.361(5), N(2)–C(1)–N(9) 106.0(3), C(26)–Pt(1)–C(1)–N(9) 110.0(3), C(22)–Pt(1)–C(20)–C(21) 0.0(4), C(21)–Pt(1)–C(22)–C(22) 1.4(4).



Fig. 2 Kinetic curves for the hydrosilylation of 1-octene with silane **5** catalysed by complexes **3a–e**. Reaction conditions: [Pt] = 5×10^{-3} mol%, [1-octene] = [**5**] = 0.5 mol L⁻¹, *o*-xylene, T = 70 °C. (A) Me-NHC-Pt(dvtms). (B) **3a**. (C) **3b**. (D) **3c**. (E) **3d**. (F) **3e**.

coordinate to the platinum centre after the loss of the dvtms ligand, efficiently inhibiting the approach of the reactants. Hydrosilylation of these substituents is thus required before the catalyst could exert its full activity. The catalytic behaviour of **3e** can be understood in part by its solid-state structure. The bulky neopentyl groups wrap around the platinum, effectively blocking both sides and significantly increasing the induction period. Even after the departure of the dvtms ligand, the neopentyl substituents



Fig. 3 Proposed catalytic cycle.

are sufficiently bulky to reduce significantly the rate of the hydrosilylation of 1-octene. These experiments also indicate that the loss of the dvtms ligand, probably by hydrosilylation, might be the rate determining step of these reactions. Finally, it is important to note that, in all cases, colloidal platinum species were never detected.

Though the mechanism of the hydrosilylation reaction catalysed by platinum carbene complexes 3a-e has not yet been investigated in detail, the similarity in kinetic behaviour between these complexes and the parent imidazolylidene complexes prompted us to draw a parallel. A thorough kinetic study on the parent imidazolylidene platinum(0) complexes has revealed a unique mode of action of these organometallic derivatives (Fig. 3).

Carbene complexes **3a–e** are precatalysts that initially undergo hydrosilylation–dissociation of the dvtms substituent. The departure of this ligand, the slowest step of the whole process, requires the presence of the alkene **4** and the silane **5** and generates the transient intermediate—or transition state—**7**.¹⁹ Insertion of the Si–H bond into the olefinic linkage leads to the platinum(II) derivative **8** which, after reductive elimination of **6**, affords the platinum(0) species **9**, probably stabilised by coordination to one or two alkenes.²⁰ Addition of the silane then regenerates the active complex **7** and a new catalytic cycle ensues.²¹ The variation in the induction period observed with different precatalysts **3a–e** reflects the respective difficulty in hydrosilylating the chelating dvtms ligand and correlates with the steric encumbrance provided by the *N*-heterocyclic carbene substituents.

In summary, a new family of benzimidazolylidene platinum(0) complexes has been synthesized and characterised. These novel species display interesting catalytic activity in the hydrosilylation of alkenes. Their activity, which is superior to that of the parent imidazolylidene carbenes, can be finely tuned by the judicious modulation of their steric and electronic properties.[‡]

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Notes and references

‡ *Crystallographic details* for **3e**: C₂₅H₄₄N₂OPtSi₂, M = 639.89, colourless parallelepiped, triclinic, a = 12.915(4), b = 13.155(4), c = 18.436(7) Å, $\alpha = 96.35(2)$, $\beta = 93.73(2)$, $\gamma = 111.56(2)^{\circ}$, U = 2876(2) Å³, T = 293(2) K, space group $P\bar{1}$ (no. 2), Z = 4, μ (Mo–K α) = 4.98 mm⁻¹, 61207 reflections measured, 12925 unique ($R_{int} = 0.063$) which were used in all calculations. The final $R_1(F^2)$ and $wR(F^2)$ were 0.046 and 0.12 respectively. CCDC

271531. See http://dx.doi.org/10.1039/b506369h for crystallographic data in CIF or other electronic format.

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- 19 The rate of the hydrosilylation reaction appears to be first order in the alkene 4 and in the silane 5, implying that both partners are involved at the same time in the "rate determining step" of the catalytic cycle. Interestingly, incubation of the Cy-NHC-Pt(dvtms) complex with excess alkene does not promote the exchange between the dvtms ligand and the olefin. In contrast, treatment of the same complex with excess silane generates the corresponding N-heterocyclic platinum(II) silyl hydride dimer. This dimer is, however, a less efficient catalyst than the parent complex. For the preparation and structure determination of the analogous phosphine-containing dimers, see: M. Ciriano, M. Green, J. A. K. Howard, J. Proud, J. L. Spencer, G. A. F. Stone and C. A. Tsipis, J. Chem. Soc., Dalton Trans., 1978, 801-808. For the hydrosilylation of alkenes using these dimers, see: M. Green, J. L. Spencer, G. A. F. Stone and C. A. Tsipis, J. Chem. Soc., Dalton Trans., 1977, 1519.
- 20 The reaction displays saturation kinetics. Whilst increasing the concentration of the alkene leads initially to an enhanced reaction rate, the presence of a large excess of olefin eventually results in a partial inhibition of the hydrosilylation reaction, probably arising from the saturation of the coordination sphere of the platinum complex **9**.
- 21 The addition of a second portion of silane and alkene, at the end of the first hydrosilylation reaction, leads to a second complete hydrosilylation. Therefore the catalyst is not deactivated at the end of the reaction but remains in a stable resting-state. This is in contrast to Karstedt's catalyst which remains inactive upon addition of fresh reactants.