

Formation of a potassium coordination polymer based on a novel 2-sulfono-benzene-1,3,5-tricarboxylic acid: Synthesis, characterization, and application of the organocatalyst in CO₂ cycloaddition reaction

Masoumeh Karimi Alavijeh^a, Mostafa M. Amini^{a,*}, Behrouz Notash^a,
Gholamhossein Mohammadnezhad^{b,*}

^a Department of Inorganic Chemistry and Catalysis, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran

^b Department of Chemistry, Isfahan University of Technology, Isfahan 8415683111, Iran

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ABSTRACT

In the present work, a new 3D potassium coordination polymer (**1**) was prepared by oxidation of sulfonated mesitylene. Its novel sulfono-tricarboxylic ligand, 2-sulfono-benzene-1,3,5-tricarboxylic acid (**2**), which acted as a structure-directing building block, was successfully synthesized by ion exchange of the potassium coordination polymer (**1**). The 3D coordination polymer and the sulfonate-carboxylate ligand were characterized by FT-IR and ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectroscopies, and their molecular structures were determined by single-crystal X-ray diffraction. In addition, thermal stability and adsorption/desorption behavior of **1** was investigated by TGA-DTA and N₂ adsorption/desorption techniques, respectively. The catalytic activities of the ligand, as a novel and simple organocatalyst, and the rarely explored potassium CPs were studied in the CO₂ cycloaddition reaction. The results showed **2** is an efficient organocatalyst in the CO₂ cycloaddition process. It is suggested that the synergetic effect among Brønsted acid COOH, Lewis base I⁻ and free water molecules facilitate this reaction.

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1. Introduction

Coordination polymers (CPs) are considered superior crystalline materials with widespread applications [1–5]. Different physical and chemical properties of CPs highlight them among other advanced materials. Exceptional high surface area, sorption capacity, acid/base Lewis or Brønsted sites, and facile tunability are some of their important characteristics [6–8]. CPs have intriguing architectures and topologies, which originate mainly from the nature of ligands and metal-centers coordination abilities. Multifunctional organic ligands are vital structure-directing building blocks in CPs and MOFs (metal organic frameworks) [9–14]. Bifunctional sulfonate-carboxylate organic ligands with strong and weak coordination ability of carboxylate and sulfonate functional groups, respectively, have been used in the synthesis of CPs [15–18]. It has also been known that potassium metal salts are efficient catalysts for the synthesis of cyclic carbonates (CCs) from CO₂ [19,20].

In recent years, direct attention has been devoted to CO₂ conversion not only for the adverse effect of CO₂ on global warming

and climate change [21] but also as a primer source of C1 [22] for the production of fine chemicals and fuels [23,24]. Besides the scientific and technological improvement, some principle issues remain, such as high energy demand for CO₂ activation [25], difficulties in separation of catalysts from the reaction mixture, and low catalytic activities of heterogeneous catalysts for these processes. Up to now, different methods and systems have been applied to improve this reaction [26]. A suitable method for synthesizing low energy CCs is the cycloaddition of CO₂ to diverse, high-energy epoxides [27]. CCs are considered as an important class of compounds in chemical industries. Various types of metal-based homogeneous and heterogeneous catalysts can catalyze this reaction including metal salts [27,28], metal oxides [29–31], oxochlorides [32], porphyrin [33], phthalocyanine [34], and salen complexes [32,35–37], immobilized nanoparticles [38], highly ordered microporous and mesoporous materials [39,40], and more recently coordination polymers (CPs) and MOFs [41–45]. An alternative that has been proved to be more efficient in milder conditions (lower pressure and temperature) is organocatalysts [46].

In this work, a new 3D potassium coordination polymer with intriguing structural aspects and a novel bifunctional sulfonate-carboxylate organic ligand, 2-sulfono-benzene-1,3,5-tricarboxylic acid (H₃BTC-SO₃·H₂O), were successfully synthesized and charac-

* Corresponding authors.

E-mail addresses: m-pourmini@sbu.ac.ir (M.M. Amini),
mohammadnezhad@iut.ac.ir (G. Mohammadnezhad).

terized. $\text{H}_3\text{BTC-SO}_3^-$ acted as a structure-directing building block in the synthesized potassium CP. The catalytic activities of the $\text{H}_3\text{BTC-SO}_3\cdot\text{H}_3\text{O}$, as a novel, simple organocatalyst, and the rarely explored potassium CPs were studied in the CO_2 cycloaddition reaction.

2. Experimental

2.1. Materials and instrumentation

All chemicals and solvents were commercially available and used without purification. Infrared spectra were recorded on a Bomem MB-Series FTIR spectrometer. ^1H and ^{13}C NMR data were collected on a Bruker AVANCE 300 MHz spectrometer utilizing D_2O as solvent and tetramethylsilane as an internal standard. A STOE diffractometer equipped with $\text{Cu K}\alpha$ radiation ($\lambda = 0.15418\text{ nm}$) was used to record powder X-ray diffraction (XRD) patterns. Thermogravimetric analysis (TGA) was performed using a Bahr STA-503 instrument at a heating rate of $10\text{ }^\circ\text{C min}^{-1}$ under airflow. The CHN elemental analysis was accomplished using a Perkin-Elmer 2400 CHN analyzer.

2.1.1. X-ray crystallography

The X-ray diffraction measurements were made on a STOE IPDS-II diffractometer with graphite-monochromated $\text{Mo-K}\alpha$ radiation. Single-crystals of **1** and **2** were mounted on glass fiber and used for data collection. Cell constants and an orientation matrix for data collection were obtained by the least-square refinement of 7248, 7588 reflections for **1** and **2**, respectively. Both data were collected at room temperature to a maximum 2θ value of 58.32 and 58.34° for **1** and **2**, respectively. Diffraction data were collected in a series of ω scans in 1° oscillation and integrated using the Stoe X-Area [47] software package. Numerical absorption correction was applied using X-RED [48] and X-SHAPE [49] software. The data were corrected for Lorentz and polarizing effects. The structures were solved by direct methods [50] and subsequent difference Fourier maps and then refined on F^2 by a full-matrix least-squares procedure using anisotropic displacement parameters [51]. Atomic factors are from the International Tables for X-ray Crystallography [52]. All refinements were performed using the X-STEP32 crystallographic software package [53]. In compound **2**, all hydrogens attached to oxygens were found in a difference Fourier maps and refined isotropically. Other hydrogen atoms were positioned geometrically and refined as riding atoms with $\text{C-H} = 0.93\text{ \AA}$, $\text{Uiso(H)} = 1.2\text{ Ueq(C)}$. Crystal data and refinement for compounds **1** and **2** are summarized in Table S1, and selected bond length and angles are given in Table S2 and Table S3 in the ESI†.

2.2. Synthesis of $[\text{K}(\text{H}_3\text{BTC-SO}_3)(\text{H}_2\text{O})_2]_n$ (**1**) and $(\text{C}_9\text{H}_5\text{O}_9\text{S})\cdot\text{H}_3\text{O}\cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ($(\text{H}_3\text{BTC-SO}_3)\cdot\text{H}_3\text{O}\cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$) (**2**)

For the synthesis of **1**, 5 mL of mesitylene was poured into a round bottom flask, then 4 mL of the oleum was added, and the mixture was stirred for 5 min. The resulting white precipitate was filtered and dried at ambient temperature. Subsequently, the sulfonated mesitylene (10.42 g, 0.056 mol) was dissolved in 250 mL of deionized water in a 500 mL round bottom flask. The flask was placed in the ice bath, and then KMnO_4 (41.18 g, 0.26 mol) was added stepwise in 3 h. Then, the reaction mixture was refluxed for 48 h and then filtered to remove the residual MnO_2 . After the addition of HCl to the filtrate, the solution allowed to crystallize by slow evaporation. The resulting colorless crystals were collected and characterized by FTIR, ^1H -, and ^{13}C NMR spectroscopies and CHN analysis. The structure of the complex was determined by single-crystal X-ray diffraction. Anal. Calcd. (Found) for $\text{C}_9\text{H}_9\text{KO}_{11}\text{S}$: C 29.67 (29.09); H 2.49 (2.38). ^1H NMR (300 MHz, D_2O) δ (ppm): 8.08 (s, 2H, 2 (Ar-H)). ^{13}C NMR (75.43 MHz, D_2O): δ (ppm): 171.5,

167.4 (C = O), 140.9, 134.0, 132.7, 130.0 (Ar). IR bands (KBr) $\bar{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}) 523, 630, 651, 700, 758, 845, 907, 1019, 1081, 1188, 1245, 1306, 1414, 1608, 1726, 3032, 3083, 3288, 3510, and 3595.

For the preparation of $(\text{H}_3\text{BTC-SO}_3)\cdot\text{H}_3\text{O}\cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$ (**2**), 250 mg of **1** was dissolved in 20 mL of deionized water and pass through a column ($20 \times 1\text{ cm}$) containing Dowex-50W-X8, a strongly acidic cation-exchange resin. The column was eluted by deionized water, and the resulted solution was collected and allowed to crystallize by slow evaporation of water at room temperature. The titled compound was characterized by FTIR, ^1H -, and ^{13}C NMR spectroscopies, and the structure of **2** was determined by single-crystal X-ray diffraction. Anal. Calcd. (Found) for $\text{C}_9\text{H}_{12}\text{O}_{12}\text{S}$: C 31.40 (31.22); H 3.51 (3.65). ^1H NMR (300 MHz, D_2O) δ (ppm): 8.10 (s, 2H, 2 (Ar-H)). ^{13}C NMR (75.43 MHz, D_2O): 171.3, 167.4 (C = O), 141.0, 133.8, 132.3, 130.1 (Ar). IR bands (KBr) $\bar{\nu}$ (cm^{-1}): 518, 625, 661, 701, 758, 860, 912, 1020, 1076, 1194, 1245, 1322, 1409, 1614, 1731, 3030, 3077, and 3430.

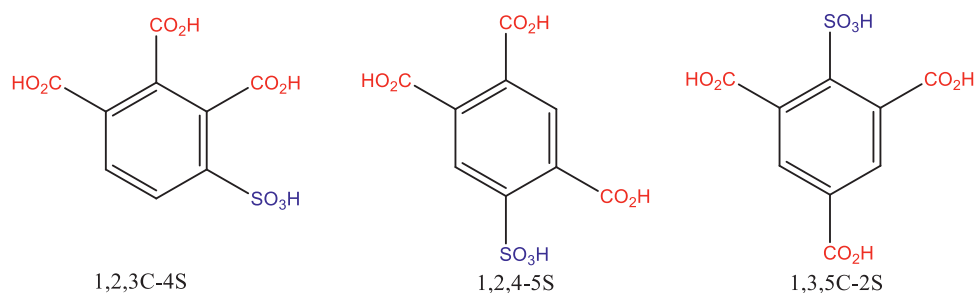
2.3. Cycloaddition reaction of CO_2 with epoxide and catalyst regeneration

In a typical procedure, 4 mmol styrene oxide, 5 mol% TBAB (tetrabutylammonium bromide) and 5 mol% catalyst were loaded into a vial, which was filled with 1 atm of CO_2 . The reaction mixture was stirred at $110\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ for 10 h, and after cooling, some chloroform was added to the reaction vessel, and the catalyst was removed by centrifugation. Purification of the crude product was performed by column chromatography using ethyl acetate/n-hexane (1:3, v:v) as an eluent to obtain the pure product. mp $49\text{--}51\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ (lit. $50\text{--}51\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$) [54,55]. ^1H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl_3) δ (ppm): 4.40 (t, 1H, (-CH₂)), 4.84 (t, 1H, (-CH₂)), 5.70 (t, 1H, (-CH)), 7.37–7.49 (m, 5H, Ph). After each catalytic cycle, the catalyst was separated by centrifugation from the reaction mixture, washed with chloroform, and dried at $80\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ for the next catalytic run.

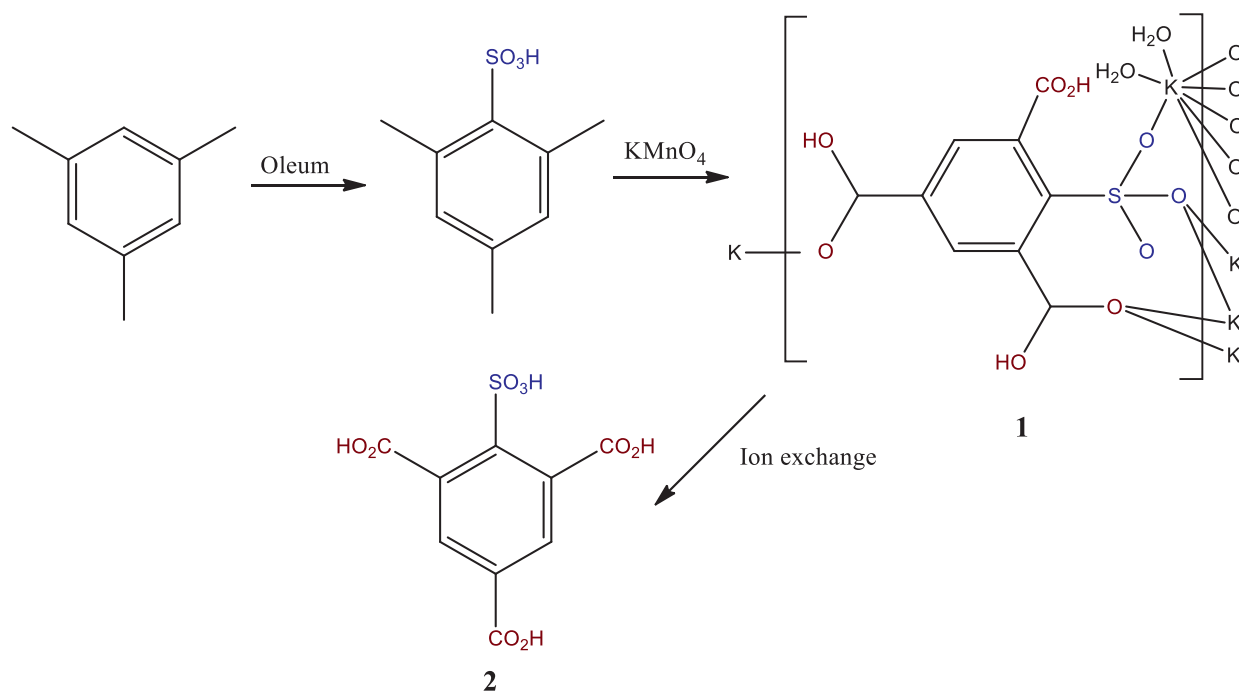
3. Results and discussion

3.1. Synthesis of the compounds

Bifunctional-substituted isomers of tricarboxylate monosulfate aromatic compounds have rarely been explored. Three different structures of monosulfono-benzene-tricarboxylic acid have been found in literature, as shown in Scheme 1. Metal salts of 5-sulfono-benzene-1,3,5-tricarboxylic acid (5-sulfonyl-1,2,4-benzenetricarboxylic acid or 1,2,4C-5S) are commercially available. They have been used to synthesize different CPs and MOFs [56,57], while the structures of the other two have been found in two patents with no further information [58]. In this study 2-sulfono-benzene-1,3,5-tricarboxylic acid (1,3,5-2S or $\text{H}_3\text{BTC-SO}_3\cdot\text{H}_3\text{O}$), were successfully synthesized in two-step, as shown in Scheme 2. Sulfonation of mesitylene has been performed in the first step. It should be mentioned that the synthesis of sulfonated mesitylene has previously been reported by other methods [59,60], in the presence of different catalysts at a higher temperature and longer time with a lower yield. Sulfonated mesitylene in this work was prepared in much higher yield using oleum at ambient temperature only in 5 min. In the next step, the methyl groups were successfully oxidized, and after work up a potassium CP and the first coordination polymer of the $\text{H}_3\text{BTC-SO}_3$ has been formed. The pure crystalline ligand $(\text{H}_3\text{BTC-SO}_3)\cdot\text{H}_3\text{O}\cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$ (**2**) was obtained by the ion-exchange technique.



Scheme 1. Three different structures of monosulfono-benzene-tricarboxylic acids.



Scheme 2. The synthetic procedure of $[K(H_3BTC-SO_3)(H_2O)_2]_n$ (**1**) and $(H_3BTC-SO_3).H_3O \cdot 2H_2O$ (**2**).

3.2. Crystal structure of $[K(H_3BTC-SO_3)(H_2O)_2]_n$ (**1**) and $(H_3BTC-SO_3).H_3O \cdot 2H_2O$ (**2**)

Compound **1** is a potassium coordination polymer that is constructed of a neutral $[K(H_3BTC-SO_3)(H_2O)_2]$ complex. The asymmetric unit of **1** consists of a K^+ ion, a $H_3BTC-SO_3^-$ ligand, and two water molecules (O10 and O11), as shown in Fig. 1. The coordination number of potassium ion, K1, is eight and form a distorted square-antiprism by three oxygens of sulfonate groups: O6, O6, and O7, three oxygens of carboxylate groups: O2, O9 and O9, and two oxygens from water molecules: O10 and O11. The bond lengths of K1–O range from 2.761(3) to 3.0642(18) Å (see Table S2) and are consistent with reported values in the literature [61]. Two sulfonate oxygens and two oxygens of carboxylate groups are in bridging position and resulted in a four and six-member cage-like 2D inorganic layer (Fig. 2). These 2D layers are connected by the organic pillars, $H_3BTC-SO_3^{3-}$ ligand, via O2 and O9 atoms of carboxylate groups and O7 atom of sulfonate groups to generate a 3D framework (Fig. 3). Interestingly, one of the carboxylate groups are left free and have the potential for further reactions.

Compound **2** was crystallized in the triclinic crystal system and $P\bar{1}$ space group with two formula units in the unit cell ($Z = 2$). The asymmetric unit of **2** is shown in Fig. 4, which consists of $H_3BTC-SO_3^-$, H_3O^+ , and two water molecules. The two C–O bonds lengths in each of the carboxylate groups are not identical, ca.

1.2 vs. 1.3 Å, which is an indication of the protonated oxygen atoms. All of the hydrogens except the two phenyl ring hydrogens are participate in extended three-dimensional hydrogen bonding. For instance, one of the two independent H_2O molecules (O9) formed a dimer via both of its hydrogens, as shown in Fig. 5. A variety of H-bondings were present in **2** and formed a 3D network.

3.3. FT-IR spectra, PXRD patterns, and thermogravimetric analyses

Fig. 6 shows the FT-IR spectra of sulfonated mesitylene, compounds **1** and **2**. The bands observed at 3510 and 3595 cm^{-1} in the FT-IR spectrum of compound **1** (Fig. 6b) demonstrated the presence of coordinated water molecules in the titled compound [62]. The emergence of the new bands at 1245, 1306, and 1726 cm^{-1} attributed to the stretching vibrations of C–O and C = O bonds of the carboxylic acid [62]. The disappearance of the C–H stretching bands at 2850 and 2930 cm^{-1} in the spectrum of sulfonated mesitylene (Fig. 6a) indicates methyl groups oxidation to carboxylic acid functional groups. Apparently, after passing the potassium coordination polymer through the ion exchange column, coordinated water molecules were eliminated, and 2-sulfono-benzene-1,3,5-tricarboxylic acid formed. Also, the bands at 661, 1020, 1076, and 1194 cm^{-1} in the spectrum of compounds **2** (Fig. 7c) associated with the stretching vibration of C–S, the stretching vibration of S – O, the in-plane skeletal vibration of the benzene ring with a

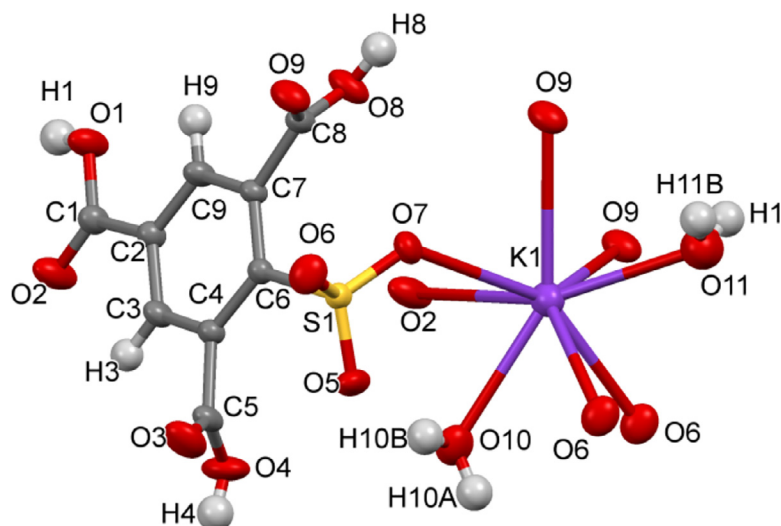


Fig. 1. Crystal structure of **1** showing potassium ion surroundings with 50% of probability.

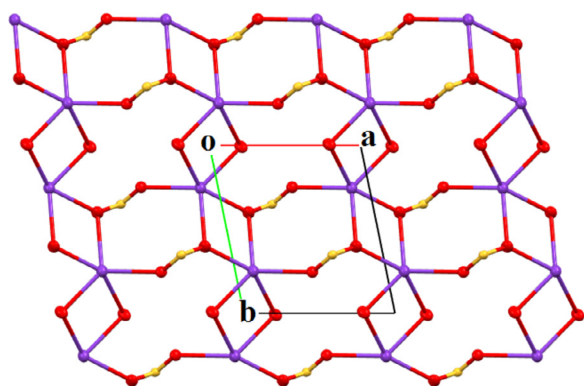


Fig. 2. Representation of 2D inorganic layer of **1** along *c* axis. The bridging oxygens, potassium, and sulfur are only shown for more clarity.

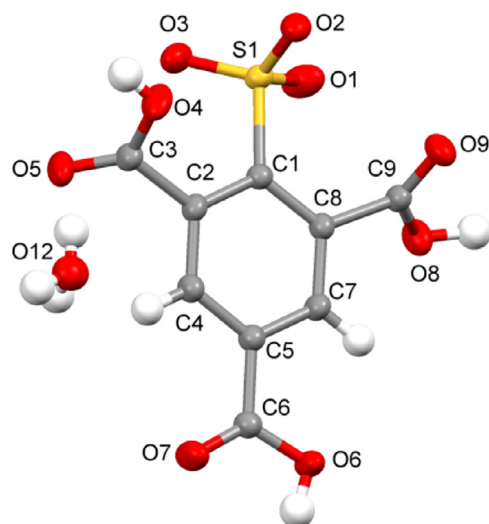


Fig. 4. The asymmetric unit of **2** (water molecules are not shown for more clarity). The ellipsoids are drawn with 50% probability. Hydrogen atoms are presented with ball and stick style.

sulfonic substituent, and the symmetric stretching vibration mode of $O = S = O$, respectively [63–65].

The X-ray powder diffraction of compound **1**, and its simulated pattern, are presented in Fig. 7. Both of the patterns are closely matched, which implies the purity and crystallinity of the bulk material of compound **1**. Also, the XRD pattern of compound **2** approved the crystallinity of the bulk material, see Figure S1.

TGA and DTA curves of compound **1** are shown in Fig. 8. The 5 wt.% mass loss at about 165 °C in the TGA curve, which

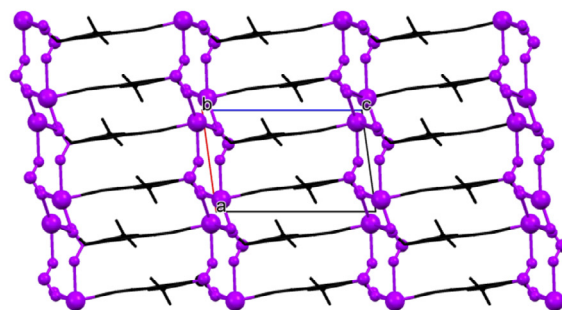
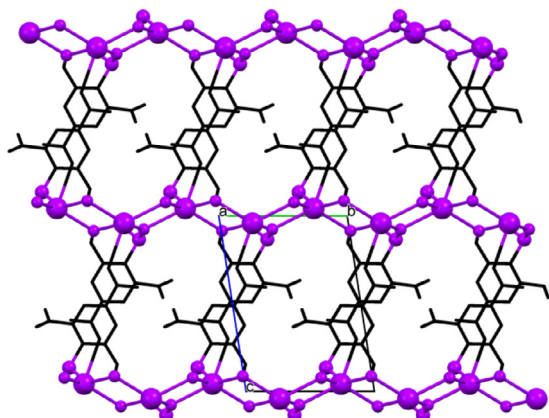


Fig. 3. Representation of 3D framework of **1** along *a* and *b* axis. The 2D inorganic layers are presented in purple color, and organic pillars are shown in black color. (For interpretation of the references to colour in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the web version of this article.)

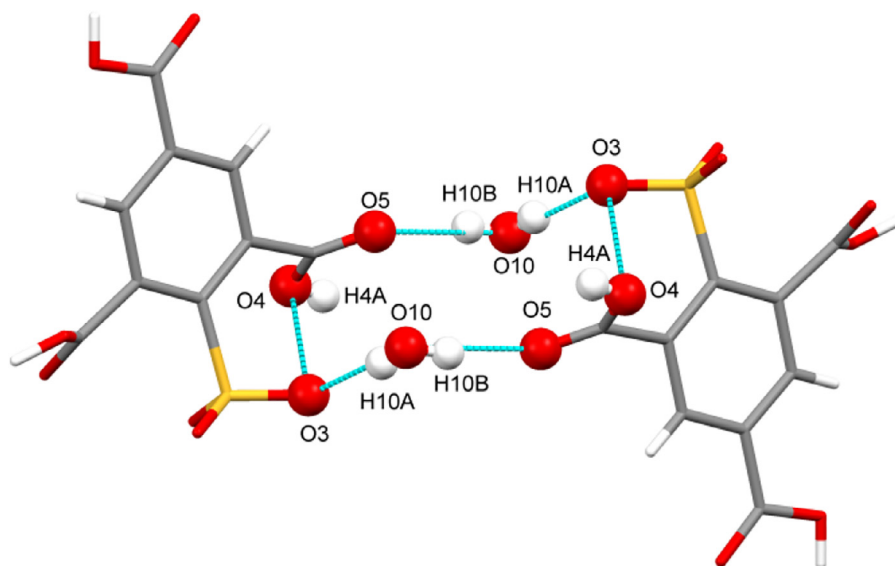


Fig. 5. Hydrogen bonds formation via H_2O , carboxylate, and sulfonate.

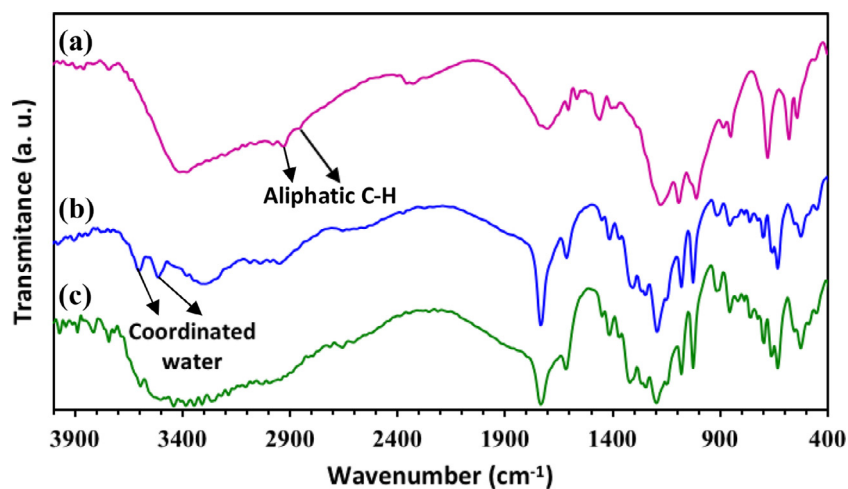


Fig. 6. FT-IR spectra of the sulfonated mesitylene (a), compound **1** (b), and compound **2** (c).

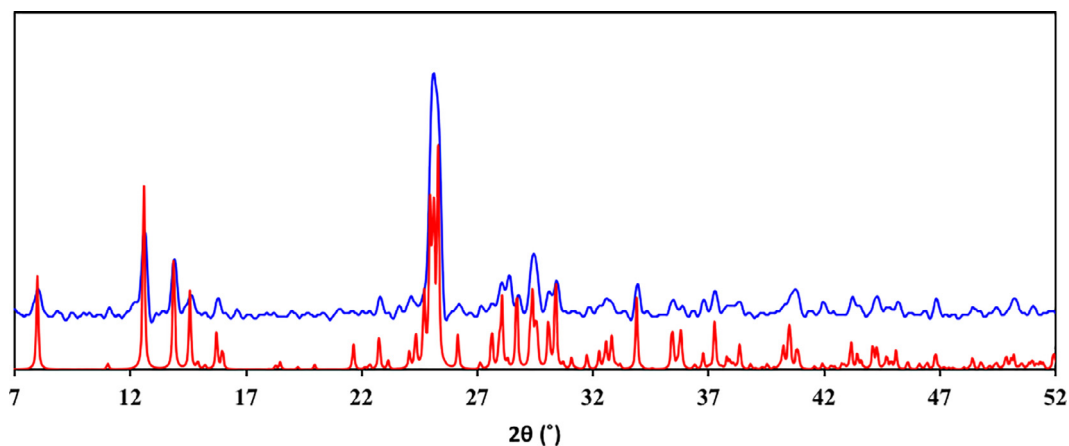


Fig. 7. Simulated XRD patterns of compound **1** based on the single-crystal structure (down, red), and its experimental pattern (top, blue).

is accompanied by an endothermic peak in the DTA curve, is associated with the dehydration and release of two coordinated water molecules in the complex. The second endothermic step in the temperature range of 250–310 °C in the DTA curve and almost without mass loss in the TGA curve can be attributed to the decomposition and collapse of coordination

polymer structure. Finally, the substantial mass loss that occurs from 310–800 °C in the TGA curve along with the several exothermic peaks in the DTA curve is due to the combustion of decomposition products, organic residue, and the possible trace of charcoal, which extend combustion to around of 800 °C.

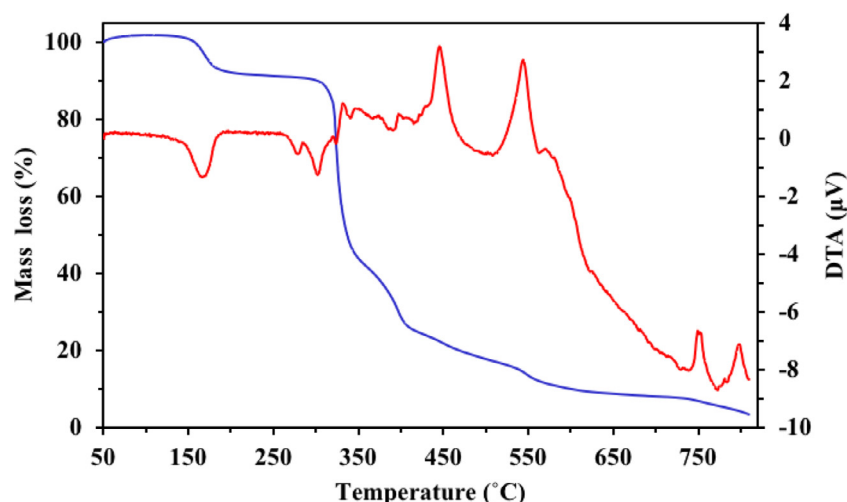


Fig. 8. Thermogravimetric analysis of the structure 1.

Table 1

The role of effective factors on the cycloaddition reaction of CO₂ with styrene oxide in the presence of [K(H₃BTC-SO₃)(H₂O)₂]_n (**1**) and (H₃BTC-SO₃).H₃O·2H₂O (**2**) under atmospheric pressure of carbon dioxide.

Entry	Catalyst (% mol)	Cocatalyst (% mol)	Solvent	T (°C)	t (h)	Yield (%)
1	-	TBAI (5)	neat	110	10	-
2	1 (5)	TBAI (5)	neat	110	10	17
3	2 (5)	TBAB (5)	neat	110	10	40
4	2 (5)	TBAI (5)	neat	110	10	50
5	2 (5)	TBAI (5)	H ₂ O	110	10	10
6	2 (5)	TBAI (5)	CH ₃ CN	110	10	-
7	2 (5)	TBAI (5)	CH ₃ CN	110	10	5
8	2 (5)	TBAI (5)	neat	130	10	52
9	2 (5)	TBAI (5)	neat	90	10	35
10	2 (5)	TBAI (5)	neat	110	14	55
11	2 (5)	TBAI (5)	neat	110	8	40
12	2 (5)	TBAI (5)	neat	110	6	26
13	2 (5)	TBAI (5)	neat	110	10	32
14	2 (8)	TBAI (5)	neat	110	10	53
15	2 (5)	TBAI (2)	neat	110	10	30
16	2 (5)	TBAI (8)	neat	110	10	51
17	2 (5)	TBAI (5)	neat	110	10	81 ^b

^a Isolated yield. ^b CO₂ pressure = 5 bar.

3.4. Catalytic study

The reaction of styrene oxide and CO₂ has been selected as a model reaction for a heterogeneous solvent-free reaction to determine the efficiency of potassium coordination polymer (PCP, **1**) and the linker derived from it (**2**). At the reaction conditions, no product was produced in the absence of the catalyst (Table 1, entry 1). Tetrabutylammonium bromide (TBAB) and tetrabutylammonium iodide (TBAI) were used at different molar percentages with respect to the substrate to determine the effect of cocatalyst on the reaction process of styrene carbonate production from styrene oxide under atmospheric pressure of carbon dioxide. As can be seen, TBAI has a better performance than TBAB, and with increasing molar percentage of TBAI, the reaction efficiency is enhanced, and after reaching the plateau, increasing the amount of cocatalyst has no effect on the reaction process (Table 1, entries 2–3 and 15–16). The differences between cocatalysts arise due to the differences in the donor strength of the Lewis-bases, as mentioned above. As shown in Table 1, entries 2–3, TBAI is the best base for this reaction. By making a simple comparison to TBAB, the iodide provided a much better nucleophilicity resulted in more convenient

ring-opening and -closure steps. Also, various studies have shown that this reaction does not progress significantly in the presence of solvents such as water and acetonitrile (Table 1, entries 5–6), which can dissolve **2** as a catalyst. In fact, by dissolving the **2** in the solvent, the structure breaks down and loses its desired spatial position to form the hydrogen bond with the epoxy ring and perform the reaction. The reaction in chloroform as a solvent in which **2** is not soluble also did not yield the desired result (Table 1, entry 7), possibly due to the decrease in the number of effective collisions between the reactants as a result of the lowering concentration. By changing various factors such as temperature, time, and amount of catalyst, the role of these factors in advancing CO₂ fixation reaction was investigated (Table 1, entries 8–14). The results showed that by increasing each of these factors, the production efficiency of styrene carbonate increased. After reaching the plateau, further increasing each item did not cause a noticeable change in the desired product yield.

Based on the catalytic test results, the optimum reaction conditions were selected, and the cycloaddition reaction of CO₂ with styrene oxide reached a maximum efficiency of 81% under 5 bar pressure of carbon dioxide in 10 h at 110 °C in the presence of

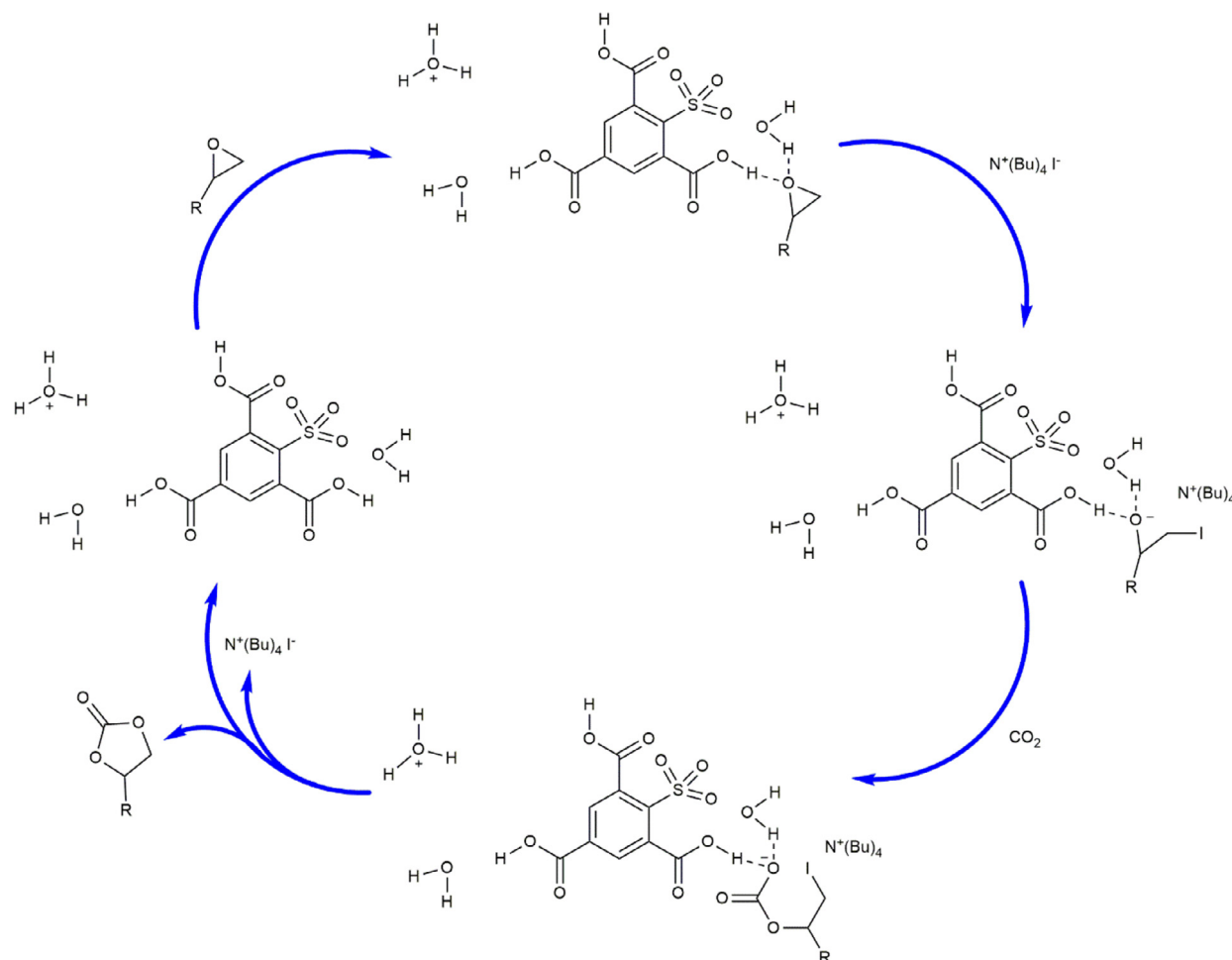


Fig. 9. The plausible mechanism pathway for the cycloaddition reaction of styrene oxide and CO₂ using 2-sulfonylbenzene-1,3,5-tricarboxylic acid (**2**).

tetrabutylammonium iodide as a cocatalyst. Furthermore, the catalysts TOF values was lower than 2 h^{-1} .

The catalytic performance of organocatalyst (**2**) was better than PCP (**1**) in the reaction of styrene carbonate synthesis under the same conditions (Table 1, entries 2 and 4). It is interesting to compare **2** and **1** as a catalyst in the cycloaddition reactions and explain the possible reason for the yield differences. It has been found that in the reaction of styrene dioxide and carbon dioxide, hydrogen bond formation plays a vital role in accelerating the reaction [66]. According to the presented mechanism in Fig. 9, the adjacent hydroxyl groups significantly impact the formation of the desired product by forming a hydrogen bond with epoxy ring oxygen and formation the stable 7-membered ring species [67]. Besides, in **1**, because of the spatial congestion around coordinated

water molecules to potassium, the possibility of forming a hydrogen bond with the epoxy ring oxygen is reduced compared to **2**. Therefore, the poor performance of **1** compared to **2** (17% vs. 50%) during the cycloaddition reaction is reasonable.

The reusability of the 2-sulfonylbenzene-1,3,5-tricarboxylic acid (**2**) as a catalyst in the CO₂ cycloaddition reaction was also evaluated, and it was found to be robust and stable during recovery cycles (Fig. 10).

Table 2 provides a brief comparison of the optimum catalyst performance in this study with previously reported catalysts with a similar mechanism. As can be seen, compared to similar catalysts reported in the literature, 2-sulfonylbenzene-1,3,5-tricarboxylic acid (**2**) has advantages such as fast, convenience, and reasonable yield in the low pressure of CO₂.

Table 2

Comparison of the catalytic performance of 2-sulfonylbenzene-1,3,5-tricarboxylic acid (**2**) with previously reported catalysts in neat condition.

Entry	Catalyst	T (°C)	t (h)	CO ₂ pressure (bar)	Yield (%)	Ref.
1	NaI/PPh ₃ /PhOH	120	14	40	100	[68]
2	Cellulose/KI	110	9	20	98	[69]
3	Potassium complex	150	8	22	50	[70]
4	EDTA	70	18	5	94	[43]
5	[{(CH ₂) ₃ CO ₂ H]im]Br	120	1	20	95	[71]
6	PDVB-CEIMBr	140	4	20	93.8	[72]
7	[{Zn ₂ (H ₂ L) ₂ }(NO ₃) ₄] _n (CP-1)	100	4	10	99	[73]
8	Cobalt-based CP	80	2	10	59	[74]
9	2	110	10	5	81	This work

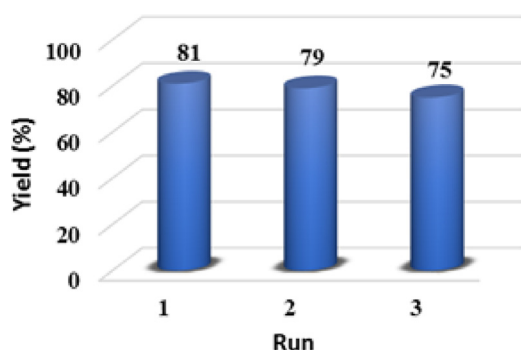


Fig. 10. The reusability of **2** in the preparation of styrene carbonate from styrene oxide under CO₂ pressure 5 bar.

4. Conclusion

In this study, two new compounds, potassium coordination polymer, and the corresponding ligand, were introduced and they used to investigate their performance as catalysts in the cycloaddition of CO₂ to epoxides. The results showed that the ligand of potassium coordination polymer, carboxylic acid-containing ligand, as a heterogeneous organocatalyst had a better performance than potassium coordination polymer under the same reaction conditions. The remarkable performance of ligand in the cycloaddition of CO₂ to epoxides confirmed the synergistic effects of the simultaneous presence of Brønsted acid COOH, Lewis base I[−] and free water molecules during the reaction. This organocatalyst can be reused and recovered without significant loss in efficiency over several consecutive steps.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Masoumeh Karimi Alavijeh: Investigation, Software, Writing – original draft. **Mostafa M. Amini:** Project administration, Supervision, Funding acquisition, Conceptualization, Writing – review & editing. **Behrouz Notash:** Formal analysis, Methodology. **Gholamhossein Mohammadnezhad:** Visualization, Writing – review & editing, Data curation, Software.

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