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### Reduction and Sulfonylation of Olefins by Solutions of Diisopropylethylamine and Sulfur Dioxide

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## REDUCTION AND SULFONYLATION OF OLEFINS BY SOLUTIONS OF DIISOPROPYLETHYLAMINE AND SULFUR DIOXIDE

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**Abstract** Solutions of diisopropylethylamine and SO<sub>2</sub> deliver sulfones from acrylates and reduce olefins substituted by two carbonyl moieties in  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  positions.

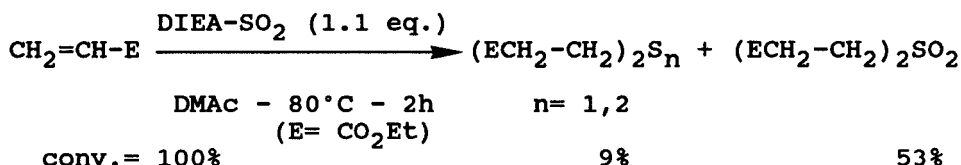
### INTRODUCTION

The growing concentration of sulfur dioxide in the atmosphere induces questions about the biological behaviour of this compound, mainly towards aminated substrates. Though interactions between sulfur dioxide and some simple tertiary amines, like Me<sub>3</sub>N<sup>1</sup> or N-benzyl-1,4-dihydronicotinamide<sup>2</sup>, a model of the biologically important NADH, have been reported, little is known about the reactivity of branched tertiary amines, like diisopropylethylamine (DIEA), towards SO<sub>2</sub>.

### REACTION OF SOLUTIONS OF DIISOPROPYLETHYLAMINE AND SO<sub>2</sub> WITH OLEFINS BEARING ONE CARBONYL GROUP

Ethyl acrylate (**1a**), crotonate (**1b**) and cinnamate (**1c**), as well as benzylidene acetone (**1d**) and carvone (**1e**), were opposed to solutions of DIEA and SO<sub>2</sub> in dimethylacetamide (DMAc) at 80°C.

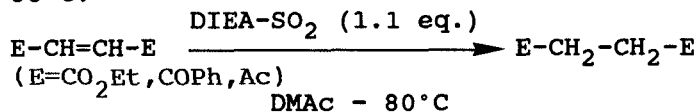
No reaction was observed from **1b-e** at 80°C after 7 hours. Only **1a**, which is a terminal olefin, reacted completely in 2 hours at 80°C to deliver a symmetric sulfone as the main product:



This reaction seemed to be very sensitive to steric hindrance and could be consistent with a 1,4 nucleophilic addition of a SO<sub>2</sub> derivative.

REACTION OF SOLUTIONS OF TERTIARY AMINES AND SO<sub>2</sub> WITH OLEFINS BEARING TWO CARBONYL GROUPS IN  $\alpha$  AND  $\beta$  POSITIONS

With such substrates, like diethyl fumarate (**4a**) and maleate (**4b**) or (E)-dibenzoyl (**4c**) and diacetyl ethylene (**4d**), the reaction with solutions of DIEA and SO<sub>2</sub> in DMAc proceeded completely differently. The reduction of the double bond, though sluggish at 20°C, occurred rapidly at 80°C:



<b>4a</b>	conv= 100%	1.25 h	65% (58% isolated)
<b>4b</b>	76%	2.50 h	55% (+10% <b>4a</b> )
<b>4c</b>	>90%	1.25 h	(31% isolated)
<b>4d</b>	100%	0.25 h	(43% isolated)

In solution, the Et<sub>3</sub>N-SO<sub>2</sub> complex is more stable than the DIEA-SO<sub>2</sub> one. However, solutions of Et<sub>3</sub>N and SO<sub>2</sub> in DMAc were less reactive, at 80°C, than those with DIEA (**4a** conv= 72% after 23.25 h) but became useful at 120°C (**4a** conv= 95% in 2 h). Thus, the R<sub>3</sub>N-SO<sub>2</sub> complex itself did not seem to be the reductive species.

In that case too, the results were consistent with a 1,4 nucleophilic addition of a reduced form of SO<sub>2</sub>: in such a reaction, a second carbonyl group in  $\beta$  position favours the orbital overlapping and maleates are less reactive than fumarates. A reversible addition could also explain the partial isomerization of maleate.

In conclusion, solutions of DIEA and SO<sub>2</sub> reduce  $\alpha,\beta$ -unsaturated- $\gamma$ -dicarbonylated compounds or deliver sulfones from acrylates through Michaël type additions. The search of the reactive species is under investigation.

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