

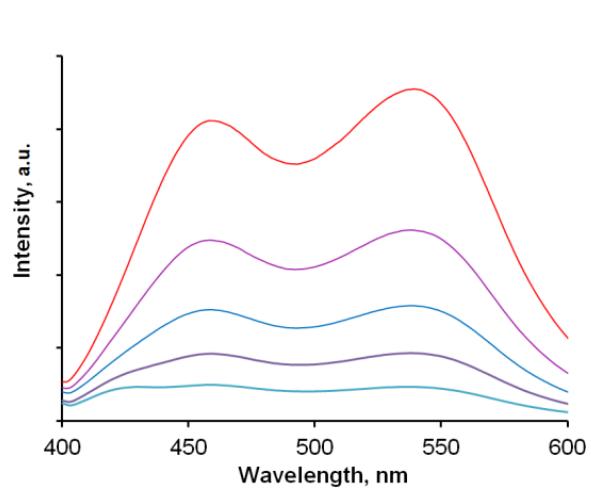
Supporting information

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1. Investigation of excimer formation by compound 6

A



B

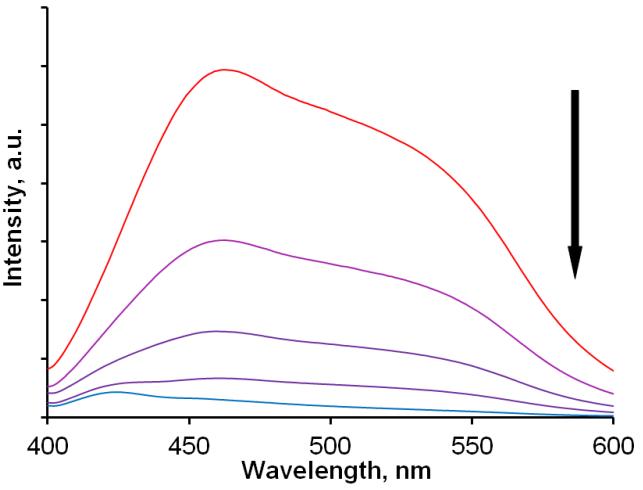


Figure S1. Dependence of emission spectra on dilution of the aqueous solutions of : A – ligand **5** (in the $1.7 \mu\text{M}$ – $26 \mu\text{M}$ concentration range; 0.03M HEPES, pH = 7.4; $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 356 \text{ nm}$); B – ligand **6** (in the 40 nM – $4.3 \mu\text{M}$ concentration range; 0.03M HEPES, pH = 7.4; $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 365 \text{ nm}$).

2. Protonation studies of compounds 5, 6 and 10

2.1. Spectrophotometric studies

Spectrophotometric studies of protonation of compound 5

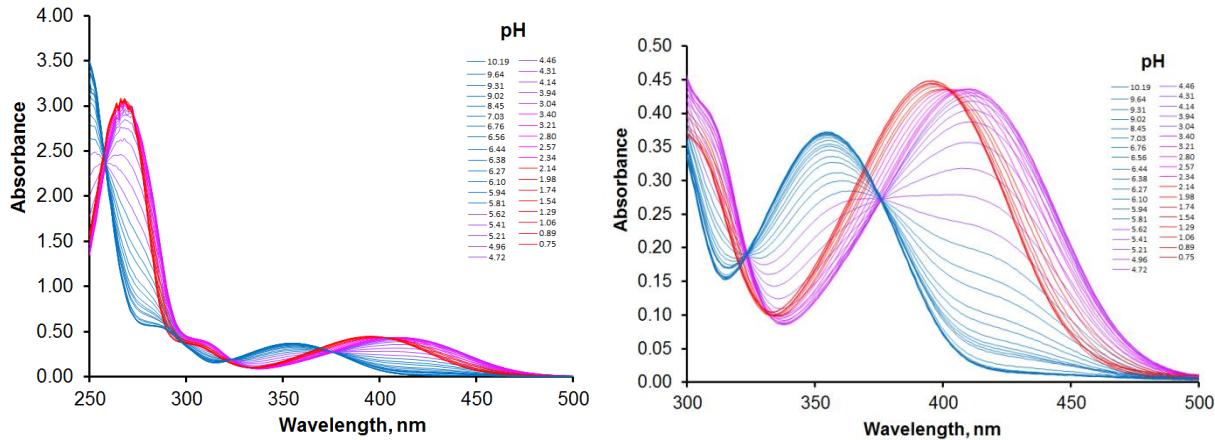
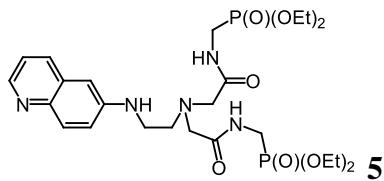


Figure S2. Spectrophotometric titration of **5** as a function of pH. $[5] = 133 \mu\text{M}$, $I = 0.1 \text{ M KCl}$, pH = 0.75–10.19.

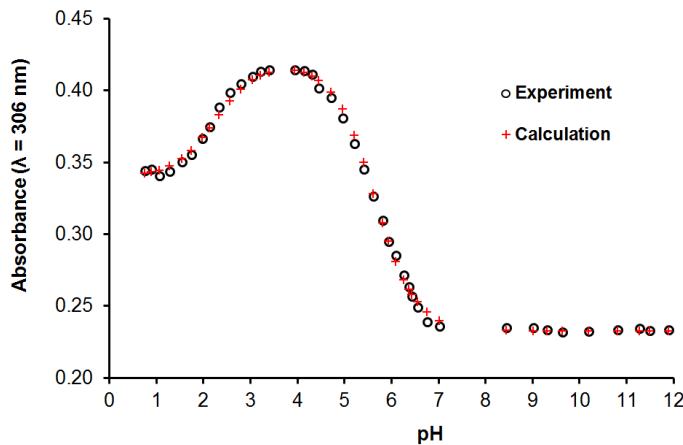


Figure S3. Evolution of absorbance with pH at 306 nm.

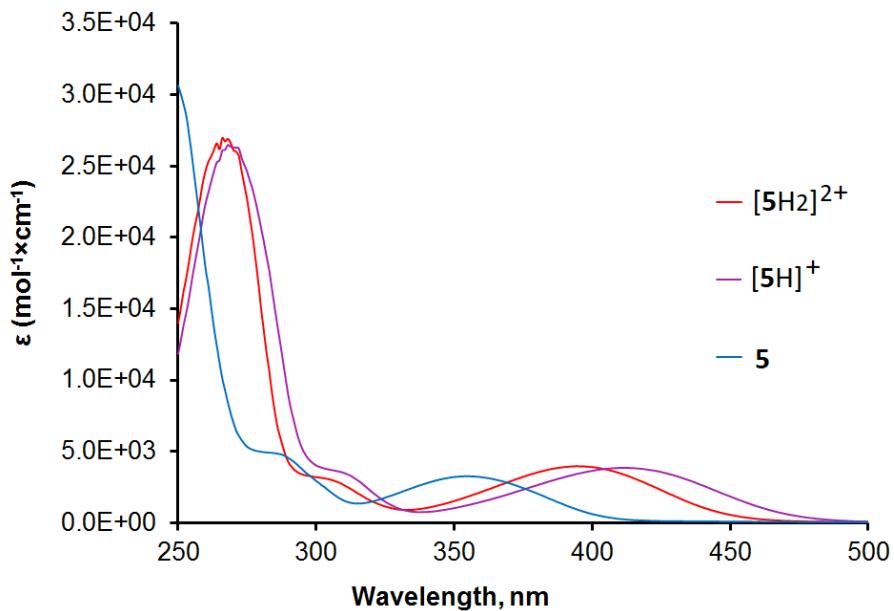


Figure S4. Calculated with the Specfit/32 program UV–vis spectra of **5**, $[5H]^+$ and $[5H_2]^{2+}$ in water.

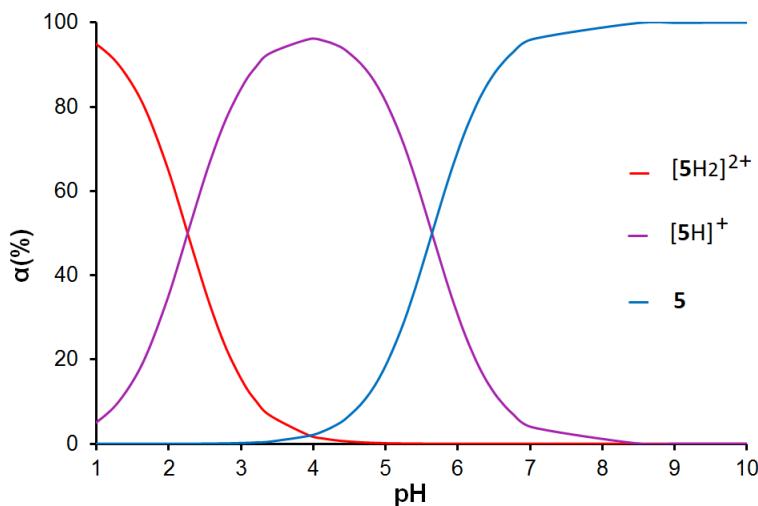
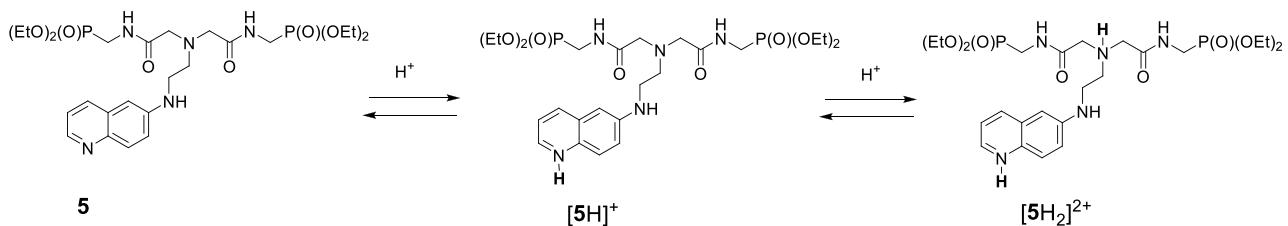


Figure S5. Distribution diagram of the protonated species of **5** calculated with the Specfit/32 program.



Scheme S1. Protonation sequence for ligand **5**.

Spectrophotometric studies of protonation of compound **6**

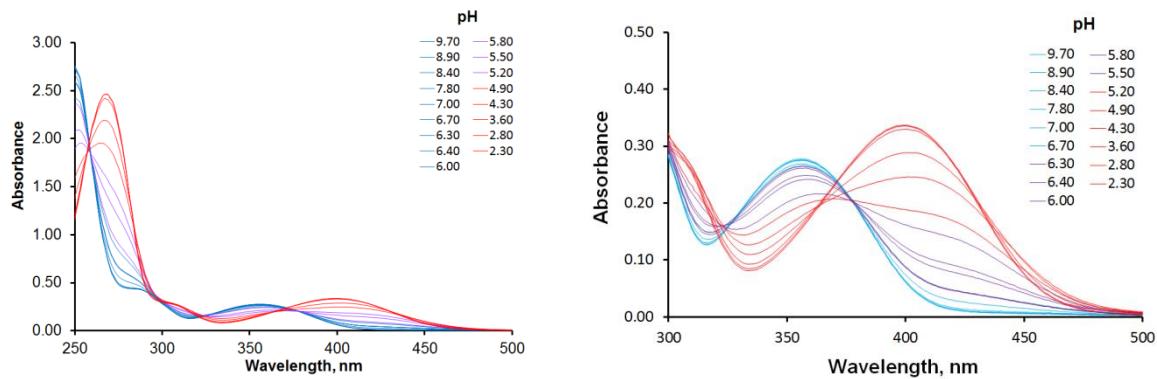
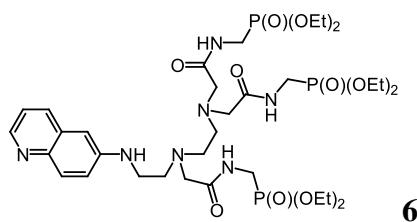


Figure S6. Spectrophotometric titration of **6** as a function of pH. $[6] = 133 \mu\text{M}$, $I = 0.1 \text{ M KCl}$, pH = 2.30–9.70.

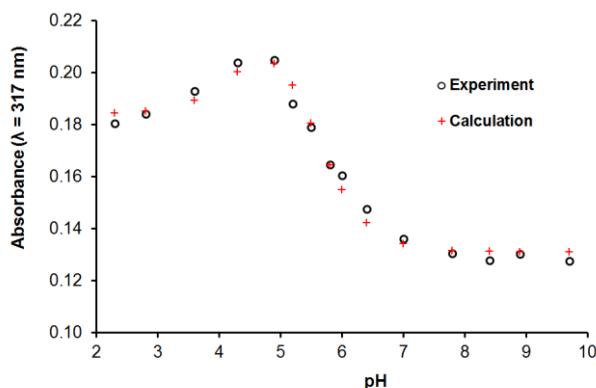


Figure S7. Evolution of absorbance with pH at 317 nm.

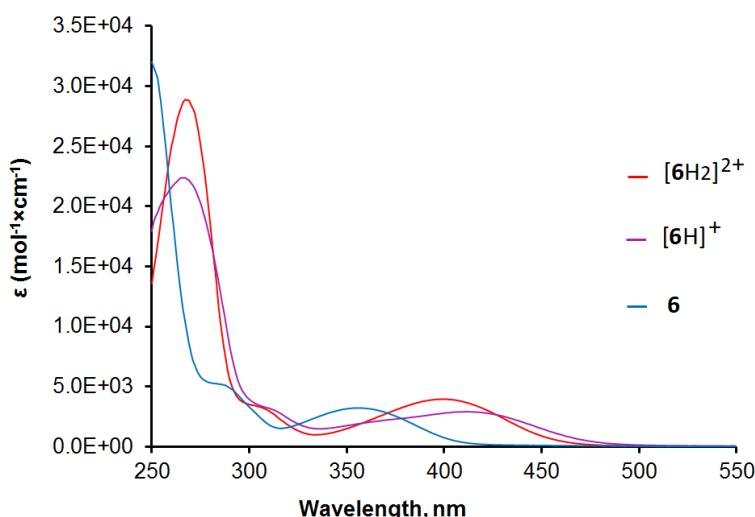


Figure S8. Calculated with the Specfit/32 program UV–vis spectra of **6**, $[6\text{H}]^+$ and $[6\text{H}_2]^{2+}$ in water.

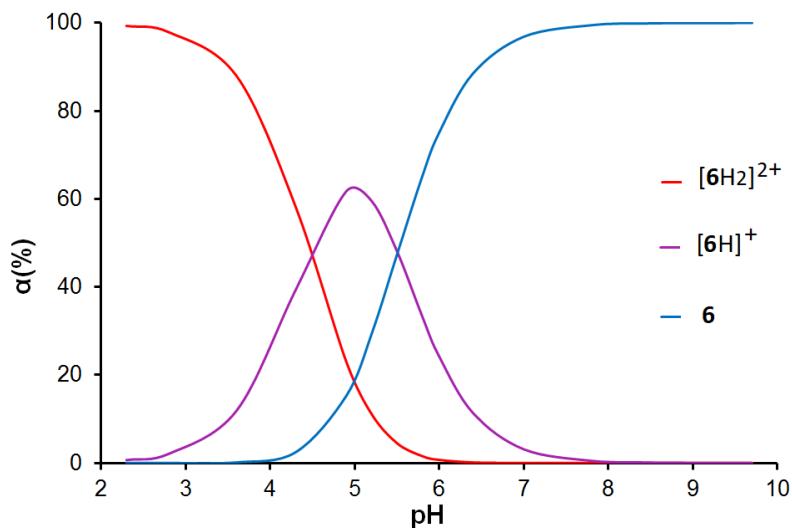
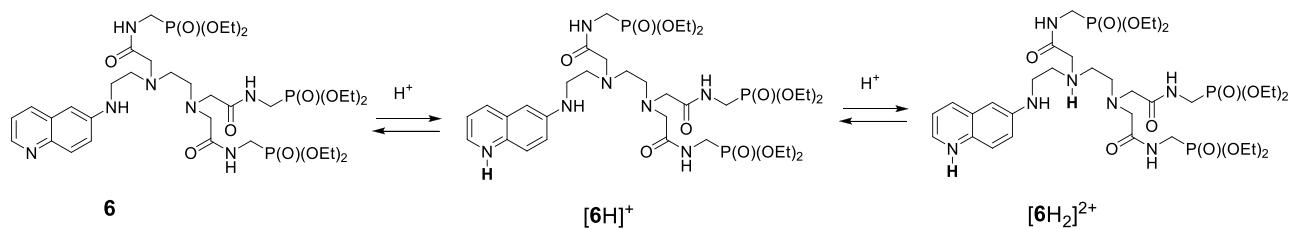


Figure S9. Calculated distribution diagram of the protonated species of **6** calculated with the Specfit/32 program.



Scheme S2. Protonation sequence for ligand **6**.

Spectrophotometric studies of protonation of compound **10**

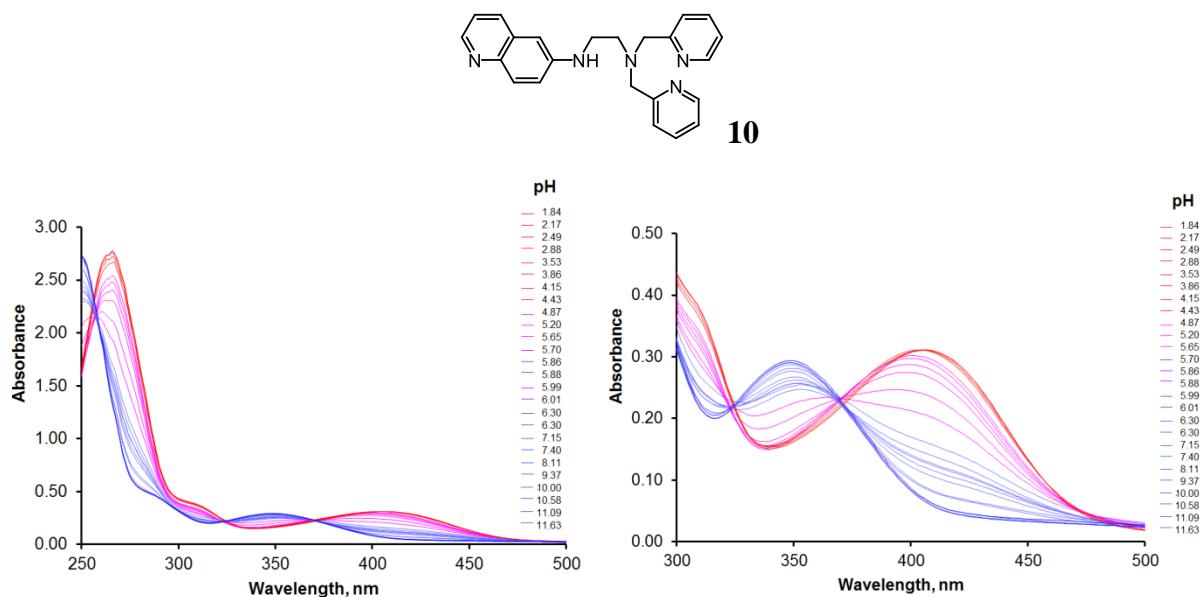


Figure S10. Spectrophotometric titration of **10** as a function of pH. $[10] = 103 \mu\text{M}$, 6% MeOH, $I = 0.1 \text{ M}$ KCl, pH = 1.84–11.63.

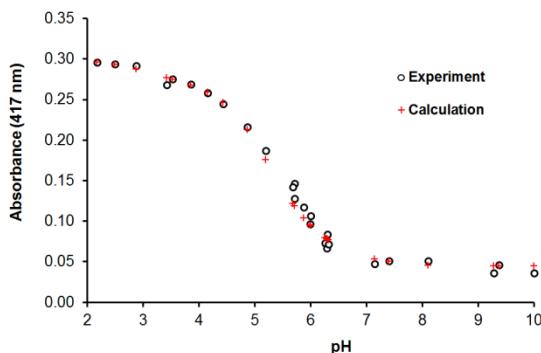


Figure S11. Changes of absorbance with pH at 417 nm.

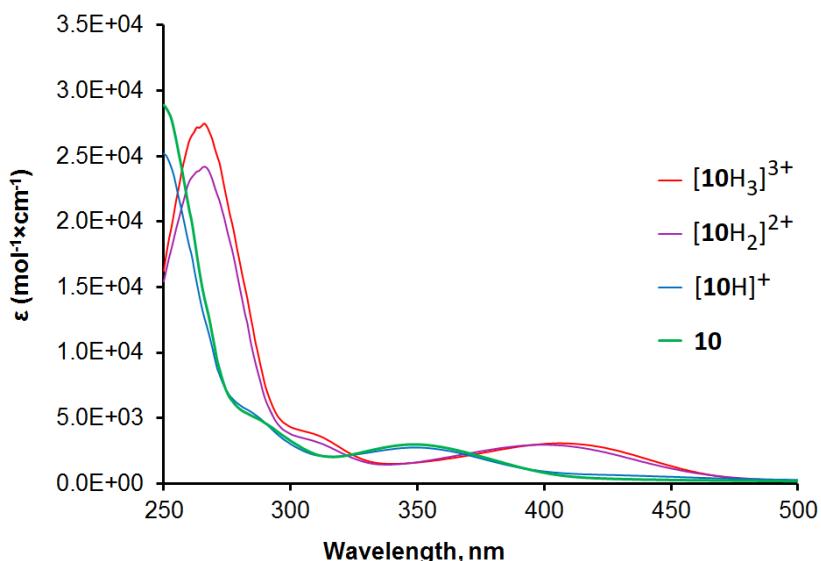


Figure S12. Calculated with the Specfit/32 program UV-vis spectra of **10**, $[10\text{H}]^+$, $[10\text{H}_2]^{2+}$ and $[10\text{H}_3]^{3+}$ in water.

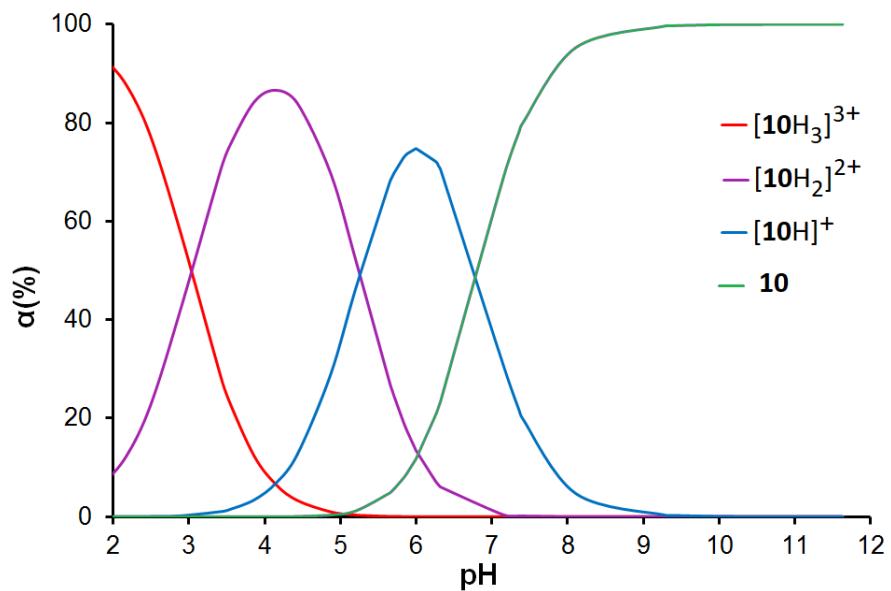
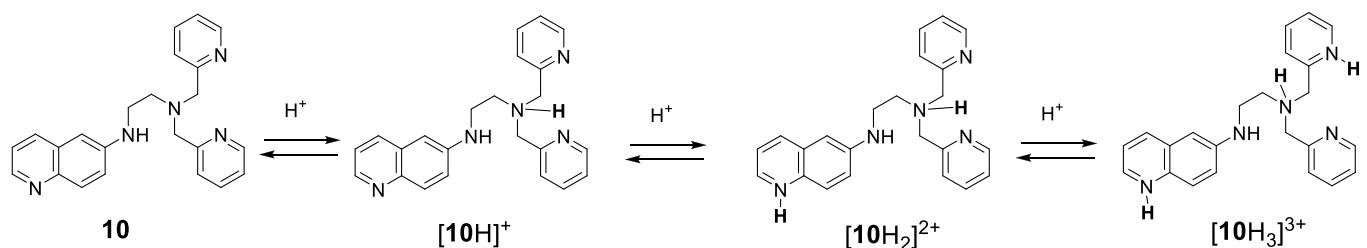


Figure S13. Distribution diagram of the protonated species of **10** calculated with the Specfit/32 program



Scheme S3. Protonation sequence for ligand **10**.

2.2 Fluorescence studies

Fluorimetric studies of protonation of compound 5

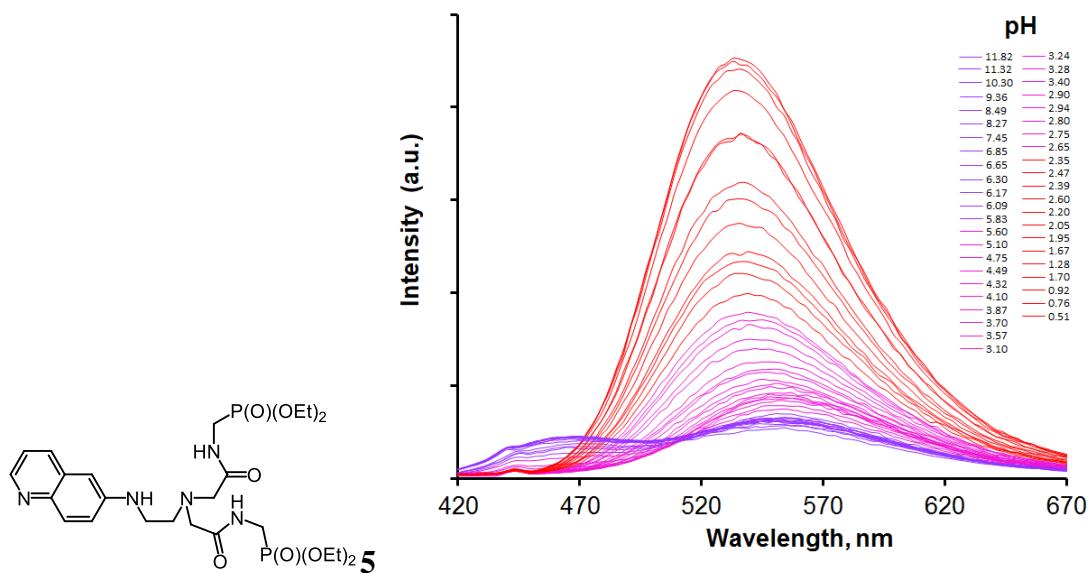


Figure S14. Fluorimetric titration of **5** as a function of pH. $[5] = 27 \mu\text{M}$, $I = 0.1 \text{ M KCl}$, $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 375 \text{ nm}$, pH = 0.51–11.82.

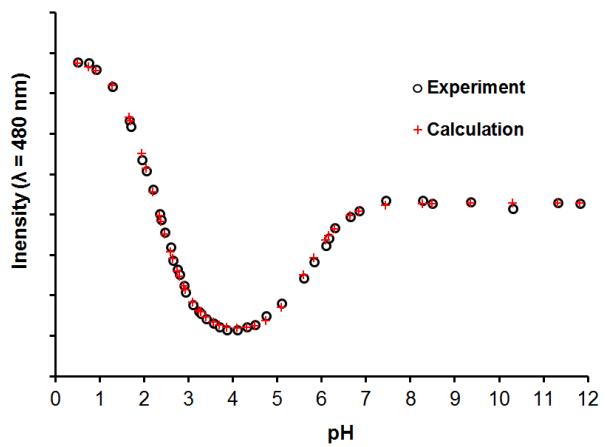


Figure S15. Changes of fluorescence intensity with pH at 480 nm

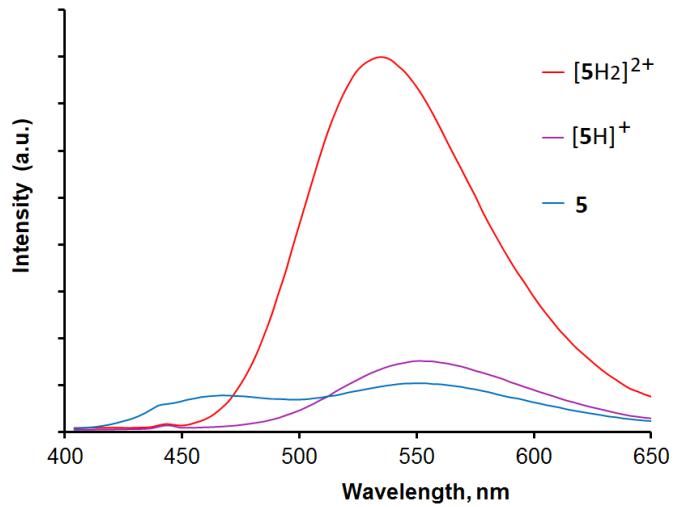


Figure S16. Calculated with the Specfit/32 program fluorescence spectra of **5**, $[5\text{H}]^+$ and $[5\text{H}_2]^{2+}$ in water.

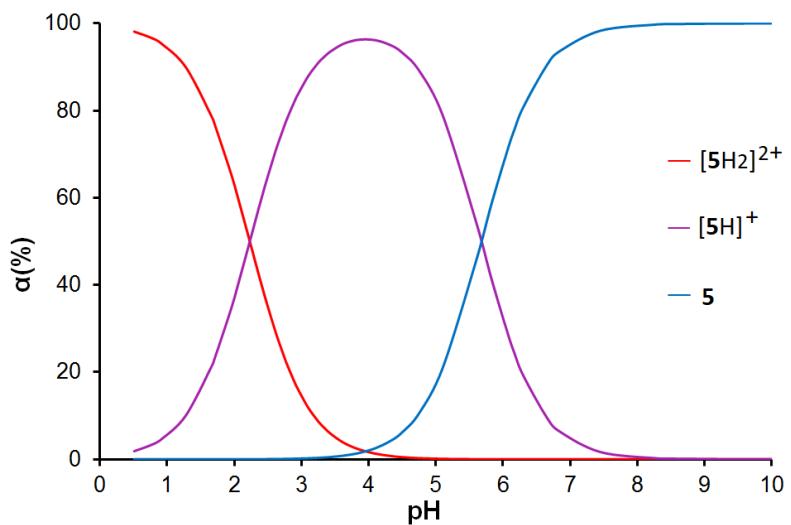


Figure S17. Distribution diagram of the protonated species of **5** calculated with the Specfit/32 program.

Fluorimetric studies of protonation of compound **6**

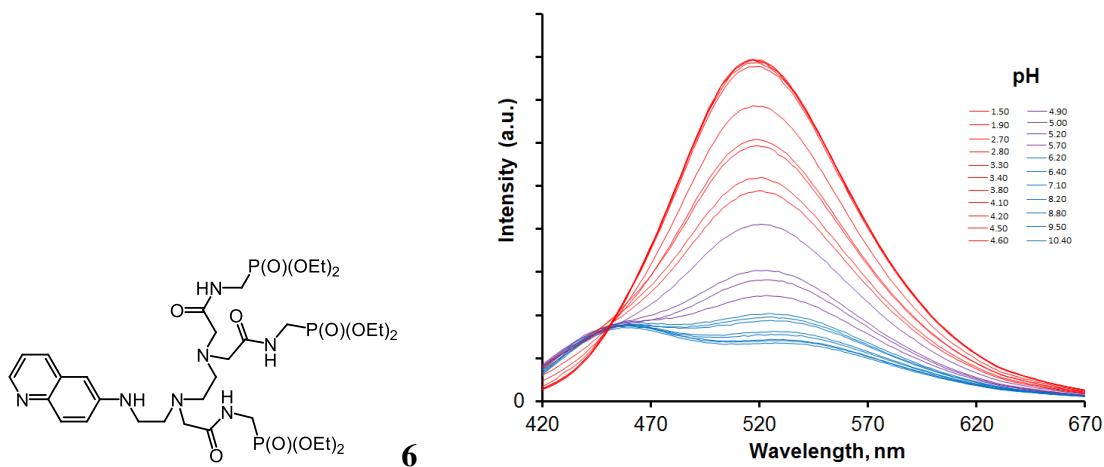


Figure S18. Fluorimetric titration of **6** as a function of pH. $[6] = 20 \mu\text{M}$, $I = 0.1 \text{ M KCl}$, $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 356 \text{ nm}$, pH = 1.50–10.40

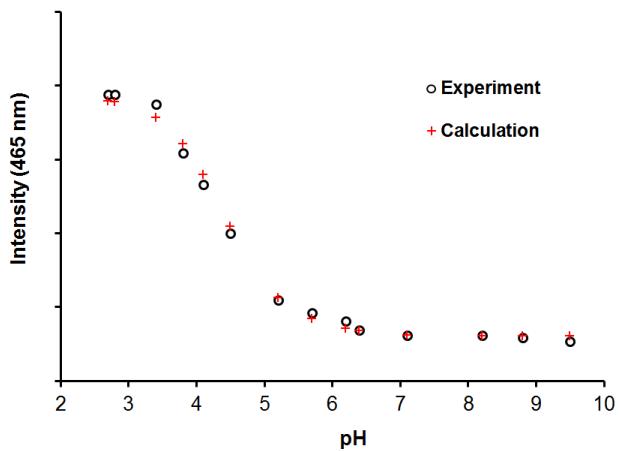


Figure S29. Evolution of fluorescence intensity with pH at 465 nm.

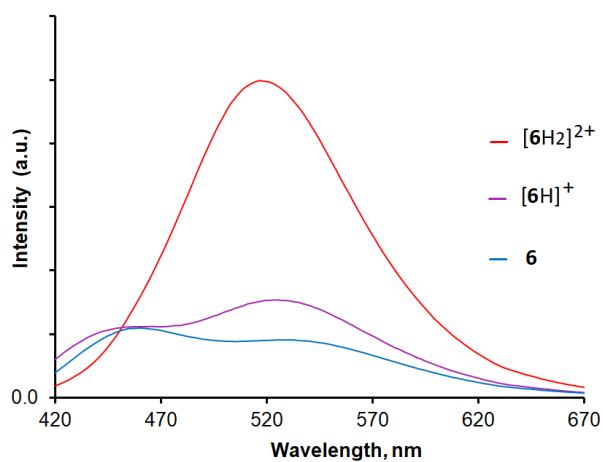


Figure S20. Calculated with the Specfit/32 program fluorescence spectra of **6**, $[\mathbf{6H}]^+$ and $[\mathbf{6H}_2]^{2+}$ in water.

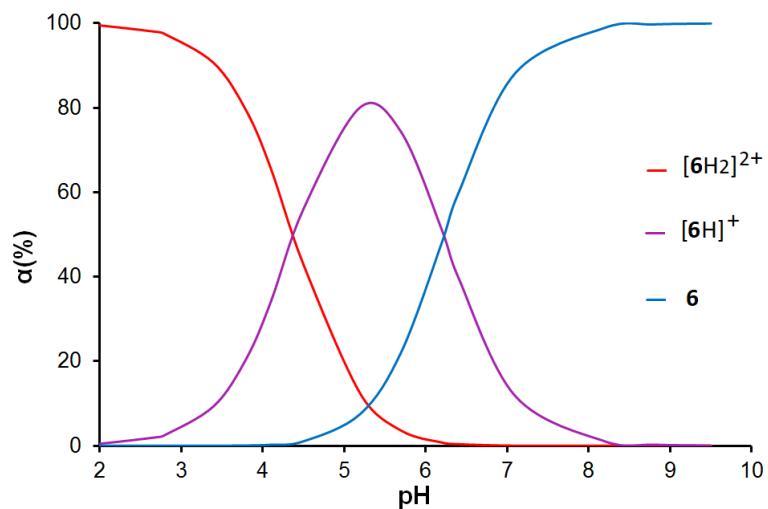


Figure S21. Distribution diagram of the protonated species of **6** calculated with the Specfit/32 program.

Fluorimetric studies of protonation of compound **10**

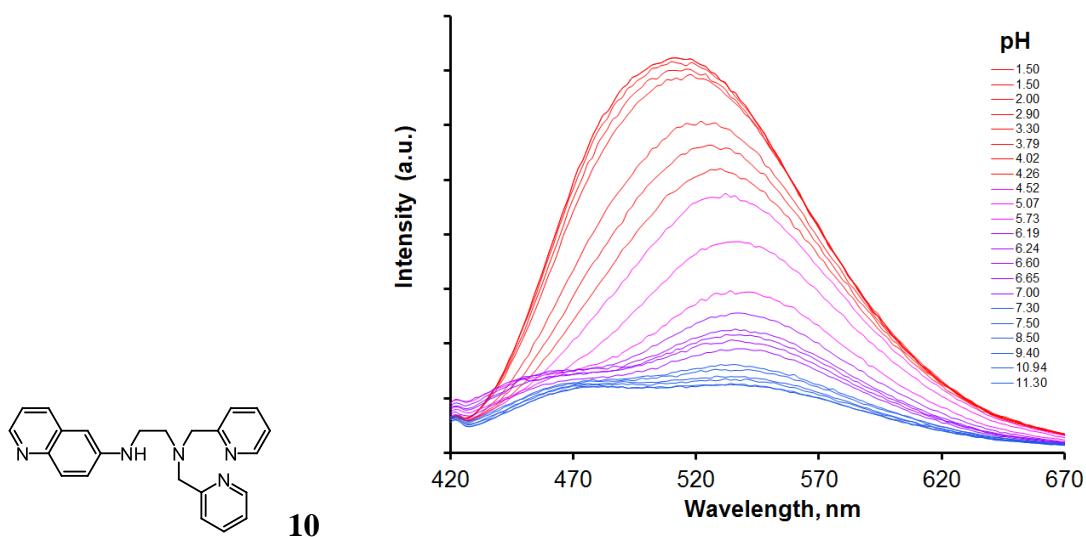


Figure S22. Fluorimetric titration of **10** as a function of pH. $[10] = 26 \mu\text{M}$, 2% MeOH, $I = 0.1 \text{ M KCl}$, $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 345 \text{ nm}$, pH = 1.50–11.30.

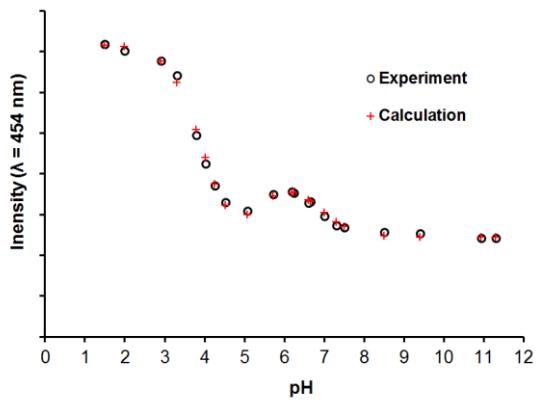


Figure S23. Changes of fluorescence intensity with pH at 454 nm.

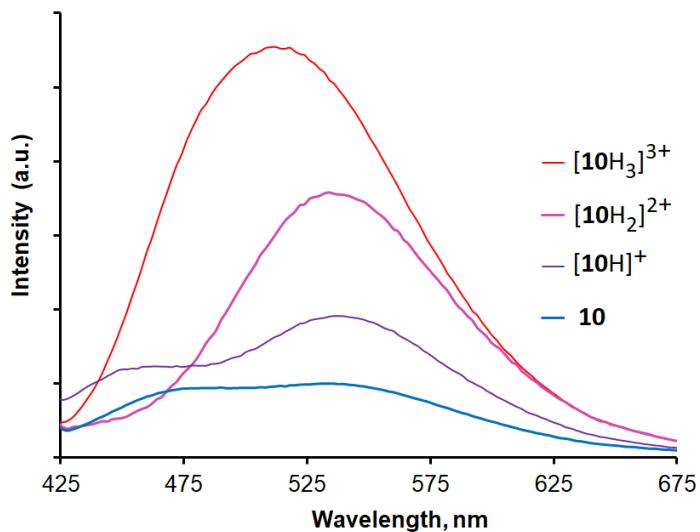


Figure S24. Calculated with the Specfit/32 program fluorescence spectra of **10**, $[10\text{H}]^+$, $[10\text{H}_2]^{2+}$ and $[10\text{H}_3]^{3+}$ in water.

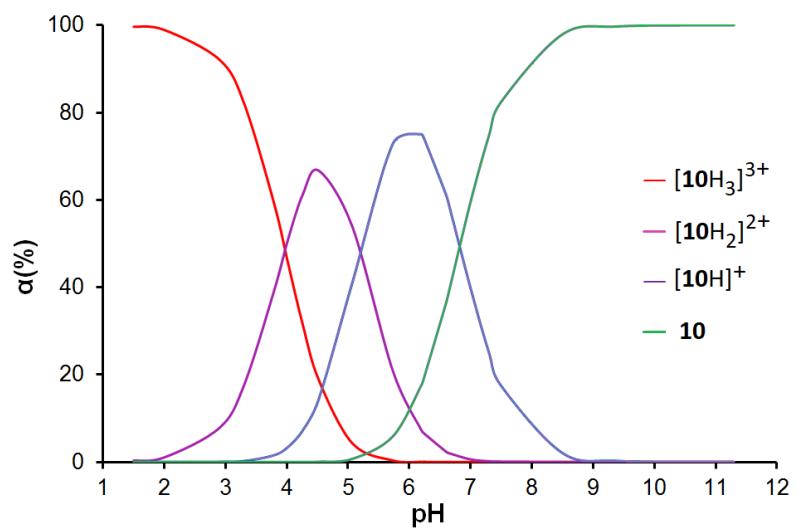
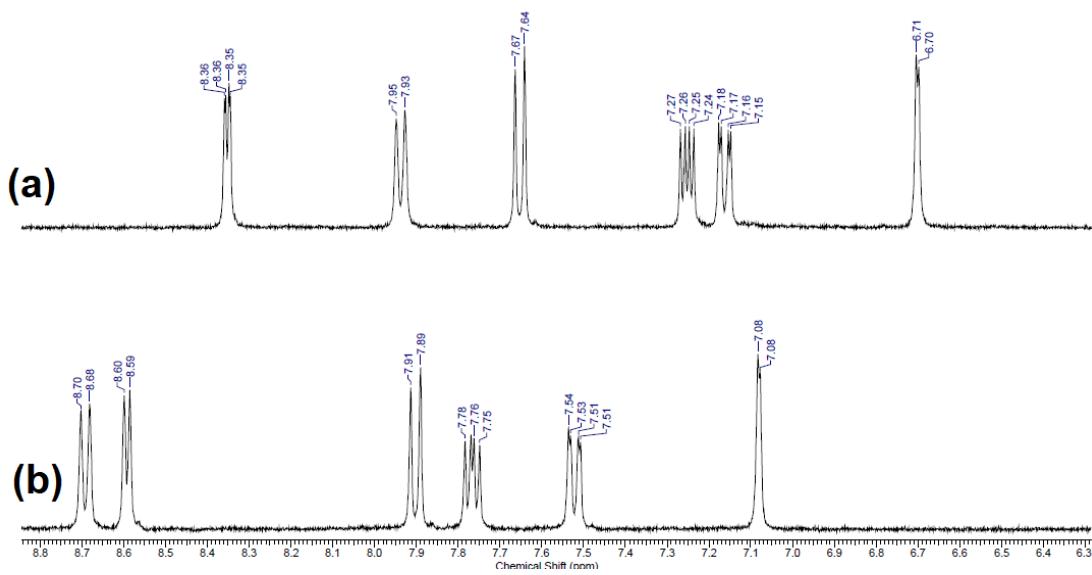


Figure S25. Distribution diagram of the protonated species of **10** calculated with the Specfit/32 program.

2.3 NMR studies of the compound **6**

A



B

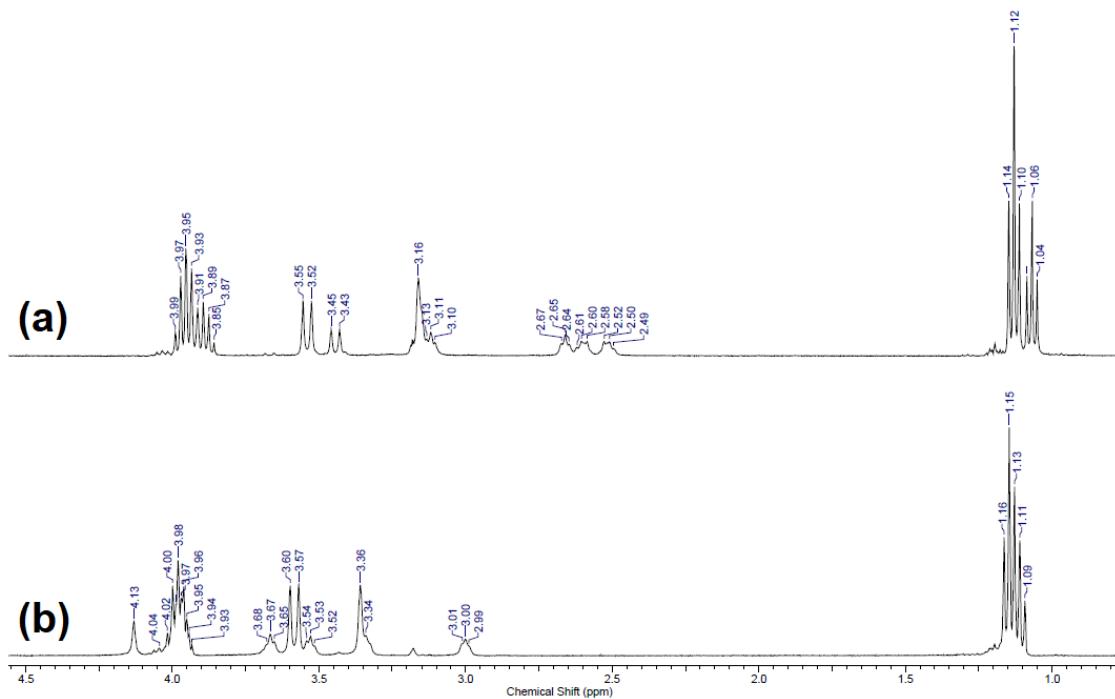


Figure S26. Aromatic (A) and aliphatic (B) regions of ¹H NMR (400 MHz) spectra of **6** in D₂O-MeOD (5:1 v/v, [6] = 0.04 M) at 298 K before (a) and after addition (b) addition of gaseous HCl.

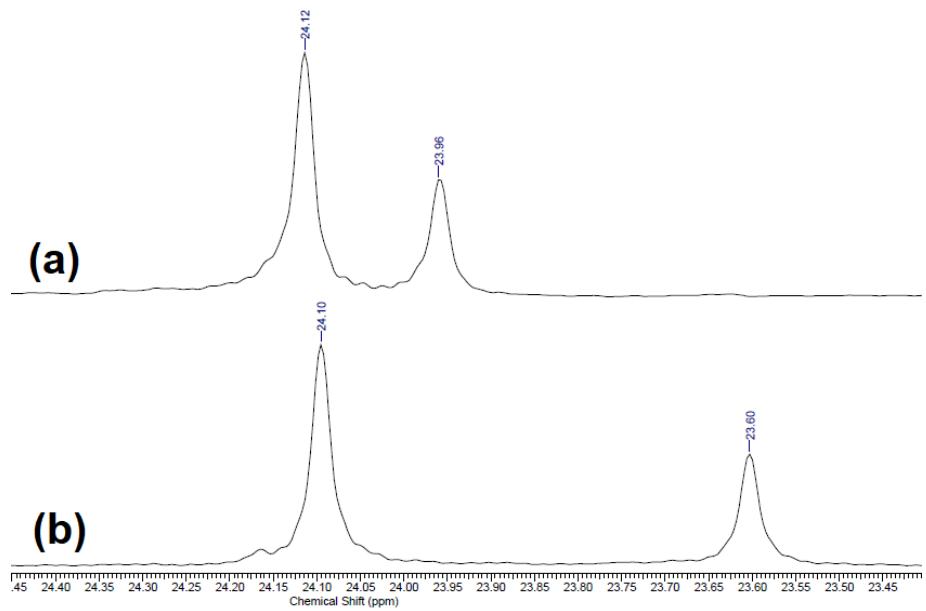


Figure S27. $^{31}\text{P}\{\text{H}\}$ NMR (162.5 MHz) spectra (a) of **6** in $\text{D}_2\text{O}-\text{MeOD}$ (5:1 v/v, $[\mathbf{6}] = 0.04 \text{ M}$) at 298 K before (a) and after addition (b) addition of gaseous HCl.

3. Metal binding studies of compounds 5, 6 and 10

3.1 Fluorimetric and spectrophotometric studies of metal binding by compound 10

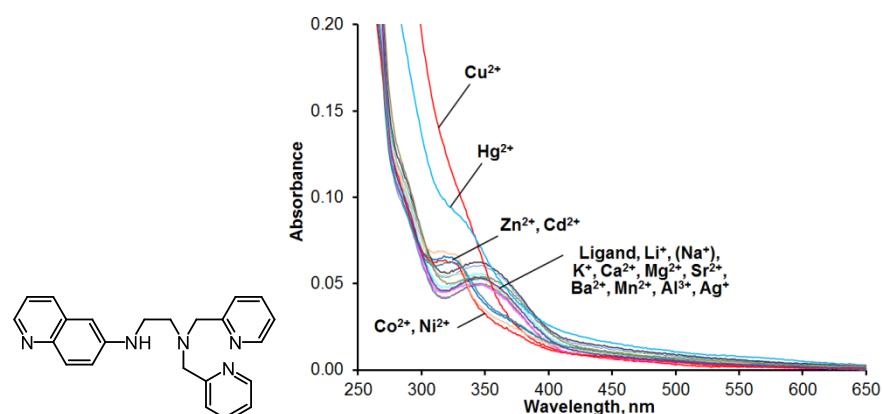


Figure S28. UV-vis spectra of **10** ($[10] = 20 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M HEPES buffer, 2% MeOH, pH = 7.4) before and after addition of 5 equiv. of metal perchlorates.

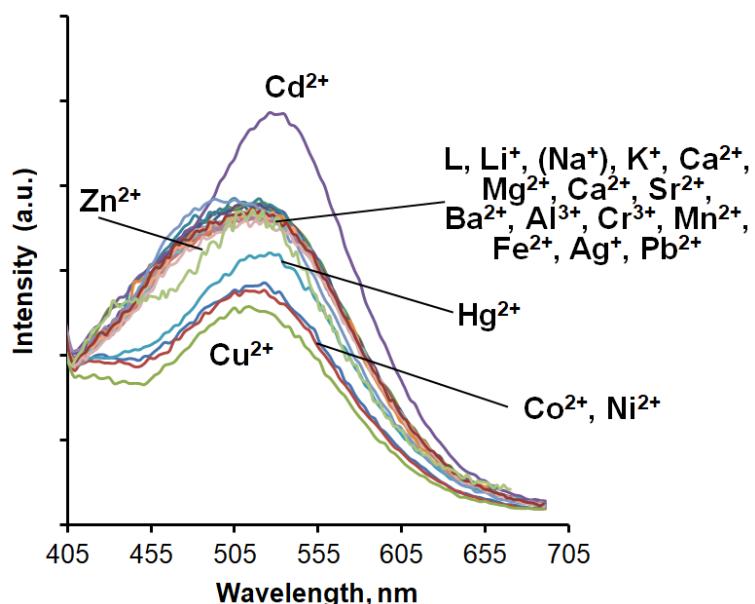


Figure S29. Fluorescence spectra of **10** ($[10] = 20 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M HEPES buffer, 2% MeOH, pH = 7.4, $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 345 \text{ nm}$) before and after addition of 5 equiv. of metal perchlorates.

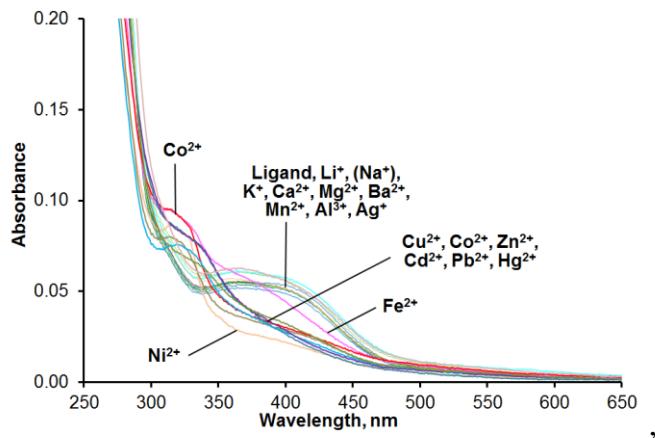


Figure S30. UV-vis spectra of **10** ($[10] = 27 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M acetate buffer, 2% MeOH pH = 5.0) before and after addition of 5 equiv. of metal perchlorates.

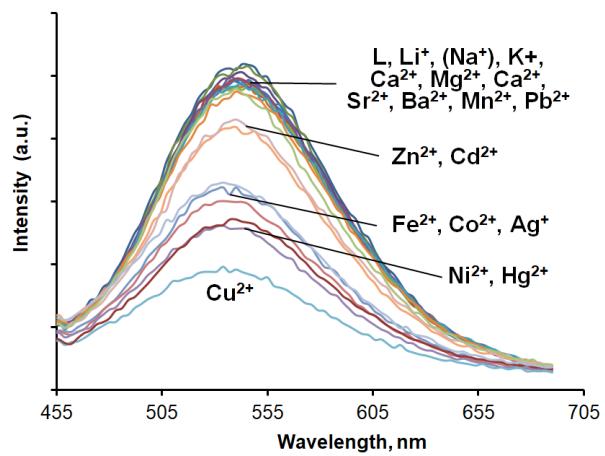


Figure S31. Fluorescence spectra of **10** ($[10] = 27 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M acetate buffer, 2% MeOH, pH = 5.0, $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 385 \text{ nm}$) before and after addition of 5 equiv. of metal perchlorates.

3.2 Fluorimetric and spectrophotometric studies of metal binding by compound 5

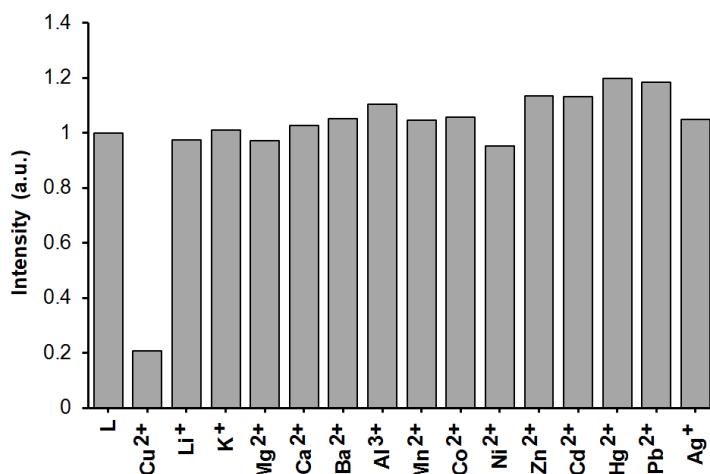


Figure S32. Normalized (to the ligand emission) fluorescence intensity ($\lambda = 551$ nm) of ligand 5 ([5] = 27 μM in 0.03 M HEPES buffer at pH = 7.4 ($\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 355$ nm) and solutions obtained after addition of 1 equiv of metal perchlorates.

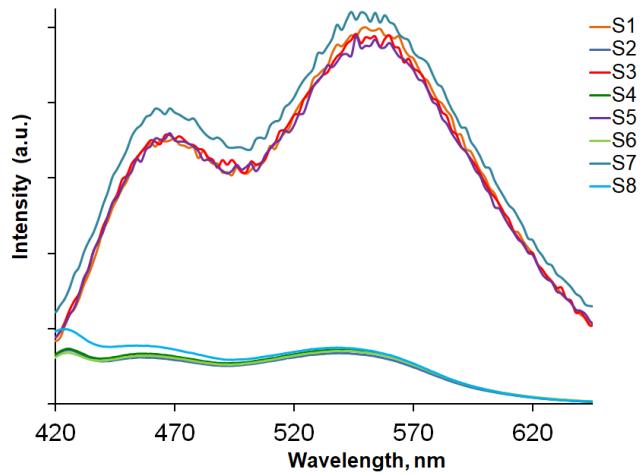


Figure S33. Cross-selectivity studies of metal ion binding by ligand **5** ($[5] = 27 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M HEPES buffer, pH = 7.4, $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 355 \text{ nm}$) using fluorescence spectroscopy:

- (S1) emission spectrum of **5**,
- (S2) emission spectrum of **5** after addition of Cu^{2+} (1 equiv),
- (S3) emission spectrum of **5** after addition of Li^+ , (Na^+) , K^+ , Mg^{2+} , Ca^{2+} , Ba^{2+} , Al^{3+} (1 equiv of each metal ion),
- (S4) emission spectrum of **5** after addition of Li^+ , (Na^+) , K^+ , Mg^{2+} , Ca^{2+} , Ba^{2+} , Al^{3+} (1 equiv of each metal ion) and Cu^{2+} (1 equiv)
- (S5) emission spectrum of **5** after addition of Mn^{2+} , Co^{2+} , Ni^{2+} , Zn^{2+} (1 equiv of each metal ion),
- (S6) emission spectrum of **5** after addition of Mn^{2+} , Co^{2+} , Ni^{2+} , Zn^{2+} (1 equiv of each metal ion) and Cu^{2+} (1 equiv)
- (S7) emission spectrum of **5** after addition of Ag^+ , Hg^{2+} , Cd^{2+} , Pb^{2+} (1 equiv of each metal ion),
- (S8) emission spectrum of **5** after addition of Ag^+ , Hg^{2+} , Cd^{2+} , Pb^{2+} (1 equiv of each metal ion) and Cu^{2+} (1 equiv)

Determination of stability constants

Spectrophotometric titration

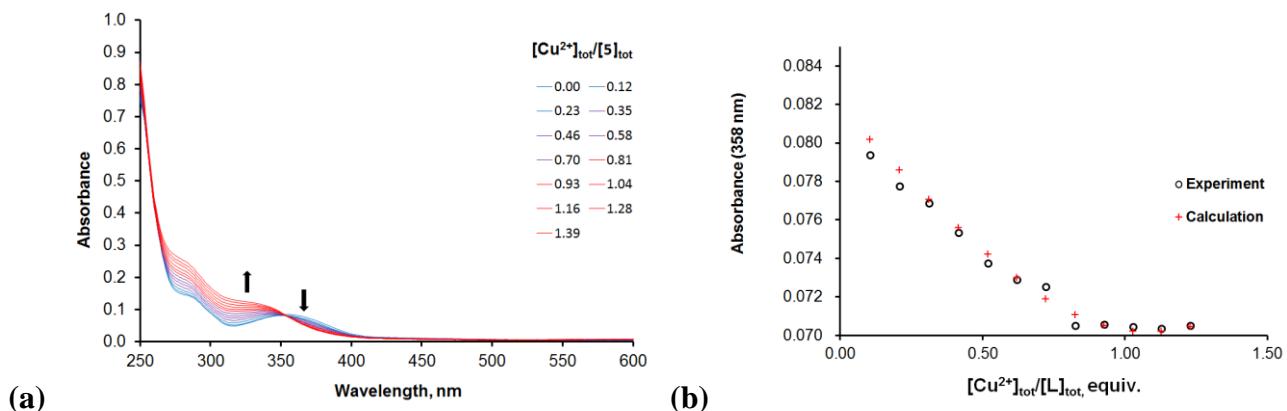


Figure S34. (a) Evolution of UV-vis spectrum of **5** ($[5] = 27 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M HEPES buffer, pH = 7.4) upon addition of $\text{Cu}(\text{ClO}_4)_2$ (0–1.4 equiv.). (b) Changes of absorbance against $[\text{Cu}^{2+}]_{\text{tot}}/[\text{L}]_{\text{tot}}$ ratio at 358 nm.

Model for calculation:

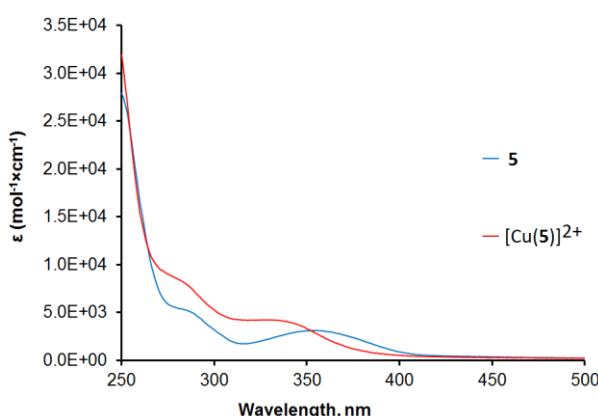
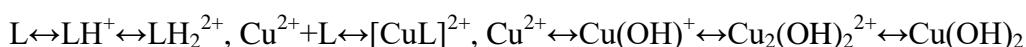


Figure S35. Calculated with the Specfit/32 program UV–vis spectra of **5** and $[\text{Cu}(\text{L})]^{2+}$ in 0.03M HEPES buffer at pH = 7.4.

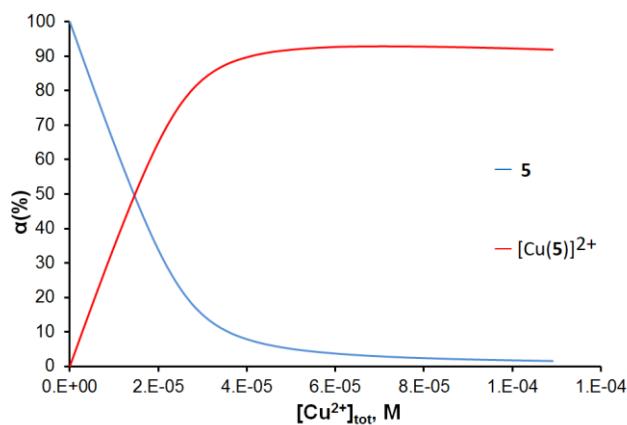


Figure S36. Distribution diagram of **5** complexes formed with Cu^{II} ($[5] = 27 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M HEPES buffer, pH = 7.4) calculated with the Specfit/32 program.

Fluorescence titration

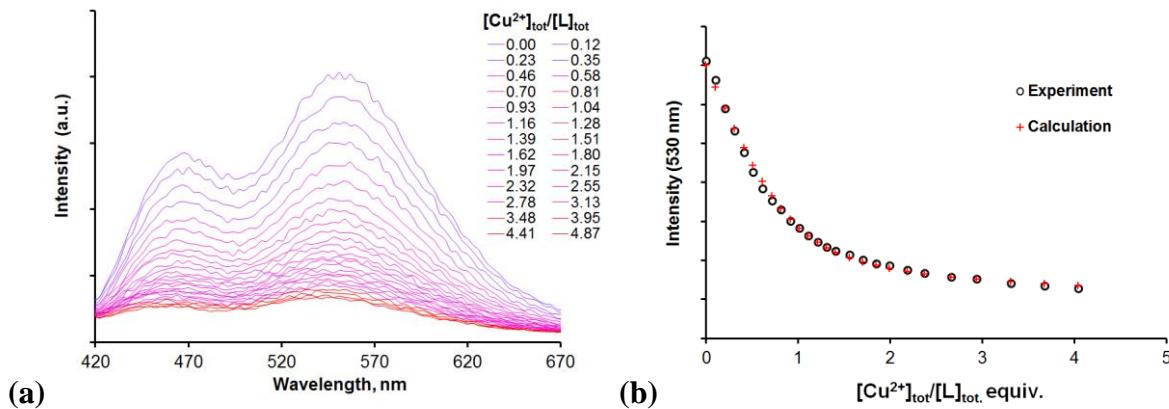


Figure S37. (a) Evolution of fluorescence spectrum of **5** ($[5] = 27 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M HEPES buffer, pH=7.4, $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 355 \text{ nm}$) upon addition of $\text{Cu}(\text{ClO}_4)_2$ (0 – 4.87 equiv.). (b) Changes of fluorescence intensity against $[\text{Cu}^{2+}]_{\text{tot}}/[\mathbf{5}]_{\text{tot}}$ ratio at 550 nm.

Stability constant for the model

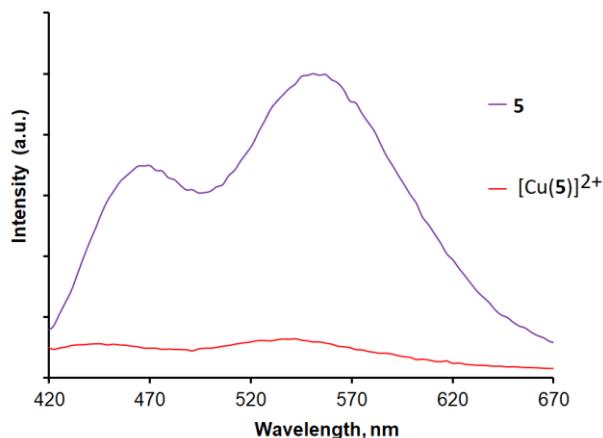


Figure S38. Calculated with the Specfit/32 program fluorescence spectra of **5** and $[\text{Cu}(\mathbf{5})]^{2+}$ in water.

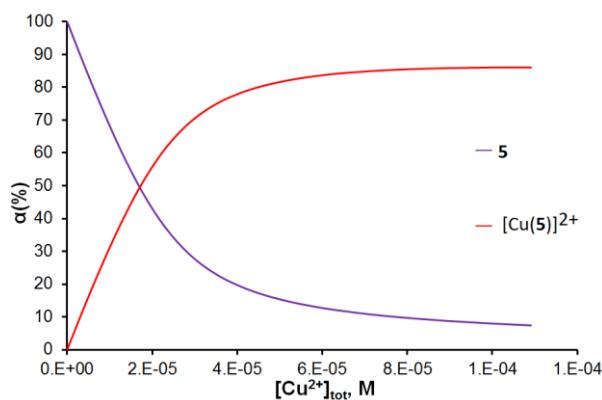


Figure S39. Species distribution diagram for the $\mathbf{5}/\text{Cu}^{2+}$ system in water calculated with the Specfit/32 program.

3.3. Fluorimetric and spectrophotometric studies of metal binding by the compound 6

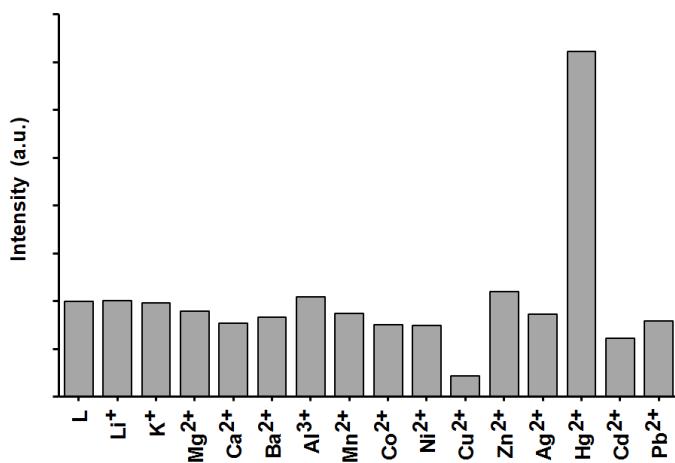


Figure S40. Fluorescence intensity of **6** ($[6] = 20 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M HEPES buffer, pH=7.4, $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 356 \text{ nm}$) before and after addition of 1 equiv. of metal perchlorates solutions at 548 nm.

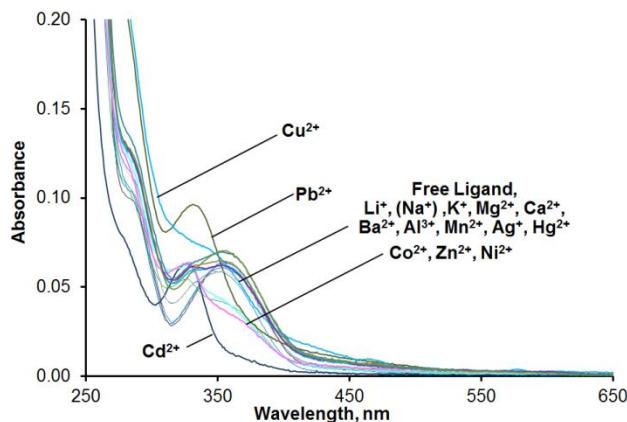


Figure S41. UV-vis spectra of **6** ($[6] = 20 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M HEPES buffer, pH=7.4) before and after addition of 1 equiv. of metal perchlorates.

Cross-selectivity studies

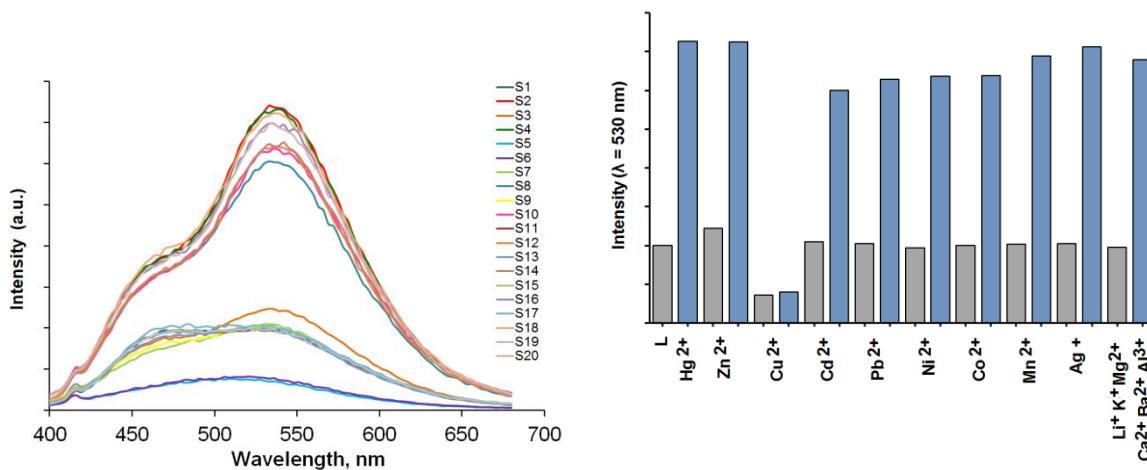


Figure S42. Cross-selectivity studies of metal ion binding by ligand **8** ($[8] = 20 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M HEPES buffer, pH=7.4, $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 356 \text{ nm}$) using fluorescence spectroscopy:

- (S1) emission spectrum of **6**,
- (S2) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Hg^{2+} (1 equiv.),
- (S3) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Zn^{2+} (1 equiv.),
- (S4) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Zn^{2+} (1 equiv.), and Hg^{2+} (1 equiv.)
- (S5) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Cu^{2+} (1 equiv.),
- (S6) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Cu^{2+} (1 equiv.), and Hg^{2+} (1 equiv.)
- (S7) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Cd^{2+} (1 equiv.),
- (S8) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Cd^{2+} (1 equiv.), and Hg^{2+} (1 equiv.)
- (S9) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Pb^{2+} (1 equiv.),
- (S10) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Pb^{2+} (1 equiv.), and Hg^{2+} (1 equiv.)
- (S11) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Ni^{2+} (1 equiv.),
- (S12) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Ni^{2+} (1 equiv.), and Hg^{2+} (1 equiv.)
- (S13) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Co^{2+} (1 equiv.),
- (S14) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Co^{2+} (1 equiv.), and Hg^{2+} (1 equiv.)
- (S15) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Mn^{2+} (1 equiv.),
- (S16) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Mn^{2+} (1 equiv.), and Hg^{2+} (1 equiv.)
- (S17) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Ag^+ (1 equiv.),
- (S18) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Ag^+ (1 equiv.), and Hg^{2+} (1 equiv.)
- (S19) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Li^+ , (Na^+) , K^+ , Mg^{2+} , Ca^{2+} , Ba^{2+} , Al^{3+} (1 equiv. of each metal ion),
- (S20) emission spectrum of **6** after addition of Li^+ , (Na^+) , K^+ , Mg^{2+} , Ca^{2+} , Ba^{2+} , Al^{3+} (1 equiv. of each metal ion) and Hg^{2+} (1 equiv.)

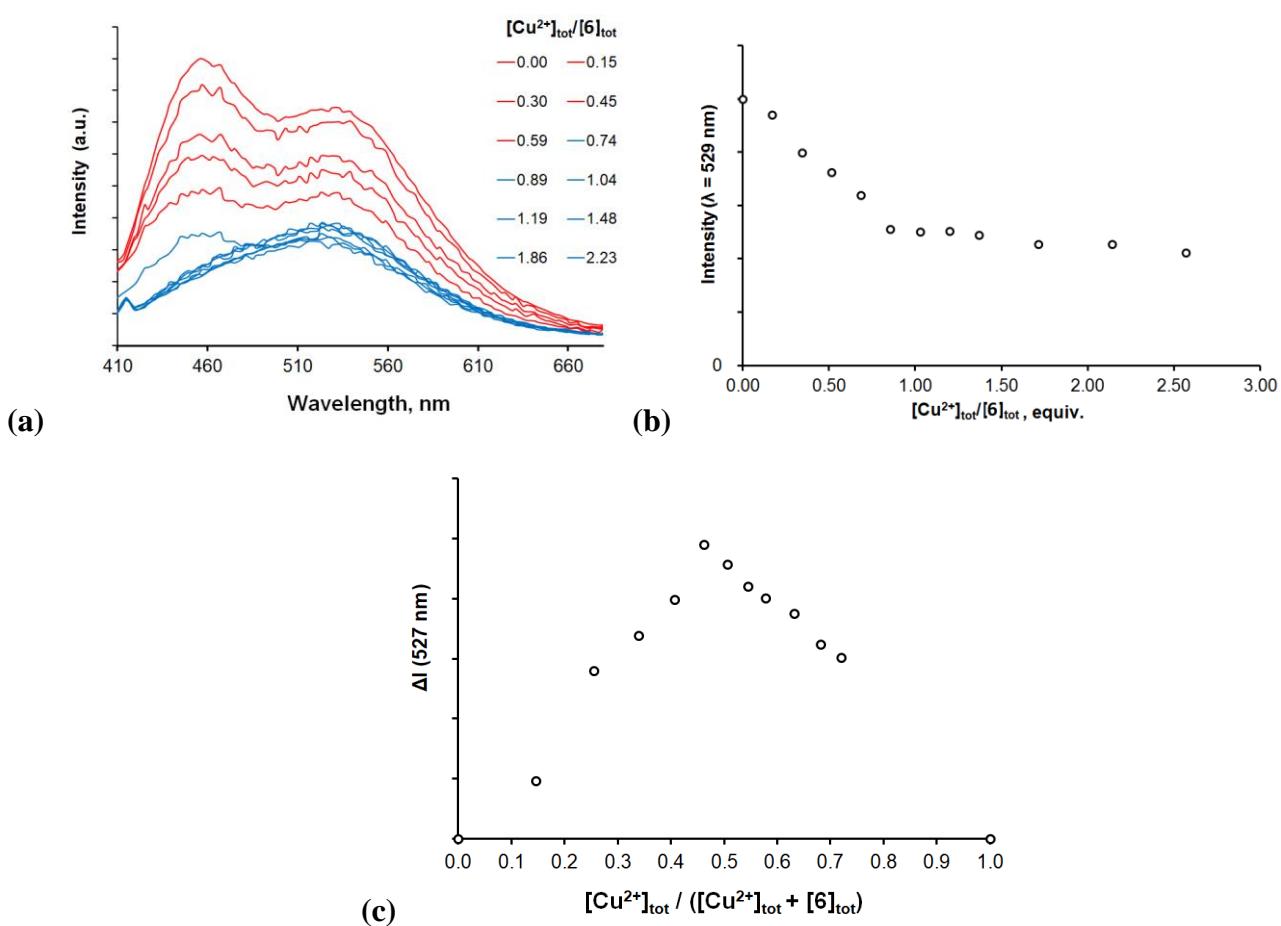


Figure S43. **(a)** Evolution of fluorescence spectrum of **6** ($[6] = 13 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M HEPES buffer, pH=7.4, $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 356 \text{ nm}$) upon addition of $\text{Cu}(\text{ClO}_4)_2$ (0 – 2.5 equiv.). **(b)** Changes of fluorescence intensity against $[\text{Cu}^{2+}]_{\text{tot}}/[6]_{\text{tot}}$ ratio at 529 nm. **(c)** Job's plot derived from the titration curve {P. MacCarthy, *Anal. Chem.*, 1978, 50(14), 2165}.

Formation of CuL complex is observed. The stability constant of the complex $\log\beta \geq 9$ can't be calculated from the direct titration.

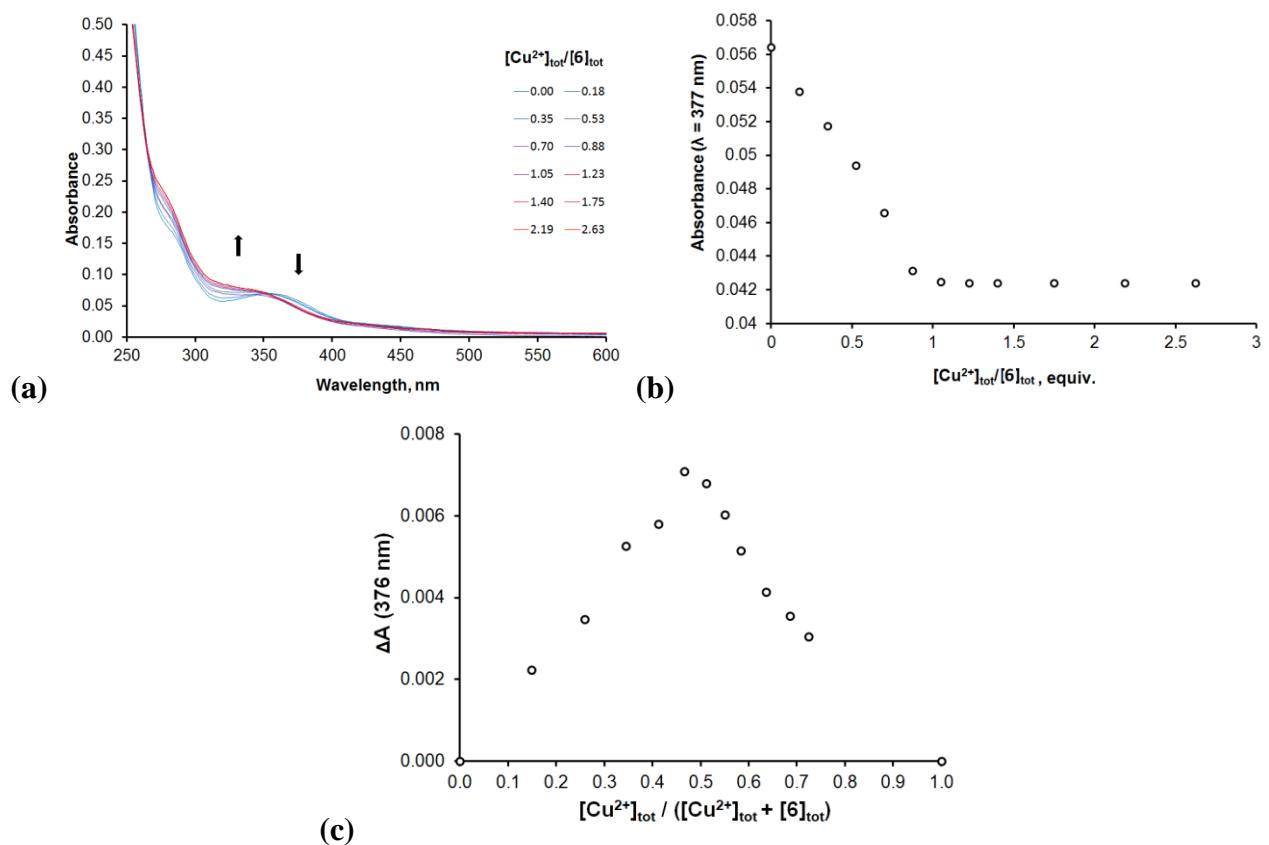


Figure S44. (a) Evolution of UV-vis spectrum of **6** ($[6] = 15 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M HEPES buffer, pH=7.4) upon addition of $\text{Cu}(\text{ClO}_4)_2$ (0 – 2.5 equiv.). (b) Changes of absorbance against $[\text{Hg}^{2+}]_{\text{tot}}/[6]_{\text{tot}}$ ratio at 377 nm. (c) Job's plot derived from the titration curve {P. MacCarthy, *Anal. Chem.*, 1978, 50(14), 2165}.

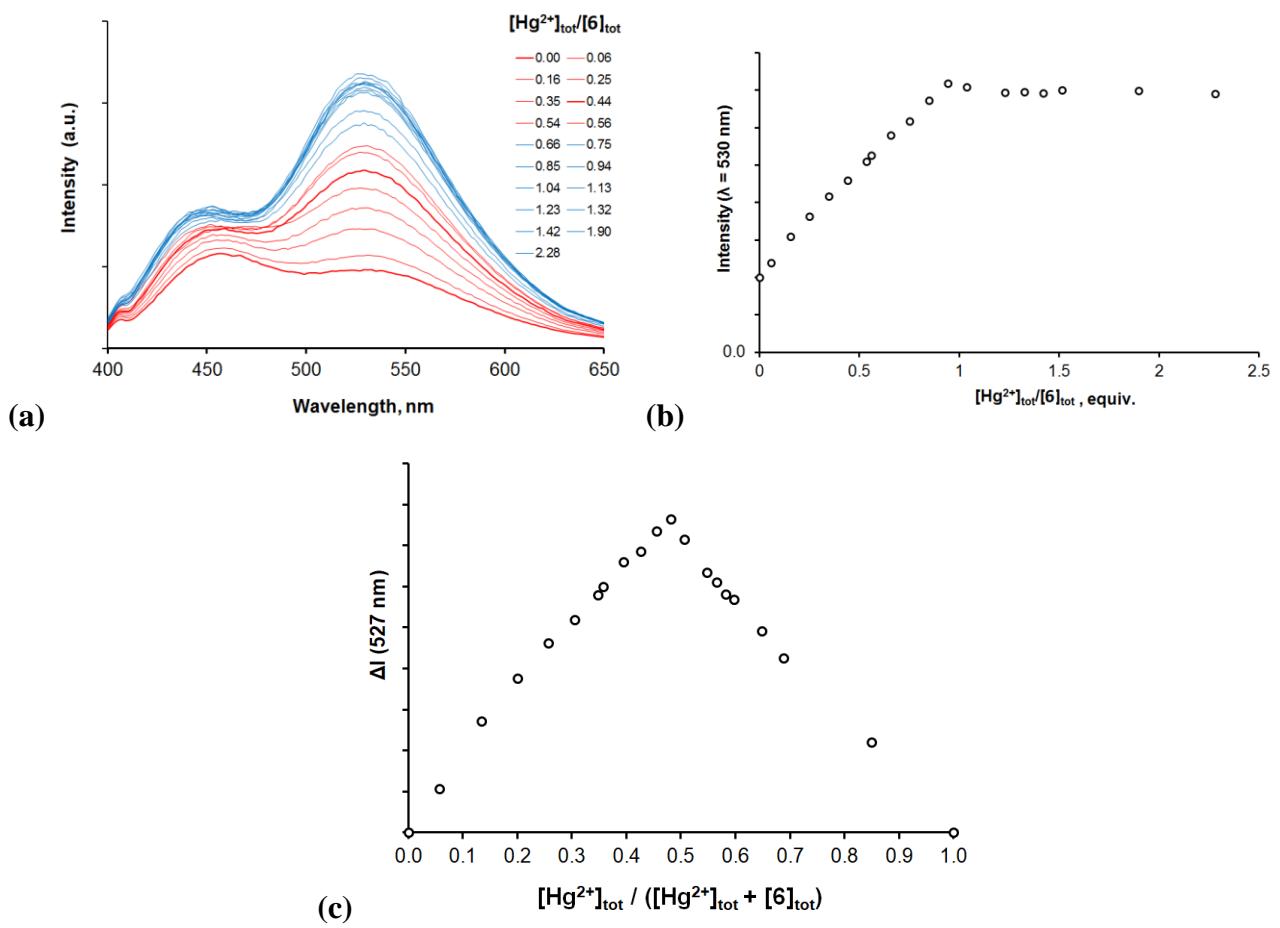


Figure S45. **(a)** Evolution of fluorescence spectrum of **6** ($[6] = 20 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M HEPES buffer, pH=7.4, $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 356 \text{ nm}$) upon addition of $\text{Hg}(\text{ClO}_4)_2$ (0 – 2.5 equiv.); **(b)** Changes of fluorescence intensity against $[\text{Hg}^{2+}]_{\text{tot}}/[6]_{\text{tot}}$ ratio at 530 nm. **(c)** Job's plot derived from the titration curve {P. MacCarthy, *Anal. Chem.*, 1978, 50(14), 2165}.

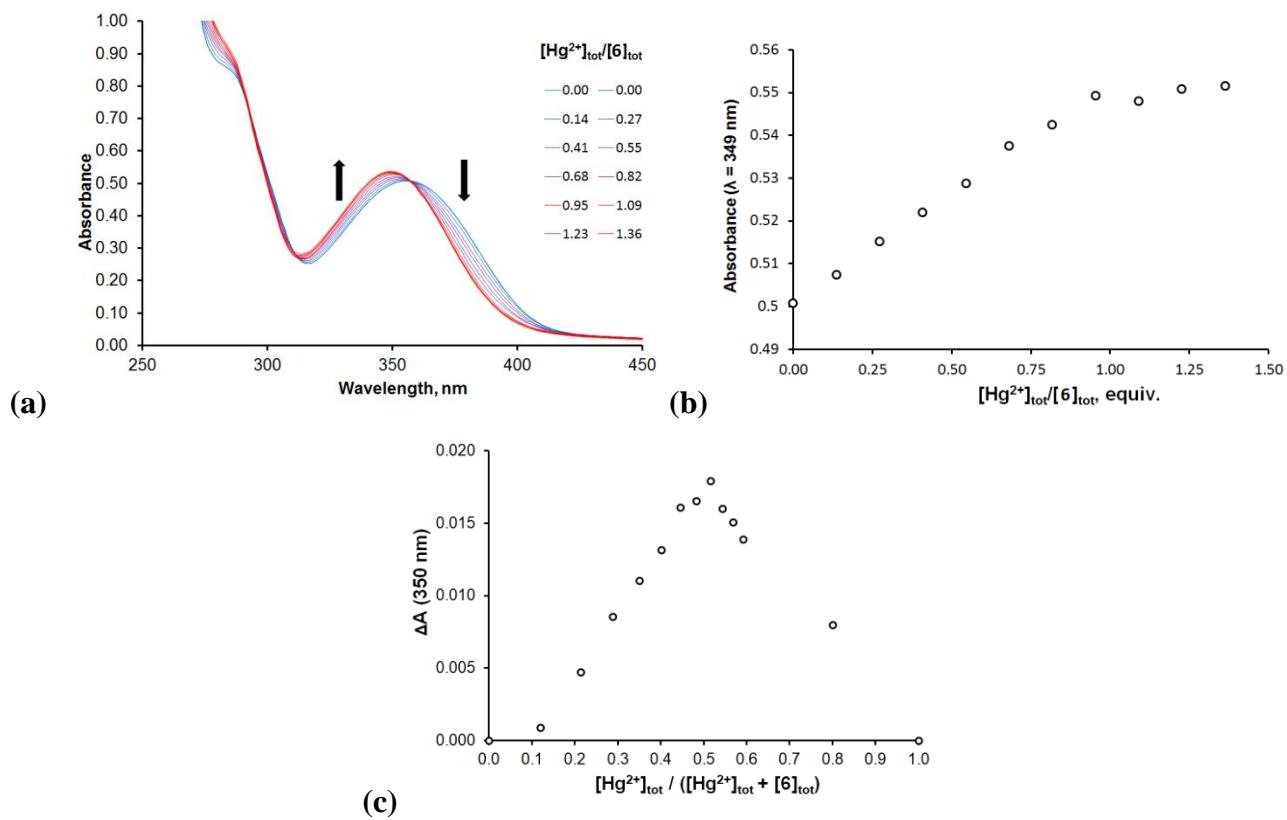


Figure S46. (a) Evolution of UV-vis spectrum of **6** ($[6] = 196 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M HEPES buffer, pH=7.4) upon addition of $\text{Hg}(\text{ClO}_4)_2$ (0 – 1.5 equiv.); (b) Changes of absorbance against $[\text{Hg}^{2+}]_{\text{tot}}/[6]_{\text{tot}}$ ratio at 349 nm. (c) Job's plot derived from the titration curve {P. MacCarthy, *Anal. Chem.*, 1978, 50(14), 2165}.

Formation of HgL complex is observed. The stability constant of the complex $\log\beta \geq 9$ can't be calculated from the direct titration.

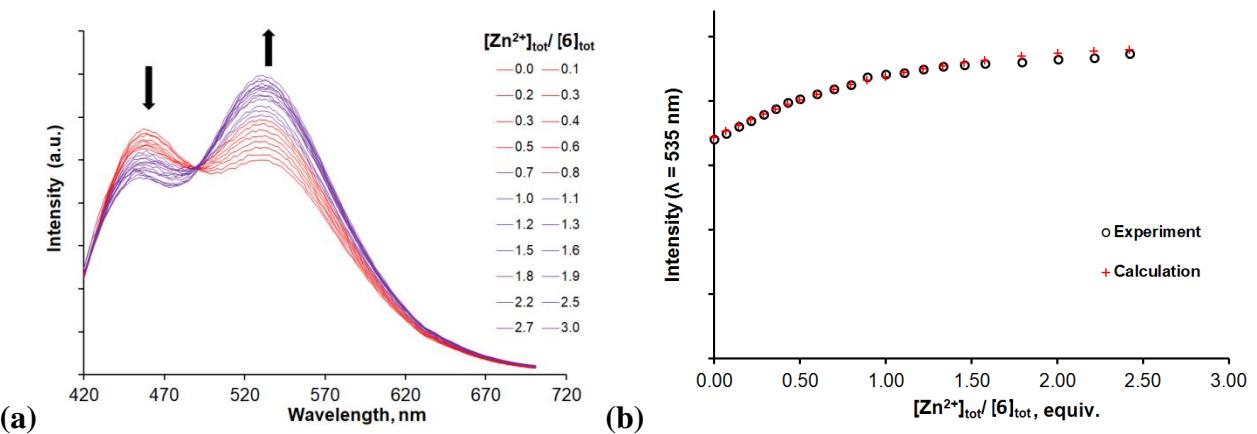


Figure S47. (a) Evolution of fluorescence spectrum of **6** ($[6] = 20 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M HEPES buffer, pH=7.4, $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 356 \text{ nm}$) upon addition of $\text{Zn}(\text{ClO}_4)_2$ (0 – 2.5 equiv.); (b) Changes of fluorescence intensity against $[\text{Zn}^{2+}]_{\text{tot}}/[6]_{\text{tot}}$ ratio at 550 nm.

Stability constant for the model $\text{L} \leftrightarrow \text{LH}^+ \leftrightarrow \text{LH}_2^{2+}$, $\text{Zn}^{2+} \leftrightarrow \text{Zn}(\text{OH})^+$, $\text{Zn}^{2+} + \text{L} \leftrightarrow [\text{ZnL}]^{2+}$,

$\log \beta = 4.78(8)$

Detection limit (Zn^{2+}) = 1.0 μM

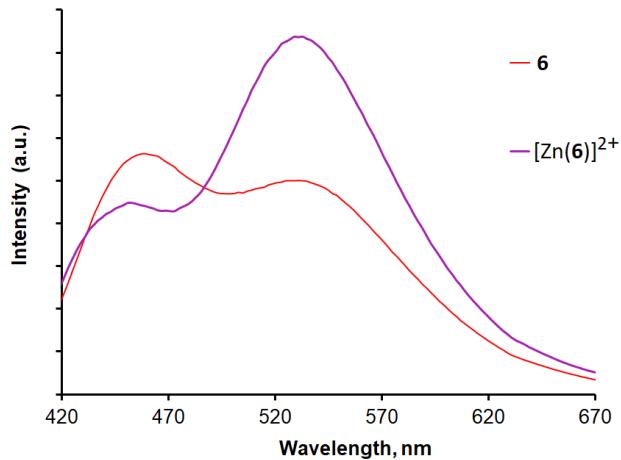


Figure S48. Calculated with the Specfit/32 program normalized fluorescence spectra of **6** and $[\text{Zn}(\mathbf{6})]^{2+}$ in water.

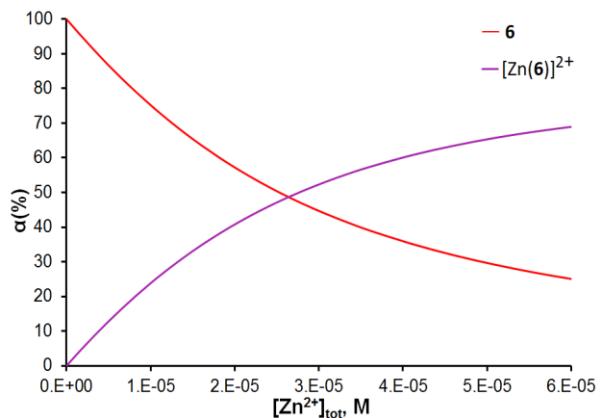


Figure S49. Species distribution diagram for the **6**/Zn²⁺ system in water calculated with the Specfit/32 program.

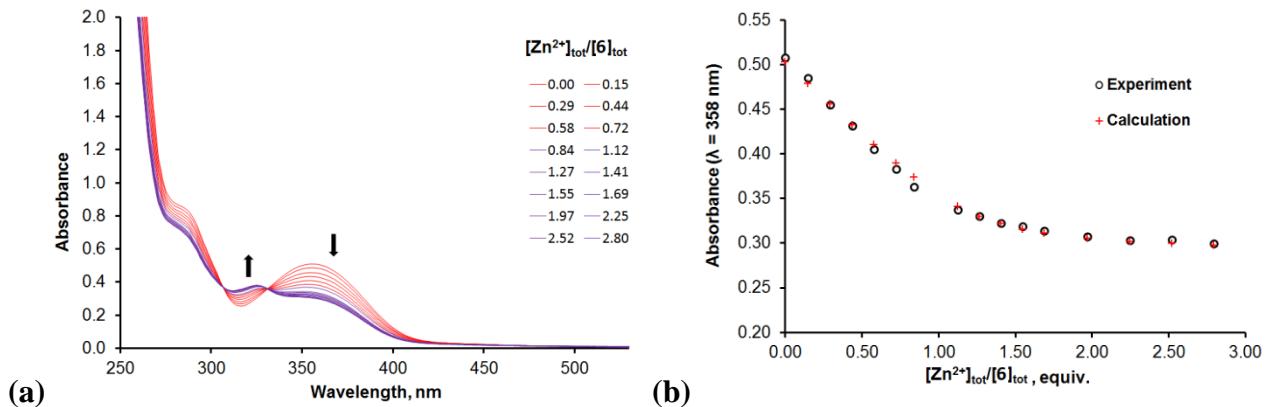


Figure S50. (a) Evolution of UV-vis spectrum of **6** ($[6] = 160 \mu\text{M}$, 0.03M HEPES buffer, pH=7.4) upon addition of $\text{Cu}(\text{ClO}_4)_2$ (0 – 1.4 equiv.); (b) Changes of absorbance against $[Zn^{2+}]_{tot}/[6]_{tot}$ ratio at 358 nm. Stability constant for the model $\text{L} \leftrightarrow \text{LH}^+ \leftrightarrow \text{LH}_2^{2+}$, $\text{Zn}^{2+} \leftrightarrow \text{Zn(OH)}^+$, $\text{Zn}^{2+} + \text{L} \leftrightarrow [\text{ZnL}]^{2+}$, $\log \beta = 5.1(1)$

Detection limit (Zn^{2+}) = 3.0 μM

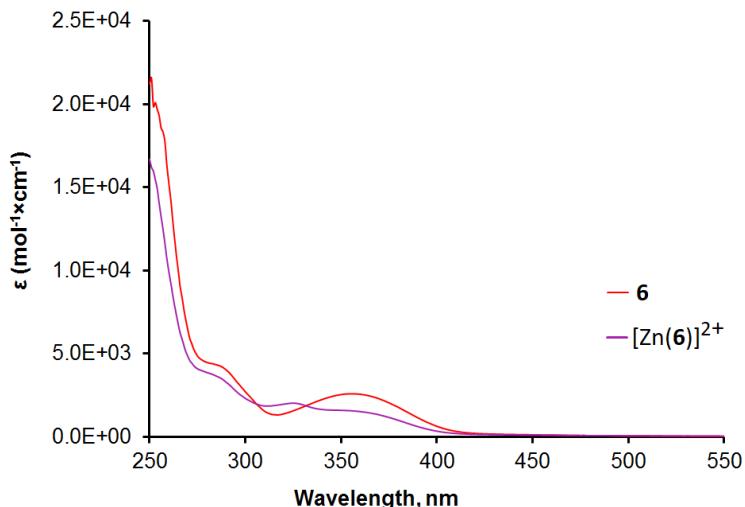


Figure S51. UV-vis spectra of **6** and $[\text{Zn}(6)]^{2+}$ in water calculated with the Specfit/32 program.

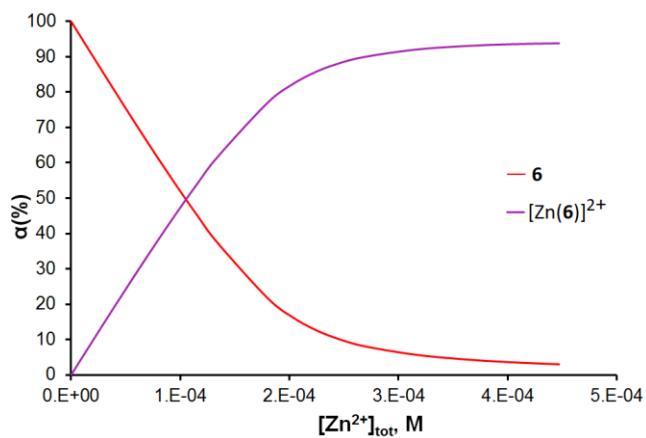


Figure S52. Species distribution diagram for the **6**/ Zn^{2+} system in water calculated with the Specfit/32 program.

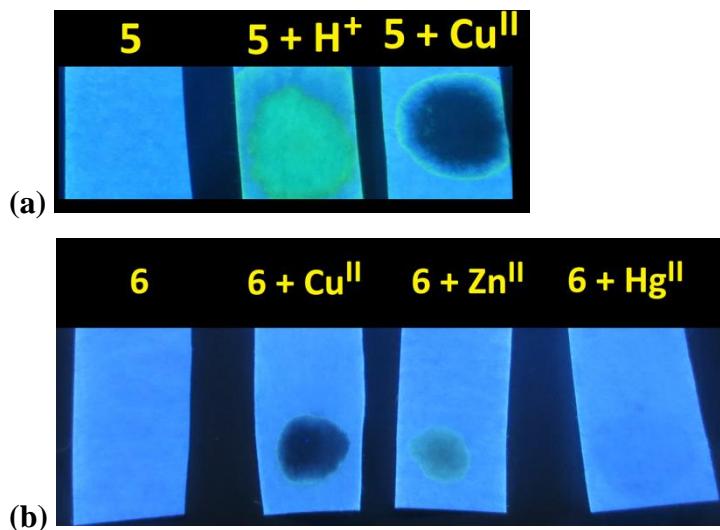


Figure S53. (a) Visual detection of Cu^{2+} and H^+ using paper stripes with **5**. (b) Visual detection of Cu^{2+} , Zn^{2+} , Hg^{2+} and H^+ using paper stripes with **6**.

4. Investigation of the structure of complexes of the compound 6

4.1. NMR-studies of $[Zn(6)]^{2+}$ complex

NMR-titration of ligand 6 with Zn(II) perchlorate

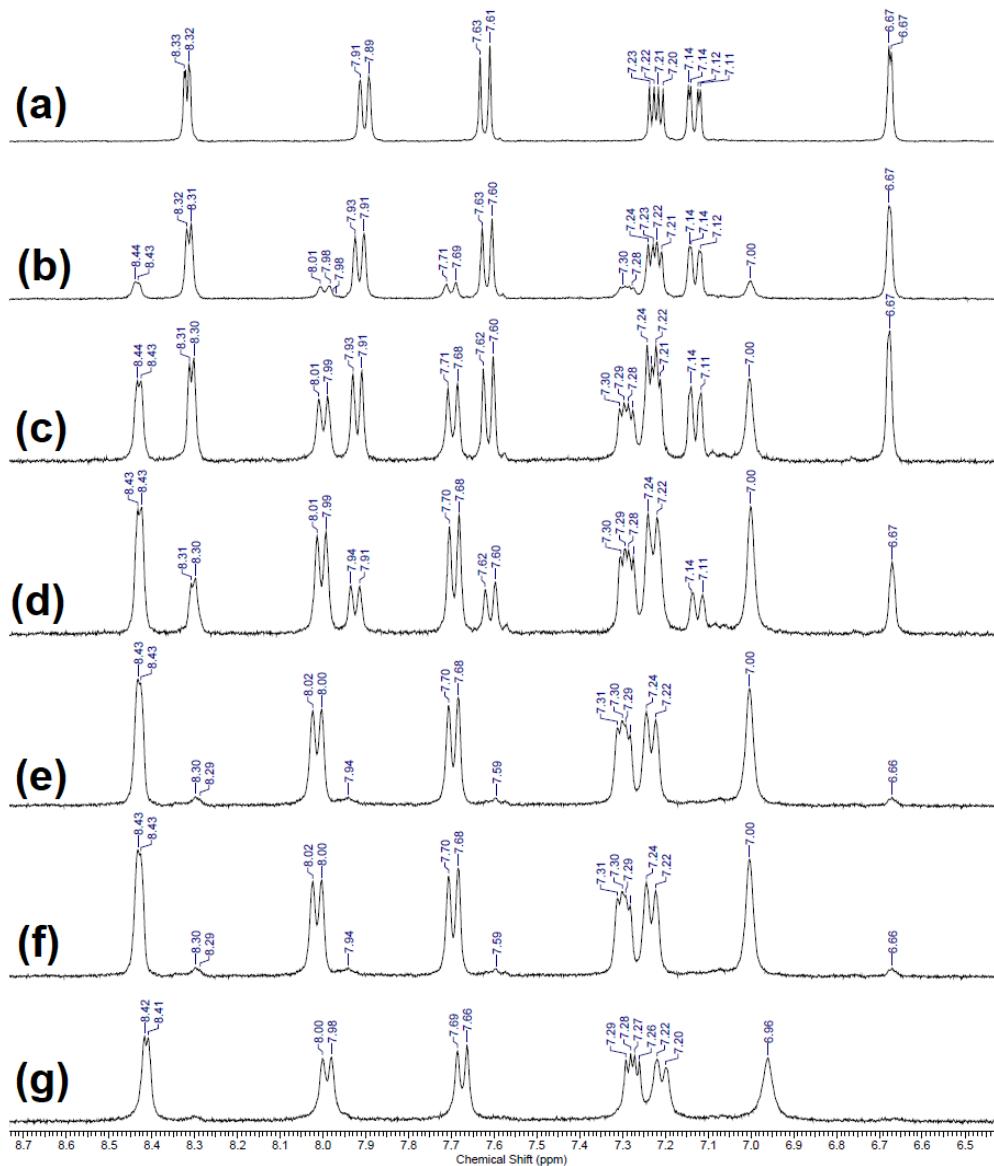


Figure S54. 400 MHz ^1H NMR spectra (aromatic) of **6** in D_2O -MeOD (5:1 v/v, $[\mathbf{6}] = 0.04 \text{ M}$) at 298 K before (a) and after addition of 0.2 (b), 0.4 (c), 0.6 (d), 0.8 (e), 1.0 (f) and 2.0 (g) equiv. of zinc(II) perchlorate.

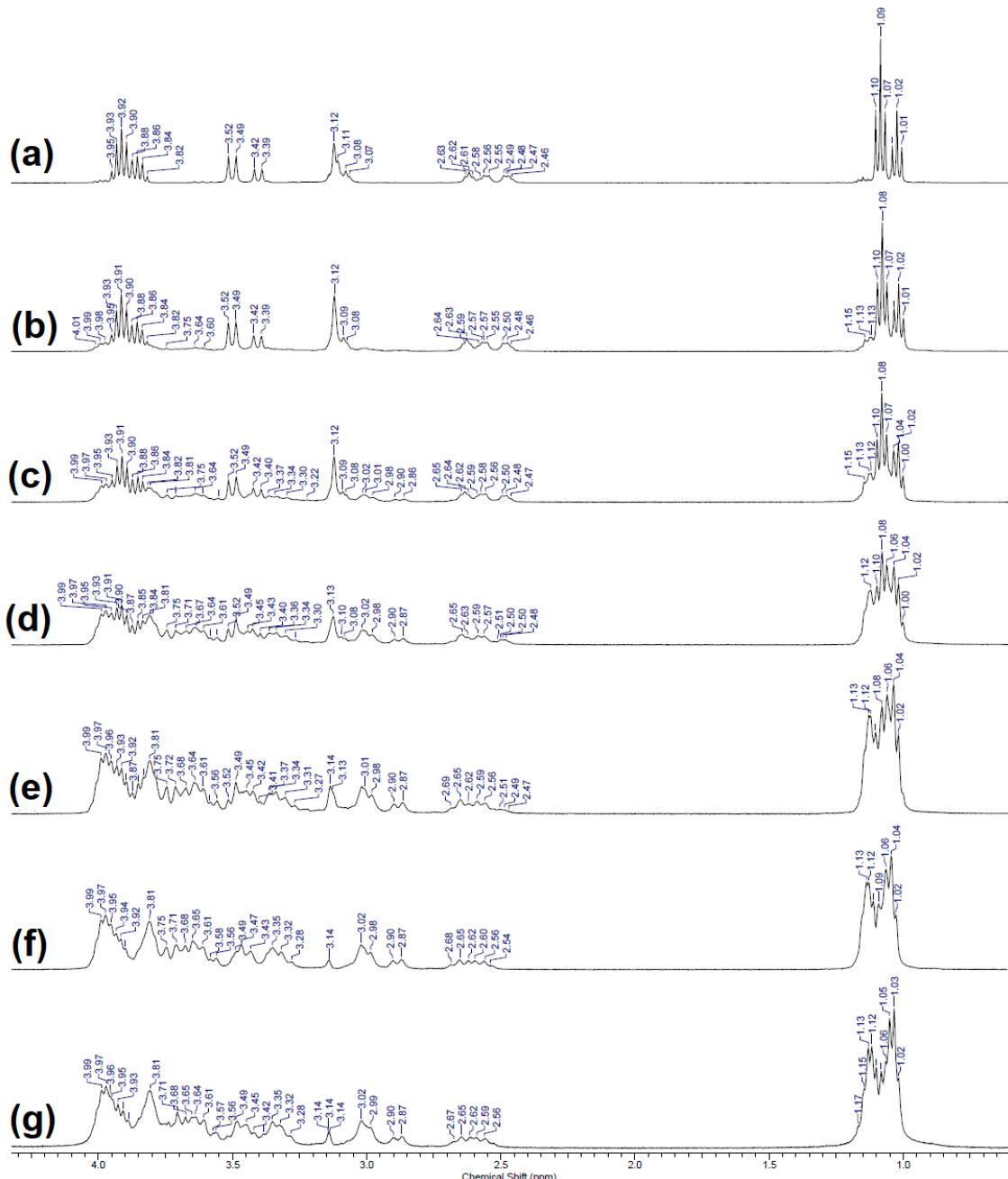


Figure S55. 400 MHz ^1H NMR spectra (aliphatic) of **6** in D_2O -MeOD (5:1 v/v, $[\mathbf{6}] = 0.04 \text{ M}$) at 298 K before (a) and after addition of 0.2 (b), 0.4 (c), 0.6 (d), 0.8 (e), 1.0 (f) and 2.0 (g) equiv. of zinc(II) perchlorate.

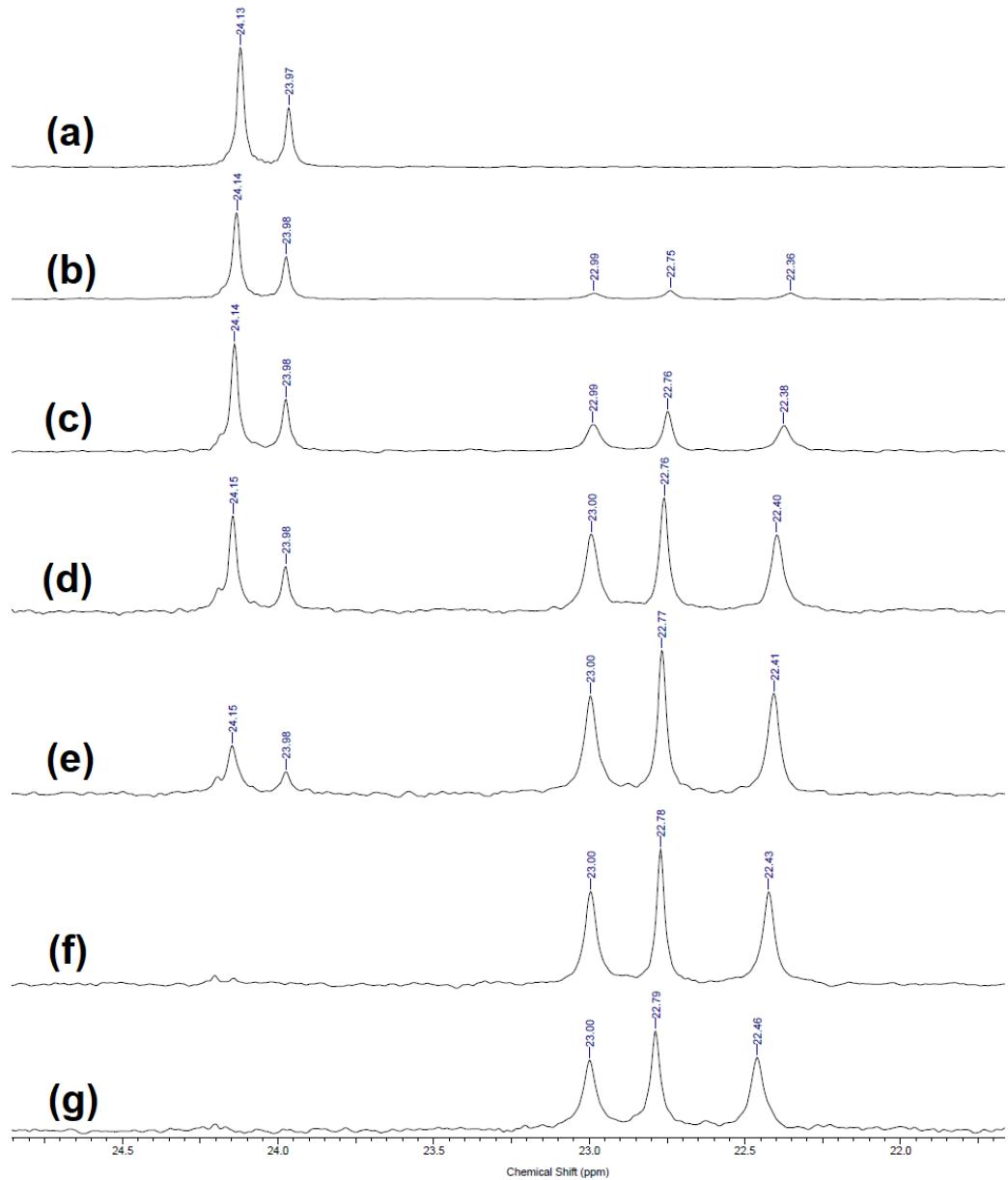


Figure S56. 162.5 MHz ^{31}P NMR spectra of **6** in $\text{D}_2\text{O}-\text{MeOD}$ (5:1 v/v, $[\mathbf{6}] = 0.04 \text{ M}$) at 298 K before (a) and after addition of 0.2 (b), 0.4 (c), 0.6 (d), 0.8 (e), 1.0 (f), and 2.0 (g) equiv. of zinc(II) perchlorate.

COSY NMR spectra of $[\text{Zn(6)}]^{2+}$ complex

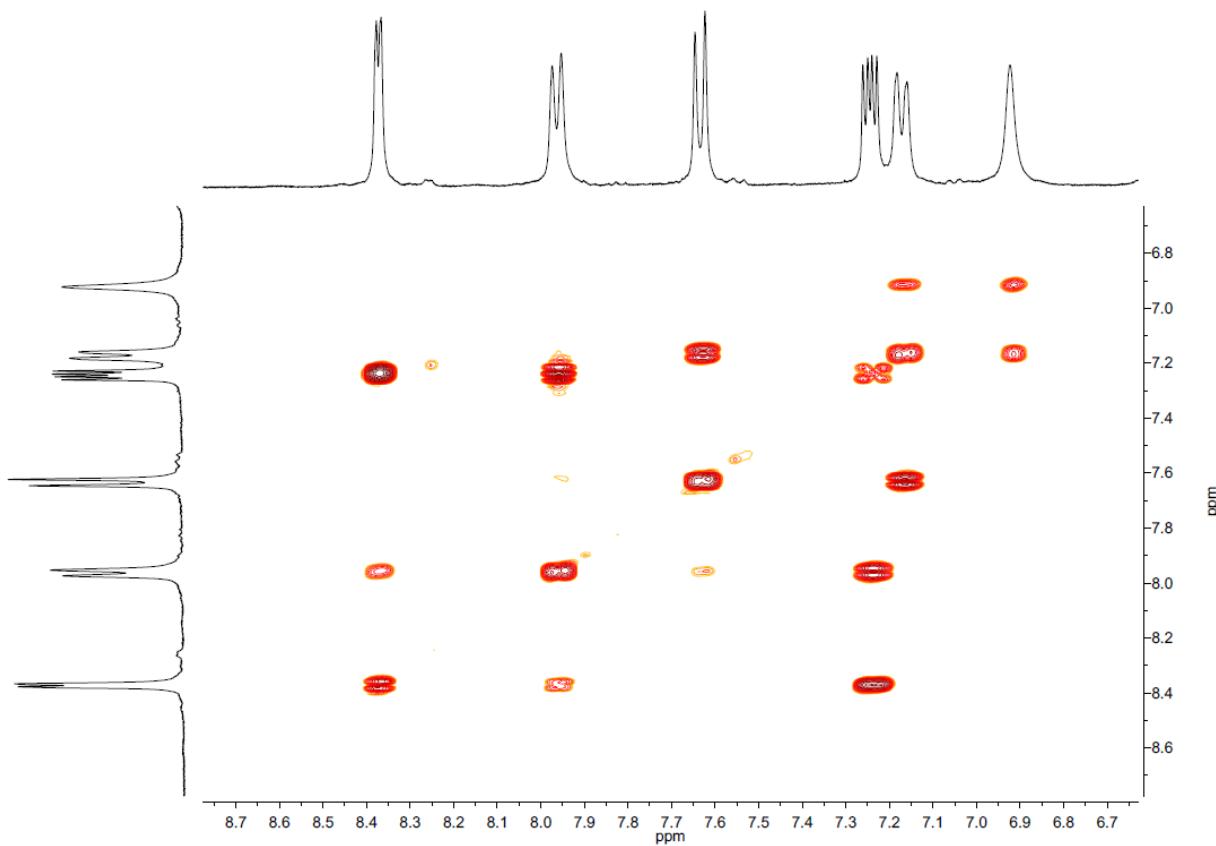


Figure S57. 400 MHz COSY- NMR spectra of $[\text{Zn(6)}]^{2+}$ complex in $\text{D}_2\text{O}-\text{MeOD}$ (5:1 v/v) at 298 K (aromatic).

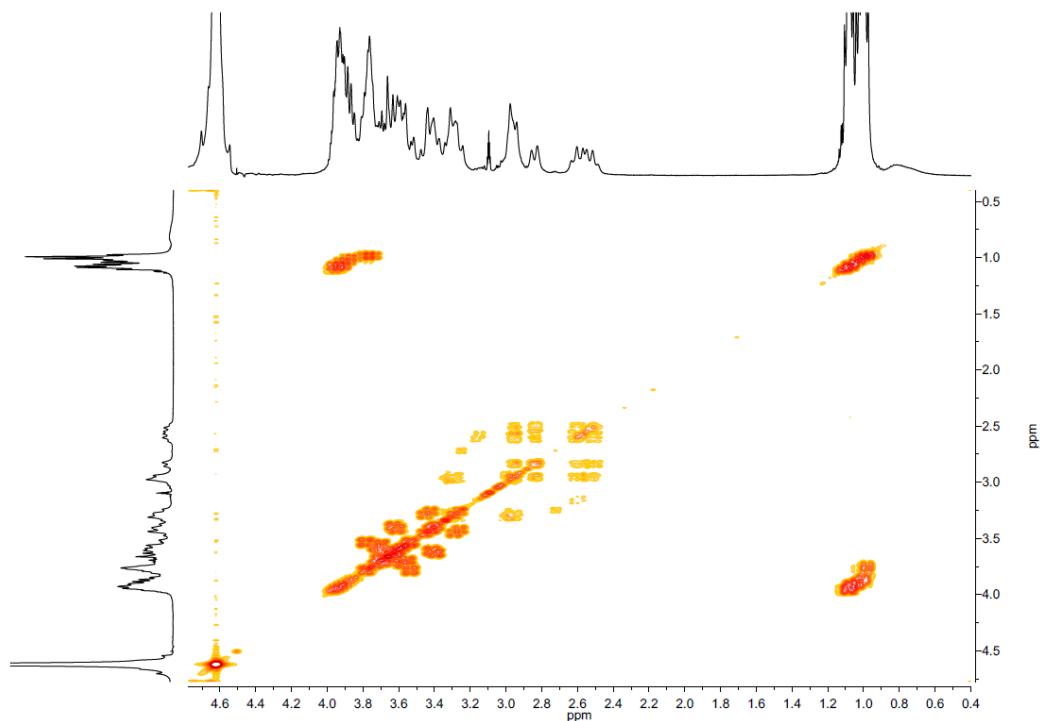


Figure S58. 400 MHz COSY-NMR spectra of $[\text{Zn(6)}]^{2+}$ complex in $\text{D}_2\text{O}-\text{MeOD}$ (5:1 v/v) at 298 K (aliphatic).

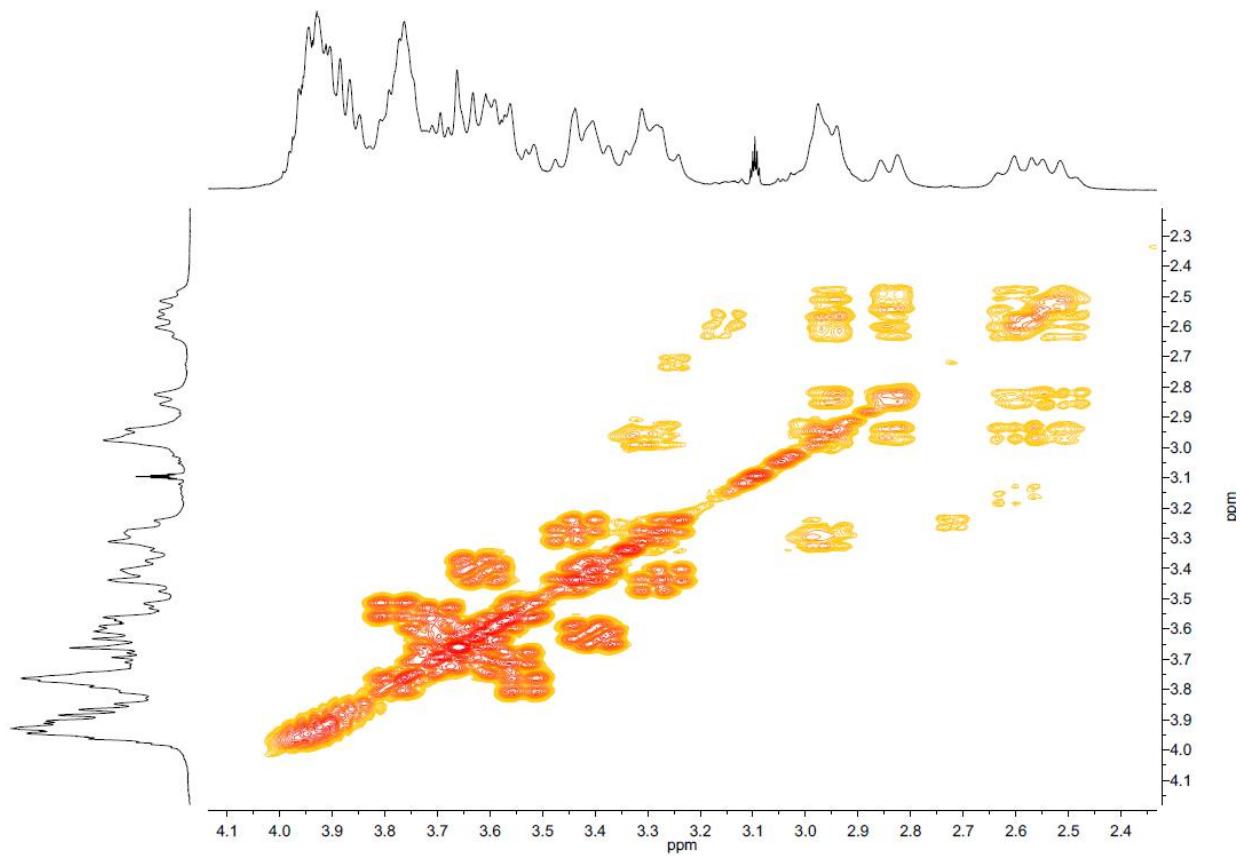


Figure S59. 400 MHz COSY- NMR spectra of $[Zn(6)]^{2+}$ complex in D_2O -MeOD (5:1 v/v) at 298 K (aliphatic - zoomed).

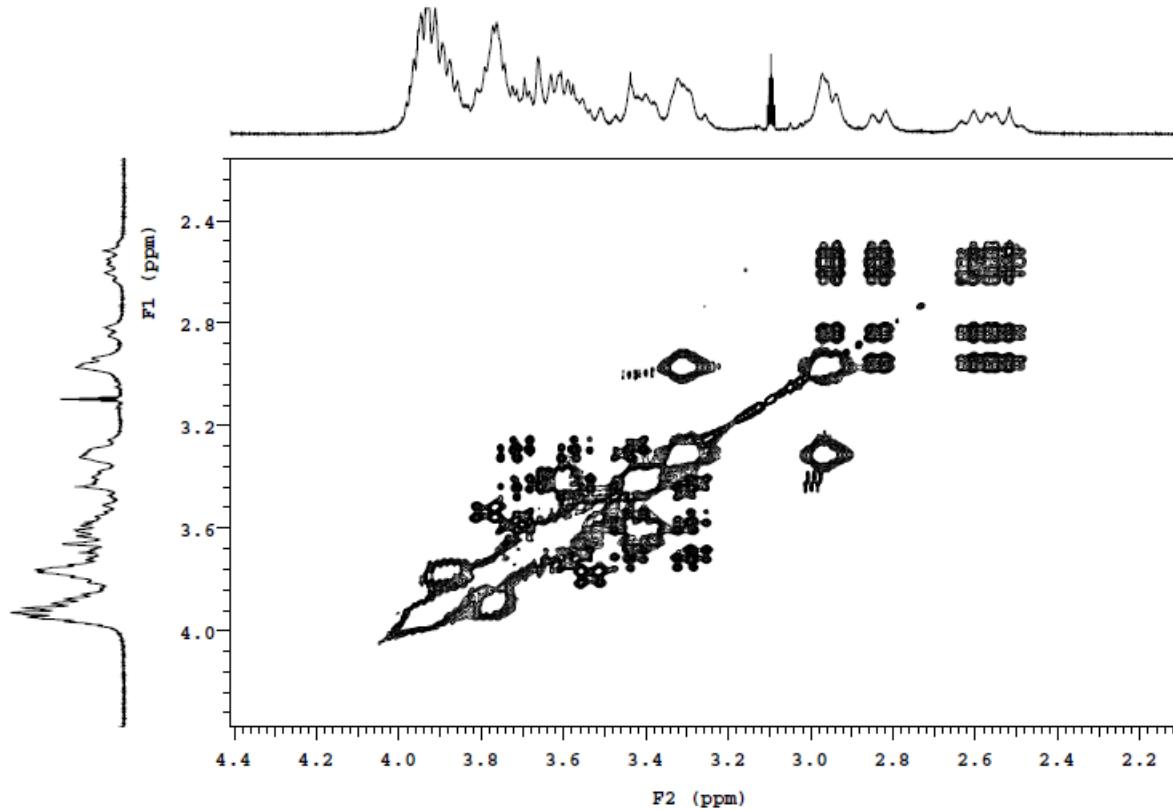


Figure S60. 400 MHz TOCSY-NMR spectra of $[Zn(6)]^{2+}$ complex in D_2O -MeOD (5:1 v/v) at 298 K (aliphatic).

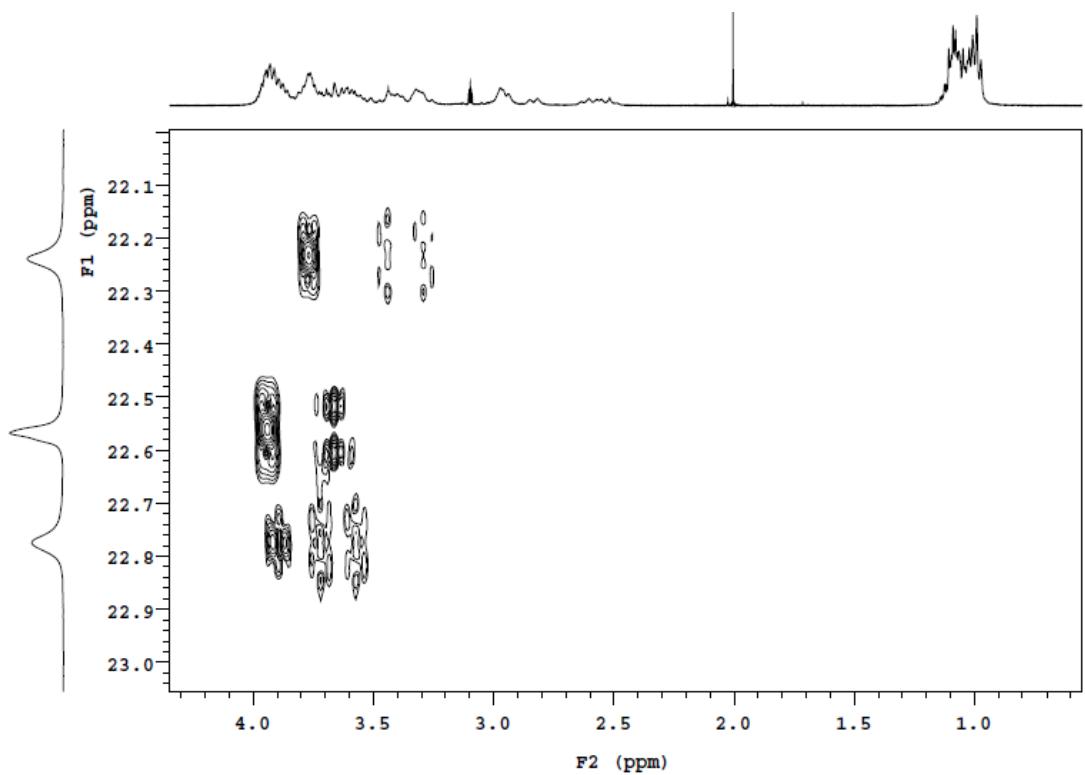


Figure S61. gHMBCAD- $\{^1\text{H}-^{31}\text{P}\}$ NMR spectra of $[\text{Zn}(\mathbf{6})]^{2+}$ complex in $\text{D}_2\text{O}-\text{MeOD}$ (5:1 v/v) at 298 K.

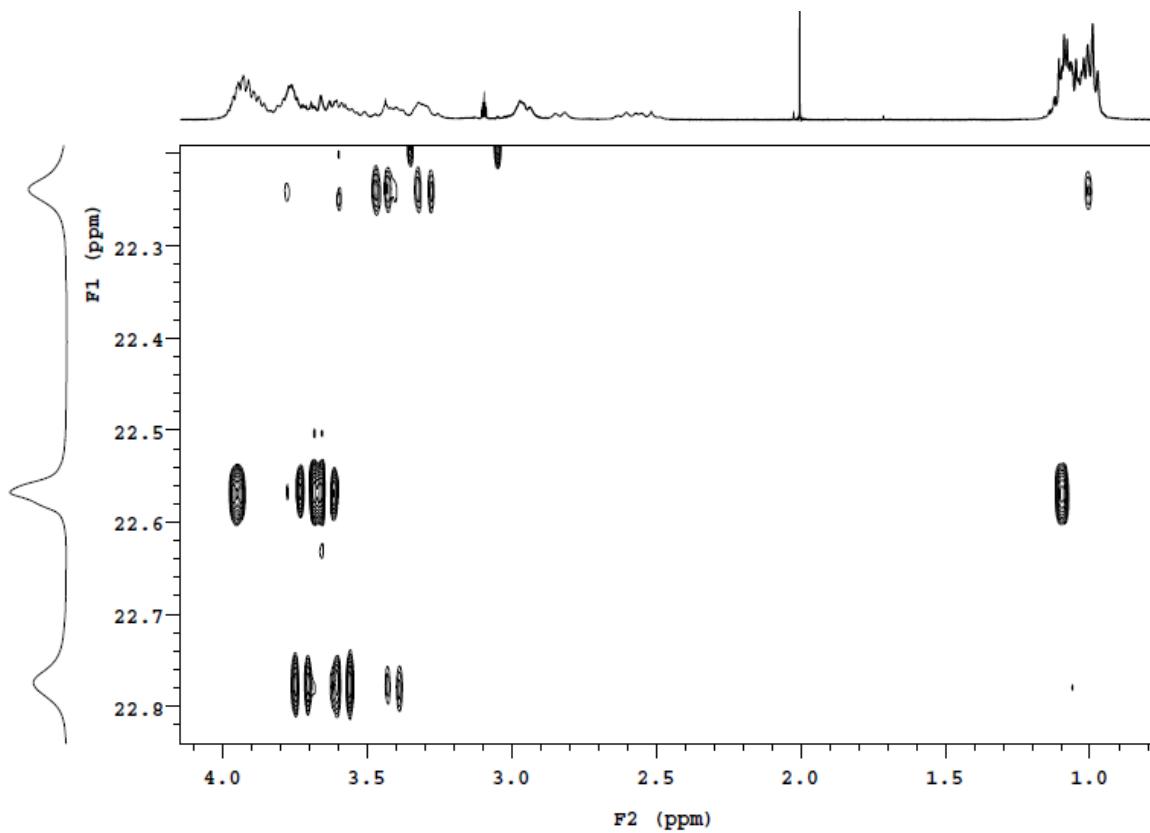
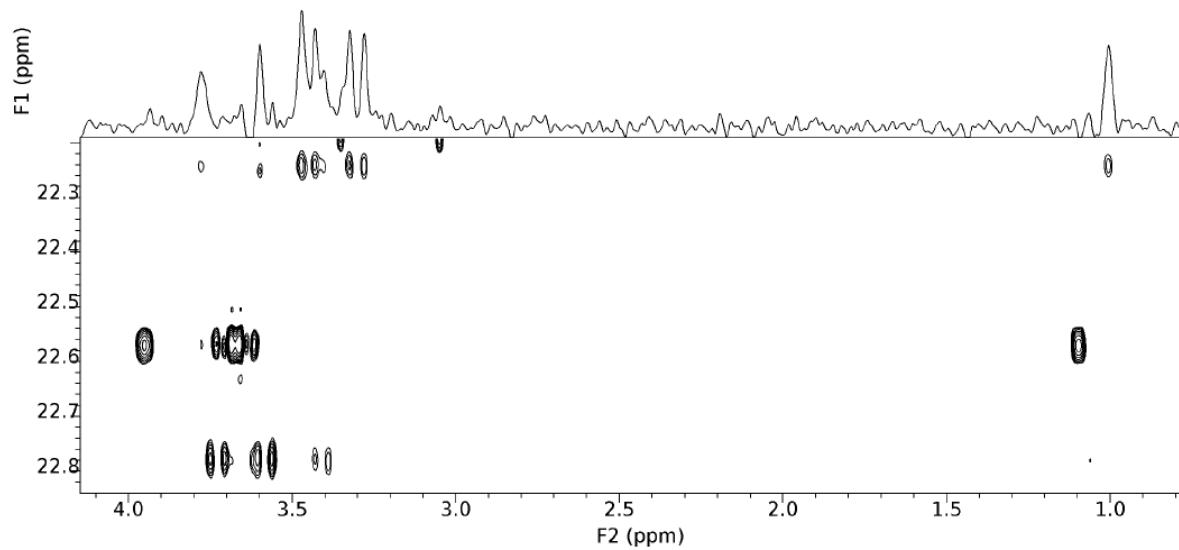
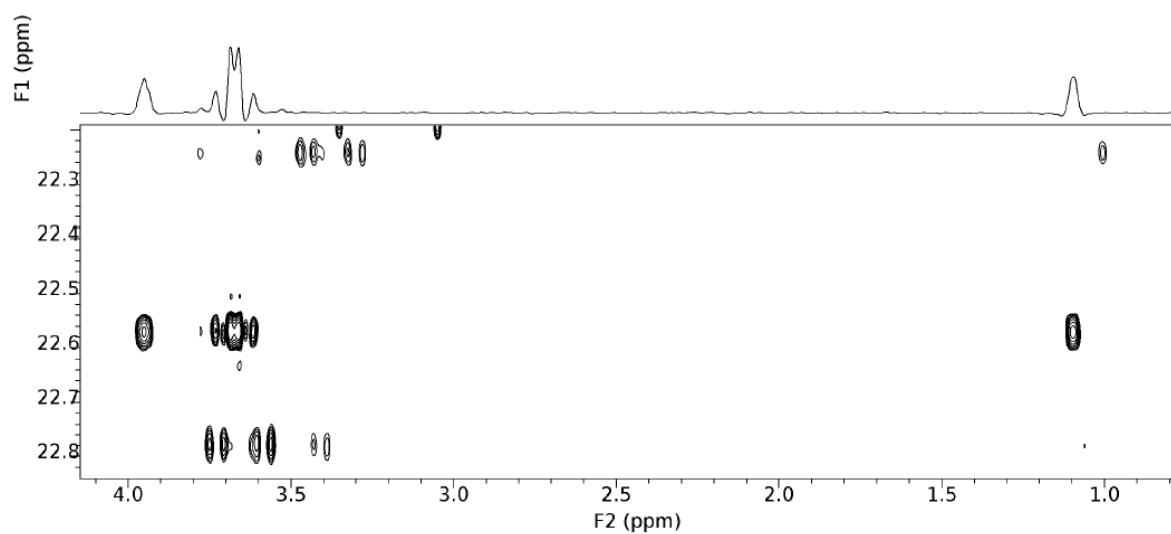


Figure S62. LR-HMBCAD- $\{^1\text{H}-^{31}\text{P}\}$ NMR spectra of $[\text{Zn}(\mathbf{6})]^{2+}$ complex in $\text{D}_2\text{O}-\text{MeOD}$ (5:1 v/v) at 298 K. {R.T. Williamson, A.V. Buevich, G.E. Martin and T. Parella, *J. Org. Chem.*, **2014**, 79, 3887-3894}.

(a)



(b)



(c)

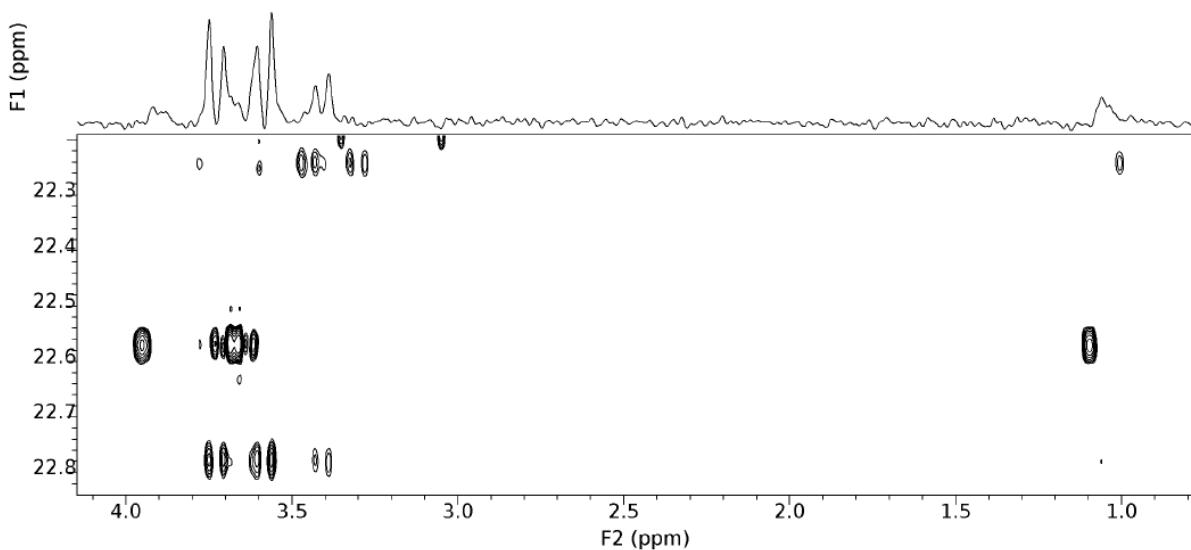


Figure S63. LR-HMBCAD- $\{{}^1\text{H}-{}^{31}\text{P}\}$ NMR spectra of $[\text{Zn}(\mathbf{6})]^{2+}$ complex in $\text{D}_2\text{O}-\text{MeOD}$ (5:1 v/v) at 298 K: correlations of ${}^{31}\text{P}$ spectra with Sections of 2D-spectra at ${}^{31}\text{P}$ shift 22.2 (a), 22.6 (b) and 22.8 (c) ppm.

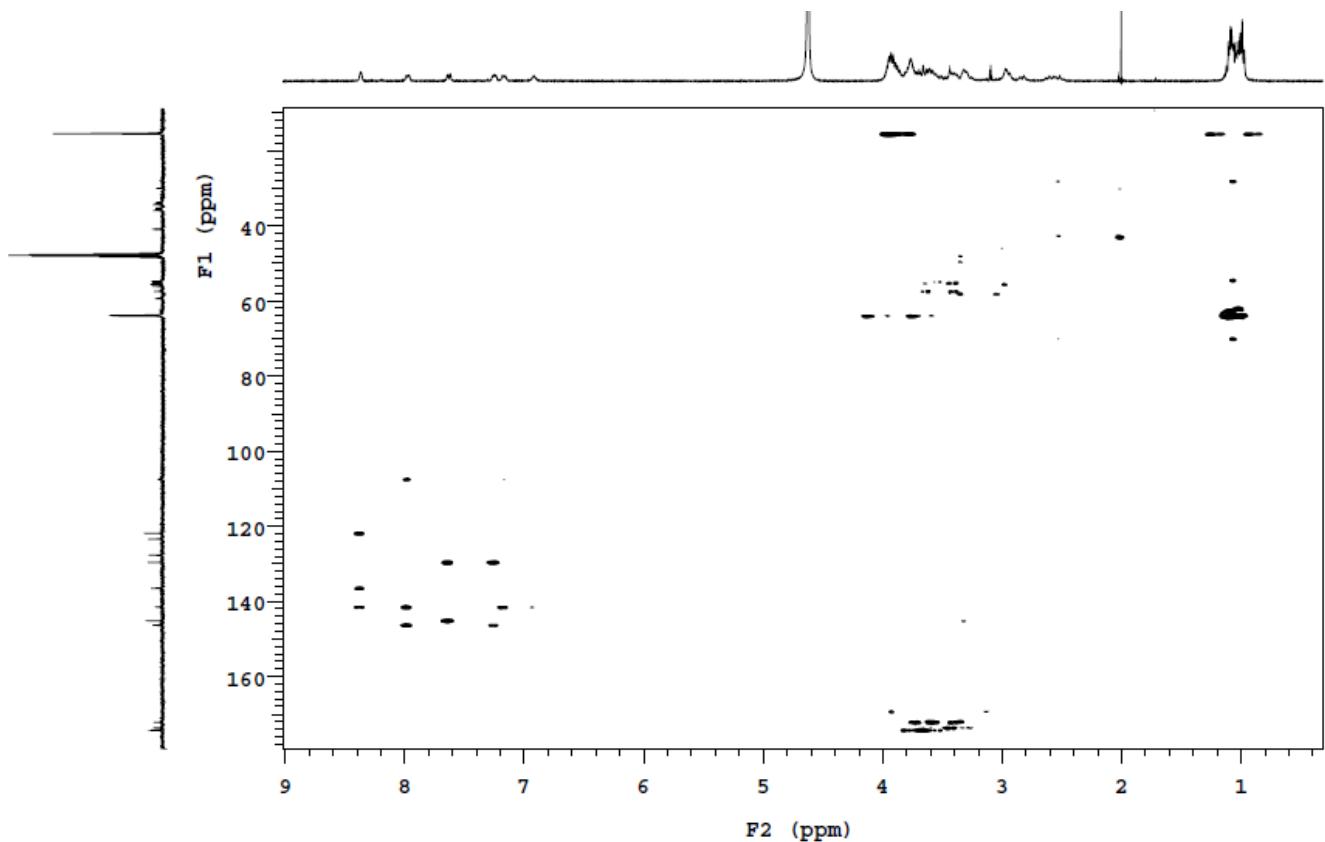


Figure S64. gHMBCAD- $\{^1\text{H}-^{13}\text{C}\}$ NMR spectra of $[\text{Zn}(\mathbf{6})]^{2+}$ complex in $\text{D}_2\text{O}-\text{MeOD}$ (5:1 v/v) at 298 K.

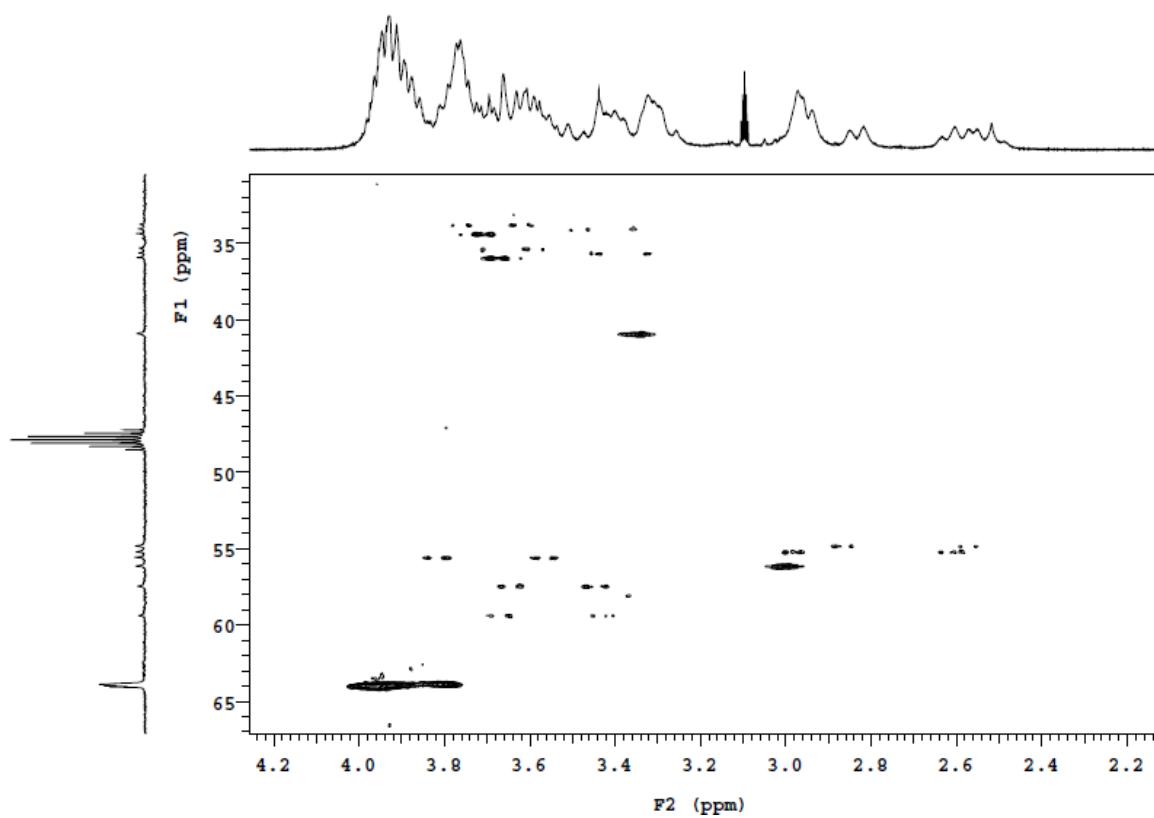


Figure S65. gHMQCAD- $\{^1\text{H}-^{13}\text{C}\}$ NMR spectra of $[\text{Zn}(\mathbf{6})]^{2+}$ complex in $\text{D}_2\text{O}-\text{MeOD}$ (5:1 v/v) at 298 K (aliphatic - zoomed).

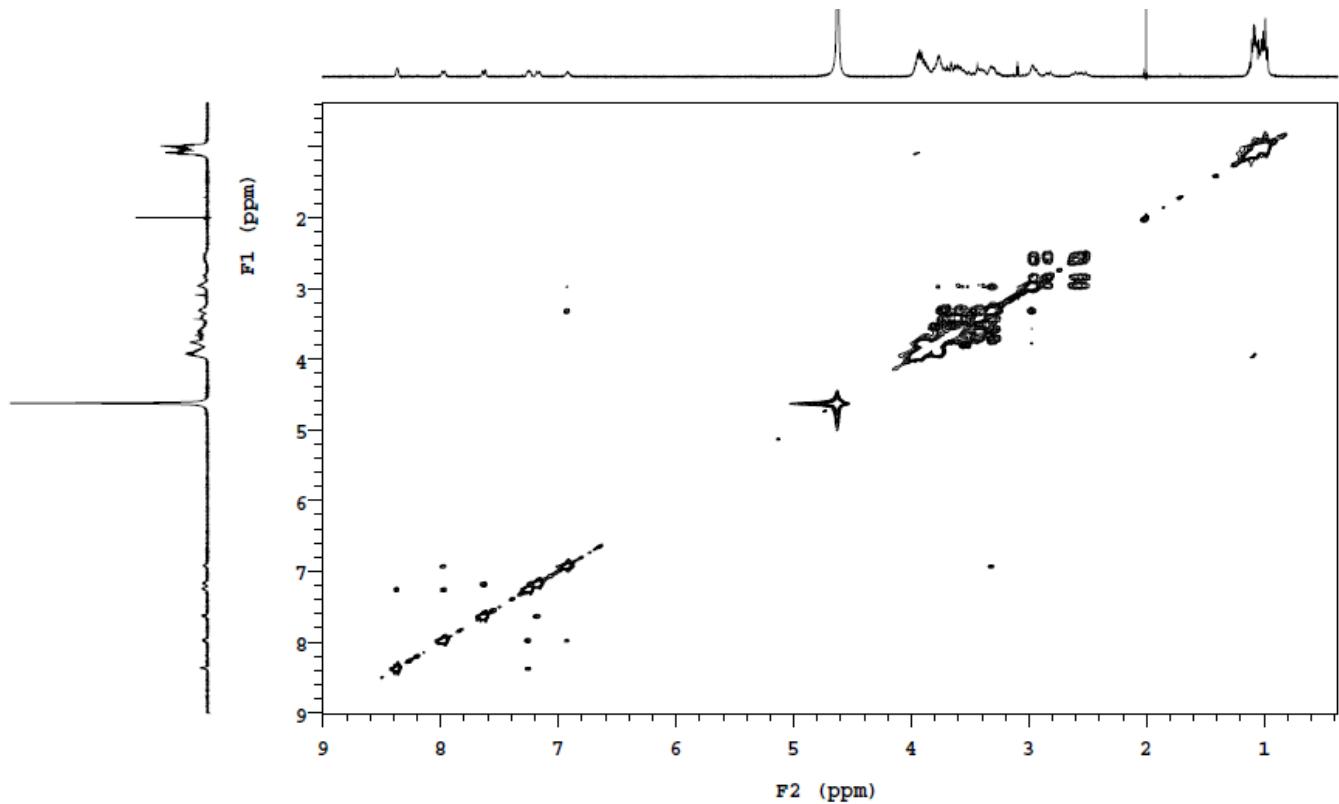


Figure S66. NOESY- NMR spectra of $[Zn(6)]^{2+}$ complex in D_2O -MeOD (5:1 v/v) at 298 K (aliphatic - zoomed).

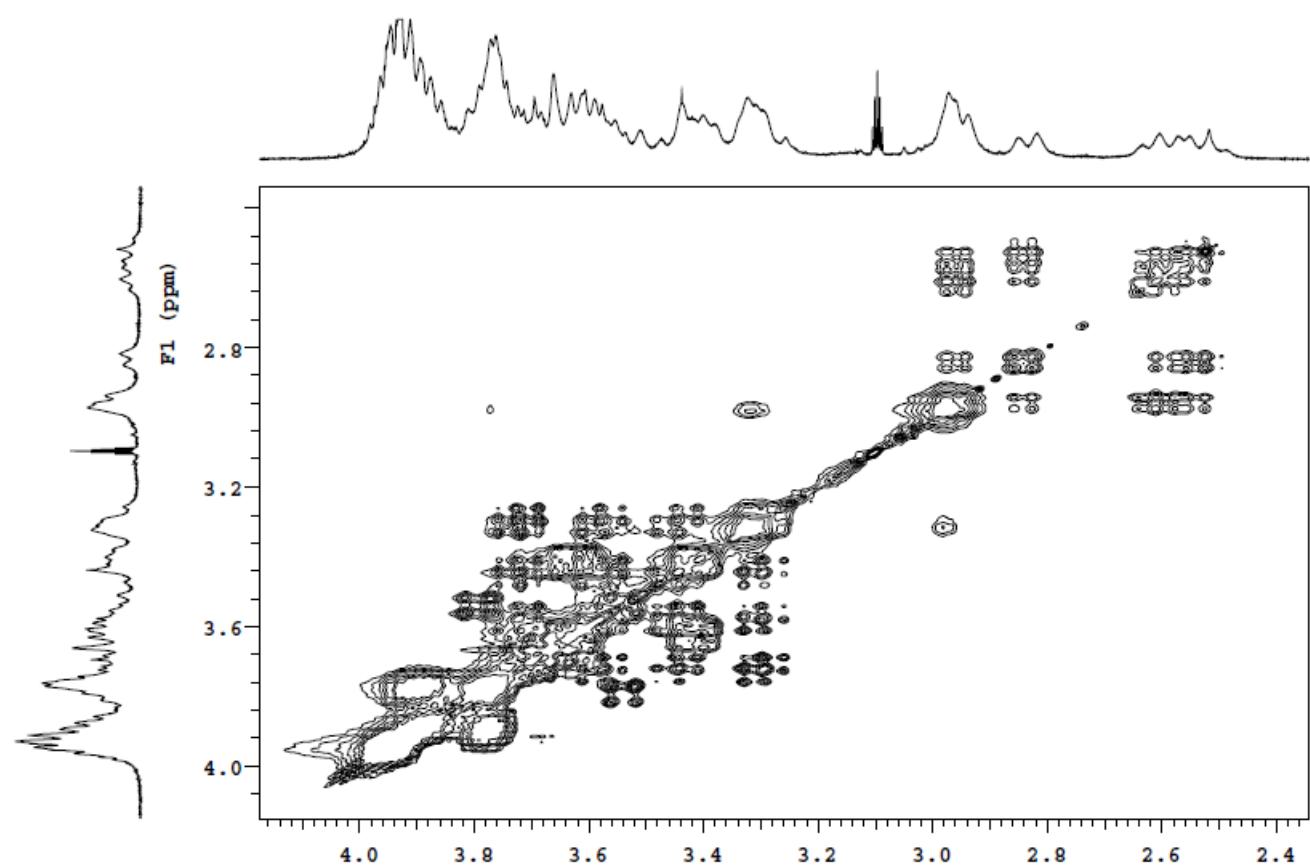


Figure S67. NOESY- NMR spectra of $[Zn(6)]^{2+}$ complex in D_2O -MeOD (5:1 v/v) at 298 K (aliphatic - zoomed).

Table S1. Assignment of signals in ^1H NMR spectrum of $[\text{Zn}(\mathbf{6})]^{2+}$

Assignment*	Chemical shift (ppm)			J (Hz)		
	^1H	^{13}C	^{31}P	H-H	H-P	C-P
2	8.38	146.32		-		
3	7.27	121.89		-		
4	7.99	136.51		-		
5		129.61				
6	6.94	107.49		-		
7		145.18				
8	7.18	123.43		-		
9	7.65	127.68		-		
10		141.5				
12	3.32	3.32	40.924		<0.1	
13	2.98	2.98	56.138		<0.1	
15	2.84	2.54	54.833		14.8	
16	2.96	2.59	55.205		12.8	
18	3.62	3.42	57.47		17.2	
19			173.67			
21	3.79	3.54	55.57		17.4	
22			174.31			4.14
24	3.64	3.40	59.39		16.8	
25			172.21			
28	3.44	3.30	34.85		14.4	12.2
29			22.22			
31,46	3.77	63.89				
32,47	0.99	15.5				
34	3.69	3.64	35.15		15.6	12.4
35			22.57			
37,50	3.94	64.03				6.95
38,51	1.08	15.5				
40	3.7	3.58	34.55		16	11.6
41			22.85			
43,54	3.90	63.92				
44,55	1.03	15.5				

* Chemical shifts of the proton and carbon atoms were obtained from gHSQCAD (at = 0.5s) and LR-HSQMBC (at=0.3s). The assignment was provided using gHMBCAD, NOESY and gCOSY-spectra (Figs. S59-67).

4.2. DFT-calculation studies of $[Zn(6)]^{2+}$ complex.

The structure of model 1 (hydrogen atoms and phosphonate pendant arms are omitted) Zn complex of ligand **6** obtained by full geometry optimization at B3LYP/6-31G(d,p) level.

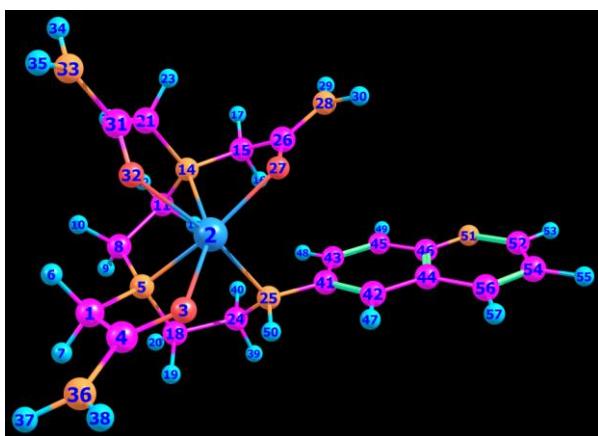


Figure S68.

COORD	1	NUCLEAR COORDINATES			
VIB	1	ATOM	X	Y	Z
		1 CARBON	28.567741	5.070436	15.070565
		2 ZINC	23.810598	7.899411	14.818165
		3 OXYGEN	24.209790	4.068907	14.128771
		4 CARBON	26.445092	3.307599	14.175834
		5 NITROGEN	27.486915	7.091643	16.662026
		6 HYDROGEN	29.397535	5.902003	13.371504
		7 HYDROGEN	30.057261	4.002057	16.042027
		8 CARBON	28.993470	9.462507	16.631239
		9 HYDROGEN	30.421591	9.470384	18.134982
		10 HYDROGEN	30.024969	9.534807	14.842254
		11 CARBON	27.364915	11.860490	16.892788
		12 HYDROGEN	28.614266	13.514983	16.798386
		13 HYDROGEN	26.457499	11.911473	18.743713
		14 NITROGEN	25.348080	11.972107	14.944429
		15 CARBON	23.090692	13.437974	15.650325
		16 HYDROGEN	22.777242	13.280493	17.688059
		17 HYDROGEN	23.263618	15.456989	15.209334
		18 CARBON	26.918724	6.097611	19.246462
		19 HYDROGEN	26.768281	4.041063	19.105071
		20 HYDROGEN	28.491252	6.485273	20.540012
		21 CARBON	26.289528	12.669092	12.411826
		22 HYDROGEN	28.229143	13.392239	12.524368
		23 HYDROGEN	25.150894	14.203631	11.616215
		24 CARBON	24.462303	7.122604	20.375034
		25 NITROGEN	22.356033	6.895581	18.531550
		26 CARBON	20.753281	12.278084	14.380956
		27 OXYGEN	20.757410	9.997473	13.771079
		28 NITROGEN	18.762461	13.759222	14.006525
		29 HYDROGEN	18.740152	15.598580	14.519111
		30 HYDROGEN	17.145064	12.995789	13.323340
		31 CARBON	26.246105	10.446160	10.553899
		32 OXYGEN	25.592897	8.298375	11.252794
		33 NITROGEN	26.983945	10.924681	8.194682
		34 HYDROGEN	27.517891	12.663781	7.604729
		35 HYDROGEN	26.941950	9.515491	6.900942
		36 NITROGEN	27.084856	0.993364	13.439054
		37 HYDROGEN	28.881313	0.350377	13.516631
		38 HYDROGEN	25.742587	-0.165547	12.717686
		39 HYDROGEN	24.044101	6.092793	22.123173
		40 HYDROGEN	24.673697	9.103979	20.893811
		41 CARBON	19.914766	7.862138	19.377096
		42 CARBON	17.758303	6.547756	18.733411
		43 CARBON	19.734616	10.160587	20.747311
		44 CARBON	15.336846	7.484009	19.395310
		45 CARBON	17.400664	11.110155	21.404475
		46 CARBON	15.147152	9.822623	20.736887
		47 HYDROGEN	17.886172	4.772163	17.702660
		48 HYDROGEN	21.415048	11.155093	21.373647
		49 HYDROGEN	17.220045	12.843807	22.483825
		50 HYDROGEN	22.100742	5.013880	18.185896
		51 NITROGEN	12.897740	10.867204	21.428398
		52 CARBON	10.822640	9.622673	20.840565
		53 HYDROGEN	9.045731	10.482956	21.414893
		54 CARBON	10.796792	7.277059	19.530863
		55 HYDROGEN	9.007449	6.363479	19.125069
		56 CARBON	13.047930	6.212121	18.802489
		57 HYDROGEN	13.100220	4.424057	17.795396

The structure of model 2 (hydrogen atoms and phosphonate pendant arms are omitted) Zn complex of ligand **6** obtained by full geometry optimization at B3LYP/6-31G(d,p) level.

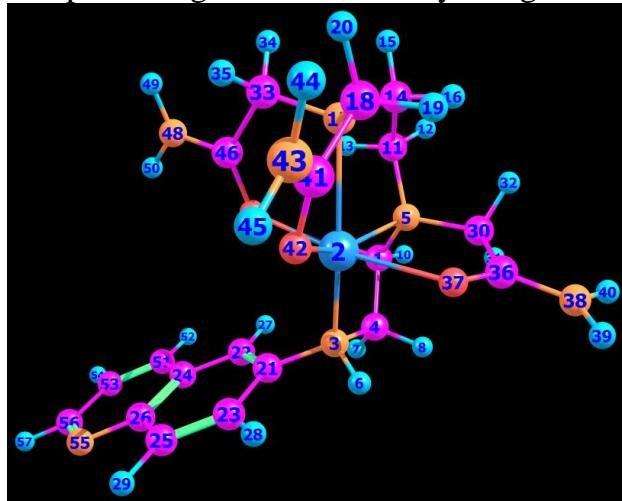


Figure S69.

COORD	3	NUCLEAR COORDINATES			
VIB	1	ATOM	X	Y	Z
		1 CARBON	4.995841	6.172709	2.693548
		2 ZINC	3.727122	8.611654	7.315908
		3 NITROGEN	3.782732	4.654839	7.035271
		4 CARBON	5.166810	4.038590	4.649561
		5 NITROGEN	5.933712	8.600984	3.775121
		6 HYDROGEN	4.895786	4.090178	8.501602
		7 HYDROGEN	4.444615	2.287398	3.827388
		8 HYDROGEN	7.140996	3.677389	5.145689
		9 HYDROGEN	3.025511	6.461654	2.151884
		10 HYDROGEN	6.054876	5.639507	0.991114
		11 CARBON	5.113142	10.895263	2.383673
		12 HYDROGEN	6.335093	11.280969	0.752563
		13 HYDROGEN	3.223861	10.537069	1.635724
		14 CARBON	5.090883	13.229625	4.118474
		15 HYDROGEN	4.577148	14.898619	2.998734
		16 HYDROGEN	6.992187	13.577583	4.848027
		17 NITROGEN	3.377869	12.894840	6.314252
		18 CARBON	4.191854	14.105375	8.677708
		19 HYDROGEN	6.258058	14.106582	8.763989
		20 HYDROGEN	3.568689	16.077368	8.845625
		21 CARBON	1.328538	3.438447	7.445446
		22 CARBON	-0.186508	2.603114	5.506238
		23 CARBON	0.542361	3.210878	9.998637
		24 CARBON	-2.565823	1.481425	6.052718
		25 CARBON	-1.752392	2.139846	10.569587
		26 CARBON	-3.370424	1.250111	8.621028
		27 HYDROGEN	0.373123	2.775271	3.540161
		28 HYDROGEN	1.775793	3.862793	11.508443
		29 HYDROGEN	-2.380954	1.922097	12.507787
		30 CARBON	8.682281	8.562019	4.235889
		31 HYDROGEN	9.594215	7.013882	3.204902
		32 HYDROGEN	9.557673	10.302316	3.535163
		33 CARBON	0.704727	13.402407	5.731418
		34 HYDROGEN	0.509738	14.754913	4.169847
		35 HYDROGEN	-0.224817	14.259854	7.369907
		36 CARBON	9.284903	8.356908	7.060866
		37 OXYGEN	7.577465	8.616459	8.661910
		38 NITROGEN	11.683951	7.941464	7.703635
		39 HYDROGEN	12.154454	7.838865	9.555741
		40 HYDROGEN	13.075149	7.715624	6.414330
		41 CARBON	3.268072	12.528511	10.933905
		42 OXYGEN	2.802898	10.229797	10.665397
		43 NITROGEN	3.029453	13.685862	13.148835
		44 HYDROGEN	3.377605	15.549523	13.377503
		45 HYDROGEN	2.542902	12.663919	14.693206
		46 CARBON	-0.738682	10.972604	5.111168
		47 OXYGEN	0.258682	8.867567	5.447328
		48 NITROGEN	-3.076450	11.218161	4.216753
		49 HYDROGEN	-3.901530	12.917407	3.935062
		50 HYDROGEN	-4.123268	9.647282	3.903048
		51 CARBON	-4.218858	0.551651	4.156021
		52 HYDROGEN	-3.679241	0.670880	2.177831
		53 CARBON	-6.480419	-0.509220	4.864335
		54 HYDROGEN	-7.789519	-1.253288	3.473512
		55 NITROGEN	-5.622819	0.205071	9.294585
		56 CARBON	-7.098987	-0.634777	7.472712
		57 HYDROGEN	-8.886530	-1.467866	8.063967

The optimized structure (B3LYP/6-31G(d,p)) of methyl analogue of Zn complex with ligand **6**

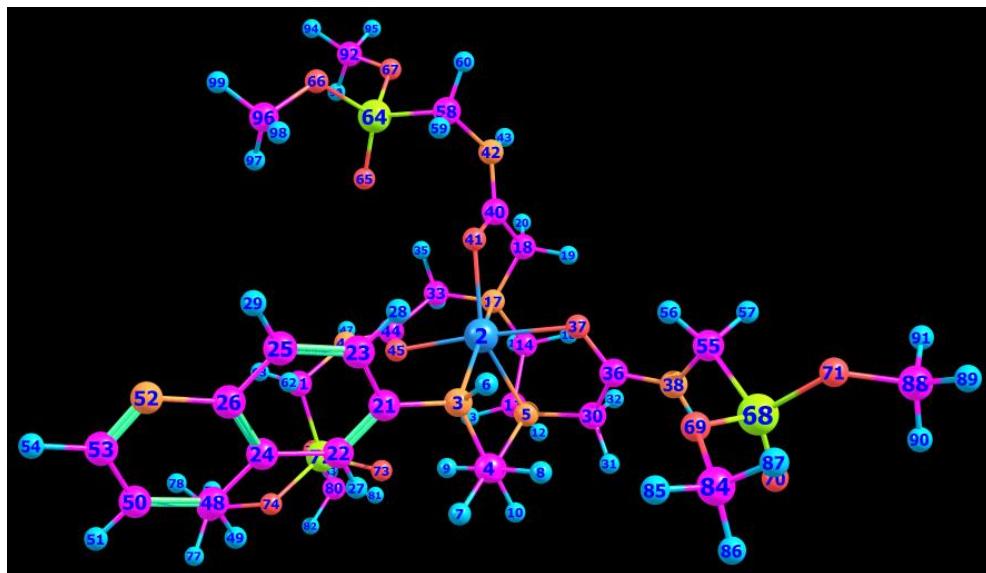


Figure S70.

COORD 2		NUCLEAR COORDINATES		
VIB 1	ATOM	X	Y	Z
	1 CARBON	4.058382	4.690461	1.323544
	2 ZINC	2.896477	7.117825	6.029103
	3 NITROGEN	3.044570	3.097994	5.697966
	4 CARBON	4.398986	2.583033	3.268971
	5 NITROGEN	4.879492	7.166838	2.387838
	6 HYDROGEN	4.228647	2.598604	7.130536
	7 HYDROGEN	3.745344	0.787693	2.461424
	8 HYDROGEN	6.400009	2.314272	3.719779
	9 HYDROGEN	2.079404	4.874512	0.766010
	10 HYDROGEN	5.143232	4.219167	-0.382641
	11 CARBON	3.872846	9.381759	0.987064
	12 HYDROGEN	5.014165	9.798833	-0.695389
	13 HYDROGEN	1.984659	8.888114	0.311289
	14 CARBON	3.814216	11.745701	2.679975
	15 HYDROGEN	3.043520	13.335756	1.593246
	16 HYDROGEN	5.737361	12.284106	3.211080
	17 NITROGEN	2.364049	11.324341	5.040652
	18 CARBON	3.391154	12.557988	7.309313
	19 HYDROGEN	5.453594	12.413341	7.275437
	20 HYDROGEN	2.894048	14.568526	7.443426
	21 CARBON	0.690544	1.742976	6.130979
	22 CARBON	-0.884922	1.000586	4.198594
	23 CARBON	0.044259	1.239359	8.685203
	24 CARBON	-3.166234	-0.302727	4.754099
	25 CARBON	-2.160487	-0.001849	9.266050
	26 CARBON	-3.828439	-0.808014	7.323763
	27 HYDROGEN	-0.450238	1.401345	2.235348
	28 HYDROGEN	1.323238	1.821129	10.185959
	29 HYDROGEN	-2.670589	-0.432686	11.203763
	30 CARBON	7.639117	7.283774	2.753794
	31 HYDROGEN	8.631340	6.017756	1.445923
	32 HYDROGEN	8.324127	9.192003	2.342320
	33 CARBON	-0.383434	11.725757	4.770494
	34 HYDROGEN	-0.799036	13.227402	3.401203
	35 HYDROGEN	-1.218886	12.274620	6.590593
	36 CARBON	8.363560	6.701673	5.494801
	37 OXYGEN	6.770144	6.980319	7.223490
	38 NITROGEN	10.730852	5.974418	5.908122
	39 HYDROGEN	11.891574	5.576390	4.424269
	40 CARBON	2.428084	11.084994	9.611068
	41 OXYGEN	2.145841	8.744734	9.470461
	42 NITROGEN	1.888157	12.390205	11.701308
	43 HYDROGEN	2.033208	14.296742	11.627218
	44 CARBON	-1.704677	9.268134	4.054129
	45 OXYGEN	-0.745099	7.188167	4.604680
	46 NITROGEN	-3.946530	9.437486	2.905252
	47 HYDROGEN	-4.604447	11.160048	2.402756
	48 CARBON	-4.851030	-1.169175	2.852756
	49 HYDROGEN	-4.408792	-0.832883	0.876318
	50 CARBON	-7.005907	-2.434894	3.561939
	51 HYDROGEN	-8.326038	-3.157863	2.169285
	52 NITROGEN	-5.984192	-2.044302	7.997868
	53 CARBON	-7.491076	-2.820065	6.172682
	54 HYDROGEN	-9.194978	-3.814663	6.753122

55	CARBON	11.746206	5.243488	8.374418
56	HYDROGEN	10.204742	4.963120	9.710686
57	HYDROGEN	13.000464	6.719321	9.104720
58	CARBON	0.283462	11.348610	13.691937
59	HYDROGEN	0.577168	9.311471	13.782922
60	HYDROGEN	0.758472	12.187346	15.514265
61	CARBON	-5.299828	7.217450	1.989599
62	HYDROGEN	-4.937919	5.640496	3.270128
63	HYDROGEN	-7.325264	7.611045	1.960132
64	PHOSPHORUS	-3.040700	12.016089	12.838324
65	OXYGEN	-3.508790	11.672990	10.073827
66	OXYGEN	-4.767501	10.371368	14.698127
67	OXYGEN	-3.260946	14.819048	13.949390
68	PHOSPHORUS	13.601856	2.338944	7.849470
69	OXYGEN	11.557144	0.227096	8.590756
70	OXYGEN	14.609662	2.365276	5.221259
71	OXYGEN	15.617196	2.161096	10.092285
72	PHOSPHORUS	-4.140492	6.332503	-1.176224
73	OXYGEN	-1.332912	6.278990	-1.351523
74	OXYGEN	-5.363192	3.636052	-1.826028
75	OXYGEN	-5.558611	8.430444	-2.860328
76	CARBON	-8.034583	3.230420	-2.295668
77	HYDROGEN	-8.161006	1.725968	-3.696440
78	HYDROGEN	-8.951077	2.630297	-0.545521
79	HYDROGEN	-8.929838	4.939105	-3.028082
80	CARBON	-4.850574	8.813373	-5.490023
81	HYDROGEN	-2.804377	9.014886	-5.652814
82	HYDROGEN	-5.497684	7.225175	-6.638872
83	HYDROGEN	-5.795039	10.540514	-6.089577
84	CARBON	12.295554	-2.420432	8.636307
85	HYDROGEN	10.585717	-3.482909	9.064927
86	HYDROGEN	13.040465	-2.989304	6.797280
87	HYDROGEN	13.704069	-2.726856	10.112026
88	CARBON	18.273377	2.772016	9.733210
89	HYDROGEN	19.325438	1.536416	10.999774
90	HYDROGEN	18.831953	2.446416	7.775942
91	HYDROGEN	18.592529	4.743576	10.255690
92	CARBON	-5.659193	16.159260	13.975212
93	HYDROGEN	-6.450380	16.249561	12.070557
94	HYDROGEN	-6.967767	15.214889	15.259637
95	HYDROGEN	-5.241871	18.054613	14.658761
96	CARBON	-5.993110	8.052997	13.902925
97	HYDROGEN	-6.684497	8.230306	11.968820
98	HYDROGEN	-4.666242	6.476212	14.043911
99	HYDROGEN	-7.559795	7.760360	15.205624

4.3. IR-studies

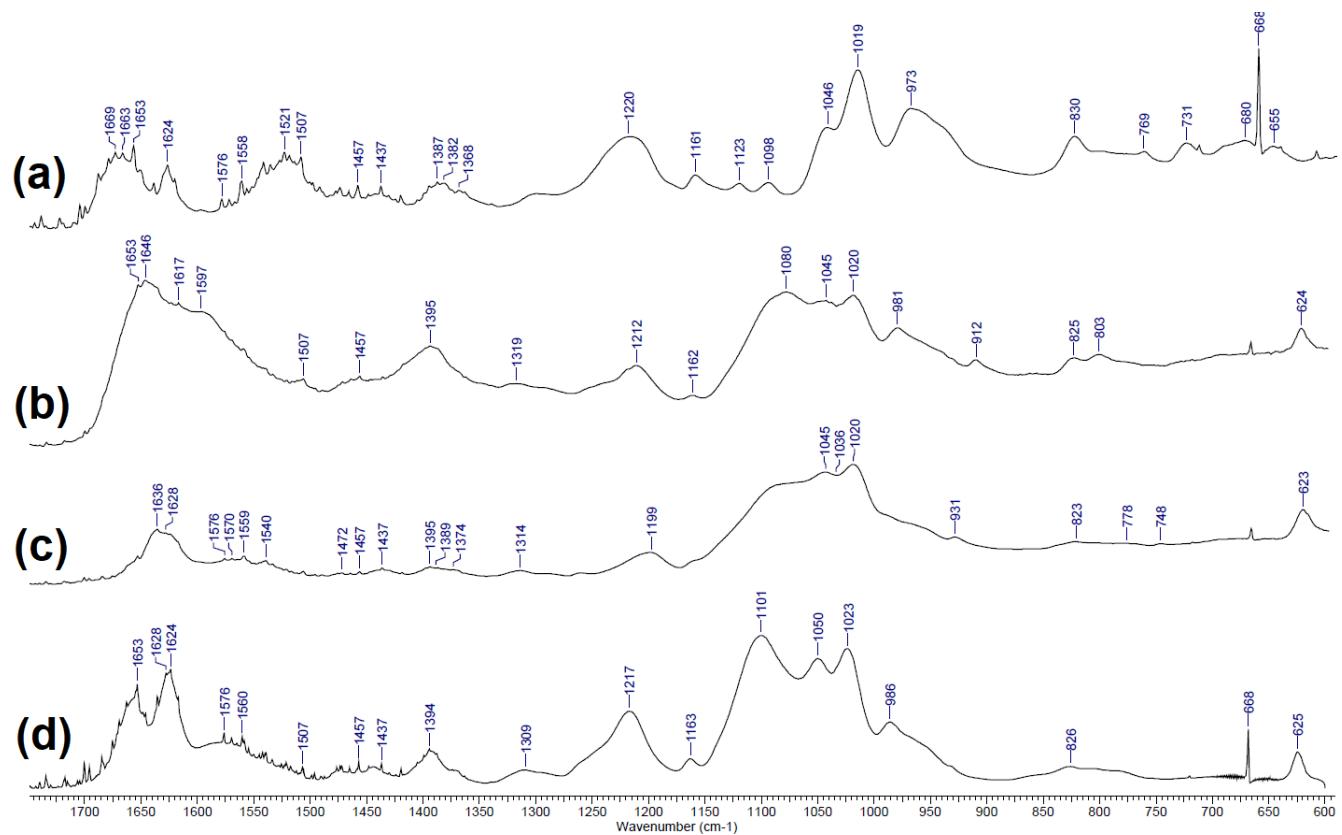
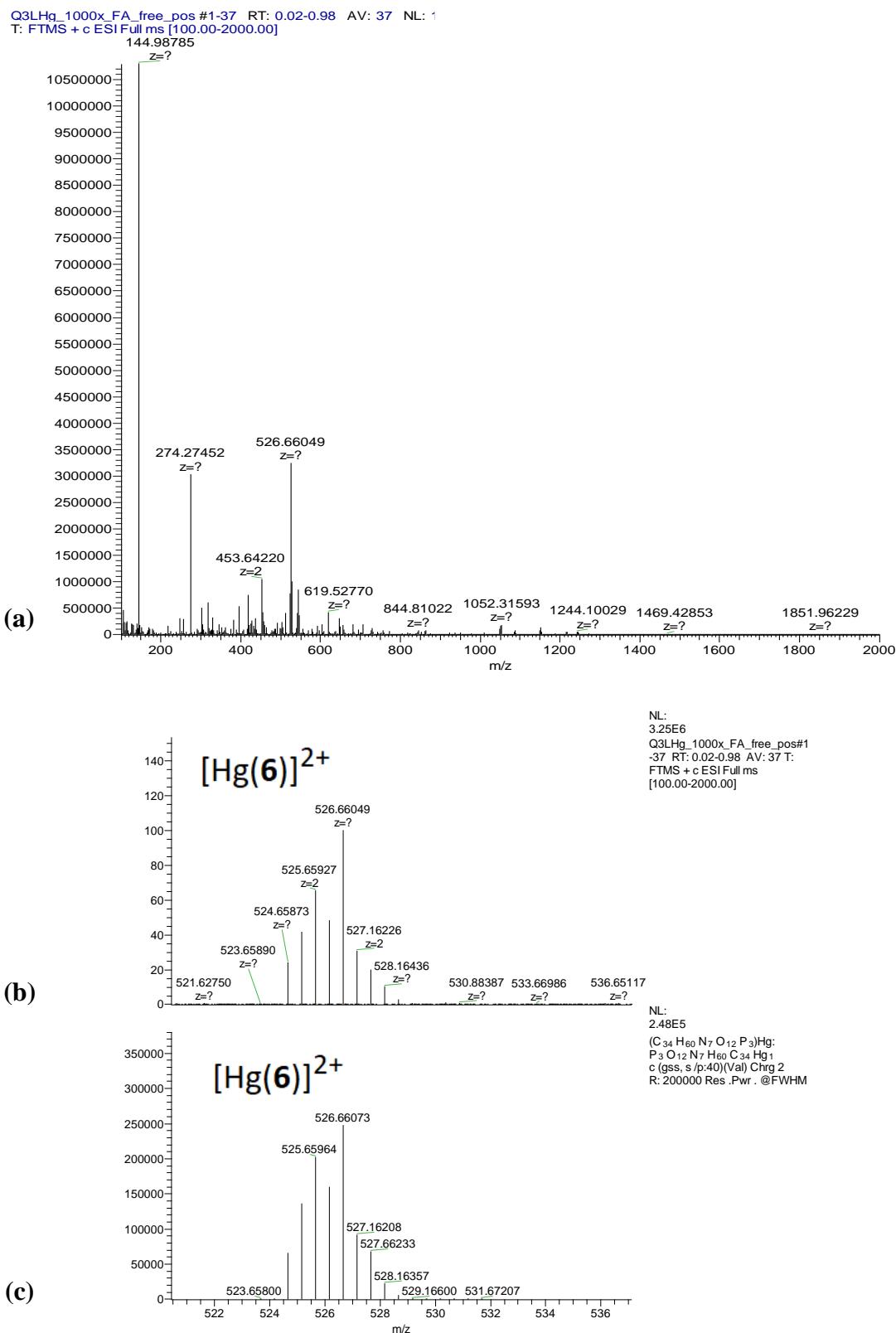


Figure S71. Comparison of IR-spectra (neat, ZnSe) of **6** (a), $[\text{Hg(6)}](\text{ClO}_4)_2$ (b), $[\text{Zn(6)}](\text{ClO}_4)_2$ and $[\text{Cu(6)}](\text{ClO}_4)_2$

4.4. ESI-spectra of [Hg(6)]²⁺ complex



Scheme S72. (a) and (b) ESI HRMS spectra obtained from the solution of **6** and Hg(ClO₄)₂ (H₂O, 1:1 molar ratio). (c) Calculated spectra of [Hg(**6**)]²⁺ complex.

4.5. NMR-studies of $[Hg(6)]^{2+}$ complex

NMR-titration of ligand **6** with Hg(II) perchlorate

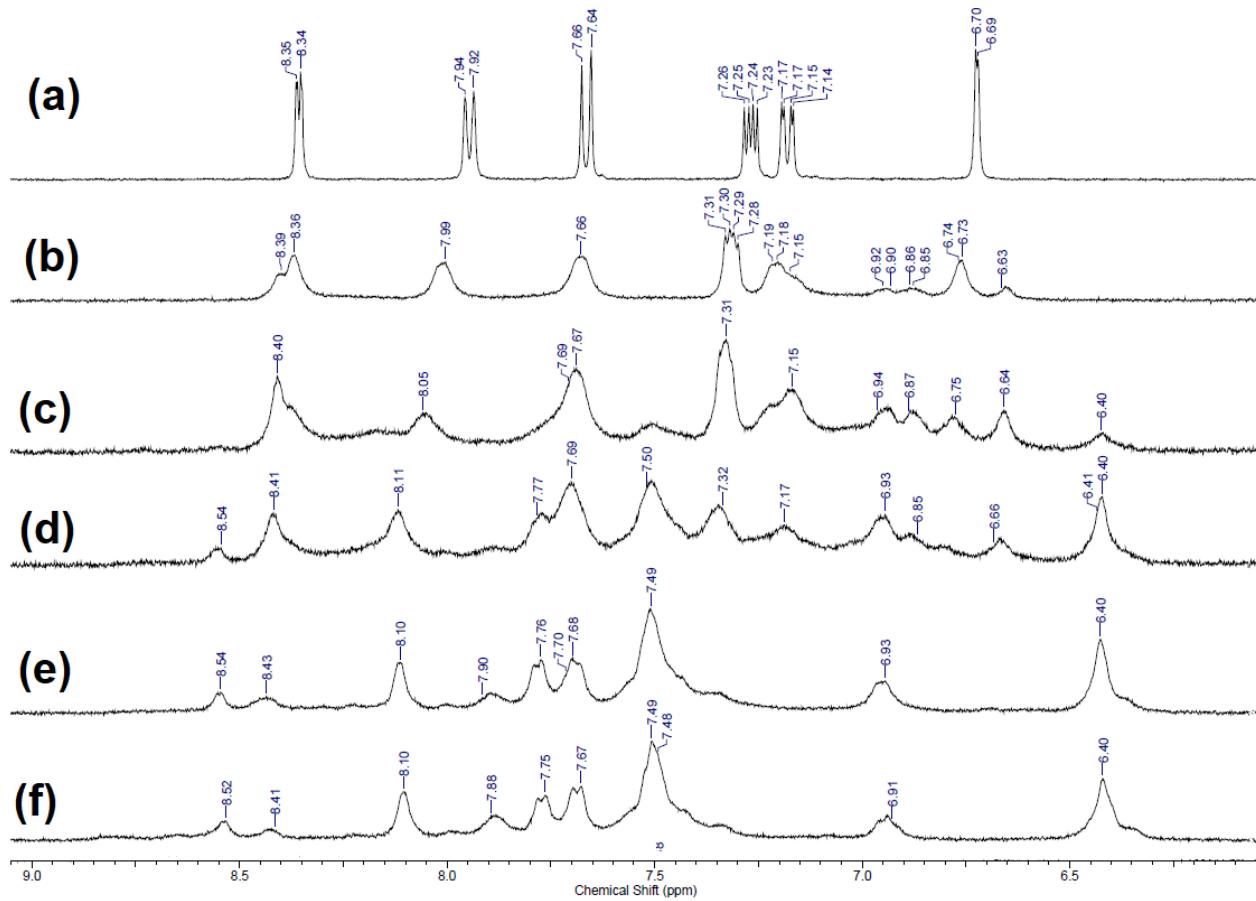


Figure S73. 400 MHz 1H NMR spectra (aromatic) of **6** in D_2O -MeOD (5:1 v/v, $[6] = 0.04$ M) at 298 K before (a) and after addition of 0.2 (b), 0.4 (c), 0.6 (d), 0.8 (e) and 1.0 (f) equiv. of mercury(II) perchlorate.

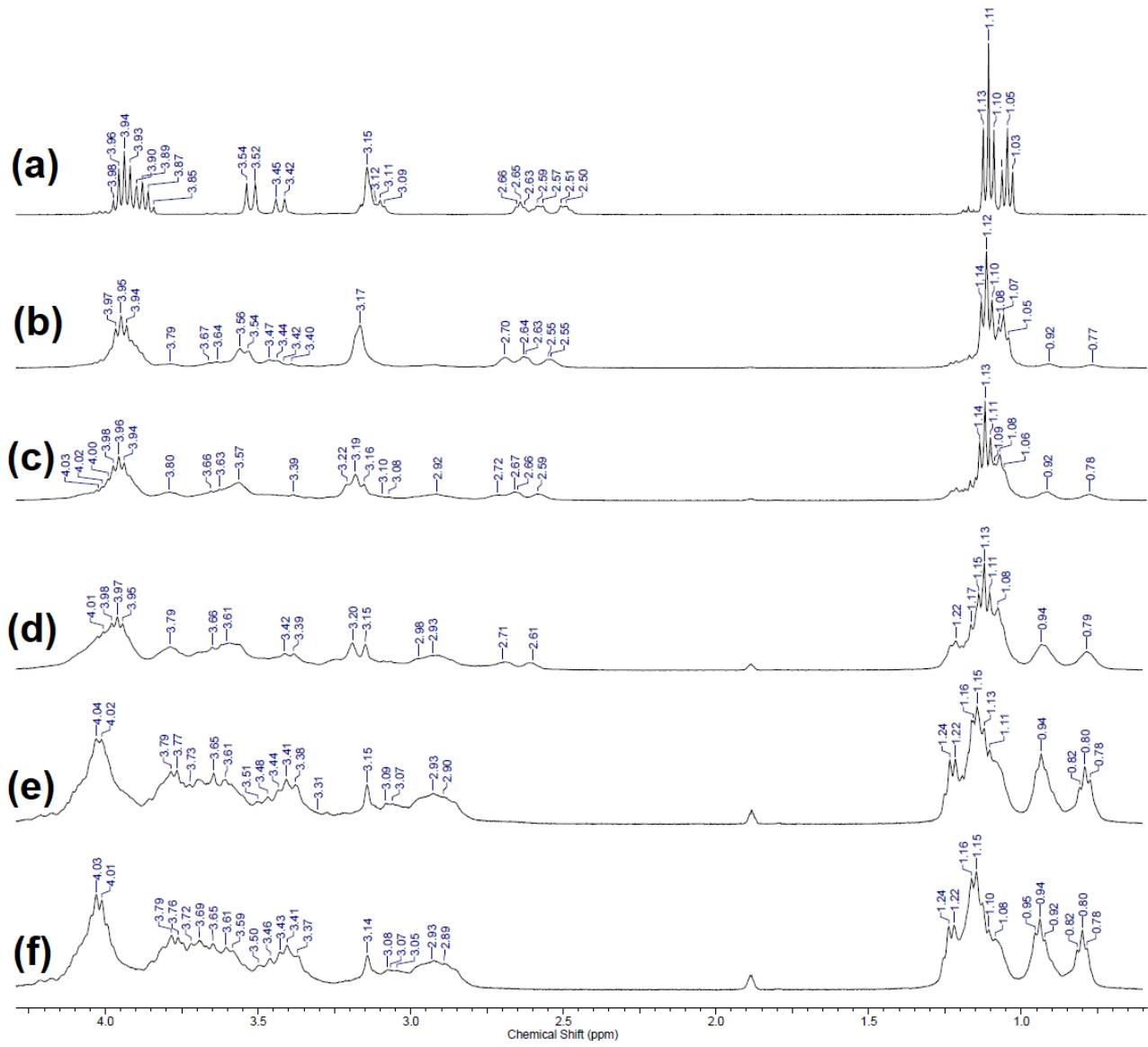


Figure S74. 400 MHz ¹H NMR spectra (aliphatic) of **6** in D₂O-MeOD (5:1 v/v, [b] = 0.04 M) at 298 K before (a) and after addition of 0.2 (b), 0.4 (c), 0.6 (d), 0.8 (e) and 1.0 (f) equiv. of mercury(II) perchlorate.

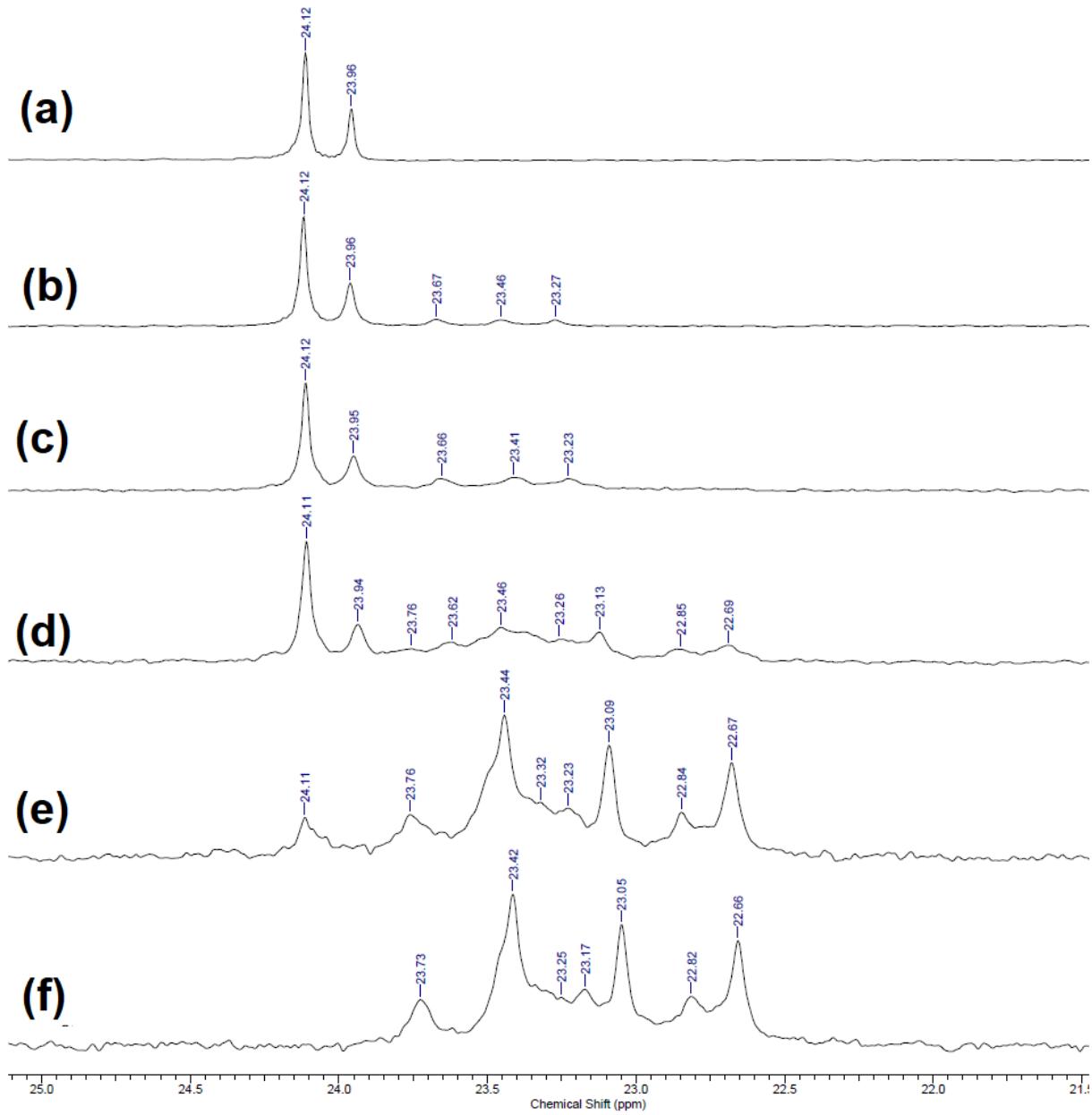


Figure S75. 162.5 MHz ^{31}P NMR spectra of **6** in D_2O -MeOD (5:1 v/v, $[\mathbf{6}] = 0.04 \text{ M}$) at 298 K before (a) and after addition of 0.2 (b), 0.4 (c), 0.6 (d), 0.8 (e) and 1.0 (f) equiv. of mercury(II) perchlorate.

5. Detection of sulfide anions.

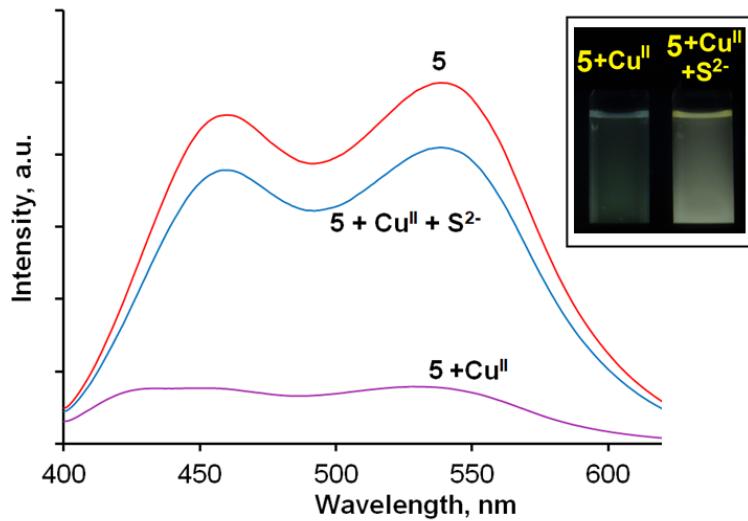


Figure S76. Changes in emission of an aqueous solution of ligand **5** (red line) (26.6 mM, pH=7.4, 0.03M HEPES, $\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 356 \text{ nm}$) after addition of Cu^{II} ions (1 equiv) (rose line) followed by S^{2-} -ions (excess) (blue line). Inset: Visual detection of S^{2-} -ions (excess) under UV light ($\lambda = 365 \text{ nm}$) in the aqueous solution of ligand **5** (26.6 mM, pH=7.4, 0.03M HEPES) and copper(II) perchlorate (1 equiv).

NMR spectra

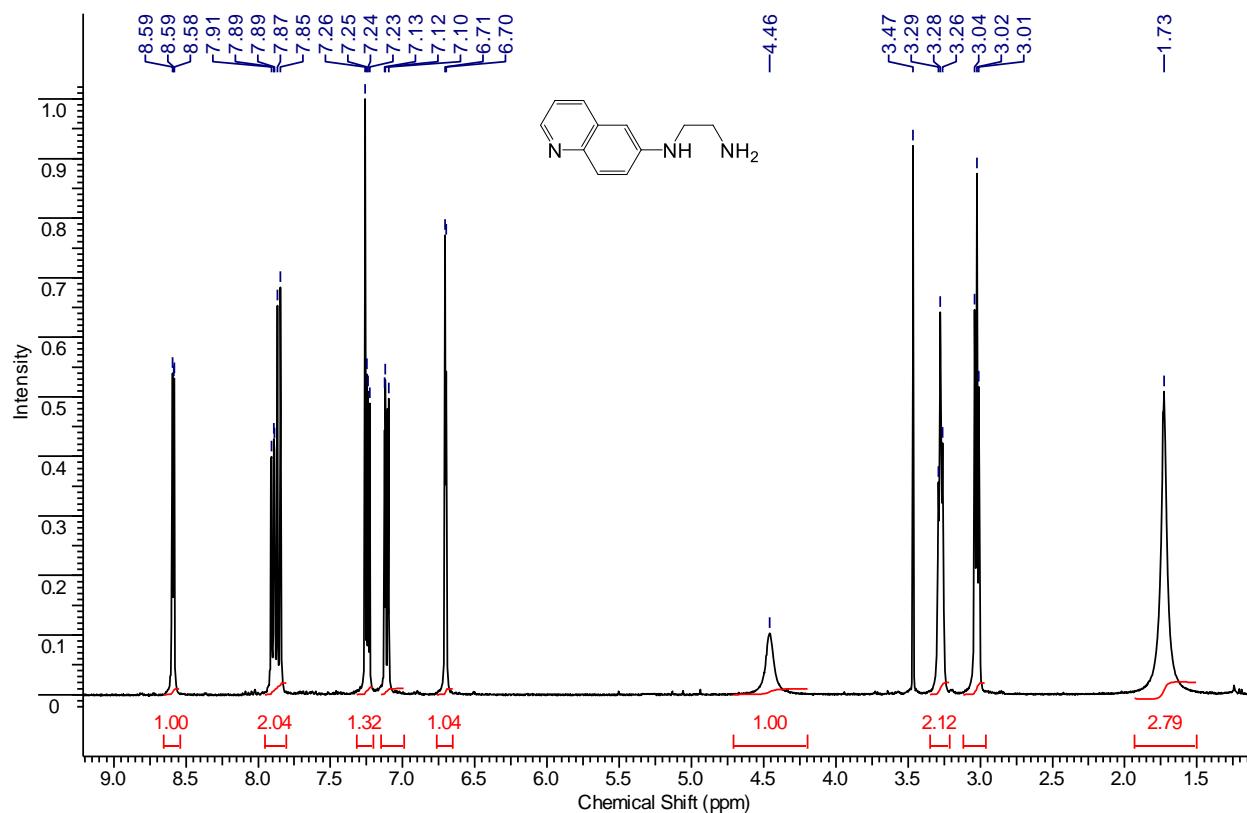


Figure S77. ^1H NMR spectrum of **9a** (CDCl_3 , 400MHz, 300K).

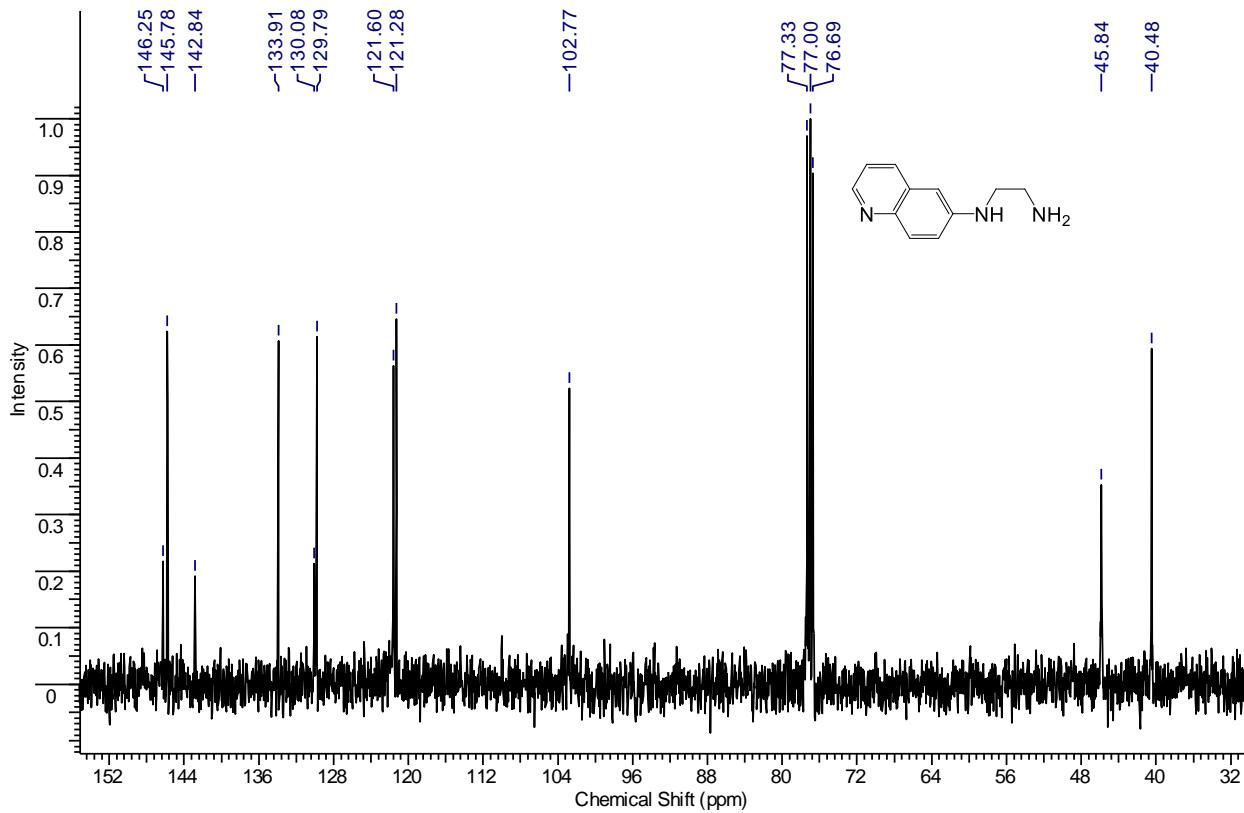


Figure S78. ^{13}C NMR spectrum of **9a** (CDCl_3 , 100.6 MHz, 300K).

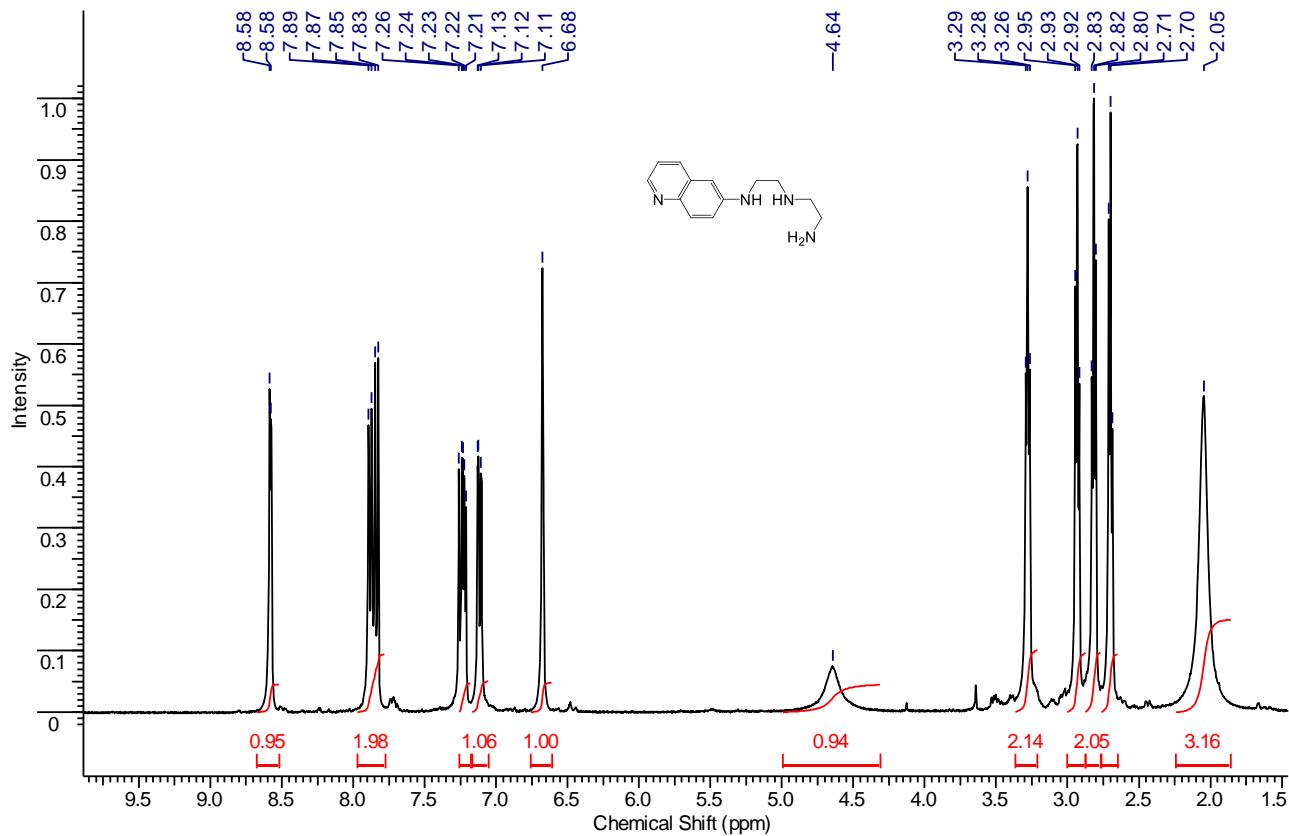


Figure S79. ^1H NMR spectrum of **9b** (CDCl_3 , 400MHz, 300K).

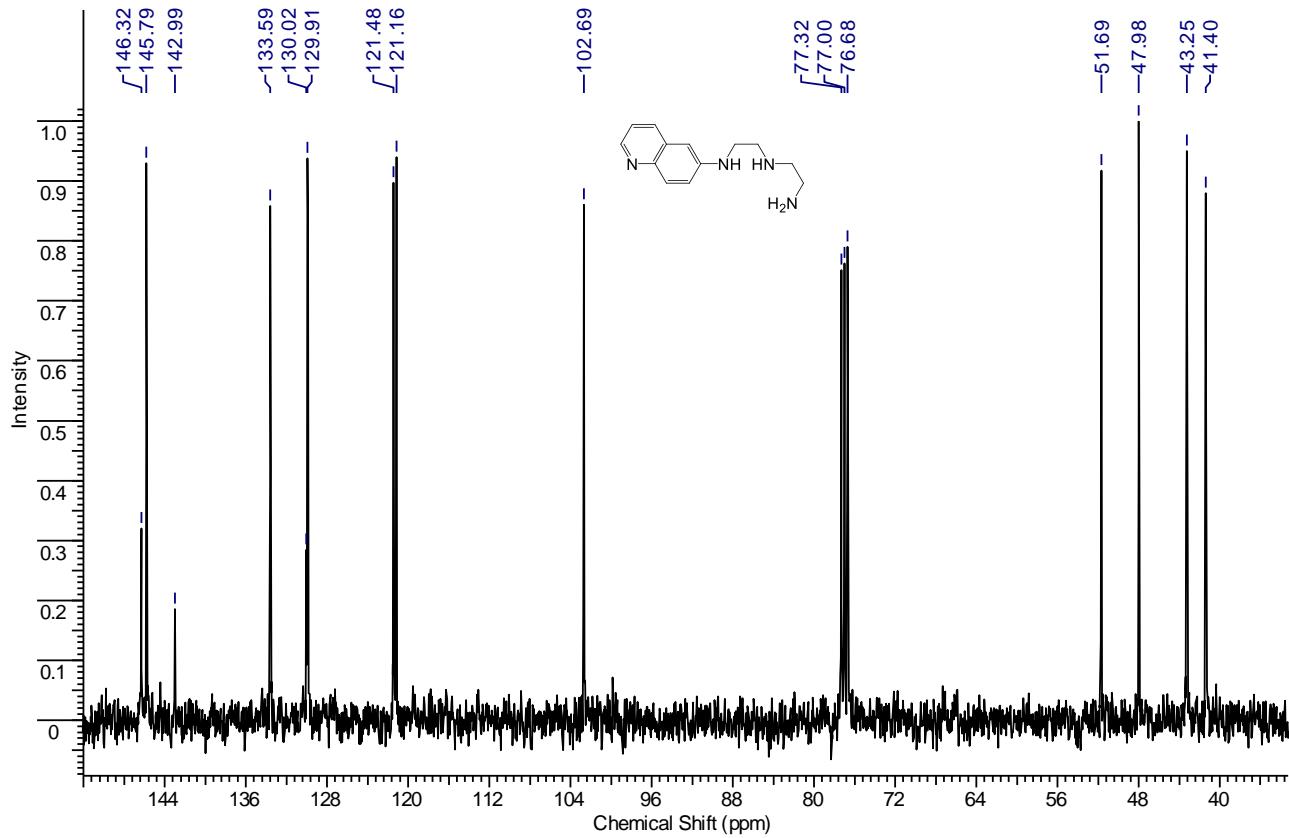


Figure S80. ^{13}C NMR spectrum of **9b** (CDCl_3 , 100.6 MHz, 300K).

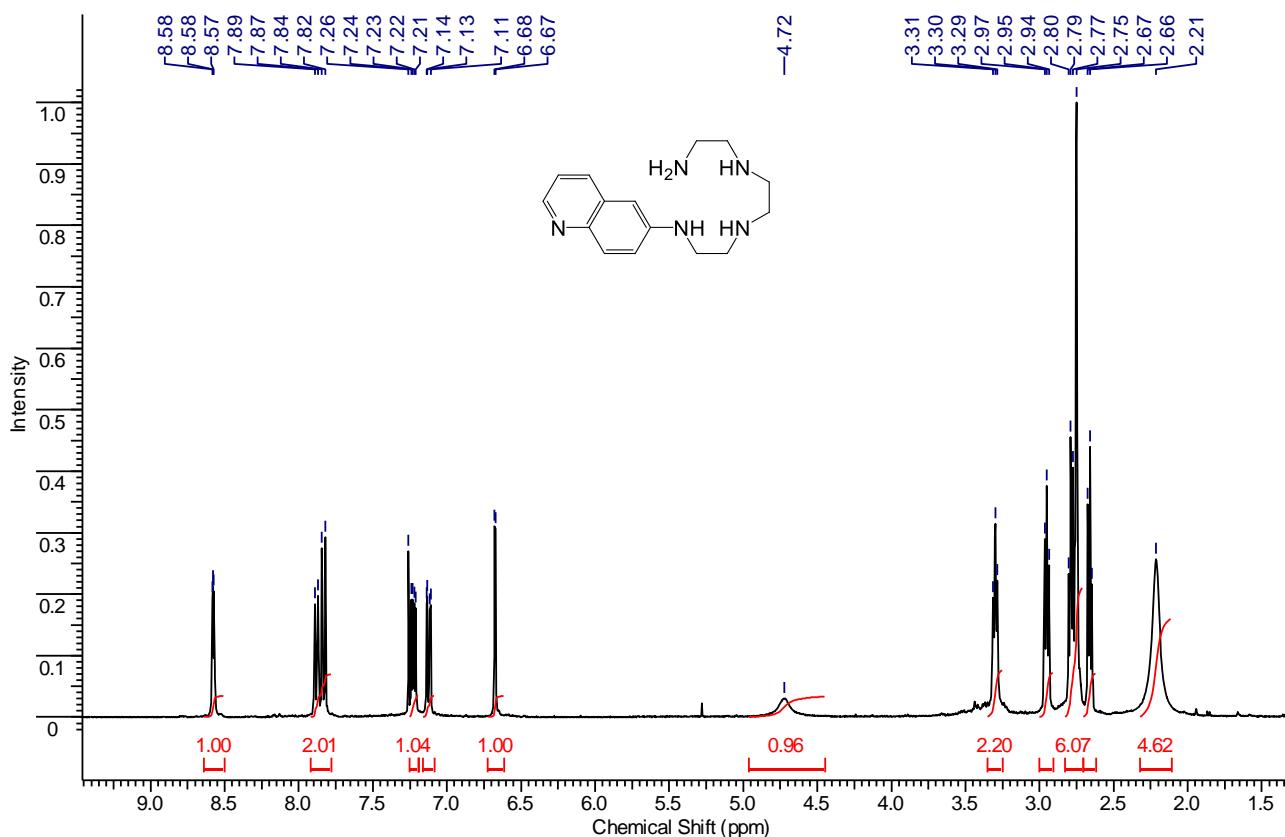


Figure S81. ^1H NMR spectrum of **9c** (CDCl_3 , 400MHz, 300K).

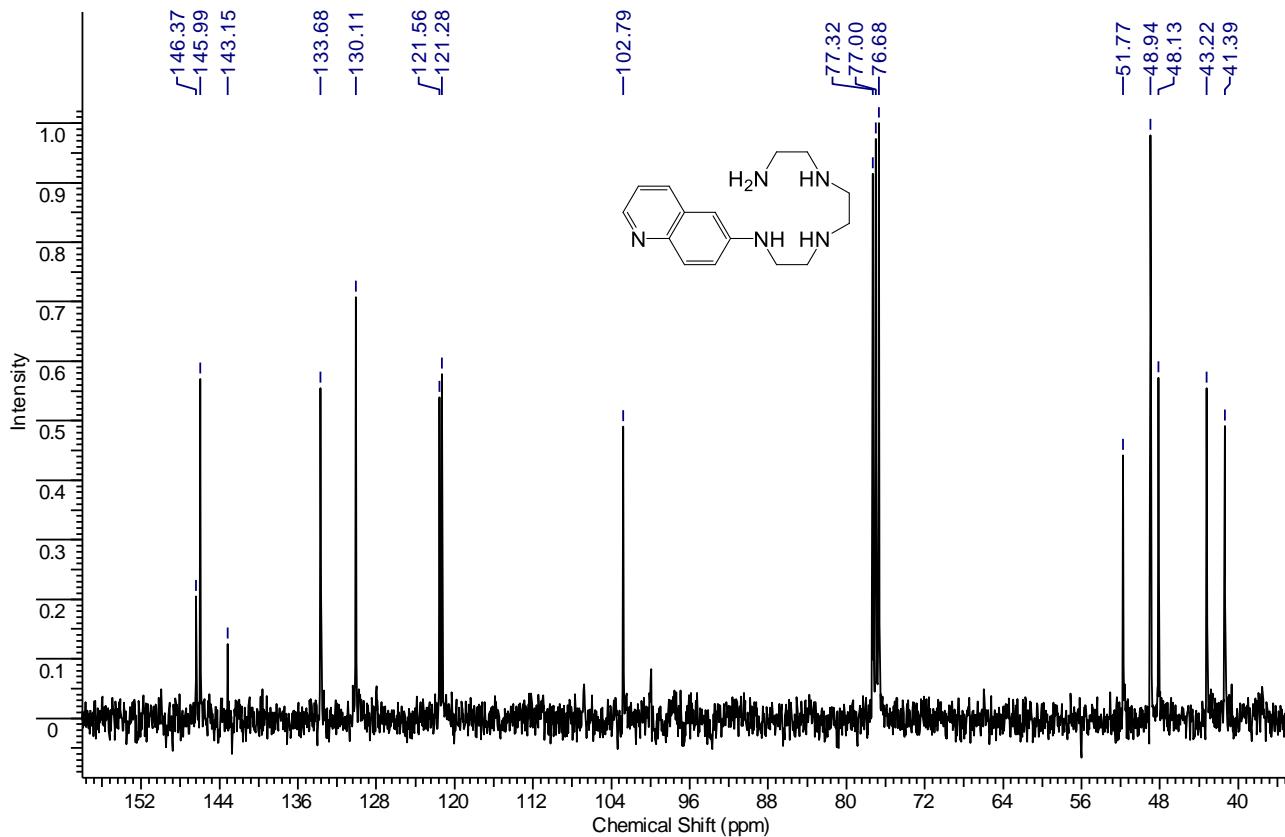


Figure S82. ^{13}C NMR spectrum of **9c** (CDCl_3 , 100.6 MHz, 300K).

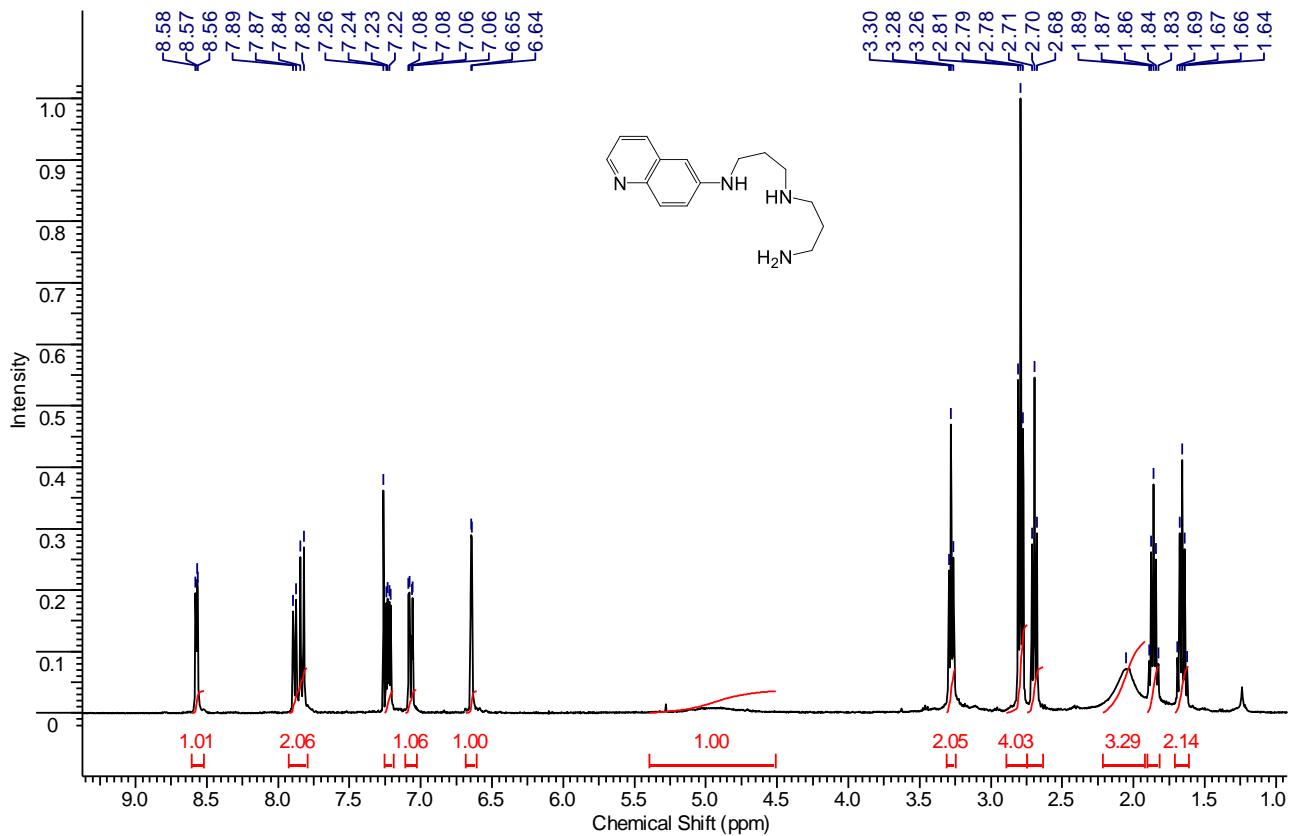


Figure S83. ^1H NMR spectrum of **9d** (CDCl_3 , 400MHz, 300K).

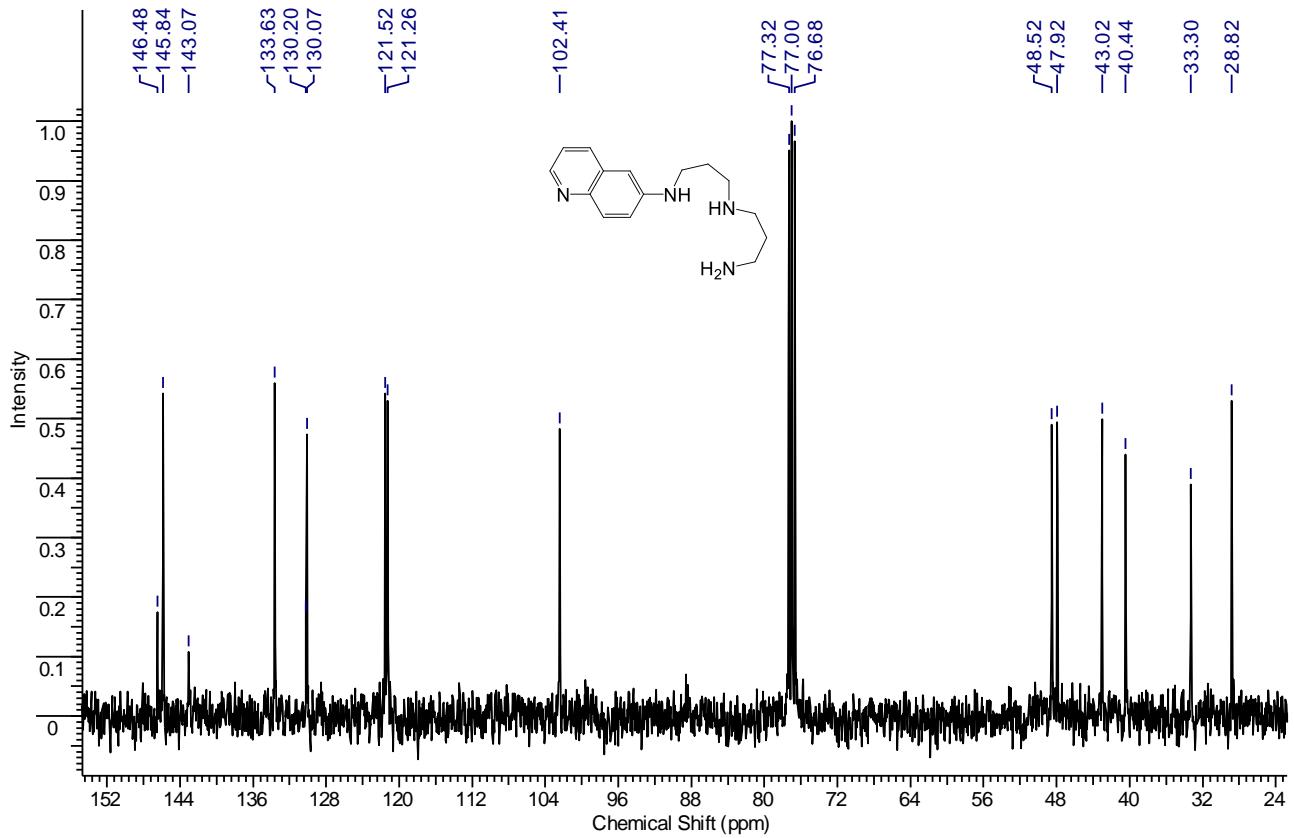


Figure S84. ^{13}C NMR spectrum of **9d** (CDCl_3 , 100.6 MHz, 300K).

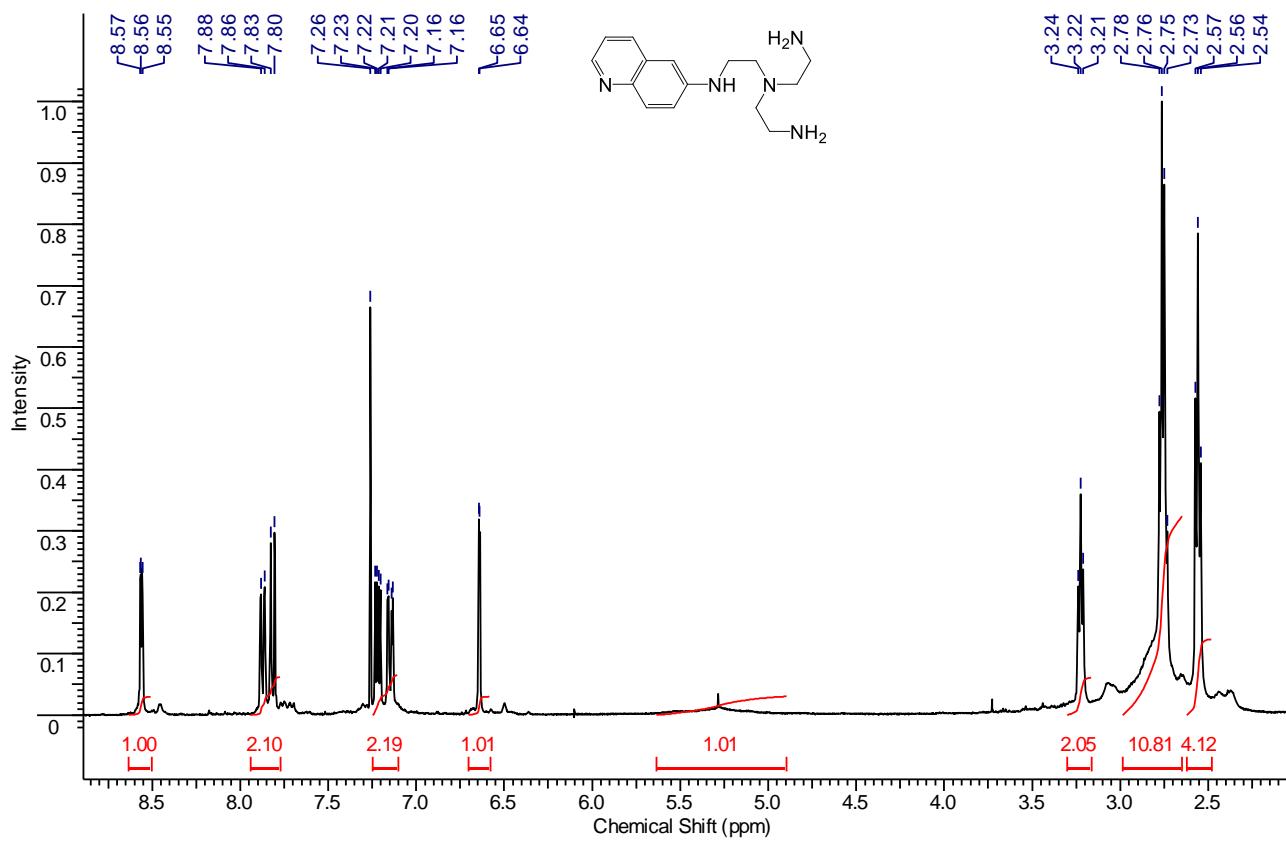


Figure S85. ^1H NMR spectrum of **9e** (CDCl_3 , 400MHz, 300K).

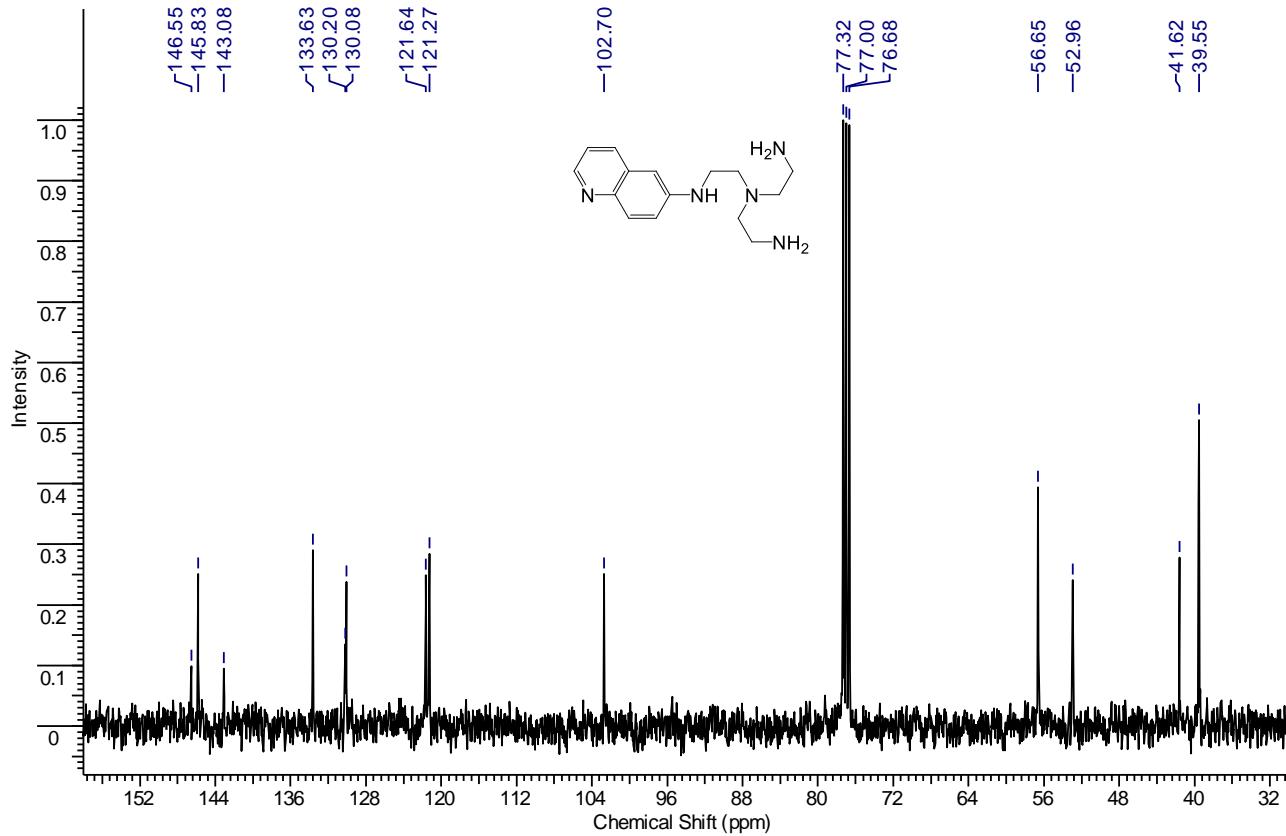


Figure S86. ^{13}C NMR spectrum of **9e** (CDCl_3 , 100.6 MHz, 300K).

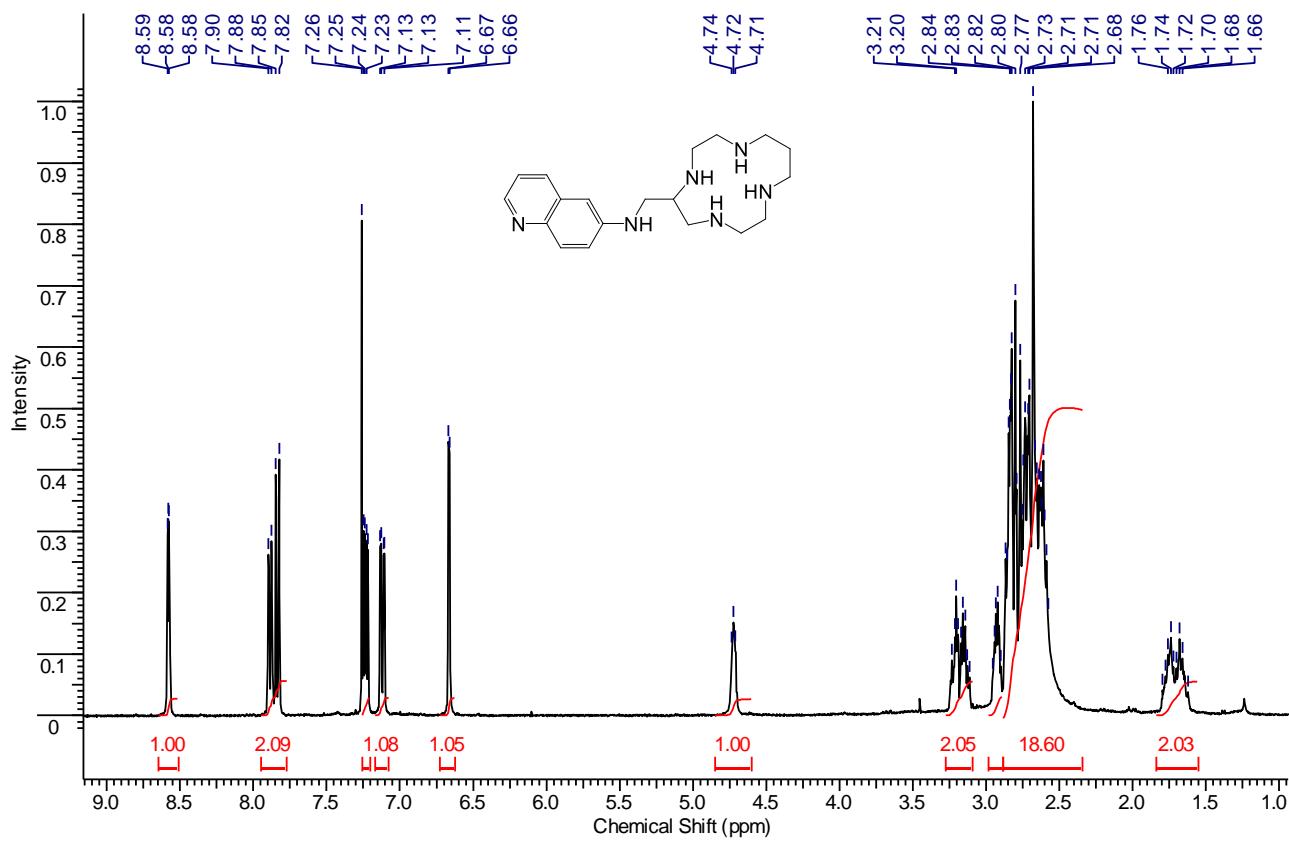


Figure S87. ^1H NMR spectrum of **9f** (CDCl_3 , 400MHz, 300K).

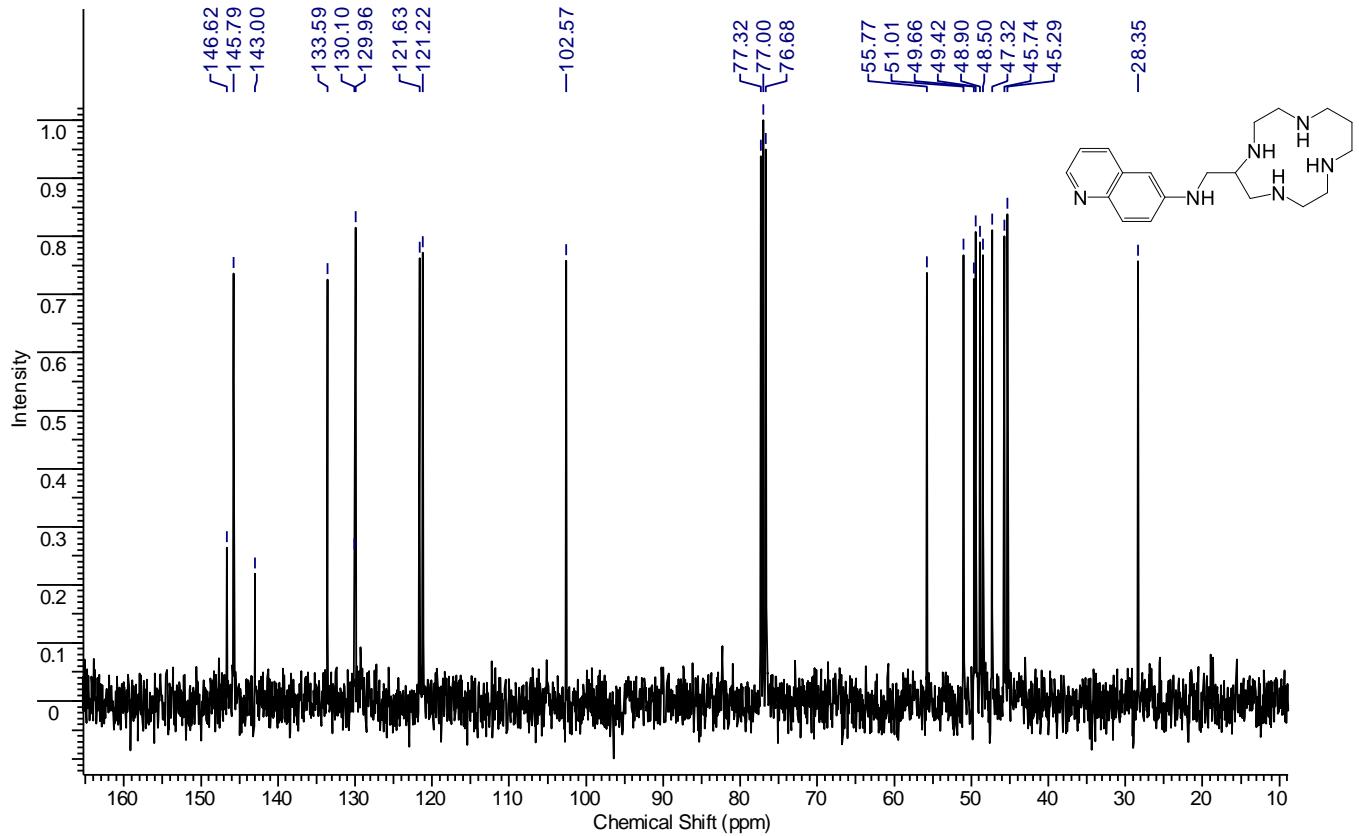


Figure S88. ^{13}C NMR spectrum of **9f** (CDCl_3 , 100.6 MHz, 300K).

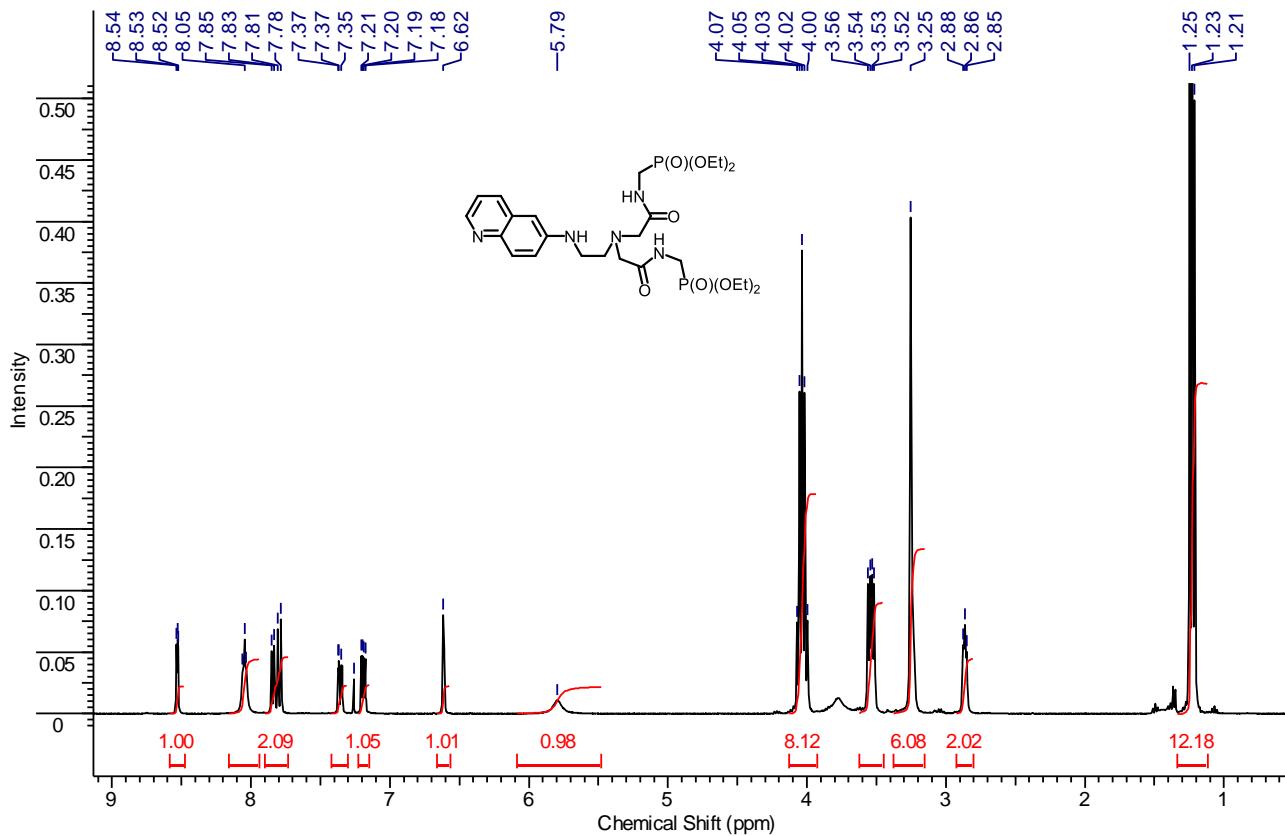


Figure S89. ^1H NMR spectrum of **5** (CDCl_3 , 400MHz, 300K).

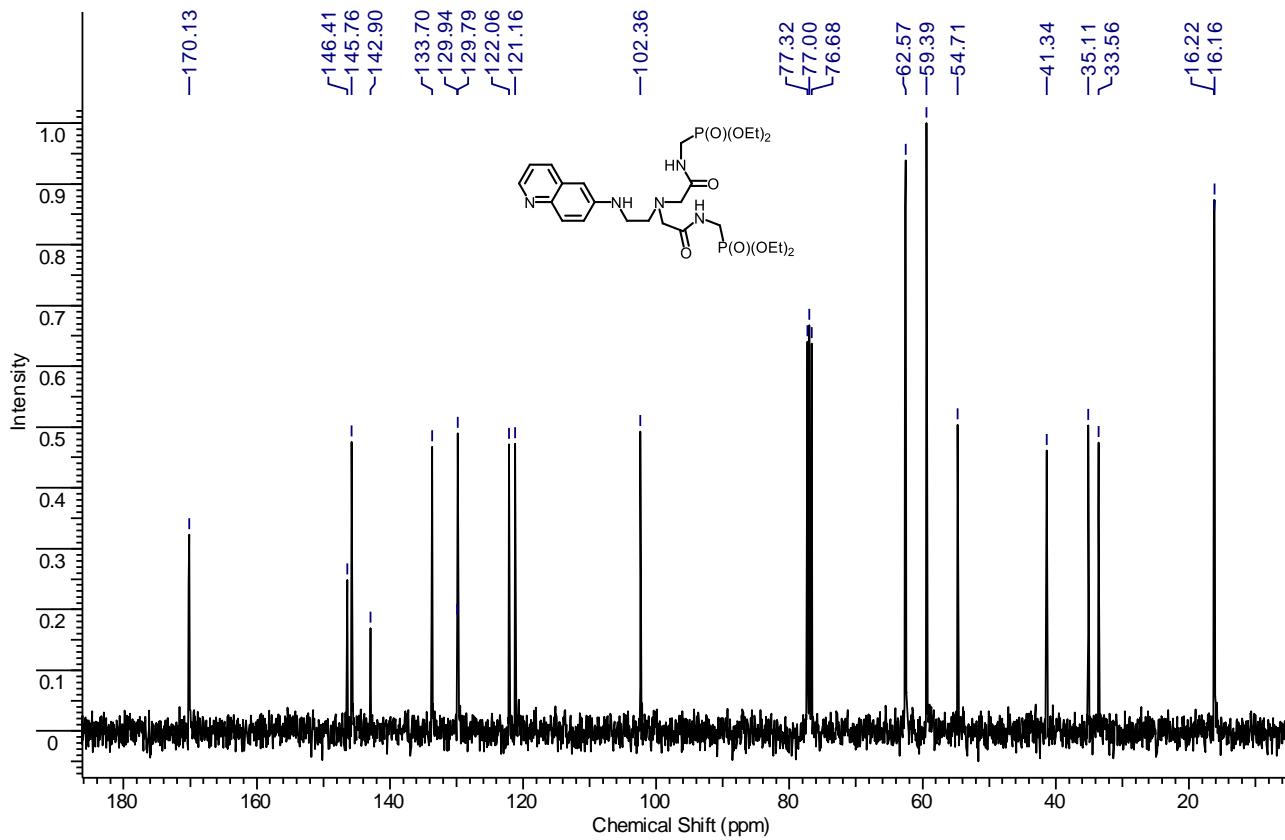


Figure S90. ^{13}C NMR spectrum of **5** (CDCl_3 , 100.6 MHz, 300K).

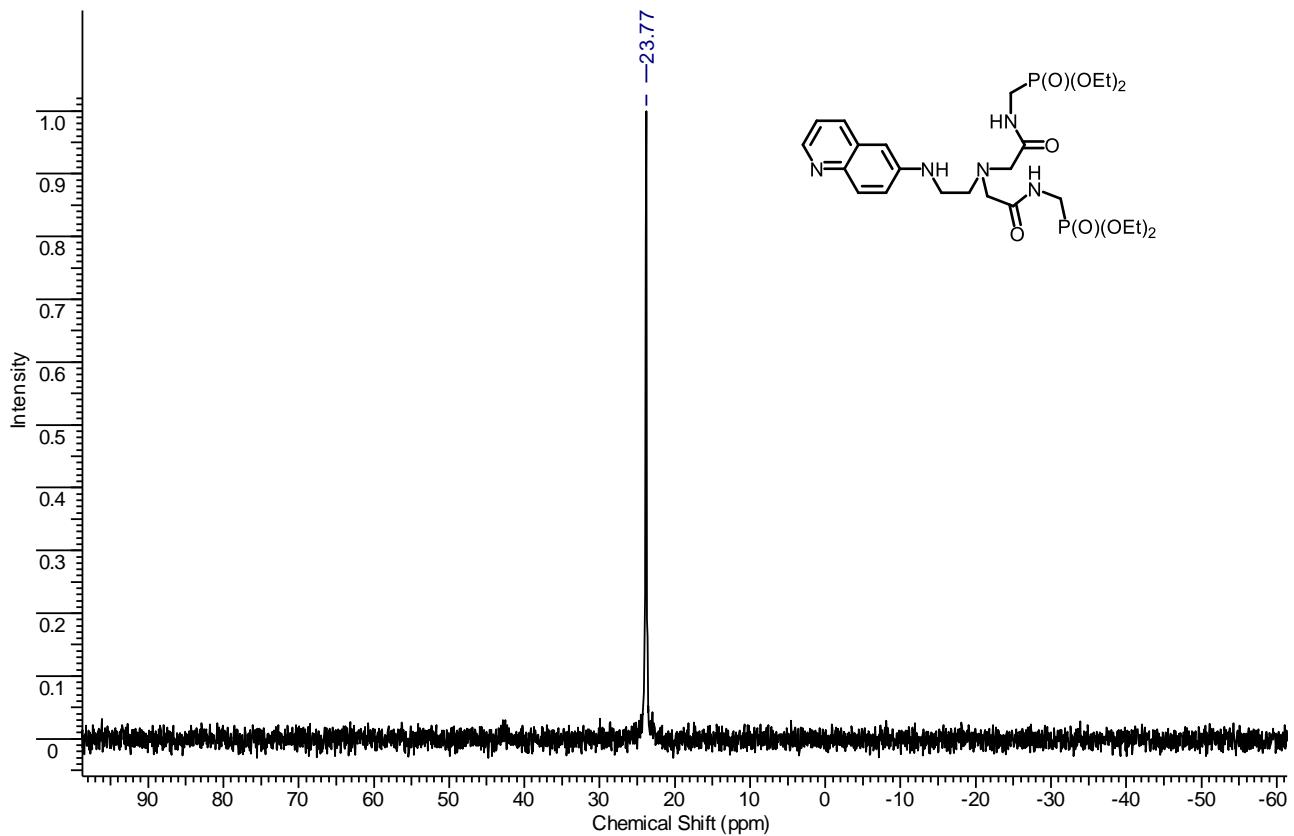


Figure S91. ^{31}P NMR spectrum of **5** (CDCl_3 , 162.5 MHz, 300K).

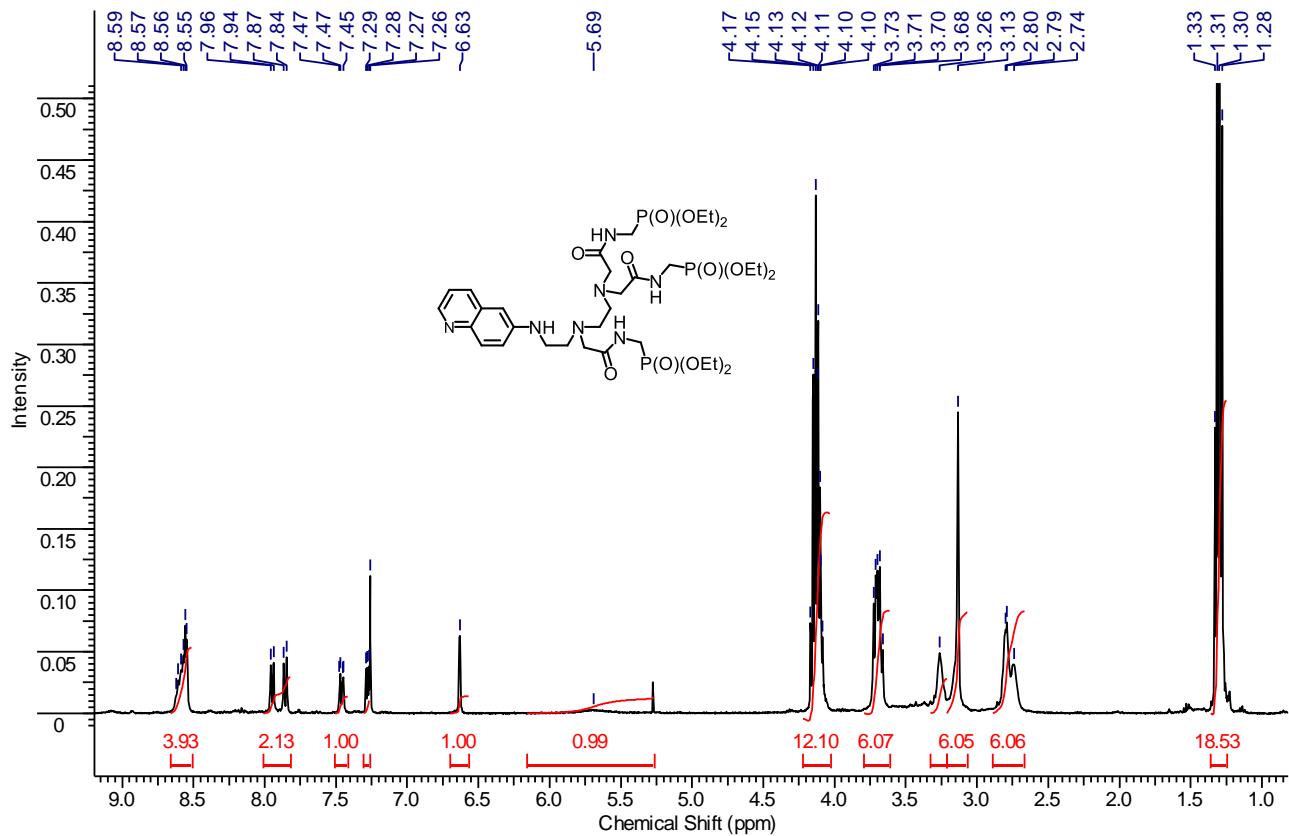


Figure S92. ^1H NMR spectrum of **6** (CDCl_3 , 400MHz, 300K).

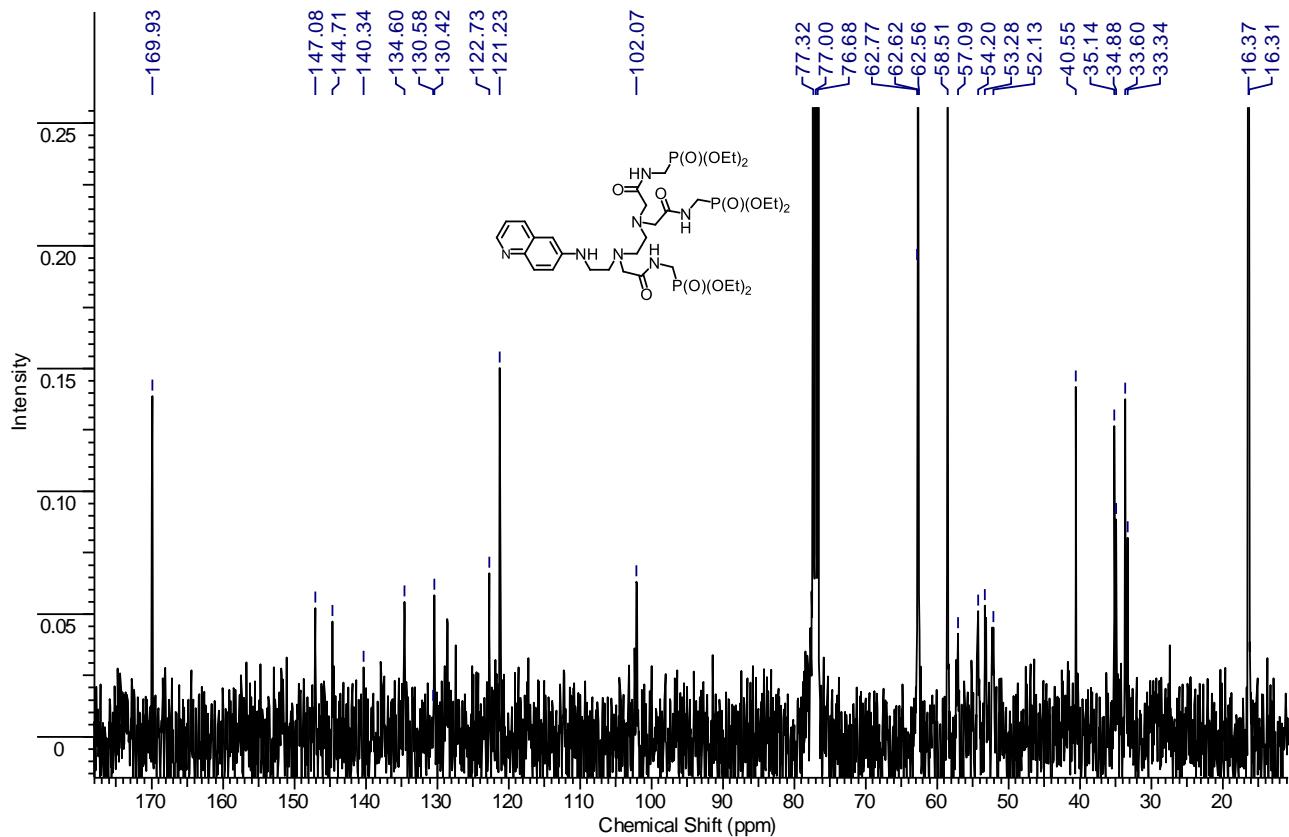


Figure S93. ^{13}C NMR spectrum of **6** (CDCl_3 , 100.6 MHz, 300K).

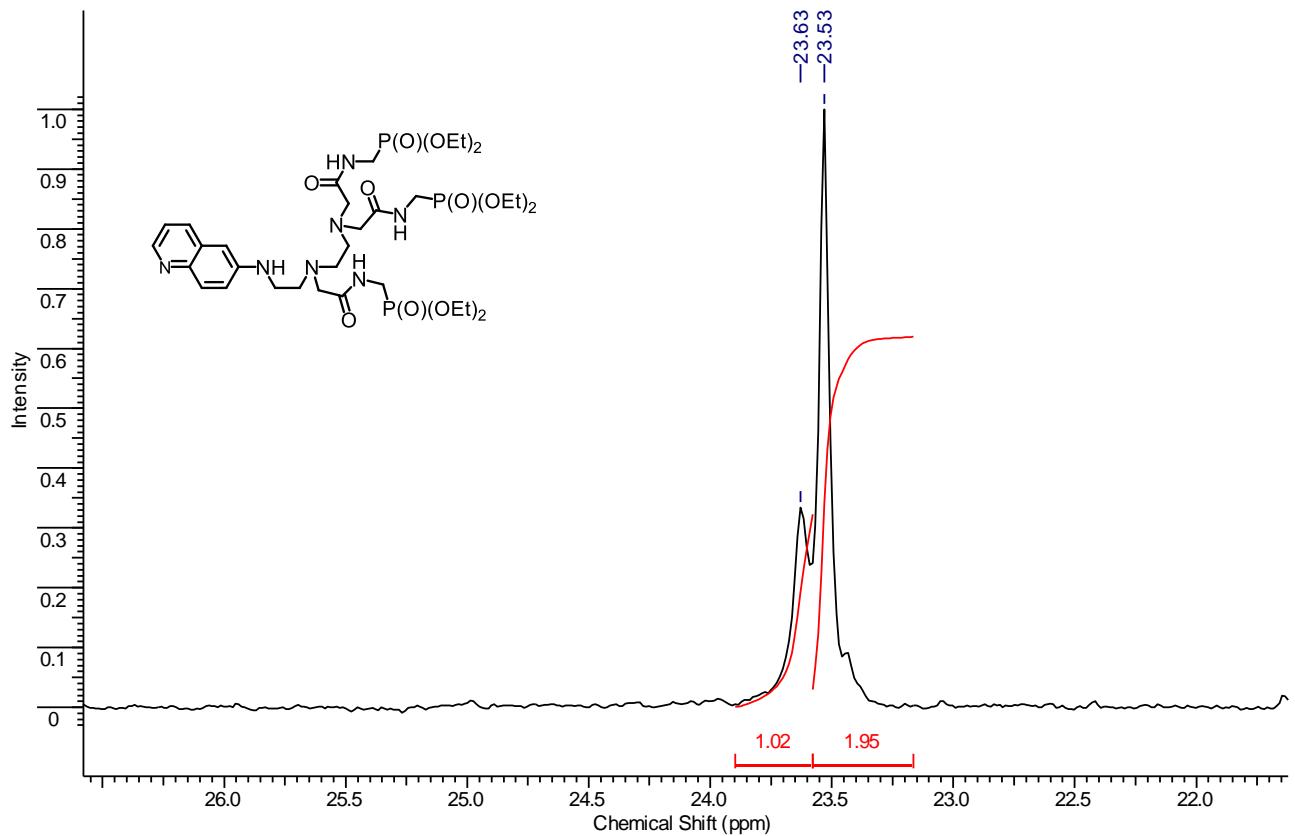


Figure S94. ^{31}P NMR spectrum of **6** (CDCl_3 , 162.5 MHz, 300K).

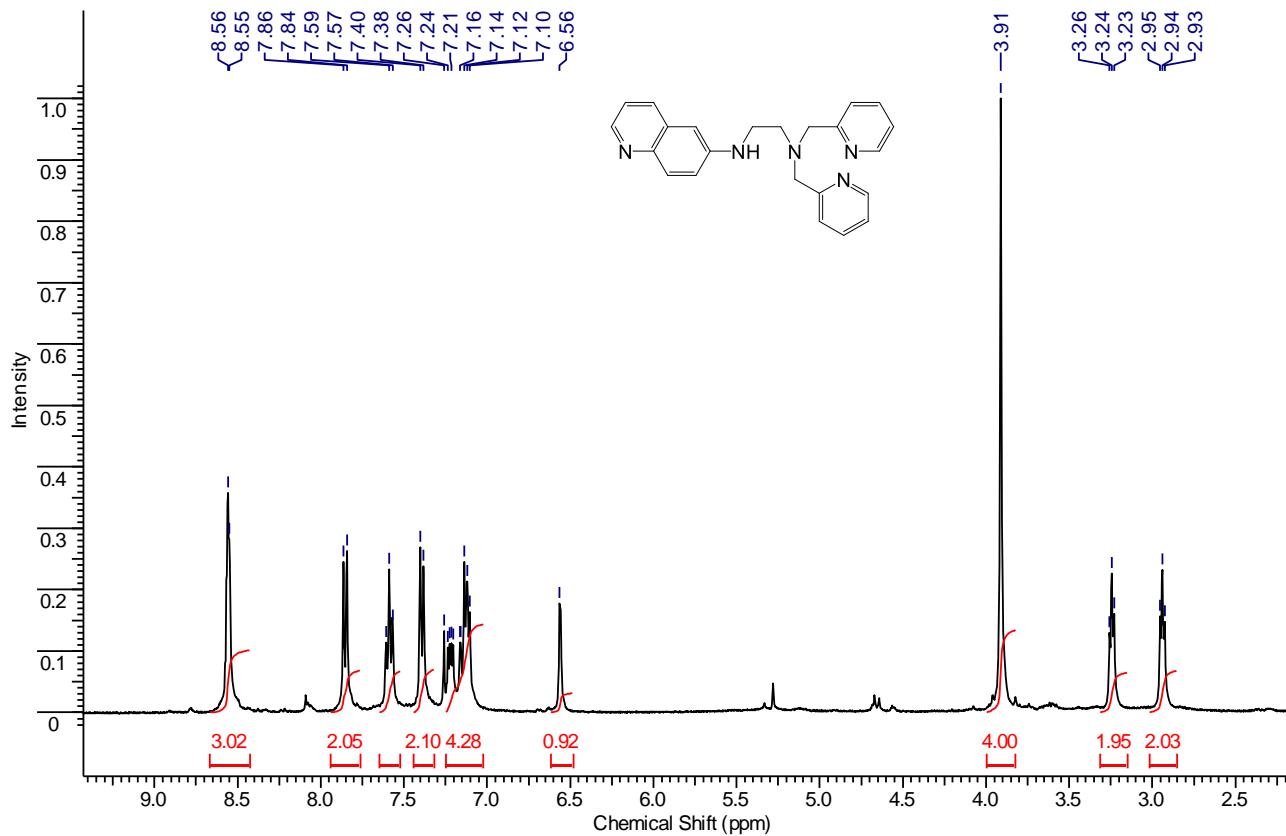


Figure S95. ^1H NMR spectrum of **10** (CDCl_3 , 400MHz, 300K).

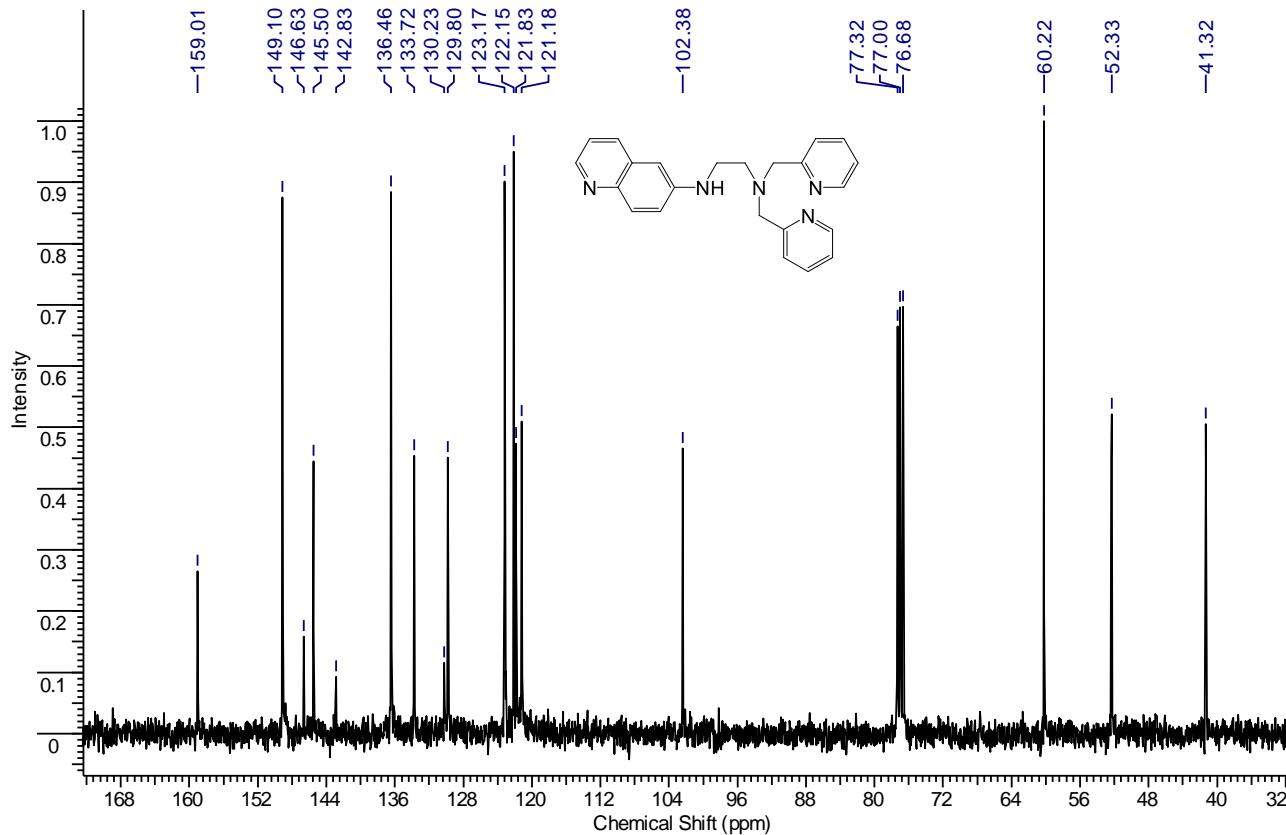


Figure S96. ^{13}C NMR spectrum of **10** (CDCl_3 , 100.6 MHz, 300K).