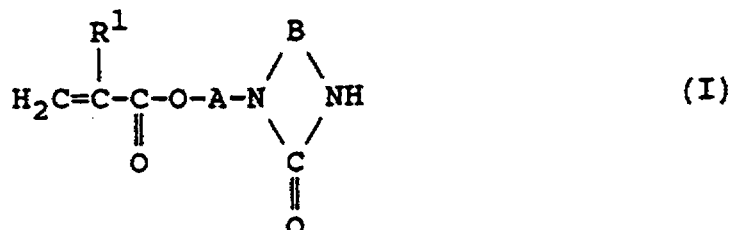


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PROCESS FOR THE PREPARATION OF ALKYLIMIDAZOLIDONE
(METH)ACRYLATES

The present invention relates to a process for the manufacture of a compound of formula:



5 in which:

- R¹ represents hydrogen or methyl; and
- A and B each independently represent a straight- or branched-chain alkylene group having from 2 to 5 carbon atoms.

10 These compounds of formula (I) are known for their role in the formation of polymers useful as coatings and adhesives, for the treatment of paper and textiles, in particular by United States Patent US-A-2,871,223, as well as for their uses as leather
15 treatment agents, and in the production of emulsion paints. Ethylimidazolidone methacrylate (EIOM) is mainly used as wet-adhesion promoter.

The abovementioned United States Patent US-A-2,871,223 describes the preparation of EIOM by reaction
20 of 1-(2-hydroxyethyl)imidazolid-2-one (HEIO) with methacryloyl chloride.

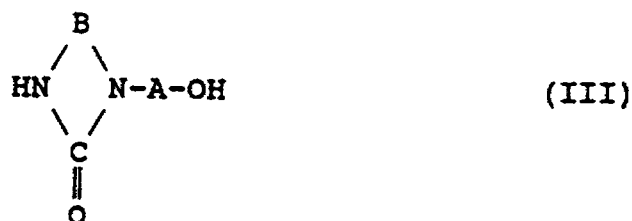
EIOM is, however, conventionally prepared by transesterification. Thus, European Patent Applications EP-A-0,236,994, EP-A-0,433,135, EP-A-0,453,638, EP-A-
25 0,571,851 and EP-A-0,619,309 and French Patent Application No. 94-13848 of 18 November 1994, in the name of the Applicant Company, describe the preparation of a compound of the formula (I) defined above, by reaction of at least one (meth)acrylate of formula (IV):



in which:

- R^1 represents H or CH_3 ; and
- R^2 represents a $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_4$ alkyl group,

with a heterocyclic alcohol of formula (III):

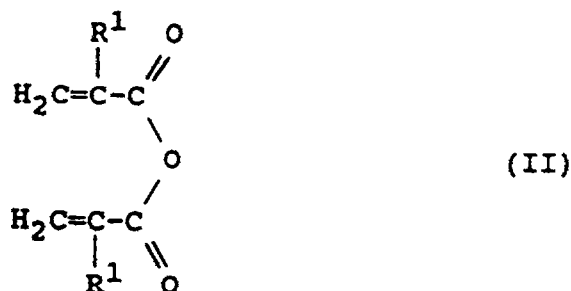


5 in which A and B have the abovementioned meanings,
in the presence of various catalysts or catalytic
systems.

10 These various transesterification processes
result in a product of formula (I) being obtained in a
form which is suitable only for certain applications.
This is in particular the case with EIOM, which is
obtained in the form of a solution in methyl methacrylate
(MMA).

15 The Applicant Company has now discovered that the
reaction of the alcohol (III) with (meth)acrylic
anhydride makes it possible to obtain, after hydrolysis
of the (meth)acrylic anhydride introduced in excess in
relation to the alcohol (III), a compound of formula (I)
in solution in (meth)acrylic acid and water, which is
20 suitable for new applications.

The subject of the present invention is therefore
a process for the manufacture of a compound of the
formula (I) as defined above, characterized in that an
anhydride of formula (II):



in which R^1 is as defined above,
is reacted with a heterocyclic alcohol of the formula
(III), also as defined above.

The above reaction can be carried out in the
5 presence of at least one esterification catalyst. Mention
may be made, as esterification catalysts, of, for
example, Brönsted acids, such as sulphuric acid, alkyl-
and arylsulphonic acids or acidic resins containing
sulphonic acid groups; Lewis acids, such as boron tri-
10 fluoride or zinc chloride; or alternatively basic
catalysts, such as tertiary amines, for example
triethylamine or 1-methylimidazole; as well as the
supported forms of these catalysts on solid supports, for
example on alumina, active charcoal, silica, acidic
15 resin, and the like.

The amount of catalyst(s) used for the implemen-
tation of the process according to the invention is
generally approximately between 0.1 and 15% on a molar
basis, preferably approximately between 0.5 and 5% on a
20 molar basis, with respect to the alcohol (III).

The reaction of the process according to the
invention is advantageously carried out with an anhydride
(II)/heterocyclic alcohol (III) molar ratio generally
approximately between 1.2 and 10, and preferably between
25 1.5 and 3.

Moreover, this reaction is preferably carried out
while bubbling air through in the presence of at least
one polymerization inhibitor used, for example, in the
proportion of 0.01 to 0.35% by weight with respect to the
30 weight of the reaction charge. Mention may be made, as
examples of polymerization inhibitors which can be used,

of, in particular, phenothiazine, hydroquinone monomethyl ether, 2,6-di-tert-butyl-para-cresol, hydroquinone, para-phenylenediamine and their mixtures in all proportions.

5 The reaction according to the invention is generally carried out at a temperature of between 20 and 120°C, and more particularly between 30 and 90°C, and at atmospheric pressure. The duration of the reaction according to the invention, which obviously depends on the reaction conditions, such as the temperature and the
10 amount of catalyst(s) used, as well as on the nature of the reactants used, is generally approximately between 2 and 15 hours.

After the reaction, the excess (meth)acrylic anhydride is hydrolysed to (meth)acrylic acid by addition
15 of water and heating between 25 and 70°C, and preferably between 30 and 50°C, in order to obtain the compound (I) in solution in water and (meth)acrylic acid.

The hydrolysis can be monitored by quantitative potentiometric determination of the (meth)acrylic acid
20 formed; it generally lasts from 3 to 10 hours.

The following examples illustrate the invention without, however, limiting it. In these examples, the percentages are indicated by weight, except when otherwise indicated.

25 Example 1

Stage 1

178.1 g of methacrylic anhydride, 99.71 g of HEIO, 0.77 g of 2,6-di-tert-butyl-para-cresol and 0.075 g of hydroquinone monomethyl ether as stabilizers and
30 2.9 g of 1-methylimidazole as catalyst are introduced into a jacketed glass reactor equipped with a probe for measuring the temperature (in the vessel contents), with a variable-speed mechanical stirrer of the anchor type and with a dip tube for introducing air.

35 The mixture is brought to 50°C while air is bubbled through at atmospheric pressure.

The reaction is monitored by thin layer chroma-

tography. The duration of the reaction is 5 hours.

Stage 2

The excess methacrylic anhydride is then hydrolysed to methacrylic acid at 50°C for 7 hours, the amount of water introduced being 96 g.

This stage is monitored by quantitative potentiometric determination of the methacrylic acid formed.

A product is thus obtained which is provided in the form of a clear, slightly yellow liquid having the following composition:

15	EIOM	31.5%
	Methacrylic acid (MAA)	32%
	Water	20%
	HEIO	0.3%
15	2,6-Di-tert-butyl-para-cresol	2500 ppm

The conversion of the HEIO, the EIOM yield and the selectivity for EIOM are determined by the following equations from the analysis, by HPLC liquid phase chromatography, of the crude reaction mixture.

20 Conversion of the HEIO (%)

$$C = \frac{\text{Number of moles of HEIO converted}}{\text{Number of moles of starting HEIO}} \times 100$$

EIOM yield (%)

25

$$Y = \frac{\text{Number of moles of EIOM formed}}{\text{Number of moles of starting HEIO}} \times 100$$

Selectivity for EIOM (%)

30

$$S = \frac{\text{Number of moles of EIOM formed}}{\text{Number of moles of HEIO converted}} \times 100$$

Example 2

Example 1 was repeated, except that the reaction

of Stage 1 was carried out at 82°C without catalyst and while using 0.18 g of phenothiazine as stabilizer.

The results of the tests carried out are given in the table below.

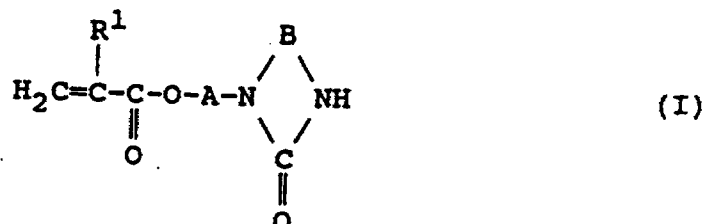
Table

Example	Reaction of Stage 1		HPLC analysis of the crude reaction mixture from Stage 2 (%)			C (%)	Y (%)	S (%)
	Temperature (°C)	Duration (h)	MAA	HEIO	BIOM			
1	50	5	32	0.3	31.5	99	67.6	66
2	82	6	30.5	4.32	33.5	89.5	53.3	59.5



CLAIMS

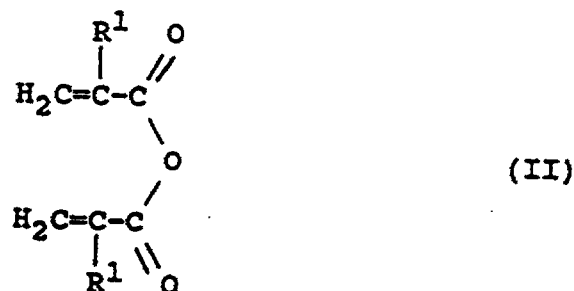
1. Process for the manufacture of a compound of formula:



in which:

- 5 - R^1 represents hydrogen or methyl; and
 - A and B each independently represent a straight- or branched-chain alkylene group having from 2 to 5 carbon atoms,

characterized in that an anhydride of formula (II):



- 10 in which R^1 is as defined above,
 is reacted with a heterocyclic alcohol of formula (III):



in which A and B have the abovementioned meanings.

2. Process according to Claim 1, characterized in that the reaction is carried out in the presence of at least one esterification catalyst chosen in particular from Brönsted acids, such as sulphuric acid, alkyl- and arylsulphonic acids or acidic resins containing sulphonic acid groups; Lewis acids, such as boron trifluoride or zinc chloride; or alternatively basic catalysts, such as
- 15



tertiary amines, for example triethylamine or 1-methyl-imidazole; as well as the supported forms of these catalysts on solid supports, for example on alumina, active charcoal, silica or acidic resin.

- 5 3. Process according to Claim 2, characterized in that the catalyst or catalysts is/are introduced in the proportion of 0.1 to 15% on a molar basis with respect to the alcohol (III), in particular in the proportion of 0.5 to 5% on a molar basis with respect to the alcohol (III).
- 10 4. Process according to one of Claims 1 to 3, characterized in that the reactants are used in an anhydride (II)/alcohol (III) molar ratio of between 1.2 and 10, and preferably between 1.5 and 3.
- 15 5. Process according to one of Claims 1 to 4, characterized in that the reaction is carried out in the presence of at least one polymerization inhibitor used in particular in the proportion of 0.01 to 0.35% by weight with respect to the weight of the reaction charge.
- 20 6. Process according to Claim 5, characterized in that the polymerization inhibitor is chosen from phenothiazine, hydroquinone monomethyl ether, 2,6-di-tert-butyl-para-cresol, hydroquinone, para-phenylenediamine and their mixtures in all proportions.
- 25 7. Process according to one of Claims 1 to 6, characterized in that the reaction is carried out at a temperature of between 20 and 120°C, in particular between 30 and 90°C.
- 30 8. Process according to one of Claims 1 to 7, characterized in that the reaction is carried out for a duration of 2 to 15 hours.
- 35 9. Process according to one of Claims 1 to 8, characterized in that, after the reaction, the excess (meth)acrylic anhydride is hydrolysed to (meth)acrylic acid by addition of water and heating between 25 and 70°C, preferably between 30 and 50°C, in order to obtain the compound (I) in solution in water and (meth)acrylic acid.

10. Process according to Claim 9, characterized in that the hydrolysis is carried for a duration of 3 to 10 hours.

