

- 1 -

Glycerol-based product, process for obtaining same and use thereof in the
manufacture of dichloropropanol

The present patent application claims the benefit of the French Patent application FR 07/59891 filed on 17 December 2007, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference.

5 The present invention relates to a product based on glycerol (1,2,3-propanetriol), to a process for obtaining it and to the use of the product in the manufacture of dichloropropanol and of derived products such as epichlorohydrin and the products derived from epichlorohydrin.

10 Dichloropropanol, for example, is a reaction intermediate in the manufacture of epichlorohydrin and epoxy resins (Kirk-Othmer Encyclopedia of Chemical Technology, Fourth Edition, 1992, Vol. 2, page 156, John Wiley & Sons, Inc.).

15 According to known processes, dichloropropanol can be obtained in particular by hypochlorination of allyl chloride, by chlorination of allyl alcohol and by hydrochlorination of glycerol. The latter process exhibits the advantage that the dichloropropanol can be obtained starting from fossil raw materials or renewable raw materials and it is known that petrochemical natural resources, from which the fossil materials originate, for example oil, natural gas or coal, available on Earth are limited.

20 The known processes have the problem of resulting in the accumulation of nitrogen-based products in various steps of the process of manufacturing dichloropropanol, more particularly in the recycle streams, and in the purges of said streams. These nitrogen-containing compounds contribute to the formation of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) in certain treatments of said streams, such as high-temperature oxidations (HTOs). The formation of NO_x necessitates equipping
25 these operations with a unit for abatement of these NO_x . This is because NO_x contribute to the formation of photochemical smog (a significant form of atmospheric pollution) and to the formation of acid rain.

30 The invention aims to solve this problem by providing a novel glycerol-containing product that does not lead to the aforementioned problem when it is used in a process for manufacturing dichloropropanol.

In one aspect, there is provided a process for manufacturing dichloropropanol, in which a product that contains glycerol and at least one nitrogen-containing compound and of which the total content of nitrogen-containing compound expressed as elemental nitrogen (N) is less than or equal to 1 g of nitrogen (N)/kg of product is reacted with a chlorinating agent.

In another aspect, there is provided the use of a product that contains glycerol and at least one nitrogen-containing compound and of which the total content of nitrogen-containing compound expressed as elemental nitrogen (N) is less than or equal to 1 g of nitrogen (N)/kg of product in a process for manufacturing dichloropropanol.

Disclosed herein is a product that contains glycerol and at

- 2 -

least one nitrogen-containing compound and of which the total content of nitrogen-containing compound expressed as elemental nitrogen (N) is less than or equal to 1 g N/kg of product.

5 Molecular nitrogen N₂ is not a nitrogen-containing compound according to the invention.

One of the main features of the invention lies in the low content of nitrogen-containing compounds of the glycerol-containing product. The advantage of using, for the manufacture of dichloropropanol, a product that contains glycerol and a low content of nitrogen-containing product according to
10 the invention is in avoiding the accumulation of nitrogen-containing products in the various steps of the process, more particularly in the recycle streams, and in the purges of said streams. The low content of nitrogen-containing compounds of the purges allows them to be treated in high-temperature oxidation (HTO) processes with a reduced production of nitrogen oxides. This makes it possible to
15 reduce the size of an abatement unit for these nitrogen oxides at the outlet of the HTO process, or even to completely eliminate such a unit.

In the product according to the invention, the glycerol content is generally greater than or equal to 500 g of glycerol per kg of product, preferably greater than or equal to 750 g/kg, more preferably greater than or equal to 900 g/kg,
20 even more preferably greater than or equal to 950 g/kg and most particularly preferably greater than or equal to 990 g/kg.

In the product according to the invention, the nitrogen-containing compound may be an inorganic compound or an organic compound. The expression "inorganic compound" is understood to mean the compounds for
25 which the molecule does not contain a carbon-carbon bond or a carbon-hydrogen bond. The expression "organic compound" is understood to mean the compounds for which the molecule contains at least one carbon-carbon bond or one carbon-hydrogen bond.

The inorganic nitrogen-containing compound may be chosen from
30 ammonia, hydrazine, chloramines, inorganic ammonium salts, metallic or ammonium nitrates, nitrites, cyanates, isocyanates or isothiocyanates, and mixtures thereof.

The organic nitrogen-containing compound may be chosen from the nitrogen-containing compounds present in cells of plant origin, preferably from
35 amines, urea, proteins, peptides, amino acids, nucleic acids, glucosinolates and degradation products thereof (isothiocyanates, thiocyanates, nitriles,

oxazolidinethiones), nitrogen-containing phospholipids, chlorophyll, sinapine, and mixtures thereof.

Examples of nitrogen-containing phospholipids are phosphatidylcholine, phosphatidylserine and phosphatidylethanolamine.

5 Examples of free amino acids or amino acids that can be incorporated in the composition of peptides or of proteins are alanine, arginine, aspartic acid, cystine, glutamic acid, glycine, histidine, isoleucine, leucine, lysine, methionine, phenylalanine, proline, serine, threonine, tryptophan, tyrosine and valine.

10 Examples of glucosinolates are sinigrin, gluconapin, glucobrassicinapin, glucorucin, glucobetteroin, glucoraphanin, glucoalyssin, gluconasturtiin, progoitrin, napoleiferin, glucobrassicin and neoglucobrassicin.

15 The nitrogen-containing compound may originate from the glycerol manufacturing process, for example from plant oils used to manufacture glycerol or else from steam corrosion inhibitors, certain heating operations possibly taking place by injection of live steam into the oils or the glycerol for example. These corrosion inhibitors are generally hydrazine or amines, such as isopropylamine, for example.

20 In the product according to the invention, the total content of nitrogen-containing compound expressed as elemental nitrogen is preferably less than or equal to 0.5 g N/kg, more preferably less than or equal to 0.1 g N/kg, even more preferably less than or equal to 0.05 g N/kg, more preferably still less than or equal to 0.03 g N/kg, and most particularly preferably less than or equal to 0.01 g N/kg. This content is generally greater than or equal to 0.1 mg N/kg.

25 The glycerol-based product according to the invention generally contains diols, usually at least one diol, as described in Application FR 07/56125 in the name of Solvay SA, from page 1, line 18 to page 2, line 7, and the content of which is incorporated here by reference.

30 The diol is preferably chosen from 1,2-ethanediol (ethylene glycol), 1,2-propanediol (propylene glycol), 1,3-propanediol, 1,2-butanediol, 2,3-butanediol, 1,4-butanediol or a mixture of at least two of them. 1,3-propanediol is particularly preferred.

35 In the glycerol-based product according to the invention, the diol content is generally greater than or equal to 0.001 g diol/kg of product and less than or equal to 100 g diol/kg of product. This content is often less than or equal to 90 g/kg, commonly less than or equal to 50 g/kg, frequently less than or equal to 10 g/kg, usually less than or equal to 1 g/kg, commonly less than or equal to

- 4 -

0.5 g/kg and frequently less than or equal to 0.2 g/kg. This amount is often greater than or equal to 0.005 g/kg, frequently greater than or equal to 0.01 g/kg, commonly greater than or equal to 0.04 g/kg and usually greater than or equal to 0.1 g/kg.

5 The glycerol-based product according to the invention generally contains glycerol alkyl ethers, usually at least one glycerol alkyl ether, as described in Application WO2007/144335 in the name of Solvay SA, from page 2, line 6 to page 3, line 25, and the content of which is incorporated here by reference. Glycerol methyl ethers are preferred.

10 The content of glycerol alkyl ethers is generally less than or equal to 90 g/kg, often less than or equal to 50 g/kg, frequently less than or equal to 10 g/kg, commonly less than or equal to 5 g/kg, usually less than or equal to 1 g/kg, more commonly less than or equal to 0.5 g/kg and more frequently less than or equal to 0.2 g/kg. This content is generally greater than or equal to
15 0.005 g/kg, frequently greater than or equal to 0.01 g/kg, often greater than or equal to 0.04 g/kg and more frequently greater than or equal to 0.1 g/kg.

 The glycerol-based product according to the invention may also comprise monoalcohols, usually at least one monoalcohol, such as the monoalcohols described in Application WO2007/144335 in the name of Solvay SA, from
20 page 3, lines 26 to 31, and the content of which is incorporated here by reference.

 These monoalcohols are generally present in a content greater than or equal to 0.001 g/kg of product, and often greater than or equal to 0.01 g/kg. This content is generally less than 20 g/kg of product and often less than or equal to 2 g/kg of product.

25 The glycerol-based product according to the invention may also comprise water in a content generally greater than or equal to 0.1 g/kg and less than or equal to 100 g/kg. This amount is often less than or equal to 50 g/kg and more preferably less than or equal to 20 g/kg.

 The glycerol-based product according to the invention may also comprise
30 alkyl esters of fatty acids, usually at least one alkyl ester of fatty acids, glycerol esters, generally at least one glycerol ester, and salts, commonly at least one salt, as described in Application WO2007/144335 in the name of Solvay SA, from page 5, lines 12 to 20.

 These esters are generally present in a content greater than or equal to
35 0.1 g/kg of product, often greater than or equal to 1 g/kg and frequently greater than or equal to 5 g/kg. This content is generally less than 50 g/kg of product,

- 5 -

and often less than or equal to 30 g/kg of product, and more often less than or equal to 10 g/kg of product.

These salts are generally present in a content greater than or equal to 0.0005 g/kg of product, often greater than or equal to 0.001 g/kg and frequently greater than or equal to 0.01 g/kg. This content is generally less than 10 g/kg of product, and often less than or equal to 1 g/kg of product, and more often less than or equal to 0.1 g/kg of product.

The diols, glycerol alkyl ethers, monoalcohols, water, alkyl esters of fatty acids, glycerol esters and salts may be by-products of glycerol manufacturing processes such as, for example, the processes for conversion of oils or fats of plant or animal origin via transesterification, saponification or hydrolysis reactions.

The glycerol-based product according to the invention may be obtained starting from fossil raw materials or starting from renewable raw materials, preferably starting from renewable raw materials, as described in WO 2005/054167 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, and especially the passages from page 1, line 26, to page 4, line 2.

The glycerol-based product according to the invention may also be obtained starting from fossil raw materials or starting from renewable raw materials, preferably starting from renewable raw materials, as described in WO 2006/100312 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, and especially the passages from page 3, line 29, to page 5, line 24.

The glycerol-based product according to the invention may also be obtained starting from fossil raw materials or starting from renewable raw materials, preferably starting from renewable raw materials, as described in PCT/EP2008/057876 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, and especially the passages at page 10, lines 16 to 23, and at page 11, lines 4 to 25.

The glycerol-based product according to the invention may have an alkali metal and/or alkaline earth metal content as described in WO 2006/100315 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, and especially the passages from page 7, line 11, to page 9, line 10.

The glycerol-based product according to the invention may contain elements other than alkali metals and alkaline earth metals as described in WO 2006/100319 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 2, line 3 to 8, and from page 6,

- 6 -

line 20, to page 9, line 14.

The glycerol-based product according to the invention contains generally an amount of heavy compounds other glycerol and whose boiling temperature under a pressure of 1 bar absolute is at least 15°C greater than the boiling
5 temperature of dichloropropanol as described in WO 2006/1000316 of SOLVAY SA the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 15, line 32, to page 17, line 33.

The glycerol-based product according to the invention may contain glycerol oligomers as described in FR 08/52206 of SOLVAY SA the content of
10 which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 1, line 19, to page 4, line 18.

The invention also relates to a process for preparing the glycerol-containing product and at least one nitrogen-containing compound and of which the total content of nitrogen-containing compound expressed as elemental
15 nitrogen is less than or equal to 1 g N/kg, comprising the following steps:

- a) the seeds of a plant are subjected to a pressing operation so as to obtain an oil of plant origin;
- b) the plant oil is subjected to a transesterification operation in the presence of methanol so as to obtain glycerol containing at least one nitrogen-containing
20 compound and of which the total content of nitrogen-containing compound expressed as elemental nitrogen is greater than 1 g N/kg; and
- c) the glycerol-containing product from step b) is subjected to a supplementary step c) in which a fraction of the glycerol obtained in step b) is subjected to at least one purification treatment so as to obtain a product that contains
25 glycerol and at least one nitrogen-containing compound and of which the total content of nitrogen-containing compound expressed as elemental nitrogen is less than or equal to 1 g N/kg of product.

The treatment from step c) may be carried out under reduced pressure. The treatment may be chosen from the group consisting of evaporative concentration, evaporative crystallization, distillation, fractional distillation, stripping,
30 liquid/liquid extraction operations, and any combination of at least two of them.

The term "evaporative concentration" is understood to mean a process of partial evaporation of the product that makes it possible to concentrate the residual product to less volatile entities. The term "evaporative crystallization" is
35 understood to mean a process resulting in the crystallization of a compound by removing, by vaporization, a compound that promotes its dissolution in the

- 7 -

medium. These processes are described in "Perry's Chemical Engineers' Handbook" in the 11th section of the 7th edition.

5 The term "distillation" is understood to mean the type of separation conventional in chemical engineering and described, for example, in "Perry's Chemical Engineers' Handbook" in the 13th section of the 7th edition.

The term "fractional distillation" is understood to mean a series of distillations where the distillate is withdrawn batchwise.

10 The term "stripping" is understood to mean the separation of a substance by entrainment using the vapour of a pure material. In the process according to the invention, this material can be any compound which is inert with respect to glycerol, such as, for example, steam, air, nitrogen and carbon dioxide.

15 The term "liquid/liquid extraction" is understood to mean bringing into contact with an appropriate completely or partially immiscible solvent that makes it possible to selectively extract the desired compounds, optionally according to a countercurrent process, as described in "Perry's Chemical Engineers' Handbook" in the 15th section of the 7th edition.

20 The stripping, evaporative concentration, evaporative crystallization, liquid/liquid extraction and distillation treatments may be combined, for example in a stripping column surmounted by a distillation section or in a partial evaporator supplying a distillation column or by combining a liquid/liquid extraction, stripping of the residual solvent contained in the glycerol-enriched stream and distillation of the solvent enriched with extracted compounds.

25 The diols, monoalcohols and the glycerol alkyl ethers are recovered in the distilled, evaporated or stripped fraction and the purified glycerol-based product constitutes an intermediate cut from the distillation, evaporation or stripping treatment. The major part of the nitrogen-containing impurities constitutes the residue from the treatment.

30 When the treatment consists of a partial evaporation of the product, the temperature of the glycerol-rich zone is generally greater than or equal to 0°C, often greater than or equal to 80°C and frequently greater than or equal to 100°C. This temperature is generally less than or equal to 280°C, often less than or equal to 250°C, and frequently less than or equal to 200°C. The temperature in the glycerol-depleted zones is generally greater than or equal to -20°C, preferably greater than or equal to -10°C, particularly preferably greater than or equal to 0°C. This temperature is generally at most equal to the temperature of the glycerol-rich zone, preferably at least 5°C below this temperature, particularly

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preferably at least 10°C below this temperature.

When the treatment is carried out by liquid/liquid extraction, the temperature is generally greater than or equal to 20°C, preferably greater than or equal to 40°C, more particularly greater than or equal to 50°C. This temperature is generally less than or equal to 200°C, preferably less than or equal to 150°C and more particularly preferably less than or equal to 120°C.

The treatment pressure is generally greater than or equal to 0.001 mbar. This pressure is generally less than or equal to 1 bar, often less than or equal to 0.5 bar, frequently less than or equal to 0.3 bar and more specifically less than or equal to 0.25 bar. When the treatment comprises a separate evaporation step, the latter is generally carried out at a pressure less than or equal to 2 bar absolute, preferably at a pressure less than or equal to 1 bar absolute, particularly preferably at a pressure less than or equal to 0.5 bar absolute. It is generally carried out at a pressure greater than or equal to 0.1 mbar, preferably at a pressure greater than or equal to 0.2 mbar. When the evaporation step is combined with a distillation or fractional distillation step, it is carried out at a pressure at least equal to the pressure of the step carried out at the lowest pressure, preferably at a pressure at least 10 mbar greater than the pressure of the step carried out at the lowest pressure. The stripping step is generally carried out at a pressure less than or equal to 5 bar, preferably less than or equal to 2 bar.

In the distillation treatments with or without stripping, the reflux ratio is generally greater than or equal to 1%, often greater than or equal to 5% and frequently greater than or equal to 10%. This reflux ratio is generally less than or equal to 99% and often less than or equal to 50%. The expression "reflux ratio" is understood to mean, for a continuous distillation, the ratio between the flow rate of the vaporized fraction to the reboiler and the flow rate of the residue.

The expression "reflux ratio" is understood to mean, for a batchwise, fractional distillation, the ratio of the amount vaporized relative to the final residue.

The amount of the fraction distilled is generally less than or equal to 300 g/kg, often less than or equal to 100g/kg of the glycerol-based product.

The distillation, fractional distillation or stripping treatment may be preceded or followed by an operation which may, for example, be a settling, centrifugation, filtration, adsorption or ion-exchange operation. When it is a settling operation, the operation can be improved by passing through a coalescer. The adsorption operation is preferably an operation for adsorption on activated

carbon.

The invention also relates to a process for manufacturing dichloropropanol in which a product that contains glycerol and at least one nitrogen-containing compound, of which the total content of nitrogen-containing compound
5 expressed as elemental nitrogen is less than or equal to 1 g N/kg, is reacted with a chlorinating agent.

The chlorinating agent generally comprises hydrogen chloride. The hydrogen chloride can be gaseous hydrogen chloride, an aqueous hydrogen chloride solution or a mixture of the two.

10 The chlorinating agent is as described in Patent Application WO2005/054167, from page 4, line 32, to page 5, line 18, in the name of Solvay SA, the content of which is incorporated here by reference.

In the process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention, the hydrogen chloride is often a gas or a mixture of a gas and an
15 aqueous solution of hydrogen chloride. The hydrogen chloride may at least partially be obtained from processes such as described in WO 2005/054167 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 4, line 32, to page 5, line 35.

The hydrogen chloride may at least partially be obtained from processes
20 such as described in WO 2006/106153 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 2, line 10, to page 3, line 20, and from page 11, line 1 to page 18, line 29.

The hydrogen chloride may at least partially be obtained from processes
25 such as described in WO 2007/144335 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 12, line 14, to page 14, line 21.

In the process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention, the hydrogen chloride may purified such as described in FR 08/56138
30 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 2, line 33, to page 16, line 21.

In the process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention, the reaction between glycerol and the chlorinating agent the hydrogen
chloride may be carried out in a reaction medium such described in
WO 2006/106154 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein
35 by reference, especially the passages from page 14, line 15, to page 17, line 10.

The reaction with the chlorinating agent may be carried out in the presence

- 10 -

of a catalyst, preferably a carboxylic acid or a carboxylic acid derivative, as described in Patent Application WO 2005/054167, from page 6, line 24, to page 7, line 35 in the name of Solvay SA, the content of which is incorporated here by reference. Succinic, glutaric, adipic, suberic, sebacic, dodecanoic, citric
5 and butanetetracarboxylic acids and derivatives thereof such as acid chlorides, anhydrides, esters and salts, are examples of catalysts. Carboxylic acid derivatives that contain nitrogen such as, for example, amides and nitriles, are not considered to be carboxylic acid derivatives that can be used as catalysts.

The reaction with the chlorinating agent may be carried out for a catalyst
10 concentration, at a temperature, at a pressure and at a residence time such described in WO 2005/054167 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 8, line 1, to page 10, line 10.

The reaction with the chlorinating agent may be carried out such described
15 in WO 2007/054505 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 1, line 24 to page 6, line 18.

The process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention may be carried in equipments made of or coated with materials which are
20 resistant to the corrosion by the chlorinating agent under the process conditions, such as described in WO 2005/054167 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 6, line 3 to 23.

The process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention
25 may be carried in equipments made of or coated with materials which are resistant to the corrosion by the chlorinating agent under the process conditions, such as described in WO 2006/100317 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 23, line 22, to page 27, line 25.

The process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention
30 may be carried in equipments made of or coated with materials which are resistant to the corrosion by the chlorinating agent under the process conditions, such as described in PCT/EP2008/062845 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 1, line 30,
35 to page 9, line 17, and from page 19, line 25, to page 20, line 33.

The chlorination reaction is preferably carried out in a liquid reaction

medium.

The chlorination reaction may be carried out in the presence of a solvents such described in WO 2005/054167 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages at page 11,
5 line 12 to 36.

However, the solvent can not comprise nitrogen in its molecule.

The reaction with the chlorinating agent may be carried out in the presence of a liquid phase comprising heavy compounds other than glycerol such described in WO 2006/100316 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is
10 incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages at page 2, lines 18 to 25 and from page 15, line 32, to page 17, line 33. Heavy-compounds that contain nitrogen are not considered as heavy compounds that can be present in the liquid phase.

The reaction with the chlorinating agent may be carried out under stirring
15 with a stirring system such described in PCT/EP2008/056688 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 1, line 30, to page 2, line 33, and from page 6, line 22, to page 14, line 31.

The reaction with the chlorinating agent may be carried out in a liquid
20 reaction medium such described in WO 2006/106154 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 1, line 29, to page 2, line 6, and from page 14, line 15, to page 17, line 10.

The reaction with the chlorinating agent may be carried out in a reactor the
25 feeding of which is described in WO 2008/107468 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 1, line 29, to page 4, line 27, and from page 5, line 34, to page 9, line 17.

The dichloropropanol formed can be separated from the other constituents of the reaction medium by any separation treatment, for example by distillation,
30 stripping, extraction or adsorption. After this treatment, the other constituents of the reaction medium may be subjected to supplementary separation treatments and/or be recycled. Among the other constituents of the reaction medium are heavy products such as, for example, various chlorinated and/or esterified isomers of glycerol oligomers.

35 In the process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention, a separation of the dichloropropanol from the other compounds of the

reaction mixture may be carried out such described in WO 2005/054167 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 12, line 1, to page 17, line 20.

5 In the process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention, a separation of the dichloropropanol from the other compounds of the reaction mixture may be carried out such described in WO 2006/100312 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages at page 2, lines 3 to 10, at page 20, line 28 to page 28, line 20.

10 In the process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention, a separation of the dichloropropanol from the other compounds of the reaction mixture may be carried out according to methods such described in WO 2006/100313 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages at page 2, lines 1 to 23, and from page 21, line 7, to page 25, line 25.

15 In the process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention, a separation of the dichloropropanol from the other compounds of the reaction mixture may be carried out according to methods such described in WO 2006/100314 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages at page 2, lines 6 to page 3, line 4, and from page 18, line 33, to page 22, line 29.

20 In the process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention, a separation of the dichloropropanol from the other compounds of the reaction mixture may be carried out according to methods such described in WO 2006/100320 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 1, line 30, to page 2, line 23 and from page 6, line 25, to page 10, line 28.

25 In the process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention, a separation of the dichloropropanol from the other compounds of the reaction mixture may be carried out according to methods such described in WO 2006/100315 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages at page 2, lines 3 to 29, and from page 23, line 3, to page 24, line 13.

30 In the process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention, a separation of the dichloropropanol from the other compounds of the reaction mixture may be carried out according to methods such described in

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WO 2008/110588 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 1, line 31, to page 27, line 25.

5 In the process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention, the dichloropropanol is generally obtained as a mixture of 1,3-dichloropropan-2-ol and 2,3-dichloropropan-1-ol isomers such described in WO 2006/100319 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 23, line 34, to page 24, line 29.

10 In the process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention may contain halogenated ketones such described in WO 2006/100311 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages at page 2, lines 22 to 34, and from page 22, line 8, to page 23, line 35.

15 In the process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention, water which have been in contact with equipment walls may be treated such described in FR 08/56059 of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference, especially the passages from page 1, line 7, to page 16, line 34.

20 The advantage of using, for the manufacture of dichloropropanol, a product that contains glycerol and a low content of nitrogen-containing product according to the invention is in avoiding the accumulation of nitrogen-containing products in the various steps of the process, more particularly in the recycle streams, and in the purges of said streams. The low content of nitrogen-containing compounds of the purges allows them to be treated in high-temperature oxidation (HTO) processes with a reduced production of nitrogen
25 oxides. This makes it possible to reduce the size of an abatement unit for these nitrogen oxides at the outlet of the HTO process, or even to completely eliminate such a unit.

30 The nitrogen oxides, in particular NO and NO₂, may combine with the volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the presence of sunlight to form a photochemical smog, a significant form of atmospheric pollution, particularly in summer. These nitrogen oxides may also dissolve in atmospheric moisture to form nitric acid, a component of acid rain.

35 The invention also relates to a process in which the dichloropropanol obtained according to the process for manufacturing dichloropropanol according to the invention is subjected to a dehydrochlorination reaction in order to obtain epichlorohydrin.

In this process, another part of the dichloropropanol may be obtained by a process other than glycerol chlorination. This process may be chosen from allyl chloride hypochlorination and allyl alcohol chlorination processes.

5 The process for dehydrochlorinating the dichloropropanol may be such as described in WO 2005/054167 in the name of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is hereby incorporated by reference, more specifically the passage from page 19, line 12 to page 22, line 30.

10 The process for dehydrochlorinating the dichloropropanol may be such as described in WO 2006/100311 in the name of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is hereby incorporated by reference, more specifically the passages at page 2, lines 22 to 25, and from page 22, line 28 to page 23, line 35.

15 The process for dehydrochlorinating the dichloropropanol may be such as described in WO 2008/101866 in the name of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is hereby incorporated by reference, more specifically the passage from page 2, line 1 to page 13, line 16.

The process for dehydrochlorinating the dichloropropanol may be such as described in PCT/EP2008/057247 in the name of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is hereby incorporated by reference, more specifically the passages from page 9, line 22 to page 13, line 31.

20 The process for dehydrochlorinating the dichloropropanol may be such as described in PCT/EP2008/057245 in the name of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is hereby incorporated by reference, more specifically the passages from page 6, line 16, to page 7, line 22.

25 The process for manufacturing the epichlorohydrin may be integrated in a global scheme for preparing dichloropropanol such as described in WO 2006/106155 in the name of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is hereby incorporated by reference, more specifically the passages at page 2, lines 26 to 31, and from page 22, line 10 to page 23, line 19.

30 The process for dehydrochlorinating the dichloropropanol may also be carried out such as described in WO 2006/100318 in the name of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is hereby incorporated by reference, more specifically the passages at page 2, lines 23 to page 3, line 26, and from page 24, line 17 to page 31, line 18.

35 The process for dehydrochlorinating the dichloropropanol may also comprise a step of treating water effluents such as described in EP 08150925.9 in the name of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is hereby incorporated by

- 15 -

reference, more specifically the passages from page 1, line 18 to page 12, line 10.

The invention also relates to the use of a product that contains glycerol and at least one nitrogen-containing compound, of which the total content of nitrogen-containing compound expressed as elemental nitrogen is less than or
5 equal to 1 g N/kg, is reacted with a chlorinating agent, in a process for manufacturing dichloropropanol. The characteristics of the process for manufacturing dichloropropanol are such as described hereabove.

The invention finally relates to a manufacturing process in which the epichlorohydrin obtained in the process for manufacturing epichlorohydrin
10 according to the invention, is subjected to a reaction with:

- at least one compound containing at least one active hydrogen atom, so as to obtain an epoxy derivative, selected from the group consisting of an epoxy resin, a glycidyl ether, a glycidyl ester, a glycidyl amide, a glycidyl imide, or any mixture of at least two of them; or
- 15 ▪ ammonia, an amine, a polyaminoamide or a polyimine, so as to obtain a coagulant; or
- a polyamine, a polyamide or a polyaminoamide, so as to obtain a water-resistant resin for the treatment of paper; or
- an amine or an amine salt, so as to obtain a cationizing agent; or
- 20 ▪ a compound chosen from phosphoric acid, a phosphoric acid salt, a phosphorus oxychloride, a phosphoric acid ester, a phosphonic acid, a phosphonic acid ester, a phosphonic acid salt, a phosphinic acid, a phosphinic acid ester, a phosphinic acid salt, a phosphine oxide or a phosphine, so as to obtain a flame retardant; or
- 25 ▪ a monoalcohol containing from 12 to 16 carbon atoms or an amine chosen from linear alkylamines, branched alkylamines, cycloalkylamines, alkoxyamines, amino alcohols, cyclic amines containing at least one nitrogen atom in a cyclic structure, an alkylenediamine, a polyetherdiamine or a polyalkylenepolyamine, so as to obtain auxiliaries that are incorporated into
30 the composition of detergents; or
- an alkylene oxide, a phenylene oxide or to a reaction with an alkylene oxide, a phenylene oxide and a glycidyl ether or to a homopolymerization reaction, so as to obtain an epichlorohydrin elastomer.

The epichlorohydrin and the uses of epichlorohydrin may be such as
35 described in PCT/EP2008/057247 in the name of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is hereby incorporated by reference, more specifically the passages from

page 1, line 18 to page 9, line 21, and from page 31, line 31 to page 63, line 4.

The epichlorohydrin and the uses of epichlorohydrin may be such as described in PCT/EP2008/057246 in the name of SOLVAY SA, the content of which is hereby incorporated by reference, more specifically the passages from
5 page 1, line 24 to page 10, line 14, and from page 13, line 3 to page 44, line 8.
Example 1 (according to the invention)

Figure 1 represents one particular diagram of an installation which has been used to apply the dichloropropanol production process according to the invention.

10 A reactor (4) was continuously supplied, at 117°C and at 1.14 bar absolute pressure, with glycerol containing 0.02 g N/kg via the line (1), a stream of hydrogen chloride via the line (2) and a stream of catalyst via the line (3). A distillation column (6) was supplied via the line (5) with a gas phase produced by the reactor (4); the residue from the column (6) was recycled via the line (8) to
15 the reactor (4). The production stream (7) contains most of the water produced by the process and a first part of the dichloropropanol production. A liquid purge was drawn off from the reactor (4) via the line (9) and supplied an evaporator (10) where an operation of partial evaporation of the mixture was carried out by heating; the gas phase which contains most of the hydrogen chloride and most of
20 the water from the stream (9) was recycled via the line (11) to the bottom of the column (6). A stripping column (13) was supplied by the liquid phase coming from the evaporator (10) via the line (12) and by a stream of nitrogen introduced via the line (16); a second part of the dichloropropanol production was collected at the top of the column (13) via the line (14) and the residue from the column
25 (13) was recycled to the reactor (4) via the line (15). A purge of the mixture flowing in the line (15) was carried out batchwise via the line (17). The nitrogen content of the purge was 0.12 g N/kg.

CLAIMS

1. Process for manufacturing dichloropropanol, in which a product that contains glycerol and at least one nitrogen-containing compound and of which the total content of nitrogen-containing compound expressed as elemental nitrogen (N) is less than or equal to 1 g of nitrogen (N)/kg of product is reacted with a chlorinating agent.

2. Process according to Claim 1, in which the total content of nitrogen-containing compound of said product expressed as elemental nitrogen (N) is less than or equal to 0.03 g of nitrogen (N)/kg of product and wherein said product comprises glycerol in a content greater than or equal to 500 g/kg of product.

3. Process according to Claim 2 wherein said product comprises glycerol in a content greater than or equal to 990 g/kg of product.

4. Process according to any one of Claims 1 to 3, in which the nitrogen-containing compound is chosen from the nitrogen-containing compounds present in cells of plant origin.

5. Process according to Claim 4, in which the nitrogen-containing compound is an organic compound chosen from amines, urea, proteins, peptides, amino acids, nucleic acids, glucosinolates and degradation products thereof (isothiocyanates, thiocyanates, nitriles, oxazolidinethiones), nitrogen-containing phospholipids, chlorophyll, sinapine, and mixtures thereof.

6. Process according to any one of Claims 1 to 5 wherein the product that contains glycerol and at least one nitrogen-containing compound and of which the total content of nitrogen-containing compound expressed as elemental nitrogen (N) is less than or equal to 1 g of nitrogen (N)/kg of product has been obtained by a process comprising the following steps:

- a) the seeds of a plant are subjected to a pressing operation so as to obtain an oil of plant origin;
- b) the plant oil is subjected to a transesterification operation in the presence of methanol so as to obtain a product that contains glycerol and at least one nitrogen-containing compound and of which the total content of nitrogen-containing compound expressed as elemental nitrogen (N) is greater than 1 g N/kg; and
- c) the glycerol-containing product from step b) is subjected to a supplementary step in which a fraction of the glycerol obtained in step b) is subjected to at least one purification treatment so as to obtain a product that contains

glycerol and at least one nitrogen-containing compound and of which the total content of nitrogen-containing compound expressed as elemental nitrogen (N) is less than or equal to 1 g of nitrogen (N)/kg of product.

5 7. Process according to any one of Claims 1 to 5 wherein the product that contains glycerol and at least one nitrogen-containing compound and of which the total content of nitrogen-containing compound expressed as elemental nitrogen (N) is less than or equal to 1 g of nitrogen (N)/kg of product has been obtained by subjecting to at least one purification treatment a product (II) that contains glycerol and at least
10 one nitrogen-containing compound and of which the total content of nitrogen-containing compound expressed as elemental nitrogen (N) is greater than 1 g N/kg, said product (II) having been obtained by subjecting a plant oil to a transesterification operation in the presence of methanol and said plant oil having been obtained by subjecting the seeds of a plant to a pressing operation.

15 8. Process according to Claim 6 or 7, in which the purification treatment is optionally carried out under reduced pressure, and is chosen from evaporative concentration, evaporative crystallization, distillation, fractional distillation, stripping, liquid/liquid extraction operations and any combination of at least two of them.

20 9. Process according to any of Claims 1 to 8, in which the dichloropropanol is subjected to a dehydrochlorination reaction in order to obtain epichlorohydrin.

25 10. Process according to Claim 9, in which the epichlorohydrin obtained is subjected to a reaction with:

- at least one compound containing at least one active hydrogen atom, so as to obtain an epoxy derivative, selected from the group consisting of an epoxy resin, a glycidyl ether, a glycidyl ester, a glycidyl amide, a glycidyl imide or a mixture of
30 at least two of them; or
- ammonia, an amine, a polyaminoamide or a polyimine, so as to obtain a coagulant; or
- a polyamine, a polyamide or a polyaminoamide, so as to obtain a water-resistant resin for the treatment of paper; or
- 35 ▪ an amine or an amine salt, so as to obtain a cationizing agent; or
- a compound chosen from phosphoric acid, a phosphoric acid salt, a phosphorus oxychloride, a phosphoric acid ester, a phosphonic acid, a phosphonic acid ester, a phosphonic acid salt, a phosphinic acid, a phosphinic acid ester, a phosphinic acid salt, a phosphine oxide or a phosphine, so as to obtain a flame retardant; or
- 40 ▪ a monoalcohol containing from 12 to 16 carbon atoms or an amine chosen

- from linear alkylamines, branched alkylamines, cycloalkylamines, alkoxyamines, amino alcohols, cyclic amines containing at least one nitrogen atom in a cyclic structure, an alkylenediamine, a polyetherdiamine or a polyalkylenepolyamine, so as to obtain an auxiliary that is incorporated into the composition of detergents; or
- 5 ▪ an alkylene oxide, a phenylene oxide or to a reaction with an alkylene oxide, a phenylene oxide and a glycidyl ether or to a homopolymerization reaction, so as to obtain an epichlorohydrin elastomer.

- 10 11. Use of a product that contains glycerol and at least one nitrogen-containing compound and of which the total content of nitrogen-containing compound expressed as elemental nitrogen (N) is less than or equal to 1 g of nitrogen (N)/kg of product in a process for manufacturing dichloropropanol.