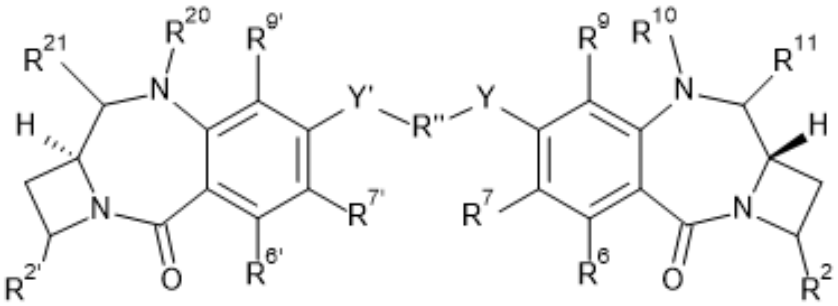
CLAIMS

1. A compound of formula **IV**:



IV

and salts and solvates thereof, wherein:

R^2 and $R^{2'}$ are H;

R^6 and R^9 are independently selected from H, R, OH, OR, SH, SR, NH_2, NHR, NRR', nitro, Me_3Sn and halo;

where R and R' are independently selected from optionally substituted C_{1-12} alkyl, C_{3-20} heterocyclyl and C_{5-20} aryl groups;

either

(a) R^7 is selected from H, R, OH, OR, SH, SR, NH_2, NHR, NRR', nitro, Me_3Sn and halo; $R^{7'}$ is selected from H, R, OH, OR, SH, SR, NH_2, NHR, NRR', nitro, Me_3Sn and halo; or

(b) R^7 and $R^{7'}$ together form a group which is: (i) $-O-(CH_2)_n-O-$, where n is from 7 to 16; or (ii) $-O-(CH_2CH_2O)_m-$, where m is 2 to 5;

R″ is a C_{3-12} alkylene group, which chain may be interrupted by one or more heteroatoms, e.g. O, S, NR^{N2} (where R^{N2} is H or C_{1-4} alkyl), and/or aromatic rings, e.g. benzene or pyridine;

Y and Y' are selected from O, S, or NH;

$R^{6'}$ and $R^{9'}$ are selected from the same groups as R^6, and R^9 respectively;

either

(i-a) R^{10} and R^{11} together form a double bond between the N and C atoms to which they are bound; or

(i-b) R^{10} is H and R^{11} is selected from OH and OR^A, where R^A is C_{1-4} alkyl; or

(i-c) R^{10} and R^{11} are both H;

either

(ii-a) R^{20} and R^{21} together form a double bond between the N and C atoms to which they are bound; or

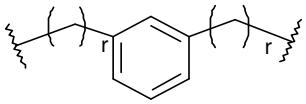
(ii-b) R^{20} is H and R^{21} is selected from OH and OR^B, where R^B is C_{1-4} alkyl; or

(ii-c) R^{20} and R^{21} are both H.

2. A compound according to claim 1, wherein both Y and Y' are O.

3. A compound according to either claim 1 or claim 2, wherein R'' is C_{3-7} alkylene.

4. A compound according to either claim 1 or claim 2, wherein R'' is a group of formula:

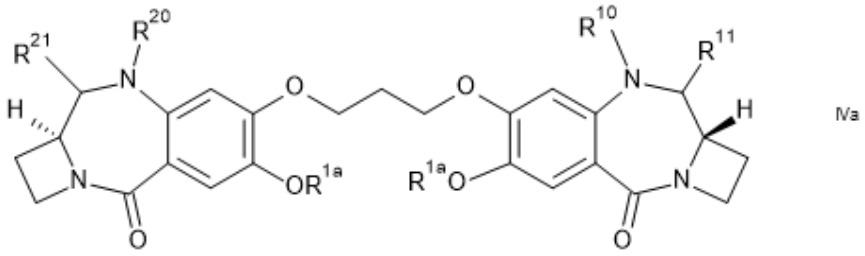


where r is 1 or 2.

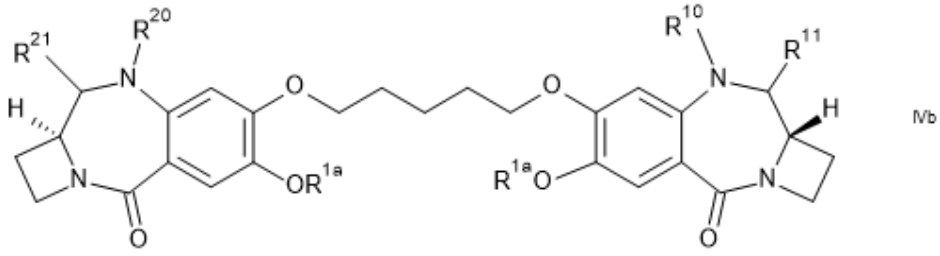
5. A compound according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein R^9 is H, R^6 is H, R^7 and $R^{7'}$ are independently a C_{1-4} alkyloxy group.

6. A compound according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein $R^{6'}$ is the same group as R^6, $R^{7'}$ is the same group as R^7, $R^{9'}$ is the same group as R^9 and Y' is the same group as Y.

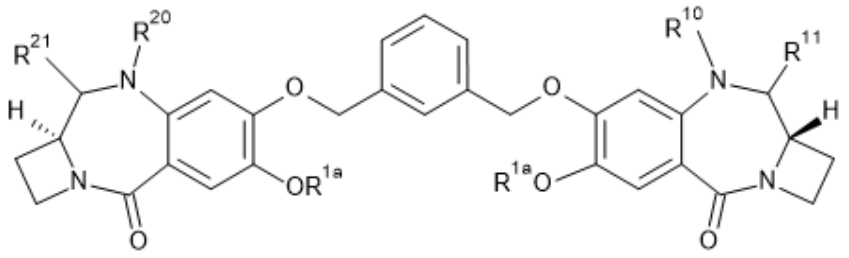
7. A compound according to claim 1 which is of formulae IVa, IVb or IVc:



IVa



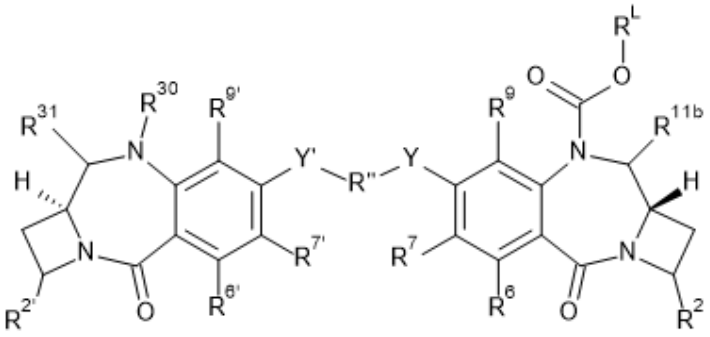
IVb



IVc

where R^{1a} is selected from methyl and benzyl.

8. A compound of formula **I**:



I

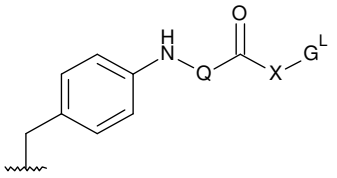
and salts and solvates thereof, wherein:

Y, Y', R", R^2, $R^{2'}$, R^6, $R^{6'}$, R^7, $R^{7'}$, R^9 and $R^{9'}$ are as defined in any one of claims 1 to 9;

R^{11b} is selected from OH, OR^A, where R^A is C_{1-4} alkyl; and

R^L is a linker for connection to a cell binding agent, which is selected from:

(iiia):

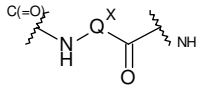


IIIa

,

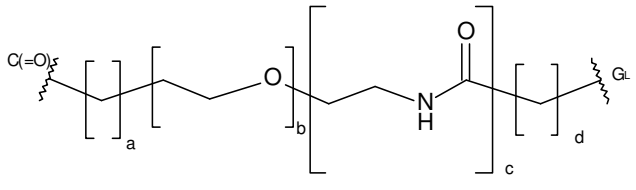
wherein

Q is:



, where Q^X is such that Q is an amino-acid residue, a dipeptide residue or a tripeptide residue;

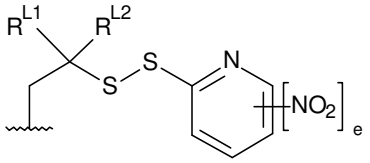
X is:



where a = 0 to 5, b = 0 to 16, c = 0 or 1, d = 0 to 5;

G^L is a linker for connecting to a Ligand Unit; and

(iiib):



IIIb

, where R^{L1} and R^{L2} are independently selected from H and methyl, or together with the carbon atom to which they are bound form a cyclopropylene or cyclobutylene group; and e is 0 or 1;

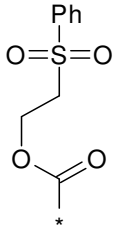
either:

(a) R^{30} and R^{31} together form a double bond between the N and C atoms to which they are bound; or

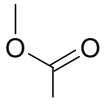
(b) R^{30} is H and R^{31} is selected from OH and OR^B, where R^B is C_{1-4} alkyl;

(c) R^{30} and R^{31} are both H; or

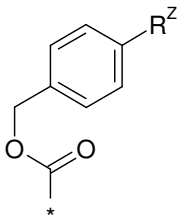
(d) R^{31} is OH or OR^B, where R^B is C_{1-4} alkyl and R^{30} is selected from:



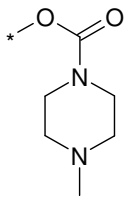
(i) ;



(ii) ;



(iii) , where R^Z is selected from:



(z-i) ;

(z-ii) $OC(=O)CH_3$;

(z-iii) NO_2;

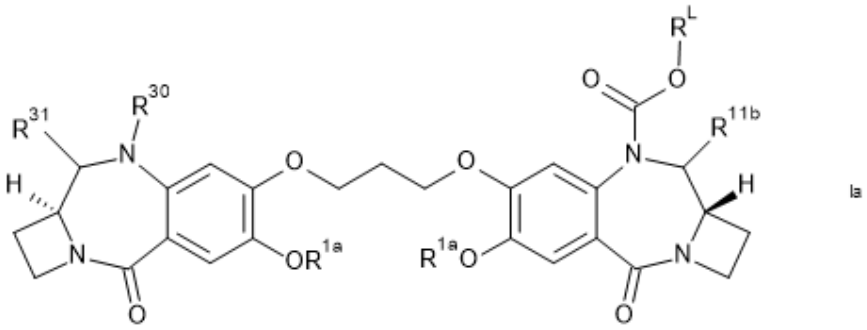
(z-iv) OMe;

(z-v) glucoronide;

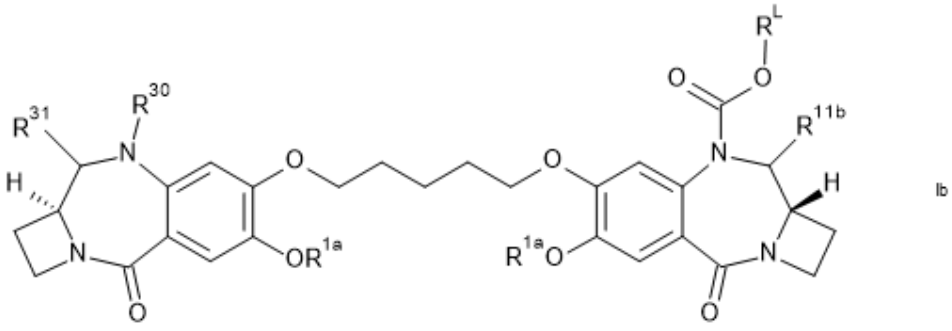
(z-vi) $NH\text{-}C(=O)\text{-}X_1\text{-}NHC(=O)X_2\text{-}NH\text{-}C(=O)\text{-}R^{ZC}$, where $-C(=O)-X_1-NH-$ and $-C(=O)-X_2-NH-$ represent natural amino acid residues and R^{ZC} is selected from Me, OMe, CH_2CH_2OMe, and $(CH_2CH_2O)_2Me$.

9. A compound according to claim 8, wherein R^{30} and R^{31} together form a double bond between the N and C atoms to which they are bound.

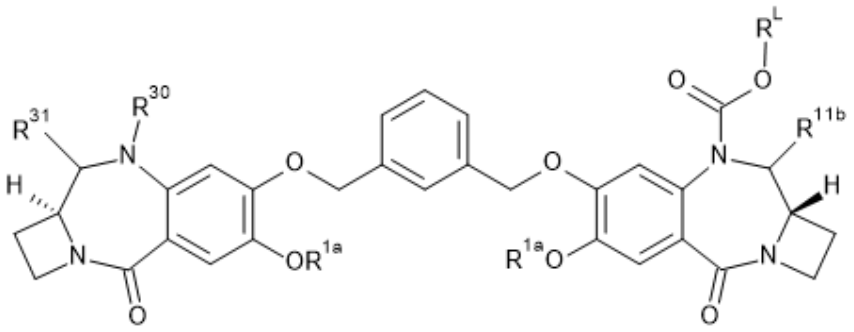
10. A compound according to claim 8, which is of formula Ia, Ib or Ic:



Ia



Ib



Ic

where R^{1a} is selected from methyl and benzyl.

11. A compound according to any one of claims 8 to 10, wherein R^L is of formula IIIa, and Q is a dipeptide residue selected from:

^{CO}-Phe-Lys-^{NH},

^{CO}-Val-Ala-^{NH},

^{CO}-Val-Lys-^{NH},

^{CO}-Ala-Lys-^{NH},

^{CO}-Val-Cit-^{NH},

^{CO}-Phe-Cit-^{NH},

^{CO}-Leu-Cit-^{NH},

^{CO}-Ile-Cit-^{NH},

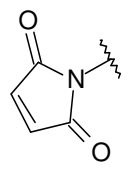
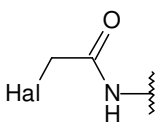
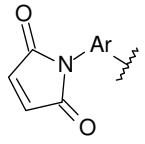
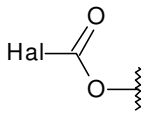
^{CO}-Phe-Arg-^{NH}, and

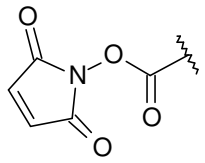
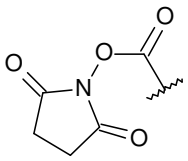
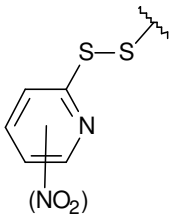
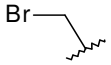
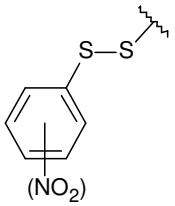
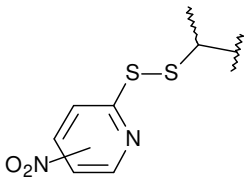
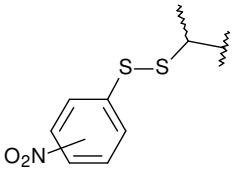
^{CO}-Trp-Cit-^{NH}.

12. A compound according to any one of claims 8 to 10 wherein R^L is of formula IIIa and, a is 0, c is 1 and d is 2, and b is from 0 to 8.

13. A compound according to claim 12, wherein b is 0, 4 or 8.

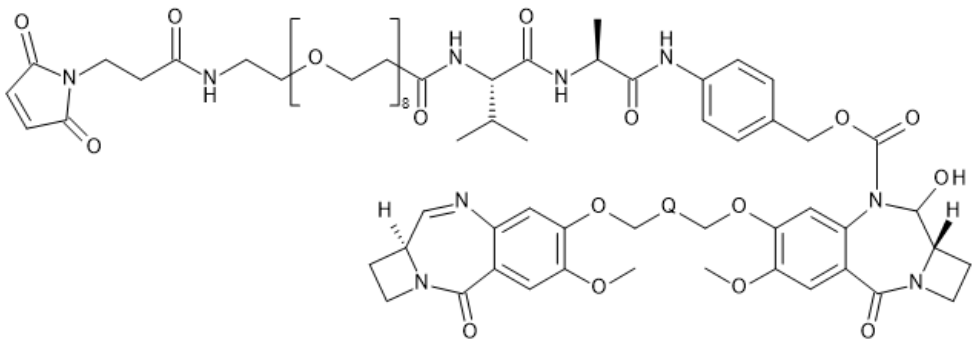
14. A compound according to any one of claims 8 to 13, wherein R^L is of formula IIIa and G^L is selected from:

(G^{L1-1})		(G^{L4})	 Where Hal = I, Br, Cl
(G^{L1-2})		(G^{L5})	

(G^{L2})		(G^{L6})	
(G^{L3-1})	 where the NO_2 group is optional	(G^{L7})	
(G^{L3-2})	 where the NO_2 group is optional	(G^{L8})	
(G^{L3-3})	 where the NO_2 group is optional	(G^{L9})	
(G^{L3-4})	 where the NO_2 group is optional		

where Ar represents a C_{5-6} arylene group.

15. A compound according to claim 14, wherein G^L is G^{L1-1}.



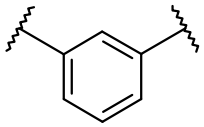
(Id)

16. A compound according to claim 8, wherein the compound is of formula Id:

where Q is selected from:

(a) $-CH_2-$;

(b) $-C_3H_6-$; and

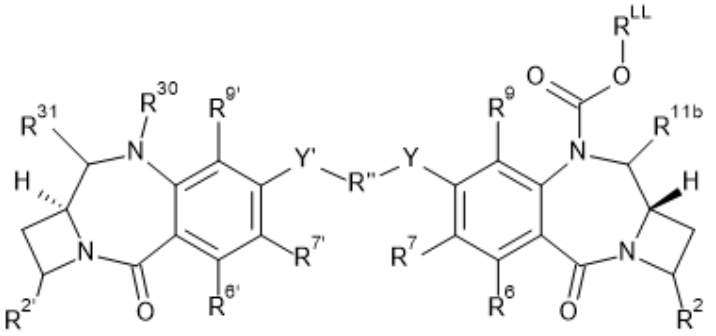


(c) .

17. A conjugate of formula II:

$$L - (D^L)_p \qquad (II)$$

wherein L is a Ligand unit (i.e., a targeting agent), D^L is a Drug Linker unit of formula I':



I'

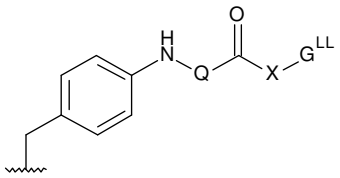
wherein:

Y, Y', R", R^2, $R^{2'}$, R^6, $R^{6'}$, R^7, $R^{7'}$, R^9 and $R^{9'}$ are as defined in any one of claims 1 to 6;

R^{11b}, R^{30} and R^{31} are as defined in either of claims 8 and 9;

R^{LL} is a linker for connection to a cell binding agent, which is selected from:

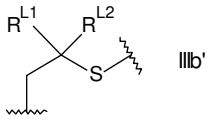
(iiia):


IIIa'

,

where Q and X are as defined in either claims 8 and 11 to 13 and G^{LL} is a linker connected to a Ligand Unit; and

(iiib):

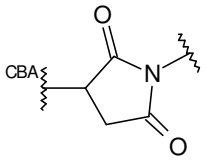
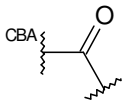
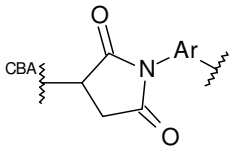
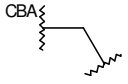
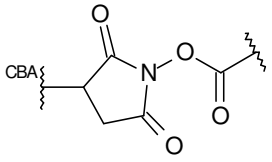
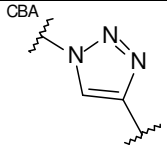
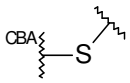
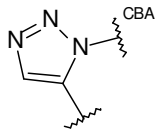
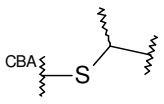
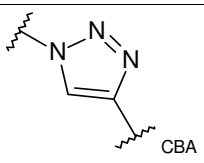

IIIb'

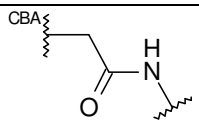
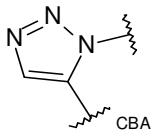
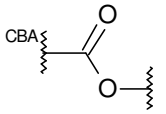
,

where R^{L1} and R^{L2} are as defined in claim 8;

wherein p is an integer of from 1 to 20.

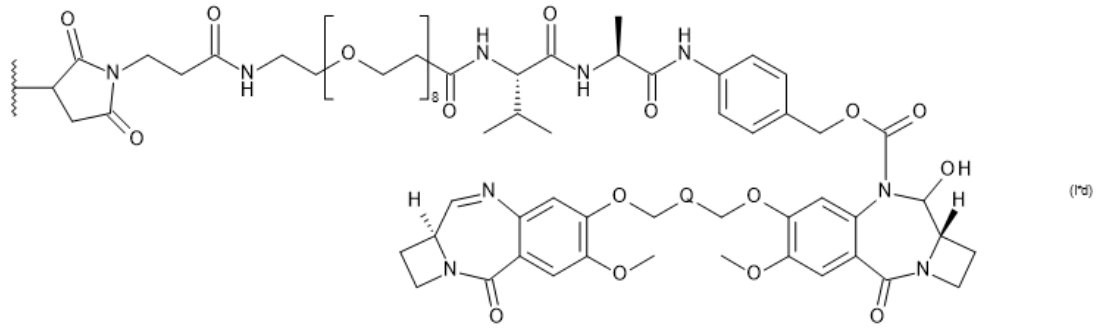
18. A conjugate according to claim 17, wherein G^{LL} is selected from:

(G^{LL1-1})		(G^{LL6})	
(G^{LL1-2})		(G^{LL7})	
(G^{LL2})		(G^{LL8-1})	
(G^{LL3-1})		(G^{LL8-2})	
(G^{LL3-2})		(G^{LL9-1})	

(G^{LL4})		(G^{LL9-2})	
(G^{LL5})			

where Ar represents a C_{5-6} arylene group.

19. A conjugate according to claim 17, wherein D^L is of formula (Id'):

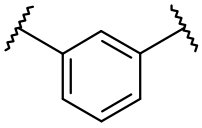


(Id)

where Q is selected from:

(a) $-CH_2-$;

(b) $-C_3H_6-$; and

(c) .

20. A composition comprising a mixture of conjugates according to any one of claims 17 to 19, wherein the average p in the mixture of conjugate compounds is about 1 to about 8.

21. The conjugate according to any one of claims 17 to 19, for use in therapy.

22. A pharmaceutical composition comprising the conjugate of any one of claims 17 to 19, and a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent, carrier or excipient.

23. The conjugate according to any one of claims 17 to 19 or the pharmaceutical composition according to claim 22, for use in the treatment of a proliferative disease in a subject.

24. Use of the conjugate according to any one of claims 17 to 19 in the manufacture of a medicament for treating a proliferative disease.