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A B S T R A C T

LUBRICATING BASE OIL PREPARATION PROCESS

A process for the preparation of lubricating base oils comprising subjecting a waxy raffinate to a pour point reducing treatment, and recovering lubricating base oil therefrom, which waxy raffinate has been prepared by contacting a hydrocarbon product with hydrogen in the presence of a hydroconversion catalyst, comprising a catalytically active metal having hydrogenation/dehydrogenation activity supported on a refractory oxide carrier, under conditions such that hydrocracking and hydroisomerisation of the hydrocarbon product occur to yield the waxy raffinate, wherein the hydrocarbon product has been prepared by:

(a) contacting a mixture of carbon monoxide and hydrogen with a hydrocarbon synthesis catalyst at elevated temperature and pressure to prepare a substantially paraffinic hydrocarbon wax; and

(b) contacting the hydrocarbon wax so-obtained with hydrogen in the presence of a hydrogenation catalyst under conditions such that substantially no isomerisation or hydrocracking of the hydrocarbon wax occurs to yield the hydrocarbon product.