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(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **SHELL
INTERNATIONALE RESEARCH MAATSCHAPPIJ
B.V.** [NL/NL]; NL-2596 HR The Hague (NL).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **VAN DER HEIDE,
Evert** [NL/NL]; NL-1031 CM Amsterdam (NL). **NISBET,
Timothy Michael** [GB/NL]; NL-1031 CM Amsterdam
(NL). **VAPORCIYAN, Garo Garbis** [US/US]; Houston,
Texas 77079 (US).

(74) Agent: **SHELL INTERNATIONAL B.V.**; Intellectual
Property services, NL-2501 CJ The Hague (NL).

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(54) Title: PROCESS FOR THE PREPARATION OF AN ALKANEDIOL AND A DIALKYL CARBONATE

(57) Abstract: An alkanediol and a dialkyl carbonate are prepared in a process comprising: (a) contacting an alkylene carbonate with an alkanol feedstock under transesterification conditions in a reactive distillation zone to obtain a top stream comprising dialkyl carbonate and the alkanol and a bottom stream comprising the alkanediol; (b) separating the top stream comprising dialkyl carbonate and the alkanol into an alkanol-rich stream and a dialkyl carbonate-rich stream; (c) recovering the dialkyl carbonate, optionally after further purification, from the dialkyl carbonate-rich stream; and (d) recycling at least part of the alkanol-rich stream to the reactive distillation zone as part of the alkanol feedstock, wherein the alkanol-rich stream is split in at least two portions, and at least one portion is condensed and freed from compounds with a lower boiling point than the alkanol. The process is especially suitable for the production of propylene glycol and dimethyl carbonate from propylene carbonate and methanol.



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