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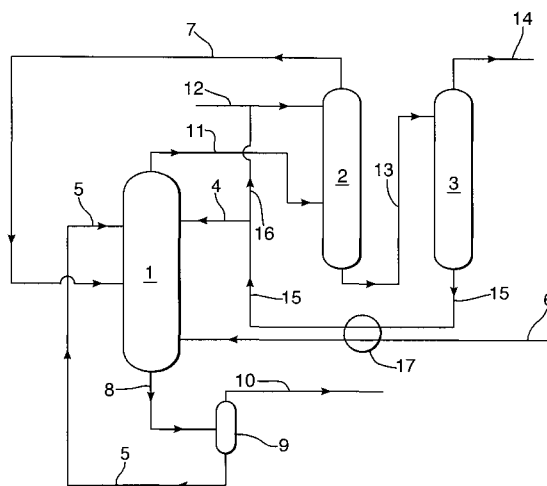
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(54) Title: PROCESS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF DIALKYL CARBONATE AND ALKANEDIOL



(57) Abstract: An alkylene carbonate and an alkanol are subjected to transesterification to yield a dialkyl carbonate and alkanediol in a process comprising (a) the alkylene carbonate and an alkanol feedstock are introduced into a reaction zone to react in the presence of a transesterification catalyst to yield an alkanediol-rich stream and a stream comprising dialkyl carbonate and alkanol, which streams are separated; (b) the stream comprising dialkyl carbonate and alkanol is passed to an extractive distillation zone in which an extractant is added to the stream; (c) from the extractive distillation zone an alkanol-rich vapour stream is obtained and a bottom stream containing the extractant and the dialkyl carbonate; (d) the bottom stream from step (c) is separated in a second non-extractive distillation zone to yield a dialkyl carbonate-rich top stream and a extractant-rich bottom stream; (e) the extractant-rich bottom stream is at least partly recycled to the extractive distillation zone, wherein the extractant-rich bottom stream is used as heat source for the alkanol feedstock. The process is suitable for the production of propylene glycol and dimethyl and diethyl carbonate from propylene carbonate and methanol or ethanol, respectively.

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