CLAIMS

1. Process for preparing alkoxylated alcohols, wherein an alkoxylated alcohol which contains more than 200 parts per million by weight of a Group IA or Group IIA metal ion is contacted with a sulfonic acid;
wherein after contacting the alkoxylated alcohol with the sulfonic acid, the alkoxylated alcohol is sulfated by contacting the alkoxylated alcohol with a sulfating agent;
wherein the sulfating agent is selected from sulfur trioxide, complexes of sulfur trioxide with bases, chlorosulfonic acid, sulfamic acid and oleum.