

GAS OIL COMPOSITION

[Field of the Invention]

The present invention relates to gas oil compositions comprising an environment friendly base gas oil produced from a triglyceride-containing hydrocarbon that is an animal or vegetable fat and/or a component originating therefrom, and having excellent life cycle CO₂ emission properties, oxidation stability, oxidation stability and lubricity.

[Background of the Invention]

Conventional base gas oils are known to be produced by subjecting a straight gas oil or straight kerosene, produced by atmospheric distillation of crude oil to hydrotreating or hydrodesulfurization. Conventional gas oil compositions are produced by blending one or more types of these base gas oils and base kerosenes. If necessary, these gas oil compositions are blended with additives such as a cetane number improver or a detergent (see, for example, Non-Patent Document 1 below).

Patent Document 1 (Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open Publication No. 2003-171670) discloses a method for producing hydrocarbons for the purpose of

producing hydrocarbons using a natural fat or a derivative thereof and a food oil waste as the raw material, wherein hydrocarbons are produced by reacting natural fats, natural fats waste or derivatives thereof with activated hydrogen in the presence of a catalyst selected from the group consisting of metal catalysts, alloy catalysts, metal-supported catalysts and alloy-supported catalysts.

Patent Document 2 (Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open Publication No. 2005-538204) discloses a fuel composition for diesel engines comprising 0.1-99 percent by volume of a component or a mixture of components produced from biological raw materials originating from plants and/or fish and 0-20 percent by volume of components containing oxygen. Both components are mixed in diesel components based on crude oil and/or fractions from Fischer-Tropsch process.

Patent Document 3 (Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open Publication No. 2004-189885) discloses an environment friendly diesel fuel composition comprising a methyl ester or ethyl ester of a saturated or unsaturated fatty acid wherein the carbon number constituting the fatty acid is from 6 to 20 or a mixture

thereof.

However, it is very difficult to design a high quality fuel that can achieve at a higher level requisite performances such as life cycle CO₂ emission properties, oxidation stability, and lubricity, and a realistic method that can produce a fuel satisfying various performances that have been required for commercial fuels has not been disclosed.

(1) Patent Document 1: Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open Publication No. 2003-171670

(2) Patent Document 2: Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open Publication No. 2005-538204

(3) Patent Document 3: Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open Publication No. 2004-189885

(4) Non-Patent Document 1: Konishi Seiichi, "Nenryo Kogaku Gairon", Shokabo Publishing Co., Ltd., March, 1991, pages 136 to 144

[Disclosure of the Invention]

Meanwhile, in recent years, gas oil, which is a fuel for internal combustion engines has been required to be decreased in sulfur and aromatic contents in an effort to improve the air environment and reduce the environment load rapidly. At the same time, in order to cope with the global warming issue, gas oil has also

been required to possess fuel properties contributive to a further improvement in fuel consumption and also effective in carbon dioxide (CO₂) reduction. As one means for achieving these objects, it has been studied to use synthetic fuels and bio diesel fuels (hereinafter also referred to as "BDF"), which are reproducible energies, as alternative fuels.

BDF is mainly composed of a fatty acid alkyl ester mixture produced from natural animal and vegetable fats and thus contains almost no aromatic compound largely contributive to the production of soot discharged with an exhaust gas or no sulfur component giving significant influences such as poisoning of an exhaust-gas post-processing catalyst. Furthermore, BDF itself is an oxygen-containing compound having oxygen in its molecules and thus has been attracted as a dominant possibility for an alternative fuel. BDF is positioned as a reproducible energy because it is derived from plants. Thus, the carbon dioxide caused by BDF is not counted as the emissions under the carbon dioxide reduction protocol entered among nations in 1997, so-called "Kyoto Protocol", and BDF has, therefore, political merits.

However, fatty acid alkyl esters produced from natural animal and vegetable fats contain

intrinsically a large quantity of heavy components and thus are poor in burnout properties upon combustion in engines, possibly leading to the increased emissions of unburned hydrocarbons. The fatty acid alkyl esters are oxygen-containing compounds and thus have the likelihood that they would increase aldehydes exhausted upon combustion. BDF that contains a large amount of a fatty acid alkyl ester containing many saturated fatty acid groups is poor in handling characteristics as fuel because it is solid at ambient temperatures and would fail to secure low-temperature fluidity. BDF that contains a large amount of unsaturated fatty acid groups is poor in oxidation stability due to its chemical composition and would be deteriorated in color and cause the formation of sludge and adverse affects on engine parts. Further, there is a strong concern that a fatty acid glyceride and an alkyl alcohol, which are raw materials for producing a fatty acid alkyl ester by refining and a glycerin mixture which is by-product thereof adversely affects engine parts and fuel injection systems.

These tendencies are not found in the existing gas oils. Therefore, the same problems arise upon use of BDF not only alone but also in combination with an existing gas oil. It is thus necessary to give more

concerns to the properties of BDF itself as well as the oxidation stability, low temperature properties and combustibility thereof when mixed with an existing gas oil than ever before.

Accordingly, the use of BDF, which is a fatty acid alkyl ester mixture produced from a natural animal or vegetable fat can not provide for a gas oil composition that is reduced in harmful exhaust components and excellent in life cycle CO₂ emission properties, oxidation stability and lubricity. Since these engine performances are closely related to other fuel properties, it is very difficult to produce a fuel of high quality which can satisfy all of these requisite performances in a higher level. Furthermore, there has not existed any example or idea on the basis of studies of a fuel which can satisfy all the performances required for commercially available fuel oils and a realistic process for producing such a fuel.

The present invention was made in view of the foregoing situations and has an object to provide a gas oil composition comprising an environment friendly base gas oil produced from a triglyceride-containing hydrocarbon that is an animal or vegetable fat and/or a component originating therefrom and having excellent life cycle CO₂ emission properties, oxidation

stability and lubricity.

The present invention was accomplished as the results of extensive research and study carried out to solve the above problems.

That is, the present invention (Invention I) relates to a gas oil composition comprising a fraction and 50 to 300 ppm by mass of a lubricity improver (LI), the fraction being produced by bringing in the presence of hydrogen a feedstock comprising an animal or vegetable fat and/or a component originating therefrom and a sulfur-containing hydrocarbon compound mixed therewith so that the total sulfur content of the mixture is from 1 ppm by mass to 2 percent by mass, into contact with a catalyst comprising a porous inorganic oxide comprising two or more types of elements selected from aluminum, silicon, zirconium, boron, titanium and magnesium and one or more types of metals selected from the group consisting of the Groups 6A and 8 metals of the periodic table, supported thereon, under conditions where the hydrogen pressure is from 2 to 13 MPa, the liquid hourly space velocity is from 0.1 to 3.0 h^{-1} , the hydrogen oil ratio is from 150 to 1500 NL/L, and the reaction temperature is from 150 to 480°C, the composition having a 95% distillation temperature of 360°C or lower, a sulfur content of 10 ppm by mass or

less, an oxygen content of 1 percent by mass or less, a fatty acid alkyl ester content of 3.5 percent by mass or less, an acid number of 0.13 mgKOH/g or less, a methanol content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, a glyceride content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, and an HFRR wear scar diameter (WS1.4) of 460 μm or smaller.

The present invention (Invention II) relates to a gas oil composition comprising an oil produced by mixing 10 to 90 percent by volume of a fraction with 90 to 10 percent by volume of a petroleum hydrotreated oil having a middle distillate refined from crude oil, and 50 to 300 ppm by mass of a lubricity improver (LI), the fraction being produced by bringing in the presence of hydrogen a feedstock comprising an animal or vegetable fat and/or a component originating therefrom and a sulfur-containing hydrocarbon compound mixed therewith so that the total sulfur content of the mixture is from 1 ppm by mass to 2 percent by mass, into contact with a catalyst comprising a porous inorganic oxide comprising two or more types of elements selected from aluminum, silicon, zirconium, boron, titanium and magnesium and one or more types of metals selected from the group consisting of the Groups 6A and 8 metals of the periodic table, supported thereon, under conditions where the hydrogen pressure is from 2 to 13

MPa, the liquid hourly space velocity is from 0.1 to 3.0 h⁻¹, the hydrogen oil ratio is from 150 to 1500 NL/L, and the reaction temperature is from 150 to 480°C, the composition having a 95% distillation temperature of 360°C or lower, a sulfur content of 10 ppm by mass or less, an oxygen content of 1 percent by mass or less, a fatty acid alkyl ester content of 3.5 percent by mass or less, an acid number of 0.13 mgKOH/g or less, a methanol content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, a glyceride content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, and an HFRR wear scar diameter (WS1.4) of 460 µm or smaller.

The present invention (Invention III) also relates to a gas oil composition comprising an oil produced by mixing 95 to 50 percent by volume of a mixture of 10 to 90 percent by volume of a fraction and 90 to 10 percent by volume of a petroleum hydrotreated oil having a gas oil fraction refined from crude oil with 5 to 50 percent by volume of a petroleum hydrotreated oil having a kerosene fraction refined from crude oil, and 50 to 300 ppm by mass of a lubricity improver (LI), the fraction being produced by bringing in the presence of hydrogen a feedstock comprising an animal or vegetable fat and/or a component originating therefrom and a sulfur-containing hydrocarbon compound mixed therewith so that the total sulfur content of the

mixture is from 1 ppm by mass to 2 percent by mass, into contact with a catalyst comprising a porous inorganic oxide comprising two or more types of elements selected from aluminum, silicon, zirconium, boron, titanium and magnesium and one or more types of metals selected from the group consisting of the Groups 6A and 8 metals of the periodic table, supported thereon, under conditions where the hydrogen pressure is from 2 to 13 MPa, the liquid hourly space velocity is from 0.1 to 3.0 h^{-1} , the hydrogen oil ratio is from 150 to 1500 NL/L, and the reaction temperature is from 150 to 480°C , the composition having a 95% distillation temperature of 360°C or lower, a sulfur content of 10 ppm by mass or less, an oxygen content of 1 percent by mass or less, a fatty acid alkyl ester content of 3.5 percent by mass or less, an acid number of 0.13 mgKOH/g or less, a methanol content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, a glyceride content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, and an HFRR wear scar diameter (WS1.4) of $460 \mu\text{m}$ or smaller.

The present invention (Invention IV) also relates to a gas oil composition comprising an oil produced by mixing 95 to 50 percent by volume of a fraction with 5 to 50 percent by volume of a petroleum hydrotreated oil having a kerosene fraction refined from crude oil, and 50 to 300 ppm by mass of a lubricity improver (LI),

the fraction being produced by bringing in the presence of hydrogen a mixture of 10 to 90 percent by volume of an oil comprising an animal or vegetable fat and/or a component originating therefrom and a sulfur-containing hydrocarbon compound mixed therewith so that the total sulfur content of the mixture is from 1 ppm by mass to 2 percent by mass and 90 to 10 percent by volume of a petroleum hydrocarbon having a gas oil fraction refined from crude oil, into contact with a catalyst comprising a porous inorganic oxide comprising two or more types of elements selected from aluminum, silicon, zirconium, boron, titanium and magnesium and one or more types of metals selected from the group consisting of the Groups 6A and 8 metals of the periodic table, supported thereon, under conditions where the hydrogen pressure is from 2 to 13 MPa, the liquid hourly space velocity is from 0.1 to 3.0 h^{-1} , the hydrogen oil ratio is from 150 to 1500 NL/L, and the reaction temperature is from 150 to 480°C , the composition having a 95% distillation temperature of 360°C or lower, a sulfur content of 10 ppm by mass or less, an oxygen content of 1 percent by mass or less, a fatty acid alkyl ester content of 3.5 percent by mass or less, an acid number of 0.13 mgKOH/g or less, a methanol content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, a

glyceride content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, and an HFRR wear scar diameter (WS1.4) of 460 μm or smaller.

Preferably, the gas oil compositions of the present invention has a cold filter plugging point of -5°C or lower.

[Best Mode of Carrying out the Invention]

The present invention will be described in more detail below.

Examples of components of the gas oil compositions of the present invention include:

1) a fraction (environment friendly base gas oil) produced by bringing in the presence of hydrogen a feedstock comprising an animal or vegetable fat and/or a component originating therefrom and a sulfur-containing hydrocarbon compound mixed therewith so that the total sulfur content of the mixture is from 1 ppm by mass to 2 percent by mass, into contact with a catalyst comprising a porous inorganic oxide comprising two or more types of elements selected from aluminum, silicon, zirconium, boron, titanium and magnesium and one or more types of metals selected from the group consisting of the Groups 6A and 8 metals of the periodic table, supported thereon, under conditions where the hydrogen pressure is from 2 to 13

MPa, the liquid hourly space velocity is from 0.1 to 3.0 h⁻¹, the hydrogen oil ratio is from 150 to 1500 NL/L, and the reaction temperature is from 150 to 480°C;

2) a petroleum hydrotreated oil having a gas oil fraction refined from crude oil;

3) a petroleum hydrotreated oil having a kerosene fraction refined from crude oil; and

4) a fraction produced by bringing in the presence of hydrogen a mixture of 10 to 90 percent by volume of an oil comprising an animal or vegetable fat and/or a component originating therefrom and a sulfur-containing hydrocarbon compound mixed therewith so that the total sulfur content of the mixture is from 1 ppm by mass to 2 percent by mass and 90 to 10 percent by volume of a petroleum hydrocarbon having a gas oil fraction refined from crude oil, into contact with a catalyst comprising a porous inorganic oxide comprising two or more types of elements selected from aluminum, silicon, zirconium, boron, titanium and magnesium and one or more types of metals selected from the group consisting of the Groups 6A and 8 metals of the periodic table, supported thereon, under conditions where the hydrogen pressure is from 2 to 13 MPa, the liquid hourly space velocity is from 0.1 to 3.0 h⁻¹, the hydrogen oil ratio is from 150 to 1500 NL/L,

and the reaction temperature is from 150 to 480°C.

The environment friendly base gas oil used in the present invention is a low sulfur and low oxygen content fraction produced by hydrotreating a specific feedstock.

The feedstock is necessarily an animal or vegetable fat or a component originating therefrom. The term "an animal or vegetable fat or a component originating therefrom" used herein denotes natural or artificially made or produced animal or vegetable fats, animal or vegetable fat components and components made or produced from these fats. Examples of raw materials of the animal fats and animal oils include beef tallow, milk fat (butter), lard, mutton tallow, whale oil, fish oil, and liver oil. Examples of raw materials of the vegetable fats and vegetable oils include the seeds and other parts of coconut, palm tree, olive, safflower, rape (rape blossoms), rice bran, sunflower, cotton seed, corn, soy bean, sesame, and flaxseed. The use of fats and oil other than these would not create any problem. The feedstocks may be of solid or liquid but are preferably produced from vegetable fats or vegetable oils with the objective of easy handling, carbon dioxide absorptivity, and high productivity. Alternatively, waste oils resulting from the use of

these animal and vegetable oils for household, industry and food preparation purposes may be used as the feedstock after the residual matters are removed from these oils.

Examples of the typical composition of the fatty acid part of the glyceride compounds contained in these feedstocks include fatty acids, so-called saturated fatty acids having no unsaturated bond in the molecules, such as butyric acid (C_3H_7COOH), caproic acid ($C_5H_{11}COOH$), caprylic acid ($C_7H_{15}COOH$), capric acid ($C_9H_{19}COOH$), lauric acid ($C_{11}H_{23}COOH$), myristic acid ($C_{13}H_{27}COOH$), palmitic acid ($C_{15}H_{31}COOH$), stearic acid ($C_{17}H_{35}COOH$), and so-called unsaturated fatty acids having one or more unsaturated bonds in the molecules, such as oleic acid ($C_{17}H_{33}COOH$), linoleic acid ($C_{17}H_{31}COOH$), linolenic acid ($C_{17}H_{29}COOH$) and ricinoleic acid ($C_{17}H_{32}(OH)COOH$). In general, the hydrocarbon parts of these fatty acids contained in substances existing in nature are mostly of straight chain. However, the fatty acid may be any of those having a side chain structure, i.e., isomers as long as the properties defined by the present invention are satisfied. The unsaturated fatty acid may be any of those existence of which are generally recognized in nature as well as those having an unsaturated bond per

molecule, the position of which is adjusted through chemical synthesis as long as the properties defined by the present invention are satisfied.

The above-described feedstocks (animal or vegetable fats and components originating therefrom) contain one or more of these fatty acids, which vary depending on the raw materials. For example, coconuts oil contains a relatively large amount of saturated fatty acid groups such as lauric acid and myristic acid groups while soy bean oil contains a large amount of unsaturated fatty acid groups such as oleic acid and linoleic acid groups.

There is no particular restriction on the sulfur-containing compounds contained in the feedstock. However, examples include sulfide, disulfide, polysulfide, thiol, thiophene, benzothiophene, dibenzothiophene, and derivatives thereof. The feedstock may be mixed with a petroleum hydrocarbon fraction containing sulfur compounds.

The hydrotreating of the feedstock is carried out preferably under conditions where the hydrogen pressure is in the range of 2 to 13 MPa, the liquid hourly space velocity (LHSV) is in the range of 0.1 to 3.0 h⁻¹ and the hydrogen/oil ratio is in the range of 150 to 1500 NL/L, more preferably under conditions where the

hydrogen pressure is in the range of 3 to 12 MPa, the liquid hourly space velocity is in the range of 0.2 to 2.0 h⁻¹, and the hydrogen/oil ratio is in the range of 200 to 1200 NL/L, more preferably under conditions where the hydrogen pressure is in the range of 4 to 10.5 MPa, the liquid hourly space velocity is in the range of 0.25 to 1.0 h⁻¹, and the hydrogen/oil ratio is in the range of 300 to 1000 NL/l. Each of the conditions is a factor exerting an influence on the reaction activity. For example, if the hydrogen pressure and hydrogen/oil ratio are less than the lower limits, the reactivity tends to reduce, and the activity tends to reduce rapidly. If the hydrogen pressure and hydrogen/oil ratio exceed the upper limits, an enormous plant investment for a compressor may be required. Lower liquid hourly space velocity tends to be more advantageous for the reactions. However, if the liquid hourly space velocity is lower than the lower limit, an enormous plant investment for construction of a reactor with an extremely large volume may be required. If the liquid hourly space velocity exceeds the upper limit, the reaction tends to proceed insufficiently.

The reaction temperature can be arbitrarily adjusted so as to obtain the decomposition rate of the intended heavy fraction of the feedstock or the

intended fraction yield. Furthermore, the reaction temperatures in the pretreatment catalyst section and the hydrocracking catalyst section of the reactor can be arbitrarily adjusted, respectively so as to suppress the oxygen content of the distillate treated with the pretreatment catalyst to a level lower than the aforesaid upper limit. The average temperature in the whole reactor is set to generally from 180 to 480°C, preferably from 220 to 400°C, more preferably from 260 to 360°C. If the reaction temperature is lower than 180°C, the reaction would not proceed sufficiently. If the reaction temperature exceeds 480°C, excessive decomposition would proceed and the yield of the liquid product would be reduced.

The reactor may be of a fixed bed mode. That is, supply of hydrogen to the feedstock may be carried out in the form of counter flow or parallel flow. Alternatively, counter flow and parallel flow may be combined in a plurality of reactors. The supply mode of the feedstock is generally down flow. Gas-liquid cocurrent flow may be employed. The reactor may be a single reactor or a combination of a plurality of reactors. A single reactor with the interior segmented into a plurality of catalyst beds may also be employed. In the present invention, the distillate hydrorefined

in the reactor is fractionated into predetermined fractions through gas-liquid separation and rectification. Thereupon, if moisture is produced in association with the reaction and the sulfur components are contained in the oil to be treated, hydrogen sulfide may be generated. Therefore, a gas-liquid separation device or any other by-produced gas removal device may be installed between the plurality of reactors or in the product recovering step.

Hydrogen gas is generally introduced into a first reactor via its inlet, accompanying the feedstock, before or after the feedstock passes through a heating furnace. Alternatively, hydrogen gas may be introduced from the spaces between the catalyst beds or between a plurality of reactors for the purposes of controlling the temperature in the reactors and maintaining the hydrogen pressure over the whole reactors. Hydrogen to be introduced in such a manner is referred to as "quenching hydrogen". The ratio of the quenching hydrogen to the hydrogen introduced, accompanying the feedstock is preferably from 10 to 60 percent by volume, more preferably from 15 to 50 percent by volume. The ratio of less than the lower limit would cause a tendency that the reaction at reaction sites in the subsequent stages does not proceed sufficiently.

The ratio in excess of the upper limit would cause a tendency that the reaction near the inlet of the reactor does not proceed sufficiently.

The support of the hydrogenation catalyst may be a porous inorganic oxide containing two or more elements selected from aluminum, silicon, zirconium, boron, titanium and magnesium. The support is generally an alumina-containing porous inorganic oxide. Examples of other components constituting the support include silica, titania, zirconia, boria and magnesia. The support is preferably a composite oxide containing alumina and at least one or more components selected from the other constituting components. The support may further contain phosphorus in addition to these components. The total content of the components other than alumina is preferably from 1 to 20 percent by mass, more preferably 2 to 15 percent by mass. If the total content is less than 1 percent by mass, the resulting catalyst fails to obtain a sufficient catalytic surface area and thus would be reduced in activity. If the total content is more than 20 percent by mass, the acidic properties of the support is increased, possibly leading to a reduction in activity caused by the formation of coke. When phosphorus is contained as a support constituting component, the content of

phosphorus is from 1 to 5 percent by mass, more preferably from 2 to 3.5 percent by mass in terms of oxide.

There is no particular restriction on the raw materials that are precursors of silica, titania, zirconia, boria and magnesia that are the support constituting components other than alumina. Therefore, a solution containing silicon, titanium, zirconium, boron or magnesium is generally used. For silicon, silicic acid, sodium silicate, and silica sol may be used. For titanium, titanium sulfate, titanium tetrachloride, and various alkoxide salts may be used. For zirconium, zirconium sulfate and various alkoxide salts may be used. For boron, boric acid may be used. For phosphorus, phosphoric acid and alkali metal salts thereof may be used.

The raw materials of these support constituting components other than alumina are preferably added at any stage prior to calcination of the support. For example, the raw materials may be added to an aluminum aqueous solution which is then formed into an aluminum hydroxide gel containing these support constituting components, or may be added to a prepared aluminum hydroxide gel. Alternatively, the raw materials may be added at a step of kneading a mixture of water or

an acid aqueous solution and a commercially available alumina intermediate or boehmite powder. Preferably, these support constituting components are contained in an aluminum hydroxide gel during the process of preparation thereof. Although the mechanism exhibiting advantageous effects attained by addition of these support constituting components other than alumina has not been elucidated, it is assumed that these components form a complex oxide state together with aluminum. It is thus presumed that this increases the surface area of the support and cause some interaction with the active metals, thereby giving influences to the activity of the catalyst.

The hydrogenating catalyst contains at least one metal, preferably two or more metals selected from the Groups 6A and 8 metals of the periodic table, as an active metal. Example of such metals include Co-Mo, Ni-Mo, Ni-Co-MO, and Ni-W. Upon hydrogenation, these metals are converted to be in the form of sulfides before being used.

The total supported amount of the active metals, for example, W and Mo is preferably from 12 to 35 percent by mass, more preferably from 15 to 30 percent by mass, in terms of oxide, of the catalyst mass. If the amount is less than 12 percent by mass, the catalytic activity

would be reduced because the number of active sites is reduced. If the amount is more than 35 percent by mass, the metals fail to disperse effectively, possibly leading to a reduction in catalytic activity. The total supported amount of Co and Ni is preferably from 1.5 to 10 percent by mass, more preferably from 2 to 8 percent by mass, in terms of oxide, of the catalyst mass. If the amount is less than 1.5 percent by mass, a sufficient co-catalytic effect can not be attained, possibly leading to a reduction in catalytic activity. If the amount is more than 10 percent by mass, the metals fail to disperse effectively, possibly leading to a reduction in catalytic activity.

There is no particular restriction on the method of supporting the active metals on any of the hydrogenating catalysts. Therefore, any conventional method for producing a usual desulfurization catalyst may be employed. A method is preferably employed in which a support is impregnated with a solution containing salts of the active metals. Alternatively, an equilibrium adsorption method, pore-filling method, or incipient-wetness method is also preferably used. For example, the pore-filling method is a method in which the pore volume of a support is measured in advance, and then the support is impregnated with the same volume

of a metal salt solution. There is no particular restriction on the method of impregnating the support with a solution. Therefore, any suitable method may be used depending on the amount of the metals to be supported and physical properties of the support.

Invention I is a gas oil composition comprising a fraction (environment friendly base gas oil) and 50 to 300 ppm by mass of a lubricity and satisfying predetermined performance requirements, the fraction being produced by bringing in the presence of hydrogen a feedstock comprising an animal or vegetable fat and/or a component originating therefrom and a sulfur-containing hydrocarbon compound mixed therewith so that the total sulfur content of the mixture is from 1 ppm by mass to 2 percent by mass, into contact with a catalyst comprising a porous inorganic oxide comprising two or more types of elements selected from aluminum, silicon, zirconium, boron, titanium and magnesium and one or more types of metals selected from the group consisting of the Groups 6A and 8 metals of the periodic table, supported thereon under conditions where the hydrogen pressure is from 2 to 13 MPa, the liquid hourly space velocity is from 0.1 to 3.0 h⁻¹, the hydrogen oil ratio is from 150 to 1500 NL/L, and the reaction temperature is from 150 to 480°C and 50

to 300 ppm by mass of a lubricity improver (LI).

Invention II is a gas oil composition comprising a base gas oil produced by mixing the fraction (environment friendly base gas oil) as produced above with a petroleum hydrotreated oil having a middle distillate (kerosene fraction and/or gas oil fraction) refined from crude oil.

The mix ratio, i.e., the environment friendly base gas oil : the petroleum hydrotreated oil is 10 to 90 percent by volume : 90 to 10 percent by volume. The environment friendly base gas oil is blended in an amount of preferably 20 percent by volume or more, more preferably 30 percent by volume or more, more preferably 50 percent by volume or more.

Invention III is a gas oil comprising a base gas oil produced by mixing 95 to 50 percent by volume of a mixture of 10 to 90 percent by volume of the fraction (environment friendly base gas oil) as produced above and 90 to 10 percent by volume of a petroleum hydrotreated oil having a gas oil fraction refined from crude oil with 5 to 50 percent by volume of a petroleum hydrotreated oil having a kerosene fraction refined from crude oil.

The mix ratio of the environment friendly base gas oil to the petroleum hydrotreated oil having a gas oil

fraction refined from crude oil is preferably 20 to 80 percent by volume : 80 to 20 percent by volume, more preferably 40 to 60 percent by volume : 60 to 40 percent by volume. The mix ratio of the mixture to the petroleum hydrotreated oil having a kerosene fraction refined from crude oil is preferably 90 to 55 percent by volume : 10 to 45 percent by volume, more preferably 85 to 60 percent by volume : 15 to 40 percent by volume.

Invention IV is a gas oil composition comprising a base gas oil produced by mixing 95 to 50 percent by volume of a fraction produced by subjecting a mixture of 10 to 90 percent by volume of the aforesaid oil resulting from mixing an animal or vegetable fat and/or a component originating therefrom and a sulfur-containing hydrocarbon compound so that the total sulfur content of the mixture is from 1 ppm by mass to 2 percent by mass and 90 to 10 percent by volume of a petroleum hydrocarbon having a gas oil fraction refined from crude oil described below to a specific hydrotreatment, with 5 to 50 percent by volume of a petroleum hydrotreated oil having a kerosene fraction refined from crude oil.

The mix ratio of the fraction to the petroleum hydrotreated oil having a kerosene fraction is preferably 90 to 55 percent by volume : 10 to 45 percent

by volume, more preferably 85 to 60 percent by volume :
15 to 40 percent by volume.

The conditions for hydrotreating a mixture of 10 to 90 percent by volume of the aforesaid oil resulting from mixing an animal or vegetable fat and/or a component originating therefrom and a sulfur-containing hydrocarbon compound so that the total sulfur content of the mixture is from 1 ppm by mass to 2 percent by mass and 90 to 10 percent by volume of a petroleum hydrocarbon having a gas oil fraction refined from crude oil described below are those for producing the above-described the environment friendly base gas oil.

Examples of the petroleum hydrotreated oil having a middle distillate refined from crude oil include the hydrotreated oils of the following petroleum hydrocarbon having a gas oil fraction and petroleum hydrocarbon having a kerosene fraction.

In the present invention, examples of the petroleum hydrotreated oil having a gas oil fraction refined from crude oil include hydrorefined gas oils and hydrodesulfurized gas oils produced by hydrotreating petroleum hydrocarbons (petroleum hydrocarbons having a gas oil fraction refined from crude oil) such as straight gas oil obtained from an

atmospheric distillation unit for crude oil, vacuum gas oil produced by treating straight heavy oil or residue obtained from an atmospheric distillation unit, in a vacuum distillation unit, and catalytic-cracked or hydrotreated oil produced by catalytic-cracking or hydrotreating vacuum heavy gas oil or desulfurized fuel oil.

These petroleum hydrotreated oils may contain a plurality of base gas oil fractions and base kerosene fractions to an extent that the predetermined conditions are satisfied.

The hydrotreating of the above-described feedstock (petroleum hydrocarbon having a gas oil fraction) is generally carried out under the conditions of a reaction temperature of 170 to 320°C, a hydrogen pressure of 2 to 10 MPa, an LHSV of 0.1 to 2 h⁻¹, and a hydrogen/oil ratio of 100 to 800 NL/L, preferably a reaction temperature of 175 to 300°C, a hydrogen pressure of 2.5 to 8 MPa, an LHSV of 0.2 to 1.5 h⁻¹, and a hydrogen/oil ratio of 150 to 600 NL/l, more preferably a reaction temperature of 180 to 280°C, a hydrogen pressure of 3 to 7 MPa, an LHSV of 0.3 to 1.2 h⁻¹, and a hydrogen/oil ratio of 150 to 500 NL/L. A lower reaction temperature is advantageous for hydrogenation but is not preferable for

desulfurization. Higher the hydrogen pressure and hydrogen/oil ratio, more desulfurization and hydrogenation are accelerated. However, their economical optimum points exist. A lower LHSV is advantageous for the reaction. However, a too low LHSV is disadvantageous because an enormous plant investment for construction of a reactor with a large volume is required.

The hydrotreating unit for hydrotreating the feedstock used in the present invention may be of any structure, and a single or a plurality of reactors in combination may be used. Hydrogen may be additionally introduced into the spaces between a plurality of reactors. The hydrorefining unit may be provided with a gas-liquid separation system or a hydrogen sulfide removal system.

The reaction system of the hydrotreating unit is preferably a fixed bed system. Hydrogen may be supplied in counterflow or parallel flow with respect to the feedstock. When the hydrotreating unit has a plurality of reactors, counterflow and parallel flow may be combined. The supply mode of the feedstock is generally down flow and is preferably a gas-liquid cocurrent flow mode. Hydrogen gas may be supplied as quencher into a middle portion of a reactor for the

purposes of removing the reaction heat or increasing the hydrogen partial pressure.

The catalyst used for hydrotreating comprises a hydrogenation active metal supported on a porous support. The porous support may be an inorganic oxide. Examples of the inorganic oxide include alumina, titania, zirconia, boria, silica, and zeolite. In the present invention, the support is preferably composed of alumina and at least one type selected from titania, zirconia, boria, silica, and zeolite. There is no particular restriction on the method of producing the support. Therefore, there may be employed any method using raw materials in the form of sols or salt compounds each containing any of the elements. Alternatively, the support may be prepared by forming a complex oxide or hydroxide such as silica alumina, silica zirconia, alumina titania, silica titania, and alumina boria and then adding at any step alumina in the form of alumina gel, a hydroxide, or a suitable solution. Alumina can be contained in any ratio to other oxides on the basis of the porous support. However, the content of alumina is preferably 90 percent by mass or less, more preferably 60 percent by mass or less, and more preferably 40 percent by mass or less, of the support mass.

The zeolite is a crystalline alumino silicate. Examples of the crystalline structure include faujasite, pentasil, and mordenite. These zeolites may be those ultra-stabilized by a specific hydrothermal treatment and/or acid treatment or those whose alumina content is adjusted. Preferred zeolites are those of faujasite and mordenite types, and particularly preferred zeolites are those of Y and beta types. The zeolites of Y type are preferably ultra-stabilized. The ultra-stabilized zeolite have a micro porous structure peculiar thereto, so-called micro pores of 20 Å or smaller and also newly formed pores in the range of 20 to 100 Å. The hydrothermal treatment may be carried out under known conditions.

The active metal of the catalyst used for hydrotreating is at least one metal selected from the Group 6A metals of the periodic table, preferably at least one metal selected from Mo and W. The active metal may be a combination of the Group 6A metals and Group 8 metals, specifically a combination of Mo or W and Co or Ni, such as Co-Mo, Co-W, Ni-Mo, Ni-W, Co-Ni-Mo, and Co-Ni-W. The metal sources of these metals may be inorganic salts or complex salt compounds which have been conventionally used. The method of supporting the metal may be any of methods such as immersion and ion

exchange which are used for a hydrogenation catalyst. When a plurality of metals are supported, they may be supported using a mixed solution thereof at the same time. Alternatively, a plurality of metals may be supported using solutions each containing any of the metals one after another. These metal solutions may be aqueous solutions or those produced using an organic solvent.

The metal(s) may be supported on the porous support after completion of all the steps for preparing the support. Alternatively, the metal(s) may be supported on the porous support in the form of a suitable oxide, complex oxide or zeolite produced at the intermediate stage of the preparation of the porous support and then may be subjected to gel-preparation or heat-concentration and kneading.

There is no particular restriction on the amount of the active metal(s) to be supported. However, the amount is from 0.1 to 10 percent by mass, preferably from 0.15 to 5 percent by mass, more preferably from 0.2 to 3 percent by mass on the basis of the catalyst mass.

The catalyst is preferably used after it is subjected to a pre-reduction treatment under a hydrogen stream. In general, the active metal(s) are subjected

to heat at 200°C or higher in accordance with the predetermined procedures, circulating a gas containing hydrogen and then reduced, thereby exerting hydrogenation activity.

In the present invention, examples of the petroleum hydrotreated oil having a kerosene fraction refined from crude oil include hydrotreated kerosenes produced by hydrotreating petroleum hydrocarbons such as a straight kerosene produced by atmospheric-distillation of crude oil and a hydrotreated kerosene co-produced with hydrotreated gas oil.

The hydrotreating of the above-described feedstock (petroleum hydrocarbon having a kerosene fraction) is generally carried out under the conditions of a reaction temperature of 220 to 350°C, a hydrogen pressure of 1 to 6 MPa, an LHSV of 0.1 to 10 h⁻¹, and a hydrogen/oil ratio of 10 to 300 NL/L, preferably a reaction temperature of 250 to 340°C, a hydrogen pressure of 2 to 5 MPa, an LHSV of 1 to 10 h⁻¹, and a hydrogen/oil ratio of 30 to 200 NL/L, more preferably a reaction temperature of 270 to 330°C, a hydrogen pressure of 2 to 4 MPa, an LHSV of 2 to 10 h⁻¹, and a hydrogen/oil ratio of 50 to 200 NL/L. A lower reaction temperature is advantageous for hydrogenation but is

not preferable for desulfurization. Higher the hydrogen pressure and hydrogen/oil ratio, more desulfurization and hydrogenation are accelerated. However, their economical optimum points exist. A lower LHSV is advantageous for the reaction. However, a too low LHSV is disadvantageous because an enormous plant investment for construction of a reactor with an extremely large volume is required.

The hydrotreating unit for hydrotreating the feedstock may be of any structure, and a single or a plurality of reactors in combination may be used. Hydrogen may be additionally introduced into the spaces between a plurality of reactors. The hydrotreating unit may be provided with a gas-liquid separation system or a hydrogen sulfide removal system.

The reaction system of the hydrotreating unit is preferably a fixed bed system. Hydrogen may be supplied in counterflow or parallel flow with respect to the feedstock. When the hydrotreating unit has a plurality of reactors, counterflow and parallel flow may be combined. The supply mode of the feedstock is generally down flow and is preferably a gas-liquid cocurrent flow mode. Hydrogen gas may be supplied as quencher into a middle portion of a reactor for the purposes of removing the reaction heat or increasing

the hydrogen partial pressure.

The catalyst used for hydrotreating comprises a hydrogenation active metal supported on a porous support. The porous support may be a porous inorganic oxide composed of mainly alumina. Examples of the inorganic oxide include alumina, titania, zirconia, boria, silica, and zeolite. In the present invention, the support is preferably composed of alumina and at least one type selected from titania, zirconia, boria, silica, and zeolite. There is no particular restriction on the method of producing the support. Therefore, there may be employed any method using raw materials in the form of sols or salt compounds each containing any of the elements. Alternatively, the support may be prepared by forming a complex oxide or hydroxide such as silica alumina, silica zirconia, alumina titania, silica titania, and alumina boria and then adding at any step alumina in the form of alumina gel, a hydroxide, or a suitable solution. Alumina can be contained in any percentage to other oxides on the basis of the porous support. However, the content of alumina is preferably 90 percent by mass or less, more preferably 60 percent by mass or less, more preferably 40 percent by mass or less, of the support mass. These conditions and the catalyst are not particularly

restricted as long as the properties of the feedstock are satisfied.

The zeolite is a crystalline alumino silicate. Examples of the crystalline structure include faujasite, pentasil, and mordenite. These zeolites may be those ultra-stabilized by a specific hydrothermal treatment and/or acid treatment or those whose alumina content is adjusted. Preferred zeolites are those of faujasite and mordenite types, and particularly preferred zeolites are those of Y and beta types. The zeolites of Y type are preferably ultra-stabilized. The ultra-stabilized zeolite have a micro porous structure peculiar thereto, so-called micro pores of 20 Å or smaller and also newly formed pores in the range of 20 to 100 Å. The hydrothermal treatment may be carried out under known conditions.

The active metal of the catalyst used for hydrotreating is at least one metal selected from the Group 6A metals of the periodic table, preferably at least one metal selected from Mo and W. The active metal may be a combination of the Group 6A metals and Group 8 metals, specifically a combination of Mo or W and Co or Ni, such as Co-Mo, Co-W, Ni-Mo, Ni-W, Co-Ni-Mo, and Co-Ni-W. The metal sources of these metals may be inorganic salts or complex salt compounds which have

been conventionally used. The method of supporting the metal may be any of methods such as immersion and ion exchange which are used for a hydrogenation catalyst. When a plurality of metals are supported, they may be supported using a mixed solution thereof at the same time. Alternatively, a plurality of metals may be supported using solutions each containing any of the metals one after another. These metal solutions may be aqueous solutions or those produced using an organic solvent.

The metal(s) may be supported on the porous support after completion of all the steps for preparing the support. Alternatively, the metal(s) may be supported on the porous support in the form of a suitable oxide, complex oxide or zeolite produced at the intermediate stage of the preparation of the porous support and then may be subjected to gel-preparation or heat-concentration and kneading.

There is no particular restriction on the amount of the active metal(s) to be supported. However, the amount is from 0.1 to 10 percent by mass, preferably from 0.15 to 5 percent by mass, more preferably from 0.2 to 3 percent by mass on the basis of the catalyst mass.

The catalyst is preferably used after it is

subjected to a pre-reduction treatment under a hydrogen stream. In general, the active metal(s) are subjected to heat at 200°C or higher in accordance with the predetermined procedures, circulating a gas containing hydrogen and then reduced, thereby exerting hydrogenation activity.

The gas oil compositions of the present invention are those produced by adding 50 to 300 ppm by mass of a lubricity improver (LI) to the above-described environment friendly base gas oil or a mixture thereof with a petroleum hydrotreated oil and having a 95% distillation temperature of 360°C or lower, a sulfur content of 10 ppm by mass or less, an oxygen content of 1 percent by mass or less, a fatty acid alkyl ester content of 3.5 percent by mass or less, an acid number of 0.13 mgKOH/g or less, a methanol content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, a glyceride content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, and an HFRR wear scar diameter (WS1.4) of 460 μm or smaller.

The lubricity improver may be any one or more types selected from carboxylic acid-, ester-, alcohol- and phenol-based lubricity improvers. Among these lubricity improvers, preferred are carboxylic acid- and ester-based lubricity improvers.

The carboxylic acid-based lubricity improver may

be linoleic acid, oleic acid, salicylic acid, palmitic acid, myristic acid or hexadecenoic acid or a mixture of two or more of these carboxylic acids.

Examples of the ester-based lubricity improver include carboxylic acid esters of glycerin. The carboxylic acid forming the carboxylic acid ester may be of one or more types. Specific examples of the carboxylic acid include linoleic acid, oleic acid, salicylic acid, palmitic acid, myristic acid or hexadecenoic acid.

The amount of the lubricity improver to be blended is necessarily 50 ppm by mass or more and 300 ppm by mass or less, preferably 75 ppm by mass or more and 200 ppm by mass, more preferably 100 ppm by mass or more and 150 ppm by mass or less. When the lubricity improver is blended in an amount within these ranges, it can effectively perform its efficacy thereof. For example, in a diesel engine equipped with a distribution type injection pump, the lubricity improver can suppress the driving torque from increasing and can reduce wear on each part of the pump while the engine is driven.

Commercially available products referred to as lubricity improvers are generally obtained in a state wherein the effective components contributing to an

improvement in lubricity are diluted with a suitable solvent. In the case where the gas oil compositions of the present invention are blended with any of such commercially available products, the content of the effective component is preferably within the above-described ranges.

The gas oil compositions of the present invention have necessarily a 95% distillation temperature of 360°C or lower, a sulfur content of 10 ppm by mass or less, an oxygen content of 1 percent by mass or less, a fatty acid alkyl ester content of 3.5 percent by mass or less, an acid number of 0.13 mgKOH/g or less, a methanol content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, a glyceride content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, and an HFRR wear scar diameter (WS1.4) of 460 μm or smaller.

The cold filter plugging point (CFPP) of the gas oil compositions of the present invention preferably satisfies the JIS No. 2 gas oil specification that is -5°C or lower. The CFPP is more preferably -6°C or lower, more preferably -7°C or lower with the objective of preventing of plugging of the pre-filter of a diesel powered automobile. The cold filter plugging point used herein denotes the cold filter plugging point measured in accordance with JIS K 2288 "Gas oil-Determination of cold filter plugging point".

The pour point of the gas oil compositions of the present invention preferably satisfies the JIS No. 2 gas oil specification that is -7.5°C or lower. The pour point is more preferably -10°C or lower with the objective of securing low-temperature startability or drivability and retaining the injection performance of an electronically controlled fuel injection pump. The pour point referred herein denotes the pour point measured in accordance with JIS K 2269 "Testing Method for Pour Point and Cloud Point of Crude Oil and Petroleum Products".

The sulfur content of the gas oil compositions of the present invention is necessarily 10 ppm by mass or less, preferably 5 ppm by mass or less, more preferably 3 ppm by mass or less, more preferably 1 ppm by mass or less with the objective of reducing poisonous substances exhausted from an engine and improving exhaust-gas post-processing system performances. The sulfur content used herein denotes the mass content of the sulfur components on the basis of the total mass of a gas oil composition measured in accordance with JIS K 2541 "Crude oil and petroleum products-Determination of sulfur content".

The oxygen content of the gas oil compositions of the present invention is necessarily 1 percent by mass

or less, preferably 0.8 percent by mass or less, more preferably 0.6 percent by mass or less, more preferably 0.4 percent by mass or less, most preferably 0.2 percent by mass or less, with the objective of improving oxidation stability. The oxygen content can be measured with a conventional elemental analysis device. For example, the oxygen content is measured by converting a sample on platinum carbon to CO or further to CO₂ and measuring the amount thereof using a thermal conductivity detector.

The flash point of the gas oil compositions of the present invention is preferably 45°C or higher. If the flash point is lower than 45°C, the composition can not be handled as a gas oil composition for safety reasons. For the same reasons, the flash point is preferably 54°C or higher, more preferably 58°C or higher. The flash point referred herein denotes the value measured in accordance with JIS K 2265 "Crude oil and petroleum products-Determination of flash point".

The cetane index of the gas oil compositions of the present invention is preferably 45 or greater. If the cetane index is lower than 45, it is likely that the concentrations of PM, aldehydes, and NO_x in the exhaust gas would be increased. For the same reasons, the cetane index is preferably 48 or greater, more

preferably 51 or greater. The cetane index used herein denotes the value calculated in accordance with "8.4 cetane index calculation method using variables equation" prescribed in JIS K 2280 "Petroleum products-Fuels-Determination of octane number, cetane number and calculation of cetane index". The cetane index defined by the JIS standards is generally applied to gas oil containing no cetane number improver. However, in the present invention, "8.4 cetane index calculation method using variables equation" is applied to a gas oil containing a cetane number improver, and the value obtained thereby is also defined as cetane index.

The cetane number of the gas oil compositions of the present invention is preferably 52 or greater, more preferably 54 or greater, more preferably 55 or greater. If the cetane number is lower than 52, it is likely that the concentrations of NO_x, PM and aldehydes would be increased. There is no particular restriction on the lower limit of the cetane number. However, with the objective of reducing black smoke in the exhaust gas, the cetane number is preferably 90 or lower, more preferably 88 or lower, more preferably 85 or lower. The gas oil compositions of the present invention can be increased in cetane number by adding thereto an

adequate amount of a cetane number improver, if necessary. The cetane number used herein denotes the cetane number measured in accordance with "7. Cetane number test method" prescribed in JIS K 2280 "Petroleum products-Fuels-Determination of octane number, cetane number and calculation of cetane index".

The density at 15°C of the gas oil compositions of the present invention is preferably 750 kg/cm³ or higher, more preferably 760 kg/cm³ or higher, more preferably 770 kg/cm³ or higher with the objective of retaining the calorific value. The density is preferably 850 kg/cm³ or lower, more preferably 845 kg/cm³ or lower, more preferably 840 kg/cm³ or lower with the objective of reducing NOx and PM emissions. The density referred herein denotes the density measured in accordance with JIS K 2249 "Crude petroleum and petroleum products-Determination of density and petroleum measurement tables based on a reference temperature (15°C)".

The gas oil compositions of the present invention have necessarily such a lubricating performance that the HFRR wear scar diameter (WS1.4) is preferably 460 μm or smaller, more preferably 430 μm or smaller, more preferably 410 μm or smaller. If the HFRR wear scar diameter (WS1.4) is greater than 460 μm, the

composition would cause a diesel engine equipped with a distribution type injection pump in particular to be increased in driving torque and in wear on each part of the pump while the engine is driven, possibly leading not only to degradation of the exhaust gas properties but also to the breakdown of the engine itself. Also in an electronically controlled fuel injection pump enabling a high pressure injection, wear on the sliding parts would likely occur.

The HFRR wear scar diameter (WS1.4) referred herein denotes the lubricity measured in accordance with JPI-5S-50-98 "Gas oil -Testing Method for Lubricity" prescribed in JPI Standard and Manuals Testing Method for Petroleum Products published by Japan Petroleum Inst.

There is no particular restriction on the aromatic content of the gas oil compositions of the present invention. However, the aromatic content is preferably 20 percent by volume or less, more preferably 19 percent by volume or less, more preferably 18 percent by volume or less with the objective of enhancing the environment load reducing effects and reducing NOx and PM. The aromatic content used herein denotes the volume percentage (volume %) of the aromatic component content measured in

accordance with JPI-5S-49-97 "Petroleum Products-Determination of Hydrocarbon Types-High Performance Liquid Chromatography" prescribed in JPI Standard and Manuals Testing Method for Petroleum Products published by Japan Petroleum Inst.

The water content of the gas oil compositions of the present invention is necessarily 300 ppm by volume or less, preferably 250 ppm by volume or less, more preferably 200 ppm by volume or less with the objective of suppressing adverse affects on parts such as a fuel tank or hydrolysis of ester compounds. The water content referred herein denotes the water content defined by JIS K 2275 "Crude oil and petroleum products-Determination of water content".

With regard to the distillation characteristics of the gas oil compositions of the present invention, the 95% distillation temperature is preferably 360°C or lower, more preferably 340°C or lower, more preferably 330°C or lower, particularly preferably 320°C or lower. If the 95% distillation temperature exceeds the upper limit, the emissions of PM and fine particles would increase. The 95% distillation temperature is preferably 280°C or higher, more preferably 285°C or higher, more preferably 290°C or higher, more preferably 295°C or higher. If the 95%

distillation temperature is lower than the lower limit, the resulting composition would fail to attain a sufficient fuel consumption improving effect, resulting in the tendency that the engine output is reduced. The 95% distillation temperature referred herein denotes the values measured in accordance with JIS K 2254 "Petroleum products-Determination of distillation characteristics".

There is no particular restriction on the kinematic viscosity at 30°C of the gas oil compositions of the present invention. However, the kinematic viscosity at 30°C is preferably 2.5 mm²/s or greater, more preferably 2.7 mm²/s or greater, more preferably 2.9 mm²/s or greater. If the kinematic viscosity is lower than 2.5 mm²/s, it would be difficult to control the fuel injection timing at the fuel injection pump side, and lubricity at each part of the fuel injection pump installed in an engine would be reduced. The kinematic viscosity at 30°C is preferably 5 mm²/s or lower, more preferably 4.7 mm²/s or lower, more preferably 4.5 mm²/s or lower. If the kinematic viscosity exceeds 5 mm²/s, the fuel injection system is destabilized due to an increase in resistance therein and thus the NO_x and PM concentrations in the exhaust gas are increased. The kinematic viscosity

referred herein denotes the value measured in accordance with JIS K 2283 "Crude petroleum and petroleum products-Determination of kinematic viscosity and calculation of viscosity index from kinematic viscosity".

The carbon residue of the 10% distillation residue of the gas oil compositions of the present invention is necessarily 0.1 percent by mass or less, more preferably 0.08 percent by mass or less, more preferably 0.06 percent by mass or less with the objective of reducing fine particles and PM and retaining the performances of the exhaust-gas post-processing system installed in an engine. The carbon residue of the 10% distillation residue referred herein denotes that measured in accordance with JIS K 2270 "Crude petroleum and petroleum products-Determination of carbon residue".

The acid number of the gas oil compositions of the present invention is necessarily 0.13 mgKOH/g or less in view of adverse affects on engine parts. The acid number indicates the free fatty acid amount in a mixture. If the acid number is larger, engine parts would be adversely affected by acid compounds. Therefore, the acid number is preferably 0.10 mgKOH/g or less, more preferably 0.08 mgKOH/g or less, more preferably 0.05

mgKOH/g or less. The acid number referred herein denotes the total acid number measured in accordance with JIS K 2501 "Petroleum products and lubricants-Determination of neutralized number".

The fatty acid alkyl ester content of the gas oil compositions of the present invention is necessarily 3.5 percent by mass or less, preferably 2.0 percent by mass or less, more preferably 1.0 percent by mass or less, more preferably 0.5 percent by mass or less with the objective of preventing the deterioration of burnout properties of the composition upon combustion in an engine. The fatty acid alkyl ester content referred herein denotes that measured in accordance with EN 14103.

The methanol content of the gas oil compositions of the present invention is necessarily 0.01 percent by mass or less, preferably 0.008 percent by mass or less, more preferably 0.006 percent by mass or less, more preferably 0.005 percent by mass or less with the objective of preventing adverse affects on a fuel injection system. The methanol content referred herein denotes that measured in accordance with JIS K 2536 and EN 14110.

The glyceride content of the gas oil compositions of the present invention is necessarily 0.01 percent

by mass or less, preferably 0.008 percent by mass or less, more preferably 0.006 percent by mass or less, more preferably 0.005 percent by mass or less with the objective of preventing adverse affects on a fuel injection system. The glyceride content referred herein denotes that measured in accordance with EN 14105.

If necessary, the gas oil compositions of the present invention may be blended with a cetane number improver as much as is sufficient so as to enhance the cetane number.

The cetane number improver may be any of various compounds known as a cetane number improver for gas oil. Examples of such a cetane number improver include nitrate esters and organic peroxides. These cetane number improvers may be used alone or in combination.

Preferred for use in the present invention are nitrate esters. Examples of the nitrate esters include various nitrates such as 2-chloroethyl nitrate, 2-ethoxyethyl nitrate, isopropyl nitrate, butyl nitrate, primary amyl nitrate, secondary amyl nitrate, isoamyl nitrate, primary hexyl nitrate, secondary hexyl nitrate, n-heptyl nitrate, n-octyl nitrate, 2-ethylhexyl nitrate, cyclohexyl nitrate, and ethylene glycol dinitrate. Particularly preferred are alkyl

nitrates having 6 to 8 carbon atoms.

The content of the cetane number improver is preferably 500 ppm by mass or more, more preferably 600 ppm by mass or more, more preferably 700 ppm by mass or more, more preferably 800 ppm by mass or more, most preferably 900 ppm by mass or more on the basis of the total mass of each of the gas oil compositions. If the content of the cetane number improver is less than 500 ppm by mass, the cetane number improving effect may not be attained sufficiently, leading to the tendency that PM, aldehydes, and NO_x in the exhaust gas from a diesel engine are not reduced sufficiently. There is no particular restriction on the upper limit content of the cetane number improver. However, the upper limit is preferably 1400 ppm by mass or less, more preferably 1250 ppm by mass or less, more preferably 1100 ppm by mass or less, most preferably 1000 ppm by mass or less, on the basis of the total mass of each of the gas oil compositions.

The cetane number improver may be any of those synthesized in accordance with conventional methods or commercially available products. Such products in the name of cetane number improver are available in a state wherein the effective component contributing to an improvement in cetane number (i.e., cetane number

improver itself) is diluted with a suitable solvent. In the case where the gas oil compositions of the present invention are prepared using any of such commercially available products, the content of the effective component is preferably within the above-described range.

In addition to the cetane number improver, the gas oil compositions may be blended with other additives, particularly preferably with a detergent.

Examples of the detergents include ashless dispersants, for example, imide compounds; alkenyl succinimides such as polybutenyl succinimide synthesized from polybutenyl succinic anhydride and ethylene polyamines; succinic acid esters such as polybutenyl succinic acid ester synthesized from polyhydric alcohols such as pentaerythritol and polybutenyl succinic anhydride; copolymerized polymers such as copolymers of dialkylaminoethyl methacrylates, polyethylene glycol methacrylates, or vinylpyrrolidone and alkylmethacrylates; and reaction products of carboxylic acids and amines. Among these, preferred are alkenyl succinimides and reaction products of carboxylic acids and amines. These detergents may be used alone or in combination.

When an alkenyl succinimide is used, an alkenyl

succinimide having a molecular weight of 1000 to 3000 may be used alone, or an alkenyl succinimide having a molecular weight of 700 to 2000 and an alkenyl succinimide having a molecular weight of 10000 to 20000 may be used in combination.

Carboxylic acids constituting reaction products of carboxylic acids and amines may be of one or more types. Specific examples of the carboxylic acids include fatty acids having 12 to 24 carbon atoms and aromatic carboxylic acids having 7 to 24 carbon atoms. Examples of fatty acids having 12 to 24 carbon atoms include, but not limited thereto, linoleic acid, oleic acid, palmitic acid, and myristic acid. Examples of aromatic carboxylic acids having 7 to 24 carbon atoms include, but not limited thereto, benzoic acid and salicylic acid. Amines constituting reaction products of carboxylic acids and amines may be of one or more types. Typical examples of amines used herein include, but not limited thereto, oleic amines. Various amines may also be used.

There is no particular restriction on the amount of the detergent to be blended. However, the amount is preferably 30 ppm by mass or more, more preferably 60 ppm by mass or more, more preferably 80 ppm by mass or more, on the basis of the total mass of each of the

compositions, because the detergent can perform its effect to suppress a fuel injection nozzle from plugging. The effect may not be obtained if the amount is less than 30 ppm by mass. On the other hand, if the detergent is blended in a too much amount, its effect as balanced with the amount is not obtained. Therefore, the amount of the detergent is preferably 300 ppm by mass or less, more preferably 180 ppm by mass or less because the detergent may increase the amounts of NO_x, PM and aldehydes in the exhaust gas from a diesel engine.

Products in the name of detergent are available in a state wherein the effective component contributing to an improvement in lubricity or to detergency is diluted with a suitable solvent. In the case where such products are blended with the gas oil compositions of the present invention, the content of the effective component is preferably within the above-described range.

In order to further enhance the properties of the gas oil compositions of the present invention, other known fuel oil additives (hereinafter referred to as "other additives" for convenience) may be used alone or in combination. Examples of other additives include cold flow improvers such as ethylene- vinyl acetate copolymers and alkenylsuccinic amides; phenol- and

amine-based anti-oxidants; metal deactivators such as salicyliden derivatives; anti-icing agents such as polyglycol ethers; anti-corrosion agents such as aliphatic amines and alkenyl succinic acid esters; anti-static additives such as anionic, cationic, and amphoteric surface active agents; coloring agents such as azo dye; and silicone-based defoaming agents.

The amounts of other additives may be arbitrarily selected. However, the amount of each of other additives is preferably 0.5 percent by mass or less, more preferably 0.2 percent by mass or less, on the basis of the total mass of each of the compositions.

[Applicability in the Industry]

According to the present invention, there are provided gas oil compositions comprising an environment friendly base gas oil produced from an animal or vegetable fat and/or a component originating therefrom and a lubricity improver in a specific amount and as the result having excellent life cycle CO₂ emission properties, oxidation stability and lubricity, all of which are difficult to achieve with the conventional gas oil compositions.

[Examples]

Hereinafter, the present invention will be described in more details by way of the following examples and comparative examples, which should not be construed as limiting the scope of the invention. (Examples 1 to 4 and Comparative Examples 1 to 6)

A vegetable fat having properties set forth in Table 1 was mixed with 5 ppm by mass of a sulfur compound (DMDS: dimethyl sulfide) to prepare a feedstock (treated oil). The feedstock was reacted under the conditions set forth in Table 2 to produce an environment friendly base gas oil (hydrotreated vegetable fat 1) as set forth in Table 3.

The properties of a fatty acid methyl ester produced by esterifying the vegetable fat set forth in Table 1 are also set forth in Table 3. This fatty acid methyl ester is a methyl ester compound produced by reacting the vegetable fat with methanol. An ester exchange reaction was used wherein an ester compound is produced by reacting the vegetable fat directly with an alkyl alcohol, stirring at a temperature of 70°C for one hour in the presence of an alkyl catalyst (sodium methyllate).

The environment friendly base gas oil, methyl-esterified product of the vegetable fat, and hydrotreated oil which is a petroleum base oil set forth

in Table 3 were blended to produce gas oil compositions (Examples 1 to 4, and Comparative Examples 1 to 6).

Tables 4 and 5 show the blend ratio in each of the gas oil compositions, and the results of measurement of the density at 15°C, kinematic viscosity at 30°C, flash point, sulfur content, oxygen content, distillation characteristics, aromatic content, cetane number, cetane index, carbon residue content of the 10% distillation residue, water content, and oxidation stability test (increase in acid number before and after acceleration test) and the result of calculation of life-cycle CO₂ emission, of each of the gas oil compositions.

Properties of fuels were determined by the following methods.

The density indicates that measured in accordance with JIS K 2249 "Crude petroleum and petroleum products-Determination of density and petroleum measurement tables based on a reference temperature (15°C)".

The kinematic viscosity indicates that measured in accordance with JIS K 2283 "Crude petroleum and petroleum products-Determination of kinematic viscosity and calculation of viscosity index from

kinematic viscosity".

The sulfur content indicates the mass content of the sulfur components on the basis of the total mass of the composition, measured in accordance with JIS K 2541 "Crude oil and petroleum products-Determination of sulfur content".

The oxygen content was measured by an elemental analysis method.

All of the distillation characteristics are values measured in accordance with JIS K 2254 "Petroleum products-Determination of distillation characteristics".

The aromatic content denotes the volume percentage (volume %) of the aromatic component content measured in accordance with JPI-5S-49-97 "Petroleum Products-Determination of Hydrocarbon Types-High Performance Liquid Chromatography" prescribed in JPI Standard and Manuals Testing Method for Petroleum Products published by Japan Petroleum Inst.

The water content denotes that measured in accordance with JIS K 2275 "Crude oil and petroleum products-Determination of water content-Potentiometric Karl Fischer titration method".

The flash point denotes the value measured in accordance with JIS K 2265 "Crude oil and petroleum

products-Determination of flash point".

The total acid number denotes that measured in accordance with JIS K 2501 "Petroleum products and lubricants-Determination of neutralized number".

The cetane index used herein denotes the value calculated in accordance with "8.4 cetane index calculation method using variables equation" prescribed in JIS K 2280 "Petroleum products-Fuels-Determination of octane number, cetane number and calculation of cetane index". The cetane number referred herein denotes that measured in accordance with "7. Cetane number test method" prescribed in JIS K 2280 "Petroleum products-Fuels-Determination of octane number, cetane number and calculation of cetane index".

(Calculation of life cycle CO₂)

Life cycle CO₂ was calculated separately as the CO₂ emitted as a result of combustion of the gas oil compositions in a vehicle equipped with a diesel-powered engine and as the CO₂ generated from oil-well drilling to pumping to a vehicle fuel tank.

The CO₂ emitted by combustion (hereinafter referred to as "Tank to Wheel CO₂" was calculated as the emissions per unit calorific value of each gas oil

composition on the basis of CO₂ emissions, driving fuel efficiency, and fuel density when the above vehicle test was carried out.

The CO₂ generated from oil-well drilling to pumping to a vehicle fuel tank (hereinafter referred to as "Well to Tank CO₂") was calculated as the total CO₂ emissions during a sequence starting from the drilling of material and crude oil resources, through transportation, processing, and delivery, to pumping to a vehicle's gas tank. For calculation of "Well to Tank CO₂", the calculation was carried out in consideration of the carbon dioxide generated during the following (1B) to (5B) events. Data required for the calculation was the oil refinery operation performance data possessed by the inventors of the present invention.

(1B) Carbon dioxide emissions accompanied with the use of fuel for various processing devices and facilities such as boilers

(2B) Carbon dioxide emissions accompanied with reforming reaction in a hydrogen producing device in a processing using hydrogen

(3B) Carbon dioxide emissions accompanied with regeneration of a catalyst if the processing is carried out through a device such as a catalytic cracking device

requiring continuous catalyst regeneration

(4B) Carbon dioxide emissions when a gas oil composition was produced or shipped at Yokohama, Japan, delivered therefrom to Sendai, Japan, and pumped into a vehicle there

(5B) Carbon dioxide emissions when an animal or vegetable fat and a component originating therefrom were obtained from Malaysia or regions therearound, and a gas oil composition was produced in Yokohama, Japan.

If an animal or vegetable fat and a component originating therefrom is used as fuel, a rule established in Kyoto Protocol that the carbon dioxide emissions resulting from combustion of such fuel is not counted is applied. This rule was thus applied to the above-described "Tank to Wheel CO₂" calculation.

Tables 4 shows the "Tank to Wheel CO₂" and "Well to Tank CO₂" emissions as calculated above as well as the total of these emissions, i.e., life cycle CO₂ emissions (LC). Each of the results is quantified by comparing it with the results of Comparative Example 1, the results of which was defined as 100.

(Oxidation stability test)

The fuels were acceleratingly deteriorated at a temperature of 115°C under oxygen bubbling for 16 hours.

The acid number of the fuels was measured before and after the test. The acid number referred herein denotes the total acid number measured in accordance with JIS K 2501 "Petroleum products and lubricants-Determination of neutralized number".

As set forth in Tables 4 and 5, the gas oil compositions used in the examples and comparative examples were produced by blending the environment friendly base gas oil, methyl-esterified product of the vegetable fat, and hydrorefined oils which are petroleum base oils in specific ratios.

As apparent from Table 4, Examples 1 to 4 wherein the environment friendly base gas oils and a mixture thereof with the petroleum hydrotreated oil were used and blended in amounts within the range defined by the present invention enabled the easy and certain production of gas oil compositions that have a sulfur content of 10 ppm by mass or less, an oxygen content of 1 ppm by mass or less, a fatty acid alkyl ester content of 3.5 percent by mass or less, an acid number of 0.13 mgKOH/g or less, a methanol content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, a glyceride content of 0.01 percent by mass or less and an HFRR wear diameter (WS 1.4) and is less in life cycle carbon dioxide emissions. Whereas,

Comparative Examples 1 to 6 wherein the gas oil compositions were produced without using the specific environment friendly base gas oil failed to produce the compositions intended by the present invention.

Table 1

		Vegetable fat 1
Density (15°C)	kg/m ³	916
Kinematic viscosity (100°C)	mm ² /s	—
C	mass%	77.3
H	mass%	12.0
Nitrogen content	mass ppm	10.6
Sulfur content	mass%	<1
Total acid number	mgKOH/g	0.07
Ratio of fatty acid groups in fat mass%	Butyric acid group	0
	Caproic acid group	0
	Caprylic acid group	0
	Capric acid group	0
	Lauric acid group	0
	Myristic acid group	1
	Palmitic acid group	44
	Stearic acid group	5
	Oleic acid group	39
	Linoleic acid group	10
	Linolenic acid group	0

Table 2

Hydrotreating catalyst	Ni-Mo/silica-alumina	
Reaction temperature	°C	280
Hydrogen partial pressure	MPa	11
LHSV	h ⁻¹	0.5
Hydrogen/oil ratio	NL/L	510

Table 3

		Hydrotreated vegetable fat 1	Vegetable fat 1 methyl ester	Hydrotreated oil 1	Hydrotreated oil 2
Density (15°C)	kg/m ³	775	874	792	821
Kinematic viscosity (30°C)	mm ² /s	4.1	5.1	1.3	3.6
Flash point	°C	116.0	181.0	41.0	72.0
Sulfur content	mass ppm	<1	<1	8	6
Oxygen content	mass %	<0.1	11.9	<0.1	<0.1
Pour point	°C	20.0	12.5	<-30	-2.5
Cold filter plugging point	°C	20.0	16.0	<-45	-1.0
Distillation characteristics °C	10% Distillation temperature	285.0	335.0	168.0	188.5
	50% Distillation temperature	290.5	354.0	195.0	268.5
	90% Distillation temperature	301.0	359.0	235.0	333.0
	95% Distillation temperature	304.0	—	244.0	350.0
Aromatic content vol. %	Total aromatic content	<1	—	17.9	17.7
	Single ring aromatic content	<1	—	17.0	16.2
Cetane number		80	52	45	57
Total acid number		0.01	0.32	0.00	0.01

Table 4

		Examples		Comparative Examples		
		1	2	1	2	3
Hydrotreated oil 2			80	100		80
Hydrotreated vegetable fat 1		100	20			
Vegetable fat 1 methyl ester					100	20
Lubricity Improver	mass ppm	150	150	150	150	150
Density (15°C)	kg/m ³	775	813	821	874	832
Kinematic viscosity (30°C)	mm ² /s	4.1	3.8	3.6	5.5	3.9
Flash point	°C	116	77	72	181	73
Sulfur content	mass ppm	<1	3	4	<1	3
Oxygen content	mass %	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	11.9	2.4
Distillation characteristics °C	10% Distillation temperature	285.0	193.0	188.5	335.0	194.0
	50% Distillation temperature	290.5	271.0	268.5	354.0	289.0
	90% Distillation temperature	301.0	319.0	333.0	359.0	336.0
	95% Distillation temperature	304.0	338.5	350.0	—	344.5
Aromatic content vol. %	Total aromatic content	<1	14.1	17.7	—	14.2
	Single ring aromatic content	<1	12.9	16.2	—	13.0
Cetane number		80	62	57	62	58
Cetane index		104	62	57	—	57
Carbonresidue content of 10% distillation residue		—	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.02
Water content	mass ppm	31	35	35	78	46
Fatty acid methyl ester content	mass %	0	0	0	98.0	19.6
Methanol content	mass %	0	0	0	0.1	0
Glyceride content	mass %	0	0	0	0.1	0
Total acid number	mgKOH/g	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.15	0.04
Increase in acid number before and after acceleration test		0.01	0.01	0.00	1.27	0.22
HFRR Wear Scar Diameter		284	315	345	185	240
CO ₂ emissions	Well to Wheel gCO ₂ /MJ	45.4	64.2	78.1	20.5	66.6
	Relative value	45	64	100	21	67

Table 5

		Examples		Comparative Examples		
		3	4	4	5	6
Hydrotreated oil 1		40	30	10	40	30
Hydrotreated oil 2		40	50	90	40	50
Hydrotreated vegetable fat 1		20	20			
Vegetable fat 1 methyl ester					20	20
Lubricity Improver	mass ppm	150	150	150	150	150
Density (15°C)	kg/m ³	800	803	818	820	823
Kinematic viscosity (30°C)	mm ² /s	3.0	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5
Flash point	°C	58	59	62	58	60
Sulfur content	mass ppm	5	6	7	5	6
Oxygen content	mass %	<1	<1	<1	2.4	2.4
Pour point	°C	-7	-5	-3	-7	-6
Cold filter plugging point	°C	-7.5	-7.5	-5.0	-7.5	-7.5
Distillation characteristics °C	10% Distillation temperature	202.5	204.5	185.5	199.5	201.5
	50% Distillation temperature	267.0	269.5	263.5	269.0	271.5
	90% Distillation temperature	328.5	228.5	325.5	333.5	335.5
	95% Distillation temperature	342.0	343.0	345.5	343.5	344.5
Aromatic content vol. %	Total aromatic content	14.2	14.2	17.7	14.2	14.2
	Single ring aromatic content	13.3	13.2	16.2	13.3	13.2
Cetane number		59	61	57	58	59
Cetane index		68	67	58	58	58
Carbon residue content of 10% distillation residue		0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Fatty acid methyl ester content		0	0	0	19.8	19.7
Methanol content		0	0	0	0	0
Glyceride content		0	0	0	0	0
Total acid number		0.00	0.01	0.01	0.06	0.08
CO ₂ emissions	Well to Wheel gCO ₂ /MJ	64.9	65.2	78.1	67.1	67.5
	Relative value	83	83	100	86	86
HFRR Wear Scar Diameter		315	305	345	240	225
Oxidation stability test		0.01	0.00	0.00	0.19	0.24

Claims

1. A gas oil composition comprising:
a fraction; and
50 to 300 ppm by mass of a lubricity improver (LI),
the fraction being produced by bringing in the presence of hydrogen a feedstock comprising an animal or vegetable fat and/or a component originating therefrom and a sulfur-containing hydrocarbon compound mixed therewith so that the total sulfur content of the mixture is from 1 ppm by mass to 2 percent by mass, into contact with a catalyst comprising a porous inorganic oxide comprising two or more types of elements selected from aluminum, silicon, zirconium, boron, titanium and magnesium and one or more types of metals selected from the group consisting of the Groups 6A and 8 metals of the periodic table, supported thereon, under conditions where the hydrogen pressure is from 2 to 13 MPa, the liquid hourly space velocity is from 0.1 to 3.0 h^{-1} , the hydrogen oil ratio is from 150 to 1500 NL/L, and the reaction temperature is from 150 to 480°C,
the composition having a 95% distillation temperature of 360°C or lower, a sulfur content of 10 ppm by mass or less, an oxygen content of 1 percent by mass or less, a fatty acid alkyl ester content of 3.5

percent by mass or less, an acid number of 0.13 mgKOH/g or less, a methanol content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, a glyceride content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, and an HFRR wear scar diameter (WS1.4) of 460 μ m or smaller.

2. A gas oil composition comprising:

an oil produced by mixing 10 to 90 percent by volume of a fraction with 90 to 10 percent by volume of a petroleum hydrotreated oil having a middle distillate refined from crude oil; and

50 to 300 ppm by mass of a lubricity improver (LI), the fraction being produced by bringing in the presence of hydrogen a feedstock comprising an animal or vegetable fat and/or a component originating therefrom and a sulfur-containing hydrocarbon compound mixed therewith so that the total sulfur content of the mixture is from 1 ppm by mass to 2 percent by mass, into contact with a catalyst comprising a porous inorganic oxide comprising two or more types of elements selected from aluminum, silicon, zirconium, boron, titanium and magnesium and one or more types of metals selected from the group consisting of the Groups 6A and 8 metals of the periodic table, supported thereon, under conditions where the hydrogen pressure is from 2 to 13

MPa, the liquid hourly space velocity is from 0.1 to 3.0 h⁻¹, the hydrogen oil ratio is from 150 to 1500 NL/L, and the reaction temperature is from 150 to 480°C,

the composition having a 95% distillation temperature of 360°C or lower, a sulfur content of 10 ppm by mass or less, an oxygen content of 1 percent by mass or less, a fatty acid alkyl ester content of 3.5 percent by mass or less, an acid number of 0.13 mgKOH/g or less, a methanol content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, a glyceride content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, and an HFRR wear scar diameter (WS1.4) of 460 μm or smaller.

3. A gas oil composition comprising:

an oil produced by mixing 95 to 50 percent by volume of a mixture of 10 to 90 percent by volume of a fraction and 90 to 10 percent by volume of a petroleum hydrotreated oil having a gas oil fraction refined from crude oil with 5 to 50 percent by volume of a petroleum hydrotreated oil having a kerosene fraction refined from crude oil; and

50 to 300 ppm by mass of a lubricity improver (LI),

the fraction being produced by bringing in the presence of hydrogen a feedstock comprising an animal or vegetable fat and/or a component originating

therefrom and a sulfur-containing hydrocarbon compound mixed therewith so that the total sulfur content of the mixture is from 1 ppm by mass to 2 percent by mass, into contact with a catalyst comprising a porous inorganic oxide comprising two or more types of elements selected from aluminum, silicon, zirconium, boron, titanium and magnesium and one or more types of metals selected from the group consisting of the Groups 6A and 8 metals of the periodic table, supported thereon, under conditions where the hydrogen pressure is from 2 to 13 MPa, the liquid hourly space velocity is from 0.1 to 3.0 h^{-1} , the hydrogen oil ratio is from 150 to 1500 NL/L, and the reaction temperature is from 150 to 480°C ,

the composition having a 95% distillation temperature of 360°C or lower, a sulfur content of 10 ppm by mass or less, an oxygen content of 1 percent by mass or less, a fatty acid alkyl ester content of 3.5 percent by mass or less, an acid number of 0.13 mgKOH/g or less, a methanol content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, a glyceride content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, and an HFRR wear scar diameter (WS1.4) of $460 \mu\text{m}$ or smaller.

4. A gas oil composition comprising:
an oil produced by mixing 95 to 50 percent by

volume of a fraction with 5 to 50 percent by volume of a petroleum hydrotreated oil having a kerosene fraction refined from crude oil; and

50 to 300 ppm by mass of a lubricity improver (LI), the fraction being produced by bringing in the presence of hydrogen a mixture of 10 to 90 percent by volume of an oil comprising an animal or vegetable fat and/or a component originating therefrom and a sulfur-containing hydrocarbon compound mixed therewith so that the total sulfur content of the mixture is from 1 ppm by mass to 2 percent by mass and 90 to 10 percent by volume of a petroleum hydrocarbon having a gas oil fraction refined from crude oil, into contact with a catalyst comprising a porous inorganic oxide comprising two or more types of elements selected from aluminum, silicon, zirconium, boron, titanium and magnesium and one or more types of metals selected from the group consisting of the Groups 6A and 8 metals of the periodic table, supported thereon, under conditions where the hydrogen pressure is from 2 to 13 MPa, the liquid hourly space velocity is from 0.1 to 3.0 h^{-1} , the hydrogen oil ratio is from 150 to 1500 NL/L, and the reaction temperature is from 150 to 480°C,

the composition having a 95% distillation temperature of 360°C or lower, a sulfur content of 10

ppm by mass or less, an oxygen content of 1 percent by mass or less, a fatty acid alkyl ester content of 3.5 percent by mass or less, an acid number of 0.13 mgKOH/g or less, a methanol content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, a glyceride content of 0.01 percent by mass or less, and an HFRR wear scar diameter (WS1.4) of 460 μm or smaller.

5. The gas oil composition according to claim 3 or 4 wherein the cold filter plugging point is -5°C or lower.