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(71) Applicant: AGENCY FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY
AND RESEARCH [SG/SG]; 1 Fusionopolis Way, #20-10
Connexis, Singapore 138632 (SG).

(72) Inventors: TIAN, Zhi Qun; c/o Institute of Chemical and
Engineering Sciences, 1 Pesek Road, Jurong Island, Singa-
pore 627833 (SG). CHEN, Luwei; c/o Institute of Chemi-
cal and Engineering Sciences, 1 Pesek Road, Jurong Island,
Singapore 627833 (SG). LIN, Jianyi; c/o Institute of
Chemical and Engineering Sciences, 1 Pesek Road, Jurong
Island, Singapore 627833 (SG).

(74) Agent: SPRUSON & FERGUSON (ASIA) PTE LTD;
P.O. Box 1531, Robinson Road Post Office, Singapore
903031 (SG).

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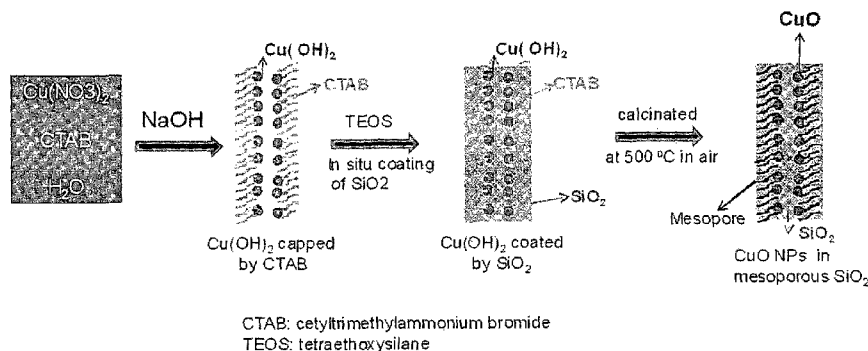


Figure 1

(57) Abstract: The invention relates to a composite substance comprising particles of an oxide of a metal dispersed in a porous silica matrix. The composite substance may be made by preparing a solution comprising a soluble salt of the metal and a surfactant; adjusting the solution to a basic pH at which a hydroxide of the metal precipitates from the solution; preparing an aqueous suspension of the hydroxide of the metal, said suspension being at pH greater than 7; adding to the suspension, with agitation, an alkoxy silane, so as to form composites comprising the hydroxide of the metal at least partially coated with silica; and calcining these composites so as to produce the composite substance.