

Claims:

1. A method for activating an oxidic fresh hydropro-
5 cessing catalyst or the catalytically active material of a
spent hydroprocessing catalyst comprising a refractory ox-
ide support and one or more base metals taken from the
group comprising nickel, cobalt, molybdenum and tungsten,
said method comprising the steps of:
- 10 - optionally regenerating the catalyst,
- providing one or more activating solutions containing an
organic acid and an alkaline additive, in amounts equiva-
15 lent to an aqueous activating solution having a target pH
higher than 3,
- impregnating the catalytically active material with the
one or more aqueous activating solution(s), and
- 20 - heat-treating the catalyst at a temperature of 120-450°C.
2. Method according to claim 1, wherein the organic acid
25 in the aqueous activating solution has 6 or fewer carbon
atoms.
3. Method according to claim 1, wherein the aqueous acti-
30 vating solution also contains an organic acid with a hy-
droxyl group.

4. Method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein pH of the aqueous activating solution is $4 < \text{pH} < 7$.

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5. Method according to any of the claims 1-3, wherein the catalyst is heat treated at a temperature of 120-220°C.

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6. Method according to any of the claims 1-3, wherein the catalyst is heat treated at a temperature of 350-450°C.

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7. Method according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the organic acid is selected from 2-hydroxyethanoic acid, 2-hydroxypropane-1,2,3-tricarboxylic acid, 2-hydroxybutanedioic acid, 2-hydroxypropionic acid, 3-hydroxypropionic acid, 2-, 3- and 4-hydroxybutanoic acid, 2-, 3-, 4-, 5- and 6-hydroxyhexanoic acid, 2,3-dihydroxybutanedioic, 2,3-dihydroxypropanoic acid, 2,3,4,5,6-pentahydroxyhexanoic acid, poly-lactic acid and (5R)-[(1S)-1,2-dihydroxyethyl]-3,4-dihydroxyfuran-2(5H)-one.

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8. Method according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the alkaline additive is inorganic.

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9. Method according to claim 8, wherein the alkaline inorganic additive is ammonia.