

"Frontiers in Bioenergy and Biofuels",

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Biofuel Additives: Conversion of Glycerol with Benzyl Alcohol over SBA-15 with Sulfonic Acid Groups

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Abstract

The etherification of glycerol with benzyl alcohol was carried out over mesostructured silica, SBA-15, with sulfonic acid groups. The products of glycerol etherification are ethers (glycerol mono-ether, glycerol di-ether and tri-glycerol ether). It was prepared with different catalysts, consisting of SBA-15 with different amounts of sulfonic groups (SBA-15, [SO₃H]1-SBA-15, [SO₃H]2-SBA-15, and [SO₃H]3-SBA-15). It was observed that the activity increased with the amount of sulfonic acid groups on SBA-15 until a maximum ([SO₃H]2-SBA-15). However, with high amount of acid groups, a decrease in catalytic activity was observed. The effect of different parameters, such as catalysts loading, temperature, and initial concentration of glycerol, was studied in order to optimize the reaction conditions. Catalyst [SO₃H]2-SBA-15 showed good activity after four uses.

Keywords: biodiesel, glycerol, benzyl alcohol, SBA-15-SO₃H, etherification