

## Supporting Information

### **Cage-Catalyzed Knoevenagel Condensation under Neutral Conditions in Water**

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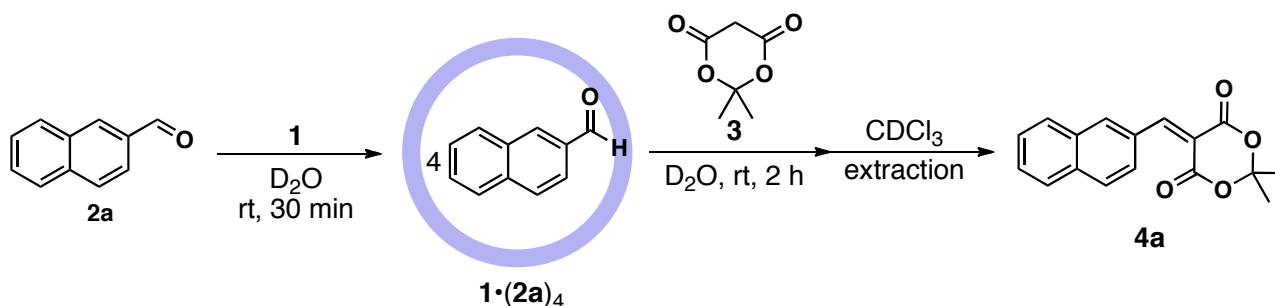
**Materials and instrumentations:**  $^1\text{H}$ ,  $^{13}\text{C}$ , and other 2D NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker DRX-500 (500 MHz) or Bruker AV-500 (500 MHz) spectrometer. TMS ( $\text{CDCl}_3$  solution) in a capillary served as an external standard ( $\delta = 0$  ppm). IR measurements were carried out using a DIGILAB Scimitar FTS-2000 instrument. GC-MS spectra were measured on Agilent Technologies 5973N spectrometer. Melting points were determined with a Yanaco MF-500 V micro melting point apparatus.

Solvents and reagents were purchased from TCI Co., Ltd., WAKO Pure Chemical Industries Ltd., KANTO Chemical Co. and Sigma-Aldrich Co. All the chemicals were of reagent grade and used without any further purification. Deuterated  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  ( $\text{D}_2\text{O}$ ) was acquired from Cambridge Isotope Laboratories, Inc. and used as supplied for the complexation reactions and NMR measurements. 6-Dimethylamino-2-naphthaldehyde (**2f**) was prepared according to the previously established method.<sup>1</sup>

#### Reference

- (1) Okamoto, A.; Tainaka, K.; Saito, I.; Takahashi, N. Preparation, fluorescence analysis, and detection of gene polymorphism of PRODAN-containing DNA. U.S. Patent 20,060,142, 311, Jun 29, 2006.

# Reaction procedure for the Knoevenagel condensation of aldehyde **2a** in cage **1** with Meldrum's Acid **3**



An excess amount of 2-naphthaldehyde (**2a**, 6.25 mg; 0.040 mmol) was suspended in a  $D_2O$  solution (1.0 mL) of cage **1** ( $5.0 \times 10^{-3}$  mmol; 5.0 mM), and the solution was stirred at room temperature for 30 min. After filtration, the quantitative formation of inclusion complex **1•(2a)<sub>4</sub>** was confirmed by  $^1H$  NMR. Meldrum's acid **3** (2.88 mg, 0.020 mmol) was added to the solution, and the resulting solution was stirred for 2 h. After extraction with  $CDCl_3$ , condensation product **4a** was obtained in 92% yield, as determined by NMR analysis.

**Physical data of **1•(2a)<sub>4</sub>**:** 9.34 (d, 24H,  $J = 6.5$  Hz,  $PyH_b$ , **1**), 8.56 (d, 24H,  $J = 6.5$  Hz,  $PyH_a$ , **1**), 8.36 (s, 1H,  $CHO$ , **2a**), 6.38 (d, 24H,  $J = 8.0$  Hz, Ar, **2a**), 6.31 (d, 1H,  $J = 7.5$  Hz, Ar, **2a**), 5.80 (br, 1H, Ar, **2a**), 5.34 (br, 1H, Ar, **2a**), 5.23 (br, 1H, Ar, **2a**), 5.16 (br, 1H, Ar, **2a**), 5.00 (br, 1H, Ar, **2a**), 3.01 (s, 24H, **1**).

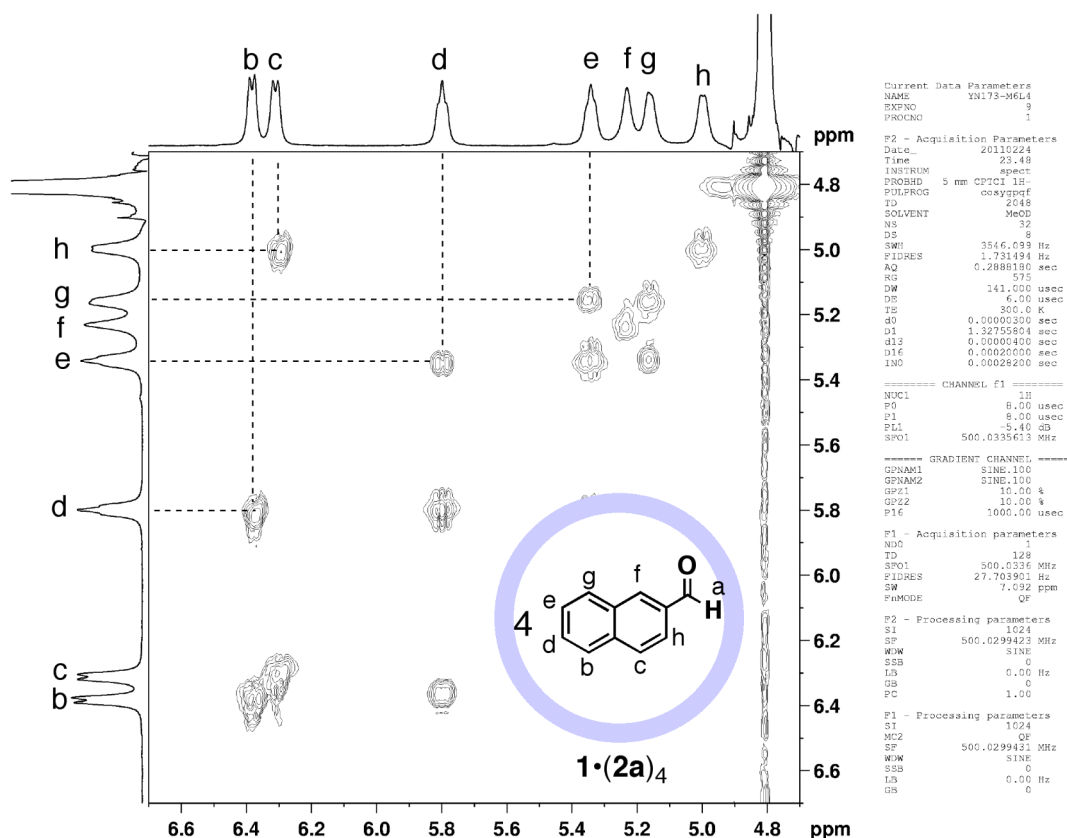
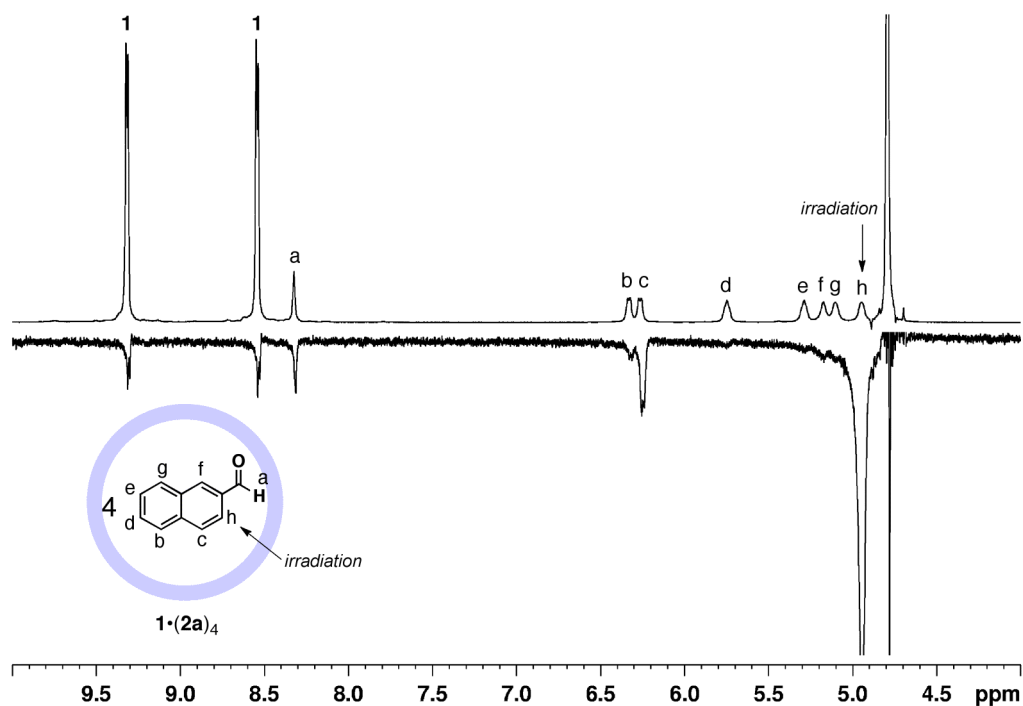


Figure S1. H-H COSY spectrum of **1•(2a)<sub>4</sub>**.



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PROCNO    1

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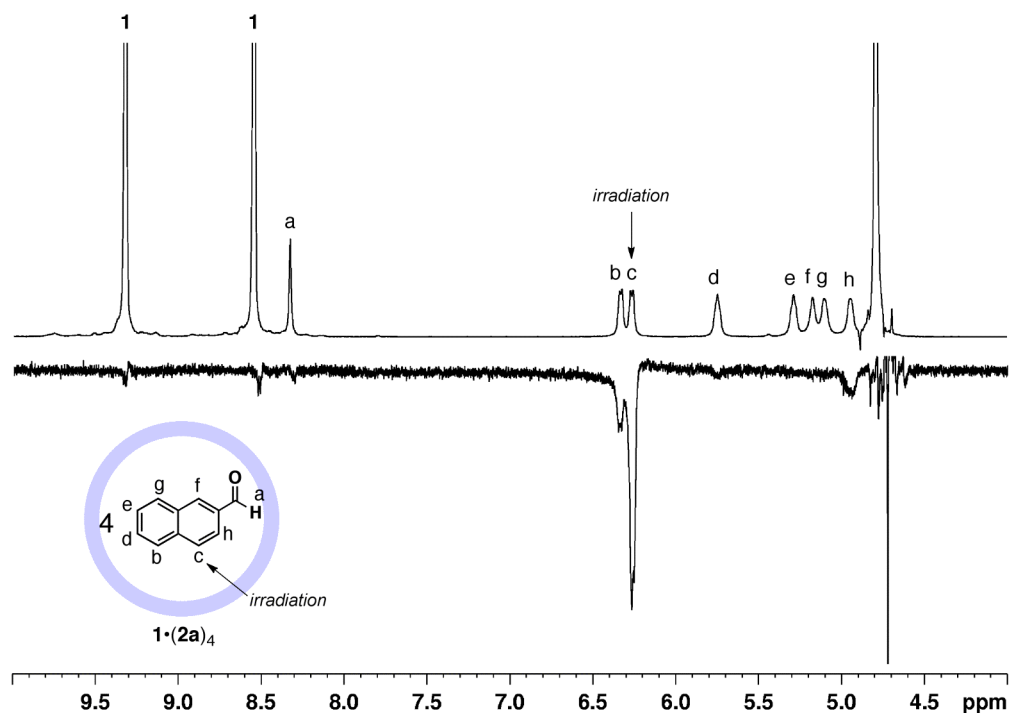
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Figure S2.  $^1\text{H}$  nOe NMR spectrum of  $1\cdot(2a)_4$ .



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PROCNO    1

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RG          90.5
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D1         10.0000000 sec
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TD0        1

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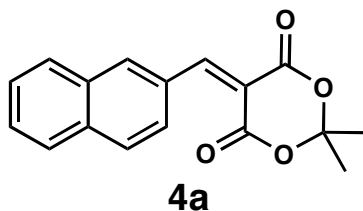
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GPZ4       -40.00 %
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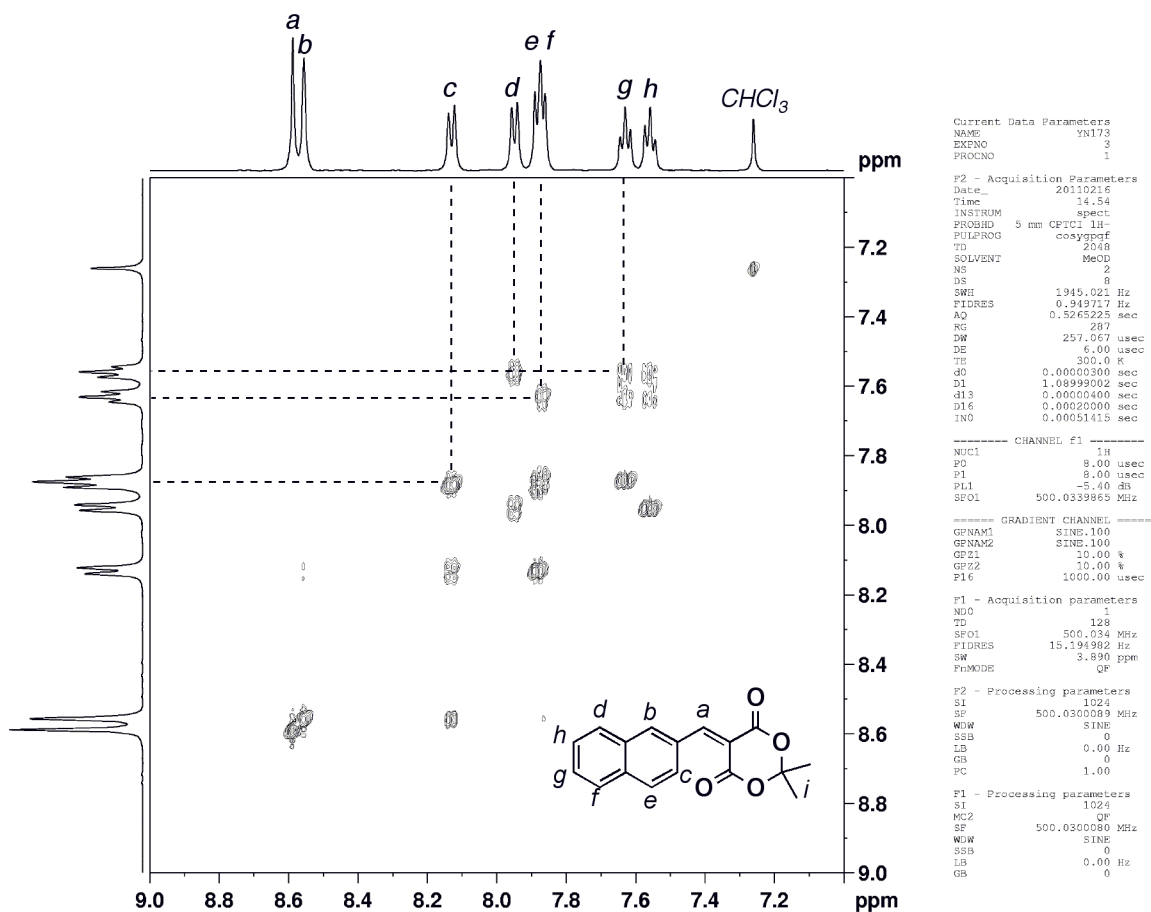
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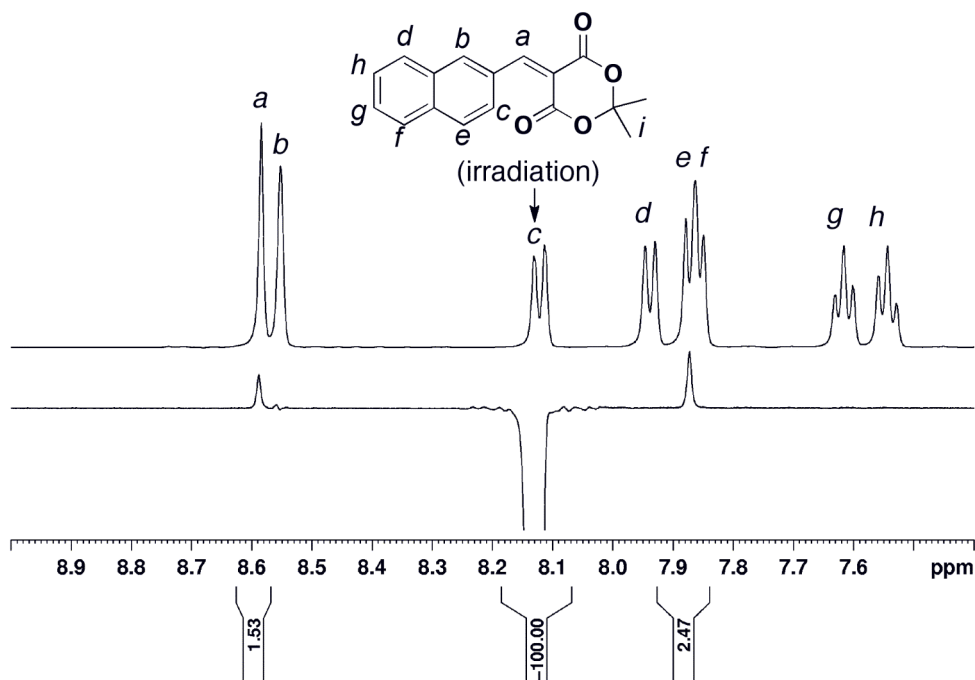
Figure S3.  $^1\text{H}$  nOe NMR spectrum of  $1\cdot(2a)_4$ .

**2,2-Dimethyl-5-(naphthalene-2-ylmethylene)-1,3-dioxane-4,6-dione (4a).**



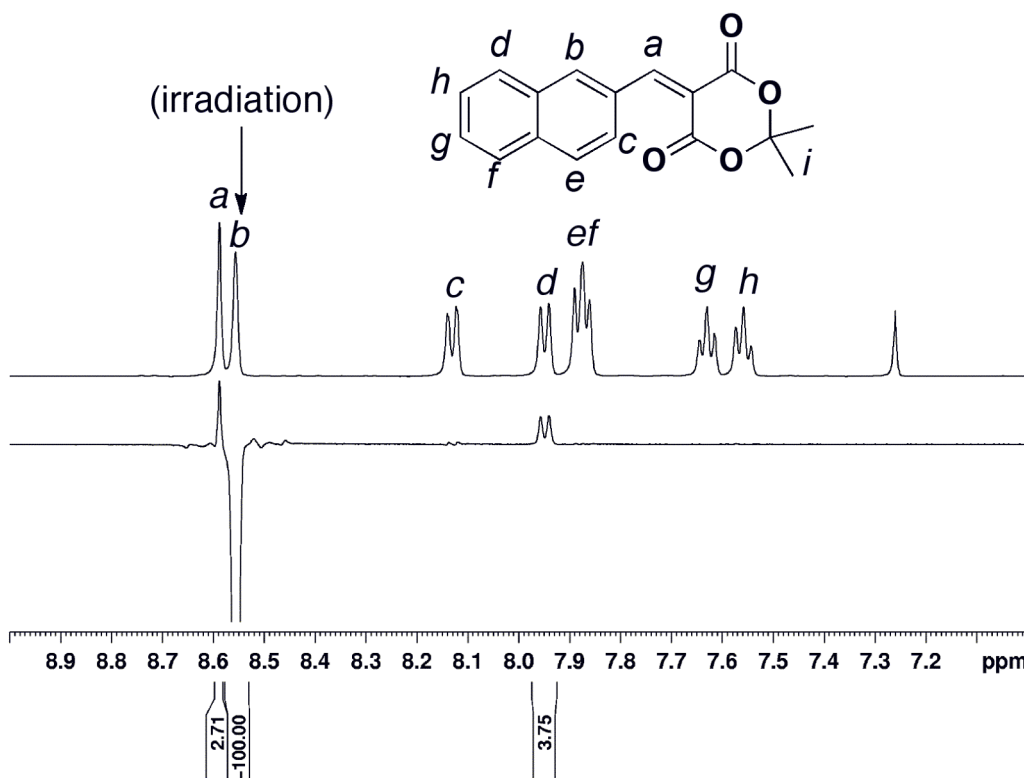
**Physical data:**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (500 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 8.60 (1H, s,  $\text{H}_a$ ), 8.56 (1H, s,  $\text{H}_b$ ), 8.14 (1H, d,  $J$  = 8.5 Hz,  $\text{H}_c$ ), 7.96 (1H, d,  $J$  = 8 Hz,  $\text{H}_d$ ), 7.89 (1H, d,  $J$  = 8.5 Hz,  $\text{H}_e$ ), 7.88 (1H, d,  $J$  = 6.5 Hz,  $\text{H}_f$ ), 7.64 (1H, dd,  $J$  = 7.5, 7.0 Hz,  $\text{H}_g$ ), 7.57 (1H, dd,  $J$  = 7.5, 8.0 Hz,  $\text{H}_h$ ), 1.85 (6H, s,  $\text{H}_i$ );  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (125 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  = 163.9 (C), 160.4 (C), 158.6 (CH), 137.5 (CH), 136.0 (C), 133.0 (C), 130.2 (CH), 129.9 (CH), 129.8 (C), 128.7 (CH), 128.5 (CH), 128.2 (CH), 127.4 (CH), 114.8 (C), 105.0 (C), 28.1 ( $\text{CH}_3$ ); GC-MS:  $m/z$  = 282 [ $\text{M}$ ] $^+$ ; IR (ATR,  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ ): 3016, 2999, 2976, 1767, 1737, 1606, 1390, 1379, 1294, 1273, 1205, 1172, 1139, 1027; m.p. 150.8–151.5  $^\circ\text{C}$ ; E.A. Calcd. for  $\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{14}\text{O}_4$  C, 72.33; H, 5.00; Found: C, 72.05; H, 5.05.





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SOLVENT CDCl3  
NS 4  
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SWH 7500.000 Hz  
FIDRES 0.114441 Hz  
AQ 4.3691168 sec  
RG 50.8  
DW 66.667 usec  
DE 6.00 usec  
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D1 10.00000000 sec  
D8 0.80000001 sec  
D16 0.00020000 sec  
d20 0.39880002 sec  
TD0 1  
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P2 16.00 usec  
P12 50000.00 usec  
PL0 120.00 dB  
PL1 -5.40 dB  
SFO1 500.0330879 MHz  
SP2 56.79 dB  
SPNAM2 Gauss1.1000  
SFOAL2 0.500  
SFOFFS2 982.00 Hz  
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SF 500.0300101 MHz  
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GB 0  
PC 1.00

Figure S5. <sup>1</sup>H nOe NMR spectrum of 4a.



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PROCNO 1  
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SOLVENT CDCl3  
NS 4  
DS 1  
SWH 7500.000 Hz  
FIDRES 0.114441 Hz  
AQ 4.3691168 sec  
RG 57  
DW 66.667 usec  
DE 6.00 usec  
TE 300.0 K  
D1 10.00000000 sec  
D8 0.80000001 sec  
D16 0.00020000 sec  
d20 0.39880002 sec  
TD0 1  
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PL1 -5.40 dB  
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SPNAM2 Gauss1.1000  
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SFOFFS2 1200.00 Hz  
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GP22 17.00 %  
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F2 - Processing parameters  
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GB 0  
PC 1.00

Figure S6. <sup>1</sup>H nOe NMR spectrum of 4a.

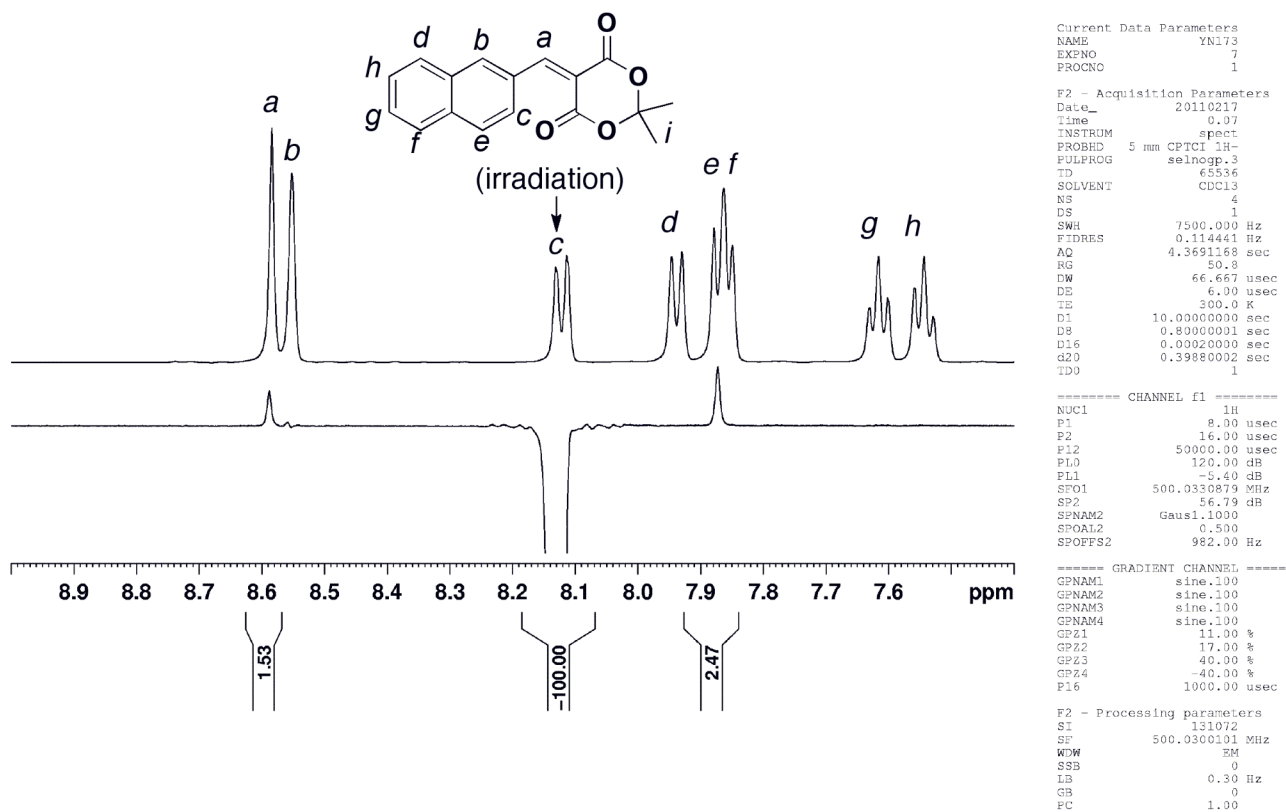


Figure S7. <sup>1</sup>H nOe NMR spectrum of 4a.

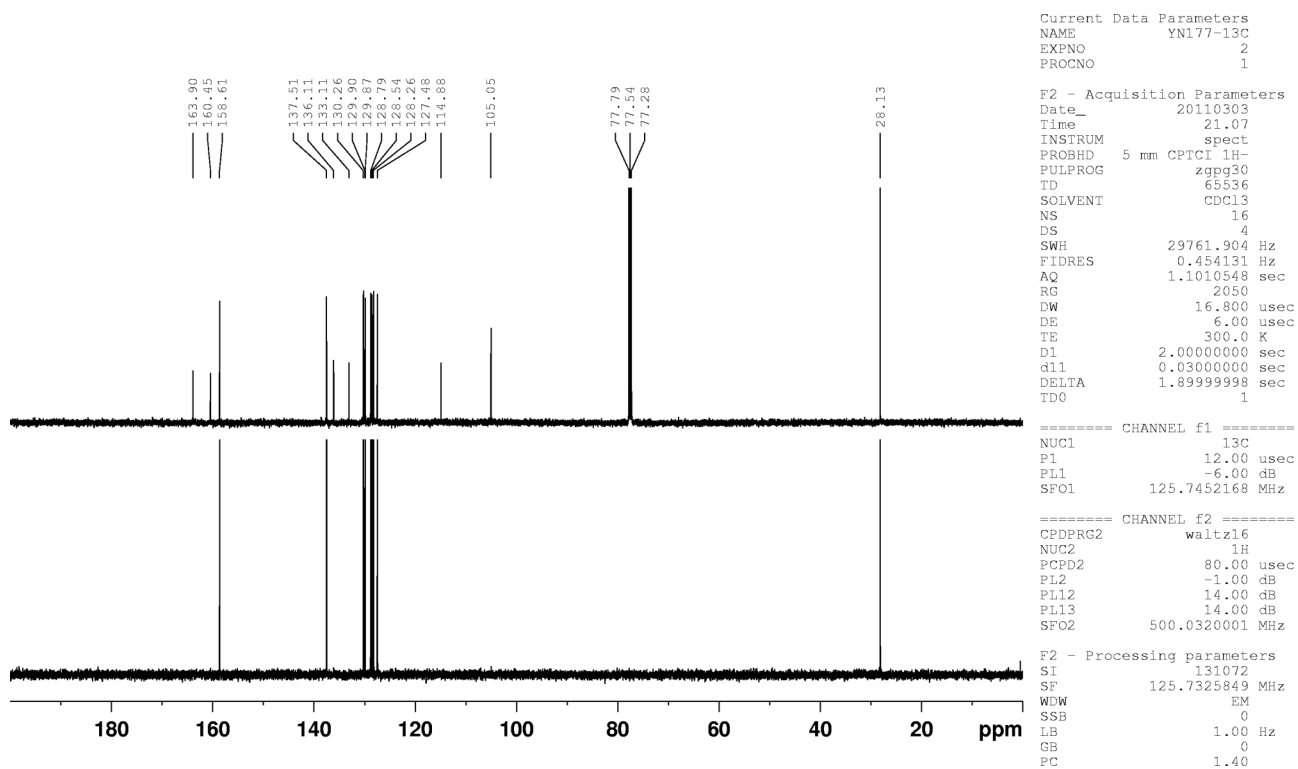


Figure S8. <sup>13</sup>C and DEPT NMR spectra of 4a.

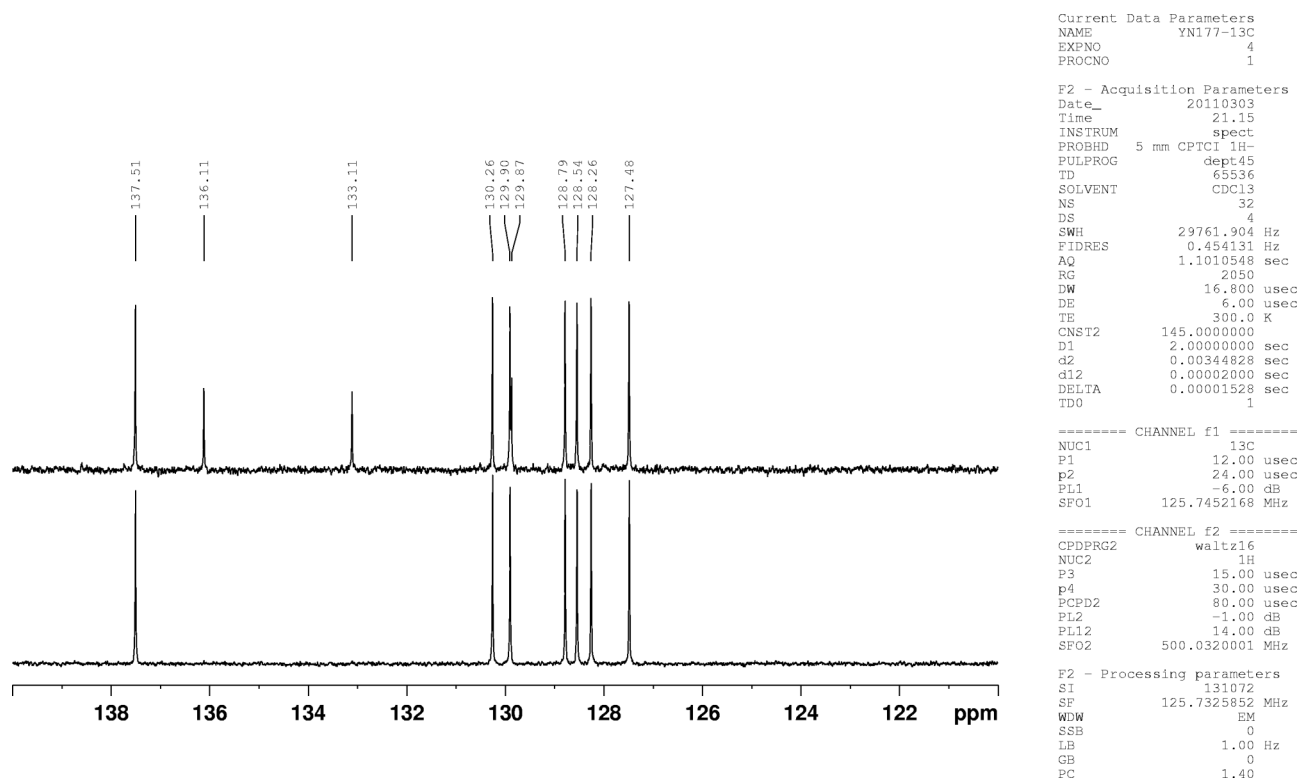


Figure S9.  $^{13}\text{C}$  and DEPT NMR spectra of **4a**.

### Knoevenagel condensation in the absence of cage **1**

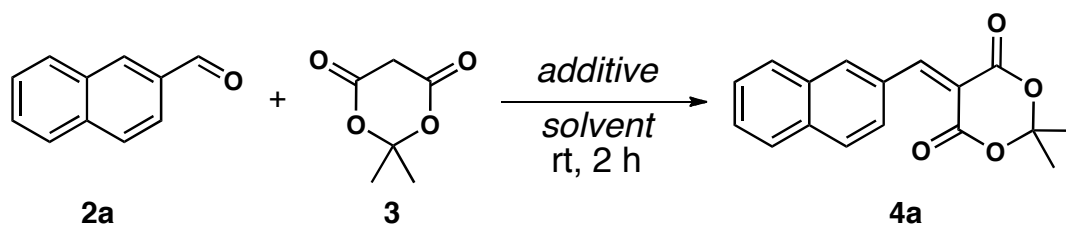


Table S1. Yields of Condensation Product **4a**.

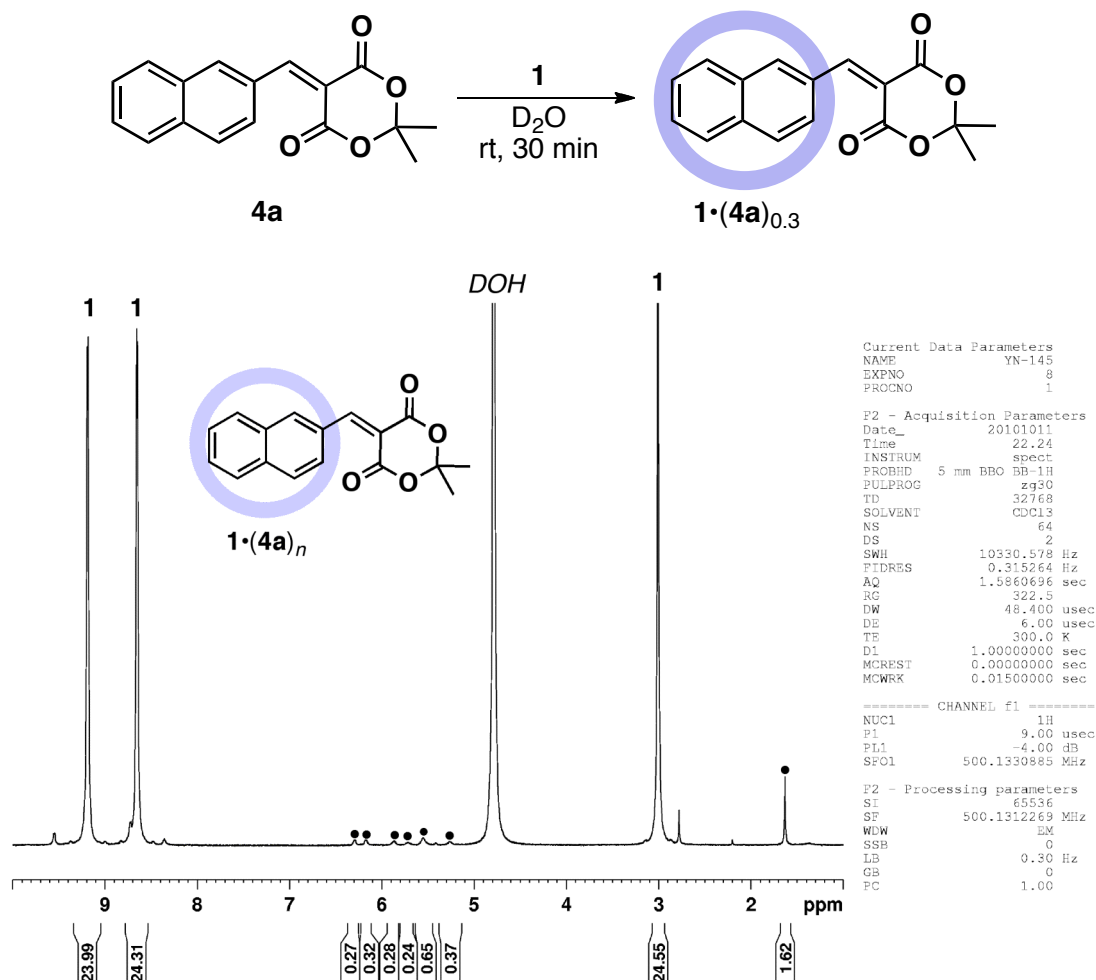
| Entry | Cage     | Additive                              | Solvent          | Yield <sup>a</sup> (%) |
|-------|----------|---------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| 1     | <b>1</b> | —                                     | D <sub>2</sub> O | 92                     |
| 2     | —        | —                                     | D <sub>2</sub> O | 2                      |
| 3     | —        | —                                     | MeOH             | 8                      |
| 4     | —        | —                                     | DMSO             | 1                      |
| 5     | —        | (en)Pd(NO <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>2</sub> | D <sub>2</sub> O | 3                      |
| 6     | —        | TPT <sup>b</sup>                      | D <sub>2</sub> O | 8                      |

<sup>a</sup> Determined by  $^1\text{H}$  NMR

<sup>b</sup> TPT: 2,4,6-tri(4-pyridyl)-1,3,5-triazine

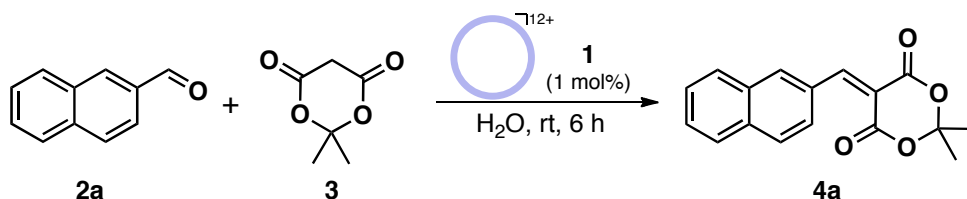


### Encapsulation of Knoevenagel condensation product **4a** within cage **1**



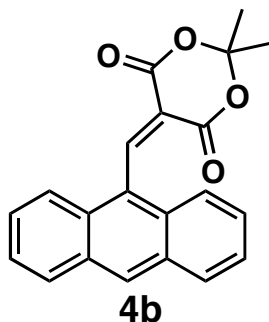
**Figure S10.** Encapsulation of condensation product **4a** within cage **1**. Only 0.3 molecule of product **4a** was encapsulated in cage **1** on average. Compared with aldehyde **2a** (encapsulation number: 4 molecules), product **4a** was a poor guest for cage **1**.

### Typical procedure for the Knoevenagel condensation of aldehyde **2** with Meldrum's Acid **3** in the presence of a catalytic amount of cage **1**



Aldehyde **2a** (0.500 mmol, 78.1 mg) and compound **3** (0.500 mmol, 72.1 mg) were added to an aqueous solution (5 mL) of cage **1** (15.0 mg,  $5.00 \times 10^{-3}$  mmol; 1 mol%), and the reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for 6 h. The product was extracted with  $CHCl_3$  ( $2 \times 5$  mL), and the organic layer was evaporated *in vacuo* to give condensation product **4a** in 96% NMR yield. The obtained product **4a** was purified by recrystallization from refluxing ethanol to afford a pale yellow solid (121 mg, 86%).

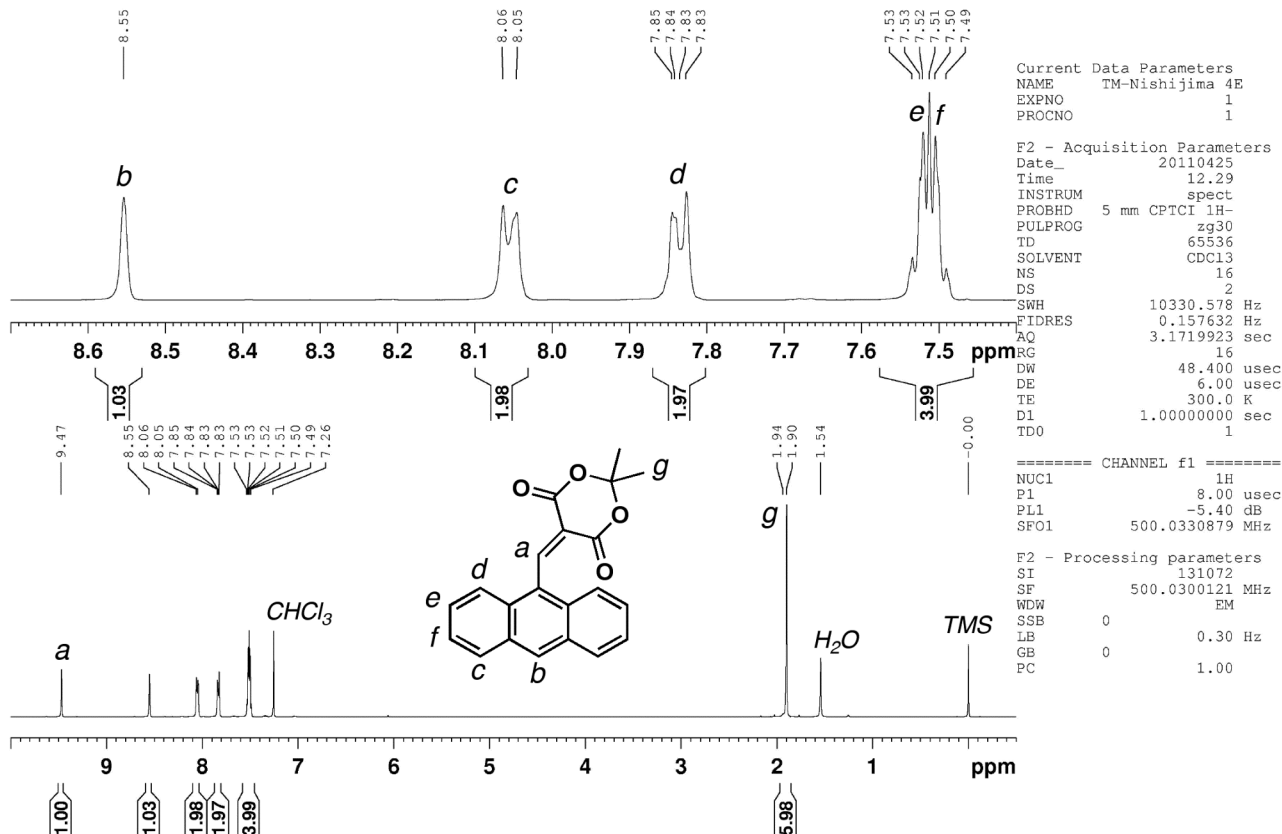
**5-(anthracen-9-ylmethylene)-2,2-dimethyl-1,3-dioxane-4,6-dione (4b)**



**Reaction condition:** Reaction time 96 h

**Yield:** 63% (NMR)

**Physical data:**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (500 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$ : 9.47 (1H, s,  $\text{H}_a$ ), 8.55 (1H, s,  $\text{H}_b$ ), 8.06 (2H, d,  $J = 8.8$  Hz,  $\text{H}_c$ ), 7.84 (2H, d,  $J = 9.1$  Hz,  $\text{H}_d$ ), 7.52 (1H, t,  $J = 9.1$  Hz,  $\text{H}_e$ ), 7.50 (1H, t,  $J = 8.8$  Hz,  $\text{H}_f$ ), 1.90 (6H, s,  $\text{H}_g$ );  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (125 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$ : 161.91 (C), 157.89 (C), 157.75 (CH), 130.94 (C), 130.29 (CH), 129.34 (CH), 128.63 (C), 127.09 (CH), 126.80 (C), 125.58 (CH), 124.52 (CH), 121.02 (C), 104.97 (C), 28.17 ( $\text{CH}_3$ ); GC-MS (EI):  $m/z = 332$  [ $\text{M}$ ] $^+$ ; IR (ATR,  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ ): 3049, 3031, 3013, 2925, 2854, 1764, 1737, 1631, 1446, 1396, 1385, 1365, 1334, 1292, 1218, 1202, 1123, 1067, 1028; m.p. 193.6–194.3  $^\circ\text{C}$ ; E.A. Calcd. for  $\text{C}_{21}\text{H}_{16}\text{O}_4$ : C, 75.89; H, 4.85; Found: C, 75.66; H, 5.03.



**Figure S11.**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of **4b**.

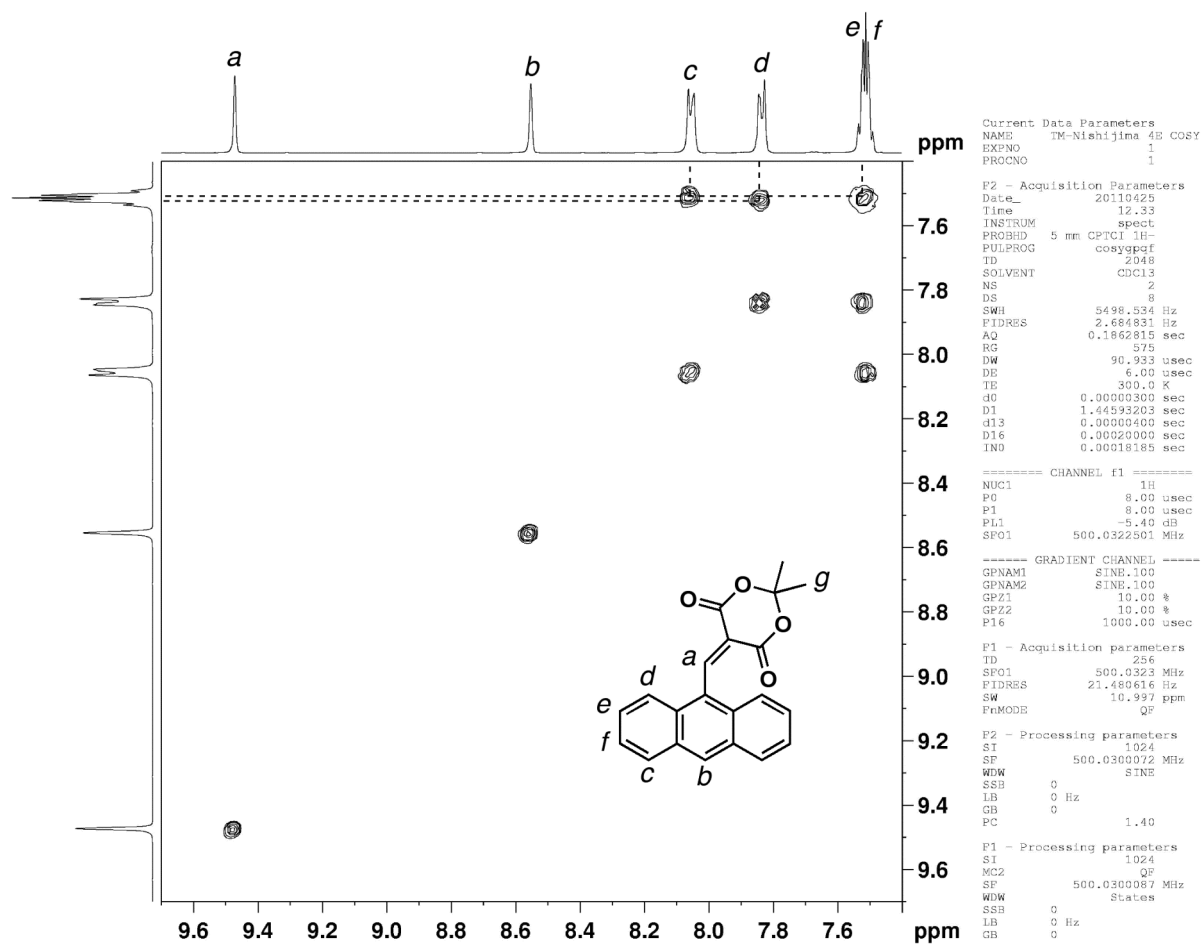


Figure S12. H-H COSY spectrum of **4b**.

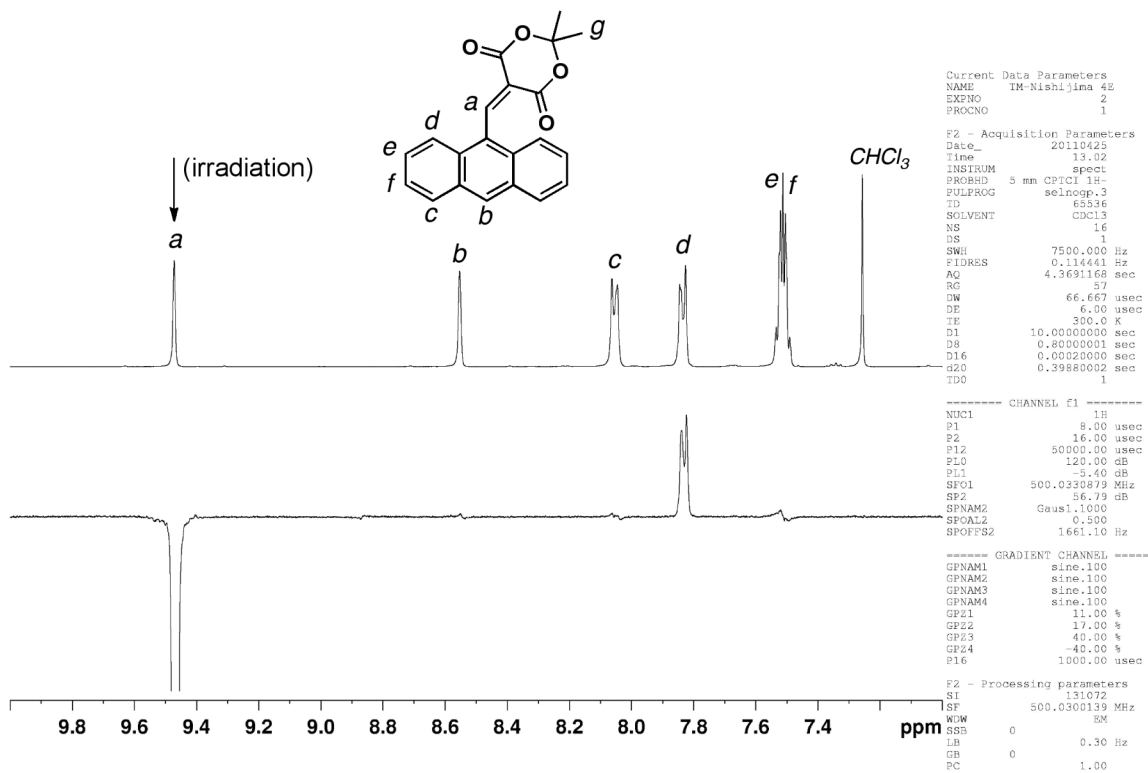


Figure S13. <sup>1</sup>H nOe NMR spectrum of **4b**.

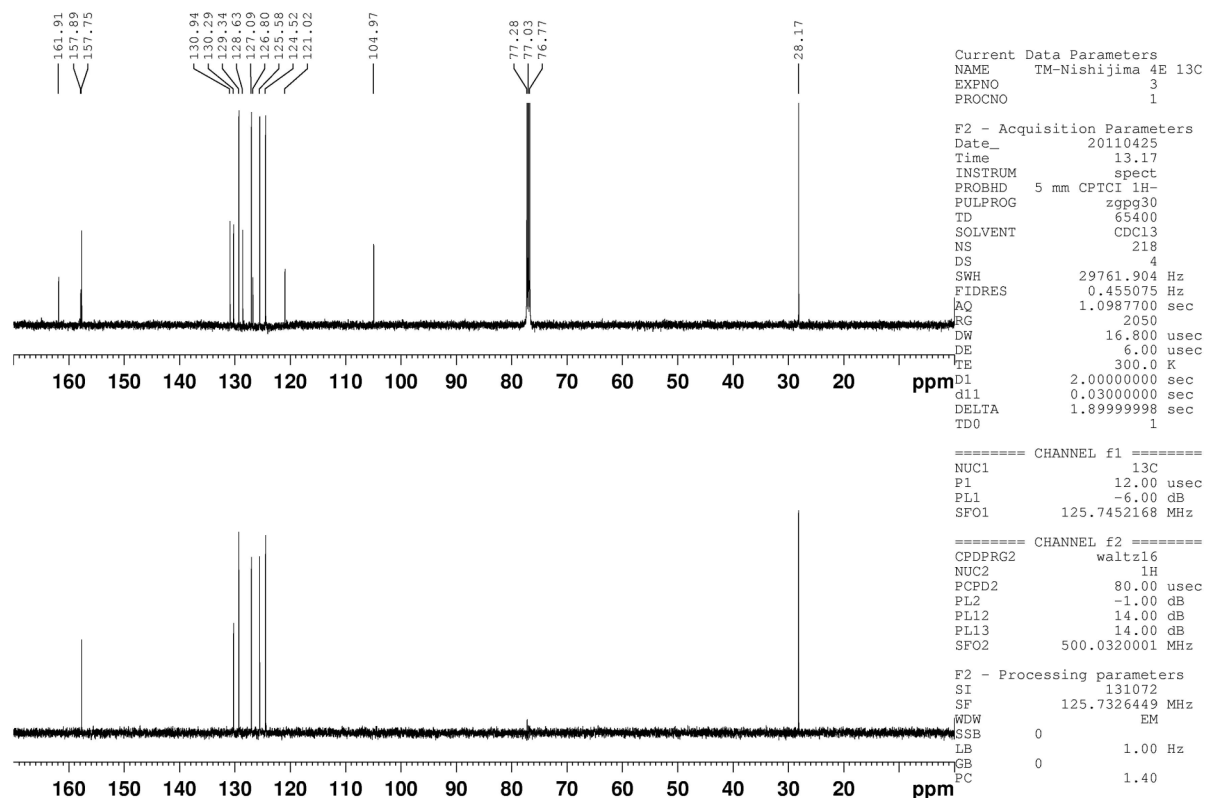


Figure S14.  $^{13}\text{C}$  and DEPT NMR spectra of **4b**.

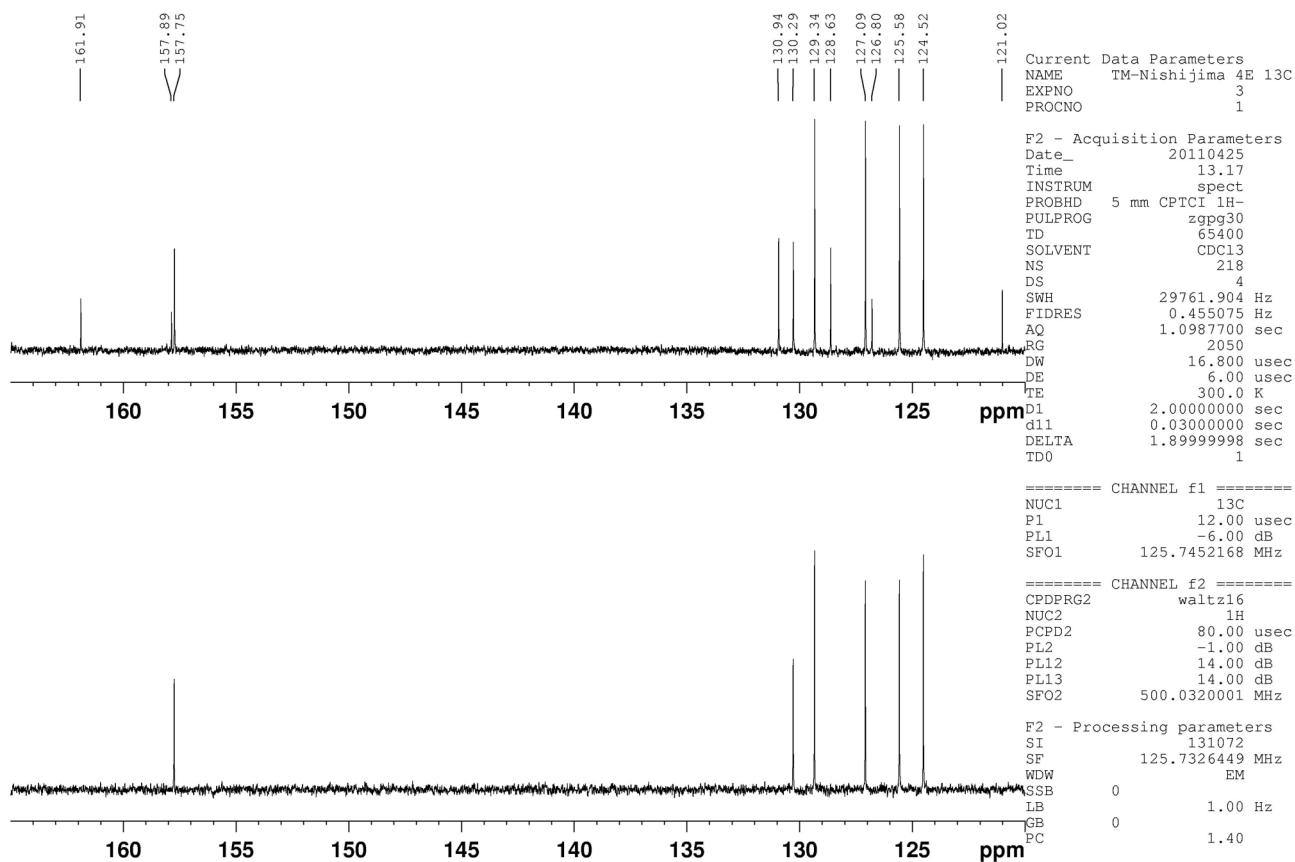
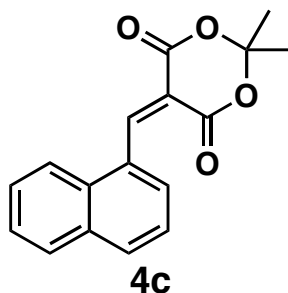


Figure S15.  $^{13}\text{C}$  and DEPT NMR spectra of **4b**.

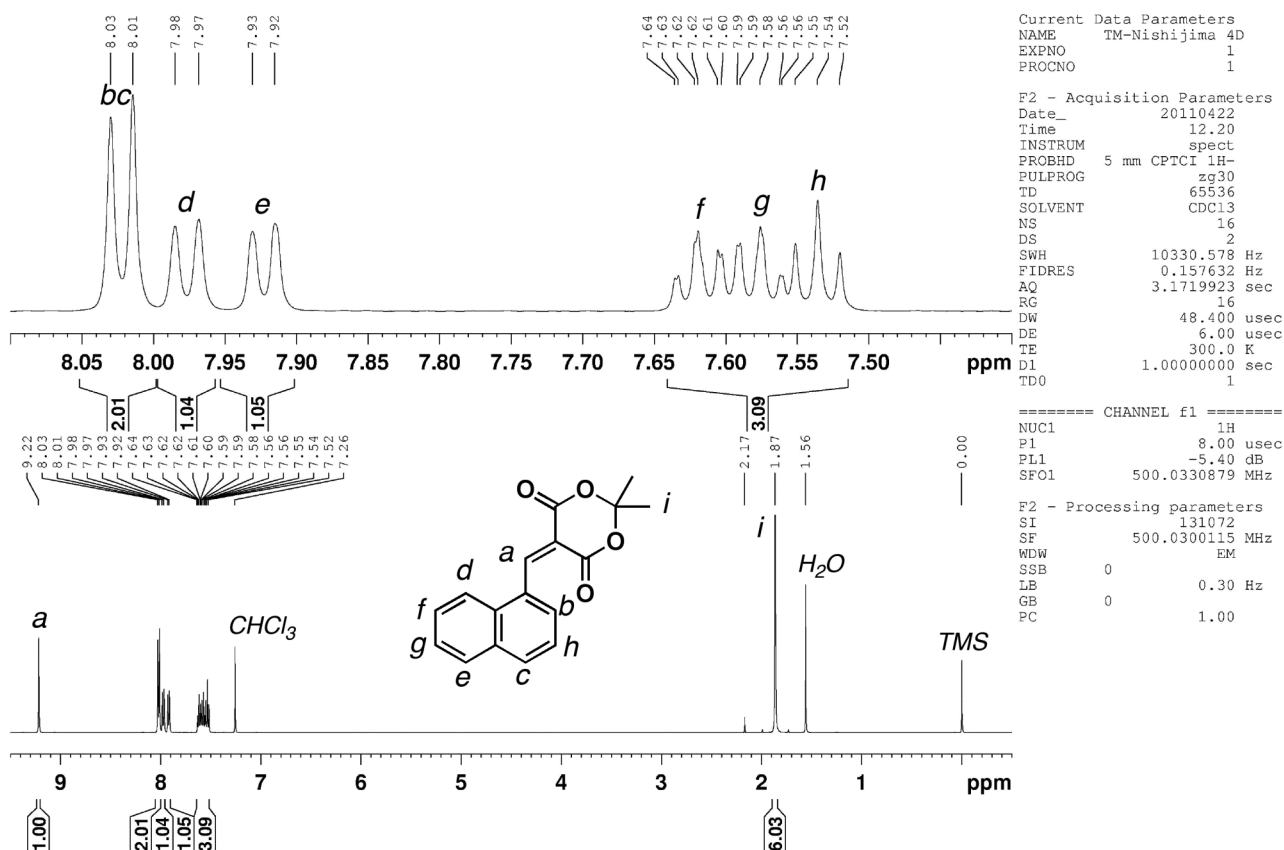
**2,2-Dimethyl-5-(naphthalen-1-ylmethylene)-1,3-dioxane-4,6-dione (4c)**



**Reaction condition:** 24 h

**Yield:** 67% (NMR)

**Physical data:**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (500 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$ : 9.22 (1H, s,  $\text{H}_a$ ), 8.02 (2H, d,  $J = 7.8$  Hz,  $\text{H}_b$  and  $\text{H}_c$ ), 7.98 (1H, d,  $J = 8.3$  Hz,  $\text{H}_d$ ), 7.92 (1H, d,  $J = 7.8$  Hz,  $\text{H}_e$ ), 7.62 (1H, t,  $J = 8.3$  Hz,  $\text{H}_f$ ), 7.58 (1H, t,  $J = 7.8$  Hz,  $\text{H}_g$ ), 7.54 (1H, t,  $J = 7.8$  Hz,  $\text{H}_h$ ), 1.87 (6H, s,  $\text{H}_i$ );  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (125 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$ : 162.78 (C), 159.41 (C), 156.48 (CH), 133.32 (C), 133.23 (CH), 131.75 (C), 129.97 (CH), 129.17 (CH), 129.02 (C), 127.80 (CH), 126.68 (CH), 124.94 (CH), 123.60 (CH), 117.01 (C), 104.81 (C), 27.84 ( $\text{CH}_3$ ); GC-MS (EI):  $m/z = 282$  [ $\text{M}$ ] $^+$ ; IR (ATR,  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ ): 3016, 2997, 2989, 1762, 1732, 1624, 1394, 1381, 1358, 1284, 1212, 1198, 1118, 1025; m.p. 144.9–145.4  $^\circ\text{C}$ ; E.A. Calcd. for  $\text{C}_{17}\text{H}_{14}\text{O}_4$ : C, 72.33; H, 5.00; Found: C, 72.26; H, 5.09.



**Figure S16.**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of **4c**.

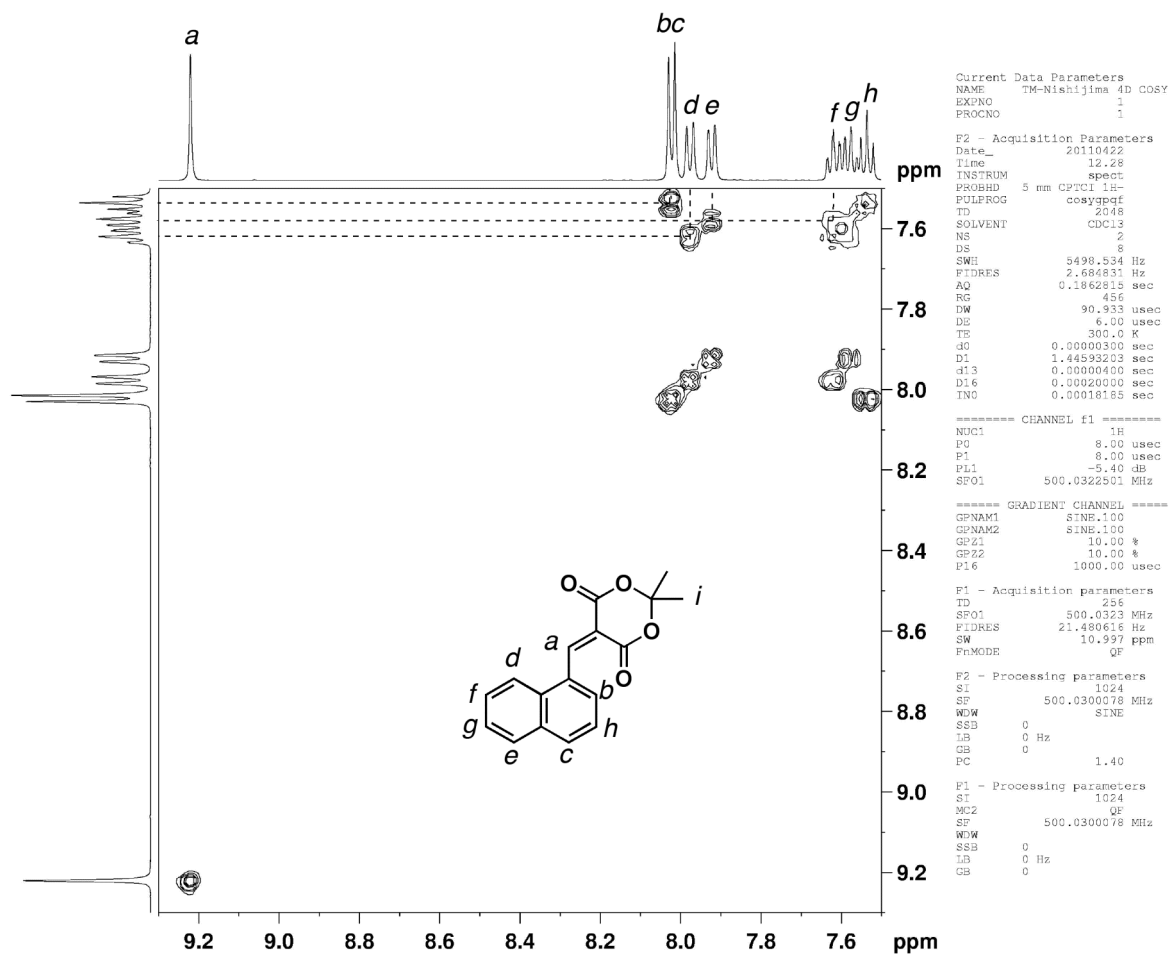


Figure S17. H-H COSY spectrum of **4c**.

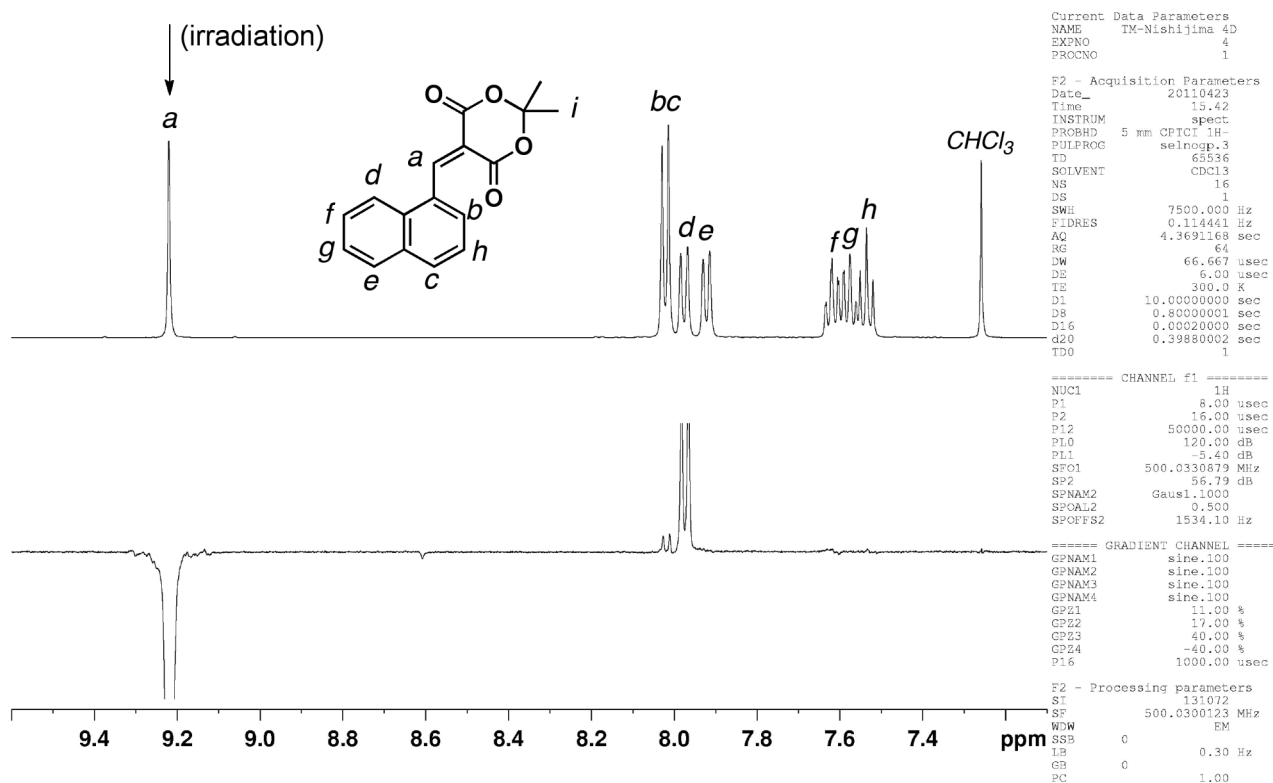


Figure S18. <sup>1</sup>H nOe NMR spectrum of **4c**.

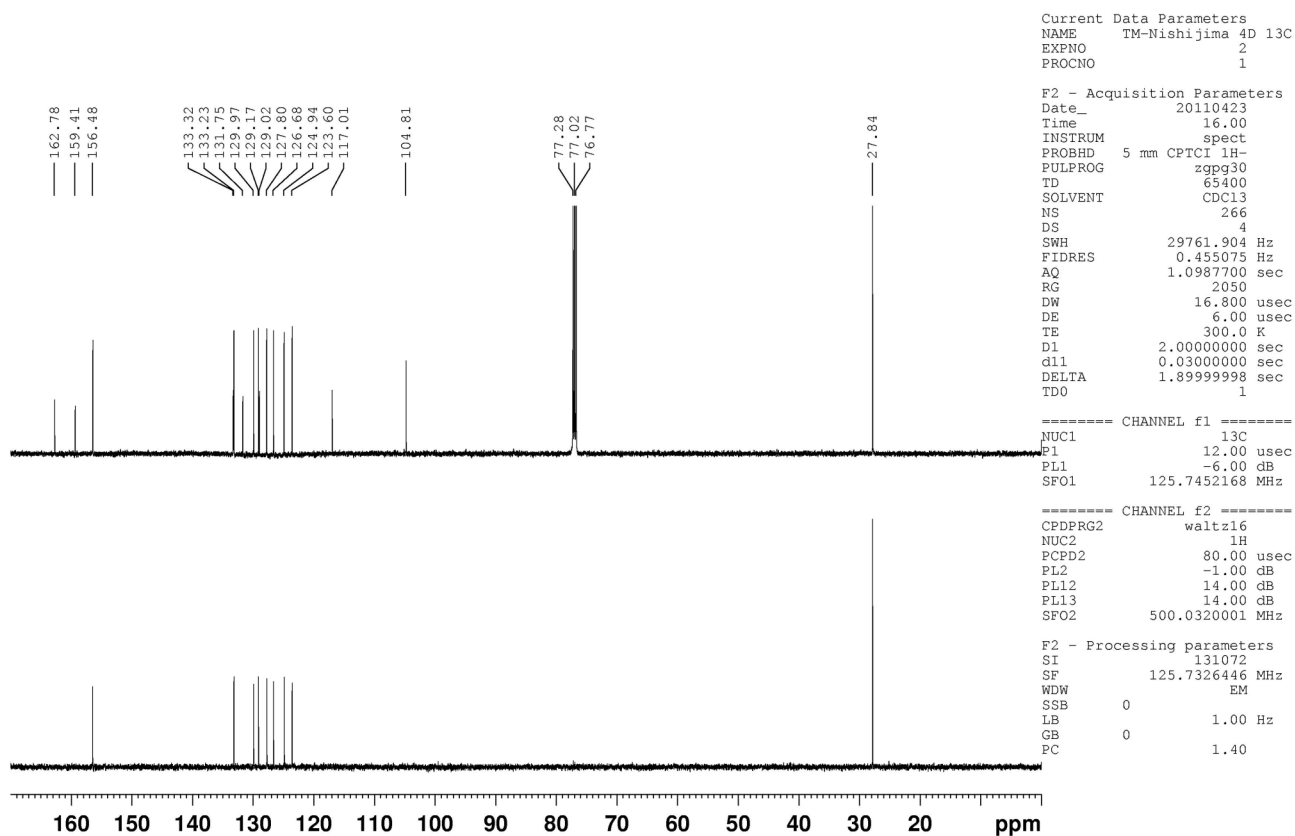


Figure S19.  $^{13}\text{C}$  and DEPT NMR spectra of **4c**.

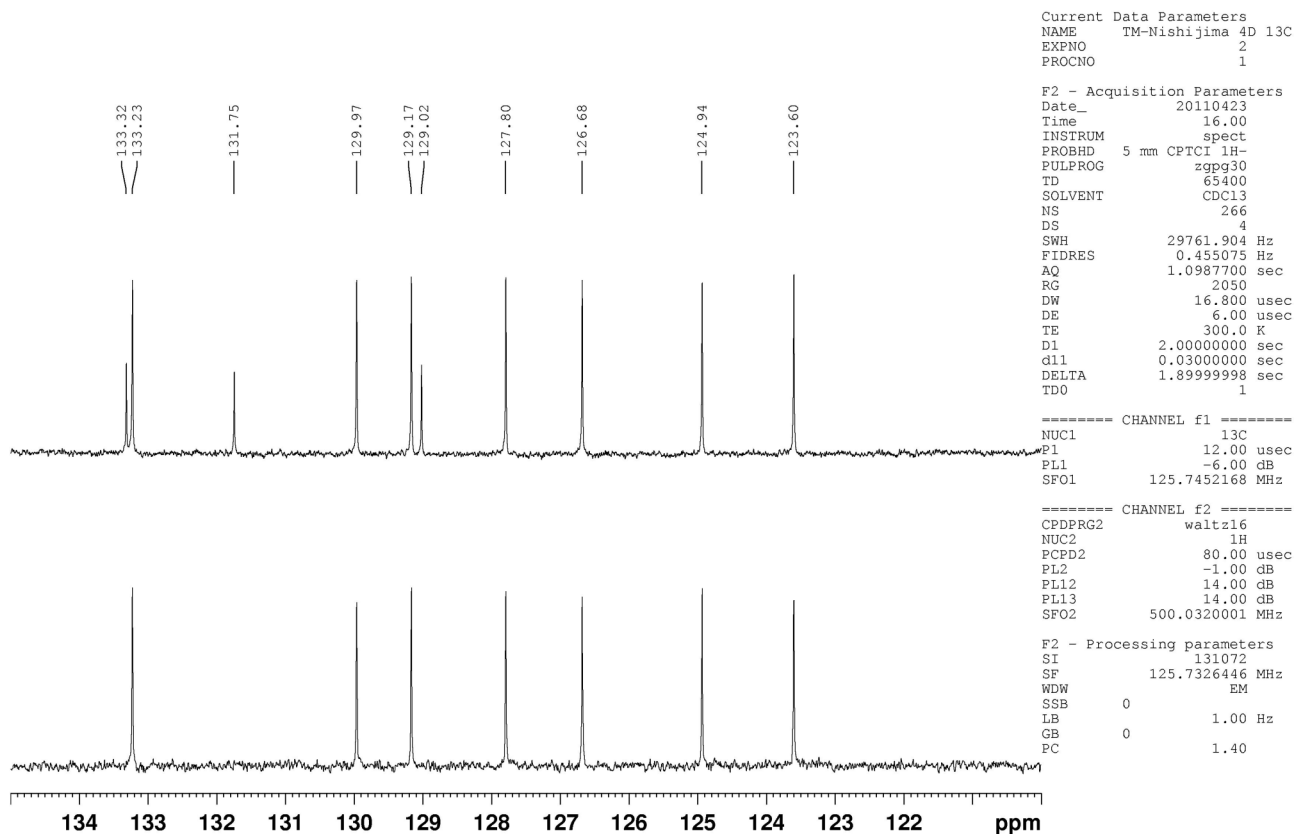
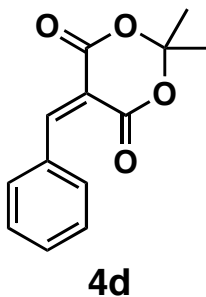


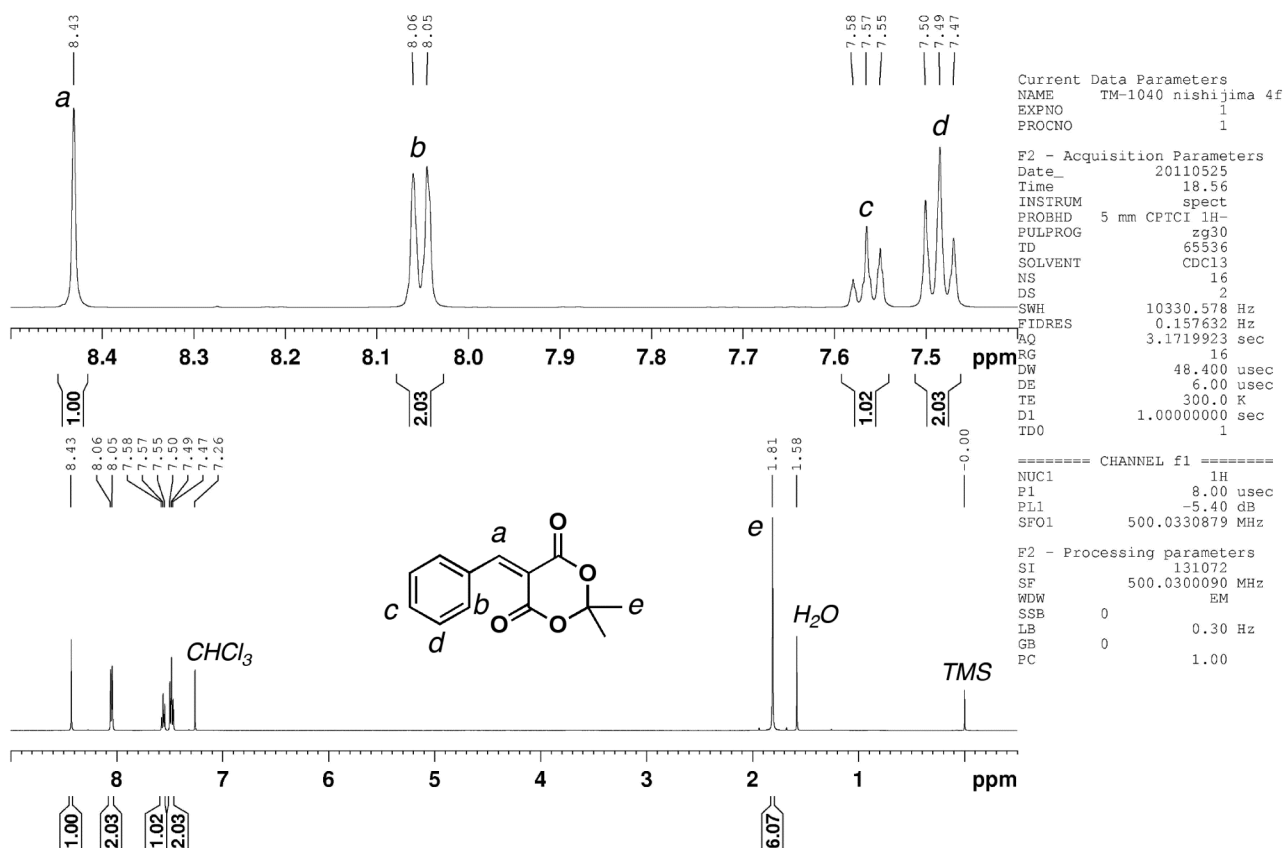
Figure S20.  $^{13}\text{C}$  and DEPT NMR spectra of **4c**.

**5-benzylidene-2,2-dimethyl-1,3-dioxane-4,6-dione (4d)**



**Yield :** 38% (NMR)

**Physical data:**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (500 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$ : 8.43 (1H, s,  $\text{H}_a$ ), 8.05 (2H, d,  $J = 7.5$  Hz,  $\text{H}_b$ ), 7.57 (1H, t,  $J = 7.4$  Hz,  $\text{H}_c$ ), 7.49 (2H, t,  $J = 7.4$ ,  $\text{H}_d$ ), 1.81 (6H, s,  $\text{H}_e$ );  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (125 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$ : 161.30 (C), 159.76 (C), 158.15 (CH), 133.71 (CH), 133.62 (CH), 131.71 (C), 128.75 (CH), 114.84 (C), 104.60 (C), 27.64 ( $\text{CH}_3$ ); GC-MS (EI):  $m/z = 232$  [ $\text{M}$ ] $^+$ , 174 [ $\text{M}-(\text{CH}_3)_2\text{CO}$ ] $^+$ ; IR (ATR,  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ ): 2999, 2923, 2852, 1767, 1732, 1621, 1394, 1283, 1363, 1299, 1222, 1202, 1029; m.p. 74.5–75.5  $^\circ\text{C}$ ; E.A. Calcd. for  $\text{C}_{13}\text{H}_{12}\text{O}_4$ : C, 67.23; H, 5.21; Found: C, 66.96; H, 5.32.





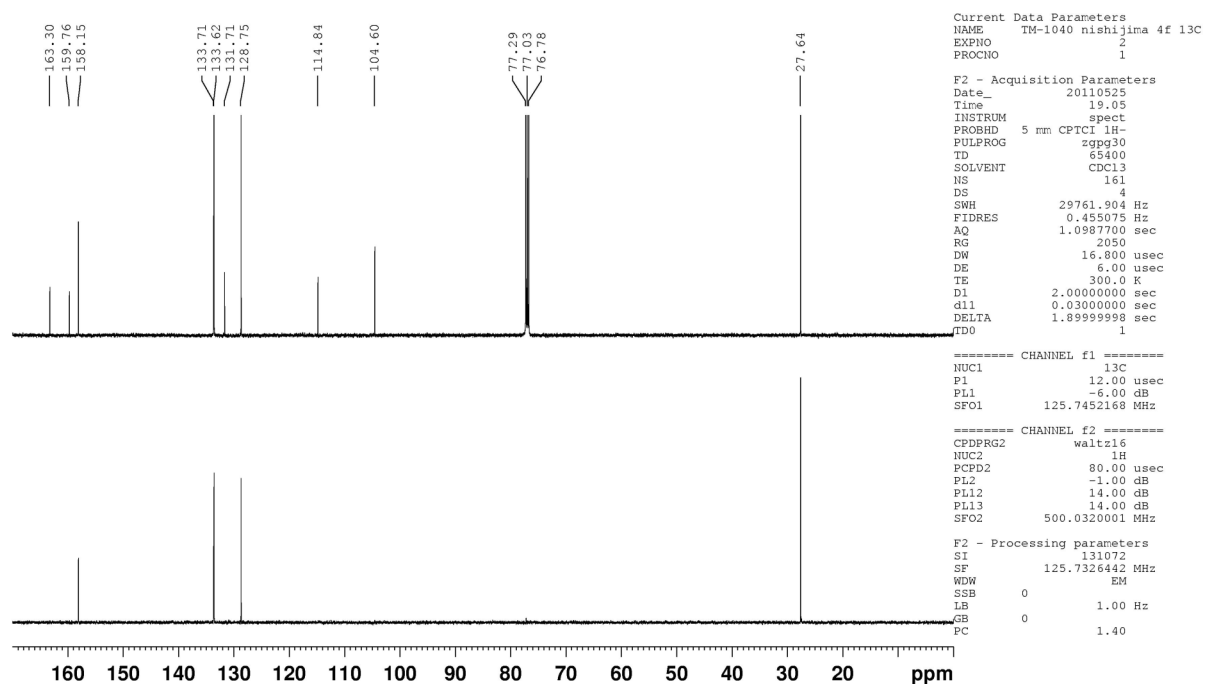


Figure S22. <sup>13</sup>C and DEPT NMR spectra of **4d**.

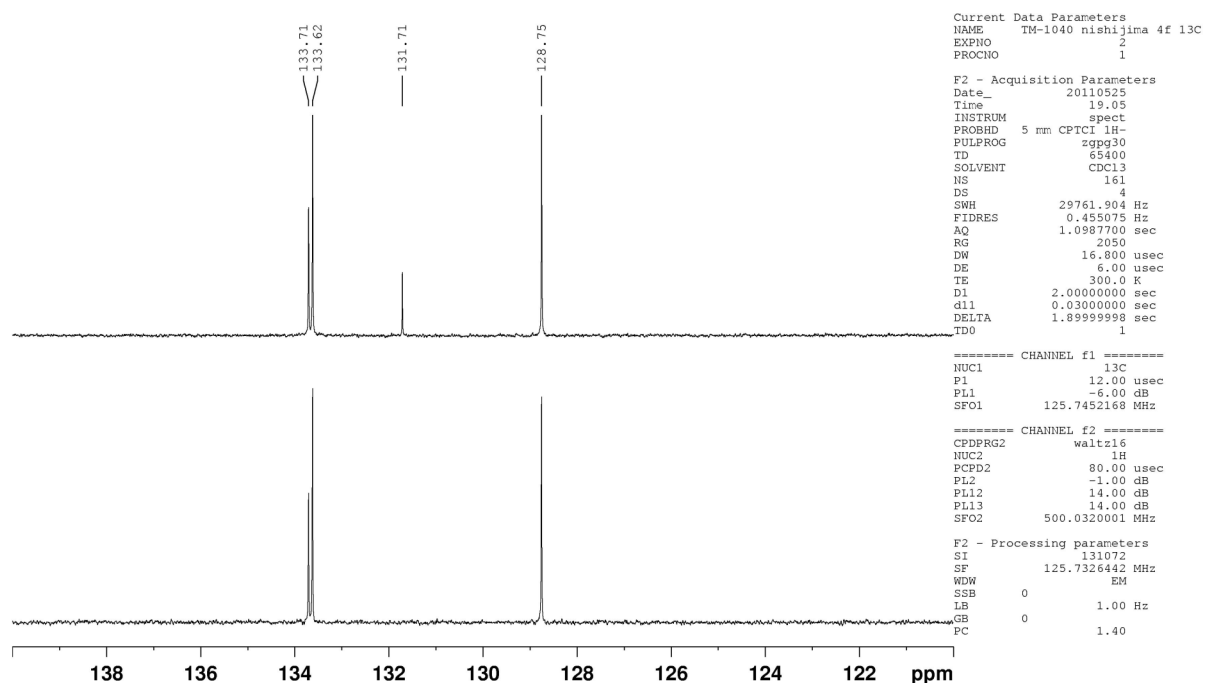
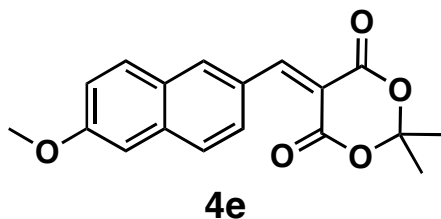


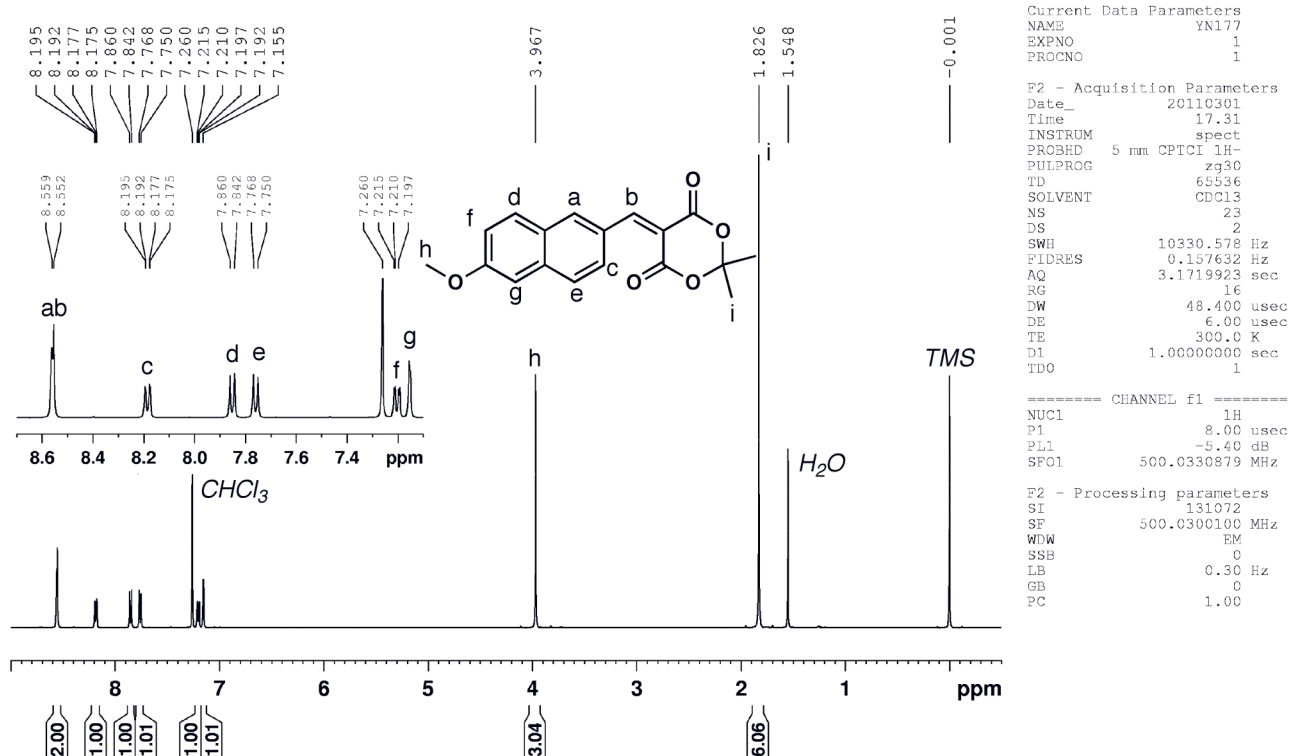
Figure S23. <sup>13</sup>C and DEPT NMR spectra of **4d**.

**5-((6-Methoxynaphthalen-2-yl)methylene)-2,2-dimethyl-1,3-dioxane-4,6-dione (4e)**



**Yield:** 96% (NMR), 88% (isolated)

**Physical data:**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (500 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 8.56 (1H, br s,  $\text{H}_a$ ), 8.55 (1H, s,  $\text{H}_b$ ), 8.18 (1H, dd,  $J$  = 8.8, 1.7 Hz,  $\text{H}_c$ ), 7.85 (1H, d,  $J$  = 9.0 Hz,  $\text{H}_d$ ), 7.76 (1H, d,  $J$  = 8.8 Hz,  $\text{H}_e$ ), 7.21 (1H, dd,  $J$  = 9.0, 2.4 Hz,  $\text{H}_f$ ), 7.16 (1H, d,  $J$  = 2.4 Hz,  $\text{H}_g$ ), 3.97 (3H, s,  $\text{H}_h$ ), 1.83 (6H, s,  $\text{H}_i$ );  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (125 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ):  $\delta$  = 163.8 (C), 160.9 (C), 160.3 (C), 158.5 (CH), 137.8 (C), 137.7 (CH), 131.7 (CH), 129.4 (CH), 128.1 (C), 127.3 (C), 127.1 (CH), 120.0 (CH), 112.7 (C), 106.0 (CH), 104.4 (C), 55.6 ( $\text{CH}_3$ ), 27.6 ( $\text{CH}_3$ ); GC-MS (EI):  $m/z$  = 312  $[\text{M}]^+$ ; IR (ATR,  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ ): 2992, 2946, 1756, 1725, 1587, 1402, 1341, 1291, 1222, 1158, 1023, 1010; m.p. 191.2–192.2  $^\circ\text{C}$ ; E.A. Calcd. for  $\text{C}_{18}\text{H}_{16}\text{O}_5$ : C, 69.22; H, 5.16. Found: C, 69.11; H, 5.32.



**Figure S24.**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of **4e**.

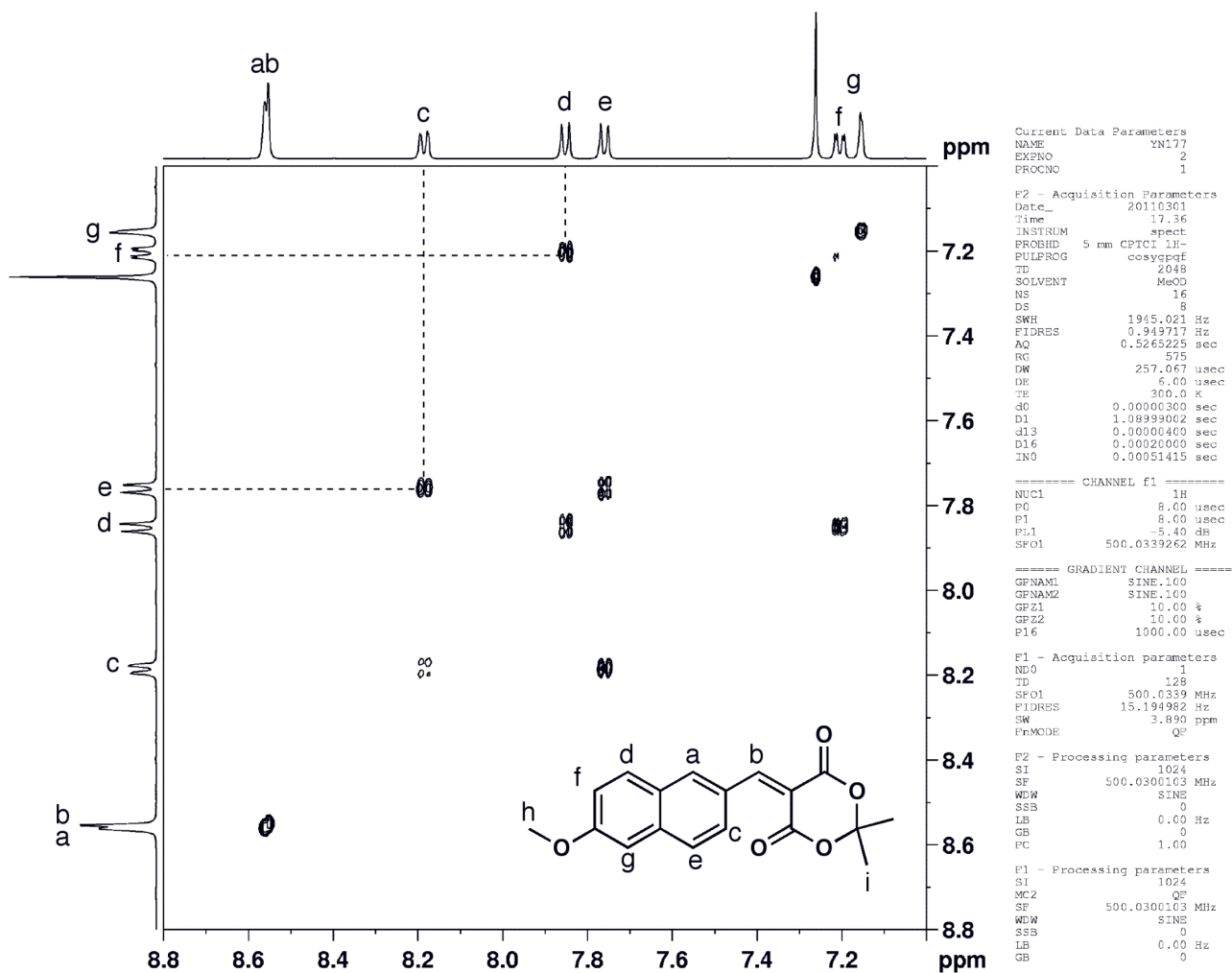


Figure S25. H-H COSY spectrum of **4e**.

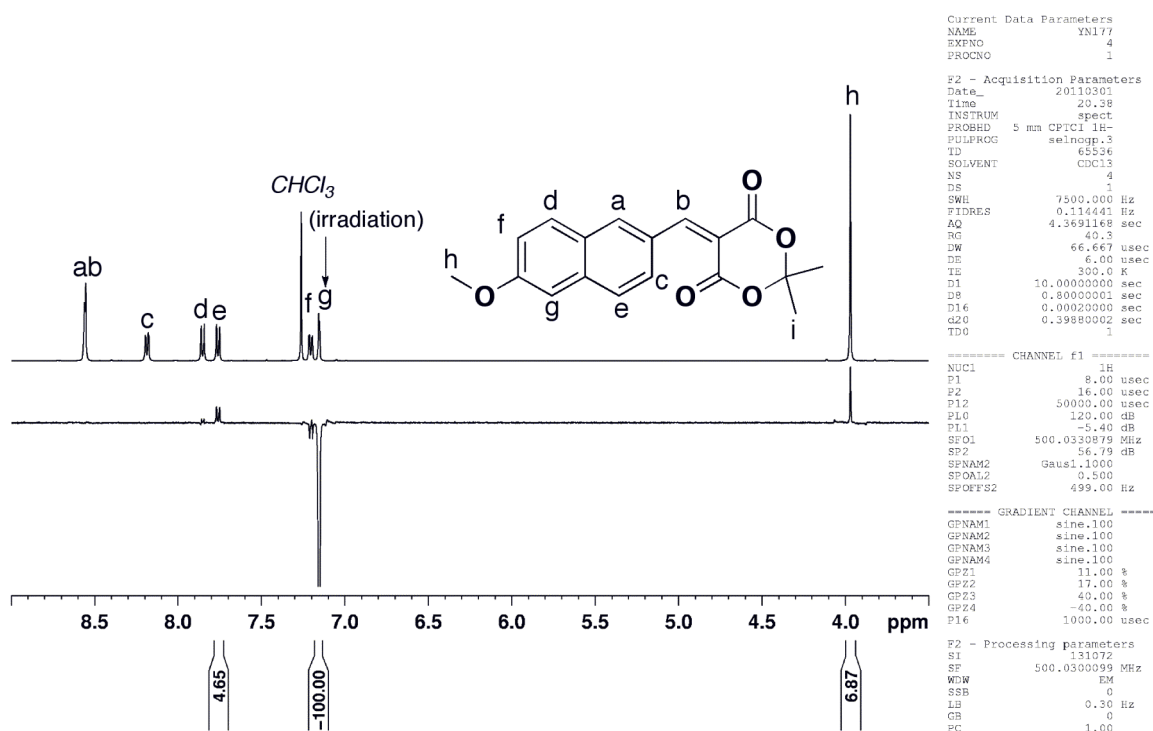


Figure S26. <sup>1</sup>H nOe NMR spectrum of **4e**.

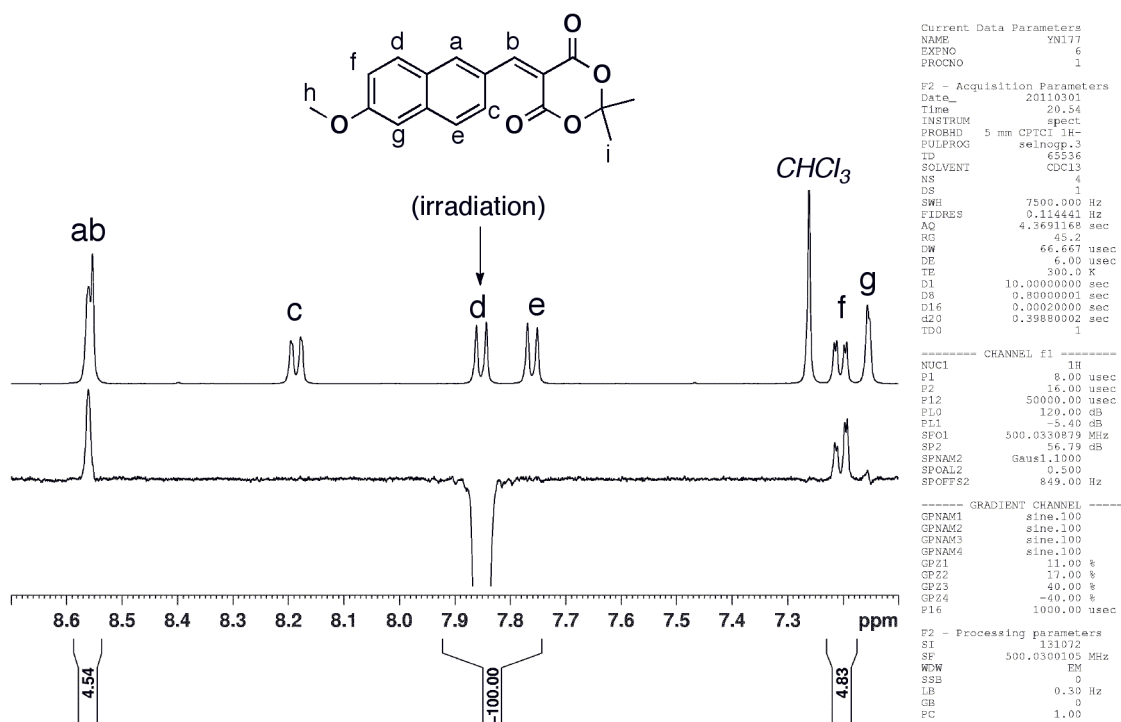


Figure S27. <sup>1</sup>H nOe NMR spectrum of **4e**.

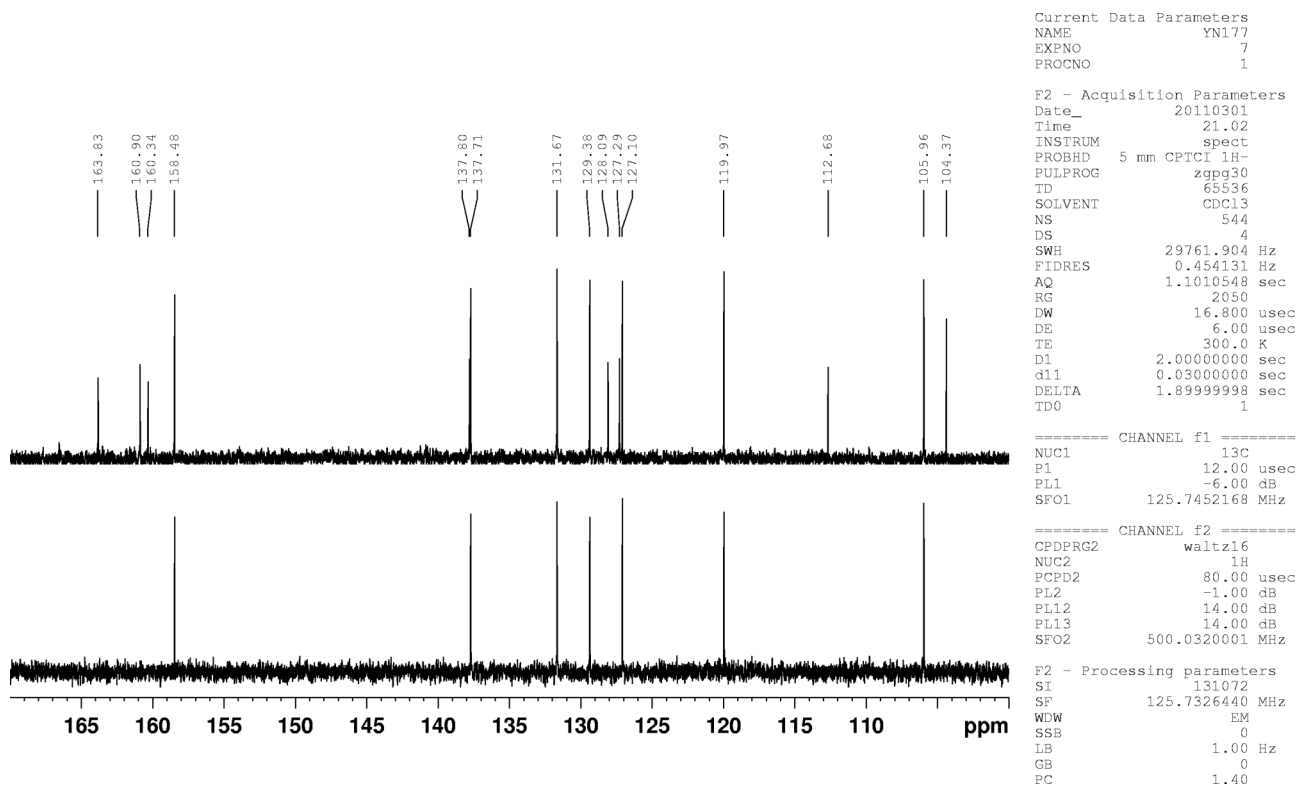


Figure S28. <sup>13</sup>C and DEPT NMR spectra of **4e**.

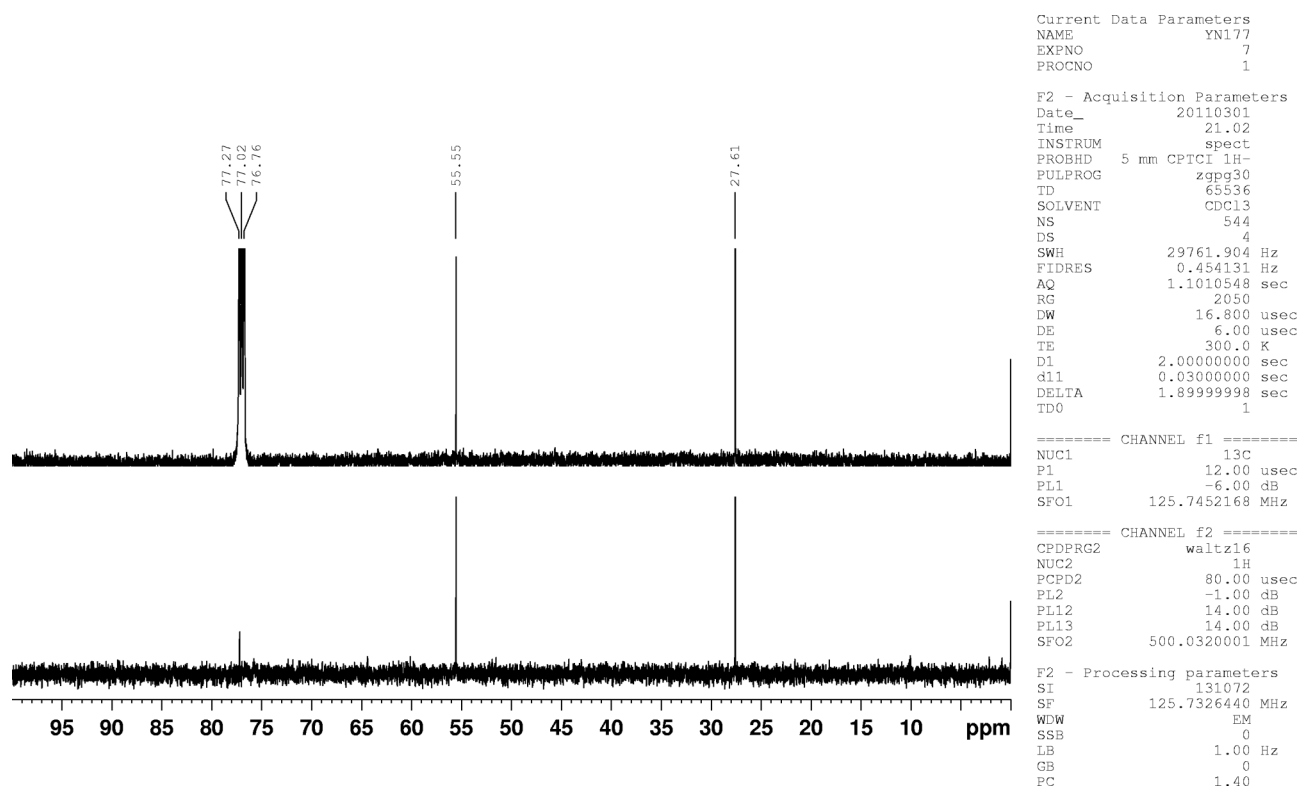
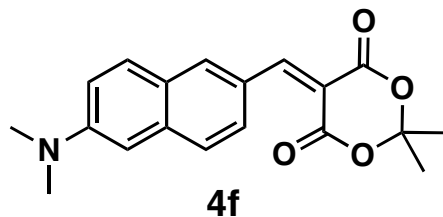


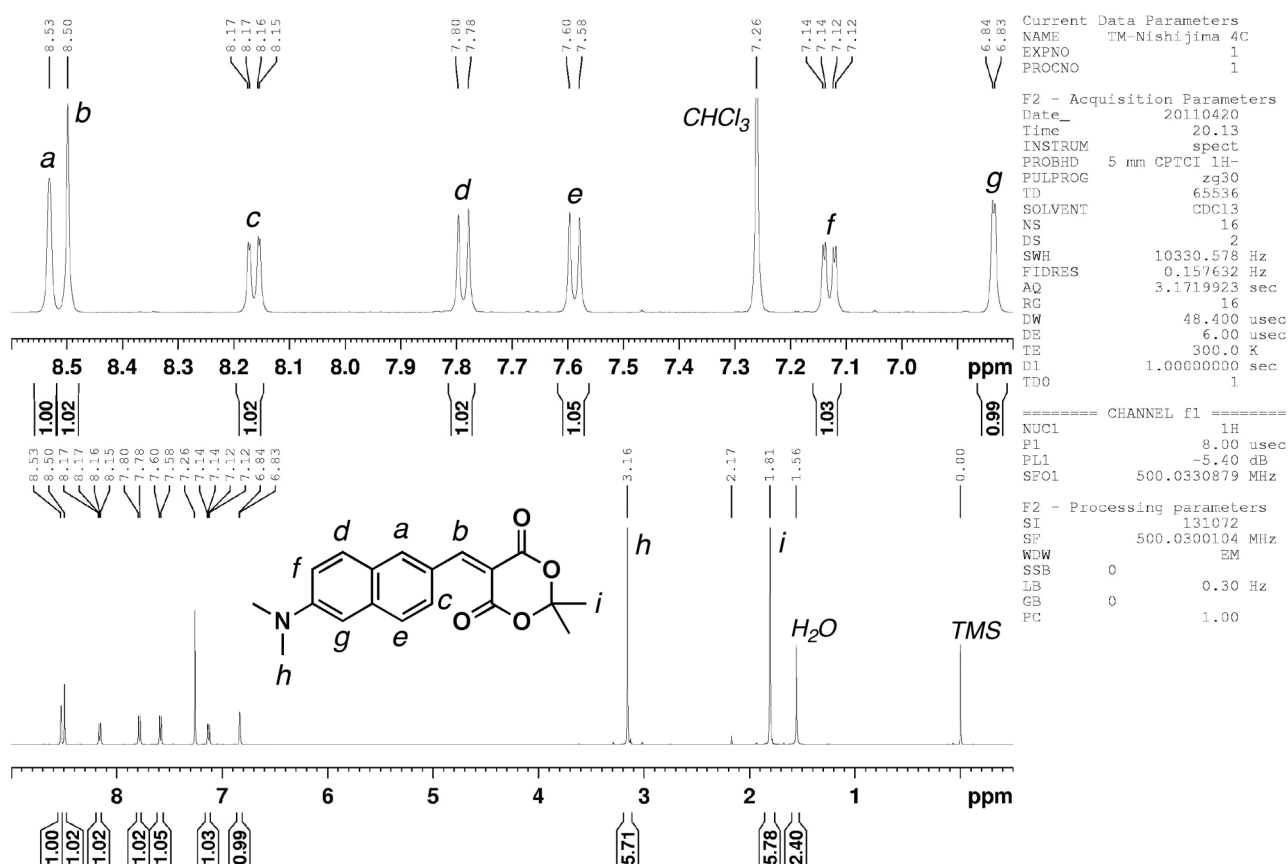
Figure S29.  $^{13}\text{C}$  and DEPT NMR spectra of **4e**.

**5-((6-(Dimethylamino)naphthalen-2-yl)methylene)-2,2-dimethyl-1,3-dioxane-4,6-dione (4f)**



**Yield:** 82% (NMR), 73% (isolated)

**Physical data:**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (500 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$ : 8.53 (1H, d,  $J = 1.6$  Hz,  $\text{H}_a$ ), 8.50 (1H, s,  $\text{H}_b$ ), 8.16 (1H, dd,  $J = 8.9, 1.6$  Hz,  $\text{H}_c$ ), 7.79 (1H, d,  $J = 9.2$  Hz,  $\text{H}_d$ ), 7.59 (1H, d,  $J = 8.9$  Hz,  $\text{H}_e$ ), 7.13 (1H, dd,  $J = 9.2, 2.4$  Hz,  $\text{H}_f$ ), 6.84 (1H, d,  $J = 2.4$  Hz,  $\text{H}_g$ ), 3.16 (6H, s,  $\text{H}_h$ ), 1.81 (6H, s,  $\text{H}_i$ );  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (125 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$ : 164.49 (C), 160.86 (C), 158.77 (CH), 151.32 (CH), 139.40 (CH), 138.51 (C), 131.80 (CH), 129.87 (CH), 126.10 (CH), 125.40 (C), 125.23 (C), 115.93 (CH), 109.73 (C), 105.18 (CH), 103.97 (C), 40.32 ( $\text{CH}_3$ ), 27.50 ( $\text{CH}_3$ ); GC-MS (EI):  $m/z = 325$  [ $\text{M}$ ] $^+$ ; IR (ATR,  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ ): 3002, 2976, 2925, 1739, 1712, 1630, 1574, 1432, 1402, 1387, 1308, 1273, 1225, 1205, 1175, 1138, 1025, 1004; m.p. 209.5–210.3  $^\circ\text{C}$ ; E.A. Calcd. for  $\text{C}_{19}\text{H}_{19}\text{NO}_4$ : C, 70.14; H, 5.89; N, 4.31; Found: C, 69.75; H, 5.97; N, 4.16.



**Figure S30.**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectrum of **4f**.

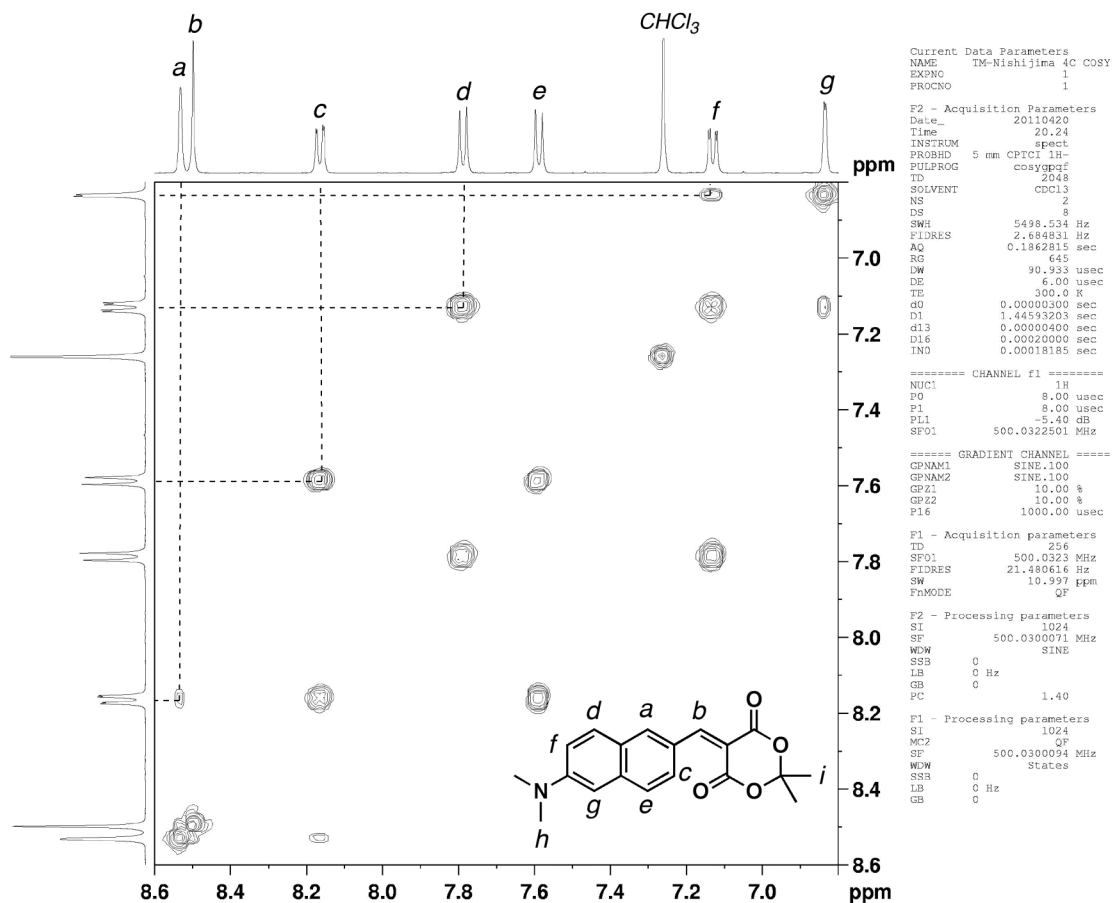


Figure S31. H-H COSY spectrum of 4f.

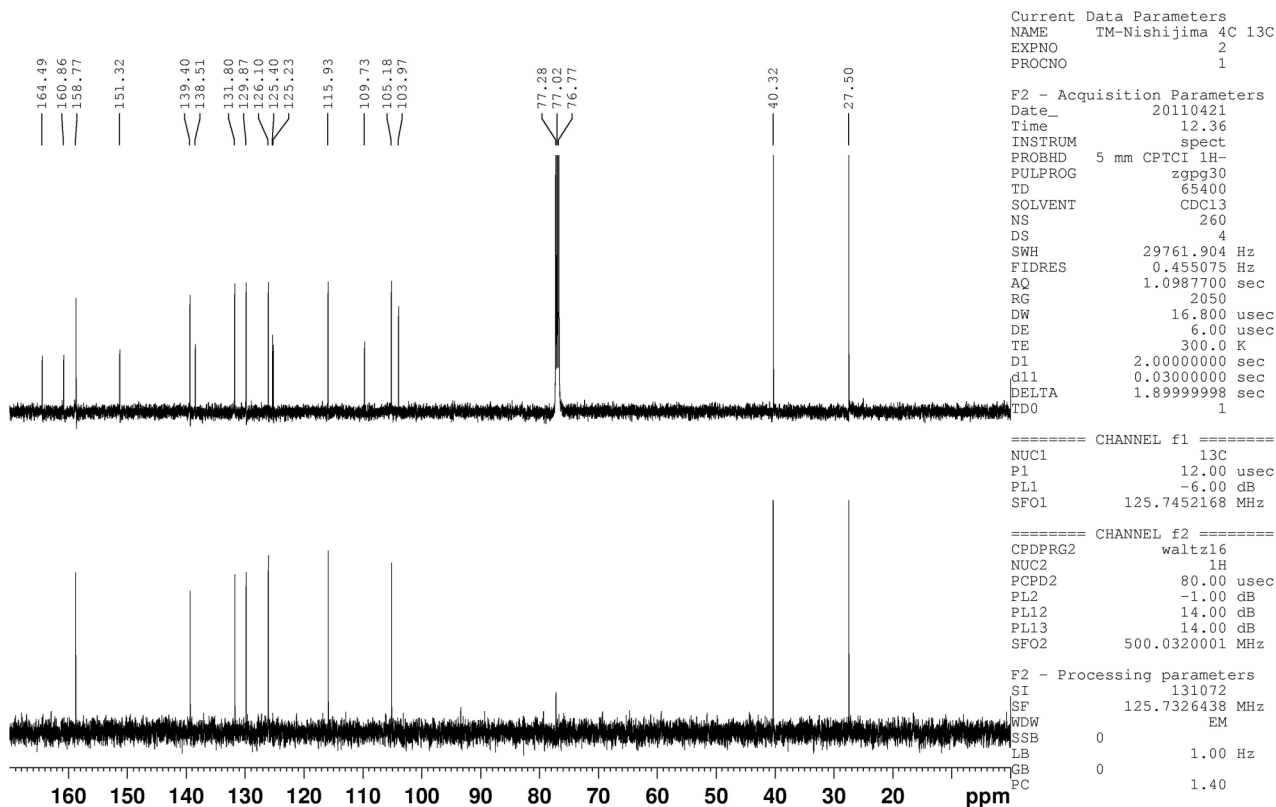
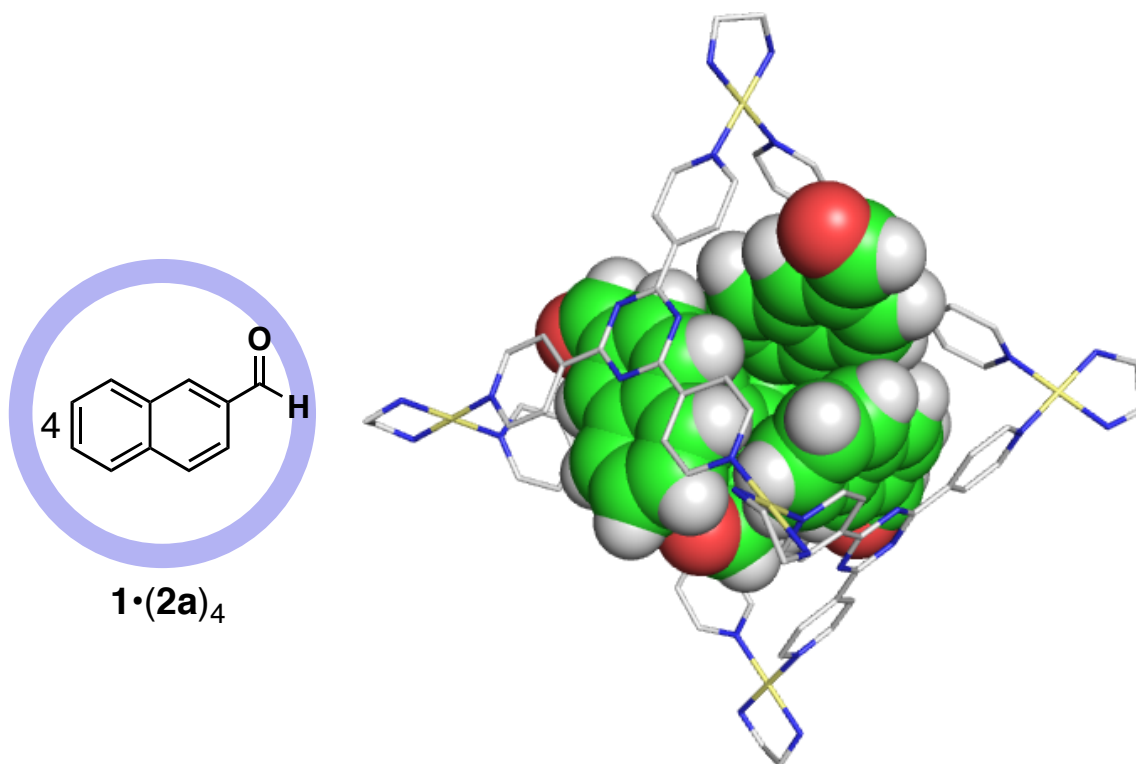


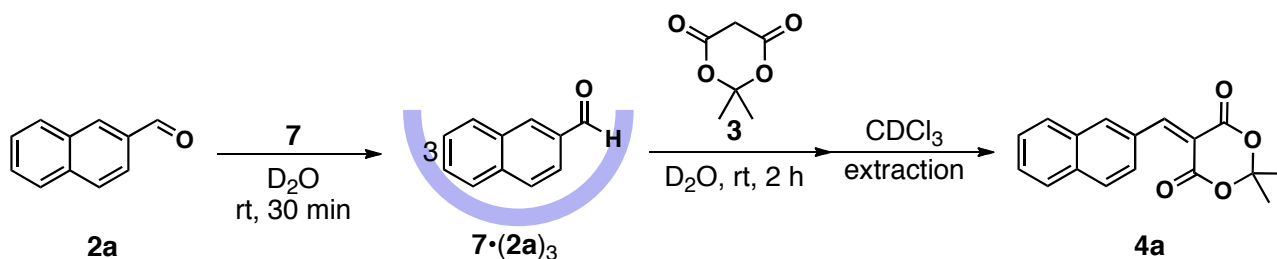
Figure S32. <sup>13</sup>C and DEPT NMR spectra of 4f.

### Molecular modeling of inclusion complex $1 \cdot (2a)_4$



**Figure S33.** Molecular modeling of inclusion complex  $1 \cdot (2a)_4$  optimized by a force-field calculation on MS Modeling 4.4 program. The four molecules of naphthaldehyde **2a** completely occupy the vacant space of cage **1** but freely rotate within the cage. Aldehyde **2a** is shown in the Corey–Pauling–Koltun (CPK) representation (cage **1**: C gray, N blue, Pd yellow; aldehyde **2a**: C green, H gray, O red).

### Reaction Procedure for the Knoevenagel condensation of aldehyde **2a** in bowl-shaped cage **7**



2-Naphthaldehyde (**2a**, 6.25 mg; 0.040 mmol) was suspended in a  $D_2O$  solution (1.0 mL) of cage **7** ( $5.0 \times 10^{-3}$  mmol; 5.0 mM), and the solution was stirred at room temperature for 30 min. After filtration, inclusion complex  $7 \cdot (2a)_3$  was obtained in a quantitative yield. Meldrum's acid **3** (2.16 mg, 0.015 mmol) was added to the solution, and the resulting solution was stirred for 2 h. After extraction with  $CDCl_3$ , condensation product **4a** was obtained in 17% yield, as determined by NMR analysis.