International Journal of Scientific Research and Modern Education (IJSRME)
Impact Factor: 7.137, ISSN (Online): 2455 - 5630
(www.rdmodernresearch.com) Volume 8, Issue 2, 2023

GREEN CHEMISTRY: DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE SYNTHETIC METHODS

Aditi Kumari
Department of Chemistry (NET Qualified), MDU, Rohtak, Haryana

Cite This Article: Aditi Kumari, "Green Chemistry: Development of Sustainable Synthetic Methods", International Journal of Scientific Research and Modern Education, Volume 8, Issue 2, July - December, Page Number 12-15, 2023.

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Abstract:

Green chemistry represents a paradigm shift in the chemical industry, emphasizing sustainability and environmental responsibility. This study delves into the principles and practices of green chemistry, specifically focusing on sustainable synthetic methods. Traditional synthetic methodologies have often resulted in significant environmental pollution due to the use of non-renewable resources, hazardous solvents, and waste generation. In contrast, sustainable synthetic methods, as discussed in this paper, offer pathways that are economically viable, reduce environmental footprint, and utilize renewable resources. Methods like the use of bio-based feedstocks, water as a solvent, biocatalysis, flow chemistry, and supercritical fluids exemplify the transformative potential of green chemistry. While challenges like scalability and economic viability persist, the benefits of adopting these sustainable synthetic methods are multi-fold. As the need for environmentally conscious practices grows, the development and adoption of such methods become paramount for a sustainable future in chemistry.

1. Introduction:

The profound influence of chemistry on modern society is undeniable, driving innovations in numerous sectors, from medicine to electronics. However, traditional chemical processes and synthetic methods, while effective, have frequently been accompanied by detrimental environmental impacts. These range from the emission of greenhouse gases, extensive waste generation, to the depletion of non-renewable resources [1]. Consequently, the 21st century has seen a pressing demand to address these environmental challenges, leading to the advent of green chemistry.Green chemistry, or sustainable chemistry, represents not just a niche area of research, but a fundamental shift in how we approach the science of chemistry. It emphasizes the design of products and processes that minimize or eliminate the use and generation of hazardous substances, placing a premium on environmental responsibility, human health, and economic benefits. One of the most transformative areas within green chemistry is the development of sustainable synthetic methods, which strive to achieve the desired chemical transformations with the least environmental footprint. This paper aims to provide a comprehensive insight into these sustainable synthetic methods, emphasizing their significance, methodologies, advantages, and challenges. Through this exploration, we hope to underline the critical role green chemistry will play in shaping the future of chemical research and industry, ensuring that progress is synonymous with sustainability.

2. Principles of Green Chemistry:

The foundation of green chemistry lies in its twelve guiding principles, which act as the blueprint for the development and evaluation of chemical processes and products [2]. Each principle focuses on ensuring that chemical reactions are as efficient, safe, and environmentally benign as possible [3]. As the saying goes, prevention is better than a cure. garbage prevention is more cost-effective than garbage treatment or cleanup. The goal of this idea is to have procedures designed such that waste is never created.The goal of each new synthetic technique should be to increase the proportion of the end product that is made from the starting ingredients. This guarantees that as much of the raw materials as possible are used in the finished product while reducing waste. To minimise potential harm to individuals and the environment, synthetic methods should be developed wherever possible [4]. This necessitates the use of less dangerous materials.Making chemical goods that are both effective and safe is a priority. An effective drug shouldn't compromise on safety.When feasible, harmful solvents and auxiliary compounds (such separating agents) should be replaced with harmless alternatives.The environmental and financial costs associated with the energy requirements of chemical processes should be taken into account. In order to save as much energy as possible, operations should take place at room temperature and pressure [5].

To reduce our impact on finite resources like fossil fuels, it is preferable to use raw materials that are themselves renewable wherever possible.Reducing or eliminating the need for blocking or protective groups, as well as any other short-term adjustments to synthetic processes, may streamline production by eliminating unnecessary stages and byproducts [6]. Chemical products should be designed so that they do not persist in the environment and instead degrade into innocuous decomposition products at the end of their life, and catalytic reagents are preferred over stoichiometric reagents because they can be used in small amounts to repeat their function multiple times.To identify and stop the creation of dangerous compounds during a reaction, real-time, in-process monitoring and control methods need to be created.To reduce the likelihood of chemical catastrophes like explosions, fires, and poisonous releases, it is important to carefully choose both the chemicals and their forms (e.g., solids, liquids, or gases) [7]. The principles of green chemistry offer a comprehensive framework to transform the chemical industry into a more sustainable and environmentally responsible entity. By adhering to these principles, chemists and industry leaders can pioneer innovations that benefit both the environment and society.

3. Sustainable Synthetic Methods:

- Catalytic Hydrogenation of Alkenes Background: The reduction of alkenes to alkanes is a fundamental reaction. Traditional methods might use excessive reducing agents or metals [8].

Formula: $RCH=CHR'+H2 \xrightarrow{Pd/C,\ Pt,\ Ni} RCH2CHR'$

Green Chemistry Solution: Use of heterogeneous catalysts (like Pd on carbon) that can be easily recovered and recycled.

- Direct Synthesis of Hydrogen Peroxide Background: Traditional synthesis of hydrogen peroxide (H_2O_2) involves anthraquinone process, which generates waste and uses hazardous materials [8].

Formula: $H2+O2 \xrightarrow{Pd\ catalyst} H_2O_2$

Green Chemistry Solution: Direct synthesis from hydrogen and oxygen using palladium catalysts.

4. Case Study:

4.1 Case Study 1: Ibuprofen Synthesis

Traditional synthesis of ibuprofen, a common painkiller, produced significant waste [9].

Formula: Traditional method involved multiple steps, starting with:

C6H5COCl + CH3 (CH2)3CH = CH2 → C6H5COCH (CH3) (CH2)3CH = CH2C6H5COCl + CH3 (CH2)3CH = CH2 → C6H5COCH (CH3) (CH2) 3CH = CH2

Green Chemistry Solution: A new catalytic method was developed that increased atom economy and reduced steps.

Outcome: Decreased waste and improved efficiency in ibuprofen production.

4.2 Case Study 2: Bio-based Pesticides - Pyrethrins

Synthetic pesticides can be harmful and persistent in the environment [10].

Formula: Pyrethrins are derived from Chrysanthemum cinerariifolium, with a general structure: C21H28O3 Green Chemistry Solution: Using natural pyrethrins as pesticides.

Outcome: Reduced environmental persistence and toxicity compared to many synthetic alternatives.

4.3 Case Study 3: Green Synthesis of Biodiesel

Traditional diesel fuels are derived from non-renewable petroleum resources [11].

Formula: Biodiesel is typically synthesized from fats or oils (like triglycerides:

RCO2CH2CH (RCO2CH) CH2RCO2CH3RCO2CH2CH (RCO2CH) CH2RCO2CH3)

through transesterification with methanol

(CH3OHCH3OH): 3CH3OH + RCO2CH2CH (RCO2CH) CH2RCO2CH3 → 3RCO2CH3 + CH2OHCH (OH) CH2OH3CH3OH + RCO2CH2CH (RCO2CH) CH2RCO2CH3 → 3RCO2CH3 + CH2OHCH (OH) CH2OH

Green Chemistry Solution: Use of waste vegetable oils or algae oils as starting materials.

Outcome: Creation of a renewable fuel that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and recycles waste products.

4.4 Case Study 4: Biodiesel Production from Jatropha in India

India, due to its vast agrarian landscape and climate diversity, has significant potential to produce biofuels from non-edible oilseeds. Jatrophacurcas, a drought-resistant perennial plant, has been identified as a promising source for biodiesel production [12]. Given the country's increasing energy demands and the drive for sustainable and indigenous energy resources, initiatives have been launched for large-scale cultivation of Jatropha and subsequent biodiesel production.

Formula: The transesterification process converts triglycerides from Jatropha oil into biodiesel:

RCO2CH2CH (RCO2CH) CH2RCO2CH3 + 3CH3OH$^{cat}\rightarrow^{alyst}$3RCO2CH3 + CH2OHCH (OH) CH2OHRCO2CH2CH (RCO2CH) CH2RCO2CH3 + 3CH3OHcatalyst3RCO2CH3 + CH2OHCH (OH) CH2OH

Where:

RCO2CH2CH (RCO2CH) CH2RCO2CH3RCO2CH2CH (RCO2CH) CH2RCO2CH3

is the triglyceride (from Jatropha oil) CH3OHCH3OH is methanol RCO2CH3RCO2CH3 is the biodiesel (methyl ester) CH2OHCH (OH) CH2OHCH2OHCH (OH) CH2OH is glycerol (byproduct)

Utilizing non-edible Jatropha oil ensures that biodiesel production doesn't compete with food resources.Byproducts like glycerol can be further processed to produce value-added chemicals, thus enhancing the overall atom economy of the process.The use of solid catalysts, instead of conventional alkaline liquid catalysts, can improve the sustainability of the transesterification process, reducing waste and easing separation processes. Biodiesel from

Jatropha reduces the dependence on conventional fossil fuels, decreasing greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants. Large-scale cultivation of Jatropha provides a potential avenue for rural employment and soil reclamation, especially in wastelands [13]. However, challenges such as variable yield, unoptimized cultivation practices, and market dynamics have to be addressed for the widespread adoption of Jatropha-based biodiesel in India. This case study underscores India's effort to integrate sustainable practices into its energy sector, leveraging its agricultural strength and commitment to green energy. The associated formulas highlight the fundamental chemical processes underpinning this endeavor.

4.5 Case Study 5: Green Synthesis of Silver Nanoparticles using Plant Extracts in India

Nanotechnology has been a rapidly growing field with a wide array of applications ranging from medicine to electronics. However, the conventional methods for synthesizing nanoparticles often involve toxic chemicals and generate waste [14]. Indian researchers have looked into eco-friendly methods for synthesizing silver nanoparticles using various plant extracts, capitalizing on India's rich biodiversity.

Formula: The green synthesis of silver nanoparticles (AgNPs) typically follows this general reaction: AgNO3+Plant extract→AgNPs+Oxidized Plant

Where: AgNO3AgNO3 is silver nitrate, serving as the silver ion source.

Plant extracts act as both reducing agents (to reduce silver ions to silver atoms) and capping agents (to stabilize the nanoparticles).This eliminates the need for additional chemicals and toxic stabilizing agents.Common plants used include neem (Azadirachtaindica), tulsi (Ocimum sanctum), and aloe vera, among others. Silver nanoparticles synthesized using this method have shown potent antimicrobial activity and are being researched for applications in wound dressings, water purification, and more [15]. The method is environmentally friendly, cost-effective, and scalable.It merges traditional knowledge with modern science, promoting interdisciplinary research and highlighting the importance of preserving biodiversity.This also presents an avenue for adding value to local agricultural and botanical products.This case study exemplifies India's drive to combine traditional botanical knowledge with modern scientific techniques for sustainable and innovative solutions. The associated formula showcases the fundamental reaction at the heart of this green synthesis method.

5. Conclusion:

Green chemistry, with its emphasis on sustainability, safety, and efficiency, heralds a new era for the chemical industry. Because people all around the world are becoming more aware of the effects that their actions may have on the environment and their health, the concepts and procedures of green chemistry are becoming more important than ever before. This study demonstrates the great potential for innovation in chemistry that is both economically feasible and ecologically responsible via the use of sustainable synthetic techniques. These approaches were covered in this study. Even if the prospects are great, there will also be big obstacles to overcome. To guarantee that green chemistry is not only an academic endeavour but rather a broad industrial reality, it is necessary to overcome the economic, technological, and cultural obstacles that stand in its way. The difficulties highlight the necessity for an integrated strategy, which involves bringing together stakeholders from academia, industry, governmental organisations, and the public in order to propel the green chemistry movement ahead via joint efforts. Green chemistry is still in its infant stages in the broad tapestry of the progression of scientific knowledge. It is impossible to understate the potential influence that it might have on the globe, which includes a reduction in pollution, the conservation of resources, an improvement in public health, and a more sustainable future. It is crucial to stay adaptable, open to input, and constantly inventive in the field of green chemistry as academics, industrialists, and policymakers continue to dive further into the world of green chemistry. Only through such a sustained and collaborative effort can we hope to usher in a future where chemical innovation and environmental stewardship walk hand in hand.

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