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# Efficient hydrolysis of polysaccharides in bagasse by *in situ* synthesis of an acidic ionic liquid after pretreatment

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## KEYWORDS

Acidic ionic liquid, Cellulose, Hydrolysis, Biomass, Zwitterion, Electrodialysis

## ABSTRACT

A highly efficient hydrolytic method using an acidic ionic liquid is proposed: pretreatment of biomass with H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>; simple *in situ* synthesis of an acidic ionic liquid, 1-(1-butylsulfonic)-3-methylimidazolium hydrosulfate ([ $(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}$ ] $\text{HSO}_4$ ), through addition of a zwitterion to the pretreated solution; and subsequent hydrolysis in the [ $(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}$ ] $\text{HSO}_4$  solution at 100 °C under microwave heating. The high yields of glucose and xylose (around 80 and 100%, respectively) were attributed to the pretreatment by H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> and the efficient catalytic activity of the [ $(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}$ ] $\text{HSO}_4$ . The high yields were comparable to the highest yields of acid hydrolysis at around 100 °C among previous literatures, and the present method achieved more rapid hydrolysis. Decomposition of glucose and xylose was negligible because the reaction temperature was relatively mild. We also identified an electrodialysis method to separate

$[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  into  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  and the zwitterion for reuse. Almost  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  (97%) was transferred to the concentrate compartment, and 99% of the zwitterion remained in the dilute compartment during electrodialysis.

## Introduction

Carbohydrates represent 75% of the annual renewable biomass. Amongst the various carbohydrates, cellulose and xylan are the most attractive raw materials for producing critical building blocks such as succinic acid, 2,5-furandicarboxylic acid, gluconic acid, and xylitol, because they are inedible, inexpensive, and are available on a very large scale from biomass.<sup>1</sup> Efficient conversion of biomass to glucose and xylose has been studied extensively.<sup>1-2</sup>

To obtain glucose and xylose from cellulose and xylan, acidic or enzymatic hydrolysis is used. Dilute acid hydrolysis is known as a simple and cost-effective method. However, the overriding problem with dilute acid hydrolysis is a poor sugar yield.<sup>3</sup> To improve this situation, there is a strong requirement to develop efficient catalysts.

Ionic liquids (ILs) have been reported as useful agents for cellulose treatment.<sup>4-10</sup> Because of their remarkable capacity to solubilize cellulose, ILs are used for decrystallization of cellulose before enzymatic hydrolysis.<sup>11-15</sup> Furthermore, acidic ILs, which have acidic parts in the IL structures, have been reported as catalysts for chemical reactions.<sup>16-18</sup> Acidic ILs have also been used for cellulose hydrolysis and show a higher catalytic activity than that of sulfuric acid,<sup>19-21</sup> although their glucose yields were only 22%, even after 3 h treatment at 170 °C.<sup>19</sup> Thus, a

combination of acidic ILs and microwave heating has been reported to improve the yield and reduce reaction time.<sup>22</sup> Because ILs can absorb microwave energy<sup>23-24</sup>, a synergistic effect between the high catalytic activity of acidic ILs and microwave heating was observed, resulting in a 40% of glucose yield at 12 min at 160 °C. Nonetheless, 40% is not sufficient for efficient use of biomass.

Pretreatment of biomass to disrupt the rigid crystal structure of cellulose is a well-known method for obtaining high yields during hydrolysis by diluted acid. There are many pretreatment methods available, such as immersion in highly concentrated sulfuric<sup>25</sup> or phosphoric<sup>26</sup> acids. Whereas some ILs enable structural disruption of cellulose, as mentioned above, we have confirmed that the acidic IL we previously used<sup>22</sup>, 1-(1-butylsulfonic)-3-methylimidazolium hydrosulfate ( $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$ , shown in Scheme 1) has no capability to disrupt structure (details later).

Here, we focus on the innate use of sulfuric acid included in  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  for pretreatment. As shown in Scheme 1,  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  is composed of sulfuric acid and 3-(1-methyl-3-imidazolium)propanesulfonate ( $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$ ), and can be synthesized simply by mixing the two components. Therefore, it was expected that we could obtain high glucose yields *via* pretreatment of biomass by concentrated  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ , followed by synthesis of  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  *in situ* through the addition of  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$ , and finally hydrolysis by  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  with microwave heating. In this study, we investigated the efficiency of glucose production by this method, comprising pretreatment, *in situ* synthesis, and hydrolysis.

## Experimental

### Biomass

Bagasse powder (approximately 3 mm in particle diameter) was purchased from Sanwa Ceruciron. The biomass powder was ground by a mill and then sieved to obtain a powder, 250–500  $\mu\text{m}$  in particle diameter. For microcrystalline cellulose, Avicel PH-101 (Aldrich) was used.

### Synthesis of $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$

1-Methylimidazole (25 g) and 1,4-butanediol (41.5 g) were mixed with acetone under a dry argon atmosphere at room temperature and the mixture was refluxed for 4 days at 50 °C. The insoluble zwitterion was separated by filtration. The product was washed with acetone several times and dried under reduced pressure. The resultant product was obtained as a white powder.  $^1\text{H-NMR}$   $\delta_{\text{H}}$  (400 MHz;  $\text{DMSO-}d_6$ ;  $\text{Me}_4\text{Si}$ ); 1.48 (2H, quin,  $J = 6.8$ ,  $\text{NCH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{SO}_3$ ), 1.83 (2H, quin,  $J = 6.8$ ,  $\text{NCH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{SO}_3$ ), 2.4 (2H, t,  $J = 6.8$ ,  $\text{NCH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{SO}_3$ ), 3.81 (3H, s,  $\text{NCH}_3$ ), 4.13 (2H, t,  $J = 6.8$ ,  $\text{NCH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{SO}_3$ ), 7.66 (1H, t,  $J = 1.55$  NCHCHN), 7.73 (1H, t,  $J = 1.55$  NCHCHN), 9.09 (1H, s, NCHN).  $^{13}\text{C-NMR}$   $\delta_{\text{C}}$  (100 MHz;  $\text{DMSO-}d_6$ ;  $\text{Me}_4\text{Si}$ ); 22.27 ( $\text{NCH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{SO}_3$ ), 29.13( $\text{NCH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{SO}_3$ ), 36.27 ( $\text{NCH}_3$ ), 49.08 ( $\text{NCH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{SO}_3$ ), 50.94 ( $\text{NCH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{SO}_3$ ), 122.86 (NCHCHN), 124.13 (NCHCHN), 137.07(NCHN). Elemental analysis: (Found: C, 43.9; H, 6.5; N, 12.8. Calc. for  $\text{C}_8\text{H}_{14}\text{N}_2\text{O}_3\text{S}$ : C, 44.0; H, 6.5; N, 12.8%).

### Preparation of phosphoric acid-swollen cellulose (PASC)

PASC was prepared as previously reported.<sup>27</sup> Cellulose (8 g) was mixed with 24 mL of ultrapure water. Phosphoric acid (200 mL) was then slowly added with stirring. After 24 h

stirring at 4 °C, ultrapure water (400 mL) was added. The solution was then centrifuged at 8,000 rpm for 10 min, and the supernatant was removed. The washing process was repeated five times. The resulting cellulose was dispersed in ultrapure water (500 mL). To adjust the pH value to 6, sodium carbonate aqueous solution (1 wt%) was added. The solution was centrifuged at 8,000 rpm for 10 min, and the supernatant was removed. The washing process was repeated three times. The resulting cellulose was stored in a refrigerator.

### **Microwave-assisted hydrolysis of microcrystalline cellulose or PASC without pretreatment**

$[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  solution was synthesized by mixing equimolar amounts of  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$  and  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ , with water in a 100-mL vessel (HPR-1000/10, Milestone S.r.l.). Avicel (0.3 g) or PASC (0.3 g dry weight) was added to the  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  solution (final concentration: 1.0 M) and then hydrolyzed with microwave heating (microwave system StartSYNTH, Milestone S.r.l.) at 100 °C.

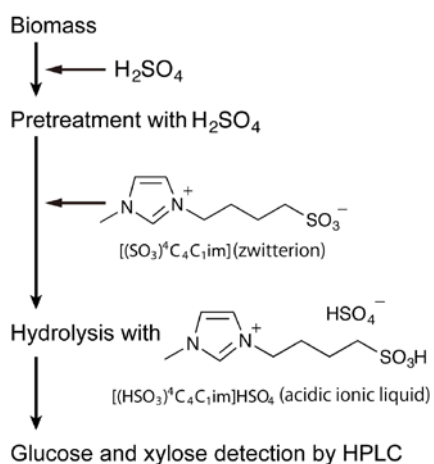
For sampling, the vessel was withdrawn from the microwave system, and cooled in an ice bath to quench the reaction. An aliquot of the sample solution (500  $\mu\text{L}$ ) was centrifuged for 2 min at 15,000 rpm. The supernatant was filtered and then subjected to high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) analysis to determine the yield of glucose and xylose, as described below.

### **Pretreatment of cellulose and biomass with $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ , *in situ* synthesis of $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$ , and microwave-assisted hydrolysis in the $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$**

The procedure is summarized in Scheme 1. Avicel or bagasse (0.3 g) was soaked in a 72 wt%  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  solution at room temperature for 1 h, with stirring, in a 100-mL vessel. Water and an

equimolar amount of  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$  powder relative to  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  were added (final concentration of  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$ : 1.0 M, final concentration of bagasse: 20 g/L, volume of  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  solution: 15 mL). In the case of hydrolysis with  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  as a control experiment,  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$  was not added. The prepared solution, composed of  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  and pretreated bagasse, was then heated using the microwave synthesizer.

When Avicel was pretreated with a  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  solution, we used the 72 wt%  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  solution as an alternative of the 72 wt%  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  solution.



**Scheme 1.** Pretreatment of biomass and hydrolysis performed in this study.

### Analysis of yield of glucose and xylose

The concentrations of glucose and xylose in the hydrolyzate were determined by HPLC. The system was composed of a refractive index detector (Shimadzu Co.), a CARBOsep CHO-682 column, and a CARBOsep CHO-682 guard column (Tokyo Chemical Industry Co. Ltd.). The injected volume of the sample was 20  $\mu\text{L}$ , and the column was heated at 85  $^\circ\text{C}$ , ultrapure water was used as the mobile phase, and a flow rate of 0.4 mL/min was applied.



The yields of glucose and xylose were evaluated based on the amount of glucose or xylose (mainly attributed to cellulose and xylan) contained in the original lignocellulosic biomass. The amounts of glucose and xylose contained in the original lignocellulosic biomass were determined according to a method reported elsewhere.<sup>28</sup>

### **Electrodialysis**

Electrodialysis was conducted using a Selemion electro dialyzer (DW-Lab, AGC Engineering Co., Ltd.) comprising a membrane stack, three compartments (dilute, concentrate, and electrolyte compartments), and a DC power supply (PMC18-3A; Kikusui Electronics Co.). During the electrodialysis, ions were transported from the dilute compartment to the concentrate compartment *via* cation and anion exchange membranes under a potential of 8 V. The membrane stack was composed of five pairs of Selemion CMV cation exchange membranes and an AMV anion exchange membranes. The initial concentration of the  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  solution (250 g) in dilute compartment was 0.05 M. The initial solution of the concentrate compartment was ultrapure water (250 g). All solutions were circulated at 4 L/min using pumps (RD-05V24; Iwaki Co., Ltd.).

The concentrations of  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  or  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$  in dilute or concentrate compartments were analyzed with HPLC. The set-up of HPLC was the same as used for the analysis of glucose yield described above.

## Results and discussion

### Effect of pretreatment by H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> on hydrolysis of cellulose by [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub>

To investigate the efficacy of pretreatment, we initially confirmed the effect of cellulose crystallinity on hydrolysis by [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub>. Microcrystalline cellulose (Avicel, crystallinity index: 0.82, the datum of X-ray scattering is shown in Figure S2) and partially amorphous cellulose (PASC, crystallinity index: 0.00, the datum of X-ray scattering is also shown in Figure S2) was subjected to hydrolysis in a 1.0 M [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub> solution under microwave heating at 100 °C without pretreatment. While Avicel was hydrolyzed with a yield of 8% at 90 min (entry 1 in Table 1, and the time course is shown in Figure S3, see SI), PASC was hydrolyzed with a yield of 46% (entry 2). Cellulose crystallinity was confirmed to prevent efficient hydrolysis by the [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub> solution.

[(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub> however does not have decrystallization ability to cellulose. Entry 3 in Table 1 shows the glucose yield *via* the hydrolysis of the Avicel after pretreatment with [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub>. The yield was 10%, and the value was almost the same as that for the untreated Avicel (entry 1). [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub> does not have the decrystallization ability, and thus the pretreatment with H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, followed by hydrolysis with [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub>, is required to achieve efficient hydrolysis.

We performed pretreatment of Avicel with a 72 wt% H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> solution, and then directly added an equimolar amount of [(SO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im] and water to the pretreated solution. After pretreatment for 1h, Avicel was dissolved, and therefore Avicel was confirmed to be decrystallized completely. The resulting [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub> solution (1.0 M) was then heated by microwave at 100 °C for hydrolysis. Entry 4 in Table 1 shows the yield was 73% and thus 9 times higher than that of the untreated Avicel. In addition, the hydrolysis was also accelerated from a viewpoint of

reaction time as shown in Figure S3. The reaction time was shortened from over 90 to 30 min, also compared to the untreated Avicel. In addition, higher glucose yield in the hydrolysis of the pretreated cellulose with H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, compared to PASC, should be due to homogeneous reaction (PASC was reacted in undissolved state). The present method was found to be a remarkably effective hydrolytic method.

**Table 1.** Glucose yield after hydrolysis of cellulose for 90 min in [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub> aqueous solution (1.0 M) at 100 °C with or without pretreatments.

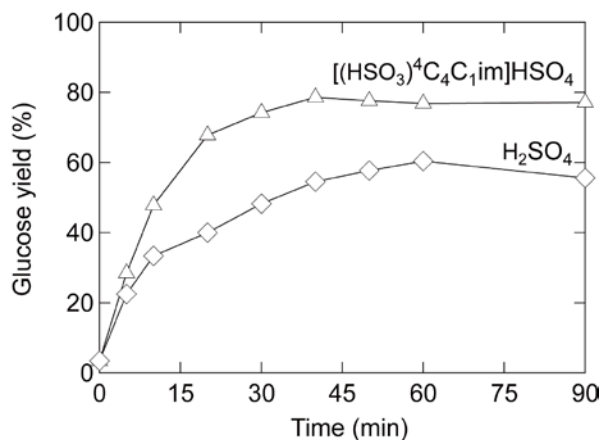
Entry	Cellulose species	Pretreatment	Glucose yield (%)
1	Avicel	–	8
2	PASC	–	46
3	Avicel	72 wt% [(HSO <sub>3</sub> ) <sup>4</sup> C <sub>4</sub> C <sub>1</sub> im]HSO <sub>4</sub>	10
4	Avicel	72 wt% H <sub>2</sub> SO <sub>4</sub>	73

### Hydrolysis of bagasse *via* pretreatment by H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> and *in situ* synthesis of [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub>

Figure 1 shows the time course for glucose yield during hydrolysis of bagasse with 1.0 M [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub> or H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> at 100 °C, after pretreatment with concentrated H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>. [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub> was synthesized *in situ* in the same way as used for cellulose hydrolysis. The glucose yield from hydrolysis with H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> increased with reaction time and reached 60% at 60 min. The glucose yield from hydrolysis with [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub> also increased with reaction time and reached 77% at 40 min (error bars are shown in Figure S4). Decomposition of glucose was not observed beyond 40 min. The results show that hydrolysis with [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub> gave a higher glucose yield, with a shorter reaction time compared with that using H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>. From the viewpoint of xylose yield, there was little difference: 102% with [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub>, and 100% with H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> (Figure S5). It is noted that

$[(\text{HSO}_3)_4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  gave a yield of over 100% because we detected the xylan content of bagasse using the NREL method<sup>28</sup>. The NREL method is conventional and generally reliable, but it involves hydrolysis with  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  at 121 °C and little xylan decomposition is possible. However, we stress here that this is not a critical result, pointing to the inaccuracy of the NERL method.

The efficient hydrolysis of bagasse was owing to the high catalytic activity of  $[(\text{HSO}_3)_4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$ <sup>19</sup> and the efficient absorption of the microwave energy by  $[(\text{HSO}_3)_4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$ , in addition to the pretreatment with  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ . ILs are reported to show effective absorbance of microwave energy based on both ion conduction and dipole relaxation mechanisms<sup>23-24</sup>, resulting in efficient reaction in this study.



**Figure 1.** Time courses of glucose yield during hydrolysis of bagasse in 1.0 M  $[(\text{HSO}_3)_4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  or  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  solutions at 100 °C under microwave heating, after pretreatment with 72 %  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  solution.  $[(\text{HSO}_3)_4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  was synthesized *in situ*.

Among the previous reports, the highest yields of glucose and xylose were 90% each in the case of diluted acid hydrolysis, using concentrated acid pretreatment below 100 °C.<sup>29</sup> The yield

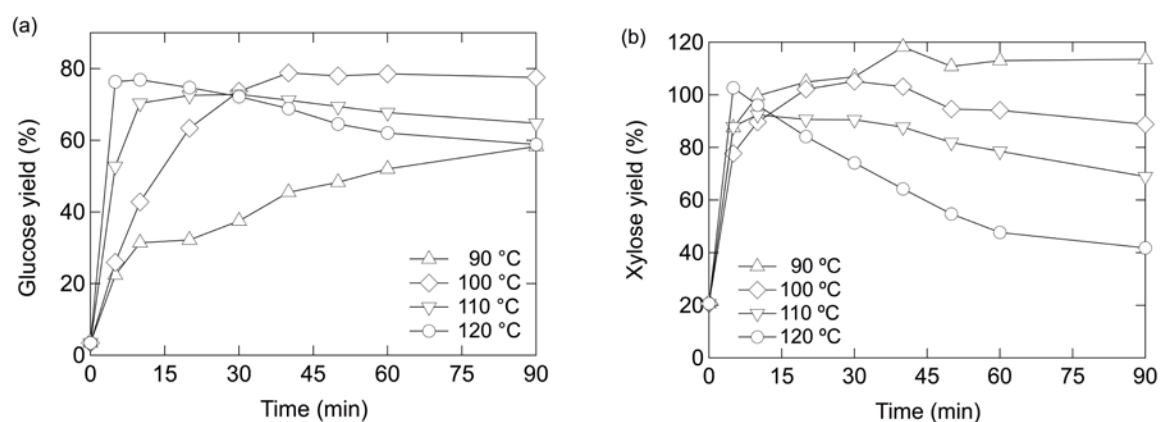
of xylose obtained in this study was higher than the highest yields previously reported in the literature. While glucose yield in this study was slightly lower than the highest reported yield, the reaction time used in this study was considerably shorter than the method giving the highest yield (40 min vs 4 h).

The hydrolysis displayed almost no decomposition of sugars. In general hydrolysis, sugars generated by hydrolysis are immediately decomposed to particular products such as 5-(hydroxymethyl)furfural (HMF).<sup>30</sup> Even during hydrolysis with acidic ILs, it has been reported that “unpretreated” cellulose hydrolysis using  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  requires over 160 °C and the harsh conditions significantly decompose glucose (glucose yield: 40% at 12 min to 23% at 30 min).<sup>22</sup> In contrast, glucose was not decomposed by the present method, probably because of the relatively mild conditions. Xylose was slightly decomposed during the present method (yield: 102% at 30 min to 99% at 60 min). In terms of degraded products, no 5-(hydroxymethyl)furfural and very little furfural (yield: 6%) were confirmed even at 90 min (Figure S6). Thus, the present method almost completely avoided decomposition of sugars, leading to high sugar yields.

Figure 2 (a) shows time courses for the yield of glucose during hydrolysis of pretreated bagasse at various temperature in a 1.0 M  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  solution, synthesized *in situ*. As mentioned above, the glucose yield at 100 °C was 77% at 40 min. At 90 °C, hydrolysis proceeded to give a yield of 58% at 90 min. At 110 and 120 °C, similar yields were obtained (73% and 77%) at 30 and 10 min, respectively, but a decrease in glucose yield was confirmed, caused by the relatively harsh conditions.

Figure 2 (b) shows time courses for the yield of xylan during hydrolysis of pretreated bagasse at various temperatures in 1.0 M  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  solution, synthesized *in situ*. The

xylose yield at 0 min was 20% because xylan was partly hydrolyzed during pretreatment of the bagasse. At all temperatures, a high hydrolysis rate was observed and over 90% was obtained within 10 min. At 90 and 100 °C, about 100–120% yields were obtained and significant decomposition of xylose was not confirmed. The decomposition caused by high temperature was observed at 110 and 120 °C. From these results, both high yields of saccharides and elimination of significant decomposition were simultaneously achieved at 90 and 100 °C.



**Figure 2.** Time courses for the yield of (a) glucose and (b) xylose during hydrolysis of bagasse pretreated with  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  in a 1.0 M  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  solution under microwave heating at 90, 100, 110, and 120 °C.

### Separation of $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$ into $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ and $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$ by electrodialysis

If synthesized  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  can be separated to  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$  and  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ , the hydrolytic process suggested in this study would be repeatable. We therefore searched for methods to separate  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  into  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$  and  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ , and chose electrodialysis. Electrodialysis is a technique for ion transport using ion-exchange membranes under an applied potential gradient. Electrodialysis has been applied to separate neutral

compounds from organic and inorganic salt solutions, and achieved recovery of ILs from mixtures of ILs and neutral compounds.<sup>31-36</sup>  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  is composed of the zwitterion and the acid moieties. While the acid is expected to be transported as ions, we assumed that the zwitterion would not move under an applied potential field because the net charge of zwitterion is neutral<sup>37</sup>. The separation of mixtures of the acid and zwitterion has not been investigated previously, so we attempted to separate  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  into  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$  and  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  using electrodialysis.

Figure S7 (a) shows the time courses for the concentration of  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  in the dilute and concentrate compartments during electrodialysis of  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$ . The concentration of  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  in the dilute compartment decreased with the elapsed time and the desalination ratio was 99% at 60 min. The concentration of  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  in the concentrate compartment increased with time and the recovery ratio was 97% at 60 min. Therefore, we recovered almost all of the  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ . Note, there was a slight difference between the desalination ratio and the recovery ratio, caused by fouling of the negatively charged species on the electrodialysis membrane.<sup>38</sup>

Figure S7 (b) shows the time course for concentration of  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$  in the dilute and concentrate compartments during electrodialysis of  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$ . In contrast to the  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  behavior, the concentration of  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$  did not change in either compartment: 99% of  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$  remained in the dilute compartment after 60 min. These results clearly show that most of the  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  was recovered in the concentrate compartment and most of the  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$  remained in the dilute compartment. Thus, we successfully separated  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  into  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$  and  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  components.

Although the hydrolyzed sample includes sugars and lignin in addition to the  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  aqueous solution, the sugars and lignin can be separated by adding

alcohol because neither species dissolve in alcohol. Thus, the  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  /hydrolyzate aqueous solution can be readily separated into  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$ ,  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ , and the hydrolyzate products as follows: addition of alcohol, filtration of sugars and lignin, electro dialysis for separation  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  into  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$  and  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ .

## Conclusion

High yields of glucose and xylose, 77% and 102%, were obtained from bagasse using the following process: pretreatment of bagasse with  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ , addition of  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$  for *in situ* synthesis of  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$ , and hydrolysis under microwave heating at 100 °C. The hydrolysis was rapidly completed, within 40 min, and the yield was comparable to the highest yield obtained with acid hydrolysis at around 100 °C. To reuse  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  and  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$ , a method to separate  $[(\text{HSO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]\text{HSO}_4$  into  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  and  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$  components is required, and electro dialysis was identified as a suitable method. While 97% of the  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  was transferred from the dilute compartment to the concentrate compartment during electro dialysis, 99% of the  $[(\text{SO}_3)^4\text{C}_4\text{C}_1\text{im}]$  remained in the dilute compartment.



## ASSOCIATED CONTENT

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### **Author Contributions**

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## Notes

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## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Scheme of the electrodialysis of  $[(\text{HSO}_3)_4\text{C}_4\text{C}_{1\text{im}}]\text{HSO}_4$ , X-ray scattering spectra of Avicel and PASC, time course of glucose yield during hydrolysis of avicel and phosphoric acid swollen cellulose (PASC) with 1.0 M of  $[(\text{HSO}_3)_4\text{C}_4\text{C}_{1\text{im}}]\text{HSO}_4$  at 100 °C, time courses of yield of glucose and xylose during hydrolysis of bagasse pretreated with  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  in a 1.0 M  $[(\text{HSO}_3)_4\text{C}_4\text{C}_{1\text{im}}]\text{HSO}_4$  solution under microwave heating at 100 °C with error bars, time course of xylose yield during hydrolysis of bagasse with 1.0 M of  $[(\text{HSO}_3)_4\text{C}_4\text{C}_{1\text{im}}]\text{HSO}_4$  or  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  at

100 °C under microwave after pretreatment with concentrated H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, time courses of yield of HMF or furfural during hydrolysis of pretreated bagasse with H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> in 1.0 M [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub> solution under microwave at 100 °C, time courses of concentration of H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> and [(SO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im] in dilute and concentrate compartments during electro dialysis of [(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub>. (PDF)

## ABBREVIATIONS

[(HSO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im]HSO<sub>4</sub>, 1-(1-butylsulfonic)-3-methylimidazolium hydrosulfate;  
[(SO<sub>3</sub>)<sup>4</sup>C<sub>4</sub>C<sub>1</sub>im], 3-(1-methyl-3-imidazolio)propanesulfonate; IL, ionic liquid; PASC, phosphoric acid swollen cellulose; HMF, 5-(hydroxymethyl)furfural.

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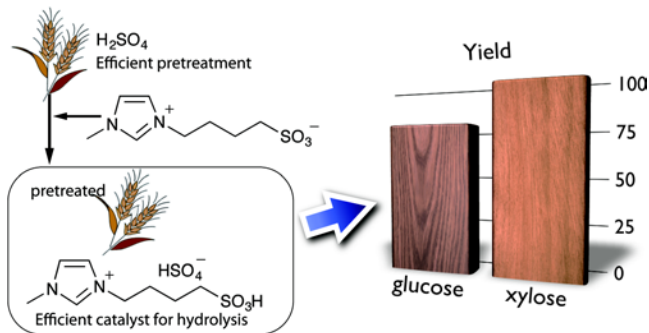
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## SYNOPSIS

Hydrolysis of lignocellulose with acidic ionic liquids after pretreatment with  $H_2SO_4$ , included in the acidic ionic liquids, was quite efficient.

Efficient hydrolysis of polysaccharides in bagasse by *in situ* synthesis of an acidic ionic liquid after pretreatment

Heri Satria, Kosuke Kuroda, Takatsugu Endo, Kenji Takada, Kazuaki Ninomiya, and Kenji Takahashi