

1 *Supplementary data for*

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3 **Redox properties of alkyl-substituted 4-aryl-2,4-dioxobutanoic acids**

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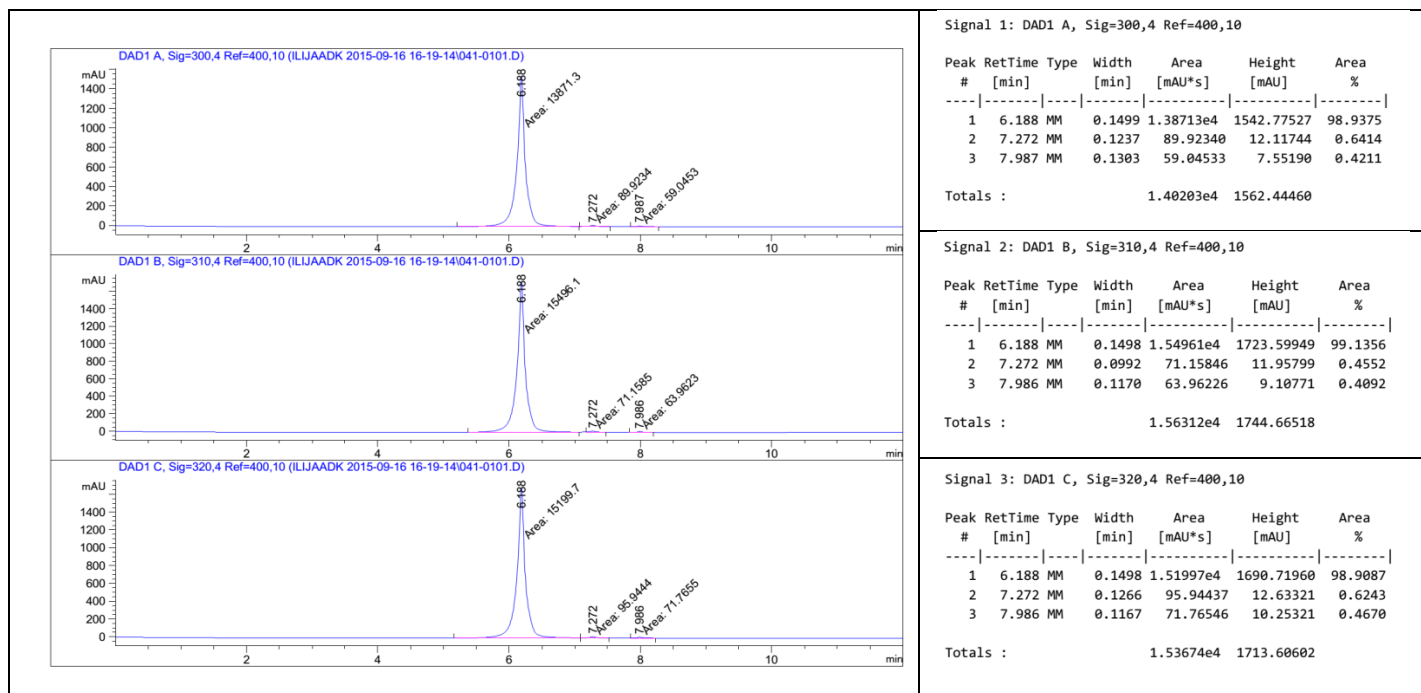


Fig. S1. Chromatogram for the assessment of compound 1 purity, with the tables showing the detector response at three wavelengths

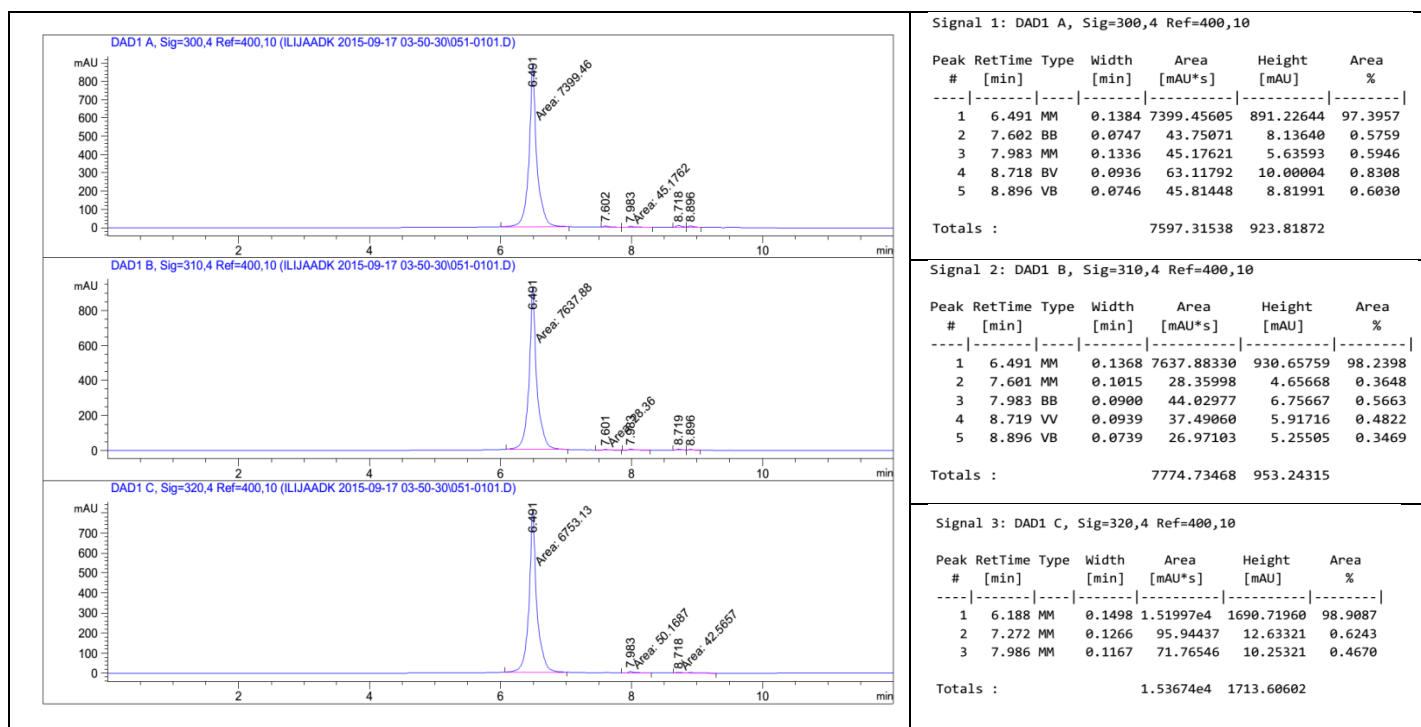


Fig. S2. Chromatogram for the assessment of compound 2 purity, with the tables showing the detector response at three wavelengths.

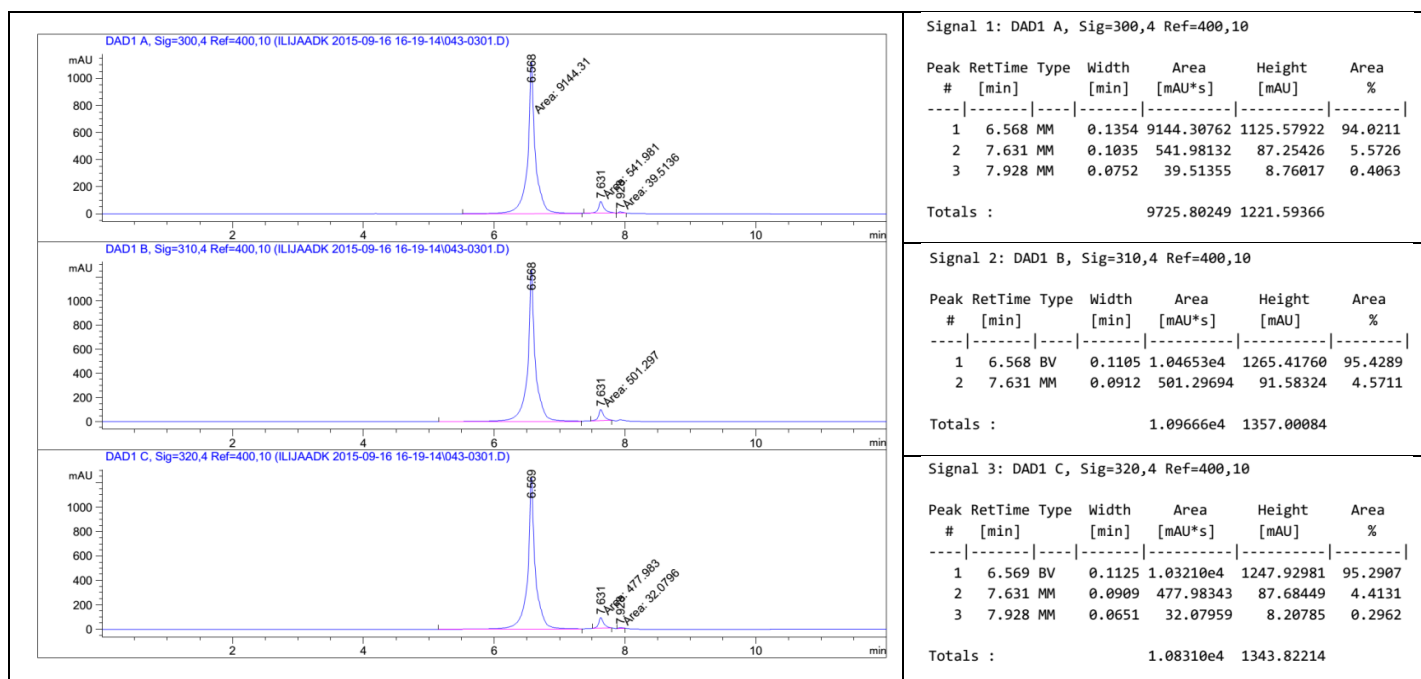


Fig. S3. Chromatogram for the assessment of compound **3** purity, with the tables showing the detector response at three wavelengths.

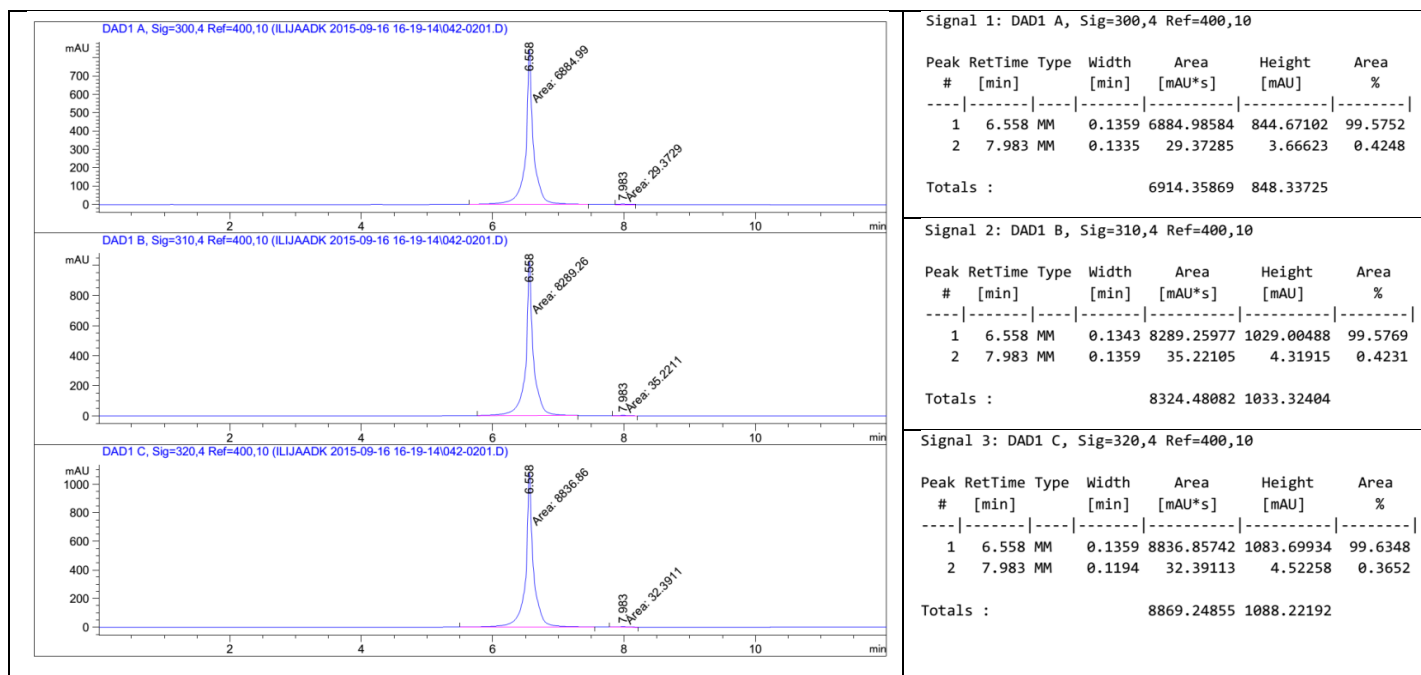


Fig. S4. Chromatogram for the assessment of compound **4** purity, with the tables showing the detector response at three wavelengths.

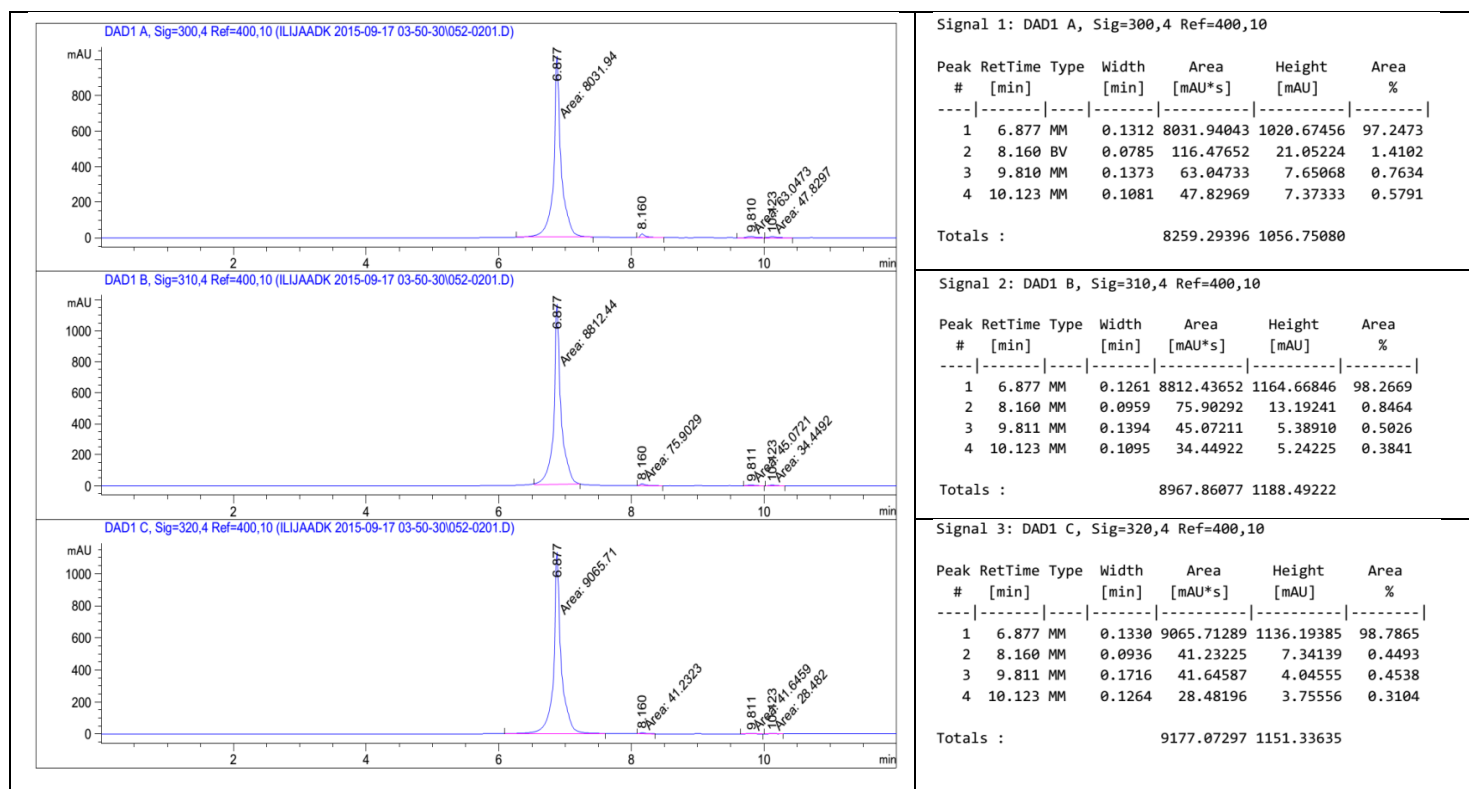


Fig. S5. Chromatogram for the assessment of compound **5** purity, with the tables showing the detector response at three wavelengths.

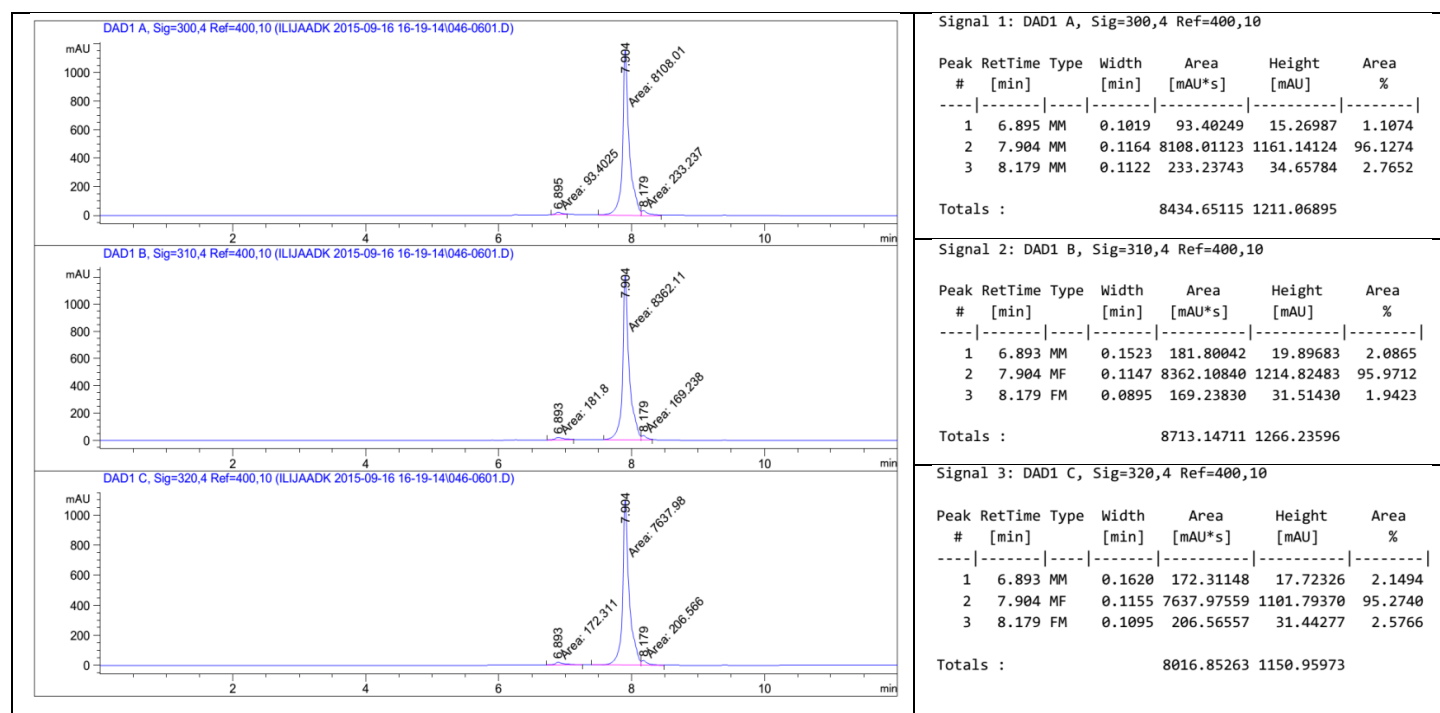


Fig. S6. Chromatogram for the assessment of compound **6** purity, with the tables showing the detector response at three wavelengths.

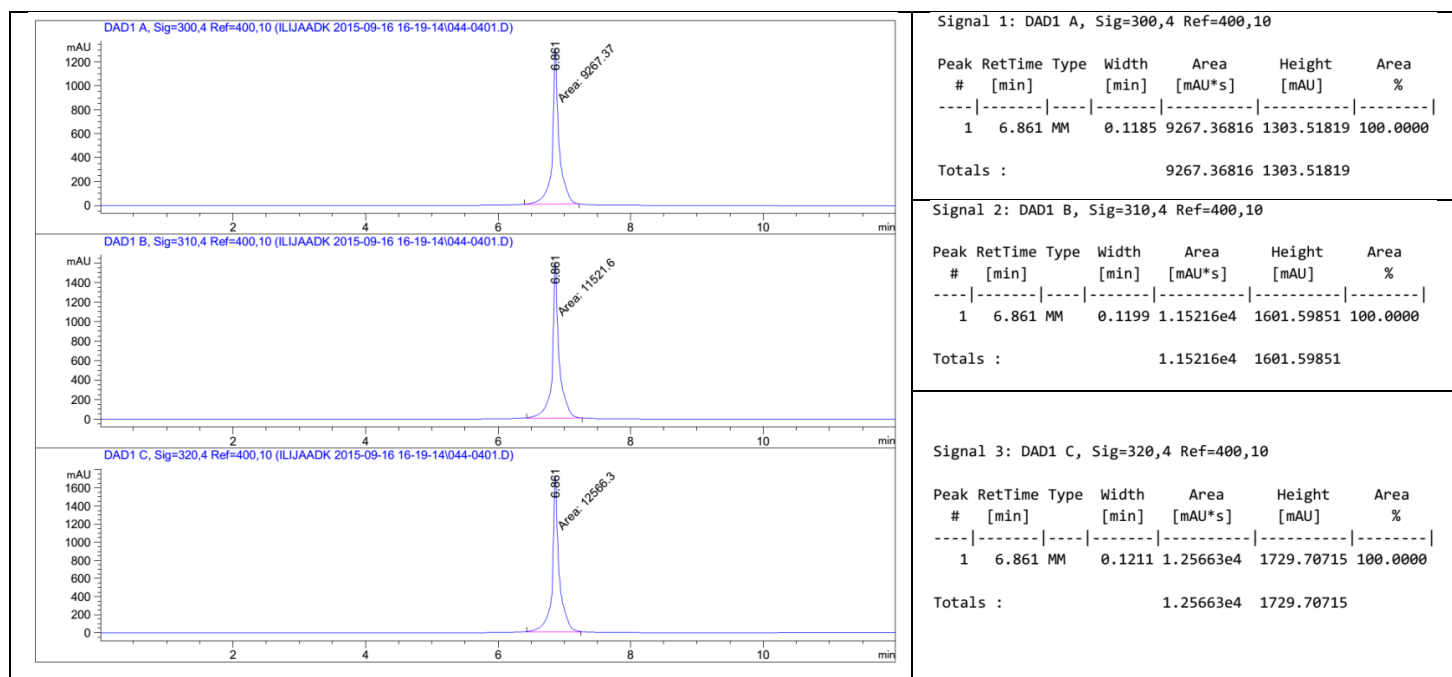


Fig. S7. Chromatogram for the assessment of compound **7** purity, with the tables showing the detector response at three wavelengths.

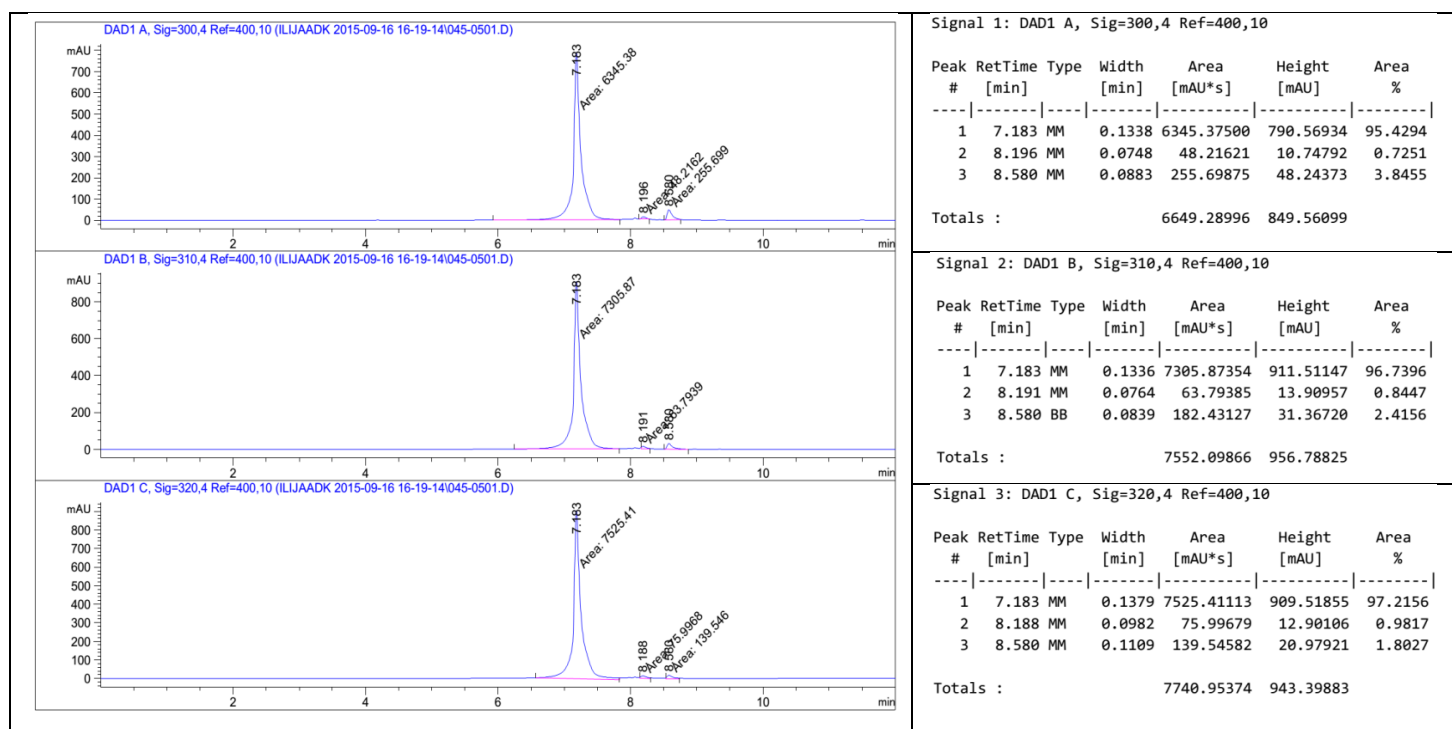


Fig. S8. Chromatogram for the assessment of compound **8** purity, with the tables showing the detector response at three wavelengths.

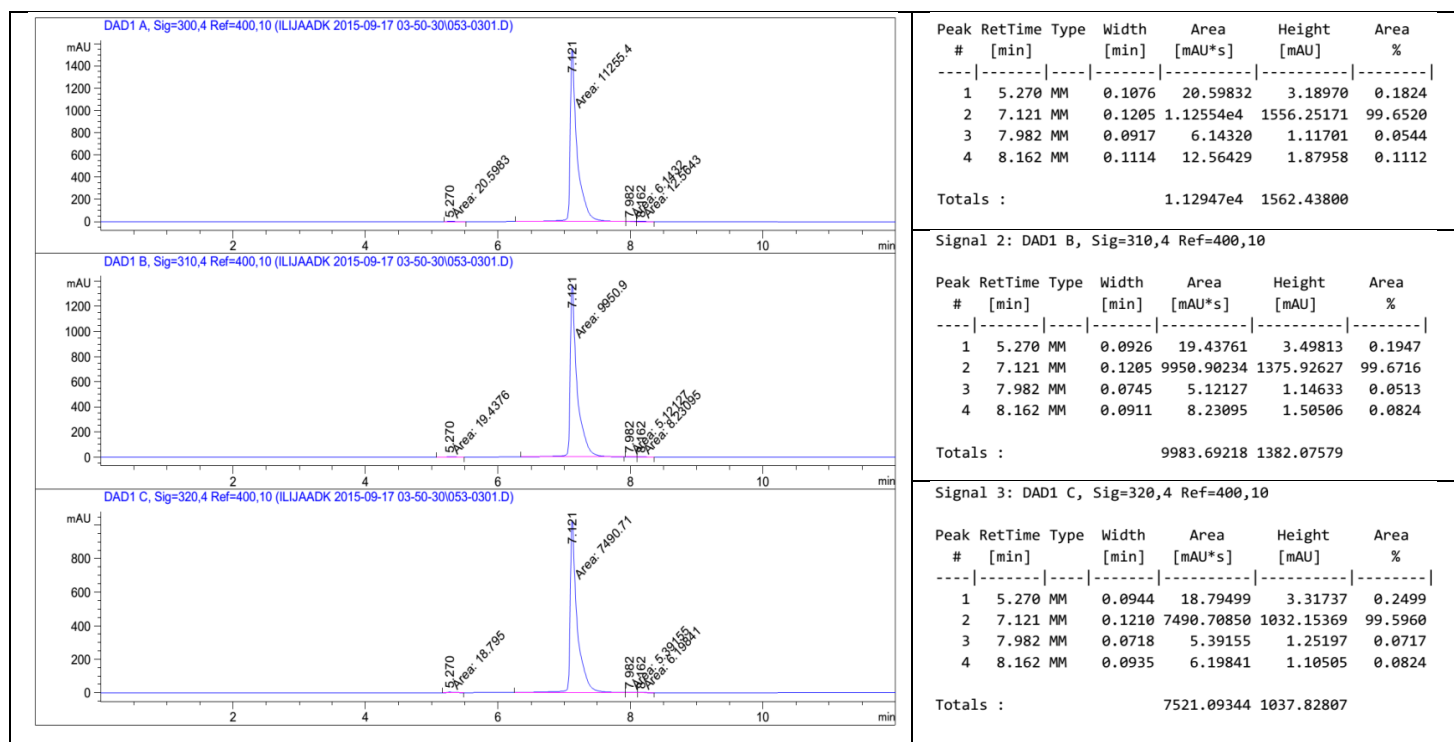


Fig. S9. Chromatogram for the assessment of compound **9** purity, with the tables showing the detector response at three wavelengths.

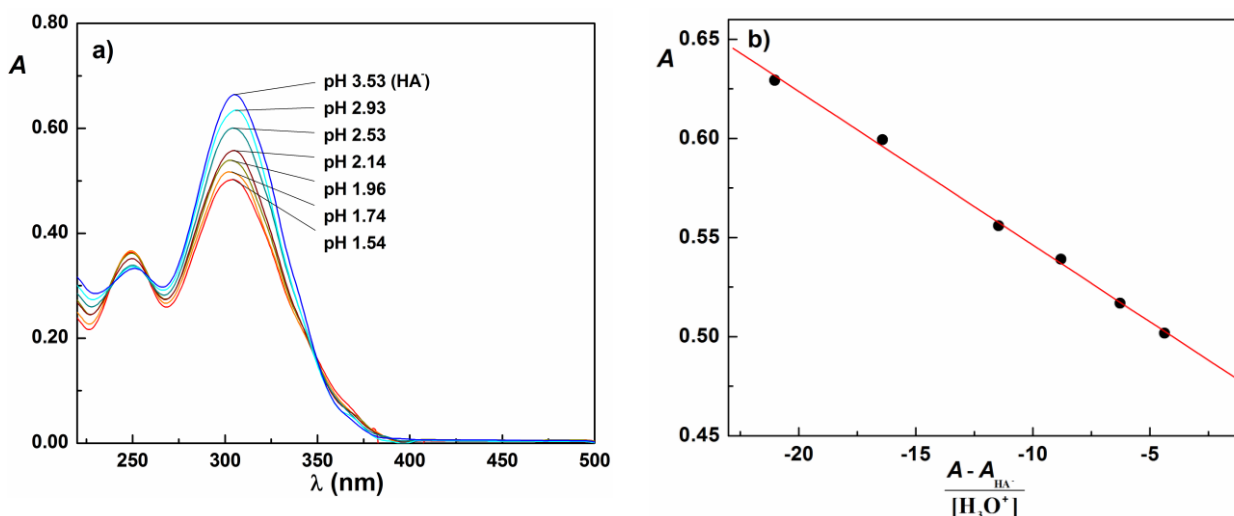


Fig. S10. Absorption spectra of compound **2** used for K_{a1} determination in solutions of different acidity, pH values are indicated; b) Spectrophotometric determination of K_{a1} according to Equation 1; $c_2=5.023 \times 10^{-5}$ M; $\lambda=302.9$ nm; $t=25$ °C, $I=0.1$ M (NaCl); scan speed 500 nm/min.

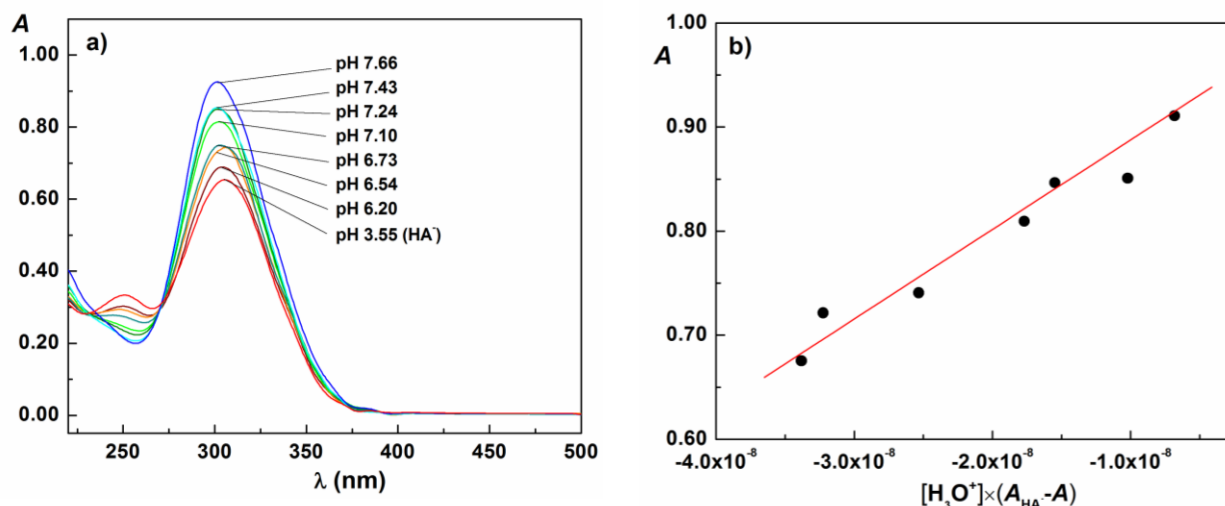


Fig. S11. Absorption spectra of compound **2** used for K_{a2} determination in solutions of different acidity, pH values are indicated; b) Spectrophotometric determination of K_{a2} according to Equation 2; $c_2=5.023 \times 10^{-5}$ M; $\lambda=299.5$ nm; $t=25$ °C, $I=0.1$ M (NaCl); scan speed 500 nm/min.

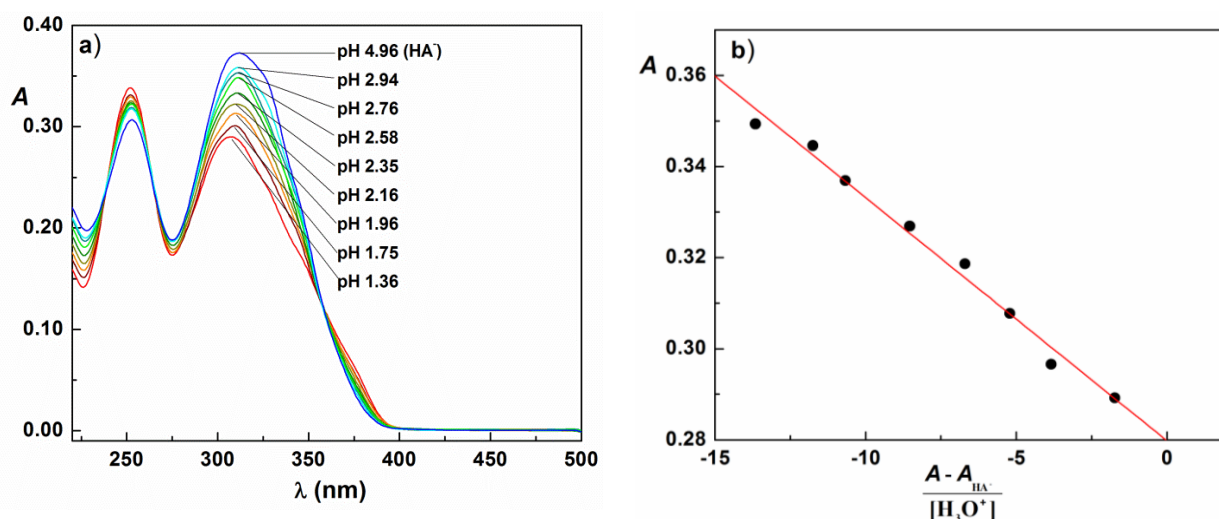


Fig. S12. Absorption spectra of compound **3** used for K_{a1} determination in solutions of different acidity, pH values are indicated; b) Spectrophotometric determination of K_{a1} according to Equation 1; $c_3=4.908 \times 10^{-5}$ M; $\lambda=305.4$ nm; $t=25$ °C, $I=0.1$ M (NaCl); scan speed 500 nm/min.

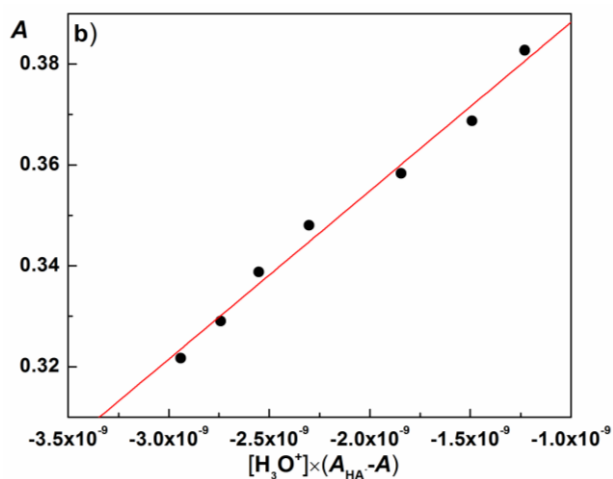
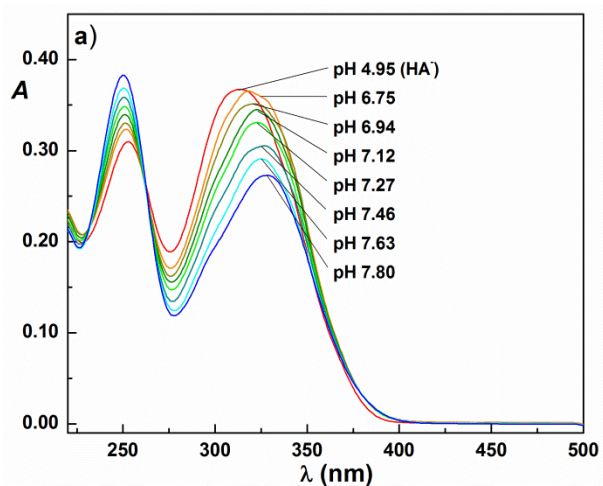


Fig. S13. Absorption spectra of compound **3** used for K_{a2} determination in solutions of different acidity, pH values are indicated; b) Spectrophotometric determination of K_{a2} according to Equation 2; $c_3=4.908 \times 10^{-5}$ M; $\lambda=250.0$ nm; $t=25$ °C, $I=0.1$ M (NaCl); scan speed 500 nm/min.

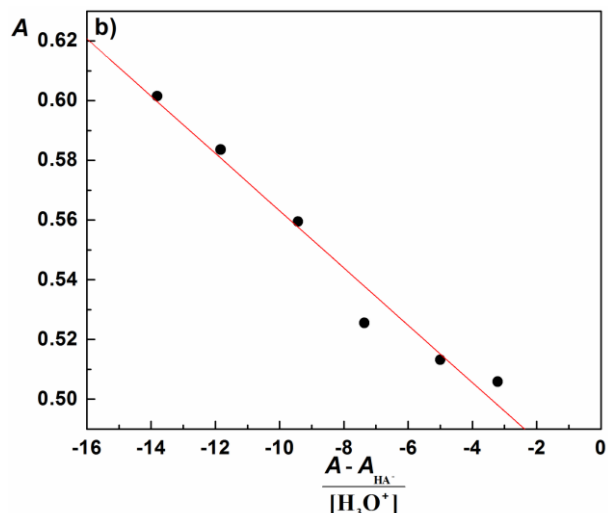
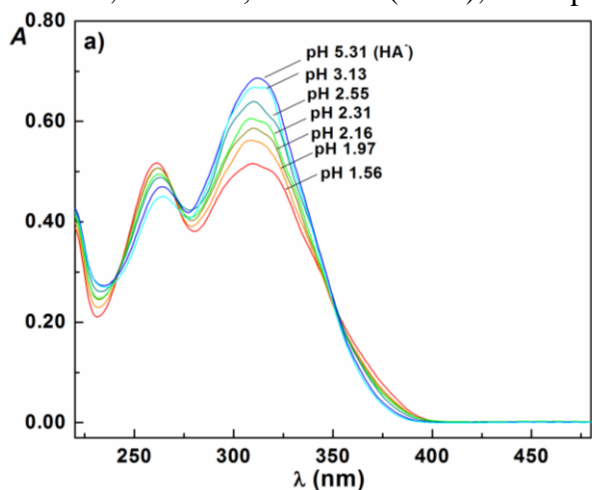


Fig. S14. Absorption spectra of compound **5** used for K_{a1} determination in solutions of different acidity, pH values are indicated; b) Spectrophotometric determination of K_{a1} according to Equation 1; $c_5=6.021 \times 10^{-5}$ M; $\lambda=312.3$ nm; $t=25$ °C, $I=0.1$ M (NaCl); scan speed 500 nm/min.

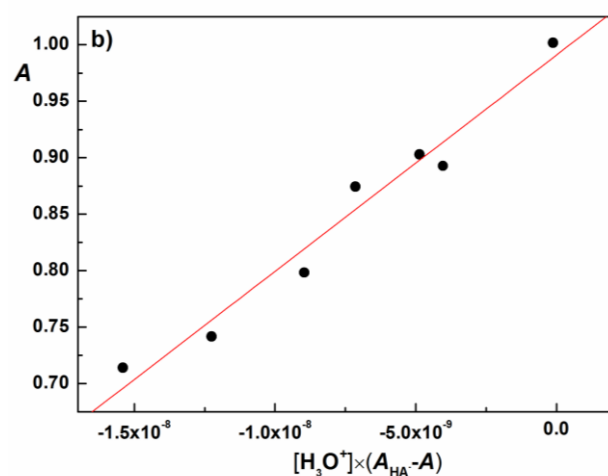
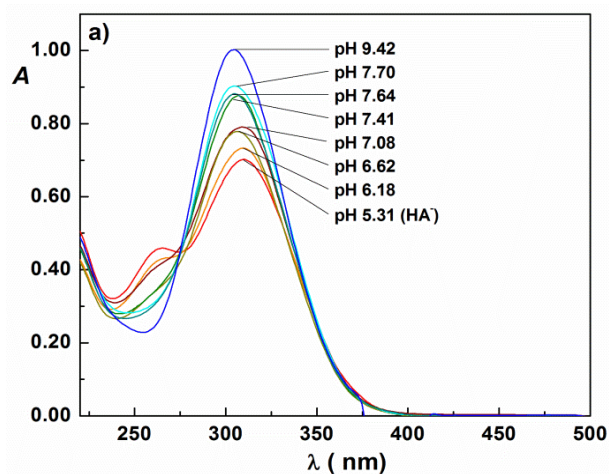


Fig. S15. Absorption spectra of compound **5** used for K_{a2} determination in solutions of different acidity, pH values are indicated; b) Spectrophotometric determination of K_{a2} according to Equation 2; $c_5=6.021\times 10^{-5}\text{M}$; $\lambda=305.9\text{ nm}$; $t=25\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$, $I=0.1\text{ M}$ (NaCl); scan speed 500 nm/min.

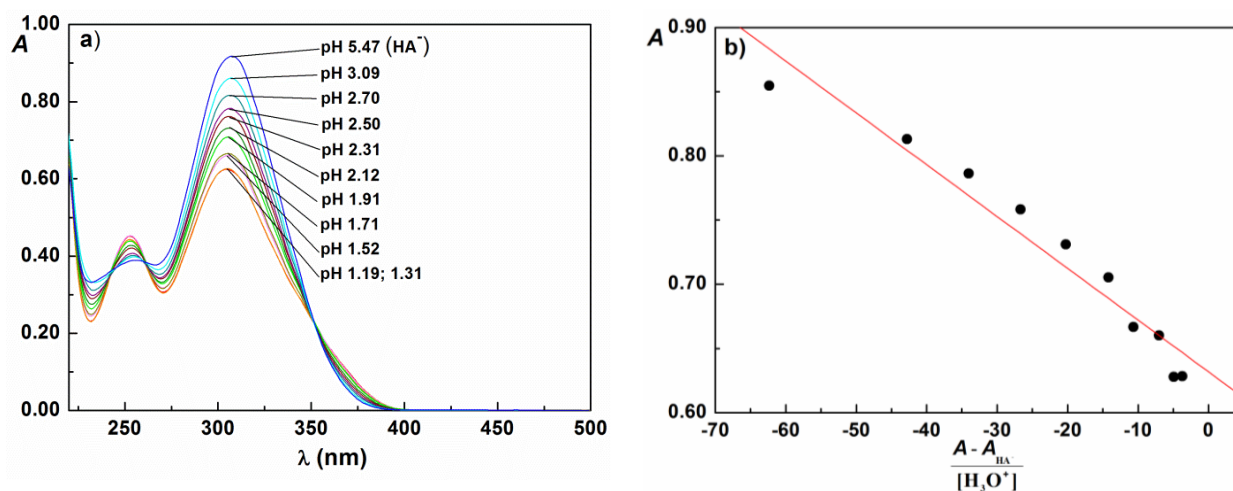


Fig. S16. Absorption spectra of compound **6** used for K_{a1} determination in solutions of different acidity, pH values are indicated; b) Spectrophotometric determination of K_{a1} according to Equation 1; $c_6=9.014\times 10^{-5}\text{ M}$; $\lambda=306.3\text{ nm}$; $t=25\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$, $I=0.1\text{ M}$ (NaCl); scan speed 500 nm/min.

Figure S11.

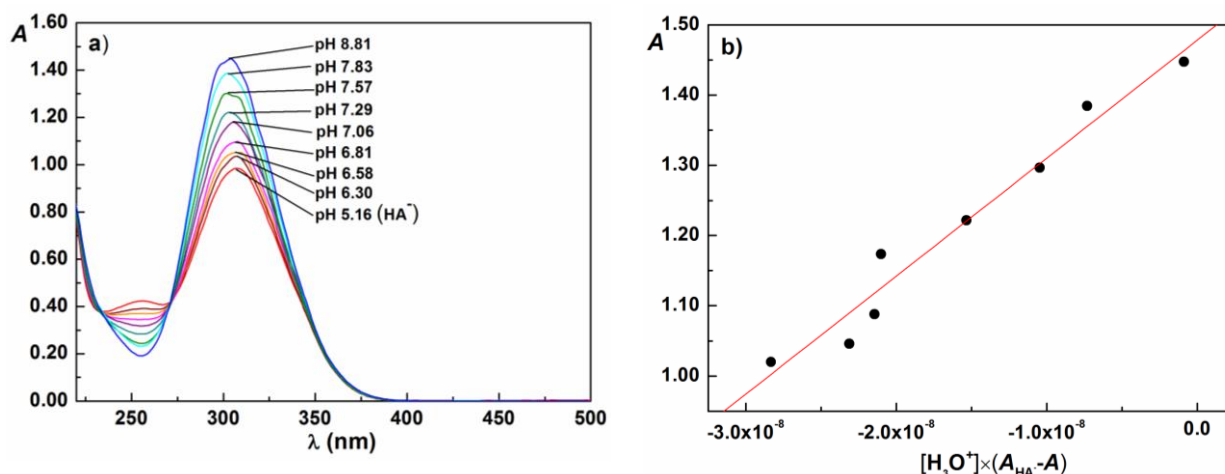


Fig. S17. Absorption spectra of compound **6** used for K_{a2} determination in solutions of different acidity, pH values are indicated; b) Spectrophotometric determination of K_{a2} according to Equation 2; $c_6=9.014\times 10^{-5}\text{ M}$; $\lambda=303.7\text{ nm}$; $t=25\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$, $I=0.1\text{ M}$ (NaCl); scan speed 500 nm/min.

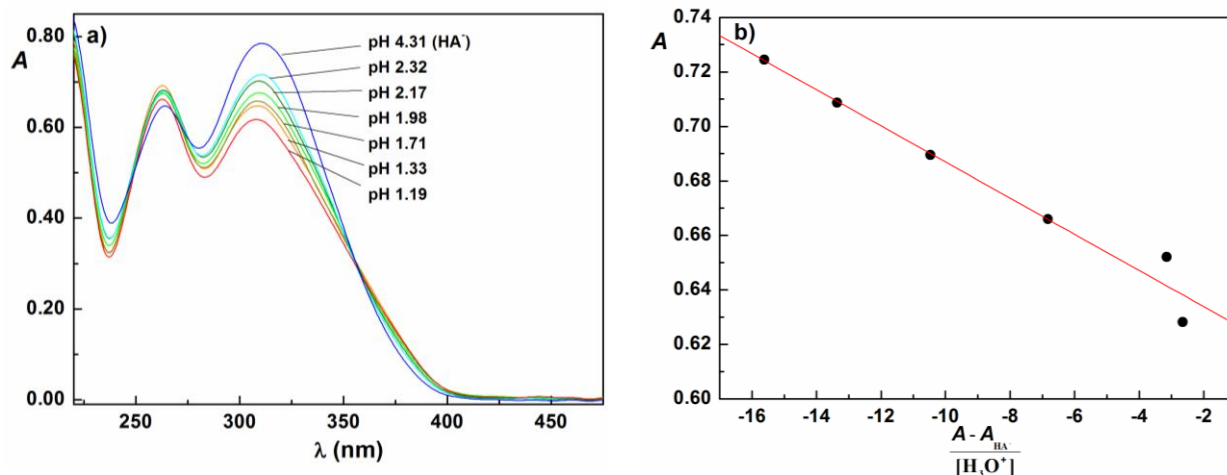


Fig. S18. Absorption spectra of compound **8** used for K_{a1} determination in solutions of different acidity, pH values are indicated; b) Spectrophotometric determination of K_{a1} according to Equation 1; $c_8=5.904 \times 10^{-5} \text{ M}$; $\lambda=308.8 \text{ nm}$; $t=25 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$, $I=0.1 \text{ M}$ (NaCl); scan speed 500 nm/min.

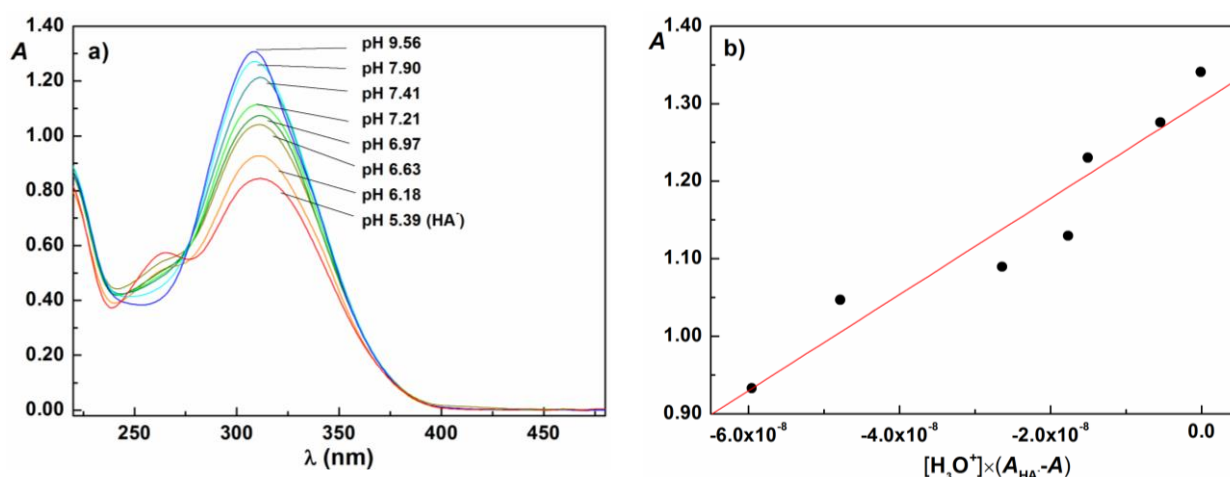
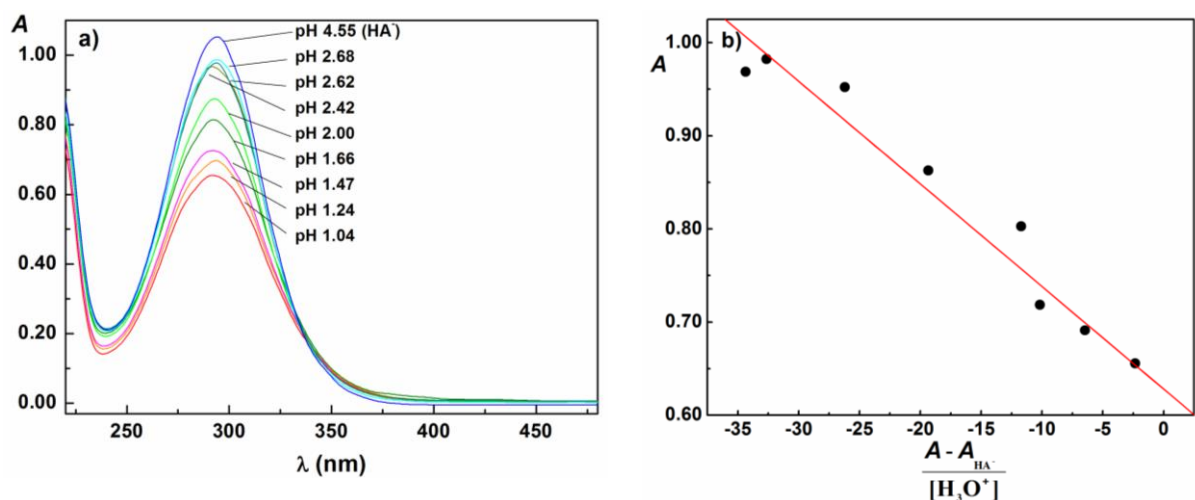
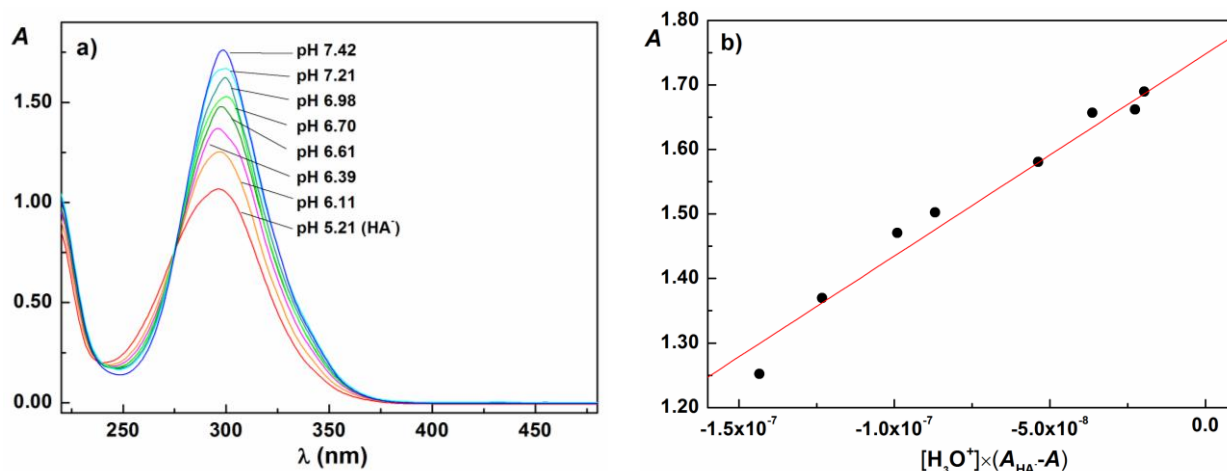


Fig. S19. Absorption spectra of compound **8** used for K_{a2} determination in solutions of different acidity, pH values are indicated; b) Spectrophotometric determination of K_{a2} according to Equation 2; $c_8=5.904 \times 10^{-5} \text{ M}$; $\lambda=308.0 \text{ nm}$; $t=25 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}$, $I=0.1 \text{ M}$ (NaCl); scan speed 500 nm/min.



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Fig. S20. Absorption spectra of compound **9** used for K_{a1} determination in solutions of different acidity, pH values are indicated; b) Spectrophotometric determination of K_{a1} according to Equation 1; $c_9=6.066\times 10^{-5}$ M; $\lambda=293.0$ nm; $t=25$ °C, $I=0.1$ M (NaCl); scan speed 500 nm/min.



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Fig. S21. Absorption spectra of compound **9** used for K_{a2} determination in solutions of different acidity, pH values are indicated; b) Spectrophotometric determination of K_{a2} according to Equation 2; $c_9=6.066\times 10^{-5}$ M; $\lambda=296.0$ nm; $t=25$ °C, $I=0.1$ M (NaCl); scan speed 500 nm/min.

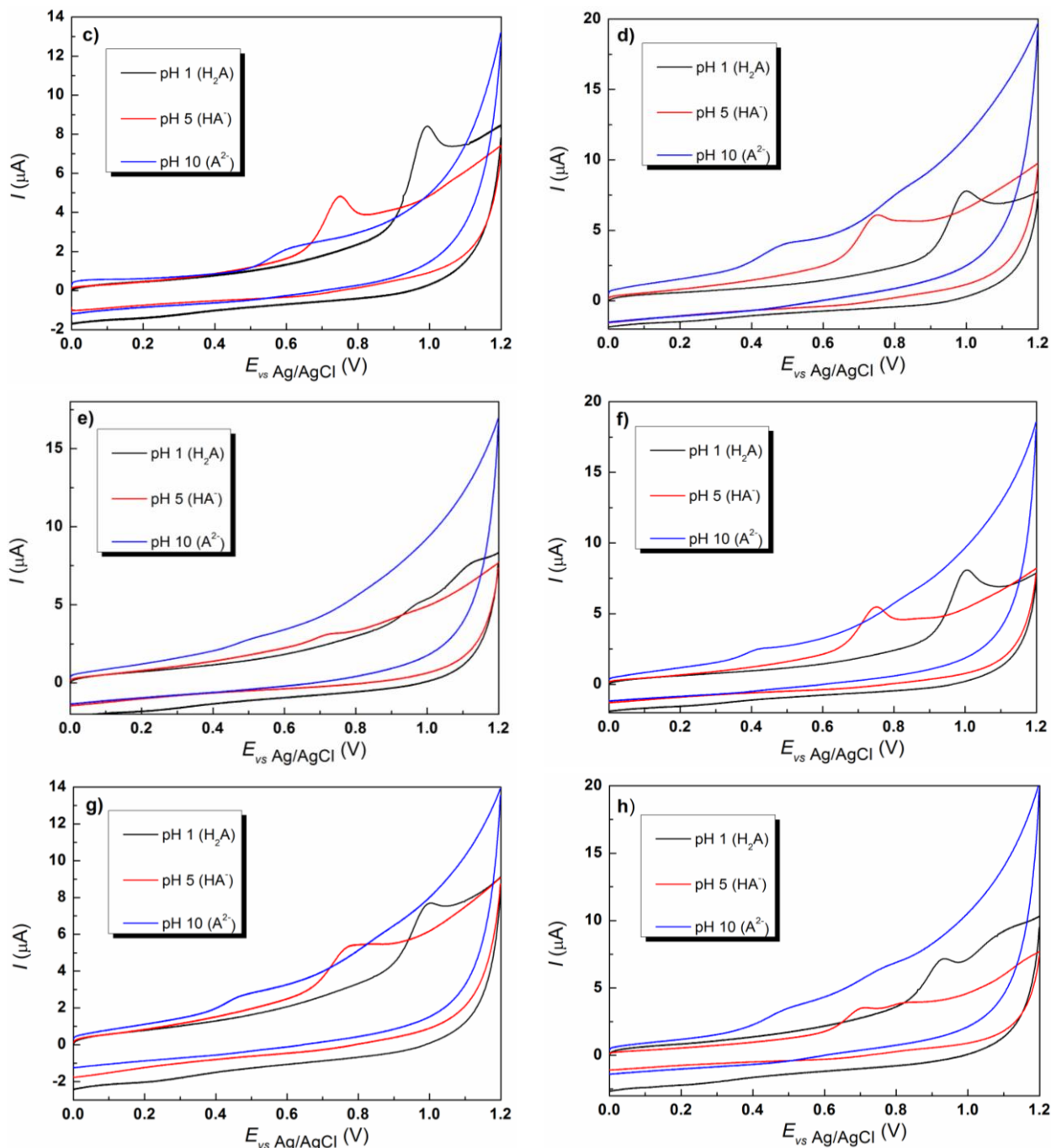


Fig. S22. Cyclic voltammograms of compounds **1-3** and **5-9** in Britton-Robinson buffer at pH 1, pH 5, and pH 10. a) **1**, $c_1 = 5.46 \times 10^{-5}$ M; b) **2**, $c_2 = 4.61 \times 10^{-5}$ M; c) **3**, $c_3 = 6.54 \times 10^{-5}$ M; d) **5**, $c_5 = 6.58 \times 10^{-5}$ M; e) **6**, $c_6 = 4.09 \times 10^{-5}$ M; f) **7**, $c_7 = 5.22 \times 10^{-5}$ M; g) **8**, $c_8 = 4.06 \times 10^{-5}$ M; h) **9**, $c_9 = 4.43 \times 10^{-5}$ M; scan rate 100 mV/s, $t = 25 \pm 1$ °C.

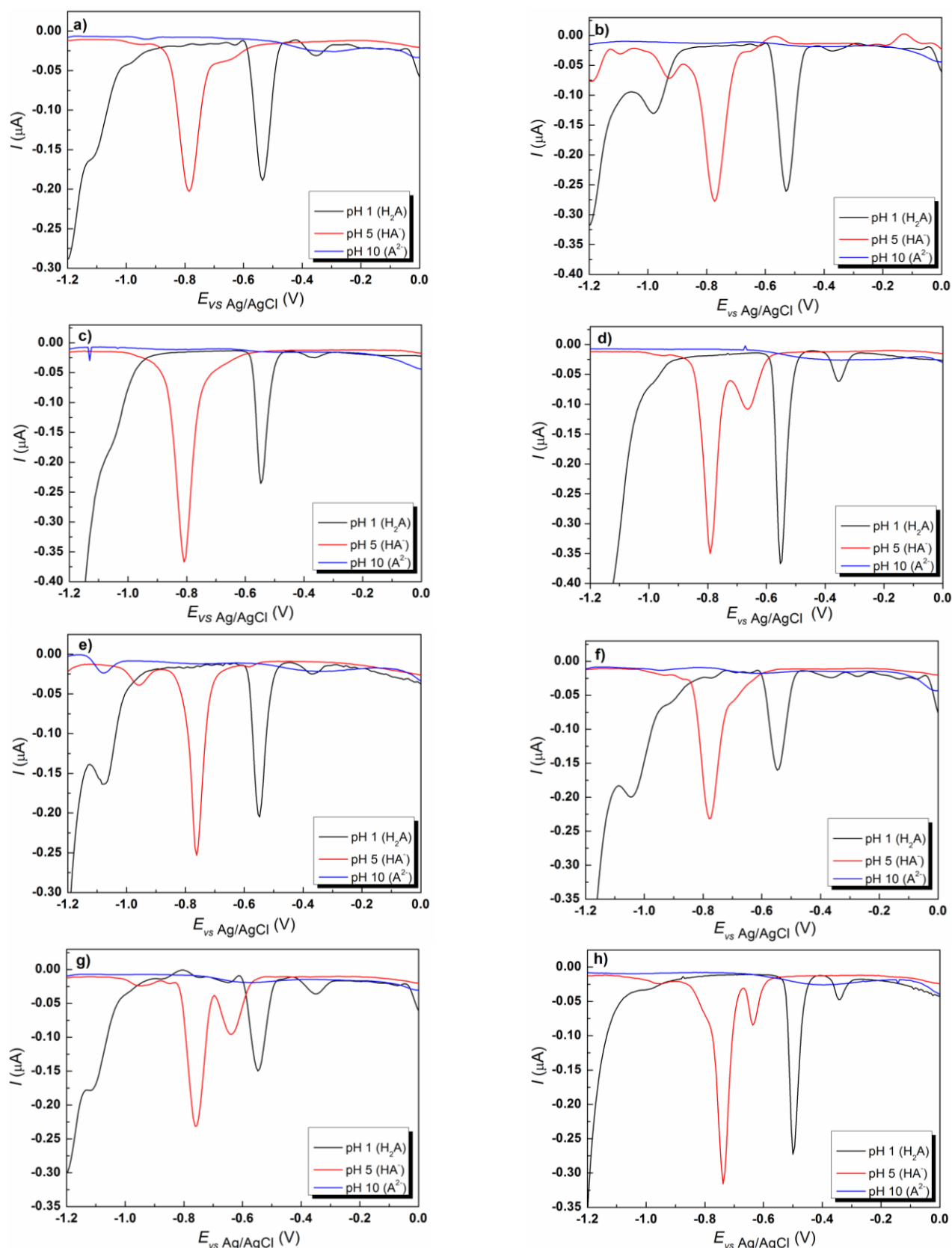
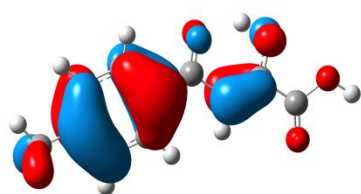
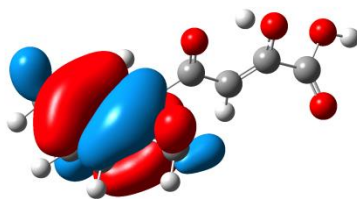


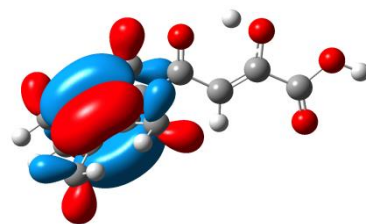
Fig. S23. Differential pulse voltammograms of comp. **2-9** in Britton-Robinson buffer at pH 1, pH 5, and pH 10; a) **2**, $c_2 = 4.61 \times 10^{-5}$ M; b) **3**, $c_3 = 6.54 \times 10^{-5}$ M; c) **4**, $c_4 = 4.77 \times 10^{-5}$ M; d) **5**, $c_5 = 6.58 \times 10^{-5}$ M; e) **6**, $c_6 = 4.09 \times 10^{-5}$ M; f) **7**, $c_7 = 5.22 \times 10^{-5}$ M; g) **8**, $c_8 = 4.06 \times 10^{-5}$ M; h) **9**, $c_9 = 4.43 \times 10^{-5}$ M; scan rate 13 mV/s, $t = 25 \pm 1$ °C.



Compound **4**

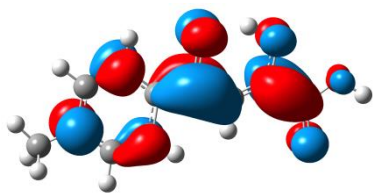


Compound **6**

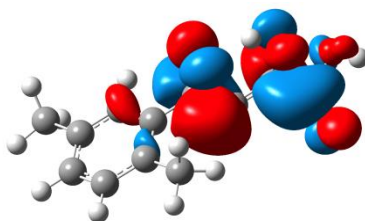


Compound **9**

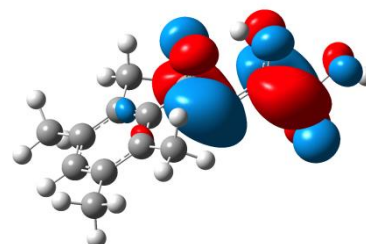
Fig. S24. HOMO orbitals of H₂A form of compounds **4**, **6** and **9** plotted on isocontour level 0.03.



Compound **4**



Compound **6**



Compound **9**

Fig. S 25. LUMO orbitals of H₂A form of compounds **4**, **6** and **9** plotted on isocontour level 0.03.

Table SI. Energies of FMOs (given in Hartree), and dipoles (given in Debye) for molecular and monoanionic form of compounds **1-9**.

Compound	Neutral (H ₂ A)				Anion (HA ⁻)			
	HOMO	LUMO	HOMO-LUMO gap	Dipole	HOMO	LUMO	HOMO-LUMO gap	Dipole
1	-0.3470	0.0367	0.3837	2.7040	-0.3321	0.0625	0.3946	20.1289
2	-0.3359	0.0406	0.3764	2.3366	-0.3274	0.0670	0.3944	20.7147
3	-0.3363	0.0377	0.3740	2.8168	-0.3266	0.0625	0.3891	22.3967
4	-0.3360	0.0394	0.3754	3.2365	-0.3244	0.0641	0.3885	22.8528
5	-0.3299	0.0417	0.3716	2.8786	-0.3213	0.0683	0.3896	23.1538
6	-0.3236	0.0401	0.3638	2.6851	-0.3172	0.0670	0.3842	21.9031
7	-0.3300	0.0403	0.3703	3.3452	-0.3199	0.0641	0.3840	24.8252
8	-0.3196	0.0425	0.3621	3.1584	-0.3129	0.0687	0.3816	24.0766
9	-0.3100	0.0448	0.3548	2.4134	-0.3063	0.0778	0.3840	22.9021

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Table SII. Energies of FMOs (given in Hartree), and dipole moments (given in Debye) for radical anion and radical cation derived from molecular form (H_2A) or monoanionic form (HA^-) of compounds **1-9**. Energies of α SOMO and α LUMO are shown.

Radical anion from H_2A					Radical cation from H_2A			
Compound	SOMO	LUMO	SOMO- LUMO gap	Dipole	SOMO	LUMO	SOMO- LUMO gap	Dipole
1	0.0757	0.2471	0.1713	5.1253	-0.3009	-0.1600	0.1409	2.2888
2	0.0767	0.2475	0.1708	5.6837	-0.2996	-0.1579	0.1417	3.0584
3	0.0756	0.2459	0.1703	6.6132	-0.2989	-0.1576	0.1413	3.3480
4	0.0765	0.2458	0.1693	7.3901	-0.2970	-0.1551	0.1419	2.9073
5	0.0774	0.2465	0.1691	7.7582	-0.2761	-0.1313	0.1449	2.9050
6	0.0766	0.2443	0.1677	7.0045	-0.2975	-0.1555	0.1421	3.4272
7	0.0763	0.2452	0.1690	8.6434	-0.2749	-0.1306	0.1443	3.1645
8	0.0772	0.2461	0.1689	8.8467	-0.2751	-0.1316	0.1435	1.9357
9	0.0784	0.2537	0.1754	8.6062	-0.2532	-0.0821	0.1711	10.3233

Radical dianion from HA^-				
Compound	SOMO	LUMO	SOMO- LUMO gap	Dipole
1	0.1658	0.3866	0.2208	12.3478
2	0.1685	0.3824	0.2138	14.5640
3	0.1641	0.3836	0.2195	15.5722
4	0.1645	0.3812	0.2167	15.8690
5	0.1669	0.3779	0.2109	17.5080
6	0.1664	0.3836	0.2172	16.0213
7	0.1631	0.3817	0.2186	18.6586
8	0.1665	0.3795	0.2130	19.1801
9	0.1875	0.3529	0.1654	23.1287

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Table SIII. Intercorrelation matrix (r values) between oxidation/reduction potentials at pH 1 and at pH 5 and descriptors extracted from QM calculations. Indicator variable (I) is also included. ‘Molecular’ refer to neutral form of compounds; ‘anion’ refer to anionic form of compounds (deprotonated carboxyl group); ‘RA’ refer to radical anion/dianion (derived from neutral/anionic form); ‘RC’ refer to radical cation derived from neutral form.

$E_{\text{ox-pH}_1}$		$E_{\text{red-pH}_1}$	
HOMO molecular	-0.6797	HOMO molecular	0.3250
LUMO molecular	-0.5739	LUMO molecular	0.2916
HOMO-LUMO gap/molecular	0.6876	HOMO-LUMO gap/molecular	-0.3233
Dipole molecular	0.3642	Dipole molecular	-0.6104
SOMO (RC)	-0.6565	SOMO (RA)	0.3298
LUMO (RC)	-0.7924	LUMO (RA)	0.8713
SOMO-LUMO gap/RC	-0.9352	SOMO-LUMO gap/RA	0.9361
Dipole RC	-0.9519	Dipole RA	-0.0503
I	-0.7908	I	0.5906
$E_{\text{ox-pH}_5}$		$E_{\text{red-pH}_5}$	
HOMO molecular	-0.4092	HOMO anion	0.8213
LUMO molecular	-0.3958	LUMO anion	0.7433
HOMO-LUMO gap/molecular	0.3999	HOMO-LUMO gap/anion	-0.6495
Dipole molecular	0.4117	Dipole molecular	-0.3518
SOMO (RC)	-0.4353	SOMO dianion (RA)	0.6858
LUMO (RC)	-0.6048	LUMO dianion (RA)	-0.6739
SOMO-LUMO gap/cation (RC)	-0.8283	SOMO-LUMO gap/dianion (RA)	-0.6869
Dipole (RC)	-0.9067	Dipole dianion (RA)	0.7311
I	-0.5295	I	0.9533