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Application of Green Solvents in Organic Synthesis: A Review

Pooja Shah[1], Vaishali Warbade[1], Sarvar Jahan[1]

Students of B.sc Forensic Science, Faculty of Science, SAM Global University, Raisen, Madhya Pradesh Assistant Professor, Faculty of Science, SAM Global University, Raisen

***Abstract*-- Organic solvents are important in organic synthesis because they dissolve reactants, help control reaction conditions, and can affect reaction rate, selectivity, and product yield. However, many conventional solvents are volatile, toxic, flammable, or difficult to recycle. Green solvents are developed to reduce these problems and to make chemical synthesis safer and more sustainable. This review gives a simple overview of the selection of green solvents and their applications in organic synthesis. The main solvent groups discussed are water, ionic liquids, deep eutectic solvents (DESs), supercritical fluids, and bio-based solvents. Water is widely available and non-flammable and can support many useful organic reactions. Ionic liquids have very low vapour pressure and tunable properties, but some may show toxicity and poor biodegradability. DESs are generally easy to prepare and can be less expensive than ionic liquids, although their high viscosity can be a limitation. Supercritical carbon dioxide can provide good mass transfer and can be separated by reducing pressure. Bio-based solvents such as Cyrene are made from renewable materials and can reduce dependence on petroleum-based solvents. Overall, green solvents can reduce environmental impact, but solvent choice should consider safety, toxicity, biodegradability, performance, recovery, cost, and the complete life cycle of the solvent.**

In organic synthesis, solvents are not only used as a medium for chemical reactions. They also play an important role in controlling the reaction rate, selectivity, and amount of product formed. Solvents help keep the reactants at a suitable concentration and provide a uniform environment for the reaction. They can dissolve catalysts and other reagents, help in the transfer of protons, control the temperature, and help the reactants move and mix properly. In some reactions, the solvent can also take part in the reaction.

However, many commonly used solvents, such as dichloromethane, toluene, and DMF, can be harmful to people and the environment. They can easily evaporate, may be toxic, and can remain in the environment for a long time. Their use can cause air pollution, health problems for workers, and the production of hazardous waste. In many industries and laboratories, solvents make up a large part of the materials used and the waste produced after a reaction.

***Keywords*--Green solvents; Organic synthesis; Green chemistry; Water; Ionic liquids; Deep eutectic solvents; Supercritical fluids; Bio-based solvents**

I. Introduction

Solvents play an important role in organic synthesis. They provide a medium in which reactants and catalysts can interact. A suitable solvent can influence reaction rate, selectivity, temperature control, product yield, and separation. In many chemical processes, solvents also form a large part of the material used and the waste produced. The uploaded review notes that solvents can account for a major part of the material input in chemical processes and that solvent management is an important environmental issue.

Common solvents such as dichloromethane, toluene, and N,N-dimethylformamide (DMF) may have problems related to volatility, toxicity, flammability, health effects, or environmental persistence. These problems have increased interest in safer and more sustainable alternatives

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The reviewed results also show applications of green solvents in solvent extraction, catalytic reactions, pharmaceutical synthesis, and polymer synthesis. These solvents can help reduce hazardous waste, pollution, energy consumption, and environmental impact.

However, the results also show that no single green solvent is suitable for every reaction. Solvent selection depends on reaction compatibility, safety, environmental impact, cost, and practical use. Therefore, further research is needed to improve solvent design, recycling, scalability, and evaluation methods.

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Therefore, proper solvent management has become an important environmental challenge in organic chemistry. To reduce these problems, scientists are developing and using green solvents, which are safer, more environmentally friendly, and less harmful to human health.

Green chemistry aims to reduce or prevent pollution at the source. Green solvents are therefore selected to reduce hazards while still giving useful reaction performance. Recent reviews also describe water and deep

1.1 Problems with Conventional Solvents

Traditional organic solvents may be volatile, toxic, flammable, persistent, or difficult to recycle. Their use can create air emissions and hazardous waste. The uploaded review gives examples including dichloromethane, DMF, toluene, benzene, petroleum ether, and acetonitrile, showing that different solvents have different hazard profiles.

Solvents are very important in organic synthesis because they help dissolve reactants and provide a suitable medium for chemical reactions. However, many traditional solvents can cause environmental and health problems because they may be toxic, volatile, flammable, or difficult to dispose of. Solvents such as dichloromethane, toluene, and DMF are commonly used but can create pollution and hazardous waste. Green solvents have been developed to reduce these problems. Water, ionic liquids, supercritical fluids, deep eutectic solvents, and bio-based solvents are some important alternatives. Green solvents can help reduce waste, energy consumption, pollution, and the environmental impact of organic synthesis

1.2 Definition of Green Solvents

A green solvent is selected to reduce the harmful effects of a chemical process on people and the environment. A solvent should not be called green only because it comes from a natural source or has low vapour pressure. Its toxicity, production, use, recovery, disposal, and overall life cycle should also be considered. The source identifies low toxicity, low volatility, biodegradability, renewable origin, low environmental impact, reaction compatibility, and economic feasibility as important characteristics.

This paper is a review study and does not involve laboratory experiments. The information was collected from published research and review studies related to green solvents in organic synthesis. The selected literature was studied to understand different

1.3 Criteria for Selection of Green Solvents

Important selection points include safety for workers, low toxicity, low volatility, biodegradability, renewable raw materials, low energy demand, good reaction performance, easy recovery and reuse, and reasonable cost. Solvent selection guides can help compare health, safety, environmental, and waste-related properties. The GSK guide described in the source uses categories related to waste, environment, health, and safety.

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Selection factor	What should be considered
Safety	Low toxicity, low flammability and safer handling
Environmental impact	Low emissions, low persistence and low pollution
Renewable source	Prefer renewable or bio-based raw materials when suitable
Biodegradability	Ability to break down after use
Reaction performance	Good solubility, selectivity and reaction yield
Recovery and reuse	Easy separation, recycling and reuse
Cost	Reasonable preparation and operating cost

II. Applications And Materials

This is a review paper, so no laboratory materials or experiments were used. The study is based on published research and review papers related to green solvents in organic synthesis. The literature was studied to compare different types of green solvents, their properties, applications, environmental and safety benefits, and their limitations. This paper is a review study and does not involve laboratory experiments. The information was collected from published research and review studies related to green solvents in organic synthesis. The selected literature was studied to understand different types of green solvents, their properties, applications, advantages, and limitations. Important green solvents discussed in the literature include water, ionic liquids, supercritical fluids, deep eutectic solvents, and bio-based solvents. The literature was compared based on factors such as toxicity, volatility, biodegradability, renewable sources, environmental impact, reaction compatibility, and economic feasibility. This approach helps provide an overall understanding of the use of green solvents in organic synthesis.

The materials and methods used in this review are based on the study of published literature related to green solvents in organic synthesis. Since this is a review paper, no laboratory experiments or physical materials were used. The main focus was to collect and compare information about different types of green solvents and their use in organic reactions. The reviewed materials include information about water, ionic liquids, deep eutectic solvents, supercritical fluids, and bio-based solvents.

The literature was examined using important solvent-selection factors such as toxicity, volatility, biodegradability, renewable sources, environmental impact, reaction compatibility, and economic feasibility.

These factors are important because a solvent should not be considered green only because it has one environmentally friendly property. For example, ionic liquids have very low vapor pressure and can be reused, but some ionic liquids may have toxicity and poor biodegradability. Similarly, deep eutectic solvents can be easy and inexpensive to prepare, but their high viscosity can affect mass transfer during reactions.

2.1 Water as a Green Solvent

Water is abundant, non-flammable, and has low toxicity. It can be used as a reaction medium for many organic transformations. The source describes aqueous transition-metal-catalyzed coupling reactions and reports examples where optimized catalysts allowed useful Heck and Suzuki–Miyaura reactions in water.

Water can also work with co-solvents or modified reaction conditions when organic compounds have limited solubility. A review of water and DESs reports applications in metal-catalyzed reactions, biocatalysis, and synthesis of active pharmaceutical ingredients

2.2 Ionic Liquids

Ionic liquids are salts that remain liquid at relatively low temperatures. They generally have very low vapour pressure, high thermal stability, and adjustable polarity. These properties make them useful as reaction media and can reduce volatile organic compound emissions. The source describes their use in enzymatic reactions and microwave-assisted synthesis.

However, ionic liquids are not automatically green. Some types can be toxic to aquatic organisms or human cells and may be difficult to degrade. Therefore, their toxicity, synthesis, recovery, and complete life cycle should be considered before selecting them.

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2.3 Deep Eutectic Solvents (DESs)

DESs are commonly prepared by mixing components such as a hydrogen-bond donor and a hydrogen-bond acceptor. They often have low volatility and can be prepared more simply than many ionic liquids. The source describes choline-chloride-based DESs and their application in sulfonamide synthesis, including a reported high yield under mild conditions

DESs can have practical limitations. Their viscosity can be high, which may slow mass transfer, and their solubility for some non-polar compounds may be limited. Standard methods for toxicity and purity assessment are also still developing

Recent literature also shows that DESs are being studied as reaction media and that their properties can be adjusted by changing their components.

2.4 Supercritical Fluids

Supercritical fluids have properties between gases and liquids. Supercritical carbon dioxide (scCO) is an important example because it is non-flammable and has relatively low toxicity. After a reaction, pressure reduction can help separate the solvent from the reaction mixture. The uploaded source describes its use in an enzyme-catalyzed ester synthesis and reports high conversion under optimized conditions

The main practical challenge is that supercritical systems require pressure equipment and careful control of temperature and pressure. Therefore, the environmental benefit must be considered together with energy and equipment requirements.

2.5 Bio-based Solvents

Bio-based solvents are produced from renewable materials such as biomass, sugars, cellulose, or fatty-acid-derived resources. They can reduce dependence on petroleum-based solvents and may offer useful biodegradability and environmental advantages. The source discusses Cyrene, a solvent produced through a biomass-based route, and its use in several organic reactions.

Cyrene can be recovered using aqueous extraction, but it also has limitations. Its chemical structure can participate in some reactions, its solubility may not suit every system, and production cost can be higher than some traditional solvents

III. Discussion Of Green Solvents

Green solvents can reduce the use of hazardous and volatile materials and can support safer chemical processes.

Depending on the solvent and reaction, they may also improve selectivity, simplify product separation, allow solvent recycling, reduce emissions, and support renewable raw materials. Water and DESs, for example, have been studied in catalytic and biocatalytic organic synthesis. A major advantage is that solvent selection can be treated as part of reaction design rather than as a final cleaning step. Choosing a suitable solvent at the beginning can reduce waste and improve the overall process.

Green solvents still have limitations. Some are expensive, not easily available, or not compatible with all reactions. Some ionic liquids can have toxicity or biodegradation concerns, while DESs can have high viscosity. Bio-based solvents may also face production-cost and scale-up challenges. These points are also identified in the uploaded review.

Another important issue is that the word 'green' should not be used only for one property. A solvent with low vapour pressure may still have toxicity or environmental problems. Recent critical reviews therefore emphasize evaluating ionic liquids and DESs using a broader sustainability view rather than assuming that every member of these groups is automatically green.

For industrial use, solvent recovery, recycling, energy demand, equipment requirements, raw-material supply, product quality, and waste treatment should be considered together.

IV. Results

Future research should focus on designing solvents that combine low toxicity, good biodegradability, renewable origin, high reaction performance, easy recovery, and low cost. More work is also needed on life-cycle assessment so that the complete environmental effect of a solvent can be compared fairly.

Research on water, DESs, ionic liquids, supercritical fluids, and bio-based solvents is continuing. Natural deep eutectic solvents are another promising direction because they can be prepared from natural components such as sugars, organic acids, amino acids, and polyols. Their applications include chemical and enzymatic reactions and extraction of bioactive compounds.

The reviewed results also show applications of green solvents in solvent extraction, catalytic reactions, pharmaceutical synthesis, and polymer synthesis. These solvents can help reduce hazardous waste, pollution, energy consumption, and environmental impact. However, the results also show that no single green solvent is suitable for every reaction.

Solvent selection depends on reaction compatibility, safety, environmental impact, cost, and practical use. Therefore, further research is needed to improve solvent design, recycling, scalability, and evaluation methods.

For wider industrial adoption, researchers should develop standard methods for toxicity testing, biodegradation measurement, solvent recovery, and life-cycle assessment. Solvent selection should increasingly use environmental, health, and safety data together with reaction performance.

The results of this review show that green solvents can play an important role in making organic synthesis more sustainable. Different types of green solvents have different properties and applications. Water is an easily available, inexpensive, non-toxic, and non-flammable solvent. It can be used for several organic transformations when suitable reaction conditions are provided. Ionic liquids have very low vapor pressure, good thermal stability, and adjustable properties, which makes them useful in catalytic reactions. They can also be recovered and reused in some processes.

Deep eutectic solvents are another important group because they can be prepared easily and may be less expensive than many ionic liquids. However, their high viscosity can create mass-transfer problems. Supercritical carbon dioxide has low toxicity, is non-flammable, and can be separated from products by reducing pressure. Bio-based solvents are obtained from renewable resources and can provide environmental benefits.

The review shows that several types of green solvents can be used in organic synthesis. These include water, bio-based solvents, ionic liquids, deep eutectic solvents, and supercritical fluids. They can be used in solvent extraction, catalytic reactions, pharmaceutical synthesis, and polymer synthesis. Green solvents can help reduce hazardous waste, pollution, energy consumption, and carbon footprint.

The review shows that green solvents can be used in many areas of organic synthesis. Water is an abundant, inexpensive, non-toxic, and non-flammable solvent and can support several organic reactions under suitable conditions. Ionic liquids have very low vapor pressure and can often be recovered and reused. Deep eutectic solvents are generally easy to prepare and can have low volatility. Supercritical carbon dioxide has low toxicity and can be separated easily by reducing pressure. Bio-based solvents are obtained from renewable resources and may provide lower environmental impact. Green solvents are also used in solvent extraction, catalytic reactions, pharmaceutical synthesis, and polymer synthesis.

V. Discussion

Green solvents are an important part of sustainable organic synthesis. Water, ionic liquids, deep eutectic solvents, supercritical fluids, and bio-based solvents provide different ways to reduce some of the problems associated with conventional organic solvents. However, no single solvent is suitable for every reaction. A proper choice should consider safety, toxicity, environmental impact, renewable origin, reaction efficiency, recovery, cost, and the complete life cycle of the solvent. The reviewed evidence shows that green solvents have useful applications, but further research is required to overcome limitations related to cost, availability, viscosity, toxicity, compatibility, and scale-up. Green solvent development will therefore remain an important area of research in organic and sustainable chemistry.

Green solvents provide important environmental, safety, and economic benefits, but they also have some limitations. Some solvents may have problems with high cost, high viscosity, low solubility, reaction compatibility, recycling, and large-scale production. Ionic liquids, for example, are useful because of their low volatility, but some may still have toxicity and biodegradability concerns. Therefore, proper solvent selection is important for developing safer and more sustainable organic synthesis methods.

Solvents are very important in organic synthesis because they help dissolve reactants and provide a suitable medium for chemical reactions. However, many traditional solvents can cause environmental and health problems because they may be toxic, volatile, flammable, or difficult to dispose of. Solvents such as dichloromethane, toluene, and DMF are commonly used but can create pollution and hazardous waste. Green solvents have been developed to reduce these problems. Water, ionic liquids, supercritical fluids, deep eutectic solvents, and bio-based solvents are some important alternatives. Green solvents can help reduce waste, energy consumption, pollution, and the environmental impact of organic synthesis.

Green solvents provide several environmental, health, safety, and economic benefits compared with many conventional solvents. They can reduce hazardous waste, pollution, energy consumption, and greenhouse gas emissions. However, the use of green solvents also has some challenges. Some solvents may have high viscosity, limited solubility, higher cost, or poor compatibility with particular reactions. Ionic liquids, although having low volatility, are not automatically green because some may show toxicity and poor biodegradability.

Large-scale production, recycling, availability, and lack of standard evaluation methods are also important concerns. Therefore, selecting a suitable solvent requires consideration of environmental impact, safety, reaction performance, cost, and scalability.

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