Review

# Recent Applications of Pd-Catalyzed Suzuki-Miyaura and Buchwald-Hartwig Couplings in Pharmaceutical Process Chemistry.

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**Abstract:** Cross coupling reactions have changed the way complex molecules are synthesized. In particular, Suzuki-Miyaura and Buchwald-Hartwig amination reactions have given opportunities to elegantly make pharmaceutical ingredients. Indeed, these reactions are forefront at both the stages of drug development, medicinal chemistry, and process chemistry. On one hand, these reactions have given medicinal chemists a tool to derivatize the core molecule to arrive at scaffold rapidly. On the other hand, these cross couplings have offered the process chemists a smart tool to synthesize the development candidates safely, quickly, and efficiently. Generally, the application of cross coupling reactions is broad, and this review will specifically focus on their real (pharma) world applications in large scale synthesis those appeared in last two years.

**Keywords:** Catalysis; Suzuki-Miyaura; Buchwald-Hartwig amination; Palladium; Pharmaceuticals, Process Chemistry

### 1. Introduction

Metal catalyzed cross coupling have played a crucial role in different stages of drug development. For example, the drug discovery stage requires multiple compounds to be tested for the best biological activity, wherein a rapid access to the chemical matter is very important. The ability of cross coupling reactions to quickly derivatize the core molecule results in the multiple compounds available for the biological studies. The aim at this stage remains to get the compound in milligrams scale. This scenario changes rapidly as the molecule moves to the next stage of the development where only a few out of many compounds are selected for the toxicology and animal studies. The required amount of compound then increases to 10-100 g, and most of the time the chemistry used to make the molecule in milligram scale will be replicated in this case. Once the molecule enters the development phase, several factors need to be considered. At this stage how instead of what is important - how to make the compounds efficiently, quickly, safely with the best quality is given the prime importance. How these two pathbreaking coupling reactions, Suzuki-Miyaura and Buchwald-Hartwig, are becoming essence of drug development is discussed in this review. The detailed structure of ligands and catalyst used in the work described in this review is also given in Figure 1.

**Figure 1.** Structures of ligand and catalysts used in this review.

## 2. Suzuki-Miyaura coupling

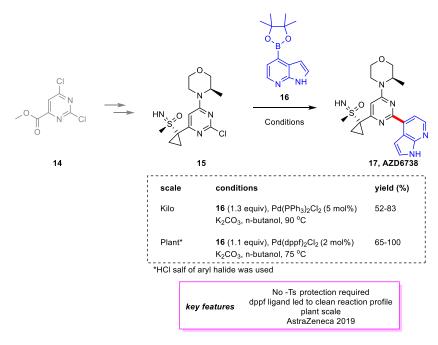
Suzuki-Miyaura coupling remained a matured technology widely used in industrial synthesis. Although the initial discovery happened in 1990's, the real applicability was realized most recently, owing to the discovery of new metal catalysts and bulky ligands that could couple the complex starting materials. This success has eventually led to Nobel prize in 2010.1 This reaction is so fundamentally and mechanistically well understood that it is possible to forge any complex C-C bond from the respective aryl halide and aryl boron reagent. Suzuki-Miyaura coupling is one of the widely used reactions in pharmaceutical synthesis. For example, St-Jean and coworkers<sup>2</sup> from Genentech developed an efficient late-stage synthetic method for PI3K β-Sparing Inhibitor taselisib 6,3 which has been demonstrated to have increased activity against PIK3CA mutant breast cancer. A one-pot Miyaura borylation, Suzuki-Miyaura coupling, and saponification to produce 5 from 1 was described. Extensive palladium catalyst screening indicated only the Buchwald XPhos G1 and G2 pre-catalysts4 were able to achieve full conversion to boronate ester 2, with G2 selected after further optimization. 90 mol % of 3, which was synthesized on a kilogram scale through four steps, and 200 mol % of 1 M LiOH were added directly to the reaction vessel following borylation to carry out the Suzuki-Miyaura coupling. Remarkably, only 0.3 mol% of Pd- catalyst was used to perform these two steps. After full conversion to 4, more LiOH was added to carry out saponification. Acidification with the addition of aqueous HCl provided 5 as a solid. An 88% yield and >98 A% purity was achieved for 5 on a kilogram-scale (Scheme 1). Overall, the development of this one-pot synthesis of 5 helped lower the process mass intensity, PMI of the entire route significantly from previous reports. Due to corrosivity of HCl and foaming issues during acidification, the plant scale acidification was run in n-propanol and H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>. The use of *n*-propanol also helped to purge Pd to <40 ppm vs  $\sim$ 400 ppm.

**Scheme 1.** Synthesis of an intermediate *en route* to taselisib.

Akin and coworkers<sup>5</sup> from Pfizer designed a new synthetic method for proprotein convertase subtilisin/kexin type 9 (PCSK9) inhibitor PF-06815345 (13),<sup>6</sup> a potential treatment for decreasing serum LDL-cholesterol levels and reducing risk of coronary heart disease. The precursor to 13•HCl is formed through a Suzuki-Miyaura coupling of intermediates 10 and 11. A Buchwald-Hartwig amination is involved in the first step towards synthesizing 9 and a yield of 77% was achieved for the amination product. Optimization of the Suzuki-Miyaura coupling focused on minimizing various side products formed. The most attention was paid to a homodimer side product that was caused by higher oxygen levels of the reaction solution. Additional precautions and adaptations were made to the reaction protocol including nitrogen purging, installing oxygen sensors, and ordering palladium catalyst from vendors in presubdivided ampules minimized the formation of the side product. Extensive screening also indicated that Pd(0) catalysts, in general, performed better than their Pd(II) counterparts, with Pd(PCy<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> achieving the best results. This reaction scaled-up well, achieving >99% conversion on a kilogram-scale (Scheme 2).

Scheme 2. Synthesis of an intermediate en route to PF06815345.

Goundry and coworkers<sup>7</sup> from AstraZeneca developed a large-scale synthetic route to ATR Inhibitor AZD6738 17,8 a potential drug candidate in Phase I/II trials for treating both solid and hematological cancers. Due to time pressure, major changes were not made to the discovery route. Rather, the conditions for each chemical transformation were optimized and scaled up. The penultimate step in the synthesis of 17, which became the ultimate step in the new route due to the elimination of a deprotection step, is a Suzuki-Miyaura coupling to install the azaindole structure from boronate ester 16. On a kilogram-scale, the catalyst system of (DTBPPS) palladium was tested as DTBPPS is a water-soluble ligand that would allow the palladium to be largely removed via aqueous washes. However, at 0.5 mol % of the catalyst, the reaction stalled at 5% conversion and could not be restarted by adding more catalyst or base. Therefore, the team reverted to Pd(PPh)3Cl2 conditions. On a plant-scale, a screening of catalyst and ligands showed Pd(dppf)Cl2 to be a superior catalyst. The HCl salt of 15 was used, which necessitated the addition of an extra equivalent of base. The reaction used ethanol as a solvent and achieved complete conversion in 2 hours, with an average yield of 88% between 3 multikilogram batches. However, it was later found that *n*-butanol proved best for this cross coupling (Scheme 3).



Scheme 3. Synthesis of AZD6738.

Gontcharov and coworkers<sup>9</sup> from Pfizer developed a robust multi-kilogram scale synthetic route for PF-06263276 **23**,<sup>10</sup> an inhaled pan-JAK inhibitor in clinical development for the treatment of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. A Suzuki-Miyaura coupling is required between an aryl fragment and cyano-substituted indazole to produce a key intermediate for the new synthesis route. The use of a boronic acid coupling partner **19** instead of its boronate ester was an improvement from the medicinal chemistry synthetic route as it uses a Grignard reaction, eliminating one Pd-catalyzed step. Side product borinic acid **20** was found to be as reactive as the boronic acid in the future Suzuki-Miyaura coupling and, due to the low isolated yield of **19** (<60%), the solution of **19** and **20** were telescoped into the next step. The Suzuki-Miyaura coupling proceeded smoothly, although its product, intermediate **22**, was not able to be isolated as a crystalline solid. Thus, it was decided to telescope the solution containing **22** into the next sequence of steps. The yield for **22** was 86% *in situ* (Scheme 4).

**Scheme 4.** Synthesis of an intermediate *en route* to PF06263276.

Baenziger and coworkers<sup>11</sup> from Novartis reported the development of a synthesis of dactolisib **27**,<sup>12</sup> a dual kinase inhibitor of phosphatidylinositol 3-kinase (PI3K) and mammalian target of rapamycin (mTOR) currently investigated as the treatment of solid tumor forms. The coupling reaction between **25** and **26** afforded the desired product **27** and was optimized for commercial scale manufacturing. The goal was to lower the palladium loading from 6 mol % to reduce cost and residual Pd levels. It was found that adding additional PPh<sub>3</sub> (2 equiv. to Pd catalyst) as a supplementary ligand helped stabilize the catalytically active Pd(0) complex as well as act as a reducing agent for converting Pd(II) to Pd(0). On a laboratory scale, the Pd loading could be reduced to <0.2 mol % with a 2 Pd equiv. addition of PPh<sub>3</sub> but was not reported on a commercial scale. The yield of **crude 27** from the Suzuki-Miyaura coupling was >96% and the overall yield for **pure 27** was 85-90% with >99.5% purity on a multi-kilogram scale (Scheme 5).

**Scheme 5.** Synthesis of an intermediate *en route* to dactolisib.

Maltais and coworkers <sup>13</sup> from Université Laval designed three new synthetic routes for PBRM, the first selective covalent inhibitor of  $17\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase type 1 ( $17\beta$ -HSD1). <sup>14</sup>  $17\beta$ -HSD1 is involved in the last step of estrogen biosynthesis, making PBRM a leading candidate to treat breast cancer. Previous routes were only able to produce milligrams to a few grams of PBRM with many steps and low yield, so new routes

that can reduce the number of steps needed and improve the overall yield are needed on a gram-scale. The installation of the bromoethyl side chain was improved. Instead of arriving at 30 after multiple steps from 28, potassium (2-benzyloxyethyl) trifluoroborate was prepared from a published procedure and used as the coupling partner for 28 to arrive at 30 in one step. The coupling conditions followed previous conditions by Molander et al., who reported different examples of cross-coupling reactions of potassium alkyltrifluoroborate with aryl triflates. The yield for 30 (67%) was similar as those published (66-75%) (Scheme 6). The scale-up of this reaction to a multi-gram scale performed just as well as the small-scale assay. Following the development of this step, the entire synthesis of PBRM was optimized, particularly regarding reducing the amount of purification needed and improving the efficiency of other reactions in the route.

Scheme 6. Synthesis of an intermediate en route to PBRM.

Zhao and coworkers<sup>15</sup> of lexicon pharmaceutical developed two large-scale synthetic routes for Tryptophan Hydroxylase Inhibitor LX1031, a drug candidate for treating irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) in clinical trials.<sup>16</sup>

The first-generation process route aimed to construct the LX1031 API via coupling two penultimate intermediates pyrimidine chloride **35** and biaryl chiral alcohol **38**. Intermediate **35** required a Suzuki-Miyaura coupling of boronate **33** and aminopyridine **34**. Extensive screening and optimization of palladium catalyst and base were conducted to minimize the formation of various impurities. The solvent was also screened to find a relatively safe and environmentally benign solvent system that was able to perform well in the reaction. A 65% yield with 95 A% purity was achieved on a 50 kg scale, although many batches had higher residual Pd levels than lab batches and required further recrystallization. The Suzuki-Miyaura coupling for intermediate **38** achieved a 93% yield with >99% purity on a 120 kg batch without further optimization (Scheme 7, top equation).

The second-generation process route aimed to reduce the cost of production even further by avoiding the tedious process to produce **35** on a modest yield. Therefore, the task became optimizing the Suzuki-Miyaura coupling to form **41**, the penultimate intermediate which is converted to LX1031 via deprotection of the chiral amine. Extensive screening and optimization of the conditions improved the conversion of the sluggish reaction and an 83% yield with ~98% purity was achieved on a multi-kg scale. However, residual Pd levels proved to be an issue again, but it was found that extending the aging time by 3-5 hours lowed the residual Pd levels drastically (Scheme 7, bottom equation).

**Scheme 7.** Synthesis of an intermediate *en route* to LX1031.

Hardouin and coworkers<sup>17</sup> from Oril Industrie designed a multi-kilogram scale synthesis of **45**, a key intermediate towards the synthesis of **46**, a Potent Dual Bcl-2/Bcl-xL Antagonist in clinical trials to treat Bcl-2 dependent malignancies such as leukemias and lymphomas. An improved Suzuki-Miyaura coupling using Pd/C was explored and optimal conditions for the reaction was determined following extensive screening. This process had several advantages over the previous method. First, the purity of **44** was improved from 60-70% to 97%, after extraction with toluene. Second, issues associated with intellectual property related to the phosphine ligand was avoided. Third, being able to conduct the reaction in water improved the environmental impact of the production. Overall, the yield of a penultimate intermediate required to make **46** *via* sulfonamide coupling has improved from 64% to 83% with the new synthetic method (Scheme 8).

**Scheme 8.** Synthesis of an intermediate *en route* to BCL inhibitor.

Kallemeyn and coworkers<sup>19</sup> from AbbVie set out to design a large-scale synthetic method for a macrocycle intermediate towards the synthesis of Glecaprevir,<sup>20</sup> a potent hepatitis C virus (HCV) NS3/4A protease inhibitor. Two ring-closing options for the desired macrocycle were considered. The first uses a coupling reaction and the second uses an etherification reaction. While exploring the first option, an extensive screening was conducted for a Suzuki-Miyaura coupling of 47 and the optimal conditions were determined. However, this method was only able to achieve an 11% yield of 48 due to the tendency of 48 to decompose rapidly due to the instability of the allylic difluoride functionality in the presence of palladium and ligand (Scheme 9). Therefore, it would be necessary to determine conditions for forming the C-C bond at a faster rate than the product's decomposition. This option was abandoned as the instability of the coupling product proved to be a liability for large-scale production.

**Scheme 9.** Synthesis of an intermediate *en route* to glecaprevir.

Schäfer and coworkers<sup>21</sup> from Idorsia pharmaceuticals developed a scalable synthetic route for the thiadiazole building block **53** to be used for a project at Idorsia Pharmaceuticals. The first-generation synthesis of **53** used Lawesson's reagent to produce the desired thiadiazole moiety, which hindered the scalability of the route. The new route

starts with **50**, a bench-stable compound with commercial availability on a kilogram-scale. The final product was afforded following a Sandmeyer bromination and Suzuki-Miyaura coupling. Screening of the Suzuki-Miyaura coupling determined the optimal conditions for the reaction on a gram scale which, notably, includes the ability to perform the reaction at room temperature. Upon scale-up to a 1.0 kg scale, it was discovered that a greater loading (3.0 mol %) of Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub>/XantPhos and longer reaction time (24 h) was needed to achieve full conversion of the **51**. This was due to time pressure for the project which prevented performing full purification of the kg scale batch of **51** to remove residual Cu catalysts from the Sandmeyer bromination, in turn interfering with the Pd catalyst system. On the kg scale a 61% yield was achieved for the Suzuki-Miyaura coupling while with additional purification of **51** an 85% yield was achieved on a 200 g scale with the screening conditions (*vide supra*) (Scheme 10).

Scheme 10. Synthesis of thiadiazole intermediate.

Zhang and coworkers<sup>22</sup> from Chinese Academy of Science designed a novel method for synthesizing crucial intermediate to lumacaftor 59,<sup>23</sup> the active ingredient of a treatment for cystic fibrosis, that increases the overall yield and decreases the environmental impact. Instead of introducing chlorines and amines like previous methods, the starting material 55 in the new route already contained the chlorine and amine in their proper positions. A Suzuki-Miyaura coupling is then used to introduce the 5-methyl group with regioselectivity. An extensive screening was conducted to determine the optimal conditions for minimizing impurities as a result of hydrolysis of acetyl groups on 56 and 58 or debromination of 58. The coupling step achieved an 82% yield on a scale of over 300 g (Scheme 11).

**Scheme 11.** Synthesis of an intermediate *en route* to lumacaftor.

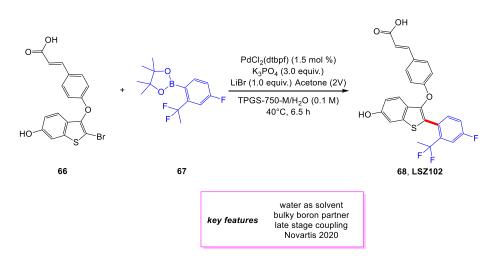
Smith and coworkers<sup>24</sup> from Bristol Myers Squibb developed a scalable synthetic method for **BMS-929075**, **63**, a therapy drug in clinical trials for the hepatitis C virus infection.<sup>25</sup> Among the improvements was a search for an alternate coupling partner to **61** that would elevate the yield of late-stage intermediate **62**. Bromo benzofuran **60** was found to be an ideal coupling partner. The above Suzuki-Miyaura coupling produced intermediate **62** in an 85% yield, an increase from 58% of the previous method, on a decagram scale. Following an amide coupling, **62** is converted to **BMS-929075**, **63**. The overall yield for this route was 30%, producing 110 g of high-quality **BMS-929075** (Scheme 12).

Scheme 12. Synthesis of an intermediate en route to BMS-929075.

Baenziger and coworkers<sup>26</sup> from Novartis developed synthetic methods for streamlined large-scaled manufacturing of LSZ102,<sup>27</sup> a selective estrogen receptor degrader drug candidate for treating breast cancer. The new methods significantly improved the overall yield and reduced the cost. The important Suzuki-Miyaura coupling, also the final step in the original synthesis route, was optimized to minimize the formation of the main side product by reducing the temperature of the reaction and changing the solvent. Extensive screening was also conducted for a superior catalyst system, but none was found to perform better than the original. A 62% yield on this Suzuki-Miyaura coupling product 68 was achieved. Alternate routes to intermediates 66 and 67 were also described (Scheme 13).

Scheme 13. Synthesis of LSZ102.

Parmentier and coworkers<sup>28</sup> from Novartis developed a kilogram-scale protocol for the final step in the synthesis of LSZ102,<sup>27</sup> a drug candidate for treating breast cancer. The Suzuki-Miyaura coupling can now be carried out using the designer surfactant TPGS-750-M<sup>29</sup> to reduce the environmental impact and cost of this reaction. Less Palladium catalyst and non-toxic organic solvents are needed. Further, the use of acetone as a cosolvent and the addition of LiBr lowered the required excess loading of boronate ester 67 to achieve desirable conversion. The main impurity was also controlled effectively, reduced to <0.1% compared to the usual 7-8% found in the crude mixture. Notably, the palladium loading was also lowered to 1.5 mol % of PdCl<sub>2</sub>(dtbpf) from 7.5 mol % of Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub> (Scheme 14).



**Scheme 14.** Synthesis of LSZ102 in aqueous surfactant.

Graham and coworkers<sup>30</sup> from AstraZeneca developed an improved manufacturing route to ceralasertib **72**,<sup>8</sup> an ATR inhibitor currently tested as a drug for treating cancer. The new method features an improved Suzuki-Miyaura coupling between **70** and **71** that simplifies the work up and crystallization required by simply performing a solvent swap to 2-methyltetrahydrofuran (2-MeTHF). This Suzuki-Miyaura coupling and crystallization process achieved a 70% yield of ceralasertib with great control of residual Palladium (<3 ppm in all batches) and impurities on a scale of 32 kg. The overall yield of this route was 16% (Scheme 15).

Scheme 15. Synthesis of ceralasertib.

Xie and coworkers<sup>31</sup> from sunshine lake pharma developed a new synthetic process for emitasvir (DAG181) 77, a novel hepatitis C treatment drug, that can be applied to the kilogram-scale and increases the overall yield of the target active pharmaceutical ingredients from 17% to 40%. The above Suzuki-Miyaura coupling reaction produces the important intermediate 75 in the synthesis route and a side product 76, which is easily converted to the desired hydrolysis product 76 via addition of K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>. An extensive screening of conditions showed that mild bases provided better conversion that strong bases due to the tendency of strong bases to hydrolyze 73 into a compound that could not participate in the Suzuki-Miyaura coupling. The effective yield (75 + 76) was 91%. Similar conditions are used for a later Suzuki-Miyaura coupling, with the only exception being using K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> instead of NaHCO<sub>3</sub> as the base (Scheme 16).

Scheme 16. Synthesis of an intermediate en route to emitasvir.

### 3. Buchwald-Hartwig coupling

The amines are integral part of pharmaceutical compounds.<sup>32</sup> Traditionally, such C(sp<sup>2</sup>)-N bonds are formed using copper catalyzed Goldberg<sup>33</sup> and Ullmann processes,<sup>34</sup> or S<sub>N</sub>Ar (if aryl halide is highly electrophilic). There are several pitfalls in these processes, especially the poor substrate scope. These processes mostly fail to reproduce in making complex pharmaceuticals which bears several Lewis basic atoms such as (N, O, S, etc.). S<sub>N</sub>Ar reactions require special activated reactants, and most of the time polar aprotic solvents such as DMF. Although Migita discovered<sup>35</sup> initial Pd catalyzed C-N bond formation, it was not greatly explored due to poor substrate scope and use of toxic amino stannanes. In 1994, Buchwald<sup>36</sup> and Hartwig<sup>37</sup> independently reported Pd catalyzed C-N bond formation. This breakthrough and the subsequent utilization of this reaction had led to a well known name reaction "Buchwald-Hartwig amination". The utility of this reaction is so broad that scientist can confidently forge the C-N bond at late stage of the API synthesis. For instance, Tao and coworkers from Pfizer38 have developed an improved synthetic route to Irreversible Epidermal Growth Factor Receptor (EGFR) T790 M<sup>39</sup> Inhibitor 81, a lead candidate for treating non small cell lung cancer. A thorough small-scale screening of catalysts, bases, and solvents for the Buchwald-Hartwig Amination to form intermediate 80 was conducted. Out of four catalysts screened, t-BuXPhos Palladacycle was the only catalyst that achieved full conversion with little impurities. t-AmOH was shown to be the optimal solvent and DBU to be the optimal base for achieving full conversion in 2 hours. Catalyst loading was lowered to 3 mol % upon final optimization and full conversion of starting material was achieved in 1 hour under a nitrogen atmosphere. A 75% isolated yield of 80 isopropanol solvate (1:1) was achieved with 94% UPLC purity on a hundred-gram scale (Scheme 17).

Scheme 17. Synthesis of an intermediate en route to T790 M.

Nonoyama and coworkers from Sumitomo Dainippon Pharma<sup>40</sup> have developed several new routes to **84**, a potential renin inhibitor and precursor to its more membrane-permeable prodrug, that improved upon the efficiency and cost of the discovery route. Plasma renin activity (PRA) plays an important role in the pathogenesis of hypertension and inhibition of PRA can lower the risk of myocardial infarction in patients suffering from hypertension. In the second-generation route, the formation of the benzoxazine core was accomplished through an intermolecular Buchwald-Hartwig coupling. An extensive screening of reaction conditions was conducted to minimize the formation of side products while maximizing conversion of **82**. Pd(PtBu<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> as catalyst, K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> as base, and DMF as solvent were selected. Upon scale-up, however, it was discovered that dif-

ferent lots of Pd(PtBu<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> performed differently, so 5.0 mol % of catalyst was used instead of 2.5 mol % to prepare the needed material. This reaction achieved 6.4 kg of 83 in 75% isolated yield with >99% HPLC purity. The team then investigated the formation of Pd(Pt-Bu<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> in situ to address the inconsistency of catalytic activity with different lots. Pd(OAc)<sub>2</sub> and 3 Pd equiv. of Pt-Bu<sub>3</sub> in xylene was found to achieve optimal catalytic activity. A 96% yield of 83 on a multi-kilogram scale with >99% HPLC purity was achieved with this protocol (Scheme 18). However, future generations of synthetic routes were developed to improve the overall yield of 84 and address issues with other steps in this generation. The Buchwald-Hartwig coupling step was ultimately eliminated in favour of other ways to achieve the benzoxazine core.

Scheme 18. Synthesis of an intermediate en route to 84.

Carroll and coworkers from Eli Lilly<sup>41</sup> have developed a synthetic route towards 89. It is an important intermediate for the synthesis of Abemaciclib 90 (trade name Verzenio), a small-molecule CDK4/6 inhibitor approved for the treatment of hormone-receptorpositive, HER2-negative metastatic, or advanced-stage breast cancer as a monotherapy, in combination with fulvestrant, or a nonsteroidal aromatase inhibitor. The aim was primarily to avoid expensive starting material, harsh amination conditions, and many recrystallizations leading to low yield. Following optimizing the S<sub>N</sub>2 reaction to form 87, the Buchwald-Hartwig Amination to form 89 by using LiHMDS was explored to install a protected amine, preventing the formation of undesired impurities. It was found after extensive screening that phosphine ligands with substituents in the ortho positions of the lower aryl ring performed better than those that lacked those substituents. RuPhos was the only such ligand screened that provided desired conversion with lower loadings of palladium. A screening of the Pd(II) source with RuPhos showed that PdCl<sub>2</sub>(PhCN)<sub>2</sub> was capable of providing complete conversion. RuPhos/PdCl<sub>2</sub>(PhCN)<sub>2</sub> was selected over Pd-171, which achieved full conversion at an even lower loading of palladium (0.25 mol %), due to the former's availability. Following deprotection of 89, the respected 2-amino pyridine was produced on a kilogram scale with 75% yield (Scheme 19).

**Scheme 19.** Synthesis of an intermediate *en route* to abemaciclib.

Li and coworkers<sup>42</sup> from biogen have developed a large-scale synthetic method for BIIB068 95, a potent Bruton's tyrosine kinase (BTK) that can provide therapy to patients with autoimmune diseases, as a Hemi-Adipate Co-crystal. The process development improved on various aspects of the discovery route, the first being the formation of the C-N bond between intermediates 91 and 92 (Scheme 20). The discovery route employed a Buchwald-Hartwig amination (same reagents as Table 1, entry 1) and carried out deprotection of 93 in a subsequent step following chromatography. After screening, it was discovered that neither the palladium catalyst nor 1,4-dioxane as a solvent were needed for the coupling of 91 with 92. Upon optimization, organic bases such as DIEA afforded 93 in ~60% yield (entry 2). However, it was also found that, under acidic conditions, the coupling reaction and the deprotection of 93 to form 94 can be carried out in one pot and a 91% yield of 94 was achieved with 3 equiv. of H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> (entry 3). Using the HCl salt of 92 instead of free base 92 was also examined and it was discovered that the HCl generated from 92 • HCl was sufficient to drive the deprotection reaction. Further optimization also revealed that using a mixture of 2-butanol and water as a solvent eliminated the butylated impurity. The optimal conditions achieved a 95% yield of 94 (entry 4).

Scheme 20. Synthesis of an intermediate en route to BIIB068.

Table 1. Selected Screening Results for the C-N Coupling of 91 with 92

				yields (HPLC area %)	
entry	reagents	solvent	T (°C)	9	10
1	Pd <sub>2</sub> (dba) <sub>3</sub> (0.2 equiv.), S-Phos (0.1 e	quiv.), 1,4-dioxane	100	58	0
	Cs <sub>2</sub> CO <sub>3</sub> (2 equiv.)				
2	DIEA (2 equiv.)	1-butanol	100	61	<1
3	$H_3PO_4$ (3 equiv.)	1-butanol	100	0	91
<b>4</b> a	none 2	2-butanol/water (2:3)	85	0	95

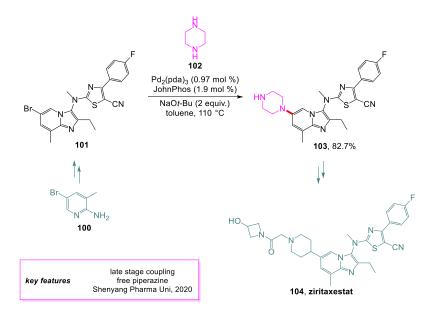
a92.HCI was used instead of 92

Sirois and coworkers<sup>43</sup> from Genentech have developed a method for producing drug candidate GDC-0022 **99**, an inhibitor of the Retinoid-related orphan receptor  $\gamma$  (RORc), on a multi-kilogram scale. One of the major problems that was addressed from the discovery synthesis route was improving the late-stage Buchwald-Hartwig amina-

tion between 97 and 98 to preserve the stereochemical purity of the sultam moiety while improving the overall conversion. Using free base 98 instead of its bis-HCl salt afforded less undesired diastereomer impurities. An extensive screening and optimization of the coupling conditions also improved the purity of the desired product and overall conversion. It was found that the addition of KOAc allowed the reaction to be performed with lower loadings of palladium. The behavior of the reaction was studied with reaction progress kinetic analysis with interesting findings regarding the role of KOAc and effects of biphosphine monoxide ligands. The final yield of > 5 kg of GDC-0022 • pTsOH 99 synthesized was 58% with >98 A% purity (Scheme 21).

Scheme 21. Synthesis of an intermediate en route to GDC-0022.

Lei and coworkers<sup>44</sup> from Shenyang pharmaceutical university have developed a novel method for producing Autotaxin inhibitor ziritaxestat **104**, a drug used to treat patients with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis or chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases. Various aspects of the previous synthetic routes were improved upon, aiming to lower the cost of production. The Buchwald-Hartwig amination to achieve penultimate intermediate **101** was modified by using free piperazine **102** instead of N-Boc piperazine<sup>45</sup> to skip the deprotection step and improve the overall yield of **103**. It was found that the original conditions for the coupling was optimal for the new coupling after extensive screening. This step of the new synthesis route could be achieved on a 300 – 400g scale (Scheme 22).



**Scheme 22.** Synthesis of an intermediate *en route* to Ziritaxestat.

# 5. Conclusions

With advent of emerging cross-coupling technologies such as Suzuki-Miyaura and Buchwald-Hartwig reactions, pharmaceutical synthesis has become quickly possible. The vast studies performed to understand the mechanism and reactivity support further development of ligands and catalyst for couplings of highly complex molecules. Extending the applications of Pd-catalyzed cross coupling from medicinal chemistry to process chemistry has significantly reduced the associated time, cost, and waste in the synthesis of active pharmaceutical ingredients. As highlighted in this review, both cross-coupling reaction are epitome in drug development and their utility will only keep growing.

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