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# Synthesis, crystal structure, optical and thermal properties of lanthanide hydrogen-polyphosphates $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$ ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb, Dy, Ho}$ )<sup>†</sup>

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Lanthanide hydrogen-polyphosphates  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb, Dy, Ho}$ ) were synthesised as colourless ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb, Dy}$ ) and light pink ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Ho}$ ) crystalline powders by reaction of  $\text{Tb}_4\text{O}_7/\text{Dy}_2\text{O}_3/\text{Ho}_2\text{O}_3$  with  $\text{H}_3\text{PO}_3$  at 380 °C. All compounds crystallise isotypically ( $P2_1/c$  (no. 14),  $Z = 4$ ,  $a_{\text{Tb}} = 1368.24(4)$  pm,  $b_{\text{Tb}} = 710.42(2)$  pm,  $c_{\text{Tb}} = 965.79(3)$  pm,  $\beta_{\text{Tb}} = 101.200(1)^\circ$ , 3112 data, 160 parameters,  $wR_2 = 0.062$ ,  $a_{\text{Ho}} = 1363.34(5)$  pm,  $b_{\text{Ho}} = 709.24(3)$  pm,  $c_{\text{Ho}} = 959.07(4)$  pm,  $\beta_{\text{Ho}} = 101.055(1)^\circ$ , 1607 data, 158 parameters,  $wR_2 = 0.058$ ). The crystal structure comprises two different infinite helical chains of corner-sharing phosphate tetrahedra. In-between these chains the lanthanide ions are located, coordinated by seven oxygen atoms belonging to four different polyphosphate chains. Vibrational, UV/Vis and fluorescence spectra of  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb, Dy, Ho}$ ) as well as  $\text{Dy}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]:\text{Ln}$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Ce, Eu}$ ) and the magnetic and thermal behaviour of  $\text{Tb}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  are reported.

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## 1 Introduction

In general, phosphates exhibit a large variety of structures and composition. Besides monophosphates, various condensed oligo-, long-chain polyphosphates and cyclophosphates exist.<sup>1,2</sup> Phosphates doped with lanthanides or stoichiometric lanthanide phosphates, such as  $\text{Sr}_3(\text{PO}_4)_5\text{Cl}:\text{Eu}^{3+}/\text{Eu}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{LaPO}_4:\text{Ce}^{3+}, \text{Tb}^{3+}$ ,  $(\text{Y, Gd})\text{PO}_4:\text{Eu}^{3+}, ^{3-7}$   $\text{Ln}(\text{PO}_3)_3:\text{Eu}^{3+}$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Y, Gd, Lu}$ ),<sup>8</sup>  $\alpha\text{-Sr}(\text{PO}_3)_2:\text{Eu}^{2+}, \text{Mn}^{2+}$ ,  $\text{SrM}(\text{P}_2\text{O}_7):\text{Eu}^{2+}, \text{Mn}^{2+}$  ( $M = \text{Zn, Sr}$ )<sup>9,10</sup> and  $\text{BaCa}(\text{PO}_3)_4:\text{Eu}^{2+}$  (ref. 11), reveal great potential for optical applications as luminescent materials. Many transitions between the energy levels of the  $\text{Ln}^{3+}$  ions are in the visible range (12500–25000  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ ).<sup>12,13</sup> Due to the strong shielding of the 5s and 5p orbitals, crystal field splitting is very small, and weak 4f–4f transitions occur, leading to the characteristic line emissions.<sup>4,7,14</sup> Since these are parity forbidden, they only become allowed by an admixture of states of the opposite parity.<sup>12,13</sup> Despite the rather low emission, a good colour rendering can be achieved.<sup>4,7</sup>

Acid polyphosphates with the sum formula  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Sm, Eu}$ ) are known to crystallise isostructurally to  $\text{Bi}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]^{15}$  in the triclinic space group  $P\bar{1}$ .<sup>16</sup> Surprisingly,

acid polyphosphates of the elements at the origin of the lanthanide row (La, Pr, Nd) and at the end (Tm, Yb) have not yet been observed. Instead, only non-protonated polyphosphates and ultraphosphates are formed depending on the synthesis temperature.<sup>17</sup>  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb–Er}$ ) crystallises in the monoclinic space group  $P2_1/c$ .  $\text{Gd}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  represents an exception, which crystallises in both configurations at the same time. Up to now only the crystal structure of  $\text{Er}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  was solved from single-crystal data.<sup>17</sup> With regard to optical applications, both the spectroscopic properties and the thermal stability of the host lattice are important characteristics.

Herein we study the crystal structures of  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb, Dy, Ho}$ ) determined from single-crystal data ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb, Ho}$ ) and refined *via* a Rietveld refinement ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Dy}$ ) as well as their optical, magnetic and thermal properties.

**Table 1** MAPLE calculations for  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb, Ho}$ )

$\text{Tb}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$	$\alpha\text{-TbP}_3\text{O}_9^{22} + 0.5\text{H}_2\text{O}^{34} + 0.5\text{P}_2\text{O}_5^{35}$
MAPLE = 98 590 $\text{kJ mol}^{-1}$ ( $\Delta = 0.1\%$ )	MAPLE = 98 466 $\text{kJ mol}^{-1}$
$\text{Ho}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$	$\alpha\text{-HoP}_3\text{O}_9^{22} + 0.5\text{H}_2\text{O}^{34} + 0.5\text{P}_2\text{O}_5^{35}$
MAPLE = 98 811 $\text{kJ mol}^{-1}$ ( $\Delta = 0.5\%$ )	MAPLE = 98 326 $\text{kJ mol}^{-1}$

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**Table 2** Absorption band energies for the strongest transitions in Tb[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] and in free Tb<sup>3+</sup> ions between 225 and 800 nm

No.	Absorption	$\lambda/\text{nm}$	Tb[H(PO <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>4</sub> ] energy/10 <sup>3</sup> cm <sup>-1</sup>	Free Tb <sup>3+</sup> (ref. 42) energy/10 <sup>3</sup> cm <sup>-1</sup>
1	<sup>7</sup> F <sub>6</sub> → <sup>5</sup> H <sub>7</sub>	319	31.3	31.6
2	<sup>7</sup> F <sub>6</sub> → <sup>5</sup> G <sub>2</sub>	336	29.8	29.6
3	<sup>7</sup> F <sub>6</sub> → <sup>5</sup> L <sub>9</sub>	351	28.5	28.5
4	<sup>7</sup> F <sub>6</sub> → <sup>5</sup> G <sub>5</sub>	358	27.9	27.8
5	<sup>7</sup> F <sub>6</sub> → <sup>5</sup> L <sub>10</sub>	369	27.1	27.1
6	<sup>7</sup> F <sub>6</sub> → <sup>5</sup> G <sub>6</sub>	377	26.5	26.4
7	<sup>7</sup> F <sub>6</sub> → <sup>5</sup> D <sub>4</sub>	486	20.6	20.5

**Table 3** Absorption band energies for the strongest transitions in Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] and in free Dy<sup>3+</sup> ions between 225 and 800 nm

No.	Absorption	$\lambda/\text{nm}$	Dy[H(PO <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>4</sub> ] energy/10 <sup>3</sup> cm <sup>-1</sup>	Free Dy <sup>3+</sup> (ref. 42) energy/10 <sup>3</sup> cm <sup>-1</sup>
1	<sup>6</sup> H <sub>15/2</sub> → <sup>4</sup> D <sub>7/2</sub>	295	33.9	33.8
2	<sup>6</sup> H <sub>15/2</sub> → <sup>6</sup> P <sub>3/2</sub>	325	30.8	30.8
3	<sup>6</sup> H <sub>15/2</sub> → <sup>4</sup> F <sub>5/2</sub> + <sup>4</sup> D <sub>5/2</sub>	338	29.6	29.6
4	<sup>6</sup> H <sub>15/2</sub> → <sup>6</sup> P <sub>7/2</sub>	350	28.6	28.6
5	<sup>6</sup> H <sub>15/2</sub> → <sup>6</sup> P <sub>5/2</sub>	364	27.5	27.5
6	<sup>6</sup> H <sub>15/2</sub> → <sup>4</sup> K <sub>17/2</sub>	378	26.5	26.4
7	<sup>6</sup> H <sub>15/2</sub> → <sup>4</sup> I <sub>13/2</sub>	386	25.9	25.9
8	<sup>6</sup> H <sub>15/2</sub> → <sup>4</sup> G <sub>11/2</sub>	425	23.5	23.3
9	<sup>6</sup> H <sub>15/2</sub> → <sup>4</sup> I <sub>15/2</sub>	452	22.1	22.3
10	<sup>6</sup> H <sub>15/2</sub> → <sup>4</sup> F <sub>9/2</sub>	473	21.1	21.1
11	<sup>6</sup> H <sub>15/2</sub> → <sup>6</sup> F <sub>3/2</sub>	753	13.3	13.2

**Table 4** Absorption band energies for the strongest transitions in Ho[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] and in free Ho<sup>3+</sup> ions between 225 and 800 nm

No.	Absorption	$\lambda/\text{nm}$	Ho[H(PO <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>4</sub> ] energy/10 <sup>3</sup> cm <sup>-1</sup>	Free Ho <sup>3+</sup> (ref. 41) energy/10 <sup>3</sup> cm <sup>-1</sup>
1	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>3</sup> H <sub>6</sub> + <sup>1</sup> I <sub>6</sub>	219	45.7	45.7
2	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>3</sup> F <sub>4</sub> + <sup>5</sup> D <sub>4</sub>	241	41.6	41.5
3	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>5</sup> D <sub>3</sub>	250	40.0	40.0
4	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>3</sup> I <sub>7</sub>	261	38.2	38.5
5	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>3</sup> P <sub>0</sub>	278	36.0	36.0
6	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>5</sup> G <sub>4</sub> + <sup>5</sup> D <sub>4</sub> + <sup>3</sup> G <sub>4</sub>	290	34.5	34.8
7	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>3</sup> F <sub>4</sub> + <sup>3</sup> H <sub>4</sub> + <sup>3</sup> G <sub>4</sub>	334	29.9	30.0
8	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>3</sup> L <sub>9</sub>	346	28.9	29.0
9	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>3</sup> H <sub>6</sub>	361	27.7	27.7
10	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>5</sup> G <sub>4</sub>	386	25.9	25.8
11	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>5</sup> G <sub>5</sub> + <sup>3</sup> G <sub>5</sub>	417	24.0	24.0
12	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>5</sup> F <sub>1</sub>	451	22.2	22.4
13	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>3</sup> K <sub>8</sub>	468	21.4	21.3
14	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>5</sup> F <sub>2</sub>	473	21.1	21.1
15	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>5</sup> F <sub>3</sub>	485	20.6	20.7
16	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>5</sup> F <sub>4</sub>	538	18.6	18.6
17	<sup>5</sup> I <sub>8</sub> → <sup>5</sup> F <sub>5</sub>	648	15.4	15.5

## 2 Crystal structure

Ln[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] (Ln = Tb, Dy, Ho) crystallise isotypically to Er[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>]<sup>17</sup> in the centrosymmetric monoclinic space group *P*<sub>2</sub><sub>1</sub>/*c* (no. 14) (Tables 5–9 and 11). The anionic partial structure of Ln[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] (Ln = Tb, Dy, Ho) consists of two different infinite

**Table 5** Single-crystal data and structure refinements of Ln[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] (Ln = Tb, Ho)

	Tb[H(PO <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>4</sub> ]	Ho[H(PO <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>4</sub> ]
Temperature/K	293(2)	296(2)
Molar weight/g mol <sup>-1</sup>	475.81	481.77
Crystal system	Monoclinic	Monoclinic
Space group	<i>P</i> <sub>2</sub> <sub>1</sub> / <i>c</i> (no. 14)	<i>P</i> <sub>2</sub> <sub>1</sub> / <i>c</i> (no. 14)
Crystal shape	Plate	Irregular
Crystal size/mm <sup>3</sup>	0.047 × 0.018 × 0.019	0.050 × 0.018 × 0.020
Colour	Colourless	Pink/yellow
<i>a</i> /pm	1368.24(4)	1363.34(5)
<i>b</i> /pm	710.42(2)	709.24(3)
<i>c</i> /pm	965.79(3)	959.07(4)
$\beta$ /°	101.200(1)	101.055(1)
Volume/10 <sup>6</sup> pm <sup>3</sup>	920.89(5)	910.15(6)
<i>Z</i>	4	4
Calculated density <i>D</i> <sub>x</sub> /g cm <sup>-3</sup>	3.432	3.499
Absorption coefficient $\mu/\text{mm}^{-1}$	8.440	9.462
<i>F</i> (000)	888	896
Radiation ( $\lambda/\text{\AA}$ )	Mo-K $\alpha$ (0.7093)	Mo-K $\alpha$ (0.7093)
Diffractionmeter	Bruker D8 Venture	Bruker D8 Venture
Absorption correction	Multi-scan	Multi-scan
Transmission factor (min./max.)	0.6359/0.7457	0.6029/0.7458
Index range <i>h</i>   <i>k</i>   <i>l</i> (min./max.)	0/16 −8/0 −11/11	−16/16 −8/8 −11/11
Theta range/°	3.04 ≤ $\theta$ ≤ 25.00	3.04 ≤ $\theta$ ≤ 25.00
Reflections collected	3112	27195
Independent reflections	3111	1607
Observed reflections ( <i>I</i> > 2 $\sigma$ )	2790	1421
<i>R</i> <sub>int</sub>	—	0.0537
Refined parameters	160	158
<i>R</i> <sub>1</sub> (all data)	0.028	0.029
<i>wR</i> <sub>2</sub> (all data)	0.062	0.058
Weighting scheme	$w^{-1} = \sigma^2 F_o^2 + (0.0389P)^2$ $P = (F_o^2 + 2F_c^2)/3$	$w^{-1} = \sigma^2 F_o^2 + (0.0423P)^2 + 1.5847P$ $P = (F_o^2 + 2F_c^2)/3$
Goof	1.131	1.030
Residual electron density (min./max.)/e <sup>-</sup> Å <sup>-3</sup>	−0.499/0.144	−0.841/1.981

helical corner-sharing phosphate chains arranged parallel to each other along [010] with alternating poly-hydrogen-phosphate and polyphosphate chains (Fig. 1).

The protonated chain (A) reveals a larger diameter compared to the non-protonated polyphosphate chain (B) (Fig. 2) due to the widened P–O–P angles (136° in A vs. 130–133° in B).

The adjacent A and B chains in the *a* and *c* directions, respectively, exhibit a phase shift of 180° towards each other (Fig. 3).

In the phosphate tetrahedra P–O bond lengths range between 146 and 161 pm. The P–O<sub>H</sub> bond is 153 pm long. P–O<sub>br</sub> distances range between 156 and 161 pm, whereas P–O<sub>term</sub> distances range between 146 and 150 pm. These values correspond very well to the data found for other poly-hydrogenphosphates<sup>15–17</sup> or polyphosphates.<sup>18–23</sup> In general, P–O distances increase from P–O<sub>term</sub> to P–O<sub>H</sub> and up to P–O<sub>br</sub> due to the decreasing effective negative charge on the involved oxygen atom which leads to weaker electrostatic interactions between P and O. Angles of the P–O<sub>H</sub>–O<sub>br</sub>–P–O and P–O–O<sub>br</sub>–P–O bridges range between 135 and 137° and between 129



**Table 6** Refined atomic coordinates, Wyckoff symbols and isotropic displacement parameters  $U_{eq}/\text{\AA}^2$  in  $\text{Tb}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$ 

Atom	Wyckoff symbol	x	y	z	$U_{eq}$
Tb1	4e	0.729401(15)	0.05792(3)	0.05897(2)	0.00704(9)
P1	4e	0.90133(8)	-0.32485(16)	0.12591(13)	0.0083(3)
P2	4e	0.90026(9)	0.15142(17)	-0.18737(12)	0.0080(3)
P3	4e	0.61157(9)	-0.20990(17)	0.29579(12)	0.0077(2)
P4	4e	0.59385(9)	0.40127(16)	0.20937(12)	0.0078(3)
O <sub>br</sub> 1	4e	0.9446(3)	-0.4771(5)	0.2377(3)	0.0135(7)
O <sub>br</sub> 2	4e	0.9990(2)	-0.2305(4)	0.0948(3)	0.0114(7)
O <sub>br</sub> 3	4e	0.5802(2)	-0.3766(4)	0.1876(3)	0.0117(7)
O <sub>br</sub> 4	4e	0.5152(2)	-0.1724(4)	0.3594(3)	0.0098(7)
O <sub>term</sub> 1	4e	0.8343(3)	-0.1896(5)	0.1741(3)	0.0145(8)
O <sub>term</sub> 2	4e	0.8414(3)	0.0764(5)	-0.0888(3)	0.0174(8)
O <sub>term</sub> 3	4e	0.8587(3)	0.2914(5)	-0.2952(3)	0.0156(8)
O <sub>term</sub> 4	4e	0.6343(3)	-0.0457(4)	0.2130(3)	0.0132(7)
O <sub>term</sub> 5	4e	0.6902(3)	-0.2722(4)	0.4168(3)	0.0123(7)
O <sub>term</sub> 6	4e	0.6158(2)	0.3586(5)	0.3627(3)	0.0115(7)
O <sub>term</sub> 7	4e	0.6615(2)	0.3364(4)	0.1191(3)	0.0114(7)
O <sub>H</sub> 1	4e	0.8569(3)	-0.4300(5)	-0.0105(4)	0.0158(8)
H1	4e	0.804(3)	-0.350(8)	-0.048(5)	0.05

O<sub>br</sub> = bridging oxygen atom; O<sub>term</sub> = terminal oxygen atom; O<sub>H</sub> = hydroxyl group.

**Table 7** Anisotropic displacement parameters  $U_{ij}/\text{\AA}^2$  in  $\text{Tb}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$ 

Atom	$U_{11}$	$U_{22}$	$U_{33}$	$U_{12}$	$U_{13}$	$U_{23}$
Tb1	0.00640(13)	0.00779(13)	0.00678(13)	-0.00024(9)	0.00093(10)	0.00006(9)
P1	0.0056(6)	0.0087(6)	0.0100(6)	0.0002(5)	0.0001(5)	-0.0004(5)
P2	0.0051(6)	0.0086(6)	0.0104(6)	0.0007(5)	0.0017(5)	0.0010(5)
P3	0.0068(6)	0.0074(6)	0.0082(5)	0.0005(5)	-0.0005(5)	-0.0001(5)
P4	0.0070(6)	0.0062(6)	0.0094(6)	-0.0008(5)	-0.0001(5)	-0.0002(5)
O <sub>br</sub> 1	0.0099(18)	0.0108(17)	0.0184(19)	0.0068(14)	-0.0009(14)	0.0002(15)
O <sub>br</sub> 2	0.0129(19)	0.0104(17)	0.0091(14)	0.0030(14)	-0.0025(13)	-0.0011(14)
O <sub>br</sub> 3	0.0195(19)	0.0051(16)	0.0087(16)	-0.0010(13)	-0.0021(14)	0.0022(15)
O <sub>br</sub> 4	0.0076(17)	0.0136(19)	0.0084(16)	0.0024(13)	0.0021(13)	0.0023(14)
O <sub>term</sub> 1	0.020(2)	0.0089(18)	0.0137(17)	0.0017(14)	0.0021(15)	0.0029(16)
O <sub>term</sub> 2	0.0116(18)	0.027(2)	0.0156(17)	-0.0013(16)	0.0066(15)	-0.0042(15)
O <sub>term</sub> 3	0.0087(19)	0.0172(18)	0.0182(17)	0.0070(16)	-0.0042(14)	0.0015(16)
O <sub>term</sub> 4	0.0148(19)	0.0093(18)	0.0171(18)	0.0040(14)	0.0068(15)	0.0012(14)
O <sub>term</sub> 5	0.0082(19)	0.0111(18)	0.0155(15)	0.0013(14)	-0.0032(13)	0.0025(13)
O <sub>term</sub> 6	0.012(18)	0.0126(17)	0.0075(16)	0.0000(14)	-0.0025(14)	-0.0054(15)
O <sub>term</sub> 7	0.0073(17)	0.0113(18)	0.0168(18)	-0.0026(14)	0.0054(14)	-0.0006(14)
O <sub>H</sub> 1	0.012(2)	0.0154(19)	0.0176(18)	-0.0077(15)	-0.0019(15)	-0.0002(14)

**Table 8** Refined atomic coordinates, Wyckoff symbols and isotropic displacement parameters  $U_{eq}/\text{\AA}^2$  in  $\text{Ho}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$ 

Atom	Wyckoff symbol	X	y	z	$U_{eq}$
Ho1	4e	0.729532(17)	0.05657(3)	0.05931(3)	0.00637(13)
P1	4e	0.90118(10)	-0.3250(2)	0.12488(15)	0.0080(3)
P2	4e	0.89935(9)	0.1530(2)	-0.18799(15)	0.0073(3)
P3	4e	0.38820(10)	0.2885(2)	0.20467(15)	0.0070(3)
P4	4e	0.59443(10)	0.3988(2)	0.21039(15)	0.0070(3)
O <sub>br</sub> 1	4e	0.9438(3)	-0.0209(6)	-0.2624(4)	0.0138(9)
O <sub>br</sub> 2	4e	0.9995(3)	-0.2308(5)	0.0942(4)	0.0101(8)
O <sub>br</sub> 3	4e	0.4186(3)	0.1212(5)	0.3132(4)	0.0111(8)
O <sub>br</sub> 4	4e	0.4853(3)	0.3257(6)	0.1412(4)	0.0107(8)
O <sub>term</sub> 1	4e	0.8334(3)	-0.1891(5)	0.1737(4)	0.0117(8)
O <sub>term</sub> 2	4e	0.8395(3)	0.0788(6)	-0.0889(5)	0.0166(9)
O <sub>term</sub> 3	4e	0.8581(3)	0.2080(6)	0.2034(4)	0.0154(9)
O <sub>term</sub> 4	4e	0.6349(3)	-0.0475(5)	0.2120(4)	0.0125(9)
O <sub>term</sub> 5	4e	0.6904(3)	-0.2267(6)	-0.0824(4)	0.0119(8)
O <sub>term</sub> 6	4e	0.6161(3)	0.1414(6)	-0.1351(4)	0.0132(9)
O <sub>term</sub> 7	4e	0.6633(3)	0.3331(5)	0.1200(4)	0.0121(9)
O <sub>H</sub> 1	4e	0.8568(3)	-0.4297(6)	-0.0126(5)	0.0178(10)
H1	4e	0.795(3)	-0.394(12)	-0.068(7)	0.050



**Table 9** Anisotropic displacement parameters  $U_{ij}/\text{\AA}^2$  in  $\text{Ho}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$ 

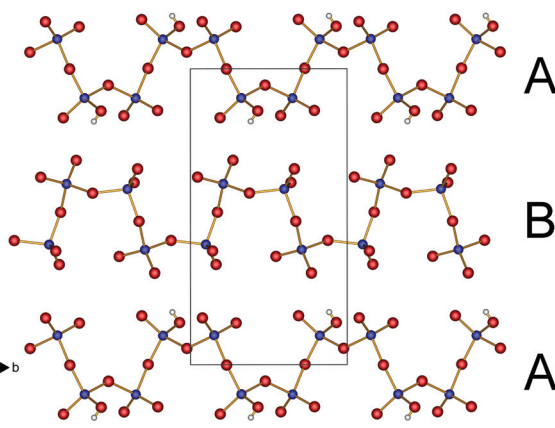
Atom	$U_{11}$	$U_{22}$	$U_{33}$	$U_{12}$	$U_{13}$	$U_{23}$
Ho1	0.00672(16)	0.00555(17)	0.00677(17)	-0.00023(10)	0.00109(10)	-0.00002(10)
P1	0.0072(6)	0.0059(7)	0.0103(7)	0.0007(6)	0.0004(6)	-0.0001(6)
P2	0.0053(6)	0.0069(7)	0.0094(7)	-0.0003(6)	0.0008(5)	-0.0011(6)
P3	0.0066(6)	0.0054(7)	0.0088(7)	-0.0006(6)	0.0010(5)	-0.0006(5)
P4	0.0069(6)	0.0048(7)	0.0090(7)	-0.0015(6)	0.0002(6)	0.0001(5)
O <sub>br</sub> 1	0.0094(19)	0.012(2)	0.019(2)	-0.0050(18)	-0.0009(17)	0.0009(17)
O <sub>br</sub> 2	0.0121(19)	0.011(2)	0.0064(18)	0.0006(17)	0.0004(15)	-0.0025(16)
O <sub>br</sub> 3	0.018(2)	0.0037(19)	0.010(2)	0.0033(17)	0.0002(17)	-0.0011(17)
O <sub>br</sub> 4	0.0084(18)	0.015(2)	0.0093(19)	-0.0018(17)	0.0029(15)	-0.0026(16)
O <sub>term</sub> 1	0.0139(19)	0.010(2)	0.011(2)	0.0014(17)	0.0020(16)	0.0033(16)
O <sub>term</sub> 2	0.014(2)	0.019(2)	0.018(2)	0.0005(19)	0.0064(18)	-0.0033(17)
O <sub>term</sub> 3	0.0119(19)	0.014(2)	0.018(2)	-0.0014(19)	-0.0037(17)	-0.0012(17)
O <sub>term</sub> 4	0.014(2)	0.010(2)	0.016(2)	0.0020(17)	0.0069(17)	-0.0008(16)
O <sub>term</sub> 5	0.0091(18)	0.010(2)	0.0015(2)	0.0004(18)	-0.0015(16)	0.0002(16)
O <sub>term</sub> 6	0.016(2)	0.010(2)	0.013(2)	-0.0019(17)	0.0000(17)	0.0043(17)
O <sub>term</sub> 7	0.0105(18)	0.010(2)	0.018(2)	-0.0016(18)	0.0068(17)	0.0006(16)
O <sub>H</sub> 1	0.015(2)	0.018(2)	0.017(2)	-0.0100(19)	-0.0039(18)	0.0004(17)

**Table 10** Selected interatomic distances/pm and angles/°

	Tb[ $\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4$ ]	Dy[ $\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4$ ]	Ho[ $\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4$ ]
Ln-O	228.0(3)-245.1(3)	224(2)-247(2)	2.254(4)-2.427(4)
P-O <sub>br</sub>	156.1(3)-161.1(3)	145(3)-188(3)	1.568(4)-1.601(4)
P-O <sub>term</sub>	146.2(3)-149.4(3)	130(2)-160(3)	1.463(4)-1.495(4)
P-O <sub>H</sub>	153.3(3)	171(3)	1.533(4)
P <sub>O<sub>H</sub></sub> -O <sub>br</sub> -P <sub>O</sub>	135.8(2)-135.90(2)	126.5(18)-134.9(16)	135.8(2)-136.3(3)
P <sub>O</sub> -O <sub>br</sub> -P <sub>O</sub>	129.9(2)-132.5(2)	129.5(19)-141.5(19)	129.8(3)-132.6(3)
O <sub>term</sub> -P-O <sub>term</sub>	117.4(2)-121.4(2)	111(2)-118(3)	117.4(2)-121.2(2)
O <sub>term</sub> -P-O <sub>br</sub>	105.9(2)-114.3(2)	94(2)-130(3)	105.9(2)-114.1(2)
O <sub>term</sub> -P-O <sub>H</sub>	115.1(2)	135(2)	115.0(2)
O <sub>br</sub> -P-O <sub>br</sub>	99.4(2)-104.1(2)	93(2)-111(2)	99.1(2)-104.2(2)
O <sub>br</sub> -P-O <sub>H</sub>	104.6(2)-106.9(2)	98.1(20)-108.9(20)	104.7(2)-106.7(2)

**Table 11** Rietveld refinement parameters of Dy[ $\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4$ ]

Molar weight/g mol <sup>-1</sup>	479.40
Crystal system	Monoclinic
Space group	$P2_1/c$ (no. 14)
Colour	Colourless
$a/\text{pm}$	1365.85(3)
$b/\text{pm}$	709.74(1)
$c/\text{pm}$	962.15(2)
$\beta/^\circ$	101.116(1)
Volume/ $10^6 \text{ pm}^3$	915.21(3)
$Z$	4
Calculated density $D_x/\text{g cm}^{-3}$	3.479
Radiation	Cu-K $\alpha$
Wavelength $\lambda/\text{\AA}$	1.5406
Diffractometer	Bruker D8 Advance
Theta range/ $^\circ$	$5.00 \leq 2\theta \leq 140.00$
Refined parameters	62
$R_p$	0.009
$R_{wp}$	0.012
$\chi^2$	4.04

**Fig. 1** Infinite, parallel hydrogen polyphosphate (A) and polyphosphate (B) chains of  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb}, \text{Dy}, \text{Ho}$ ) along  $[010]$  (viewed along direction  $[001]$ ); phosphorus blue, oxygen red, hydrogen white.

and  $133^\circ$ , respectively. Selected bond lengths and angles of  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb}, \text{Ho}$ ) are listed in Table 10.

An appropriate method for the calculation of the deviation of tetrahedra from ideal symmetry was introduced by Balić-

Žunić and Makovicky.<sup>24,25</sup> We adopted and explained the application of this method with the example of  $\alpha\text{-BaHPO}_4$ ;<sup>26</sup> in the course of our recent results we assigned deviations of less than 1% to regular tetrahedra. The four crystallographically



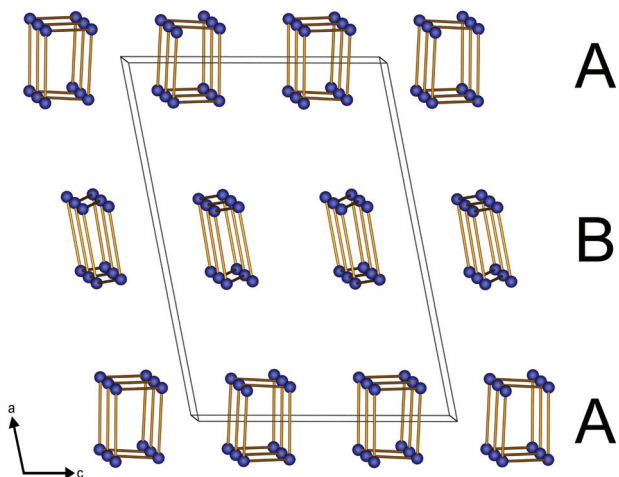


Fig. 2 Reduced presentation of the infinite helical poly-hydrogenphosphate (A) and polyphosphate (B) chains of  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb}, \text{Dy}, \text{Ho}$ ) viewing in the  $[010]$  direction. O and H atoms are omitted for clarity; phosphorus blue.

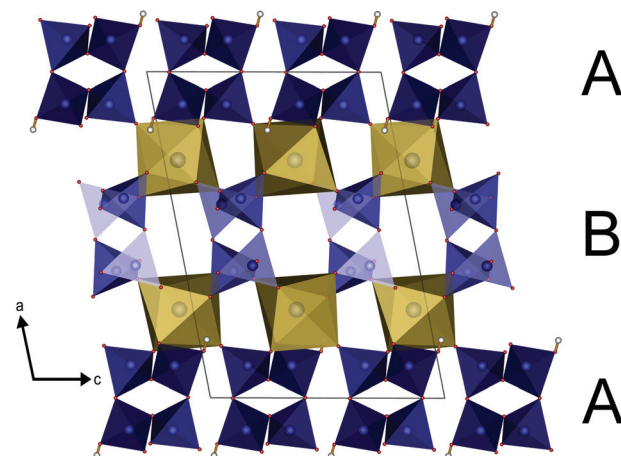


Fig. 4 Infinite helical chains of poly-hydrogenphosphate (A) and polyphosphate (B) tetrahedra in  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb}, \text{Dy}, \text{Ho}$ ) in the  $[010]$  direction interconnected via  $\text{LnO}_7$  polyhedra (yellow); phosphate tetrahedra blue, oxygen red, hydrogen white.

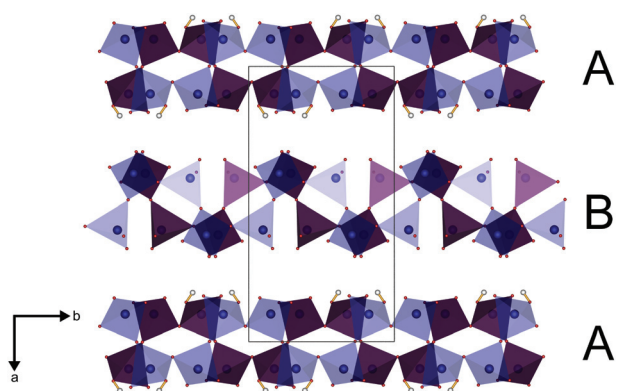


Fig. 3 Phase-shifted chains of poly-hydrogenphosphate (A) and polyphosphate (B) tetrahedra (blue: front, violet: back) of  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb}, \text{Dy}, \text{Ho}$ ) in  $[001]$ ; phosphate tetrahedra blue, oxygen red, hydrogen white.

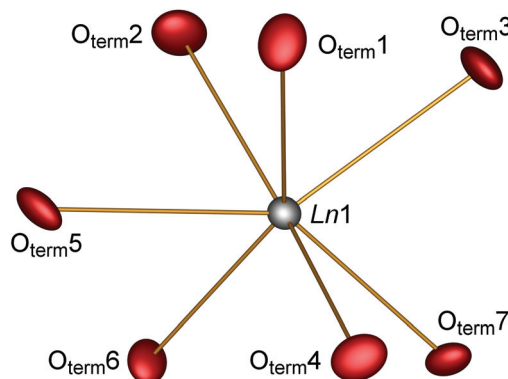


Fig. 5 Coordination sphere of the lanthanide in  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb}, \text{Dy}, \text{Ho}$ ). The displacement ellipsoids are drawn on a probability level of 70%.

different phosphate and hydrogenphosphate tetrahedra in  $\text{Tb}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  and  $\text{Ho}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  show the values of  $-0.32\%$  (P1),  $-0.29\%$  (P2),  $-0.22\%$  (P3),  $-0.20\%$  (P4) and  $-0.32\%$  (P1),  $-0.29\%$  (P2),  $-0.21\%$  (P3),  $-0.21\%$  (P4), respectively. These values are on the typical scale for phosphate tetrahedra.<sup>22,26–29</sup> Exhibiting a deviation far below 1%, all tetrahedra are classified as regular.

The parallel poly-hydrogenphosphate and polyphosphate chains of  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb}, \text{Dy}, \text{Ho}$ ) are interconnected via common O corners of  $\text{LnO}_7$  polyhedra (Fig. 4). The single-crystal structure reveals a single site of  $\text{Ln}^{3+}$ , which is coordinated capped trigonal prismatic by seven terminal oxygen atoms of the polyphosphate chains (Fig. 5 and 6). The Ln–O bond lengths range between 225 and 245 pm (Table 10). These values are in the same range as the Er–O bond lengths in  $\text{Er}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  determined by Palkina *et al.*<sup>17</sup>

In  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb}, \text{Ho}$ ) a single hydrogen bond was found which can be considered as moderate according to

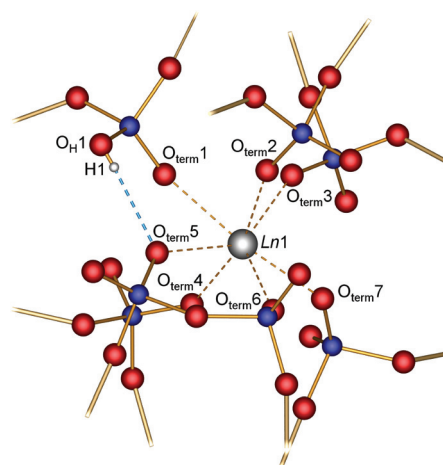


Fig. 6 Moderate hydrogen bond (dotted blue line) and coordination sphere of the Ln atom in  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb}, \text{Dy}, \text{Ho}$ ); phosphorus blue, oxygen red, hydrogen white.



Steiner.<sup>30</sup> Tb[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] exhibits a hydrogen to acceptor distance  $d(\text{H1}-\text{O}_{\text{term}5})$  of 176 pm and a bond angle  $\angle(\text{DHA})$  of 165° (the donor to hydrogen distance  $d(\text{O}_{\text{H1}}-\text{H1}) = 93$  pm, and the donor to acceptor distance  $d(\text{O}_{\text{H1}}-\text{O}_{\text{term}5}) = 267$  pm). In Ho[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] the hydrogen to acceptor distance  $d(\text{H1}-\text{O}_{\text{term}5})$  is 185 pm and the bond angle  $\angle(\text{DHA})$  is 145° (the donor to hydrogen distance  $d(\text{O}_{\text{H1}}-\text{H1}) = 94$  pm, and the donor to acceptor distance  $d(\text{O}_{\text{H1}}-\text{O}_{\text{term}5}) = 266$  pm) (Fig. 6). In contrast to moderate hydrogen bonds with a hydrogen to acceptor distance between 150 and 220 pm and bond angles  $\angle(\text{DHA})$  larger than 130°, strong hydrogen bonds exhibit a distance of 120–150 pm and an angle of 170–180°.

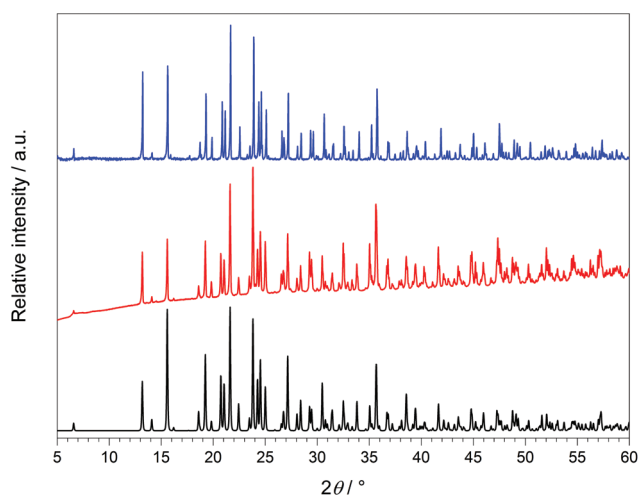


Fig. 7 X-ray powder diffraction patterns of Tb[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] (red) and Ho[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] (blue) and the calculated X-ray powder diffraction pattern from single-crystal data of Tb[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] (black) ( $\lambda_{\text{Cu-K}\alpha} = 1.54178$  Å).

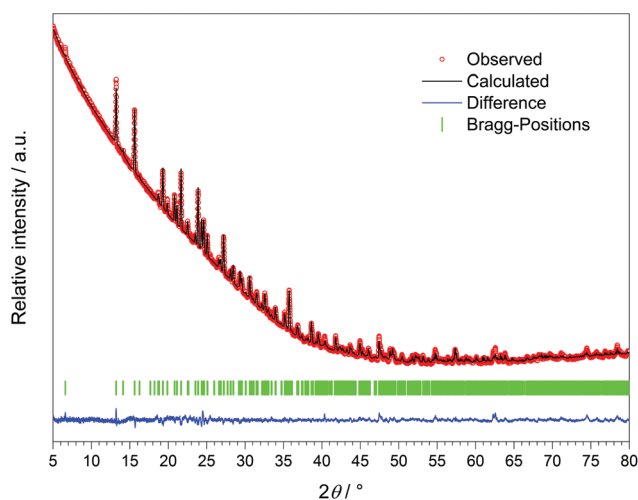


Fig. 8 X-ray powder diffraction pattern and the result of the Rietveld refinement of Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] ( $\lambda_{\text{Cu-K}\alpha} = 1.54178$  Å).

The crystal structure of Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] was refined *via* the Rietveld method (Fig. 8 and Table 11) based on the structure model of Tb[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>].

### 3 Electrostatic calculations

The coordination numbers of the lanthanide ions and the electrostatic consistency of the structure model were confirmed by calculations based on the MAPLE concept (Made-lung Part of Lattice Energy).<sup>31–33</sup> The presence of one proton could also be proven. A structure model is electrostatically consistent if the sum of MAPLE values of chemically similar compounds deviates from the MAPLE value of the compound of interest by less than approximately 1%. Thus the structure models of Tb[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] and Ho[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] show electrostatic consistency (Table 1).

### 4 Infrared spectroscopy

The infrared spectra of Ln[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] (Ln = Tb, Dy, Ho) were recorded between 4000 and 400 cm<sup>-1</sup> and are shown in Fig. 9.

The bands between 1350 and 1200 cm<sup>-1</sup> can be assigned to the asymmetric stretching vibrations of PO<sub>2</sub>, while vibrations between 1200 and 990 cm<sup>-1</sup> can be assigned to the stretching vibrations of PO<sub>term</sub>. The  $\nu_{\text{as}}(\text{PO}_{\text{br}})$  and  $\nu_{\text{as}}(\text{PO})$  vibrational bands range between 985 and 845 cm<sup>-1</sup>.<sup>11,36–38</sup> The four symmetric stretching modes of the PO<sub>br</sub> vibrations are detected between 780 and 650 cm<sup>-1</sup> peaking at 681, 700, 741 and 770 cm<sup>-1</sup>, which had been empirically correlated with the periodicity of polyphosphate chains in *catena*-polyphosphates.<sup>11,36,39</sup> This also holds for Ln[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] (Ln = Tb, Dy, Ho), due to the periodicity  $P = 4$  of its poly-hydrogenphosphate chains. Vibrations observed below 620 cm<sup>-1</sup> are assigned to the bending vibrations of the PO<sub>4</sub> tetrahedra.<sup>11,36–38</sup> Surpris-

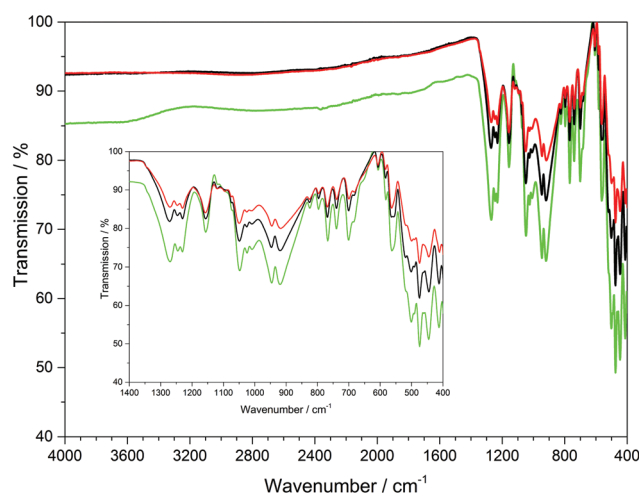


Fig. 9 Infrared spectra of Ln[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] (Ln = Tb, Dy, Ho); terbium green, dysprosium black, holmium red.



ingly, no vibrations of the hydroxyl groups were detected, which leads to the assumption that presumably the ratio of O–H/P–O vibrations of 1 : 16 is too small to be detected *via* ATR.

## 5 UV/Vis spectroscopy

The UV/Vis reflection spectra of Ln[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] (Ln = Tb, Dy, Ho) (Fig. 10–12) reveal the typical absorption bands of the f–f transitions of Tb<sup>3+</sup>, Dy<sup>3+</sup> and Ho<sup>3+</sup> ions, according to the well-known energy level schemes.<sup>40,41</sup> All transitions start from the respective ground states <sup>7</sup>F<sub>6</sub>, <sup>6</sup>H<sub>15/2</sub> and <sup>5</sup>I<sub>8</sub> with the electronic configuration [Xe] 4f<sup>8</sup>, [Xe] 4f<sup>9</sup> and [Xe] 4f<sup>10</sup>, respectively. The corresponding assignments are listed in Tables 2–4.

No significant deviations from the spectra of other inorganic salts of terbium, dysprosium and holmium were detected and the spectra are in accordance with the powder

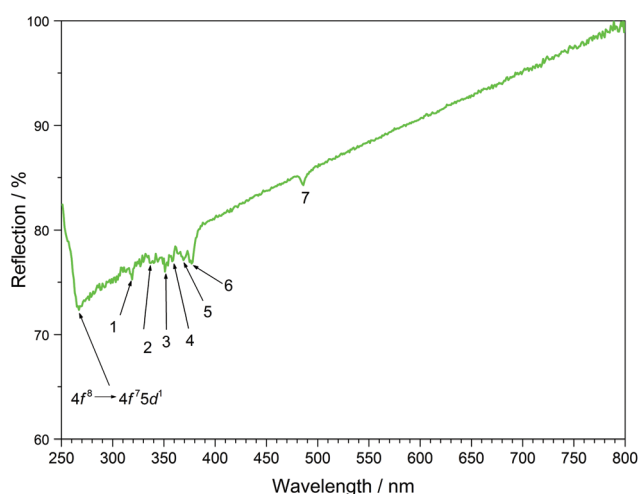


Fig. 10 UV/Vis spectrum of Tb[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>].

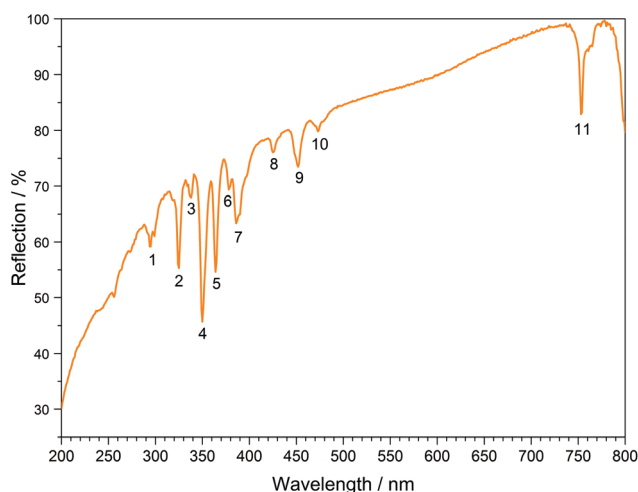


Fig. 11 UV/Vis spectrum of Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>].

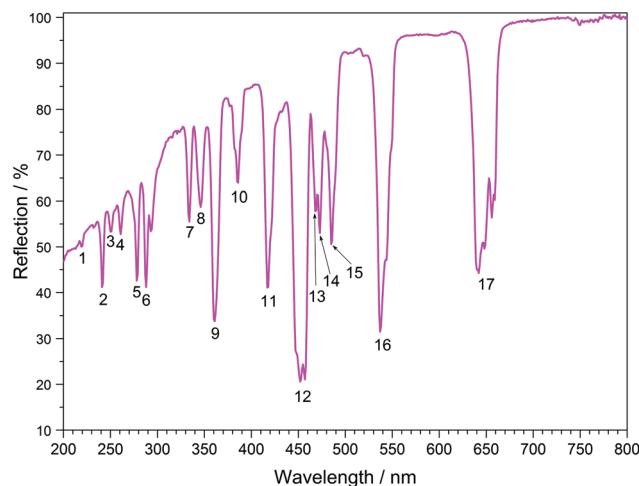


Fig. 12 UV/Vis spectrum of Ho[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>].

colours white (Tb[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] and Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>]) and pink/yellow (Ho[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>]). Like other holmium compounds Ho[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] shows the alexandrite effect.<sup>43,44</sup> Due to an absorption gap in the yellow region, it exhibits a yellow body colour in ambient day light. In artificial light, *e.g.* fluorescent lamps, exhibiting distinct emissions in the blue (~450 nm), green (~540 nm) and red (~610 nm) range, it reveals a pink body colour, due to the reflection of the wavelengths between 550 and 620 nm.<sup>4</sup>

## 6 Fluorescence spectroscopy

The fluorescence spectra of Tb[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] (Fig. 13) and Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] (Fig. 14) reveal the characteristic f–f emissions of Tb<sup>3+</sup> and Dy<sup>3+</sup>, respectively.<sup>40–42</sup>

Between 230 and 267 nm a broader band in the excitation spectrum of Tb[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] reveals the parity allowed 4f<sup>8</sup> →

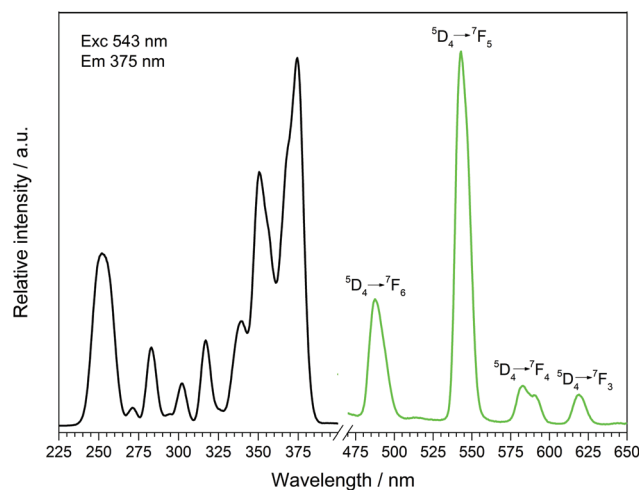


Fig. 13 Excitation (black), recorded at  $\lambda_{Em} = 543$  nm, and emission (green) spectrum, recorded at  $\lambda_{Exc} = 375$  nm, of Tb[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>].



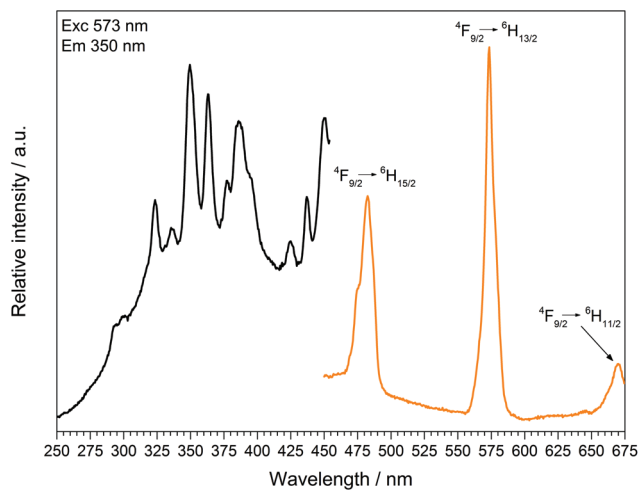


Fig. 14 Excitation (black), recorded at  $\lambda_{Em} = 573$  nm, and emission (orange) spectrum, recorded at  $\lambda_{Exc} = 350$  nm, of Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>].

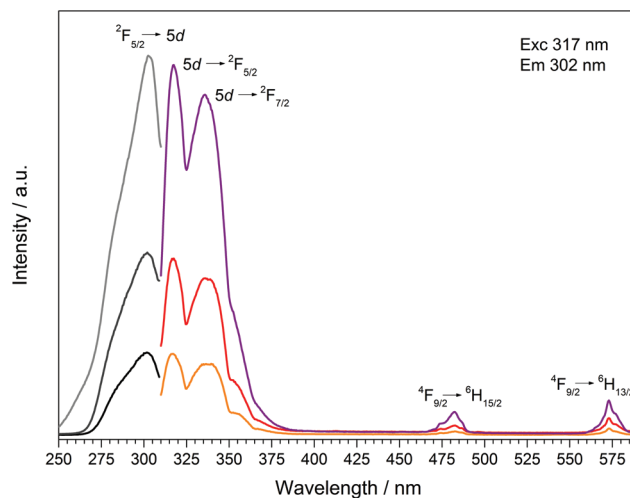


Fig. 15 Excitation, recorded at  $\lambda_{Em} = 317$  nm, and emission spectra, recorded at  $\lambda_{Exc} = 302$  nm, of Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>]:Ce<sup>3+</sup> (5% black/orange, 10% dark grey/red, 30% grey/violet).

$4f^75d^1$  transition. Under excitation at 375 nm Tb[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] exhibits sharp emission lines between 475 and 630 nm, which can be assigned to the  $^5D_4 \rightarrow ^7F_6$  (488 nm),  $^5D_4 \rightarrow ^7F_5$  (543 nm) showing the highest intensity,  $^5D_4 \rightarrow ^7F_4$  (583 nm) and  $^5D_4 \rightarrow ^7F_3$  (619 nm) transitions.<sup>42</sup>

The excitation spectrum of Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] exhibits a broad band around 290 nm, which reveals the  $4f^9 \rightarrow 4f^85d^1$  transition. Under excitation at 349 nm Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] exhibits sharp emission lines between 460 and 675 nm, which correspond to the f-f electronic transitions  $^4F_{9/2} \rightarrow ^6H_{15/2}$  (482 nm),  $^4F_{9/2} \rightarrow ^6H_{13/2}$  (573 nm) and  $^4F_{9/2} \rightarrow ^6H_{11/2}$  (671 nm).<sup>41</sup> The most intense transition  $^4F_{9/2} \rightarrow ^6H_{13/2}$  is sensitive to the surrounding of Dy<sup>3+</sup>, and is thus called hypersensitive. The surrounding of Dy<sup>3+</sup> in Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] is of relatively low symmetry (single capped trigonal prismatic), therefore the intensity of the hypersensitive transition is increased with respect to the  $^4F_{9/2} \rightarrow ^6H_{15/2}$  transition.<sup>45,46</sup>

Doping of Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] with increasing concentrations of Ce<sup>3+</sup> (5, 10, 30 mol%) was carried out to investigate the effect of Ce<sup>3+</sup> as a sensitizer. The presence of cerium and the corresponding ratios of Dy:Ce were investigated *via* EDX spectroscopy. The resulting ratios are 1:0.04 (expected: 1:0.05), 1:0.07 (1:0.10) and 1:0.26 (1:0.30), which are within the limits of accuracy of the measurements very close to the expected values. Due to an overlap in the wavelength range of the emission bands of Ce<sup>3+</sup> and the excitation spectrum of Dy<sup>3+</sup> energy transfer could be expected. Transitions in Ce<sup>3+</sup> are f-d transitions, which are allowed due to the selection rules, and thus lead to broad and intense bands in the fluorescence spectrum.<sup>13</sup> The fluorescence spectra of the doped samples Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>]:Ce<sup>3+</sup> are shown in Fig. 15. The excitation spectra exhibit strongly increasing broad band intensities of Ce<sup>3+</sup> at 302 nm ( $^2F_{5/2} \rightarrow 5d$ ). In the emission spectra, next to the typical broad band emissions of Ce<sup>3+</sup> peaking at 317 nm ( $5d \rightarrow ^2F_{5/2}$ ) and 336 nm ( $5d \rightarrow ^2F_{7/2}$ )<sup>47,48</sup> two comparably weak emis-

sion bands of Dy<sup>3+</sup>, corresponding to the f-f electronic transitions  $^4F_{9/2} \rightarrow ^6H_{15/2}$  and  $^4F_{9/2} \rightarrow ^6H_{13/2}$ , can be observed. Despite the low Dy<sup>3+</sup> emission intensities the hypersensitive transition  $^4F_{9/2} \rightarrow ^6H_{13/2}$  can still be observed with higher intensity compared to the  $^4F_{9/2} \rightarrow ^6H_{15/2}$  transition. Doubling the content of Ce<sup>3+</sup> from 5 to 10% the emission intensity of Dy<sup>3+</sup> also increases equally ( $^4F_{9/2} \rightarrow ^6H_{15/2}$ ), whereas the hypersensitive transition  $^4F_{9/2} \rightarrow ^6H_{13/2}$  even triples. A further increase of the Ce<sup>3+</sup> content to 30% leads to a raised intensity of a factor of 2.5 for the  $^4F_{9/2} \rightarrow ^6H_{15/2}$  transition and a factor of 1.7 for the  $^4F_{9/2} \rightarrow ^6H_{13/2}$  transition. Thus the emission intensities of Dy<sup>3+</sup> increase slightly with the increasing Ce<sup>3+</sup> content but do not prove efficient Ce<sup>3+</sup>  $\rightarrow$  Dy<sup>3+</sup> energy transfer. The intensity of the f-d transition in the excitation spectrum increases corresponding to the increasing Ce<sup>3+</sup> content. According to Luo and Yang satisfying energy transfer rates in the system Dy<sup>3+</sup>/Ce<sup>3+</sup> could be reached, if the ratio of Dy<sup>3+</sup> to Ce<sup>3+</sup> ions is decreased to about 1:3, before the luminescence quenching of Ce<sup>3+</sup> occurs.<sup>49-51</sup> By reversing the Dy<sup>3+</sup>/Ce<sup>3+</sup> ratio and increasing the content of Ce<sup>3+</sup> to Ce<sub>0.75</sub>Dy<sub>0.25</sub>[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] efficient energy transfer might be reached, which represents a substitution process rather than a doping process.

Doping Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] with 5 mol% Eu<sup>3+</sup> leads to the typical sharp excitation and emission bands of Dy<sup>3+</sup> and Eu<sup>3+</sup> (Fig. 16). The ratio of Dy:Eu was investigated *via* EDX spectroscopy exhibiting a ratio of 1:0.04, which is very close to the expected ratio (1:0.05). Under excitation at 392 nm Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>]:Eu<sup>3+</sup> exhibits sharp emission lines between 530 and 757 nm, which can be assigned to the  $^5D_1 \rightarrow ^7F_1$  (536 nm),  $^5D_0 \rightarrow ^7F_0$  (553 nm),  $^5D_0 \rightarrow ^7F_1$  (593 nm),  $^5D_0 \rightarrow ^7F_2$  (614 nm),  $^5D_0 \rightarrow ^7F_3$  (646 nm),  $^5D_1 \rightarrow ^7F_5$  (663 nm),  $^5D_0 \rightarrow ^7F_4$  (700 nm) and  $^5D_0 \rightarrow ^7F_5$  (750 nm) transitions of Eu<sup>3+</sup>.<sup>52</sup> The most intense transition  $^5D_0 \rightarrow ^7F_2$  at 614 nm is called hypersensitive due to its sensitivity to the surrounding of Eu<sup>3+</sup> and is responsible for



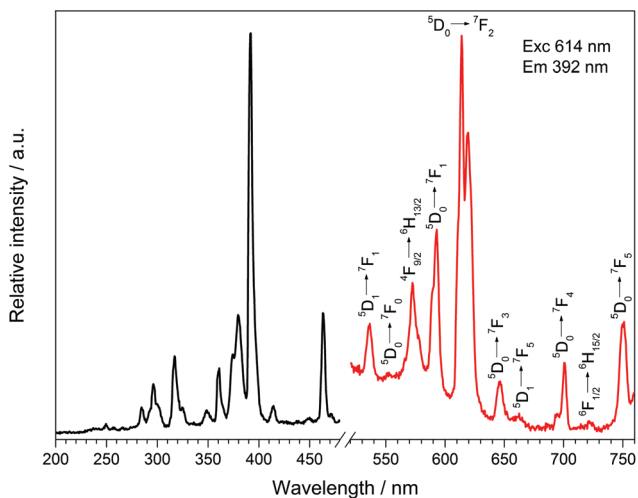


Fig. 16 Excitation (black), recorded at  $\lambda_{Em} = 614$  nm, and emission (red) spectrum, recorded at  $\lambda_{Exc} = 392$  nm, of  $Dy[H(PO_3)_4]:Eu^{3+}$ .

the weak red emission. It is dominant over the  $^5D_0 \rightarrow ^7F_1$  transition because of the asymmetric surrounding of  $Eu^{3+}$  in  $Dy[H(PO_3)_4]:Eu^{3+}$ , which proves its partial substitution of  $Dy^{3+}$ .<sup>53,54</sup> Besides the emission bands of  $Eu^{3+}$  two emission bands of  $Dy^{3+}$  can be observed at 573 and 722 nm, which can be assigned to the  $^4F_{9/2} \rightarrow ^6H_{13/2}$  and  $^6F_{1/2} \rightarrow ^6H_{15/2}$  transitions of  $Dy^{3+}$ , respectively.<sup>41</sup>

## 7 Magnetic properties

Due to the presence of one proton and the thus postulated sum formula of  $Tb[H(PO_3)_4]$ , the valence state of terbium was confirmed by the magnetic susceptibility measurement, which was recorded in a field of 1000 Oe over the temperature range of  $1.8\text{ K} < T < 400\text{ K}$  (Fig. 17). In the whole temperature range the molar susceptibility obeys Curie's law ( $\chi_m = C/T$ ) very well

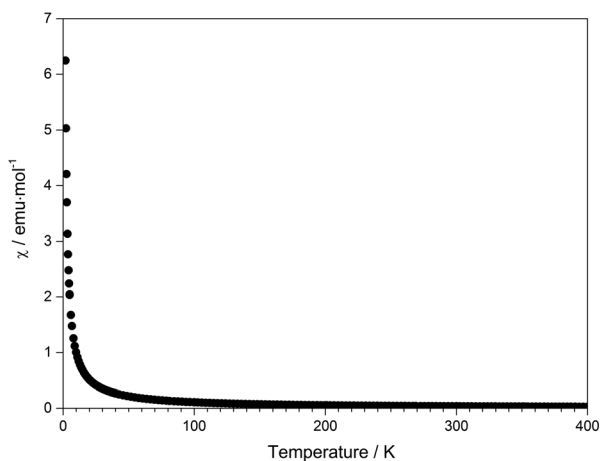


Fig. 17 Temperature dependence of the magnetic susceptibility  $\chi$  of  $Tb[H(PO_3)_4]$ .

with a Curie constant of  $C = 11.3792\text{ emu mol}^{-1}\text{ K}^{-1}$ . The Curie constant corresponds to an effective magnetic moment per  $Tb^{3+}$  ion of  $\mu_{eff} = 9.54\mu_B$ , which is close to the theoretical value ( $\mu_{eff} = 9.72\mu_B$ ) and to experimental effective magnetic moments of  $Tb^{3+}$  ions ( $9.7\text{--}9.8\mu_B$ ).<sup>55</sup>

## 8 Thermal analysis

The thermal behaviour of  $Tb[H(PO_3)_4]$  was investigated between room temperature and  $1450\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$  (Fig. 18). The thermogravimetric curve revealed several undefined steps with a total mass loss of 15.2 wt% in the temperature range of  $500\text{--}1450\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$ . Assuming that besides 0.5 moles of  $H_2O$  a further 0.5 moles of  $P_2O_5$  evaporate (theor. mass loss: 16.8 wt%) a final composition of  $TbP_3O_9$  may be assumed. After the thermal treatment the product was glazed and the expected composition could not be confirmed *via* X-ray powder diffraction.

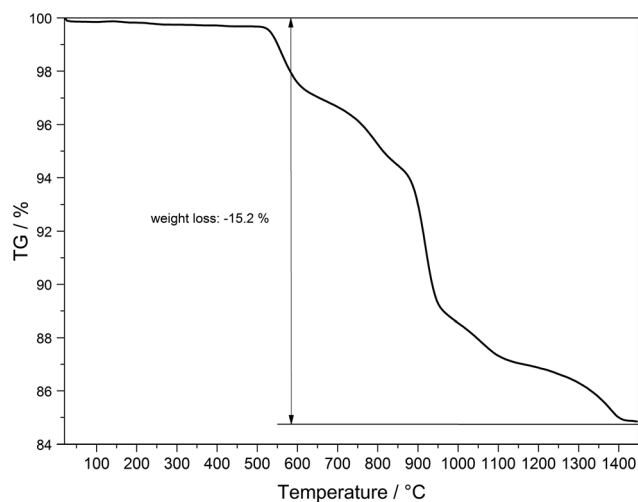
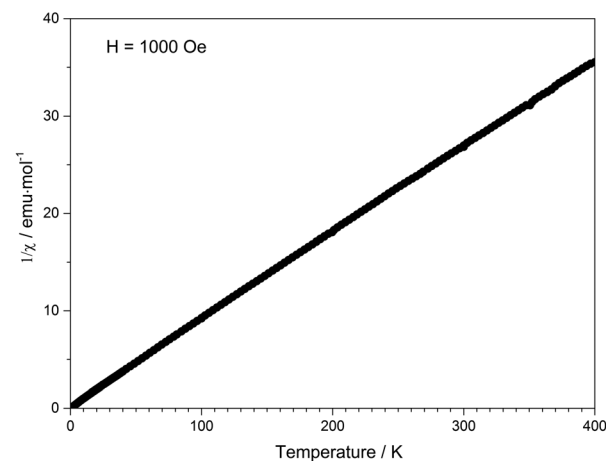


Fig. 18 Thermogravimetric analysis of  $Tb[H(PO_3)_4]$ .



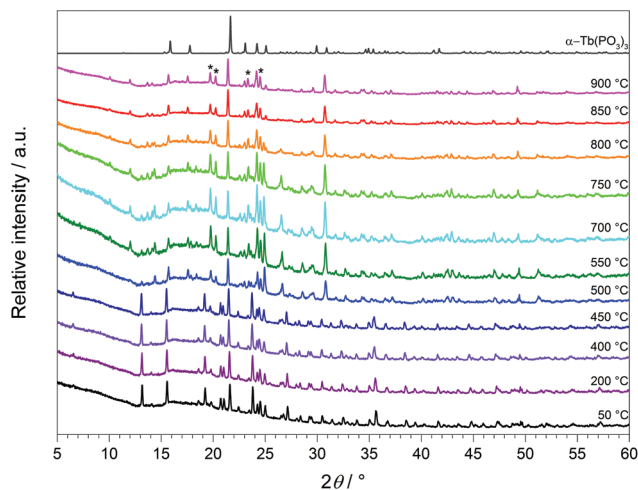


Fig. 19 Temperature-dependent X-ray powder diffraction patterns of  $\text{Tb}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  recorded between 50 and 900 °C and the calculated powder diffraction pattern from the single-crystal data of  $\alpha\text{-TbP}_3\text{O}_9$  (grey) ( $\lambda_{\text{Cu-K}\alpha} = 1.54178 \text{ \AA}$ ).

Temperature-dependent X-ray powder diffraction confirms that  $\text{Tb}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  is stable up to 500 °C (Fig. 19). At 900 °C  $\alpha\text{-TbP}_3\text{O}_9$  (grey) represents the main phase next to a small part of  $\text{TbP}_5\text{O}_{14}$  (marked with \*).<sup>56</sup> This leads to the conclusion that the assumption of losing half a mole of each,  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  and  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$ , in the thermal analysis is correct.  $\text{Tb}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  exhibits infinite chains of  $[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]^{3-}$  and  $[\text{P}_3\text{O}_9]^{3-}$  anions. Hence it is not surprising that thermal decomposition leads to the elimination of the hydroxyl groups by evaporation of water. Astonishingly, under nitrogen flow this process does not occur below 500 °C.

The thermal decomposition of  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Y}, \text{Gd-Er}$ ) was determined between 350 and 600 °C by Selevich *et al.*<sup>57</sup> According to the authors all investigations were carried out in atmospheric humidity. Thus thermal analysis was carried out in air and naturally proceeds in a shorter and lower temperature range (350–600 °C) rather than under an inert atmosphere (500–1440 °C) as performed in this work. Since an increasing stability is to be expected with an increasing connectivity, the thermal stability of  $\text{Tb}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$ , exhibiting infinite polyphosphate chains, is estimated to be higher than for non-condensed cyclotetraphosphates, *e.g.*  $\text{Ba}_2(\text{P}_4\text{O}_{12}) \cdot 3.5\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ,<sup>27</sup> which decomposes around 380 °C. In contrast, thermal decomposition of the ultraphosphate  $\text{YP}_5\text{O}_{14}$ , which reveals a higher degree of condensation, does not occur until 760 °C.<sup>58</sup>

## 9 Conclusions

In this contribution we demonstrated the crystal structures of  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb}, \text{Dy}, \text{Ho}$ ), which were solved and refined based on single-crystal X-ray diffraction (Tb and Ho) and refined by a Rietveld refinement (Dy), respectively. Via MAPLE calculations the presence of a single proton could be proved on the one hand, and on the other hand the electrostatic con-

sistency of the structure model of  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb}, \text{Ho}$ ) was confirmed. All the observed bands in the IR spectrum are in agreement with our structure model. The optical properties reveal the typical UV/Vis reflection and fluorescence spectra of  $\text{Tb}^{3+}$ ,  $\text{Dy}^{3+}$  and  $\text{Ho}^{3+}$  ions exhibiting their characteristic absorption and emission bands. Doping of  $\text{Dy}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  with increasing amounts of  $\text{Ce}^{3+}$  revealed only slightly more intense emission bands of  $\text{Dy}^{3+}$  in the blue and yellow regions. Doping of  $\text{Dy}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  with  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  leads to a partial occupancy of  $\text{Dy}^{3+}$  sites, which is in accordance with the relatively high intensity of the hypersensitive  $^5\text{D}_0 \rightarrow ^7\text{F}_2$  transition of  $\text{Eu}^{3+}$  in a non-centrosymmetric surrounding. The magnetic measurements reveal no interaction between the  $\text{Tb}^{3+}$  centres and confirmed the oxidation state of  $\text{Tb}^{3+}$  and thus the composition of  $\text{Tb}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$ . Though  $\text{Tb}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  only reveals a condensation in one dimension, it exhibits a remarkable thermal stability up to 500 °C before presumably  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  and  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$  are released.

## 10 Experimental section

### 10.1 Syntheses of $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$ ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb}, \text{Dy}$ )

$\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb}, \text{Dy}$ ) were synthesised *via* solid-state reactions starting from the respective lanthanide oxides and phosphorous acid.  $\text{Tb}_4\text{O}_7$  (94.70 mg, 0.14 mmol, Chempur, 99.9%) and  $\text{Dy}_2\text{O}_3$  (94.00 mg, 0.25 mmol, Kristallhandel Kelpin, 99.99%), respectively, and  $\text{H}_3\text{PO}_3$  (264.10 mg, 3.22 mmol, Sigma Aldrich, 99%) were ground in an agate mortar and transferred into a silica glass crucible. The reaction mixtures were covered with  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  (20 ml, Merck, 30%) to suppress the formation of  $\text{LnP}_3\text{O}_9$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb}, \text{Dy}$ ) as the side phase and heated up to 380 °C with a heating rate of 100 °C/h using a muffle furnace. The temperature was maintained for three hours before cooling down to room temperature by switching off the furnace. The products were washed with hot water and dried in air overnight. Different experiments showed that addition of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  to the reaction mixtures leads to phase pure samples of colourless  $\text{Tb}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  and  $\text{Dy}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$ .

### 10.2 Synthesis of $\text{Ho}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$

$\text{Ho}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  was synthesised analogously to  $\text{Ln}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  ( $\text{Ln} = \text{Tb}, \text{Dy}$ ) but could be obtained as phase pure yellow/pink powder without addition of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  to the reaction mixture.

### 10.3 X-Ray powder diffraction

The crystalline sample was finely ground, enclosed in a Hilgenberg glass capillary of 0.3 mm outer diameter and investigated at room temperature with a Bruker D8 Advance diffractometer using  $\text{Cu-K}\alpha$  radiation (LynxEye 1-D detector, steps of 0.2°, acquisition time 7 s per step, Soller slits 2.5°, fixed divergence slit 8 mm, transmission geometry). The obtained products were phase pure according to X-ray powder diffractometry (Fig. 7). The structure models of  $\text{Tb}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  and  $\text{Ho}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  were confirmed and the structure model of  $\text{Dy}[\text{H}(\text{PO}_3)_4]$  was refined by Rietveld analysis<sup>59,60</sup> (Fig. 8) using the FullProf program suite and the WinPlotR graphical user interface.<sup>61</sup>



The single-crystal data of Tb[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] served as the starting structure model. The structure of Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] was refined to excellent residuals of  $R_p = 0.009$ ,  $R_{wp} = 0.012$  and  $\chi^2 = 4.04$  (Table 11). The phase purity of Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] could thus be confirmed. In Table 11 the data of the Rietveld refinement of Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] are summarised.

The composition of Ln[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] (Ln = Tb, Dy, Ho) was checked *via* EDX (Energy-dispersive X-ray) spectroscopy. For the doped samples Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>]:Ce and Dy[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>]:Eu the ratios of Dy:Ce and Dy:Eu were also confirmed. Within the accuracy of the measurement limits no other elements were found.

#### 10.4 Crystal structure determination of Ln[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] (Ln = Tb, Ho)

Single-crystals suitable for single-crystal X-ray diffraction analysis were selected under a polarizing microscope. Diffraction data were collected with a Bruker D8 Venture diffractometer using Mo-K $\alpha$  radiation ( $\lambda = 0.7093 \text{ \AA}$ ) at a temperature of  $293 \pm 2$  (Ln = Tb) and  $296 \pm 2$  K (Ln = Ho), respectively.

The structure of the non-merohedrally twinned crystal of Tb[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] was solved by defining the twinned components using TWINABS (twin matrix: 0 0 1 0 -1 0 1 0 0; BASF = 0.430).<sup>62</sup> Both crystal structures were solved by direct methods and refined by the full-matrix least-squares technique with the SHELXTL crystallographic software package.<sup>63,64</sup> The Tb/Ho, P and O atoms could be clearly located. The hydrogen atom was added geometrically and was confirmed by MAPLE calculations.<sup>31–33</sup> Relevant crystallographic data and further details of the structure determination are summarised in Table 5. Tables 6–9 show the atomic coordinates and displacement parameters.

Further details of the crystal structure investigations presented in this work may be obtained from the Fachinformationszentrum Karlsruhe, D-76344 Eggenstein-Leopoldshafen, Germany (Fax: +49-7247-808-666; E-mail: crysdata@fiz-karlsruhe.de, [http://www.fiz-karlsruhe.de/request\\_for\\_deposited\\_data.html](http://www.fiz-karlsruhe.de/request_for_deposited_data.html)) on quoting the depository numbers CSD 429861 (Tb[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>]) and CSD 429860 (Ho[H(PO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub>]).

#### 10.5 Infrared spectroscopy

Infrared spectra were recorded at room temperature with a Bruker Equinox 55 FT-IR spectrometer using a Platinum ATR device with a scanning range from 4000 to 400 cm<sup>-1</sup>.

#### 10.6 UV/Vis spectroscopy

The optical reflection spectra were recorded with a Varian Cary 300 Scan UV/Vis spectrophotometer in the range of 200–800 nm.

#### 10.7 Fluorescence spectroscopy

Excitation and emission spectra were recorded at room temperature with a Fluoromax-4 spectrofluorometer with a Xe plasma lamp (Horiba Scientific, Unterhaching).

#### 10.8 Magnetic investigations

The temperature-dependent magnetic susceptibility data were recorded with a Quantum Design MPMS-XL super-conducting

quantum-interference device (SQUID) magnetometer in the field of 1000 Oe between 1.8 K <  $T$  < 400 K.

#### 10.9 Thermal analysis

The thermal analysis was carried out with a Netzsch STA-409 PC thermal analyzer in the temperature range of 25–1450 °C in air with a heating rate of 5 K min<sup>-1</sup>.

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