

## Supporting Information

### REACTIVITY OF INORGANIC SULFIDE SPECIES TOWARD A HEME PROTEIN MODEL.

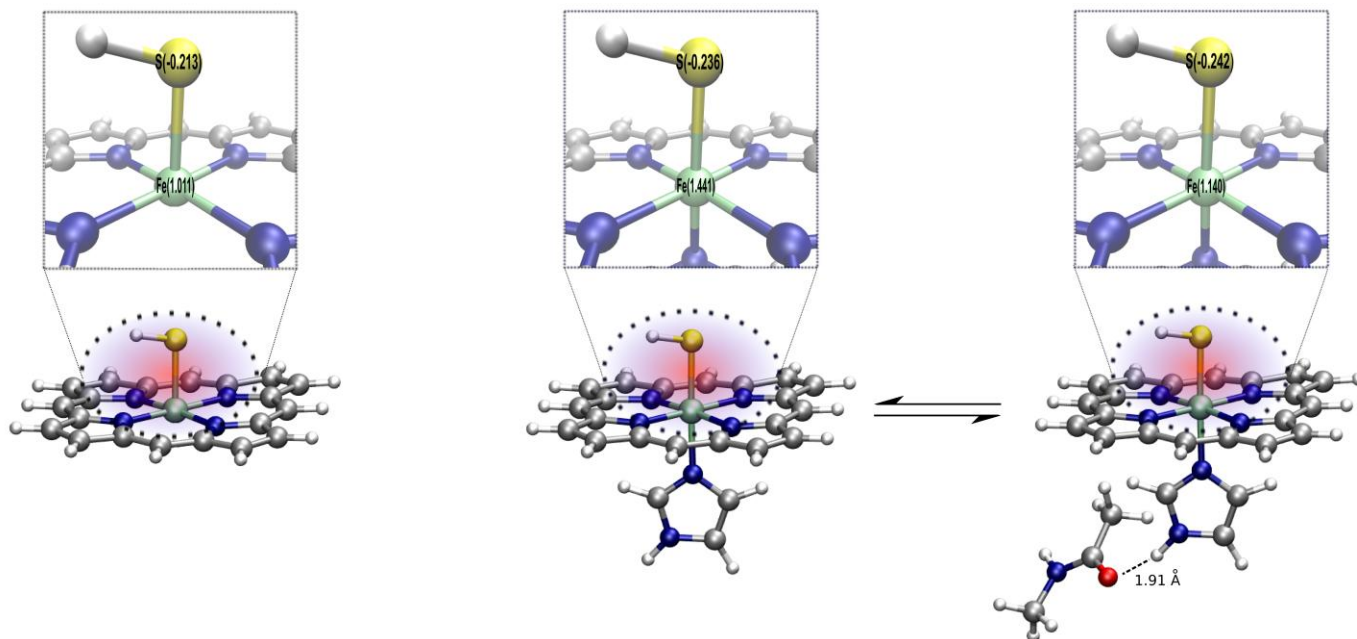
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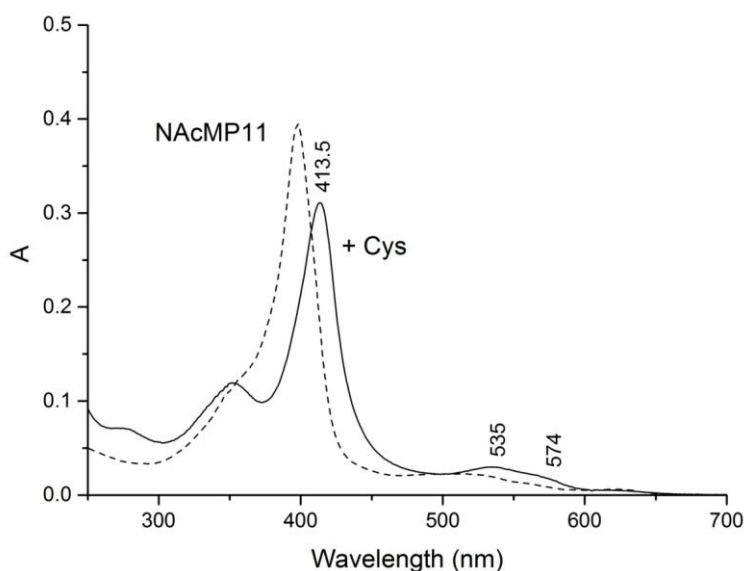
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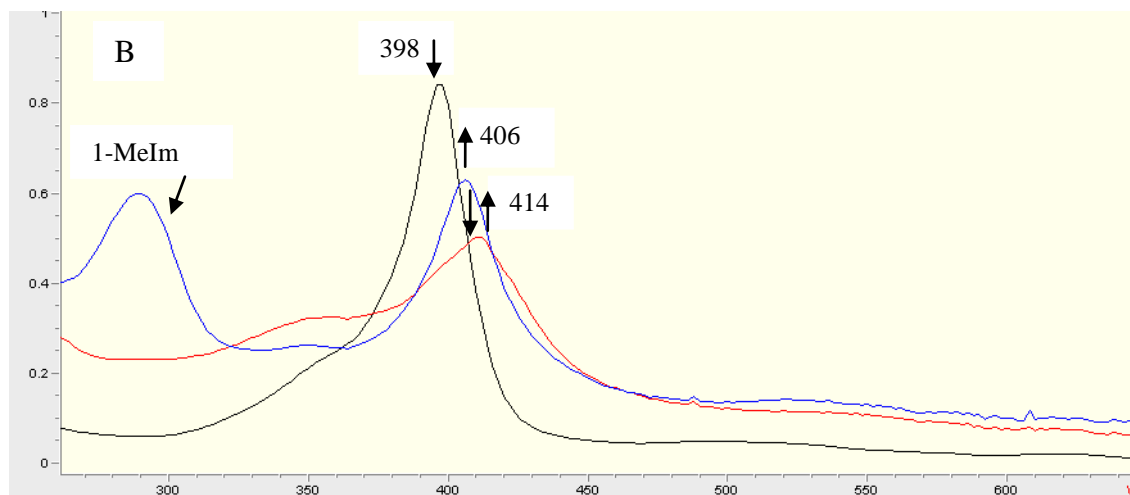
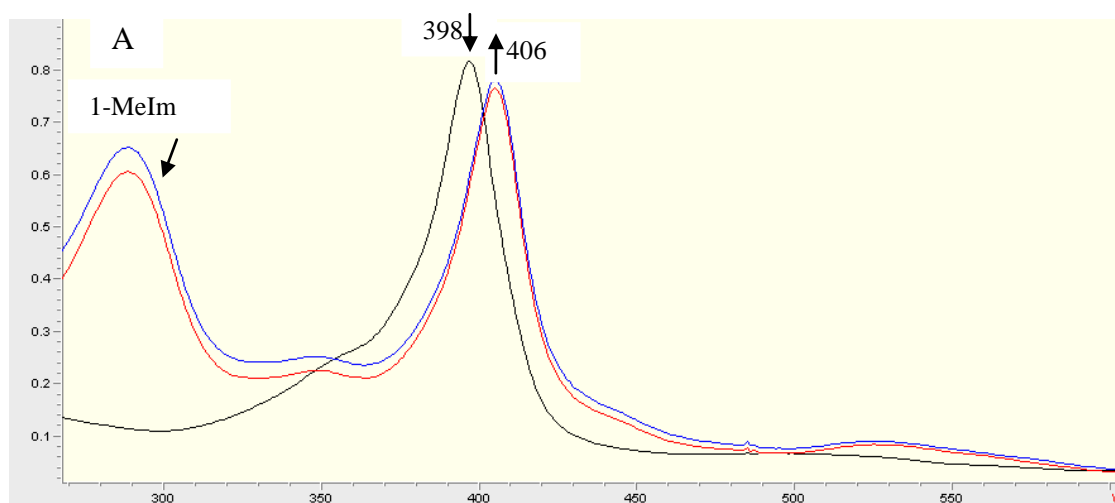
**Figure S1** - QM optimization at PBE 6-31G\*\* DFT level were performed on a ferric low-spin hexacoordinated core-porphyrinate, with both an imidazole ring and SH<sup>-</sup> as 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> ligand. An N-methyl acetamide molecule was used to provide a counterpart for hydrogen bonding to the imidazole ligand. Also, a control calculation (full-optimization at the same level of theory) was performed in the absence of N-methyl acetamide. Mülliken charge populations were computed for the optimized structures.



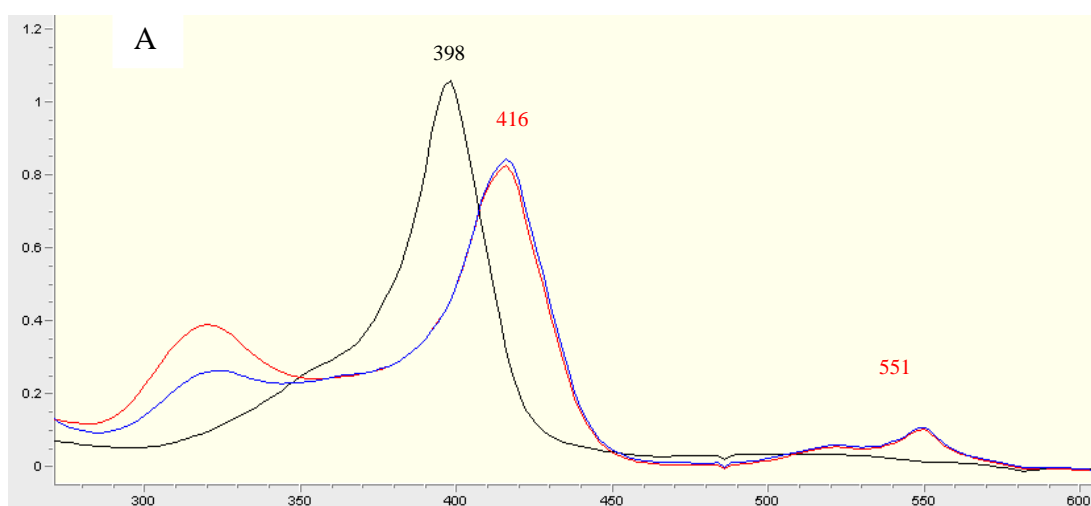
**Figure S2** – Absorption spectra of  $2.6 \times 10^{-6}$  M Fe<sup>III</sup>NAcMP11 in the absence (dashed line) and in the presence (continuous line) of 4.5 mM cysteine. The optical path was 1 mm.



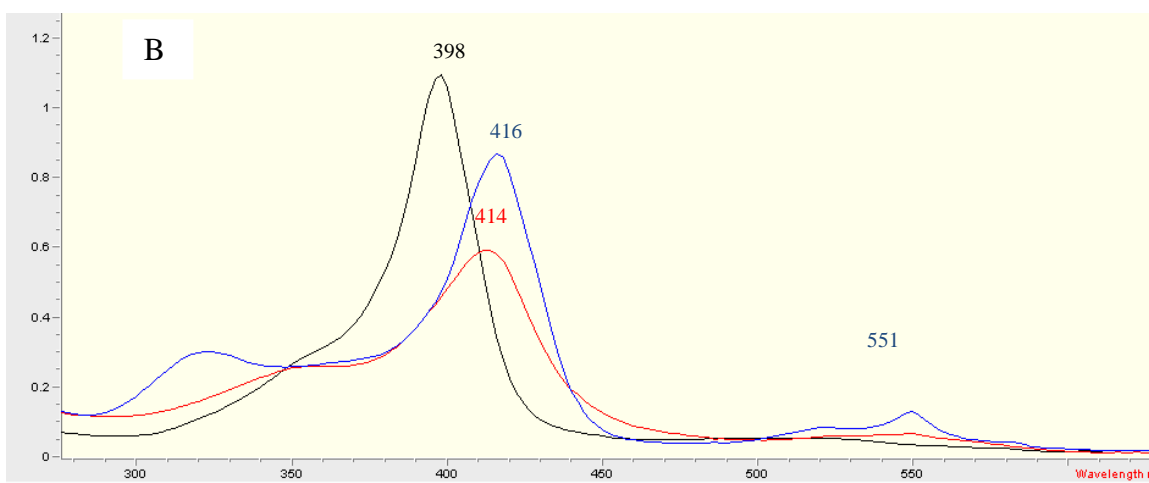
**Figure S3A** - Reactivity of the NAcMP11Fe<sup>III</sup>-S(sulfide) toward 1-methylimidazole. **A:** 1) [Fe<sup>III</sup>NAcMP11]= 5x10<sup>-6</sup>M, pH 6.8 (PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup>, 0.1M, 2.5mL, black line), 2) 10 μL 1-methylimidazole (red line), 3) 100μL H<sub>2</sub>S (g) (blue line). The reaction of Fe<sup>III</sup>NAcMP11 with 1-methylimidazole led to the formation of a [NAcMP11Fe<sup>III</sup> (Imid)(His)] complex, with λ<sub>max</sub>= 406 nm, at pH 6.8. This complex was indifferent to the addition of H<sub>2</sub>S (g). **B:** 1) [Fe<sup>III</sup>NAcMP11]= 5x10<sup>-6</sup>M, pH 6.8 (PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup>, 0.1M, 2.5mL, black line), 2) 100μL H<sub>2</sub>S (g) (red line), 3) 10 μL 1-methylimidazole (blue line). The samples were deaerated under stream of argon, in quartz cuvettes (1 cm) with silicon septa prior to the addition of the reagent. The addition of 1-methylimidazole after the addition of H<sub>2</sub>S shows the conversion of the 414 nm complex to the [NAcMP11Fe<sup>III</sup> (1-MeIm)(His)], without modification of the Fe<sup>III</sup> redox state in the process. Reagents are numbered according the order of addition to the solution in each experiment.



**Figure S3B** - Reactivity of the NAcMP11Fe<sup>III</sup>-S(sulfide) toward the addition of dithionite. **A:** 1) [Fe<sup>III</sup>NAcMP11]= 7x10<sup>-6</sup>M, pH 6.8 (PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup>, 0.1M, 2.5mL) (black line), 2) [S<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup>]<sub>final conc</sub>= 0.15mM (red line), 3) 200μL H<sub>2</sub>S (g) (blue line). The Fe<sup>II</sup>NAcMP11 is indifferent to the addition of H<sub>2</sub>S (g). **B:** 1) [Fe<sup>III</sup>NAcMP11]= 7x10<sup>-6</sup>M, pH 6.8 (PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup>, 0.1M, 2.5mL) (black line), 2) 200μL H<sub>2</sub>S (g) (red line), 3) [S<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup>]<sub>final conc</sub>= 0.15M (blue line). The samples were deaerated under stream of argon, in quartz cuvettes (1 cm) with silicon septa prior to the addition of the reagent. The NAcMP11Fe<sup>III</sup>-S(sulfide) reacts with sodium dithionite and yields the Fe<sup>II</sup>NAcMP11 form. Reagents are numbered according the order of addition to the solution in each experiment.

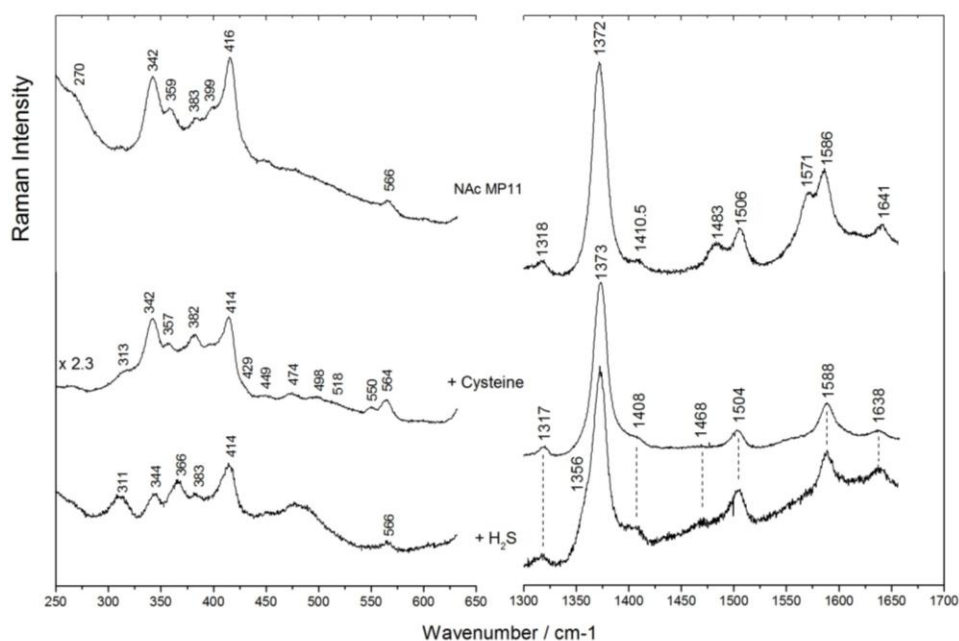


1) [Fe<sup>III</sup>NAcMP11]= 7x10<sup>-6</sup>M, pH 6.8 (PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> buffer, 0.1M, 2.5 mL), 2) [S<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup>]<sub>final conc</sub>= 0.15M, 3) 200μL H<sub>2</sub>S(g)

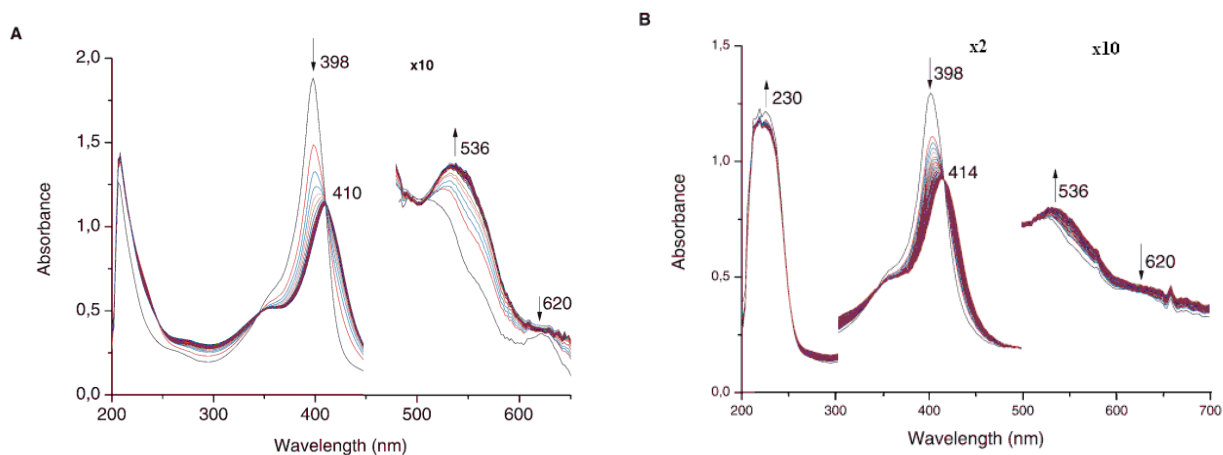


1) [Fe<sup>III</sup>NAcMP11]= 7x10<sup>-6</sup>M, pH 6.8 (PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup> buffer, 0.1M, 2.5 mL), 2) 200μL H<sub>2</sub>S(g), 3) [S<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup>]<sub>final conc</sub>= 0.15M

**Figure S4** - (middle trace) RR spectra of  $2.6 \times 10^{-5}$  M NAcMP11 with 4.5 mM cysteine, in comparison with the RR spectra of unbound and sulfide-bound ferric NAcMP11. The intensities are normalized to the intensity of the  $\nu_4$  band at  $1372\text{-}1373\text{ cm}^{-1}$ . The low-frequency region of the cysteine complex is expanded to allow for a better visualization. Experimental conditions: 413.1 nm excitation wavelength, 3 mW power,  $1.2\text{ cm}^{-1}$  spectral resolution; low-frequency range: 30 min integration time; high-frequency range: 30 min (NAcMP11), 10 min (+ cysteine), 6 min (+H<sub>2</sub>S) integration time.

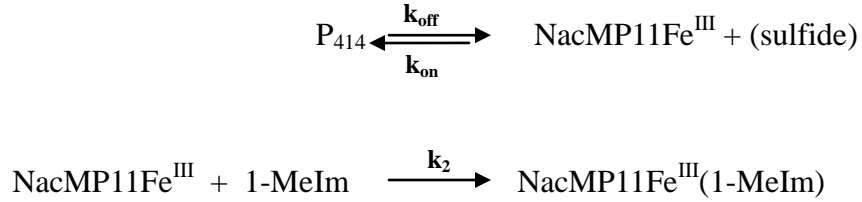


**Figure S5**. UV-Vis spectra of the Fe<sup>III</sup>NAcMP11 toward Na<sub>2</sub>S(anhydrous) solution. A) [Fe<sup>III</sup>NAcMP11] = [Na<sub>2</sub>S(anhydrous)] =  $1.2 \times 10^{-5}$  M; B) [Fe<sup>III</sup>NAcMP11] =  $8 \times 10^{-6}$  M, [Na<sub>2</sub>S(anhydrous)] =  $8 \times 10^{-4}$  M. Both reactions at pH 6.8; buffer PO<sub>4</sub><sup>3-</sup>, 0.1 M, 25°C.



## S6. Dissociation kinetic constant

By assuming the following reaction scheme



Expressing the reaction rate as

$$v = v_2 = k_2 \cdot [\text{NacMP11Fe}^{III}] \cdot [1\text{-MeIm}] = \frac{\partial [\text{NacMP11Fe}^{III}(1\text{-MeIm})]}{\partial t}$$

and assuming steady-state for  $[\text{NacMP11Fe}^{III}]$  the following relationship is obtained:

$$k_{off} \cdot [P_{414}] = k_{on} \cdot [\text{NacMP11Fe}^{III}] \cdot [\text{sulfide}] + k_2 \cdot [\text{NacMP11Fe}^{III}] \cdot [1\text{-MeIm}]$$

Thus, the reaction rate can be expressed as a function of the reactants

$$v = \frac{\partial [\text{NacMP11Fe}^{III}(1\text{-MeIm})]}{\partial t} = \frac{k_2 \cdot k_{off} \cdot [P_{414}] \cdot [1\text{-MeIm}]}{k_{on} \cdot [\text{sulfide}] + k_2 \cdot [1\text{-MeIm}]}$$

The previous expression can be simplified as follows:

$$v = \frac{\partial [\text{NacMP11Fe}^{III}(1\text{-MeIm})]}{\partial t} = k_{obs} \cdot [P_{414}]$$

$$\text{with } k_{obs} = \frac{k_2 \cdot k_{off} \cdot [1\text{-MeIm}]}{k_{on} \cdot [\text{sulfide}] + k_2 \cdot [1\text{-MeIm}]}$$

At high concentration of  $[1\text{-MeIm}]$ ,  $k_{obs}$  becomes independent of  $[1\text{-MeIm}]$ , and the following equivalence is derived:

$$k_{obs} = k_{off}$$

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