Supplementary Information

Conjugated Electrochromic Polymers with Amide-containing Side Chains Enabling Aqueous Electrolyte Compatibility

*Kuluni Perera,† Zhengran Yi, † Liyan You, Zhifan Ke, Jianguo Mei*<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Department of Chemistry, Purdue University, 560 Oval Drive, West Lafayette, Indiana 47907, United States

†equal contribution

E-mail: jgmei@purdue.edu
Materials

All salts used in electrolytes (tetrabutylammonium hexafluorophosphate (≥ 99.0%), ammonium hexafluorophosphate (≥99.0%), tetrabutylammonium chloride (≥ 97%) and ammonium chloride (≥99.5%)) and propylene carbonate were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich. Octadecyltrichlorosilane (95%) was purchased from Acros Organics. All chemicals were used as purchased without further purification.

Synthetic Procedures

Intermediates (1, 2, and 3) and ECP-Magenta (P1, M_w/M_n (GPC) =11800/9600, Figure S5) were synthesized according to reported literature.[51-S4] NMR spectra were recorded on Mercury 300 (300 MHz). Gel permeation chromatography (GPC) was performed on an Agilent PL-GPC220 instrument at 25 °C with THF as eluent.

Synthesis of mono-substituted amide ProDOT (4): To a suspension of NaH (0.27 g, 6.7 mmol, 60% dispersion in mineral oil) in THF (50 mL) ProDOT-OH (1) (0.41 g, 1.9 mmol) was added at 0 °C. After stirring at 0 °C for 1 h, N-(2-ethylhexyl)-2-chloroacetamide (2) (1.0 g, 5.0 mmol) was added and the mixture was stirred at room temperature for 12 h. Then the reaction solution was poured into saturated aqueous NH_4Cl and extracted with ethyl acetate. The combined organic phase was dried over MgSO_4, concentrated in vacuo, and finally purified by flash column chromatography on silica gel (EtOAc) to afford a colorless oil (0.85 g, 81%). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl_3, δ ppm): 6.49 (s, 2H), 6.49 (t, 2H), 2.33 (s, 4H), 3.96 (s, 4H), 3.61 (s, 4H), 3.23 (t, 4H), 1.43 (m, 2H), 1.24-1.31 (m, 16H), 0.88 (m, 12H). ¹³C NMR (300 MHz, CDCl_3, δ): 168.70, 148.89, 106.06, 73.16, 71.06, 70.85, 47.71, 41.90, 39.33, 31.05, 28.90, 24.32, 23.10, 14.19, 10.96.

Synthesis of di-substituted amide ProDOT (5): The synthetic procedure is similar to compound 4 using N,N-dibutyl-2-chloroacetamide (3) in place of 2. (87%). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl_3, δ ppm): 6.44 (d, 2H), 4.15 (s, 4H), 4.10 (s, 4H), 3.69 (s, 4H), 3.26 (t, 4H), 3.12 (t, 4H), 1.46 (m, 8H), 1.26 (m, 8H), 0.88 (m, 12H). ¹³C NMR (300 MHz, CDCl_3, δ): 168.18, 149.55, 105.29, 73.57, 70.71, 70.08, 47.79, 46.53, 45.50, 31.05, 29.73, 20.31, 20.17, 13.96, 13.91.

Synthesis of P2: A 1 mol/L solution of anhydrous FeCl_3 (453 mg, 2.79 mmol) in nitromethane was added dropwise to compound 4 (310 mg, 0.559 mmol) in chloroform (0.1 mol/L). The mixture was stirred overnight at room temperature and subsequently poured into 200 mL of methanol. The
precipitated solid was dissolved in 200 mL of chloroform and stirred for 1 h with 3 mL of hydrazine monohydrate. The solution was washed with 1 mol/L HCl and concentrated by evaporation, and then dropped into methanol. The precipitated solid was subsequently purified via Soxhlet extraction with methanol, hexanes, and chloroform. The chloroform fraction was collected, concentrated by evaporation, and precipitated from methanol to afford a dark-purple solid in a yield of 63%. $^1$H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl$_3$, $\delta$ ppm): 7.41 (bs), 4.03 (bs), 3.72 (bs), 3.19 (bs), 1.75 (bs), 1.46 (bs), 1.22 (bs), 0.84 (bs). Elemental Analysis Calc. for C29H48N2O6S: Calc. C 63.01, H 8.75, N 5.07; Found C 62.60, H 9.01, N 5.22. M$_w$/M$_n$ (GPC) =12400/9400.

**Synthesis of P3:** The synthetic procedure is similar to P2 (71%).$^1$H NMR (300 MHz, CD$_2$Cl$_2$, $\delta$ ppm): 4.25 (bs), 3.85 (bs), 3.31 (bs), 3.21 (bs), 1.66 (bs), 1.54 (bs), 1.33 (bs), 0.94 (bs). Elemental Analysis Calc. for C29H48N2O6S: Calc. C 63.01, H 8.75, N 5.07; Found C 62.68, H 9.25, N 5.38. M$_w$/M$_n$ (GPC) =10100/8000.

![Figure S1. $^1$H NMR spectrum of compound 4.](image-url)
Figure S2. $^{13}$C NMR spectrum of compound 4.

Figure S3. $^1$H NMR spectrum of compound 5.
Figure S4. $^{13}$C NMR spectrum of compound 5.

Figure S5. $^1$H NMR spectrum of P2.
**Figure S6.** $^1$H NMR spectrum of P3.

**Figure S7.** GPC chromatograms of P1 using THF as an eluent.
Figure S8. GPC chromatograms of P2 using THF as an eluent.

Figure S9. GPC chromatograms of P3 using THF as an eluent.
FT-IR spectra of polymer thin films

**Figure S10** – FT-IR spectra of thin films (a) P1 (b) P2 and (c) P3 coated on ITO/glass substrates. Figured (b) and (c) clearly show the presence of the carbonyl peak and (b) indicated the presence of the N-H bond.

**Thin Film topology**
**Figure S11** - AFM images of (a) P1, (b) P2 and (c) P3 revealing the rough topology of P3 thin films compared to P1 and P2.

![AFM images of P1, P2, and P3](image)

**Calibration of Ag/AgCl reference electrode in 0.2 M TBAPF₆/PC**

**Figure S12** – Cyclic voltammetry curve for 5 mM ferrocene dissolved in 0.2 M TBAPF₆/PC using a Pt button as the working electrode, a leak-free Ag/AgCl reference electrode and a Pt wire as the counter electrode.

**Electrochemistry of P1, P2 and P3 in organic and aqueous electrolytes**

![Cyclic voltammetry curves for P1, P2, and P3 in organic and aqueous electrolytes](image)
Figure S13 – First 10 CV cycles of the polymers in the respective electrolytes; the first cycle is a clear outlier in each case.

Spectroelectrochemistry of P1, P2 and P3
**Figure S14** Variation of absorbance spectra with applied potential for P1, P2 and P3 in TBAPF₆/PC (a,b,c) and P2 and P3 in 0.2 M NH₄Cl (d, e)

**OTS modification of ITO/glass substrates**

ITO/glass substrates were modified with OTS to prevent delamination of the P1 films during electrochemical testing in 0.2 M TBAPF₆ in propylene carbonate. The ITO/glass substrates were cleaned by sonicating for 10 minutes in ethanol followed by acetone. The washed substrates were dried in an oven and blow-dryed with N₂ to remove any dust particles. Then the substrates were UV-ozone treated (HELIOS-500 UV-ozone cleaning system) for 20 minutes to remove any organic residues remaining on the substrates. The glass substrates were then dipped in DI water, blow-dryed so that only a thin film of water remains on the surface and immersed in an OTS-solution (80 mL of hexane + 80 µL of OTS) for 10 seconds. The substrates were then immediately washed with hexane. The treated substrates were stored in a glovebox.

**Figure S15** – Cyclic voltammetry of P3 in 0.2 M TBAPF₆/PC in the potential range +1.0 V to -0.2 V. The charge density decreases with each cycle indicating instability.
Long term electrochemical cycling

Figure S16 – Variation of current for 500 consecutive cycles for P1, P2 and P3 in TBAPF$_6$/PC (a, b, c) and P2 and P3 in NH$_4$Cl/H$_2$O (d, e).

Figure S17 - Percent charge density variation over 500 repetitive CV cycles for P2 and P3.
Figure S18 – Scan rate dependence of peak current for P2 and P3 aqueous and non-aqueous electrolytes
**Figure S19** – Cyclic voltammograms of P3 in different aqueous chloride salts

**Figure S20** - Transmittance of ProDOT polymers measured in the coloured and bleached states at the respective $\lambda_{\text{max}}$ values in (a) 0.2 M TBAPF$_6$/PC and (b) 0.2 M NH$_4$Cl/H$_2$O
Figure S21 Transmittance measurements of P2 and P3 in the coloured and bleached states in 0.2 M NH₄Cl/H₂O electrolyte.

Table 1 Contrast, coloration efficiency, coloration time and bleaching time for P2 and P3 for organic and aqueous electrolytes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electrochromic Property</th>
<th>0.2 M TBAPF₆/PC</th>
<th>0.2 M NH₄Cl/H₂O</th>
<th>0.2 M TBAPF₆/PC</th>
<th>0.2 M NH₄Cl/H₂O</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contrast</td>
<td>72% (569 nm)</td>
<td>66% (570 nm)</td>
<td>69% (550 nm)</td>
<td>63% (582 nm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bleaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency (cm² C⁻¹)</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time (s)</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency (cm² C⁻¹)</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time (s)</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>0.5 s</td>
<td>13.2 s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The wavelength at which the transmittance measurements were recorded is indicated in parenthesis for each instance.
Coloration efficiency (CE) calculations and switching times were calculated using transmittance values and times corresponding to 95% of the maximum contrast.

Equation for CE calculation: \[ CE = \log \left( \frac{T_{0.95\Delta\%T}}{T_{initial}} \right) / Q \]

Where \( T_{initial} \) = initial transmittance, \( T_{0.95\Delta\%T} \) = transmittance at 95% of the complete transmittance change, \( Q \) = charge density required for the transmittance change.

*The main reason for the higher colouration efficiencies in aqueous electrolytes, is due to the smaller charge density that brings about the transmittance change. However the slower switching times, reflect the slow charging/discharging in aqueous systems compared to non-aqueous electrolytes.

References


