

Supporting Information To:

Dual emissive analogue of deoxyuridine as a sensitive hydration-reporting probe for discriminating mismatched from matched DNAs and DNA/DNA and DNA/RNA duplexes

Nicolas P. F. Barthes,^{a‡} Krishna Gavvala,^{b‡} Dmytro Dziuba,^a Dominique Bonhomme,^a Julie Karpenko,^a Anne Sophie Dabert-Gay,^c Delphine Debayle,^c Alexander P. Demchenko,^d Rachid Benhida,^a Benoît Y. Michel,^a Yves Mély,^{*b} Alain Burger^{*a}

a) Institut de Chimie de Nice, UMR 7272, Université de Nice Sophia Antipolis, CNRS, Parc Valrose, 06108 Nice Cedex 2, France.

b) Laboratoire de Biophotonique et Pharmacologie, UMR 7213, Faculté de Pharmacie, Université de Strasbourg, CNRS, 74 Route du Rhin, 67401 Illkirch, France

c) Institut de Pharmacologie Moléculaire et Cellulaire, UMR 6097, Université de Nice Sophia Antipolis, 660 Route des Lu-cioles, 06560 Valbonne, France.

d) A.V. Palladin Institute of Biochemistry, 9 Leontovicha Street, Kiev 01030, Ukraine.

Corresponding authors: burger@unice.fr; yves.mely@unistras.fr

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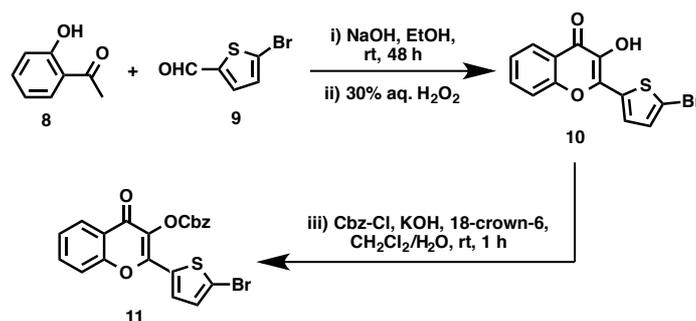
Experimental section

1. Synthetic Procedures

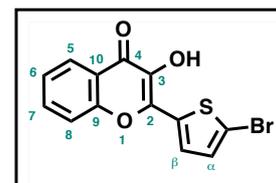
General methods:

All reactions involving water-sensitive reagents were performed in oven-dried glassware under argon using dry solvents. The synthetic intermediates were co-evaporated twice with toluene beforehand and dried *in vacuo* before use. All chemical reagents were obtained from commercial sources and were used as supplied. Anhydrous solvents were obtained according to standard procedures.[1] The reactions were monitored by thin-layer chromatography (TLC, Merck silica gel 60 F254 plates) and visualized both by UV radiation (254 & 360 nm) and by spraying with phosphomolybdic acid in ethanol followed by a subsequent warming with a heat gun. Column chromatography[2] was performed with flash silica gel (40–63 μ m). All NMR spectra (^1H , ^{13}C , ^2D) were recorded on 200 or 500 Bruker Advance Spectrometers (200 or 500 MHz). ^1H NMR (200 and 500 MHz), ^{13}C NMR (50 and 125 MHz, recorded with complete proton decoupling) spectra were obtained with samples dissolved in CDCl_3 , CD_2Cl_2 , CD_3OD , $\text{DMSO}-d_6$, acetone- d_6 , CD_3CN with the solvent signals used as internal references: 7.26 ppm for CHCl_3 , 5.32 ppm for CDHCl_2 , 3.31 ppm for CD_2HOD , 2.50 ppm for $(\text{CD}_3)(\text{CD}_2\text{H})\text{S}(\text{O})$, 2.05 ppm for $(\text{CD}_3)(\text{CD}_2\text{H})\text{C}(\text{O})$, 1.94 ppm for CD_2HCN concerning ^1H NMR experiments, and 77.0 ppm for CDCl_3 , 53.8 ppm for CD_2Cl_2 , 49.0 ppm for CD_3OD , 39.4 ppm for $(\text{CD}_3)_2\text{S}(\text{O})$, 30.8 ppm for $(\text{CD}_3)_2\text{C}(\text{O})$ concerning ^{13}C NMR experiments.[3] Chemical shifts (δ) are given in ppm to the nearest 0.01 (1H) or 0.1 ppm (^{13}C). The coupling constants (J) are given in Hertz (Hz). The signals are reported as follows: (s=singlet, d=doublet, t=triplet, m=multiplet, br=broad). Assignments of ^1H and ^{13}C NMR signals were achieved with the help of D/H exchange, COSY, DEPT, APT, HMQC, HSQC, HMBC experiments. Regular mass spectra (MS) were recorded on an Esquire 3000 Plus apparatus with ESI in both positive and negative mode. High-resolution mass spectrometry was conducted with a FINIGAN MAT 95 spectrometer with EI or ESI ionization techniques. Supplementary data associated with this article: the experimental protocols for the synthesis of intermediates **3-7** and **10-11**, the ^1H NMR, ^{13}C NMR and (in part) $^1\text{H}-^{13}\text{C}$ COSY, $^1\text{H}-^{13}\text{C}$ HMQC and $^1\text{H}-^{13}\text{C}$ HMBC spectra of all compounds are described herein. Systematic nomenclatures are used below for the assignments of the flavone and nucleoside.

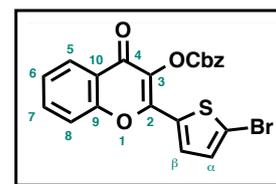
1.1 Preparation of the 3HC fluorophores



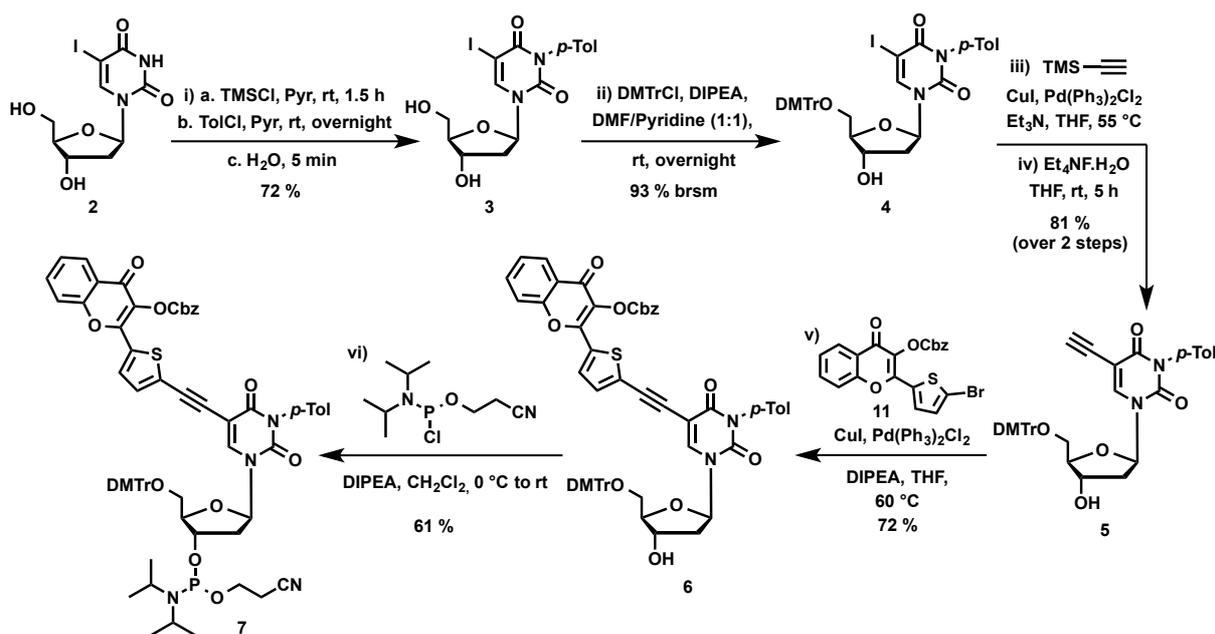
2-(5-Bromothiophen-2-yl)-3-hydroxy-chromen-4-one (10): To a stirred solution of *o*-hydroxyacetophenone **8** (1.16 mL, 9.65 mmol) and 5-bromo-2-thiophenecarbaldehyde **9** (1.15 mL, 9.65 mmol) in ethanol (50 mL) was dropwise added a 5 N NaOH solution (6 mL). The reaction mixture was stirred 48 h at rt before a dropwise addition of 30 % aq. hydrogen peroxide solution (2 mL). The resulting mixture was stirred 5 h at rt, and then poured into cold water (300 mL) and acidified with acetic acid to pH 4. The resulting precipitate was filtered and thoroughly washed with water and cyclohexane to provide as a yellow solid the chromone **10** (1.79 g, 57 %). $\text{C}_{13}\text{H}_7\text{BrO}_3\text{S}$ (323.16). $R_f=0.39$ (cyclohexane/EtOAc=7:3); ^1H -NMR (CDCl_3 , 200 MHz): δ = 8.22 (1H, dd, $^3J=8.0$ Hz, $^4J=1.4$ Hz, H5), 7.73 (1H, d, $^3J=4.0$ Hz, H β), 7.71 (1H, ddd, $^3J=8.4$ Hz, $^3J=8.0$ Hz, $^4J=1.4$ Hz, H7), 7.54 (1H, d, $^3J=8.4$ Hz, H8), 7.41 (1H, td, $^3J=8.0$ Hz, $^4J=0.8$ Hz, H6), 7.19 (1H, d, $^3J=4.0$ Hz, H α); ^{13}C -NMR ($\text{DMSO}-d_6$, 50 MHz): δ = 176.0 (C4), 153.3 (C9), 146.5 (C2), 141.6 (C3), 136.1 (C2-*Th*), 131.6 (C7), 129.3 (C α), 124.7 (C5), 122.9 (C6), 122.0 (C10), 121.6 (C β), 117.8 (C8), 112.2 (*Th*-Br); MS (ESI⁺, MeOH): m/z : 345.0, 347.0 [$\text{M}+\text{Na}$]⁺.



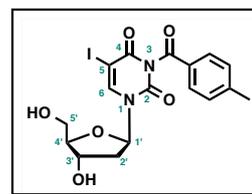
3-Benzyloxycarbonyloxy-2-(5-bromothiophen-2-yl)-chromen-4-one (11): To a stirred suspension of **10** (1.05 g, 3.25 mmol) in CH_2Cl_2 (13 mL) were added a 4.5 M aq. KOH solution (9 mL), 18-crown-6 (5 mol %, 43 mg) and benzyl chloroformate (700 μL , 4.88 mmol). The reaction mixture became homogenous in 5 min and was stirred at rt for 1 h. After quenching by addition of H_2O (10 mL), the organic layer was extracted with CH_2Cl_2 (3x), dried over MgSO_4 , filtered and the volatiles were removed *in vacuo*. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel eluted with cyclohexane/EtOAc mixture (9:1 \rightarrow 7:3, v/v) to provide the desired compound **11** as white crystals (1.20 g, 81 %). $\text{C}_{21}\text{H}_{13}\text{BrO}_5\text{S}$ (457.29). $R_f=0.53$ (cyclohexane/EtOAc=7:3); ^1H -NMR (CDCl_3 , 200 MHz): δ = 8.25 (1H, dd, $^3J=8.0$ Hz, $^4J=1.6$ Hz, H5), 7.72 (1H, td, $^3J=8.4$ Hz, $^4J=1.6$ Hz, H7), 7.65 (1H, d, $^3J=4.0$ Hz, H β), 7.52 (1H, dd, $^3J=8.4$ Hz, $^4J=0.6$ Hz, H8), 7.34–7.50 (6H, m, H6 & Cbz), 7.16 (1H, d, $^3J=4.0$ Hz, H α), 5.37 (2H, s, CH_2); ^{13}C -NMR (CDCl_3 , 50 MHz): δ = 171.3 (C4), 155.0 (C9), 151.8 ($\text{OC}(\text{O})\text{CH}_2\text{Ph}$), 150.3 (C2), 134.5 (*i*-C-Ph), 134.1 (C7), 132.0 (C3), 131.5 (C2-*Th*), 131.0 (C β), 131.0 (C α), 128.8 (*p*-C-Ph), 128.7 (*m*-C-Ph), 128.4 (*o*-C-Ph), 126.1 (C5), 125.4 (C6), 123.6 (C10), 120.4 (*Th*-Br), 117.8 (C8), 71.3 ($\text{OC}(\text{O})\text{CH}_2\text{Ph}$); MS (ESI⁺, MeOH/ CH_2Cl_2): m/z : 479.5, 481.5 [$\text{M}+\text{Na}$]⁺, 495.4, 497.4 [$\text{M}+\text{K}$]⁺. HRMS (ESI⁺): m/z calcd for $\text{C}_{21}\text{H}_{14}\text{BrO}_5\text{S}$: 456.9740 [$\text{M}+\text{H}$]⁺; found 456.9737.



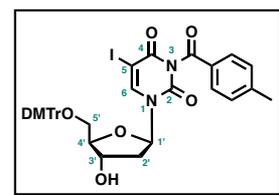
1.2 Preparation of the amidite 7



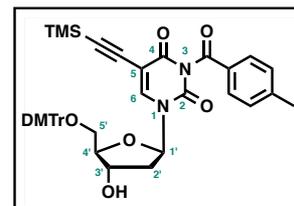
5-Iodo-3-*N*-(4-methylbenzoyl)-2'-deoxyuridine (3): To a stirred solution of 5-iodo-2'-deoxyuridine **2** (4.00 g, 11.3 mmol), in dry pyridine (14 mL), previously cooled down to 0 °C, was dropwise added Me₃SiCl (5.9 mL, 45.2 mmol, 4 eq). The reaction mixture was stirred at rt for 1.5 h. After completion by monitoring with TLC, the reaction mixture was cooled down to 0 °C and Et₃N (7.6 mL, 54.2 mmol, 4.8 eq) and *p*-toluoyl chloride (3.6 mL, 27.1 mmol, 2.4 eq) were sequentially added. The reaction mixture was stirred at rt overnight. H₂O was added and the mixture was stirred for 15 min. The organic phase was extracted with CH₂Cl₂ (2x) and EA (2x), dried over MgSO₄, filtered and reduced *in vacuo*. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel eluted with toluene/acetone (9:1 → 3:2, v/v) to provide the desired compound **3** as a white foam (3.85 g, 72 %). C₁₇H₁₇IN₂O₆ (472.2). *R*_f=0.55 (toluene/acetone=1:1). ¹H-NMR (acetone-*d*₆, 200 MHz): δ = 8.80 (1H, s, H6), 7.94 (2H, d, ³*J*=8.2 Hz, *o*-*H*-Tol), 7.39 (2H, d, ³*J*=8.2 Hz, *m*-*H*-Tol), 6.24 (1H, t, ³*J*=6.3 Hz, H1'), 4.55 (1H, m, H3'), 4.01 (1H, m, H4'), 3.87 (2H, m, H5'), 2.44 (3H, s, *p*-*Me*-Tol), 2.41–2.34 (2H, m, H2'); ¹³C-NMR (acetone-*d*₆, 50 MHz): δ = 168.9 (C(O)-Tol), 159.8 (C4), 149.9 (C2), 147.4 (*p*-*C*-Tol), 146.7 (C6), 131.4 (*o*-*C*-Tol), 130.7 (*m*-*C*-Tol), 129.7 (*i*-*C*-Tol), 88.9 (C4'), 86.8 (C1'), 71.4 (C3'), 67.3 (C5), 62.0 (C5'), 41.8 (C2'), 21.7 (*p*-*Me*-Tol); HRMS (ESI⁺): *m/z* calcd for C₁₇H₁₇IN₂NaO₆: 495.0029 [M+Na]⁺; found 495.0028.



5'-*O*-(4,4'-Dimethoxytrityl)-5-iodo-3-*N*-(4-methylbenzoyl)-2'-deoxyuridine (4): To a stirred solution of **3** (3.85 g, 8.2 mmol), in a mixture of dry DMF (15 mL) and pyridine (15 mL) previously cooled down to 0 °C were added sequentially DIPEA (3.7 mL, 40.8 mmol, 5 eq) and DMTrCl (8.29 g, 24.5 mmol, 3 eq). The reaction mixture was stirred at rt overnight. The volatiles were evaporated. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel eluted with toluene/acetone (93:7 → 82:18, v/v) to provide the recovery of starting material **3** as a white foam (2.01 g, 52 %) as well as the desired derivative **4** as a beige foam (3.02 g, 93 % brsm). C₃₈H₃₅IN₂O₈ (774.6). *R*_f=0.66 (toluene/acetone=7:3). ¹H-NMR (CD₂Cl₂, 200 MHz): δ = 8.22 (1H, s, H6), 7.79 (2H, d, ³*J*=7.3 Hz, *o*-*H*-Tol), 7.45 (2H, d, ³*J*=7.3 Hz, *m*-*H*-Tol), 7.36 (4H, d, ³*J*=8.6 Hz, *o*-*H*-PhOMe), 7.33–7.23 (5H, m, *H*-Ph), 6.87 (4H, d, ³*J*=8.6 Hz, *m*-*H*-PhOMe), 6.25 (1H, d, ³*J*=7.6, 5.9 Hz, H1'), 4.57 (1H, m, H3'), 4.07 (1H, dd, ³*J*=5.9, 3.1 Hz, H4'), 3.78 (6H, s, MeO), 3.37 (2H, d, ³*J*=3.2 Hz, H5'), 2.55–2.35 (5H, m, *p*-*Me*-Tol, H2'); HRMS (ESI⁺): *m/z* calcd for C₃₈H₃₅IN₂NaO₈: 797.1336 [M+Na]⁺; found 797.1311.

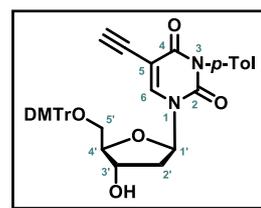


5'-*O*-(4,4'-Dimethoxytrityl)-5-trimethylsilylethynyl-3-*N*-(4-methylbenzoyl)-2'-deoxyuridine (4'): To a stirred solution of **4** (870 mg, 1 mmol) in dry THF (11 mL) under argon, were sequentially added TMS-acetylene (216 μL, 1.5 mmol, 1.5 eq), triethylamine (710 μL, 5 mmol, 5 eq) and CuI (8 mol %, 16 mg)/PdCl₂(PPh₃)₂ (8 mol %, 57 mg). The reaction mixture was warmed to 50 °C and stirred for 2 h. The mixture was filtered over a 545 Celite[®] (basic-washed) pad and the volatiles were removed *in vacuo*. The residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel eluted with toluene/EtOAc (93:7 → 55:45, v/v) to provide the desired compound **4'** as a beige foam (642 mg, 85 %). C₄₃H₄₄N₂O₈Si (744.9). *R*_f=0.53 (toluene/EtOAc=7:3). ¹H-NMR (CD₂Cl₂, 500 MHz): δ = 8.13 (1H, s, H6), 7.85 (2H, d, ³*J*=8.0 Hz, *o*-*H*-Tol), 7.52 (2H, d, ³*J*=7.8 Hz, *o*-*H*-Ph), 7.42 (5H, d, ³*J*=8.5 Hz, *o*-*H*-PhOMe), 7.39 (2H, t, ³*J*=7.8 Hz, *m*-*H*-Ph), 7.38 (2H, d, ³*J*=8.0 Hz, *m*-*H*-Tol), 7.29 (1H, t, ³*J*=7.8 Hz, *p*-*H*-Ph), 6.93 (4H, d, ³*J*=8.5 Hz, *m*-*H*-PhOMe), 6.27 (1H, dd, ³*J*=7.6 Hz, 5.8 Hz, H1'), 4.53 (1H, dd, ³*J*=6.0 Hz, 3.2 Hz, H3'), 4.12 (1H, dd, ³*J*=6.0 Hz, 3.2 Hz, H4'), 3.84 (6H, s, MeO), 3.43 (1H, dd, ²*J*=10.7 Hz, ³*J*=3.2 Hz, H5'_B), 3.38 (1H, dd, ²*J*=10.7 Hz, ³*J*=3.9 Hz, H5'_A), 2.52–2.49 (4H, m, H2'_A, *p*-*Me*-Tol), 2.31 (1H, m, H2'_B), 0.09

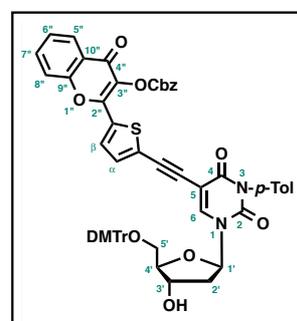


(9H, s, Si(CH₃)₃); ¹³C-NMR (CD₂Cl₂, 125 MHz): δ = 168.2 (C(O)-Tol), 160.9 (C4), 159.1 (*p*-C-PhOMe), 148.6 (C2), 147.5 (*p*-C-Tol), 145.0 (*i*-C-Ph), 142.8 (C6), 135.9 (*i*-C-PhOMe), 130.9 (*o*-C-Tol), 130.4 (*o*-C-PhOMe), 130.4 (*m*-C-Tol), 129.3 (*i*-C-Tol), 128.5 (*m*-C-Ph), 128.3 (*o*-C-Ph), 127.3 (*p*-C-Ph), 113.7 (*m*-C-PhOMe), 100.6 (C5), 100.2 (C≡CSi), 95.1 (C≡CSi), 87.3 (C_H-O-5'), 87.0 (C4'), 86.5 (C1'), 72.6 (C3'), 63.8 (C5'), 55.6 (OMe), 41.8 (C2'), 22.0 (*p*-Me-Tol), 0.3 (Si(CH₃)₃); HRMS (ESI⁺): *m/z* calcd for C₄₃H₄₄N₂NaO₈Si: 767.2765 [M+Na]⁺; found 767.2742.

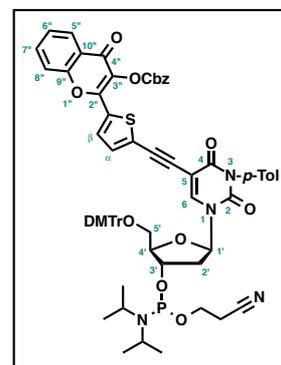
5'-O-(4,4'-Dimethoxytrityl)-3-N-(4-methylbenzoyl)-5-ethynyl-2'-deoxyuridine (5): To a stirred solution at 0 °C of the protected ethynyl derivative 4' (0.725 mmol, 540 mg) in THF (7.5 mL) was portionwise added Et₄NF·H₂O (4.35 mmol, 660 mg, 6 eq). The reaction mixture was stirred at rt for 1.5 h and then quenched with water. The organic layer was extracted with CH₂Cl₂ (3 x), dried over MgSO₄, filtered and reduced *in vacuo* to provide the desired compound 5 as a beige foam (468 mg, 96 %). The compound was sufficiently pure to be used in the next step without further purification. C₄₀H₃₆N₂O₈ (672.72). *R_f*=0.22 (toluene/Et₂O=7:2, v/v). ¹H-NMR (CD₂Cl₂, 200 MHz): δ = 8.21 (1H, s, H6), 7.81 (2H, d, ³*J*=8.1 Hz, *o*-H-Tol), 7.48 (2H, dd, ³*J*=8.2 Hz, ⁴*J*=1.4 Hz, *o*-H-Ph), 7.39 (4H, d, ³*J*=8.6 Hz, *o*-H-PhOMe), 7.33 (2H, d, ³*J*=8.1 Hz, *m*-H-Tol), 7.31–7.20 (3H, m, *m*-H-Ph, *p*-H-Ph), 6.89 (4H, d, ³*J*=8.6 Hz, *m*-H-PhOMe), 6.24 (1H, dd, ³*J*=7.2, 6.0 Hz, H1'), 4.62–4.52 (1H, m, H3'), 4.12–4.03 (1H, m, H4'), 3.80 (3H, s, OMe), 3.41 (1H, dd, ²*J*=10.8 Hz, ³*J*=3.4 Hz, H5'_B), 3.32 (1H, dd, ²*J*=10.8 Hz, ³*J*=3.0 Hz, H5'_A), 2.97 (1H, s, C≡CH), 2.55–2.44 (1H, m, H2'_B), 2.44 (3H, s, *p*-Me-Tol), 2.43–2.25 (1H, m, H2'_A); ¹³C-NMR (CD₂Cl₂, 50 MHz): δ = 168.1 (C(O)-Tol), 161.0 (C4), 159.2 (*p*-C-PhOMe), 148.6 (C2), 147.7 (*p*-C-Tol), 145.0 (*i*-C-Ph), 144.0 (C6), 136.0 (*i*-C-PhOMe), 135.7 (*i*-C-PhOMe), 130.9 (*o*-C-Tol), 130.4 (*o*-C-PhOMe), 130.4 (*m*-C-Tol), 128.8 (*i*-C-Tol), 128.5 (*m*-C-Ph), 128.3 (*o*-C-Ph), 127.3 (*p*-C-Ph), 113.7 (*m*-C-PhOMe), 99.3 (C5), 87.5 (C_H-O-5'), 87.1 (C4'), 86.6 (C1'), 82.4 (C≡CH), 74.4 (C≡CH), 72.4 (C3'), 63.8 (C5'), 55.6 (OMe), 41.9 (C2'), 22.0 (*p*-Me-Tol). MS (ESI⁺, MeOH) *m/z*: 695.5 [M+Na]⁺ 711.5 [M+K]⁺. HRMS (ESI⁺): *m/z* calcd for C₄₀H₃₆N₂NaO₈: 695.2364 [M+Na]⁺; found 695.2357.



5'-O-(4,4'-Dimethoxytrityl)-3-N-(4-methylbenzoyl)-5-(5-(3-benzylcarbonate-4-oxochromen-2-yl)thien-2-yl)ethynyl-2'-deoxyuridine (6): To a stirred solution of 5 (300 mg, 0.45 mmol, previously azeotropically coevaporated with dry toluene) and 11 (279 mg, 0.58 mmol, 1.3 eq) in THF (10 mL) under argon, were sequentially added triethylamine (311 μL, 2.23 mmol, 5 eq), and CuI (7 mol %, 0.031 mmol, 6 mg.)PdCl₂(PPh₃)₂ (7 mol %, 0.031 mmol, 22 mg) all together. The reaction mixture was warmed to 60 °C and stirred for 2 h. The volatiles were removed *in vacuo* and the residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel eluted with toluene/EtOAc (93:7 → 3:2, v/v) to provide the desired compound 6 as a yellow foam (339 mg, 72 %). C₆₁H₄₈N₂O₁₃S (1049.1). *R_f*=0.39 (toluene/EtOAc=7:3). ¹H-NMR (CDCl₃, 200 MHz): δ = 8.41 (1H, s, H6), 8.22 (1H, dd, ³*J*=8.0 Hz, ⁴*J*=1.6 Hz, H5''), 7.85 (2H, m, ³*J*=8.2 Hz, *o*-H-Tol), 7.71 (1H, ddd, ³*J*=8.3, 7.0 Hz, ⁴*J*=1.6 Hz, H7''), 7.62 (1H, d, ³*J*=4.1 Hz, Hβ), 7.51 (1H, d, ³*J*=8.3 Hz, H8''), 7.46–7.16 (17H, m, *H*-Ph-Cbz, *H*-Ph, *o*-H-PhOMe, H6'', *m*-H-Tol), 6.81 (4H, d, ³*J*=8.8 Hz, *m*-H-PhOMe), 6.74 (1H, d, ³*J*=4.1 Hz, Hα), 6.34 (1H, dd, ³*J*=7.0 Hz, 6.0 Hz, H1'), 5.31 (2H, s, CH₂-Cbz), 4.67–4.58 (1H, m, H3'), 4.18–4.11 (1H, m, H4'), 3.72 (3H, s, OMe), 3.71 (3H, s, OMe), 3.49 (1H, dd, ²*J*=10.6 Hz, ³*J*=2.4 Hz, H5'_B), 3.37 (1H, dd, ²*J*=10.6 Hz, ³*J*=2.8 Hz, H5'_A), 2.64–2.39 (5H, m, H2', *p*-Me-Tol); ¹³C-NMR (CDCl₃, 50 MHz): δ = 171.5 (C4''), 167.6 (C(O)-Tol), 160.2 (C4), 158.8 (*p*-C-PhOMe), 155.1 (C9''), 151.9 (C(O)-Cbz), 150.8 (C2''), 148.3 (C2), 147.0 (*p*-C-Tol), 144.4 (*i*-C-Ph), 142.8 (C6), 135.5 (*i*-C-PhOMe), 135.4 (*i*-C-PhOMe), 134.5 (C7''), 134.3 (*i*-C-Cbz), 133.4 (Cβ), 132.1 (C2''-Th), 131.8, 130.9 (*o*-C-Tol), 130.6 (Cα), 130.1, 130.0, 129.2, 128.9, 128.8, 128.7, 128.4, 128.3, 128.2, 128.0, 127.3, 126.2 (C5''), 125.5 (C6''), 123.7 (C10''), 118.0 (C8''), 113.5 (*m*-C-PhOMe), 99.7 (C5), 87.6 (Th-C≡C-), 87.3 (C_H-O-5'), 87.1 (C4'), 86.6 (Th-C≡C-), 86.5 (C1'), 72.4 (C3'), 71.4 (CH₂-Cbz), 63.5 (C5'), 55.3 (MeO), 42.1 (C2'), 22.1 (*p*-Me-Tol); MS (ESI⁺, MeOH) *m/z*: 1070.7 [M+Na]⁺, 1086.8 [M+K]⁺. HRMS (ESI⁺): *m/z* calcd for C₆₁H₄₉N₂O₁₃S: 1049.2955 [M+H]⁺; found 1049.2920.



5'-O-(4,4'-Dimethoxytrityl)-3-N-(4-methylbenzoyl)-5-(5-(3-benzylcarbonate-4-oxochromen-2-yl)thien-2-yl)ethynyl-2'-deoxyuridine, 3'-[(2-cyanoethyl)-N,N-diisopropyl]-phosphoramidite (7): To a stirred solution of 6 (0.32 mmol, 339 mg, previously dried azeotropically by coevaporation with dry toluene) in DCM (2.3 mL) under argon and cooled down at 0 °C, were sequentially added DIPEA (1.1 mmol, 193 μL, 3.4 eq) and 2-cyanoethyl-*N,N*-diisopropylchlorophosphoramidite (0.614 mmol, 138 μL, 2 eq). The reaction mixture was stirred at rt for 2.5 h. The volatiles were removed *in vacuo* and the residue was purified by flash chromatography on silica gel eluted with toluene/EtOAc (95:5 → 60:40, v/v) to provide the desired compound 7 as a yellow foam (246 mg, 61 %). C₇₀H₆₅N₄O₁₄PS (1249.34). *R_f*=0.48 (toluene/EtOAc=8:2). ¹H-NMR (CD₃CN, 200 MHz): δ = 8.42 (1H, s, H6), 8.12 (1H, dd, ³*J*=8.0 Hz, ⁴*J*=1.7 Hz, H5''), 7.95 (2H, d, ³*J*=8.1 Hz, *o*-H-Tol), 7.82 (1H, ddd, ³*J*=8.8 Hz, ⁴*J*=1.7 Hz, H7''), 7.76 (1H, d, ³*J*=4.1 Hz, Hβ), 7.66 (1H, d, ³*J*=8.0 Hz, H8''), 7.53–7.32 (10H, m, H6'', *H*-Ph-Cbz, *o*-H-PhOMe), 7.29–7.14 (7H, m, *H*-Ph, *m*-H-Tol), 6.90–6.81 (5H, m, Hα, *m*-H-PhOMe), 6.14 (1H, dd, ³*J*=13.0 Hz, 6.0 Hz, H1'H1'), 5.28 (2H, s, CH₂-Cbz), 4.86–4.68 (1H, m, H3'), 4.19 (1H, m, H4'), 3.82–3.73 (2H, m, CH₂-O), 3.68 (6H, s, MeO), 3.64–3.52 (2H, m, N-CH(CH₃)₂), 3.38 (2H, m, H5'), 2.69–2.52 (4H, m, H2', CH₂-CN), 2.45 (3H, s, *p*-Me-Tol), 1.19–1.06 (11H, m, N-CH(CH₃)₂); ³¹P-NMR (CD₃CN, 81 MHz): δ=148.1, 148.0; HRMS (ESI⁺): *m/z* calcd for C₇₀H₆₆N₄O₁₄PS: 1249.4034 [M+H]⁺; found 1149.4014.



2. ODNs synthesis, purification & physical characterization

2.1 ODNs synthesis and purification:

The ODN synthesis was performed on an Expedite 8900 DNA synthesizer (Applied Biosystem) using the “trityl off” mode and mild phosphoramidite chemistry on a 0.2 μmol scale. Reagents and solvents, as well as dT, Ac-dC, Pac-dA, and dmf-dG phosphoramidites were purchased from Link Technologies. The standard DNA assembly protocol “DMT-off” was used except for the following modifications: 5-Ethylthio-1H-tetrazole (ETT) was used as activating agent; Pac-anhydride was used for capping; a longer coupling time (1200 s) was applied to the 3HC phosphoramidite. Non-labelled ODNs were purchased from Microsynth AG. The ODNs were cleaved from the solid support and deprotected with concentrated aqueous ammonia at room temperature for 12 h. The ODNs were analyzed (0.5 mL/min) and purified (2.5 mL/min) by RP HPLC (HPLC apparatus: WatersTM 600 Controller with WatersTM 996 Photodiode Array Detector and Jasco LC-Net II / ADC apparatus. Columns: analytical, 300 \times 4.60 mm, 5 μm particle size, Clarity[®] 100 \AA , Phenomenex[®]; semi-preparative, Clarity[®] 5u Oligo-RP column 250 \times 10 mm Phenomenex[®]). The following gradient system was used: 100 % A –(30 min)→ 60 % A / 40 % B – (5 min)→ 100 % B –(5 min)→ 100 % A with A=Buffer pH 7.0 (1.9 L of MilliQ[®] water, 160 mL acetonitrile, 28 mL triethylamine, 12 mL of acetic acid) and B=0.2 CH₃CN:0.8 Buffer.

Fig S1. HPLC profile of TMT single strand ODN (254 nm left – 390 nm right):

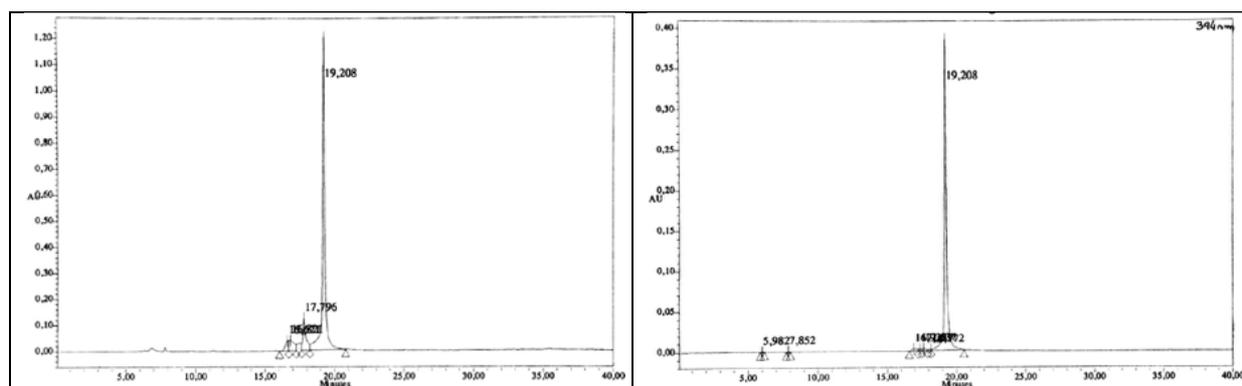


Fig S2. HPLC profile of AMA single strand ODN (254 nm left – 390 nm right):

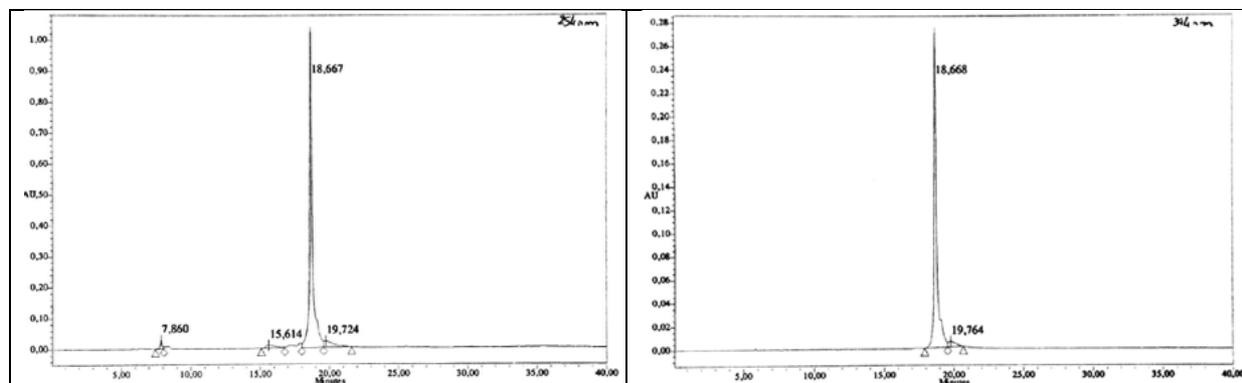


Fig S3. HPLC profile of CMC single strand ODN (254 nm left – 390 nm right):

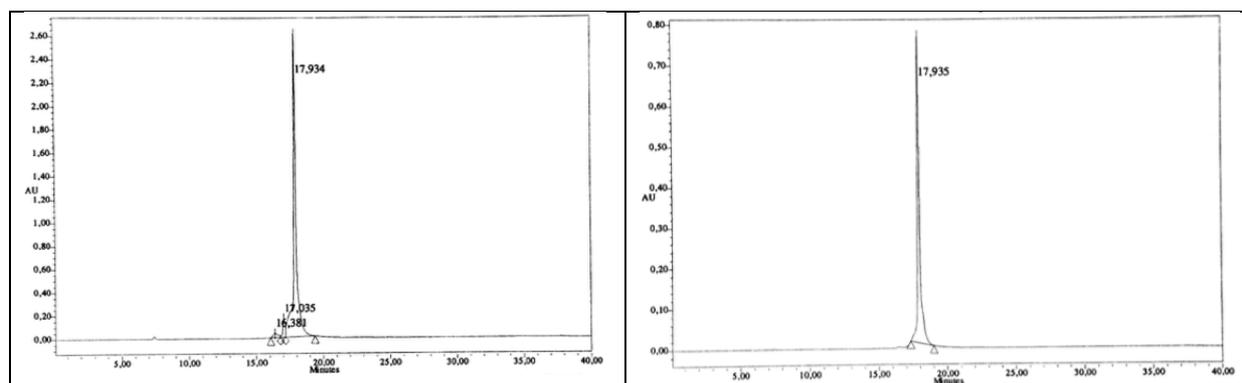
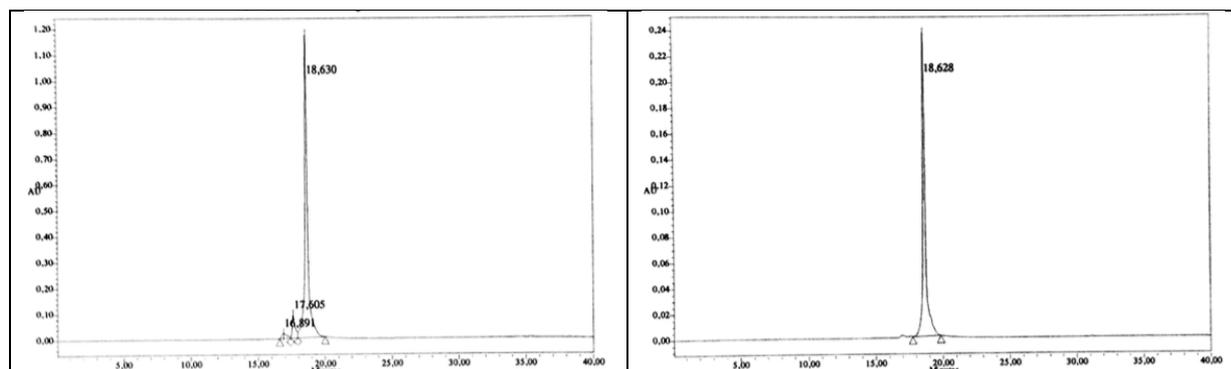


Fig S4. HPLC profile of GMG single strand ODN (254 nm left – 390 nm right):



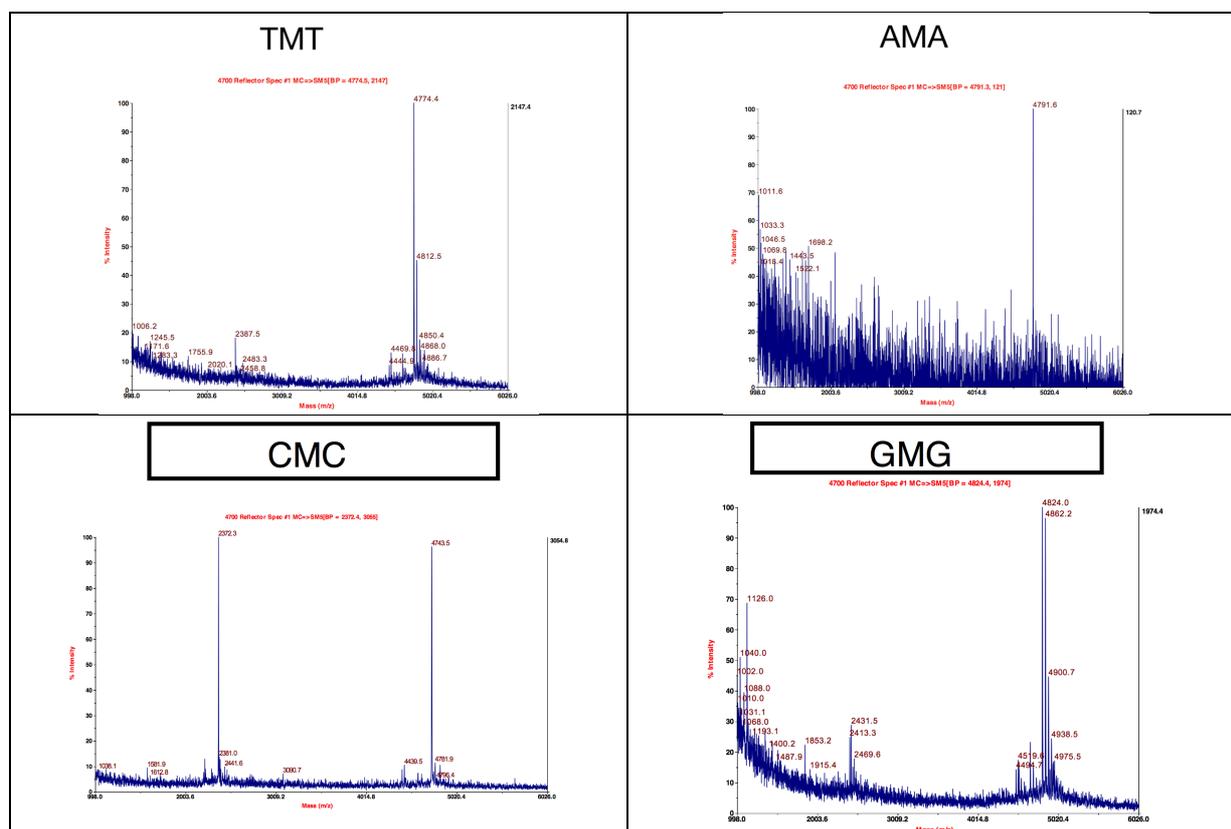
2.2 MALDI TOF/TOF analysis of ODNs:

Dibasic Ammonium Citrate (DAC) (98% capillary GC) was obtained from Sigma. Acetonitrile of HPLC grade was purchased from VWR chemical. Ultrapure 3-Hydroxypicolinic Acid (3-HPA) MALDI matrix was purchase to Protea Biosciences. C4 pipette tips (Zip-Tip) were from Millipore.

The samples (500 pmol) were diluted to 10 μ L of water and were desalted with a C4 pipette Tips (Zip-tip). The Zip-tip was activated before use with 2 x 5 μ L of water: CH₃CN (50:50) and 2 x 5 μ L of DAC (50 mg/ml diluted in water). The 10 μ L of the ODN solution was loaded on Zip-tip by drawing and expelling ten times. Next the zip-tip was washed with 3 x 5 μ L of DAC (50 mg/mL) and 3 x 5 μ L of water. Elution was performed with 1.5 μ L of 3-HPA matrix (80 mg/mL, 50:50 CH₃CN:DAC) directly on MALDI plate. The ODN profile obtained in a ABSciex MALDI-TOF/TOF mass spectrometer in reflector mode with external calibration mixture (cal Mix 1+2 distributed by ABSciex). MALDI-TOF/TOF-MS analysis: MS spectra were recorded manually in a mass range of 500-6000 Da resulting from 400 laser shots of constant intensity fixed at 6200. Data were collected using 4000 series Explorer (AB SCIEX) experiments.

Table S1. Mass of the synthesized oligonucleotides.

ODN	Sequence	MALDI-TOF found (calcd) [M ⁺]
1	5'-d-CGTTTTT M TTTTTGC-3'	4774.1 (4773.2)
2	5'-d-CGTTTT A MATTTTGC-3'	4791.6 (4791.3)
3	5'-d-CGTTTT C MCTTTTGC-3'	4743.5 (4743.2)
4	5'-d-CGTTTT G MGTTTTTGC-3'	4824.0 (4823.3)



3. Spectroscopic characterizations

3.1 Denaturation studies and melting temperatures

❖ Preparation of the samples:

The ODNs were analyzed in triplicate cacodylate buffer pH 7.0 (10 mM cacodylate, 150 mM NaCl, 1 mM EDTA).

Preparation of the single strand solution: the solution of the sample was prepared by mixing 400 μ L of a stock solution of 20 mM Cacodylate buffer solution pH 7.0, 80 μ L of 1.5 M NaCl solution, 10 μ L of 80 mM EDTA solution, 25 μ L of 64 μ M ssODN and 285 μ L of MilliQ[®] water.

Preparation of the double strand solution: 400 μ L of a stock solution of 20 mM Cacodylate buffer solution pH 7.0, 80 μ L of 1.5 M NaCl solution, 10 μ L of 80 mM EDTA solution, 25 μ L of 64 μ M ODN 1, 25 μ L of 64 μ M ODN 2 and 260 μ L of MilliQ[®] water.

Melting curves were recorded by following the temperature-dependence of the absorbance changes at 260 nm of the sample (2 μ M concentration of each strand). Absorption spectra were recorded in a Peltier thermostated cell holder on a Cary 4 spectrophotometer (Varian). The pathlength of cell was 1 cm. The temperature range for denaturation measurement was 5 – 80 $^{\circ}$ C. Speed of heating was 0.3 $^{\circ}$ C/min. The melting curves were converted into a plot of α versus temperature, where α represents the fraction of single-strands in the duplex state. The melting temperatures were extracted from these curves after differentiation as described elsewhere.[5]

Table S2. Melting temperatures of the duplexes.

Duplexes	T_m ($^{\circ}$ C)		
	M	Wild Type ^b	ΔT_m ($^{\circ}$ C) ^c
TMT·AAA	45.8	49.5 [50.2]	-3.7
TMT·ATA	37.9	40.5 [42.2]	-2.6
TMT·ACA	39.1	39.0 [42]	0.1
TMT·AGA	38.1	40.7 [42.9]	-2.6
TMT·AAbA	39.2	34.5	4.7
AMA·TAT	42.4	47.3 [47.4]	-4.9
AMA·TTT	37.6	39.8 [40.6]	-2.2
AMA·TCT	39.2	38.5 [39.3]	0.7
AMA·TGT	38.1	42.7 [42.8]	-4.6
AMA·TAbT	36.3	30.5	5.8
CMC·GAG	48.1	51.3 [53.7]	-3.2
CMC·GTG	37.9	41.1 [46.7]	-3.2
CMC·GCG	42.6	42.1 [45.3]	0.5
CMC·GGG	42.5	46.5 [49.5]	-4.0
CMC·GAbG	43.2	37.2	6.0
GMG·CAC	52.4	54.8 [55.1]	-2.4
GMG·CTC	45.6	46.6 [47.5]	-1.0
GMG·CCC	47.1	43.5 [44.8]	3.6
GMG·CGC	47.3	49.7 [51.0]	-2.4
GMG·CAbC	44.5	37.5	7.0
Duplexes	T_m ($^{\circ}$ C)		
	M	Wild Type ^b	ΔT_m ($^{\circ}$ C) ^c
TMT·rAAA	40.6	43.7	-3.1
TMT·r_MAAA	38.8	41.4	-2.6
TMT·r_MAUA	29.2	32.0	-2.8
AMA·rUAU	37.1	40.9	-3.8

^a T_m of the corresponding duplexe formed from unmodified ODNs and its theoretical values given in square brackets. ^b ΔT_m refers to the difference of T_m between the labelled and wild type ODNs.

Fig S5. Melting temperature curves of the wild type double strands:

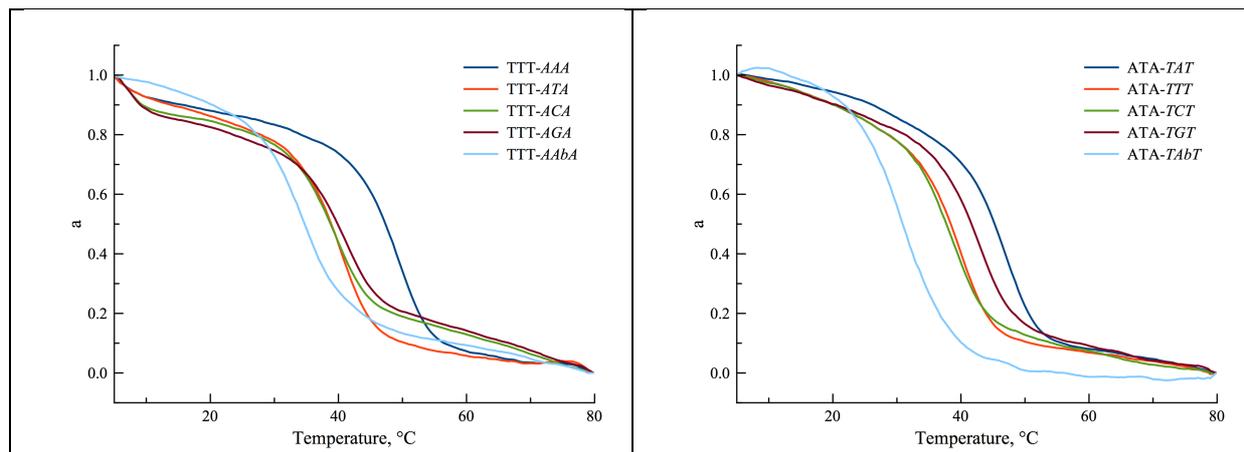
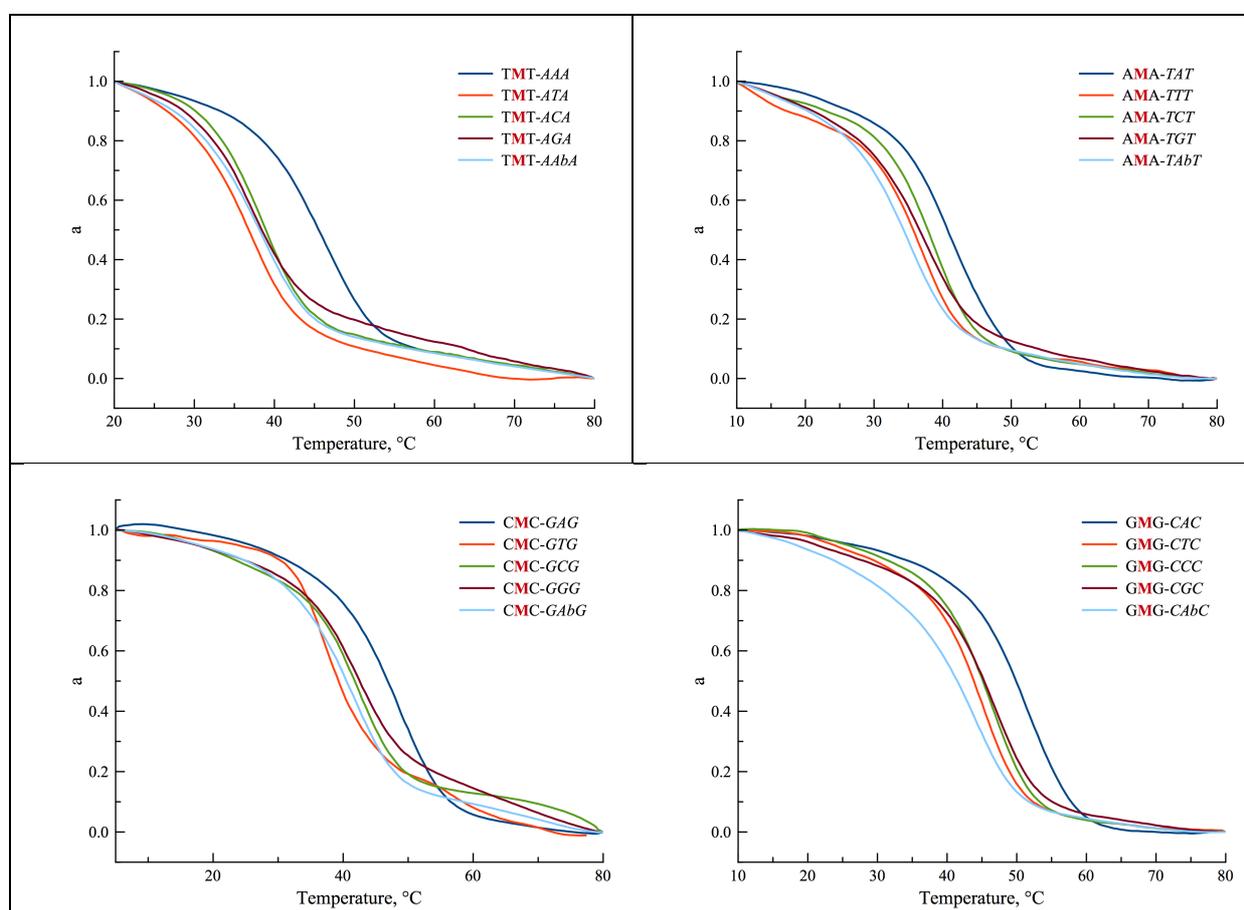


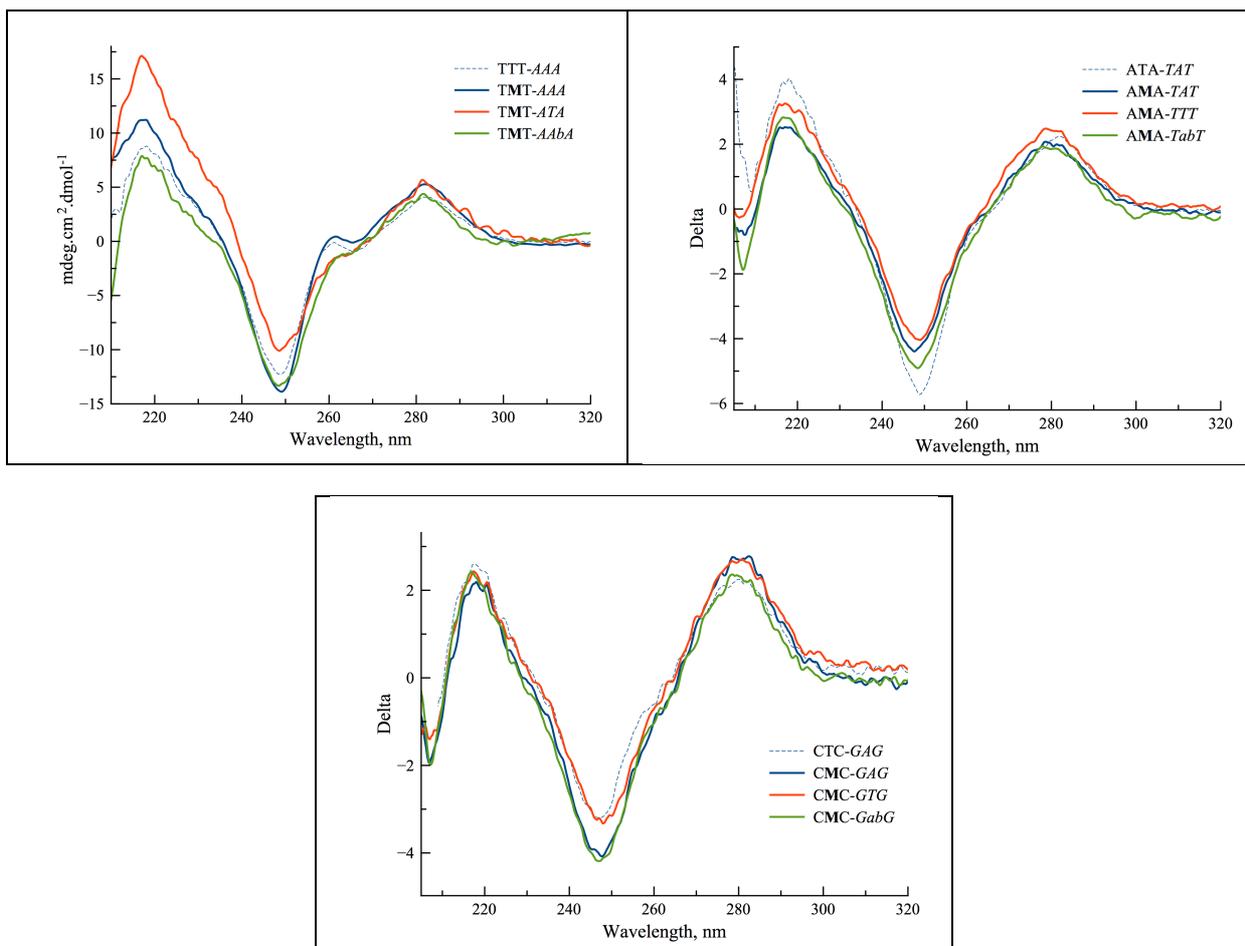
Fig S6. Melting temperature curves of labelled double strands:



3.3. Circular dichroism

Circular dichroism spectra were recorded in duplicate with 2 μ M solution of the canonical dsDNA and labelled dsDNA (3HC (M) opposite A, T or Ab) in buffer pH 7.0 (20 mM Sodium phosphate, 150 mM NaCl, 1 mM EDTA) at 20 °C on a Jasco J-810 spectropolarimeter. Two maxima were observed in CD spectra: one negative at 249 nm and the other positive at 282 nm. Similar results were obtained by using an alternative buffer: 10 mM cacodylate buffer, 150 mM NaCl, 1 mM EDTA.

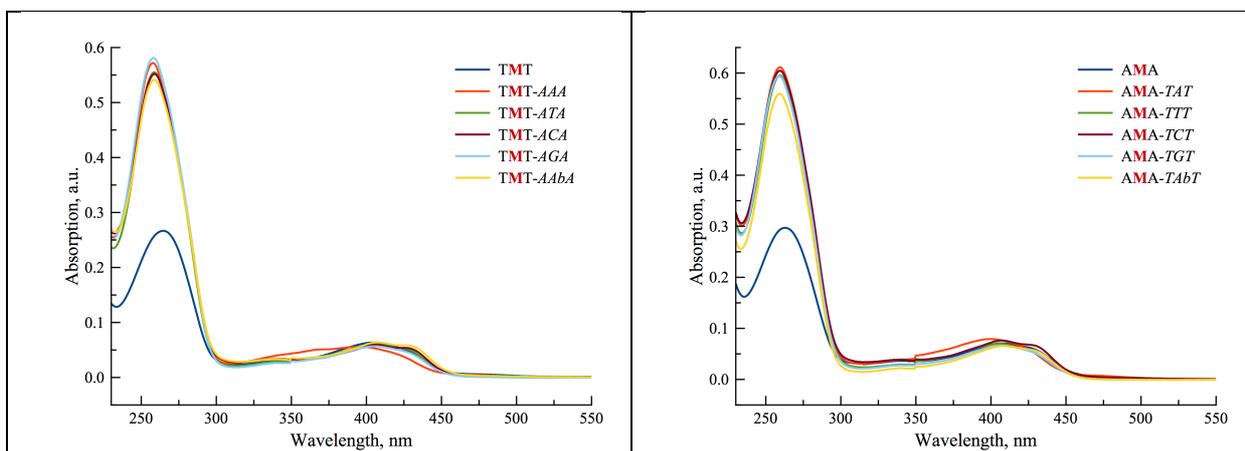
Fig S7. Representative CD spectra of wild type and labelled duplexes:



3.4. Absorption and Fluorescence spectra

The absorption and fluorescence experiments were realized in triplicate in pH 7.0 phosphate buffer (20 mM sodium phosphate, 150 mM NaCl, 1 mM EDTA). The absorption spectra were recorded on a Cary 300 Scan spectrophotometer (Varian) using 1cm quartz cells at 20 °C. The fluorescence spectra were recorded on a FluoroMax 4.0 spectrofluorometer (Jobin Yvon, Horiba) by using excitation and emission slits of 2 nm and were corrected at excitation and emission. They were taken with absorbance of about 0.05 at 20 °C at the excitation wavelength mentioned in the corresponding experiments. The quantum yields were corrected according to the variation of the refractive index of the different solvents. Quantum yields were determined by using quinine sulfate (QS) in 0.1 M HCl solution ($\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 350 \text{ nm}$, $\Phi = 0.54$) and *p*-dimethylaminoflavone (dMAF) in EtOH ($\lambda_{\text{ex}} = 404 \text{ nm}$, $\Phi = 0.27$) as standard references.[6,7] Similar results were obtained by using an alternative buffer: 10 mM cacodylate buffer, 150 mM NaCl, 1 mM EDTA.

Fig S8. UV spectra of labelled single and double strands:



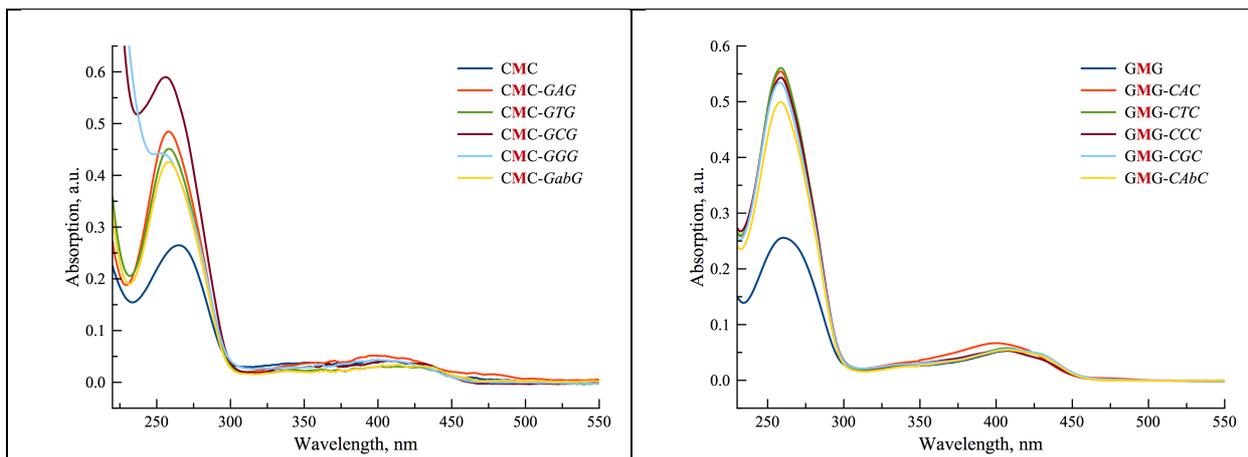


Fig S9. Fluorescence spectra of labelled single and double strands with TMT:

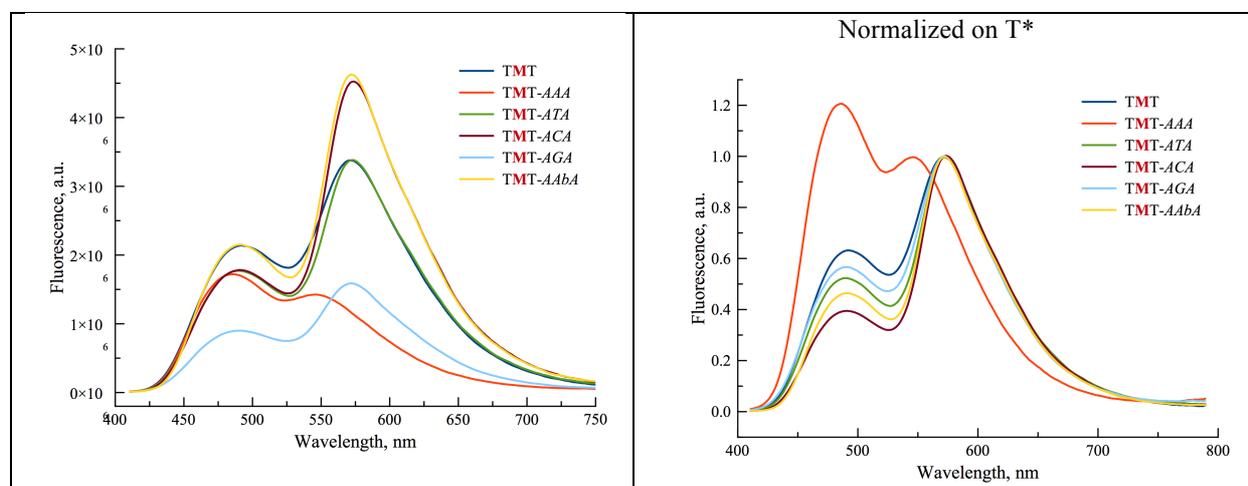


Fig S10. Fluorescence spectra of labelled single and double strands with AMA:

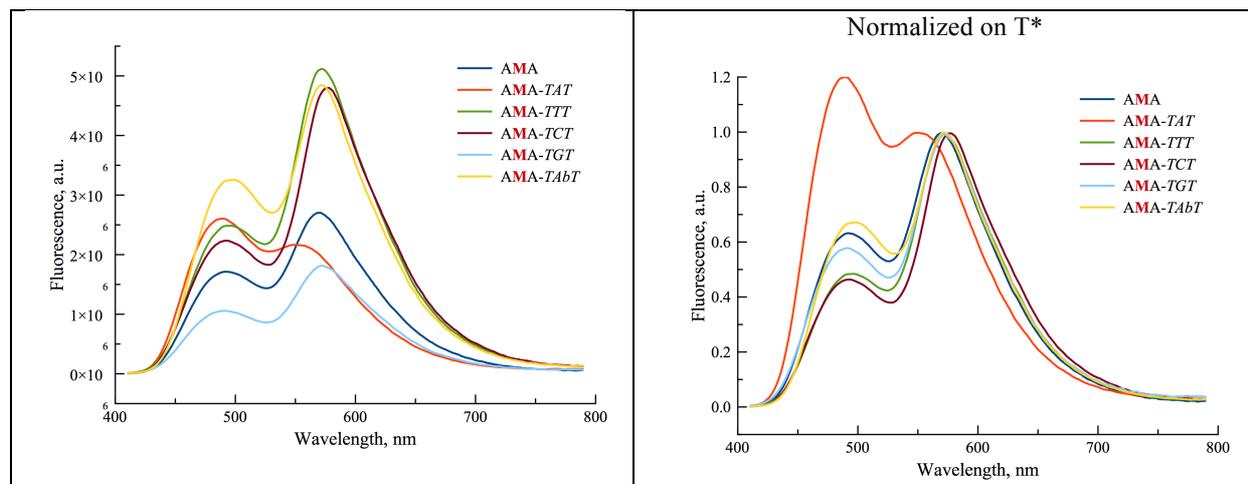


Fig S11. Fluorescence spectra of labelled single and double strands with CMC:

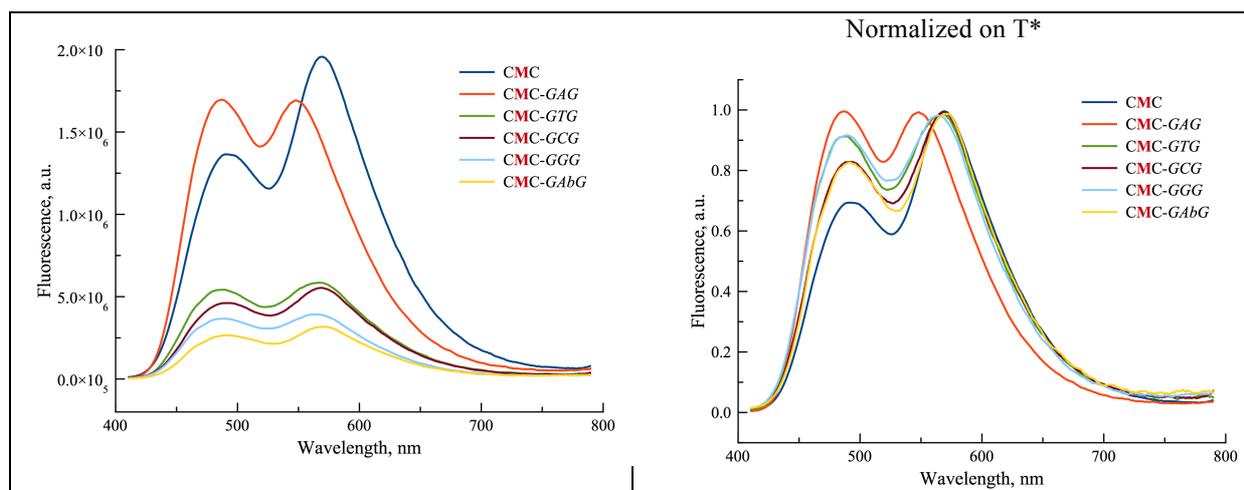


Fig S12. Fluorescence spectra of labelled single and double strands with GMG:

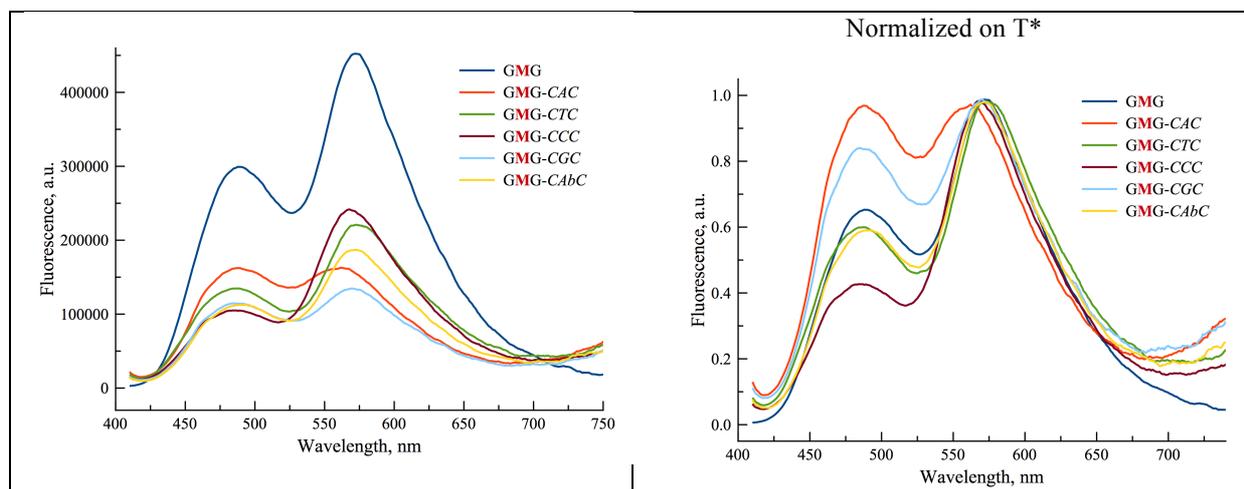
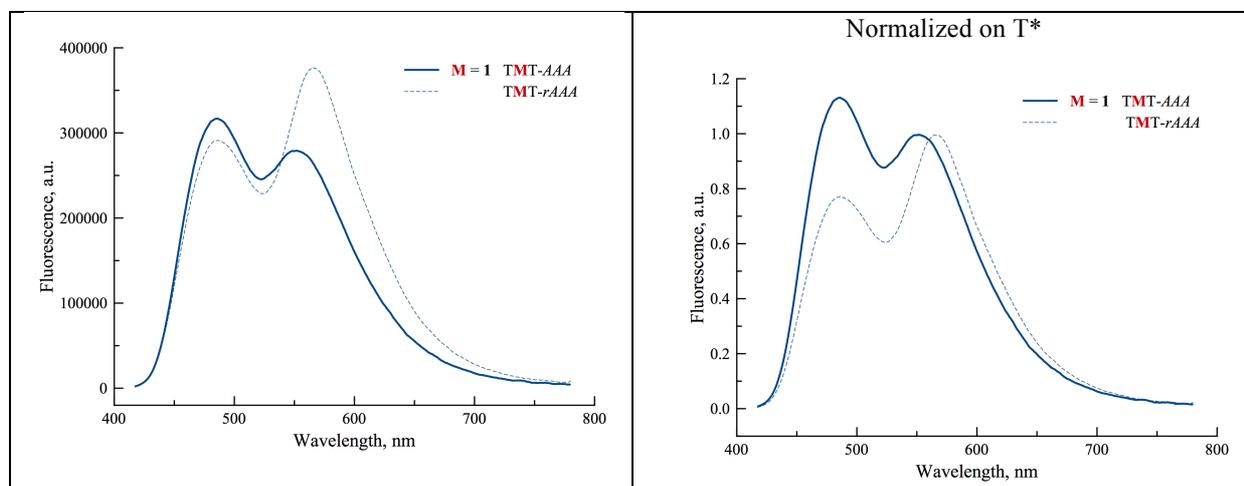


Fig S13. Fluorescence spectra of B DNA/DNA and A DNA/RNA:



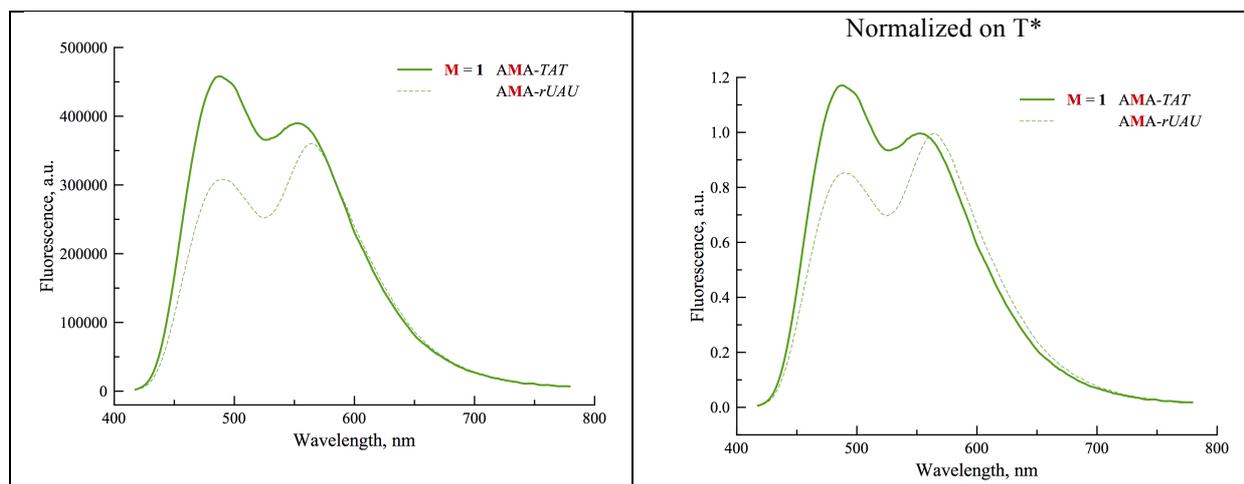
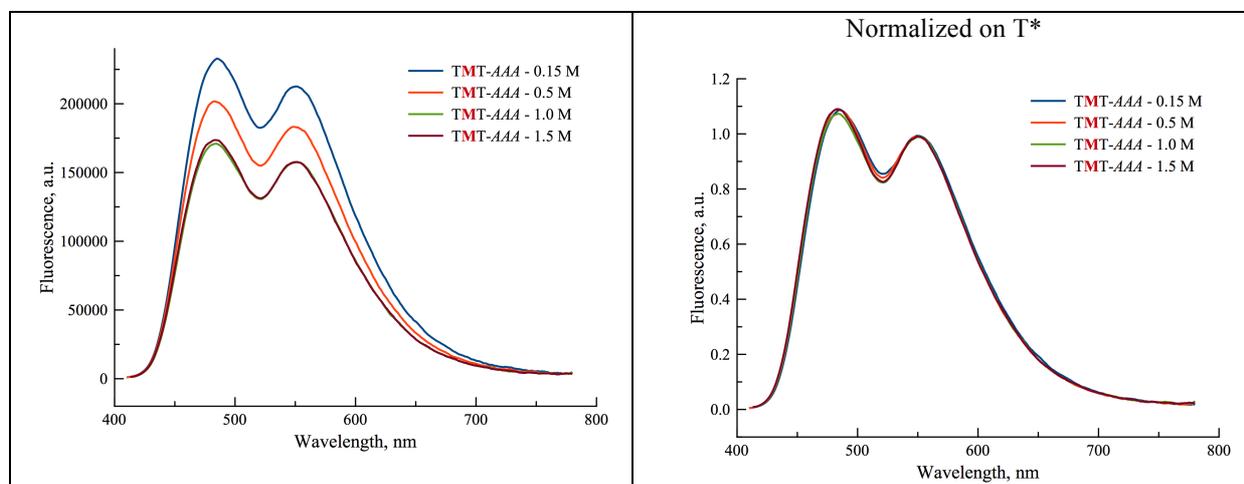


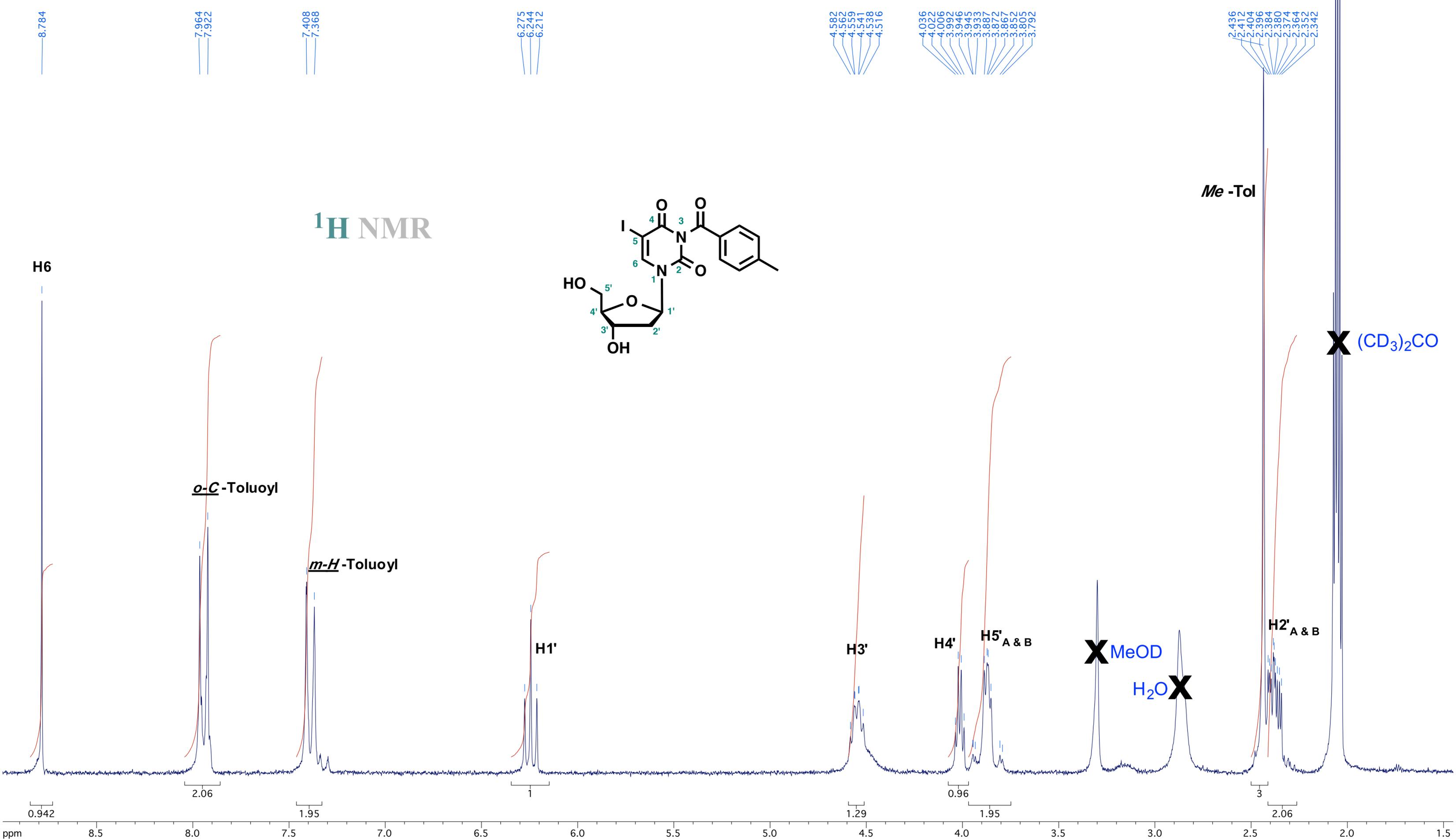
Fig S14. Fluorescence spectra of the TMT-AAA duplex at different NaCl concentrations:



References:

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4. NMR spectra



¹³C NMR

