

Supporting Information

Organic sensitizers with a rigid dithienobenzotriazole-based spacer for high performance dye-sensitized solar cells

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Materials and Reagents. All chemicals were obtained from Acros, Aldrich, Alfa Lancaster, and Matrix scientific. The solvents were dried over sodium or CaH₂ and distilled before use. The starting materials, 2-(2-ethylhexyl)-2*H*-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-*d*][1,2,3]triazole (DTBZ),¹ (5-(1,3-dioxolan-2-yl)thiophen-2-yl)tri-*n*-butylstannane,² (5-(1,3-dioxolan-2-yl)-4-*n*-hexylthiophen-2-yl)tri-*n*-butylstannane,³ *N,N*-diphenyl-4-(tri-*n*-butylstannyl)aniline (TPA-Sn^{*n*}Bu₃),⁴ 9-(2-ethylhexyl)-3-(tri-*n*-butylstannyl)-9*H*-carbazole (CBZ-Sn^{*n*}Bu₃)⁵ and 4-(2-ethylhexyl)-2-(tri-*n*-butylstannyl)-4*H*-thieno[3,2-*b*]indole (TID-Sn^{*n*}Bu₃)⁶ were prepared according to the published procedures. TiO₂ paste was purchased from Solaronix S. A., Switzerland.

Characterization. ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker 400 MHz spectrometer. Mass spectra (FAB) were recorded on a VG70-250S mass spectrometer. Elementary analyses were performed on a Perkin-Elmer 2400 CHN analyzer. Absorption spectra were recorded on a Dynamica DB-20 probe UV-vis spectrophotometer. Fluorescence spectra were recorded on a Hitachi F-4500 spectrophotometer. Cyclic voltammetry experiments were performed with a CHI-621A electrochemical analyzer. All measurements were carried out at room temperature with a conventional three electrode configuration consisting of a platinum working electrode, an auxiliary electrode and a non-aqueous Ag/AgNO₃ reference electrode. The photoelectrochemical characterizations on the solar cells were carried out using an Oriel Class AAA solar simulator (Oriel

94043 A, Newport Corp.). Photocurrent-voltage characteristics of the DSSCs were recorded with a potentiostat/galvanostat (CHI650B, CH Instruments, Inc.) at a light intensity of 100 to 10 mW/cm² calibrated by an Oriel reference solar cell (Oriel 91150, Newport Corp.). The monochromatic quantum efficiency was recorded through a monochromator (Oriel 74100, Newport Corp.) at short circuit condition. The intensity of each wavelength was in the range of 1 to 3 mW/cm². Electrochemical impedance spectra (EIS) were recorded for DSSCs under illumination at open-circuit voltage (V_{OC}) or dark at -0.65 V potential at room temperature. The frequencies explored ranged from 10 mHz to 100 kHz. Intensity-modulated photovoltage spectroscopy (IMVS) was carried out on the electrochemical workstation (Zahner, Zennium) with a frequency response analyzer under an intensity modulated (10 to 300 W m⁻²) white light emitting diode driven by a Zahner (0982wlr02) source supply. The frequency range was set from 100 kHz to 10 mHz.

Fabrications of DSSCs. The photoanode used was the TiO₂ thin film (12 μ m of 20 nm particles as the absorbing layer and 6 μ m of 100 nm particles as the scattering layer) coated on FTO glass substrate with a dimension of 0.4×0.4 cm², and the film thickness measurement by a profilometer (Dektak3, Veeco/Sloan Instruments Inc., USA). The TiO₂ thin film was dipped into the mixture solution of ethanol and chloroform (v/v, 1/1) containing 0.3 mM dye sensitizers for at least 12 hours. For the coadsorbed solar cell, chenodeoxycholic acid (CDCA) was added into the dye solutions at a concentration of 5 mM. After rinsing with acetonitrile, the photoanode adhered with a polyimide tape of 30 μ m in thickness and with a square aperture of 0.36 cm² was placed on top of the counter electrode and tightly clipping them together to form a cell. A 0.6×0.6 cm² of cardboard mask was clipped onto the device to constrain the illumination area. Electrolyte was then injected into the seam between two electrodes. The electrolyte was composed of 0.8 M 1-methyl-3-propyl imidazolium iodide (PMII), 0.1 M lithium iodide (LiI), 0.05 M iodine (I₂), and 0.5 M 4-*tert*-butylpyridine dissolved in acetonitrile.

Electrochemical measurements. The electrochemical properties of the organic dyes were measured by cyclic voltammetry (CV) and differential pulse voltammetry (DPV) in THF solutions at a concentration of 1 mM with ferrocene/ferrocenium as the internal reference. This first oxidation potential (E_{OX}) together with the zero-zero excitation energy (E_{0-0}) can be used to deduce the excited state potential (E_{0-0}^*) of the sensitizer, i.e., $E_{0-0}^* = E_{OX} - E_{0-0}$. Electron injection from the excited dye to the TiO₂ is energetically favored as the E_{0-0}^* value of the dye (-1.09 to -1.22 V vs. NHE) is more negative than the conduction band edge of TiO₂ (-0.5 V vs. NHE). Dye regeneration should also be energetically favored as the first oxidation potentials of the dyes (1.21 to 1.26 V vs. NHE) are more positive than that of the I^-/I_3^- redox couple (0.4 V vs. NHE).

Quantum chemistry computation. The computations were performed with Q-Chem4.0 software.⁴ Geometry optimization of the molecules was performed using hybrid B3LYP functional and 6-31G* basis set. For each molecule, a number of possible conformations were examined and the one with the lowest energy was used. The same functional was also applied for the calculation of excited

states using time-dependent density functional theory (TD-DFT). There exist a number of previous works that employed TD-DFT to characterize excited states with charge-transfer character. In some cases underestimation of the excitation energies was seen. Therefore, in the present work, we use TD-DFT to visualize the extent of transition moments as well as their charge-transfer characters, and avoid drawing conclusions from the excitation energy.

Synthesis of 5,8-dibromo-2-(2-ethylhexyl)-2H-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-*d*][1,2,3]triazole (Br-DTBZ-Br). DTBZ (0.82 g, 2.39 mmol) was dissolved in DMF (2 mL), and NBS (0.89 g, 5.02 mmol) dissolved in DMF (2 mL) was added slowly in the ice-bath. After stirred for 15 h at the room temperature, the reaction mixture was extracted with CH₂Cl₂ and H₂O. The organics were combined and dried over MgSO₄, filtered, and give a yellow oil in 86.7% yield (1.04 g). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.86 (s, 2H), 4.62 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 2.25–2.19 (m, 1H), 1.37–1.24 (m, 8H), 0.91 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 0.85 (t, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 139.45, 132.84, 126.78, 124.77, 122.60, 59.63, 40.62, 30.65, 28.63, 24.05, 23.12, 14.24, 10.71. MS-HR-EI (*m/z*): [*M*]⁺ calcd for C₁₈H₁₉Br₂N₃S₂, 501.30; found, 498.9377; 500.9334; 502.9311.

Synthesis of 4-(8-bromo-2-(2-ethylhexyl)-2H-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-*d*][1,2,3]triazol-5-yl)-*N,N*-diphenylaniline (1a). Br-DTBZ-Br (1.04 g, 2.07 mmol), Pd(PPh₃)₂Cl₂ (0.07 g, 0.10 mmol) and *N,N*-diphenyl-4-(tri-*n*-butylstannyl)aniline (1.11 g, 2.07 mmol) were dissolved in 4 mL of dry DMF and stirred at 80 °C for 16 h. The solvent was removed under vacuum, and then extracted with CH₂Cl₂ and deionized water. The combined organic layers were dried over anhydrous MgSO₄, evaporated and the residue was purified with column chromatography on silica gel using CH₂Cl₂/hexanes (1/3, v/v) as the eluent to afford an yellow oil in 17.4% yield. ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.98 (s, 1H), 7.87 (s, 1H), 7.59 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.28 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 7.6 Hz, 4H), 7.14–7.04 (m, 8H), 4.64 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 2.27–2.22 (m, 1H), 1.37–1.25 (m, 8H), 0.92 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H), 0.86 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H).

Synthesis of 5-bromo-2-(2-ethylhexyl)-8-(9-(2-ethylhexyl)-9H-carbazol-3-yl)-2H-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-*d*][1,2,3]triazole (1b). Yield of 32.3% (0.7 g). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.42 (s, 1H), 8.12 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 8.07 (s, 1H), 7.85 (s, 1H), 7.81 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.47 (dd, *J* = 7.2, 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.39–7.36 (m, 2H), 7.26 (dd, *J* = 7.6, 6.4 Hz, 1H), 4.64 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 2H), 4.13 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 2H), 2.29–2.26 (m, 1H), 2.06–2.04 (m, 1H), 1.39–1.24 (m, 16H), 0.96–0.84 (m, 12H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 145.77, 141.64, 141.02, 139.37, 138.66, 133.75, 129.91, 128.18, 126.31, 126.03, 125.62, 124.92, 124.21, 123.51, 123.04, 120.73, 119.50, 118.01, 116.33, 112.52, 109.48, 60.02, 47.66, 40.92, 39.76, 32.40, 32.06, 31.41, 30.94, 30.18, 29.85, 29.21, 28.92, 24.82, 24.30, 23.50, 23.40, 23.17, 14.57, 14.48, 11.30, 10.91. MS-HR-EI (*m/z*): [*M*]⁺ calcd for C₃₈H₄₃BrN₄S₂, 698.2107; found, 698.2093.

Synthesis of 5-(8-(4-(diphenylamino)phenyl)-2-(2-ethylhexyl)-2H-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-d][1,2,3]triazol-5-yl)thiophene-2-carbaldehyde (2a). Compound **1a** (0.24 g, 0.36 mmol), Pd(PPh₃)₂Cl₂ (0.013 g, 0.018 mmol) and (5-(1,3-dioxolan-2-yl)thiophen-2-yl)tri-*n*-butylstannane (0.18 g, 0.4 mmol) were dissolved in 1 mL of dry DMF and stirred at 80 °C for 16 h. The solvent was removed under vacuum, and HCl (4N, 10 mL) and DCM (25 mL) were added. After further stirred for 2 h, the solution was extracted with CH₂Cl₂ and deionized water. The combined organic layers were dried over anhydrous MgSO₄, evaporated and the residue was purified with column chromatography on silica gel using CH₂Cl₂/hexanes (1/1, v/v) as the eluent to afford an orange oil in 49% yield. ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 9.86 (s, 1H), 8.06 (s, 1H), 7.94 (s, 1H), 7.67 (d, *J* = 4.0 Hz, 1H), 7.58 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.33 (d, *J* = 4.0 Hz, 1H), 7.29 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 7.6 Hz, 4H), 7.14 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 4H), 7.10–7.05 (m, 4H), 4.64 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 2.28–2.25 (m, 1H), 1.39–1.28 (m, 8H), 0.93 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 3H), 0.86 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 148.28, 147.24, 146.65, 144.81, 142.34, 139.37, 137.15, 134.32, 132.99, 130.36, 129.43, 128.85, 127.12, 126.99, 126.89, 124.96, 123.57, 122.97, 120.99, 116.81, 59.85, 53.38, 40.54, 30.49, 28.46, 27.83, 26.81, 23.87, 22.88, 17.51, 13.97, 13.56, 10.47. MS-HR-EI (*m/z*): [*M*]⁺ calcd for C₄₁H₃₆N₄OS₃, 696.2046; found, 696.2043.

Synthesis of 5-(2-(2-ethylhexyl)-8-(9-(2-ethylhexyl)-9H-carbazol-3-yl)-2H-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-d][1,2,3]triazol-5-yl)thiophene-2-carbaldehyde (2b). Yield of 21% (93 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 9.84 (s, 1H), 8.41 (s, 1H), 8.12 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 8.07 (d, *J* = 3.6 Hz, 2H), 7.81 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.65 (d, *J* = 4.0 Hz, 1H), 7.48 (dd, *J* = 7.6, 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.38 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.33 (d, *J* = 3.6 Hz, 1H), 7.26 (dd, *J* = 7.6, 9.2 Hz, 1H), 4.65 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 4.14 (d, *J* = 4.4 Hz, 2H), 2.30–2.27 (m, 1H), 2.07–2.05 (m, 1H), 1.40–1.27 (m, 16H), 0.96–0.84 (m, 12H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, d₈-THF): δ 182.67, 147.20, 146.76, 142.49, 141.87, 141.36, 139.77, 139.52, 134.43, 133.47, 130.45, 129.31, 126.98, 126.58, 125.15, 124.98, 124.44, 123.75, 123.13, 121.33, 120.89, 119.75, 118.35, 116.73, 109.74, 60.29, 47.97, 41.02, 39.91, 32.41, 31.50, 31.00, 30.18, 29.84, 29.28, 28.97, 24.89, 24.36, 23.53, 23.41, 23.17, 14.58, 14.50, 11.38, 10.96. MS-HR-FAB (*m/z*): [*M*]⁺ calcd for C₄₃H₄₆N₄OS₃, 730.2828; found, 730.2822.

Synthesis of 5-(2-(2-ethylhexyl)-8-(9-(2-ethylhexyl)-9H-carbazol-3-yl)-2H-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-d][1,2,3]triazol-5-yl)thiophene-2-carbaldehyde (2c). Yield of 10% (80 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 9.93 (s, 1H), 8.31 (s, 1H), 8.07 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.95 (s, 1H), 7.93 (s, 1H), 7.72 (dd, *J* = 2.0, 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.45 (dd, *J* = 7.6, 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.34 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.28 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.24 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.07 (s, 1H), 4.59 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 4.07 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 2H), 2.83 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.30–2.24 (m, 1H), 2.04–2.00 (m, 1H), 1.70–1.65 (m, 2H), 1.38–1.27 (m, 22H), 0.96–0.83 (m, 15H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 181.80, 146.66, 146.08, 141.85, 141.33, 139.76, 139.53, 136.67, 134.72, 133.32, 130.52, 129.24, 127.46, 126.98, 126.56, 125.01, 124.45, 123.73, 123.12, 121.17, 120.88, 119.73, 118.32, 116.76, 109.76, 109.72, 60.27, 47.95, 41.23, 41.01, 39.90, 32.42, 32.06, 31.73, 31.49, 30.99, 30.53, 30.20, 30.16, 29.86, 29.54, 29.28, 29.00,

28.97, 24.88, 24.34, 23.54, 23.42, 23.18, 23.06, 14.59, 14.51, 11.37, 10.95. MS-HR-FAB (m/z): [M]⁺ calcd for C₄₉H₅₈N₄OS₃, 797.2886; found, 797.2892.

Synthesis of 5-bromo-2-(2-ethylhexyl)-2H-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-d][1,2,3]triazole (DTBZ-Br). DTBZ (1.01 g, 2.94 mmol) was dissolved in DCM (6 mL), and NBS (0.52 g, 2.94 mmol) dissolved in AcOH (6 mL) was added slowly in the ice-bath. After stirred for 15 h at the room temperature, the reaction mixture was extracted with CH₂Cl₂ and H₂O. The organics were combined and dried over MgSO₄, filtered, and give a yellow oil in 97% yield (1.2 g). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.88 (d, *J* = 4.0 Hz, 1H), 7.86 (s, 1H), 7.51 (d, *J* = 4.0 Hz, 1H), 4.64 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 2H), 2.26–2.23 (m, 1H), 1.38–1.24 (m, 8H), 0.92 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 3H), 0.85 (t, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 139.36, 139.17, 137.96, 133.40, 132.00, 131.42, 126.81, 126.70, 126.36, 126.30, 125.25, 125.12, 124.98, 124.68, 122.57, 122.47, 113.34, 112.94, 59.67, 53.73, 40.64, 30.70, 29.99, 28.70, 24.09, 23.18, 14.32, 10.77. MS-HR-EI (m/z): [M]⁺ calcd for C₁₈H₂₀BrN₃S₂, 422.41; found, 421.0288; 421.0258.

Synthesis of 5-(2-(2-ethylhexyl)-2H-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-d][1,2,3]triazol-5-yl)-3-hexylthiophene-2-carbaldehyde (3). DTBZ-Br (1.70 g, 4.02 mmol), Pd(PPh₃)₂Cl₂ (0.14 g, 0.20 mmol) and (5-(1,3-dioxolan-2-yl)-3-hexylthiophen-2-yl)tributylstannane (3.2 g, 6.04 mmol) were dissolved in 4 mL of dry DMF and stirred at 80 °C for 16 h. The solvent was removed under vacuum, and HCl (4N, 10 mL) and DCM (25 mL) were added. After further stirred for 2 h, the solution was extracted with CH₂Cl₂ and deionized water. The combined organic layers were dried over anhydrous MgSO₄, evaporated and the residue was purified with column chromatography on silica gel using CH₂Cl₂/hexanes (2/1, v/v) as the eluent to afford an orange solid in 21% yield. ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 9.90 (s, 1H), 7.88 (s, 1H), 7.74 (d, *J* = 5.2 Hz, 1H), 7.42 (d, *J* = 5.2 Hz, 1H), 7.00 (s, 1H), 4.57 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 2.80 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.25–2.21 (m, 1H), 1.64–1.58 (m, 2H), 1.35–1.20 (m, 14H), 0.95–0.91 (m, 9H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 154.08, 145.71, 139.85, 139.33, 136.88, 135.25, 133.24, 132.32, 128.06, 127.63, 127.49, 126.06, 125.49, 123.02, 121.03, 119.63, 60.15, 40.93, 32.36, 32.13, 31.99, 31.66, 30.90, 30.13, 29.45, 28.94, 28.88, 24.28, 23.35, 22.99, 14.49, 14.44, 10.91. MS-HR-EI (m/z): [M]⁺ calcd for C₂₉H₃₅N₃OS₃, 537.80; found, 537.1942.

Synthesis of 5-(8-bromo-2-(2-ethylhexyl)-2H-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-d][1,2,3]triazol-5-yl)-3-hexylthiophene-2-carbaldehyde (4). Compound **3** (0.45 g, 0.84 mmol) was dissolved in DCM (4 mL), and NBS (0.16 g, 0.92 mmol) dissolved in AcOH (1.5 mL) was added slowly in the ice-bath. After stirred for 15 h at the room temperature, the reaction mixture was extracted with CH₂Cl₂ and H₂O. The organics were combined and dried over MgSO₄, filtered, and give a deep-yellow oil in 97% yield. ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 9.84 (s, 1H), 7.61 (s, 1H), 7.49 (s, 1H), 6.85 (s, 1H), 4.51 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 2.74 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 1.58–1.52 (m, 1H), 1.64–1.58 (m, 2H), 1.28–1.18 (m, 14H), 0.89–0.85 (m, 9H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 153.79, 145.15, 138.90, 138.45, 136.78, 135.36, 132.66, 131.42, 127.40, 125.56, 120.45, 119.19, 114.17, 40.84,

31.93, 31.54, 30.86, 30.07, 29.45, 28.84, 24.22, 23.31, 22.96, 14.46, 10.86. MS-HR-EI (m/z): [M]⁺ calcd for C₂₉H₃₄BrN₃OS₃, 616.70; found, 615.1057; 617.1052.

Synthesis of 5-(8-(4-(diphenylamino)phenyl)-2-(2-ethylhexyl)-2H-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-d][1,2,3]triazol-5-yl)-3-*n*-hexylthiophene-2-carbaldehyde (5a). Compound **4** (0.32 g, 0.47 mmol), Pd(PPh₃)₂Cl₂ (0.01 g, 0.02 mmol) and *N,N*-diphenyl-4-(tri-*n*-butylstannyl)aniline (0.28 g, 0.52 mmol) were dissolved in 1 mL of dry DMF and stirred at 80 °C for 16 h. The solvent was removed under vacuum, and extracted with CH₂Cl₂ and deionized water. The combined organic layers were dried over anhydrous MgSO₄, evaporated and the residue was purified with column chromatography on silica gel using CH₂Cl₂/hexanes (2/1, v/v) as the eluent to afford a red oil in 20% yield. ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 9.96 (s, 1H), 7.98 (s, 1H), 7.90 (s, 1H), 7.55 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 7.27 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 4H), 7.19–7.11 (m, 4H), 7.08–7.04 (m, 4H), 7.04 (s, 1H), 4.61 (d, 2H), 2.89 (t, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 2.28–2.23 (m, 1H), 1.70–1.67 (m, 2H), 1.39–1.28 (m, 14H), 0.94–0.84 (m, 9H). ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 181.91, 154.27, 148.68, 147.71, 145.96, 145.11, 139.79, 139.59, 136.89, 135.05, 133.25, 130.84, 129.91, 129.18, 127.70, 127.60, 127.43, 127.31, 125.42, 124.03, 123.42, 121.24, 117.25, 60.28, 41.00, 32.04, 31.75, 30.94, 29.50, 29.05, 28.93, 24.31, 23.38, 23.03, 14.54, 14.49, 10.96. MS-HR-FAB (m/z): [M]⁺ calcd for C₄₇H₄₈N₄OS₃, 780.2990; found, 780.2988.

Synthesis of 5-(2-(2-ethylhexyl)-8-(4-(2-ethylhexyl)-4H-thieno[3,2-b]indol-2-yl)-2H-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-d][1,2,3]triazol-5-yl)-3-hexylthiophene-2-carbaldehyde (5b). Yield of 29%. ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 9.91 (s, 1H), 7.89 (s, 1H), 7.76 (s, 1H), 7.66 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.26 (s, 1H), 7.25 (s, 1H), 7.14 (dd, *J* = 6.4, 6.0 Hz, 1H), 7.07–7.05 (m, 2H), 4.57 (d, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 3.90 (d, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 2H), 2.81 (t, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 2H), 2.28–2.22 (m, 1H), 1.96–1.93 (m, 1H), 1.70–1.63 (m, 2H), 1.38–1.25 (m, 22H), 0.95–0.86 (m, 15H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 154.17, 145.74, 141.99, 139.44, 139.30, 137.77, 136.78, 135.23, 132.69, 130.41, 128.63, 127.54, 123.32, 121.91, 121.06, 119.76, 119.40, 117.91, 116.27, 110.55, 108.32, 60.28, 49.62, 40.98, 40.35, 32.03, 31.70, 31.28, 30.97, 29.51, 29.15, 28.94, 24.70, 24.32, 23.53, 23.39, 23.04, 14.53, 14.48, 11.26, 10.92. MS-HR-FAB (m/z): [M+H]⁺ calcd for C₄₇H₅₆N₄OS₄, 821.2337; found, 821.3414.

Synthesis of (Z)-2-cyano-3-(5-(8-(4-(diphenylamino)phenyl)-2-(2-ethylhexyl)-2H-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-d][1,2,3]triazol-5-yl)thiophen-2-yl)acrylic acid (YC-2). Compound **2a** (0.12 g, 0.176 mmol), cyanoacetic acid (0.15 g, 1.76 mmol), NH₄OAc (5 mg) were dissolved in 2 mL of AcOH. The reaction mixture was then vigorously stirred at 110 °C for 20 h. The solvent was removed under vacuum, washed with deionized water, dried under vacuum, and purified with column chromatography on silica gel using acetic acid/ethyl acetate (1/100, v/v) as the eluent to give a deep-purple solid in 24.6% yield (32 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, d₈-THF): δ 8.39 (s, 1H), 8.29 (s, 1H), 8.14 (s, 1H), 7.88 (d, *J* = 3.9 Hz, 1H), 7.75 (d, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 7.63 (d, *J* = 3.8 Hz, 1H), 7.29 (dd, *J* = 7.8, 7.7 Hz, 4H), 7.14 (d, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 6H), 7.08–7.04 (m, 2H), 4.72 (d, *J* = 6.6 Hz, 2H), 2.28–2.25 (m, 1H), 1.40–1.32 (m, 8H), 0.97 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 3H), 0.90 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, d₈-THF): δ 148.57, 146.29, 140.07, 130.42, 128.60, 128.09, 126.65, 125.97, 124.55,

124.11, 122.13, 118.14, 60.26, 41.86, 31.77, 30.50, 29.74, 25.88, 25.68, 25.48, 25.29, 25.09, 23.91, 14.50, 11.10. MS-HR-EI (m/z): [M]⁺ calcd for C₄₄H₃₇N₅O₂S₃, 763.2104; found, 763.2114. Anal. calcd for C₄₄H₃₇N₅O₂S₃: C, 69.17; H, 4.88; N, 9.17; found: C, 69.32; H, 4.76; N, 9.15.

Synthesis of (Z)-2-cyano-3-(5-(8-(4-(diphenylamino)phenyl)-2-(2-ethylhexyl)-2H-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-d][1,2,3]triazol-5-yl)-3-*n*-hexylthiophen-2-yl)acrylic acid (YC-3). Yield of 98% (75 mg). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, d₈-THF): δ 8.42 (s, 1H), 8.26 (s, 1H), 8.13 (s, 1H), 7.74 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.54 (s, 1H), 7.29 (d, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 4H), 7.15–7.04 (m, 8H), 4.72 (d, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 2H), 2.88 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2H), 2.27–2.26 (m, 1H), 1.42–1.29 (m, 16H), 0.99–0.85 (m, 9H). ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, d₈-THF): δ 165.78, 164.50, 156.39, 149.58, 148.54, 145.97, 145.07, 143.58, 140.55, 140.33, 135.67, 133.57, 131.17, 131.06, 130.42, 128.57, 128.40, 128.24, 128.07, 125.95, 124.54, 124.09, 122.16, 118.13, 116.89, 114.84, 60.22, 41.84, 35.64, 32.21, 31.75, 30.07, 29.83, 29.74, 24.36, 23.92, 23.62, 14.58, 14.52, 11.10. MS-HR-FAB (m/z): [M]⁺ calcd for C₄₇H₄₈N₄OS₃, 847.3048; found, 847.3053. Anal. calcd for C₄₇H₄₈N₄OS₃: C, 70.81; H, 5.82; N, 8.26; found: C, 70.73; H, 5.91; N, 8.56.

Synthesis of (Z)-2-cyano-3-(5-(2-(2-ethylhexyl)-8-(9-(2-ethylhexyl)-9H-carbazol-3-yl)-2H-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-d][1,2,3]triazol-5-yl)thiophen-2-yl)acrylic acid (YC-4). Yield of 29% (30 mg). ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.66 (s, 1H), 8.38 (s, 1H), 8.28 (s, 1H), 8.25 (s, 1H), 8.20 (d, *J* = 3.6 Hz, 1H), 7.79 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 7.88 (d, *J* = 3.2 Hz, 1H), 7.62 (s, 1H), 7.58 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 1H), 7.50 (d, *J* = 6.4 Hz, 1H), 7.45 (t, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 1H), 7.23 (dd, *J* = 6.0, 5.6 Hz, 1H), 4.73 (d, *J* = 5.6 Hz, 2H), 4.30 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 2H), 2.29–2.27 (m, 1H), 2.15–2.13 (m, 1H), 1.47–1.26 (m, 16H), 1.01–0.95 (m, 12H). ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, d₈-THF): δ 147.80, 146.71, 146.33, 142.68, 142.26, 140.61, 140.34, 140.17, 136.75, 135.33, 133.70, 130.80, 130.56, 128.31, 127.09, 126.58, 125.75, 125.15, 124.66, 123.96, 122.18, 121.51, 120.28, 119.09, 117.68, 116.72, 110.73, 110.43, 100.65, 48.20, 41.87, 40.54, 32.03, 31.78, 30.80, 29.84, 29.76, 24.96, 24.12, 23.92, 23.72, 14.52, 11.34, 11.12. MS-HR-FAB (m/z): [M]⁺ calcd for C₄₆H₄₇N₅O₂S₃, 797.2886; found, 797.2892. Anal. calcd for C₄₆H₄₇N₅O₂S₃: C, 69.23; H, 5.94; N, 8.78; found: C, 69.73; H, 5.68; N, 8.86.

Synthesis of (Z)-2-cyano-3-(5-(2-(2-ethylhexyl)-8-(9-(2-ethylhexyl)-9H-carbazol-3-yl)-2H-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-d][1,2,3]triazol-5-yl)-3-*n*-hexylthiophen-2-yl)acrylic acid (YC-5). Yield of 45% (40 mg). ¹H NMR (500 MHz, d₈-THF): δ 8.66 (s, 1H), 8.43 (s, 1H), 8.26–8.23 (m, 3H), 7.95 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 7.58 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 1H), 7.54 (s, 1H), 7.48 (d, *J* = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.45 (dd, *J* = 8.0, 7.0 Hz, 1H), 7.23 (dd, *J* = 7.6, 7.0 Hz, 1H), 4.73 (d, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 2H), 4.30 (d, *J* = 7.0 Hz, 2H), 2.88 (t, *J* = 6.0 Hz, 2H), 2.30–2.27 (m, 1H), 2.15–2.13 (m, 1H), 1.49–1.33 (m, 24H), 0.99–0.86 (m, 15H). ¹³C NMR (125 MHz, d₈-THF): δ 156.06, 147.73, 143.20, 142.66, 142.23, 140.55, 140.30, 135.48, 131.21, 130.83, 128.25, 128.15, 127.09, 125.72, 125.15, 124.62, 123.92, 122.03, 121.50, 120.26, 119.05, 117.67, 110.73, 110.42, 41.84, 40.52, 33.01, 32.71, 32.22, 32.00, 31.75, 30.77, 30.55, 30.44, 30.05, 29.82, 29.73, 24.10, 23.90, 23.70, 23.60, 14.57, 14.51, 11.37,

11.11. MS-HR-FAB (m/z): $[M]^+$ calcd for $C_{52}H_{59}N_5O_2S_3$, 881.3831; found, 881.3850. Anal. calcd for $C_{52}H_{59}N_5O_2S_3$: C, 70.79; H, 6.74; N, 7.94; found: C, 70.63; H, 6.56; N, 7.96.

Synthesis of (Z)-2-cyano-3-(5-(2-(2-ethylhexyl)-8-(4-(2-ethylhexyl)-4*H*-thieno[3,2-*b*]indol-2-yl)-2*H*-dithieno[3',2':3,4;2'',3'':5,6]benzo[1,2-*d*][1,2,3]triazol-5-yl)-3-*n*-hexylthiophen-2-yl)acrylic acid (YC-6). Yield of 82% (90 mg). 1H NMR (400 MHz, d_8 -THF): δ 8.37 (s, 1H), 8.18 (s, 1H), 7.98 (s, 1H), 7.70 (d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 1H), 7.55 (s, 1H), 7.48 (s, 1H), 7.43 (d, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 1H), 7.25 (dd, $J = 8.0$, 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.12 (dd, $J = 7.6$, 7.2 Hz, 1H), 4.71 (d, $J = 6.4$ Hz, 2H), 4.20 (d, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 2H), 2.83 (t, $J = 7.6$ Hz, 2H), 2.28–2.25 (m, 1H), 2.09–2.02 (m, 1H), 1.40–1.32 (m, 24H), 1.00–0.85 (m, 15H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz, d_8 -THF): δ 164.74, 156.17, 146.68, 144.85, 143.39, 142.92, 140.29, 140.26, 138.05, 135.95, 133.09, 131.20, 130.80, 130.70, 129.83, 129.14, 128.79, 128.11, 123.94, 122.64, 122.01, 120.31, 119.82, 118.61, 117.03, 116.94, 111.30, 109.85, 99.29, 60.28, 50.01, 41.83, 40.98, 38.21, 33.92, 33.04, 32.72, 32.15, 31.82, 31.77, 31.13, 30.80, 30.47, 30.12, 29.82, 29.75, 29.68, 28.18, 23.94, 23.72, 23.64, 14.59, 14.55, 11.25, 11.10. MS-HR-FAB (m/z): $[M]^+$ calcd for $C_{46}H_{47}N_5O_2S_3$, 888.28; found, 887.3391. Anal. calcd for $C_{50}H_{57}N_5O_2S_4$: C, 67.61; H, 6.47; N, 7.88; found: C, 67.67; H, 6.40; N, 7.65.

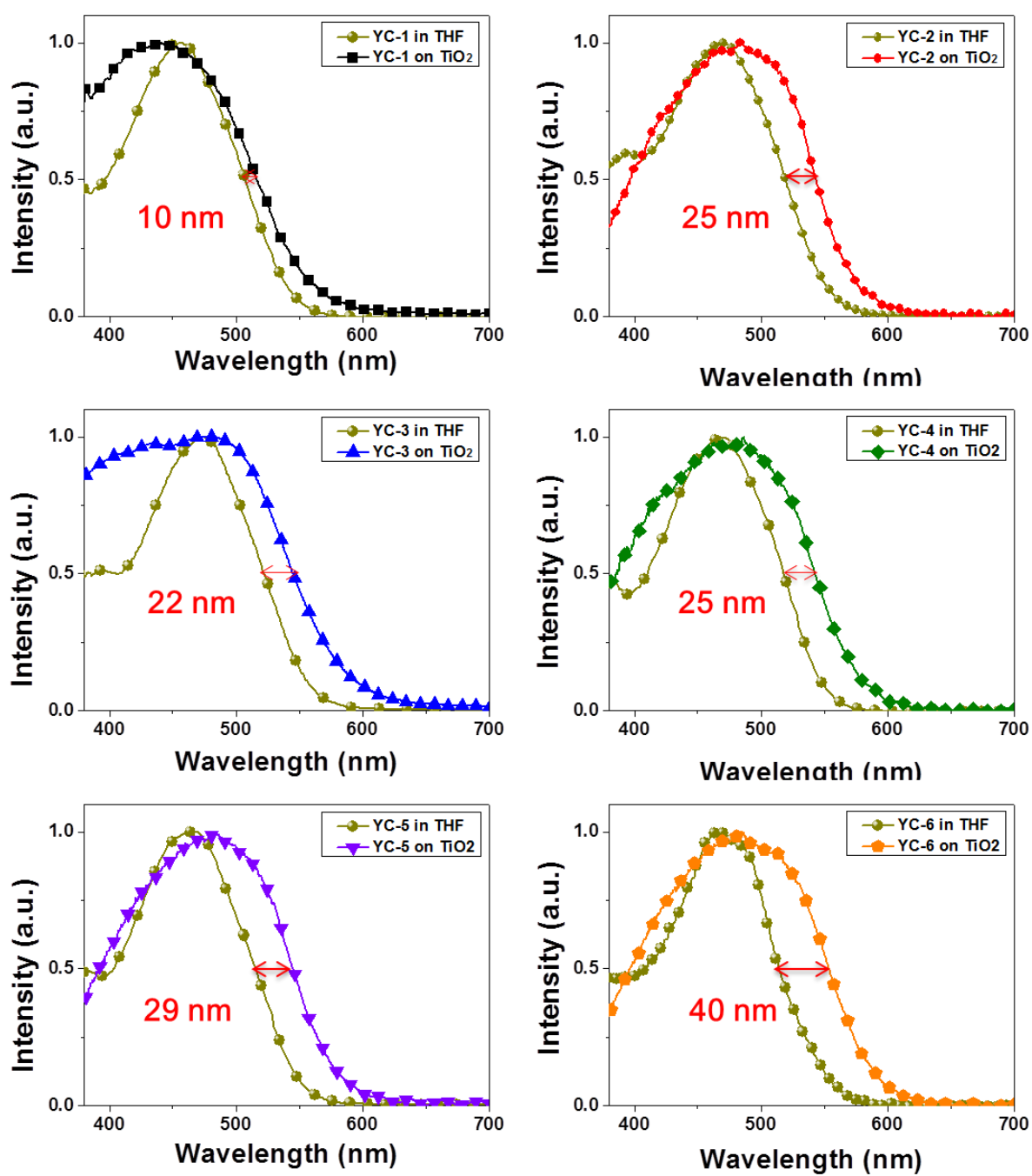


Fig. S1 Absorption spectra of YC dyes in THF (10 μ M) and on the TiO₂ film.

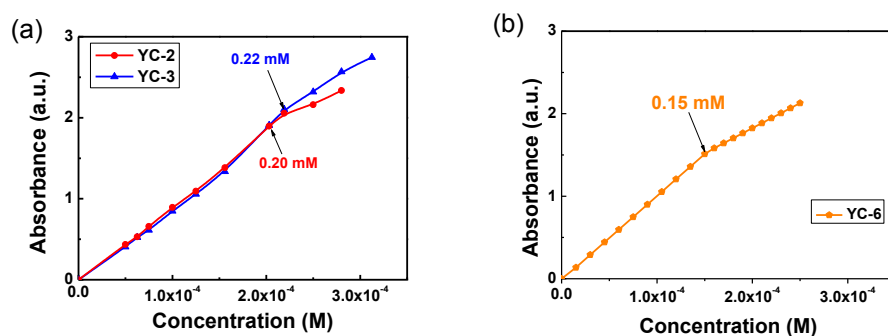


Fig. S2 Absorbance vs. concentration plots for (a) YC-2, YC-3, and (b) YC-6 dyes in THF.

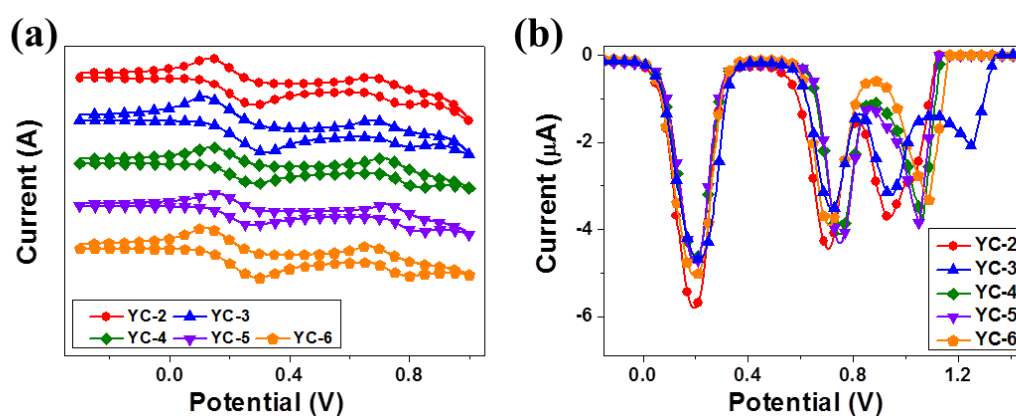


Fig. S3 (a) Cyclic voltammograms and (b) differential pulse voltammograms of dyes in THF (1 mM).

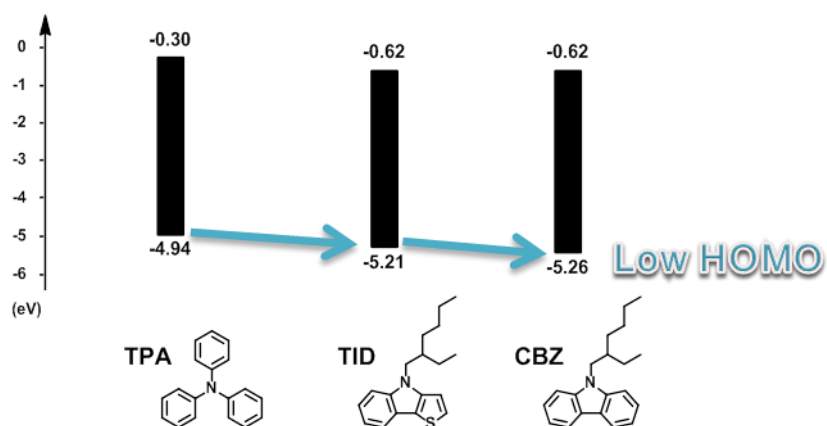


Fig. S4 Energy level diagram in the gas-phase for donors.

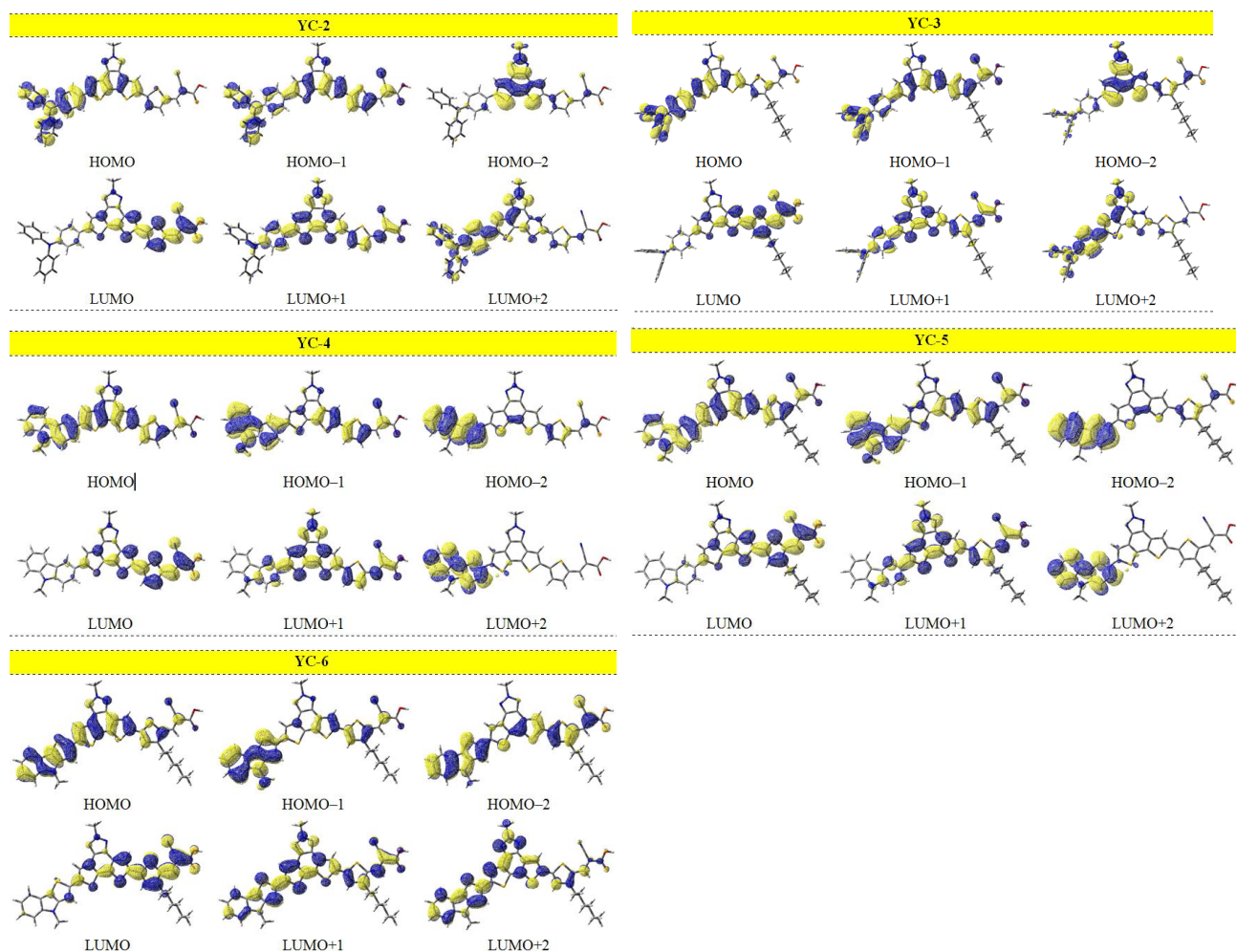


Fig. S5 Selected frontier orbitals of the dyes.

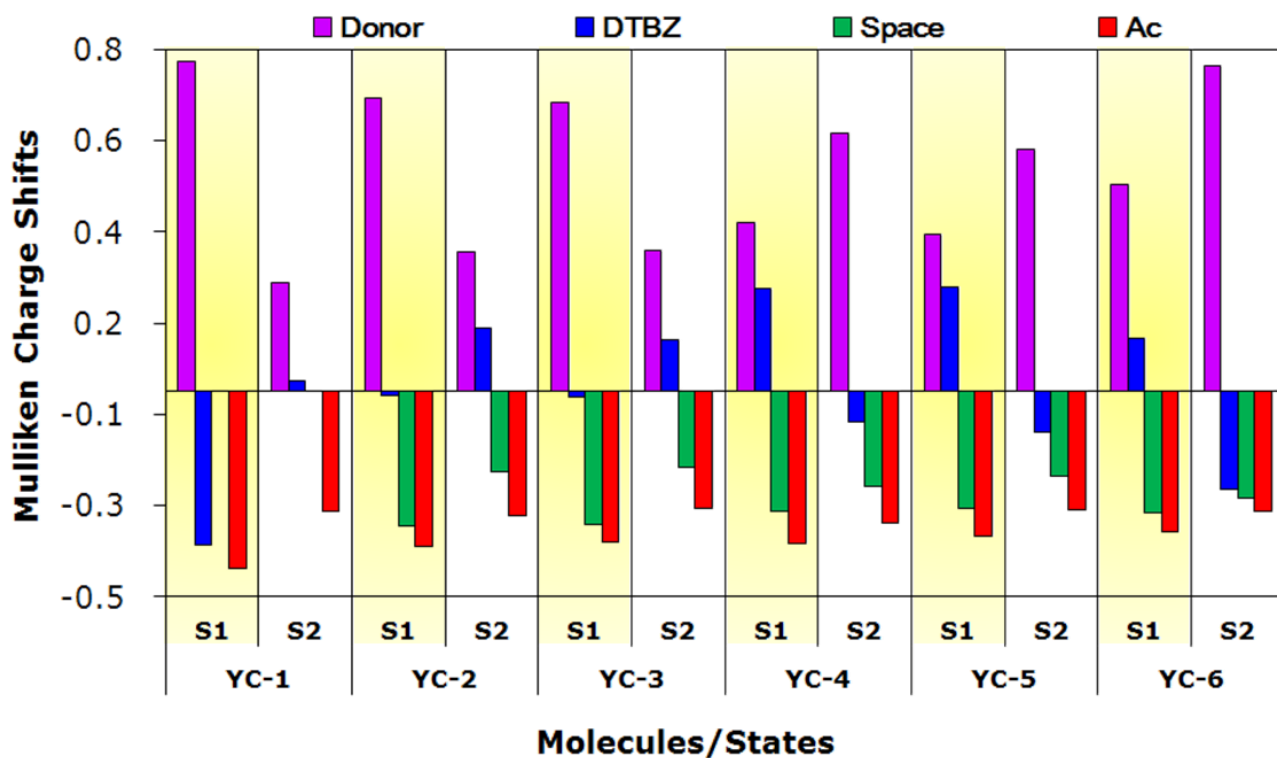


Fig. S6 Plot of the difference in the Mulliken charges between the ground and the excited states.

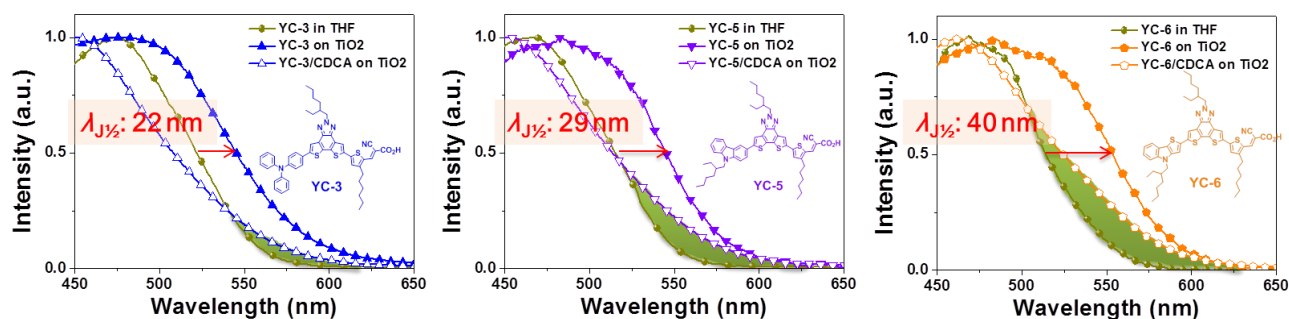


Fig. S7 Absorption spectra of YC-6 in THF and on the TiO₂ film in comparison with that of YC-3 and YC-5.

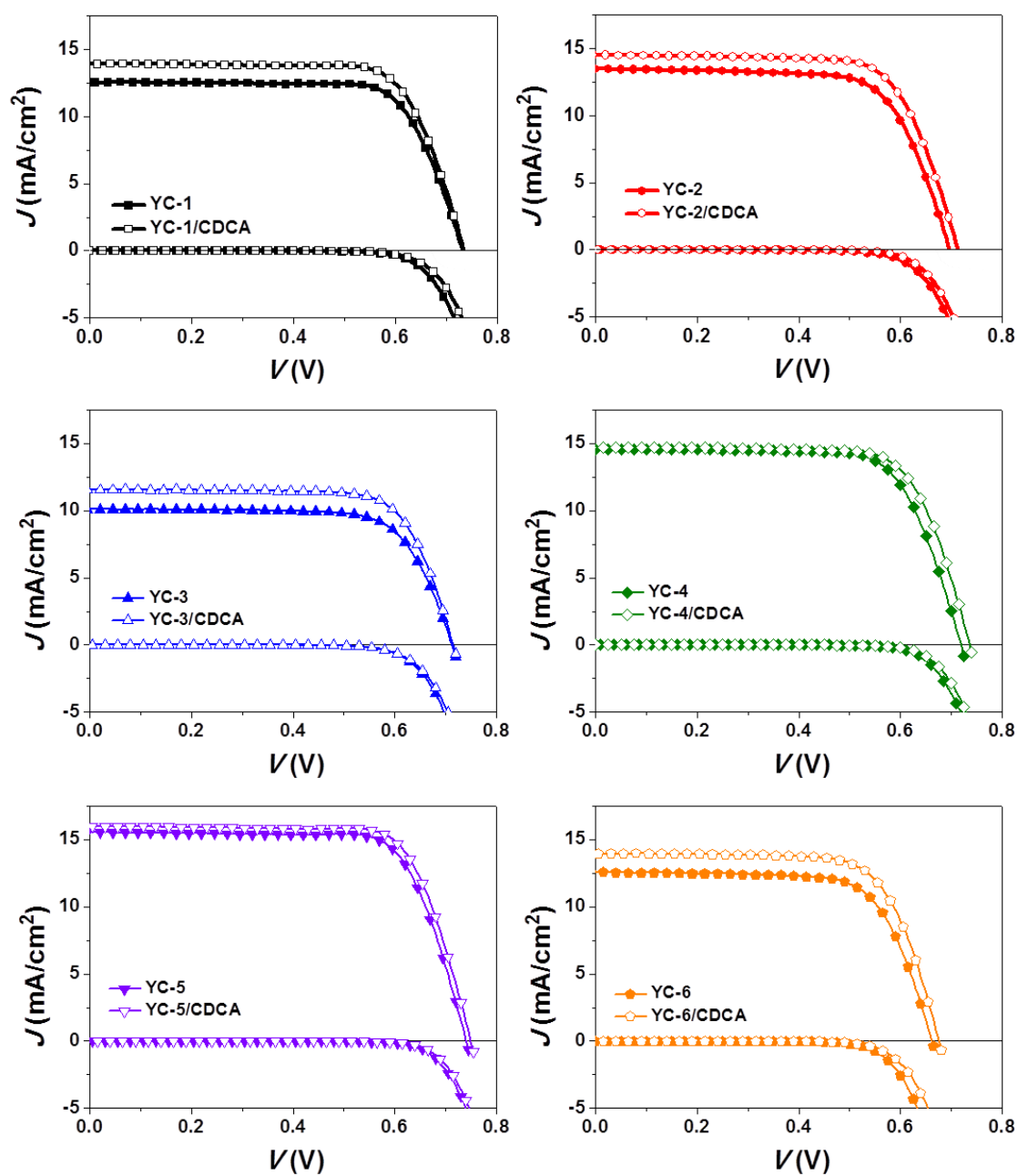


Fig. S8 J - V curves of DSSCs based on the dyes with and without CDCA as coadsorbent.

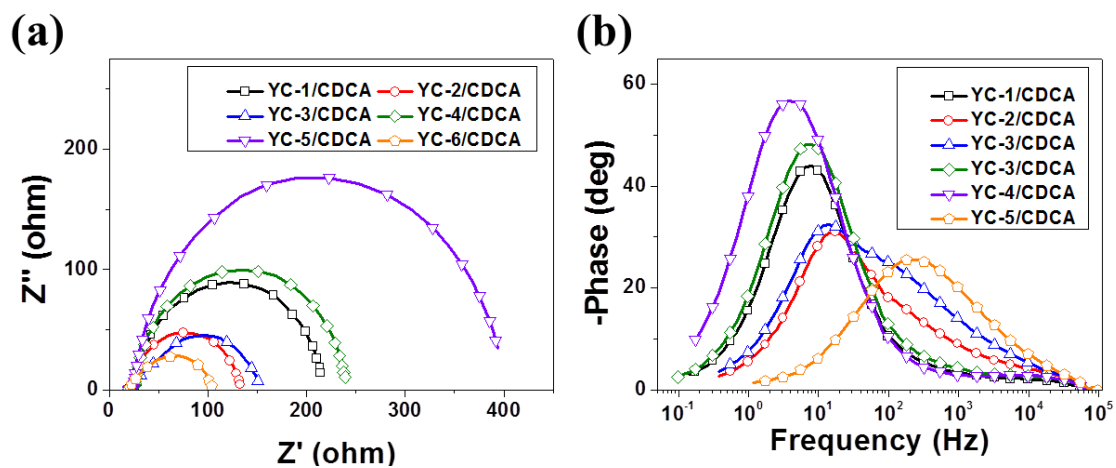


Fig. S9 (a) Nyquist and (b) Bode plots of the DSSCs with the dyes and CDCA in the dark.

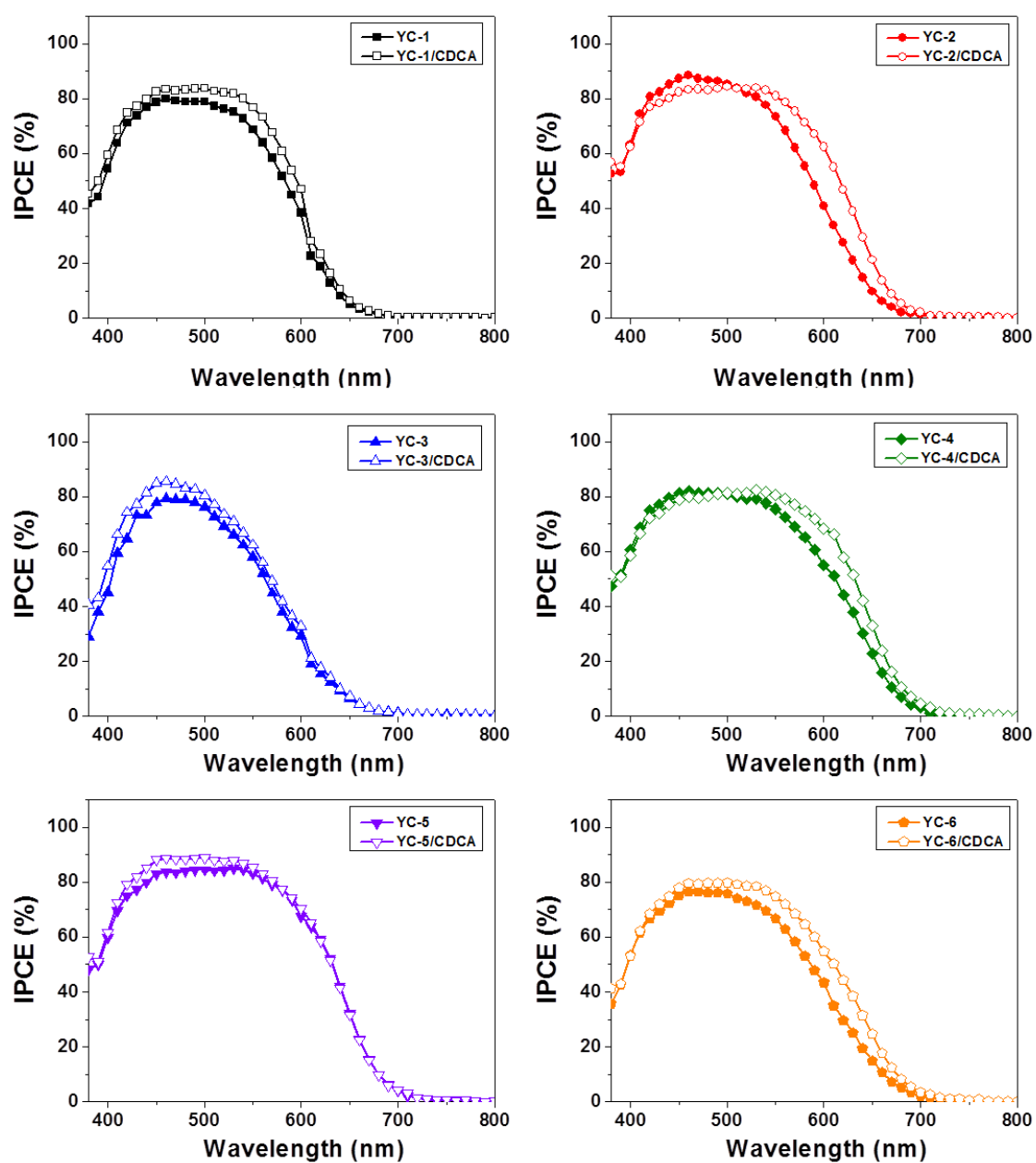


Fig. S10 IPCE plots of DSSCs based on the dyes with and without CDCA as coadsorbent.

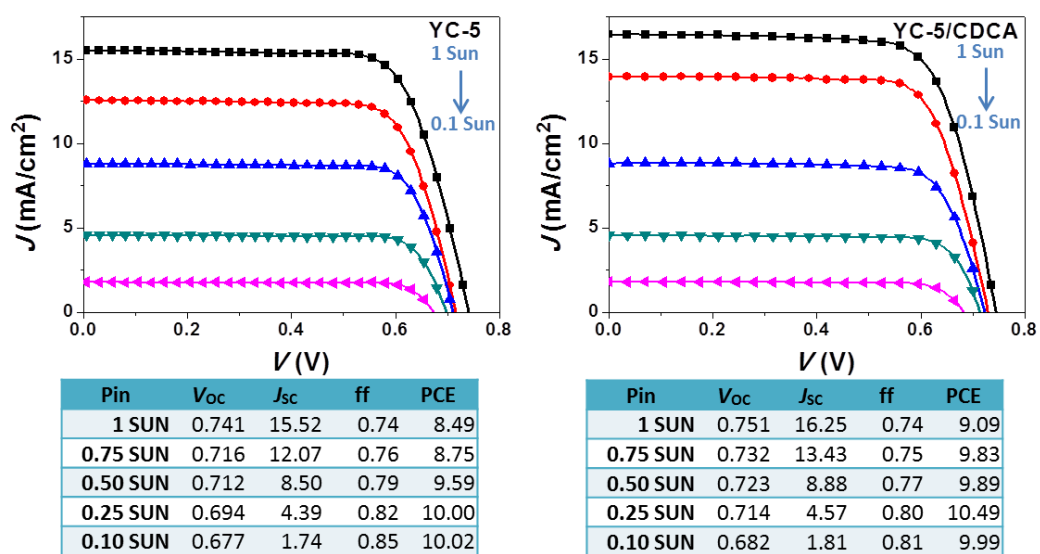


Fig. S11 J - V curves of the DSSCs based on the **YC-5** sensitizers with and without CDCA as coadsorbent under the different illumination.

Table S1. Calculated low-lying transition for the dye molecules^a

Dye	State	Excitation ^b	λ_{cal} (eV)	f^c	Δ (Mulliken charge), ^d e
YC-1	S ₁	H → L (99%)	2.17	0.64	DG: 0.72, DTBZ: -0.34, Ac: -0.39
	S ₂	H1 → L (92%), H → L1 (7%)	2.96	0.66	DG: 0.24, DTBZ: 0.02, Ac: -0.26
	S ₃	H2 → L (98%)	3.22	0.05	DG: -0.03, DTBZ: 0.49, Ac: -0.45
YC-2	S ₁	H → L (100%)	2.04	0.77	DG: 0.64, DTBZ: -0.01, T: -0.29, Ac: -0.34
	S ₂	H1 → L (95%)	2.64	0.86	DG: 0.31, DTBZ: 0.14, T: -0.17, Ac: -0.27
	S ₃	H → L1 (89%)	2.96	0.29	DG: 0.45, DTBZ: -0.23, T: -0.07, Ac: -0.14
YC-3	S ₁	H → L (99%)	2.10	0.77	DG: 0.63, DTBZ: -0.01, T6: -0.29, Ac: -0.33
	S ₂	H1 → L (95%)	2.66	0.83	DG: 0.31, DTBZ: 0.11, T6: -0.17, Ac: -0.26
	S ₃	H → L1 (90%)	2.99	0.27	DG: 0.44, DTBZ: -0.23, T6: -0.07, Ac: -0.14
YC-4	S ₁	H → L (99%)	2.23	1.06	DG: 0.37, DTBZ: 0.22, T: -0.26, Ac: -0.33
	S ₂	H1 → L (96%)	2.84	0.40	DG: 0.57, DTBZ: -0.07, T: -0.21, Ac: -0.29
	S ₃	H2 → L (85%), H → L1 (5%)	3.02	0.15	DG: 0.68, DTBZ: -0.10, T: -0.27, Ac: -0.31
YC-5	S ₁	H → L (99%)	2.27	1.10	DG: 0.34, DTBZ: 0.23, T6: -0.26, Ac: -0.32
	S ₂	H1 → L (95%)	2.87	0.39	DG: 0.53, DTBZ: -0.09, T6: -0.18, Ac: -0.26
	S ₃	H2 → L (88%), H → L1 (8%)	3.07	0.12	DG: 0.69, DTBZ: -0.14, T6: -0.26, Ac: -0.29
YC-6	S ₁	H → L (100%)	2.11	1.12	DG: 0.45, DTBZ: 0.12, T6: -0.26, Ac: -0.31
	S ₂	H1 → L (94%)	2.68	0.29	DG: 0.71, DTBZ: -0.22, T6: -0.23, Ac: -0.26
	S ₃	H2 → L (52%), H → L1 (46%)	2.81	0.56	DG: 0.34, DTBZ: -0.12, T6: -0.08, Ac: -0.14

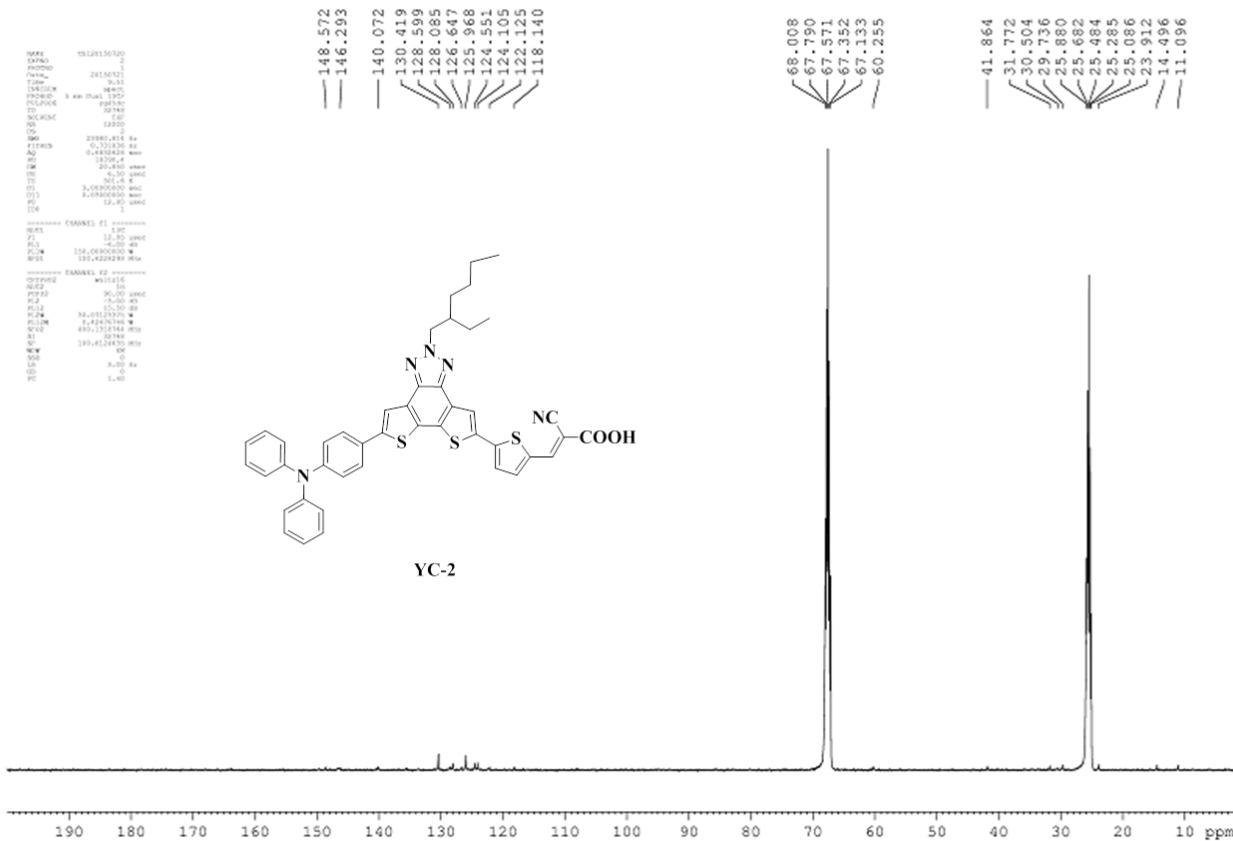
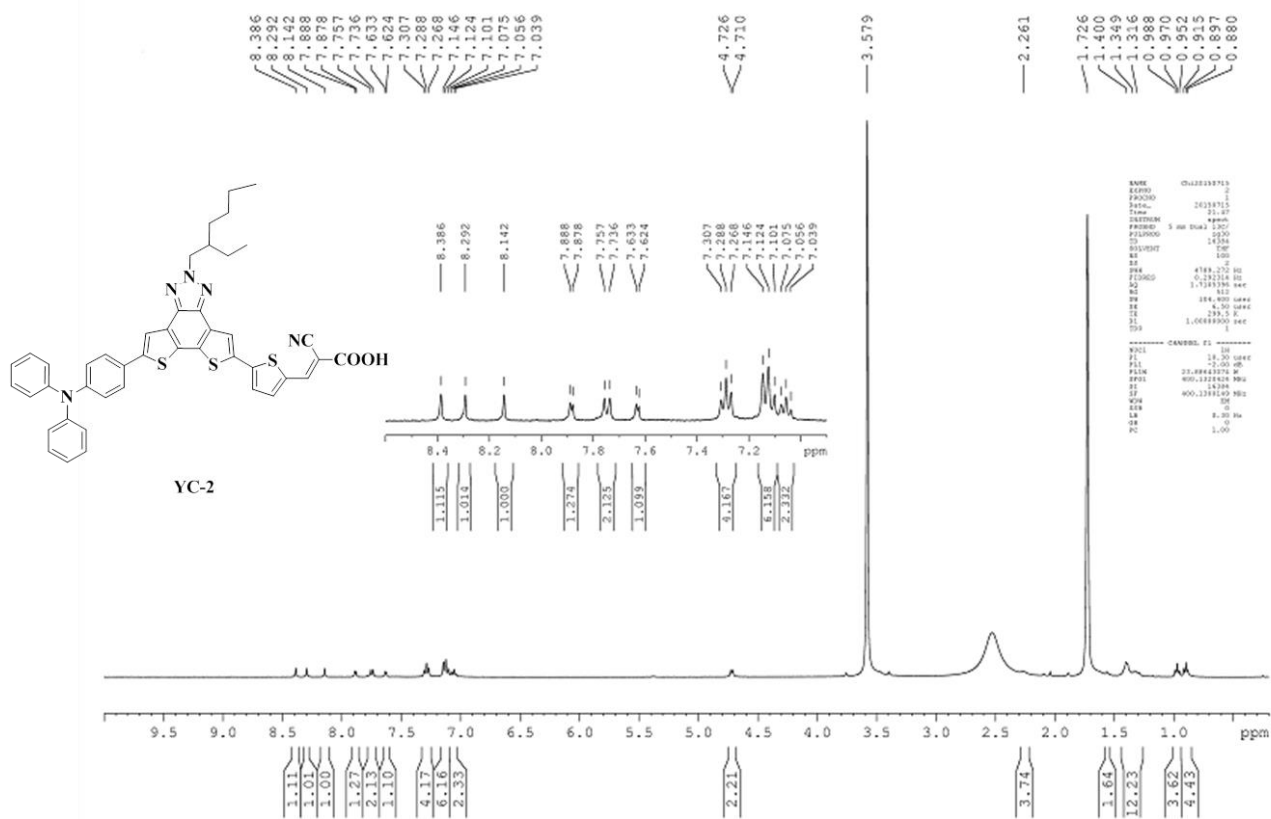
^a Results are based on gas-phase TD-DFT calculation.^b H = HOMO, L = LUMO, H1 = The next highest occupied molecular orbital, or HOMO-1, H2 = HOMO-2, L1 = LUMO+1, L2 = LUMO+2. In parentheses is the population of a pair of MO excitations.^c Oscillator strength.^d The difference of the Mulliken charge between the ground state and excited state.**Table S2.** Dipole moments of the dye molecules

	Dipole Moment (Debye)			
	x	y	z	total
YC-1	4.76	5.30	1.07	7.20
YC-2	7.35	-0.47	-0.17	7.37
YC-3	6.78	-2.48	0.49	7.23
YC-4	8.04	-2.58	-0.66	8.47
YC-5	6.86	-5.04	-0.73	8.55
YC-6	4.47	-4.76	-0.54	6.56

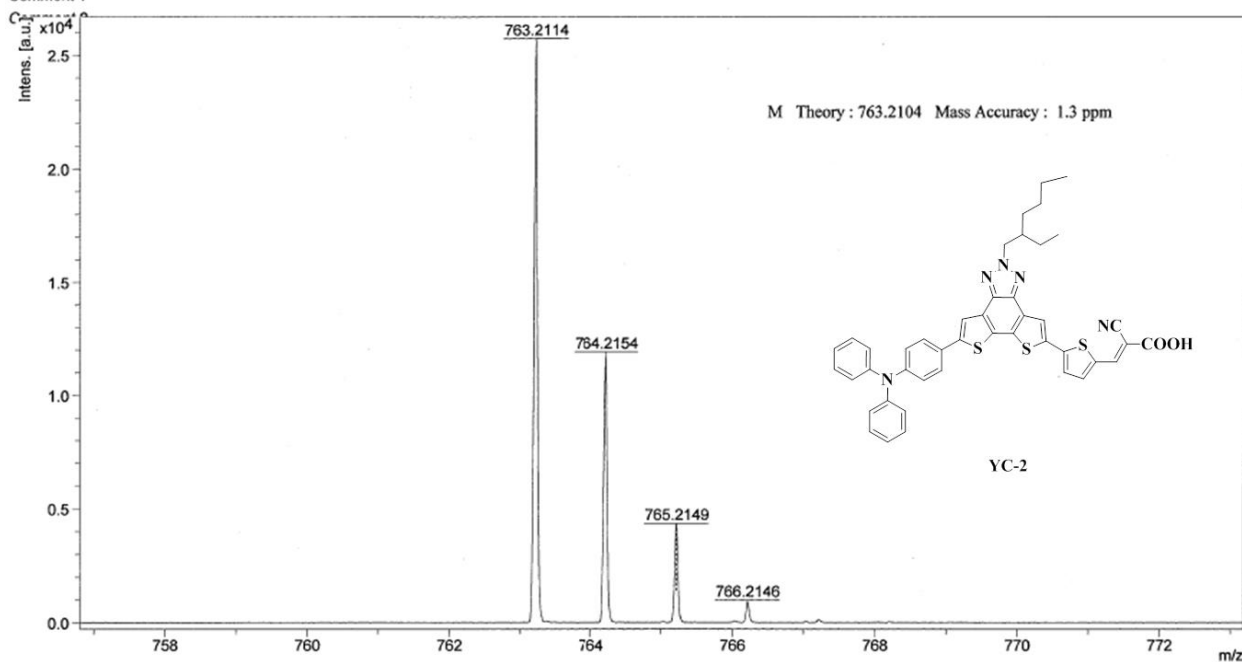
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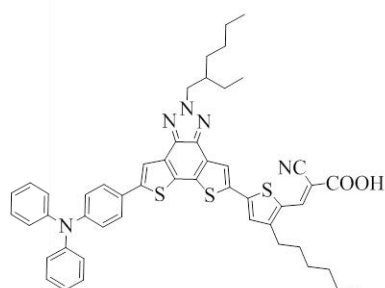


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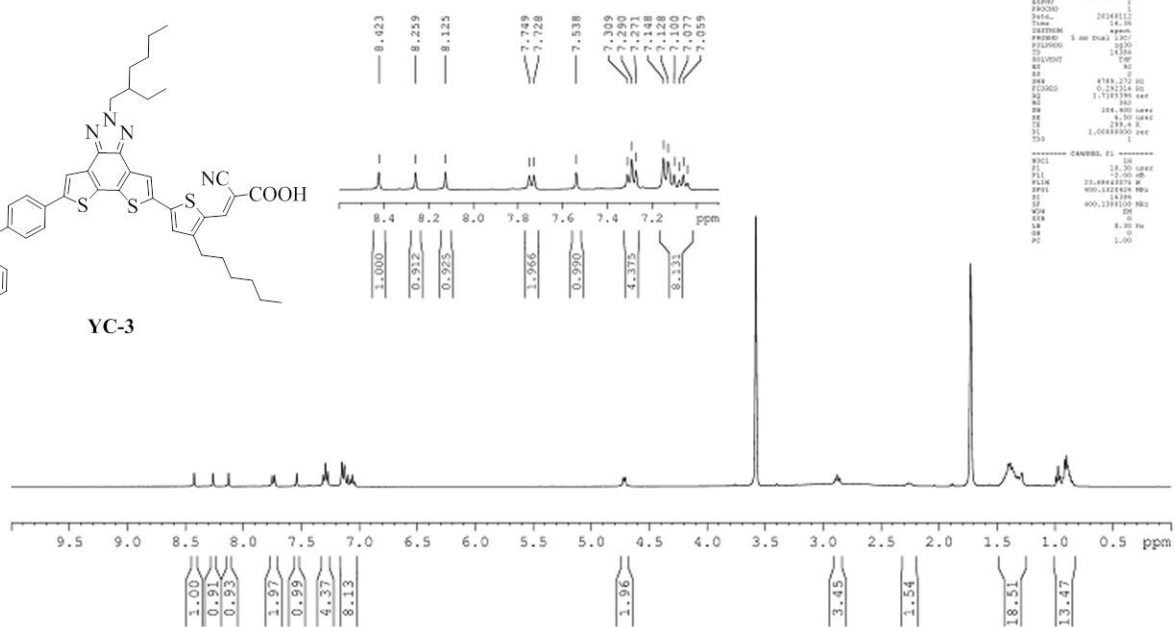
4.723
4.707

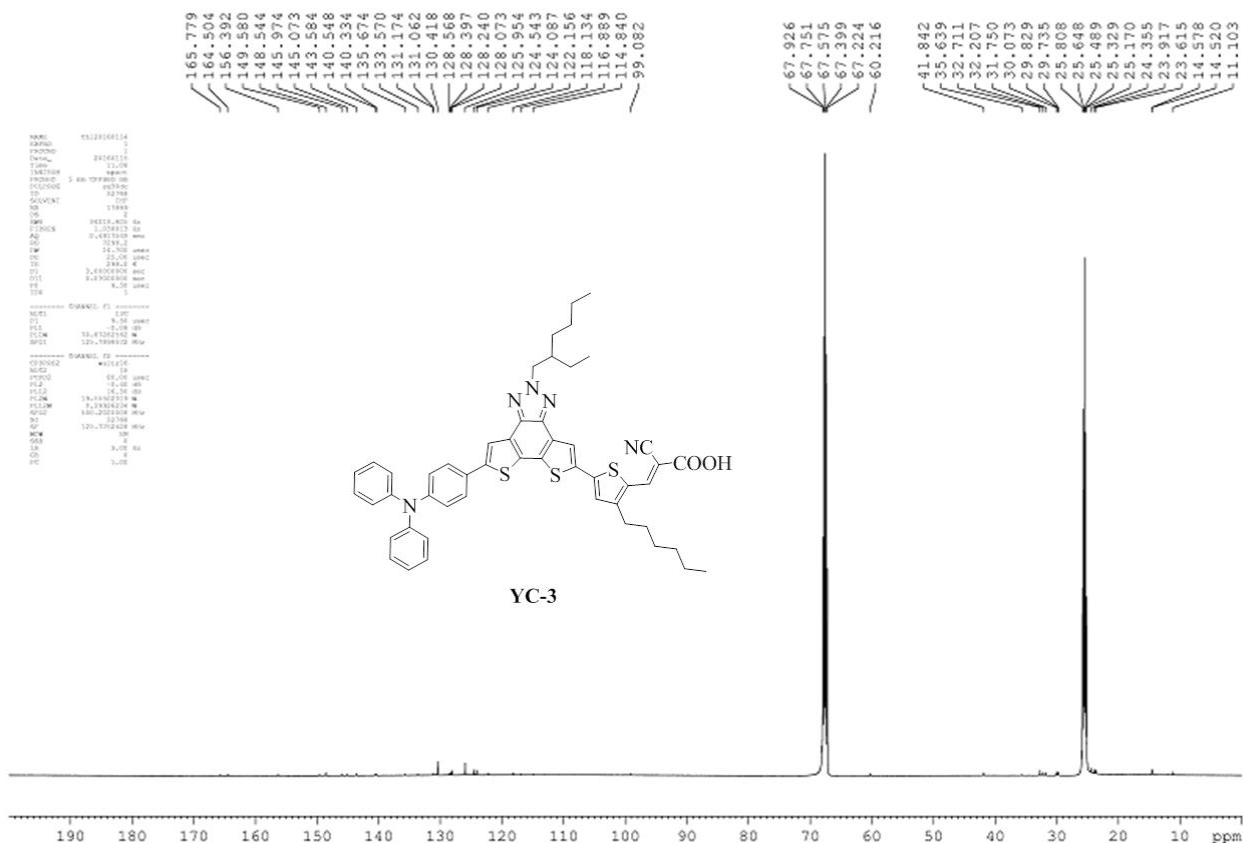
3.580

2.896
2.877
2.658
2.271
2.257
1.419
1.402
1.387
1.369
1.352
1.335
1.318
1.287
0.991
0.973
0.955
0.932
0.916
0.899
0.881



YC-3





[Elemental Composition]

Date : 16Jan19_08-001

Date : 19-Jan-2016 15:49

Page: 1

Sample: YC-6

Note : NBA

Inlet : Direct

Ion Mode : FAB+

RT : 0.14 min

Scan#: (1,6)

Elements : C 1000/0, H 1000/0, O 2/2, N 5/5, S 3/3

Mass Tolerance : 10mmu

Unsaturation (U.S.) : -0.5 - 1000.0

Observed m/z Int% Err[ppm / mmu] U.S. Composition

847.3053 100.0 +0.5 / +0.5 32.0 C 50 H 49 O 2 N 5 S 3 =847.3048

[Mass Spectrum]

Date : 16Jan19_08-001

Date : 19-Jan-2016 15:49

Sample: YC-6

Note : NBA

Inlet : Direct

Ion Mode : FAB+

Spectrum Type : Normal Ion (CF-Linear)

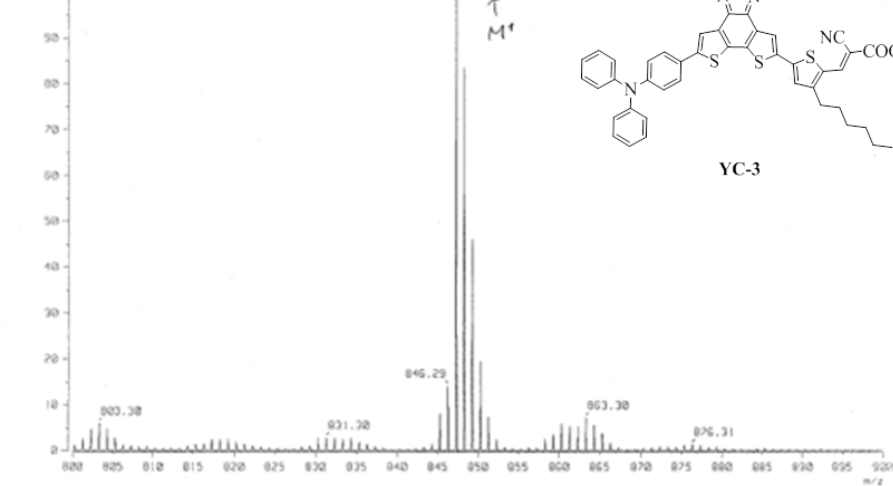
RT : 0.14 min

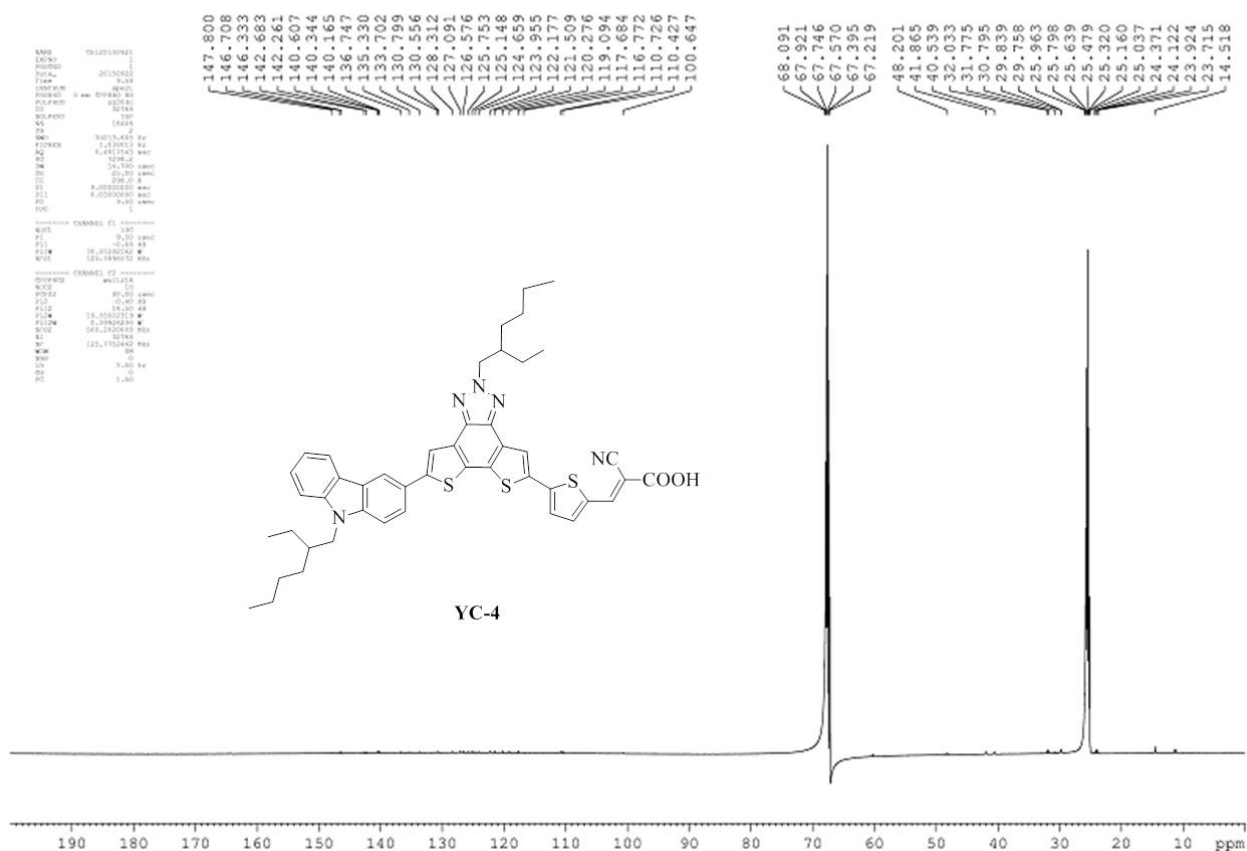
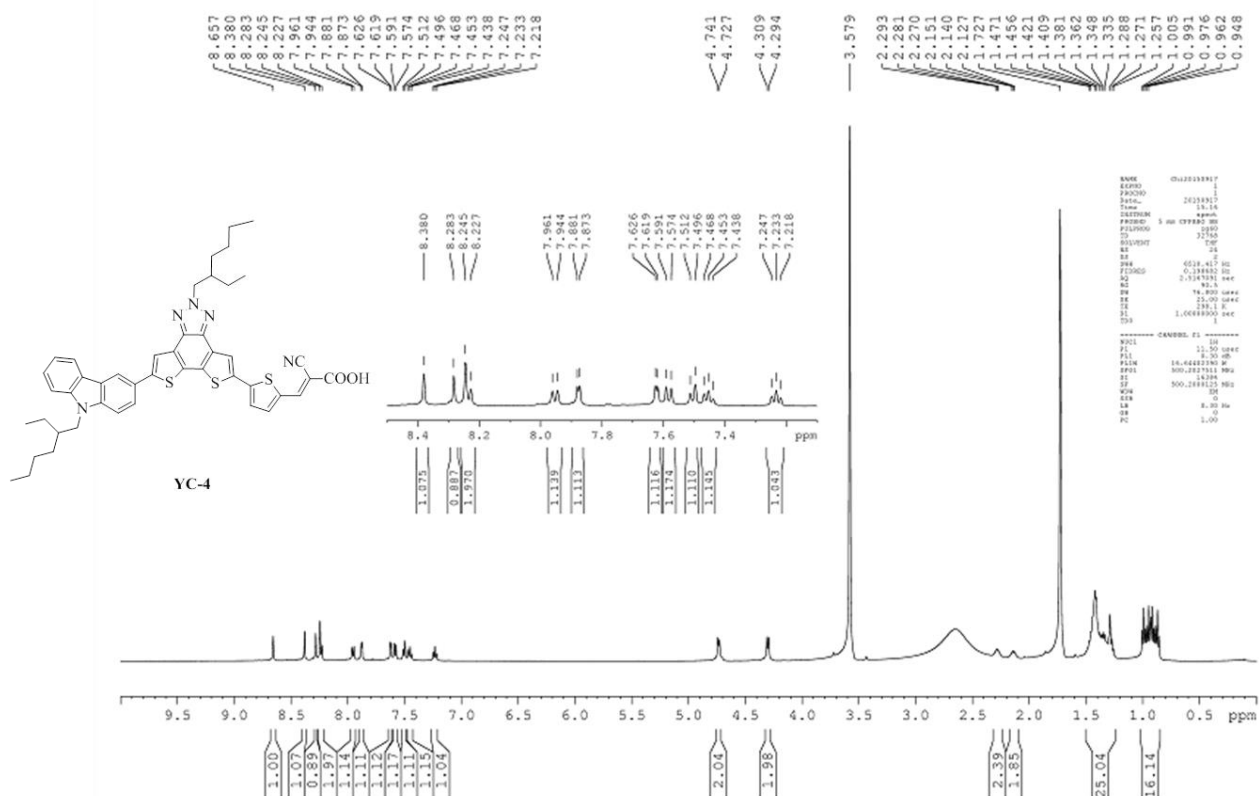
Scan#: (1,6)

CP : m/z 847.3053 Int. : 19.25

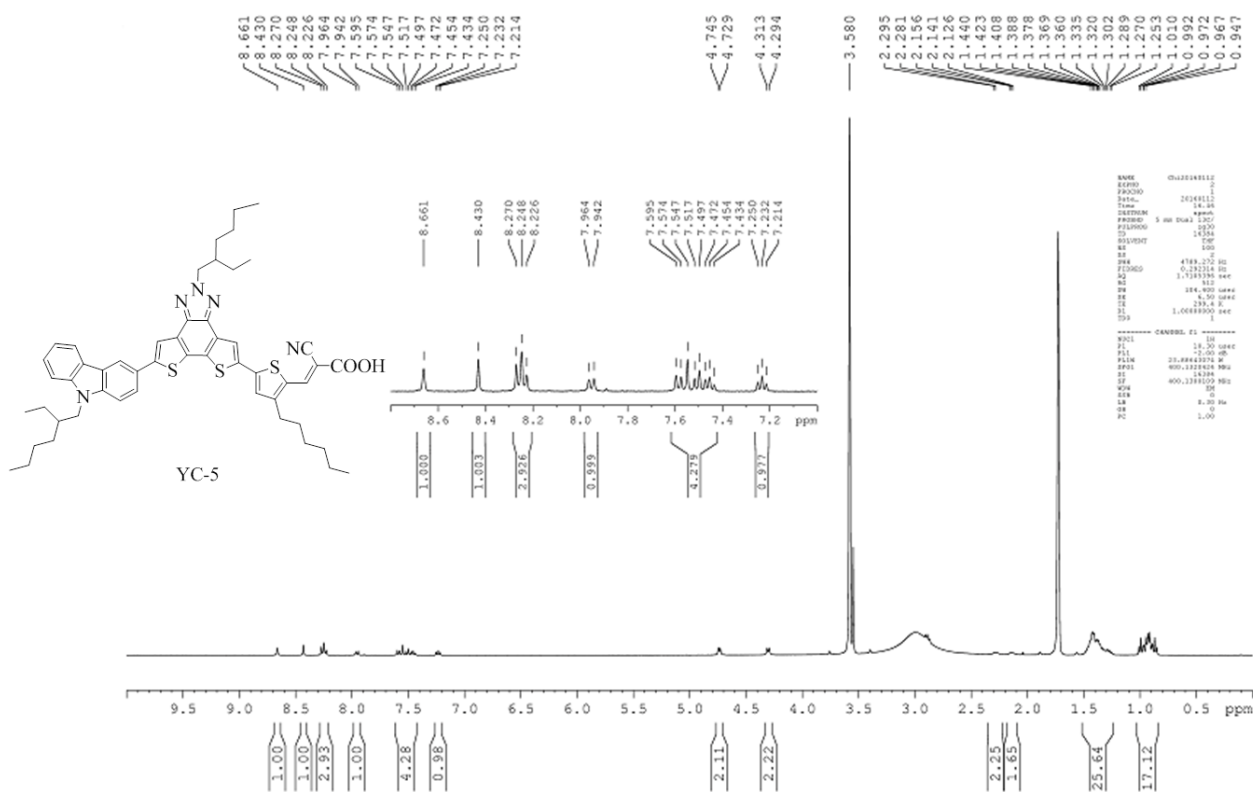
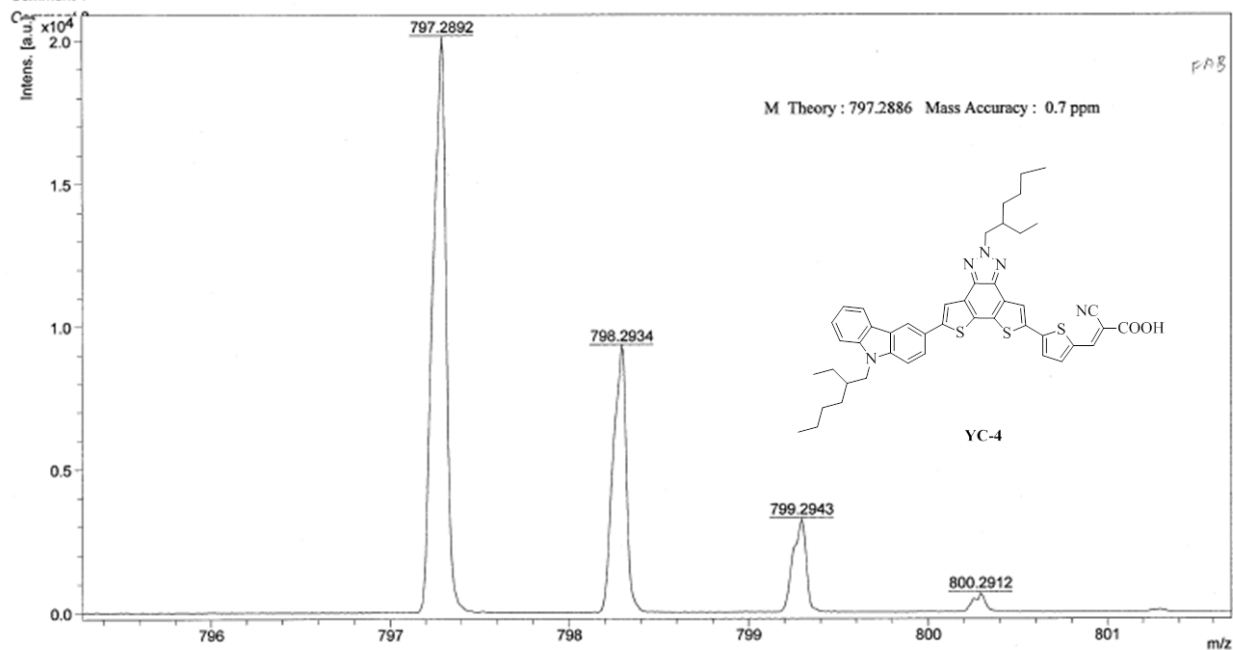
Output m/z range : 800.0000 to 900.0000

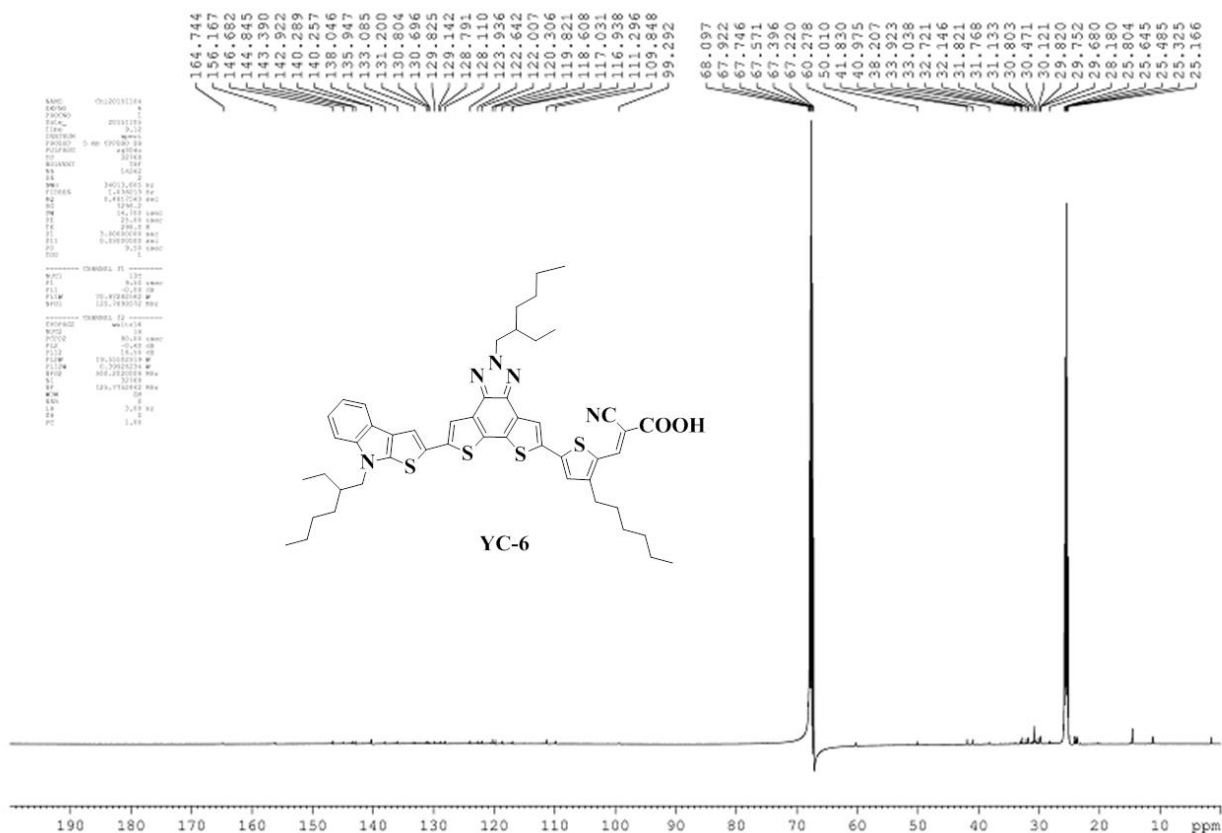
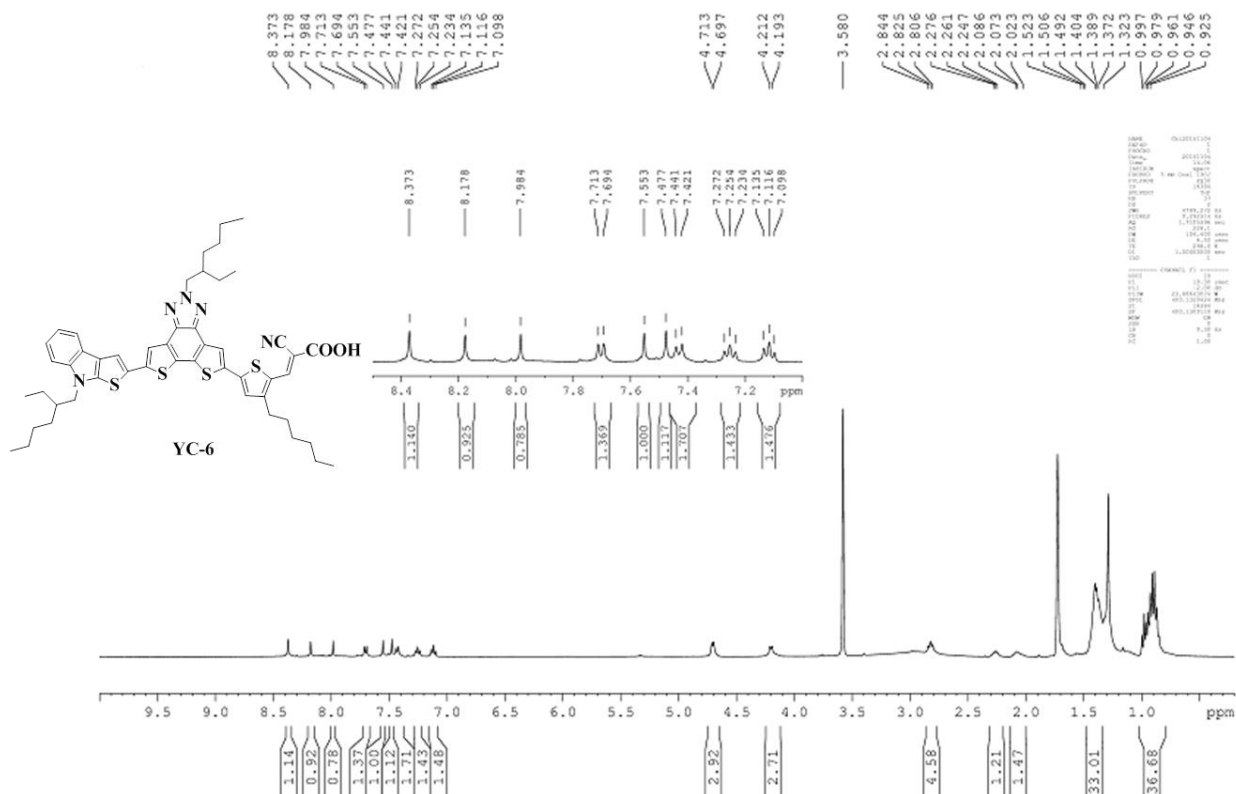
Cut Level : 8.00 %





Comment 1





[Elemental Composition]

Data : 15Nov13_03-002

Date : 13-Nov-2015 12:50

Page: 1

Sample: YC-5

Note : NBA

Inlet : Direct

Ion Mode : FAB+

RT : 0.13 min

Scan#: (1,5)

Elements : C 1000/0, H 1000/0, O 2/2, N 5/5, S 4/4

Mass Tolerance : 20mmu

Unsaturation (U.S.) : -0.5 - 1000.0

Observed m/z	Int%	Err[ppm / mmu]	U.S. Composition
887.3391	100.0	-0.5 / -0.4	29.0 C 50 H 57 O 2 N 5 S 4 = 887.3395

[Mass Spectrum]

Data : 15Nov13_03-002

Date : 13-Nov-2015 12:50

Sample: YC-5

Note : NBA

Inlet : Direct

Ion Mode : FAB+

Spectrum Type : Normal [on (EF-Linear)]

RT : 0.13 min

Scan#: (1,5)

Q1 : m/z 887.3391

Int. : 20.56

Output m/z range : 850.0000 to 950.0000

Cut Level : 0.00 %

