Electronic Supplementary Information (ESI)

Structural Variations vs Energy Loss in Regioregular Narrow

Band Gap Polymer Solar Cells

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1. General methods

Ultraviolet-Visible (UV-Vis) absorption spectra were recorded on a DU-800 spectrometer. Nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectra were obtained on Varian 500 MHz spectrometer. Gel permeation chromatography (GPC) was performed in chloroform (CHCl₃) on a Waters 2690 Separation Module equipped with a Waters 2414 Refractive Index Detector and a Waters 2996 Photodiode Array Detector. Molecular weights were calculated relative to linear PS standards. Thermogravimetric analysis (TGA) was carried out using a Perkin Elmer TGA4000 instrument with about 3-5 mg polymer samples at a rate of 10 °C / min in the temperature range of 25 to 700 °C. Differential scanning calorimetry (DSC) was determined by a TA Instruments DSC (Model Q-20) with about 3-5 mg polymer samples at a rate of 10 °C / min in the temperature range of 30 to 300 °C. Cyclic voltammetry (CV) measurements were conducted using a standard three-electrode configuration under an argon atmosphere. A three-electrode cell was equipped with a glassy carbon working electrode, an Ag wire reference electrode and a Pt wire counter-electrode. The measurements were performed in absolute acetonitrile with tetrabutylammoniumhexafluorophosphate (0.1 M) as the supporting electrolyte at a scan rate of 100 mV/s. Polymer films for CV test were drop-casted onto the glassy carbon working electrode from a 5 mg/mL chloroform solution. The absolute energy level of ferrocene/ferrocenium (Fc/Fc⁺) to be 4.8 eV below vacuum. Atomic force microscopy (AFM) was conducted on an Asylum Research MFP 3D AFM, transmission electron microscopy (TEM) images were obtained using a Veeco Multimode V instrument and Tecnai T2 transmission electron microscope. 2D grazing-incidence wide-angle X-ray scattering (GIWAXS) measurements were performed at the Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Lightsource (SSRL) on Beamline 11-3, with a MAR345 image plate area detector, at 12.7 keV incident photon energy, and at incident angles of 0.12°. Thin film illumination occurred in a helium atmosphere to minimize X-ray beam damage.

Experimental section for EQE/EL: EQE characteristics were measured in a nitrogenfilled glovebox using a setup consisting of a 75 W Xe light source, monochromator,

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optical chopper, lock-in amplifier, and a National Institute of Standards and Technology calibrated silicon photodiode for power-density calibration. To obtain sub-bandgap EQE, higher sensitivity settings were used with a longer time delay between measurement points. Electroluminescence spectra for the bilayers were collected directly from the solar cell devices, by applying a bias that is close to the turn-on voltage of the devices. The resulting emission was collected with a Si CCD camera cooled to -70°C. The spectra were corrected for detector response using a blackbody spectrum.

All DFT calculations were carried out using the long-range corrected ω B97X-D functional with the 6-31G(d,p) basis set. The randomly generated donor:acceptor complexes were optimized in the gas phase at the ω B97X-D/6-31G(d,p) level of theory. Excited-state energies were calculated at the TD-DFT level using the Tamm-Dancoff approximation and considering the ground-state geometries. The impact of the surrounding dielectric medium (electron polarization effects) on E_{CT} was taken into account by combining the DFT calculations with the polarizable continuum model (PCM). Furthermore, the range separation parameter ω of the ω B97XD functional is optimally tuned in the presence of the dielectric medium; all excited-state calculations were carried out with the PCM-tuned ω value. All DFT calculations reported here were performed with the Gaussian 09 package.⁴

2. Synthesis and characterizations



Scheme S1. Synthesis of PIFCF and PSFCF.

4,7-Dibromo-5-fluorobenzo[c][1,2,5]thiadiazole and benzo[1,2-b:4,5-b]bis-2bromo-4,4'-dihexyl-4*H*-silolo[3,2-b]thiophene)were purchased from 1-Materials Co. Tris(dibenzylideneacetone)dipalladium (0) [Pd₂dba₃] and tri-*o*-tolylphopine [P-(*o*-tol)₃] and tetrakis(triphenylphosphine)palladium(0) [Pd(PPh₃)₄] were purchased from

Strem Chemicals Inc. Compound 5,5'-bis(trimethylstannyl)-4,4-bis(2-

ethylhexyl)cyclopenta-[2,1-b: 3,4-b']-dithiophene (bis-CPDT-tin)¹,{4,4,9,9-

Tetrakis(4-hexylphenyl)-4,9-dihydro-s-indaceno[1,2-b:5,6-b']dithiophene-2,7-

diyl}bis(trimethylstannane) (2)² benzo[1,2-b:4,5-b]bis(2-trimethylstannyl-4,4'dihexyl-4H-

silolo[3,2-b]thiophene) (**3**)³ were prepared by methods similar to those reported in the literature. All the solvents were distillated before used.

5,5'-bis{(4-(6-fluoro-7-bromo-[1,2,5]thiadiazolobenzene)}-{4,4-bis(2-

ethylhexyl)cyclopenta-[2,1-b: 3,4-b']-dithiophene} (**1**): A 20 mL reaction vial was charged with bis-CPDT-tin (500 mg, 0.687 mmol, 1.0 eq), 4,7-Dibromo-5-fluorobenzo[*c*][1,2,5]thiadiazole (535 mg, 1.717 mmol, 2.5 eq), Pd(PPh₃)₄ (80 mg, 0.069 mmol, 0.10 eq), and dry toluene (15 mL) inside a dry nitrogen box. The reaction vial was then sealed using a Teflon®cap and moved out of the dry box. The reaction mixture was stirred at 90 °C in a conventional oil bath for 72 h. The resulting mixture was first passed through a short silica gel column by using chloroform as

eluent. After the chloroform solution was concentrated to dryness, a second purification step via column chromatography (10~30% DCM in hexane gradient) was needed to give analytically pure **1** (356 mg, 60%) as a dark powder. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 500 MHz, δ) 8.15 (s, 2H), 7.72 (d, 2H), 2.13-2.04 (m, 4H),1.08-0.80 (m, 18H), 0.68-0.65 (m, 12H). ¹³C NMR(CDCl₃, 500 MHz, δ):161.9, 159.9, 159.8, 154.4, 154.3, 148.2, 140.1, 138.5, 128.2, 128.1, 124.3,114.7, 114.4, 95.5, 95.3, 54.5, 43.2, 35.4, 34.3, 28.6, 27.5, 22.8, 14.0, 10.7.

PIFCF: **1** (86.5 mg, 0.1 mmol), **2** (123.3 mg, 0.1 mmol), tri(*o*-tolyl)phosphine (8 mg, 0.032 mmol), and Pd₂(dba)₃ (4 mg, 0.004 mmol) were dissolved in 5/0.5 mL dry toluene/DMF under argon. After stirred at 110 °C for 1 h, the mixture become very sticky and hardly to be stirred, after kept at 110 °C for 24 h, the mixture was cooled to room temperatures and precipitated in methanol (70 mL). The precipitate was filtered and washed with methanol (12 h) and hexane (12 h) successively in a soxhlet apparatus to remove oligomers and catalyst residue. Finally, the polymer was extracted with chloroform (24 h). The chloroform fraction was concentrated and precipitated in methanol. The polymer was precipitated and collected via filter paper, dried over in the vacuum line to give 150 mg dark solid, yield 89%. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 500 MHz, δ) 8.25 (m, 2H), 8.10 (m, 2H), 7.72 (m, 4H), 7.58 (m, 2h), 7.28 (m, 8H) 7.11 (m, 8H), 2.58 (m, 6H) 2.04 (br, 2H), 1.55-0.65 (br, 76H); *M*_n = 17,000 g/mol, *M*_w = 28,600 g/mol, *PDI* = 1.7.

PSFCF: 1 (86.5 mg, 0.1 mmol), **3** (96.1 mg, 0.1 mmol), Pd(PPh₃)₄ (5.8 mg, 0.005 mmol), xylene (2 mL) were added to a 2-5 mL microwave tube in the nitrogen atmosphere glovebox. The tube was and subjected to the following reaction conditions in the microwave reactor: 80 °C for 2 min, 130 °C for 2 min, 160 °C for 2 min, 185 °C for 2 min and 200 °C for 40 min. The reaction was allowed to cool to room temperature, the polymer was precipitated in methanol. The precipitates were collected by a cellulose extraction thimble and extracted with methanol, hexane, dichloromethane and chloroform respectively via a Soxhlet extractor. The chloroform solution was concentrated under vacuum. Then concentrated polymer solution was dropwise to the methanol under the stirring. The polymer was precipitated and collected via

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filter paper, dried over in the vacuum line to give 100 mg dark solid, yield 72 %. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 500 MHz, δ) 8.34 (br, 2H), 8.14 (br, 2H), 7.76 (br, 4H) 1.49-0.80 (br, 62H), 0.69 (m, 24H); M_n = 36,000 g/mol, M_w = 57,600 g/mol, *PDI* = 1.6.



Figure S1. Aromatic region (8.9 \sim 6.8 ppm) of 2D ¹H-¹H NOESY NMR spectrum of 1 and 2 in CDCl₃ at room temperature with a concentration of ca.35 mg/mL. Crosspeaks(blue)indicates the spatial interaction between H1and H2, due to fast rotation of the C-C single bond between two aromatic units.



Figure S2. ¹H NMR spectrum of PIFCF in CDCl₃



Figure S3. ¹H NMR spectrum of PSFCF in CDCl₃

3. Thermogravimetric analysis and Differential scanning calorimetry



Figure S4. Thermogravimetric analysis with a heating rate of 10 °C/min under an inert atmosphere (N_2), the dash line indicates 95% decomposition.



Figure S5. Differential scanning calorimetry curves with a heating rate of 10 °C/min under an inert atmosphere (Ar).

4. UV-vis absorption



Figure S6. Film absorption of PIPCP and with fullerene blend films.



Figure S7. FBT analogues with $PC_{71}BM$ blend films on quartz substrates (Both blend films were prepared according to the optimal device condition: polymer: $PC_{71}BM=2:1$, chloroform with optimal DIO, the thickness is around 100 nm).



5. Cyclic voltammetry

Figure S8. Oxidation onsets of polymers PIPCP, PIFCF and PSFCF.

6. Mobility measurements by space charge limited current method

Hole-only and electron-only devices were fabricated to measure the hole and electron mobilities using the space charge limited current (SCLC) method. The hole-only device structure is ITO/PEDOT:PSS/polymer/Au (50 nm) and the electron-only device structure is ITO/ZnO/Polymer:PC₇₁BM /LiF (0.6 nm)/Al. The thickness was measured by Profilometer. The mobility was determined by fitting the dark current to the model of a single carrier SCLC, which is described by the equation:

$$J = \frac{9}{8} \varepsilon_0 \varepsilon_r \mu \frac{V^2}{d^3}$$

where J is the current, ε_0 is the permittivity of free space, ε_r is the relative permittivity of the material, μ is the zero-field mobility, d is the thickness of the polymer layer, V is the applied voltage. Then mobilities were calculated from the fitting slope of the $J^{1/2}$ -V curves below:



Figure S9. *J-V* curves of: (a) neat polymer films hole-only diodes devices; (b) blend films hole-only diodes devices; (c) blend films electron-only diodes devices. (The solid SCLC fitting lines' slopes are 2).

7. Grazing incidence wide angle X-ray scattering



Figure S10. Neat PIPCP film cast from chloroform.



Figure S11. 2D-GIWAXS pattern(a) and TEM image (b) of optimal PSFCF:PC₇₁BM blend film.

Crystal correlation length estimates (Scherrer analysis):

The crystal correlation lengths (CCL) were estimated by the following equation:

$$CCL = \frac{2\pi}{FWHM}$$

Where FWHM is the full-width-at-half-maximum of the fitted Gaussian

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	Processing	(100)	(010)	(100)	
	Solvent	(Q _z)	(Q _z)	(Q _{xy})	
PIFCF	CF	1.7 nm	1.5 nm	5.2 nm	
PSFCF	CF	2.6 nm	2.6 nm	4.0 nm	
PIPCP	CF	2.7 nm	1.2 nm	3.8 nm	

Table S1. Summary of polymer CCL values

8. Solar Cells Performance

Device Fabrication: Solution-processed solar cells devices were fabricated with a conventional architecture of ITO/PEDOT:PSS/active layer/Ca/Al, an inverted structure of ITO/ZnO/active layer/MoO_x/Ag, respectively. The ITO-coated glass substrates were firstly cleaned by ultrasonic treatment in detergent, deionized water, acetone and isopropyl alcohol for 30 minutes each, and subsequently dried in an oven overnight. After treated with UV/ozone for 30 min, PEDOT:PSS (Al 4083) layer was deposited and dried at 150 °C in ambient atmosphere for 10 mins, ZnO (so-gel method)⁴ layer was deposited and dried at 200 °C in ambient atmosphere for 10 mins. Active layers were spun at varying spin rate from Polymer:PC₇₁BM solutions at different weight ratio, cathodes were deposited by sequential thermal evaporation of 10 nm of calcium followed by 80 nm of aluminum, for the inverted devices, cathodes were deposited by sequential thermal evaporation of 5 nm of MoO_x followed by 80 nm of silver. The device area was 4.5 mm².

Device Characterization : Photovoltaic characterization was performed on a Keithley 2602 source measure unit with a 300 W Xe arc lamp and an AM 1.5 global filter. The solar simulator illumination intensity was measured using a KG1 filter from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) with a silicon photovoltaic. EQE spectra were measured using a 75 W Xe lamp, Newport monochrometer, Newport optical chopper, and a Stanford Research Systems lock-in amplifier. Power-density calibration was done by National Institute of Standards and Technology traceable silicon photodiode.

Table S2. Performance of PIFCF under the conventional structure using different
solvents. (ITO/PEDOT:PSS/ PIFCF:PC71BM /Ca/Al, each condition average result is
based on five devices. CF: chloroform (16 mg/mL); TA: termal annealing at 120 °C for
10 min)

Blend Ratio	V _{oc}	J _{sc}	FF	PCE (%)	PCE (%)
	(V)	(mA/cm ²)		Average	Best
1:1	0.86	3.63	0.38	1.15	1.19
1:1 + 1.0% DIO	0.79	2.20	0.36	0.60	0.63

1:2	0.83	7.46	0.45	2.68	2.79
1:2 + TA	0.83	7.38	0.44	2.60	2.70
1:2 +0.5 % DIO	0.83	6.99	0.46	2.57	2.67
1:2 + 1.0 % DIO	0.81	6.66	0.39	2.04	2.10
1:3	0.83	6.11	0.42	2.02	2.13
1:3+1.0 % DIO	0.81	4.99	0.41	1.60	1.65

Table S3. Performance of PSFCF in different D/A ratio.

(ITO/PEDOT:PSS/PSFCF:PC₇₁BM (CF solution 16 mg/mL)/Ca/Al, each condition average result is based on five devices.)

D/A ratio	V _{oc}	J _{sc}	FF	PCE (%)	PCE (%)
	(V)	(mA/cm ²)		Average	Best
1:1+0.5% DIO	0.78	8.87	0.32	2.17	2.21
1:1+1.0% DIO	0.78	15.02	0.57	6.50	6.67
1:1+2.0% DIO	0.78	13.73	0.57	5.76	6.05
1:2+CF	0.82	9.35	0.40	3.00	3.06
1:2+0.5% DIO	0.78	10.86	0.56	4.52	4.73
1:2+1.0% DIO	0.78	15.35	0.60	6.93	7.20

Table S4. Optimized device performance based on PSFCF with different DIO additive content. (ITO/PEDOT:PSS/PSFCF:PC₇₁BM/Ca/AI)

DIO	V _{oc}	J _{sc}	FF	PCE (%)	PCE (%)
(%)	(V)	(mA/cm ²)		Average	Best
PSFCF 0.0	0.82	9.35	0.40	3.00	3.06
PSFCF 0.5	0.78	10.86	0.56	4.52	4.73
PSFCF 1.0	0.78	15.35	0.60	6.93	7.20
PSFCF 2.0	0.78	12.96	0.53	5.17	5.32
PSFCF 3.0	0.78	11.30	0.53	4.56	4.70

Table S5. Device performance based on PSFCF:PC₇₁BM blend (w/w, 1/2, chloroform+1.0 % DIO, 16 mg/mL, 1750 rpm) with different molecular weight under the same processing conditions. (ITO/PEDOT:PSS/PSFCF:PC₇₁BM/Ca/AI)

M _n	Ð	V _{oc}	J _{sc}	FF	PCE (%)
		(∨)	(mA/cm²)	(%)	
18 k	2.2	0.80	14.81	55.3	6.55
36 k	1.6	0.78	15.02	56.9	6.67



Figure S12. J-V curves of PSFCF:PC71BM blend with different molecular weight.

Table S6. Device performance based on PIFCF:PC₇₁BM (w/w, 1/2, chloroform, 16 mg/mL, 1750 rpm) and PSFCF:PC₇₁BM blend (w/w, 1/2, chloroform+1.0 % DIO, 16 mg/mL, 1750 rpm) with different device structure. (Conventional: ITO/PEDOT:PSS/PSFCF:PC₇₁BM/Ca/AI; Inverted: ITO/ZnO/active layer/MoO_x/Ag).

Blend Ratio	Device	V _{oc}	J _{sc}	FF	PCE (%)	PCE (%)
		(V)	(mA/cm ²)		Average	Best
PIFCF:PC71BM	Conventional	0.83	7.46	0.45	2.68	2.79
PIFCF:PC71BM	Inverted	0.83	7.90	0.43	2.70	2.80
PSFCF:PC ₇₁ BM	Conventional	0.78	15.35	0.60	6.93	7.20
PSFCF:PC ₇₁ BM	Inverted	0.79	15.40	0.66	7.80	8.00



Figure S13. J-V curves of PIFCF:PC₆₁BM and PIPCP:PC₆₁BM inverted devices.

9. TD-DFT calculations



Figure S14. The eight configurations used to calculate the excitation energies of S_1 and E_{ct} in Figure 7 in the main text. These configurations were randomly generated by placing the fullerene molecule at many different positions around the polymer backbone.



Figure S15. Natural transition orbitals for hole (h) and electron (e) in the lowest CT state for: (left) PIPCP:PC₆₁BM and (right) PIFCF:PC₆₁BM.

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