

## Supplementary Information

### Effect of Low Oxygen Annealing on Photoelectrochemical Water Splitting Properties of $\alpha\text{-Fe}_2\text{O}_3$

Yoichi Makimizu,<sup>ab</sup> JeongEun Yoo,<sup>a</sup> Mahshid Poornajar,<sup>a</sup> Nhat Truong Nguyen,<sup>a†</sup>  
Hyo-Jin Ahn,<sup>ac‡</sup> Imgon Hwang,<sup>a</sup> Stepan Kment<sup>c</sup> and Patrik Schmuki<sup>\*acd</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Materials Science and Engineering, University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Martensstrasse 7, D-91058 Erlangen, Germany

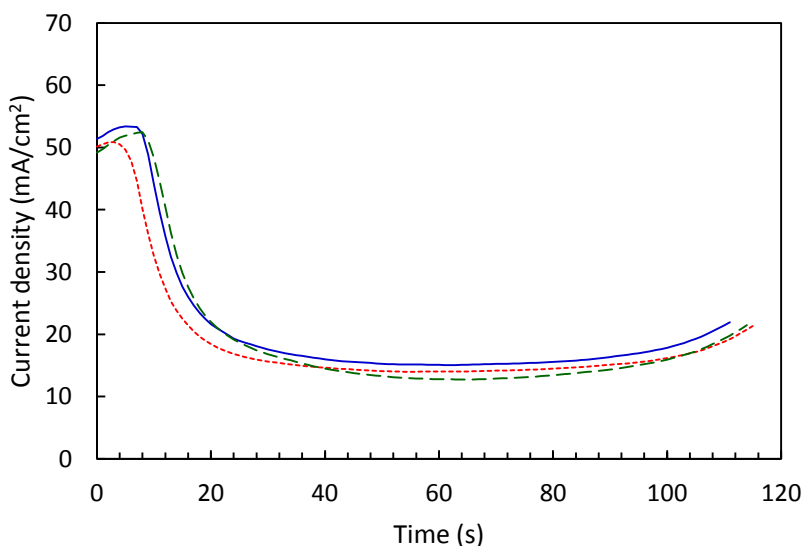
<sup>b</sup> Steel Research Laboratory, JFE Steel Corporation, 1, Kokan-cho, Fukuyama, Hiroshima 721-8510, Japan

<sup>c</sup> RCPTM, Faculty of Science, Palacky University, 17. listopadu 12, 771 46, Olomouc, Czechia

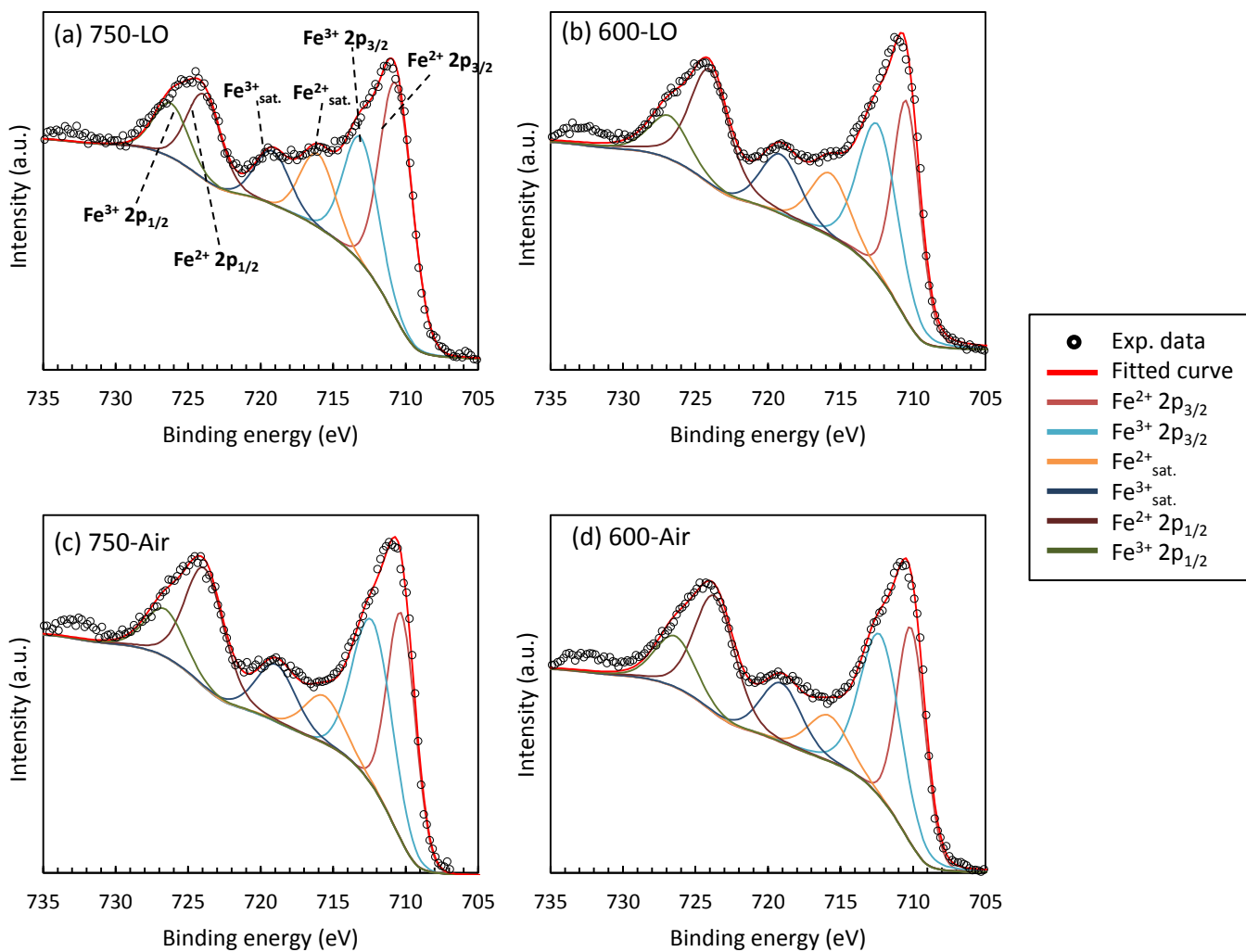
<sup>d</sup> Chemistry Department, Faculty of Sciences, King Abdulaziz University, 80203 Jeddah, Saudi Arabia Kingdom

† Current address: Department of Chemistry, University of Toronto, 80 St. George Street, Toronto, Ontario M5S 3H6, Canada

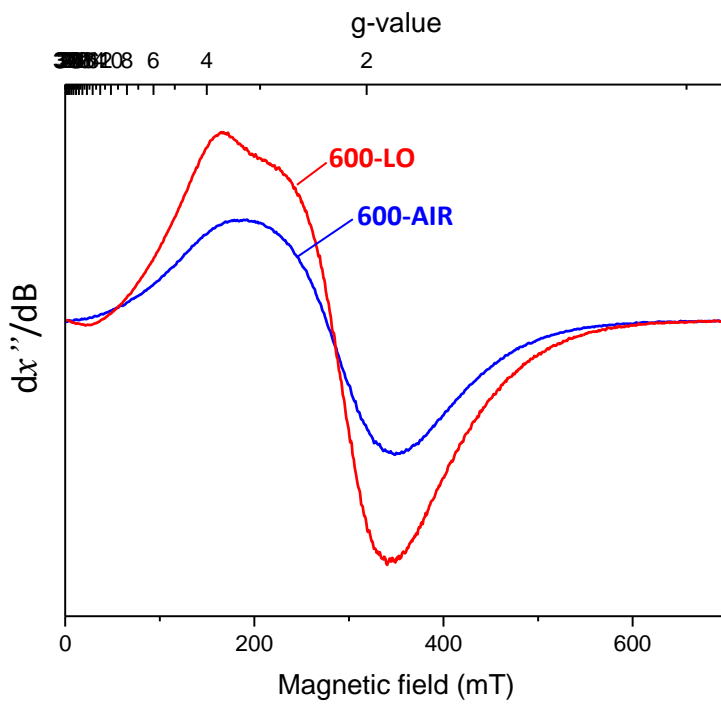
‡ Current address: German Engineering Research and Development Center LSTME Busan, Affiliate Institute to FA Universität 7 Erlangen, 1276, Jisa-Dong, Gangseo-Gu, Busan 46742, Republic of Korea



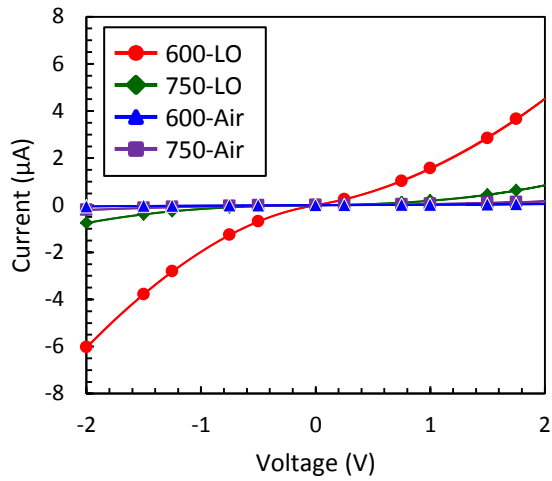
**Figure S1.** Some examples of anodization anodic current-time curves for Fe layers on FTO glass.



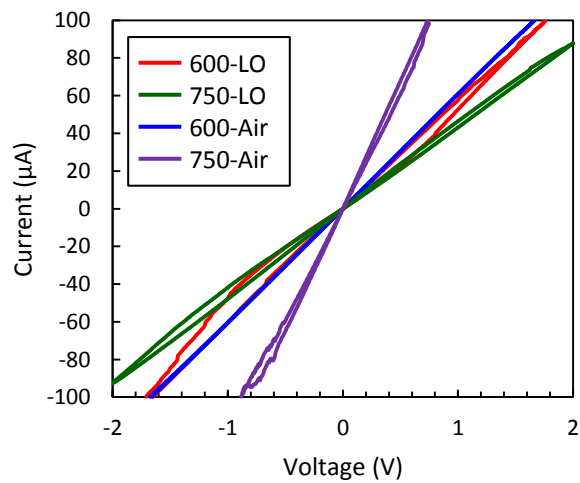
**Figure S2.** X-ray photoelectron spectra of Fe 2p shown in Fig. 3(d) and curves fitted to  $\text{Fe}^{2+}$  and  $\text{Fe}^{3+}$  for  $\alpha\text{-Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  annealed under various conditions.



**Figure S3.** EPR spectra of  $\alpha\text{-Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  after annealing at 600 °C in 0.03%  $\text{O}_2\text{-Ar}$  and air ambient.

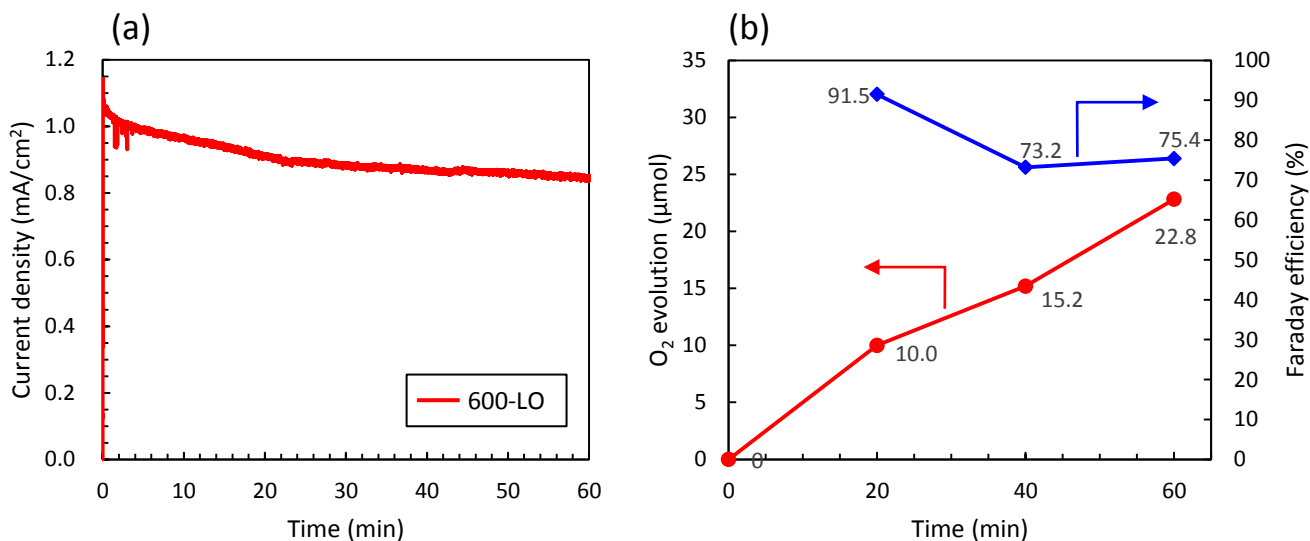


**Figure S4.** *I-V* curves collected by conductivity measurements for  $\alpha\text{-Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  annealed under various conditions.

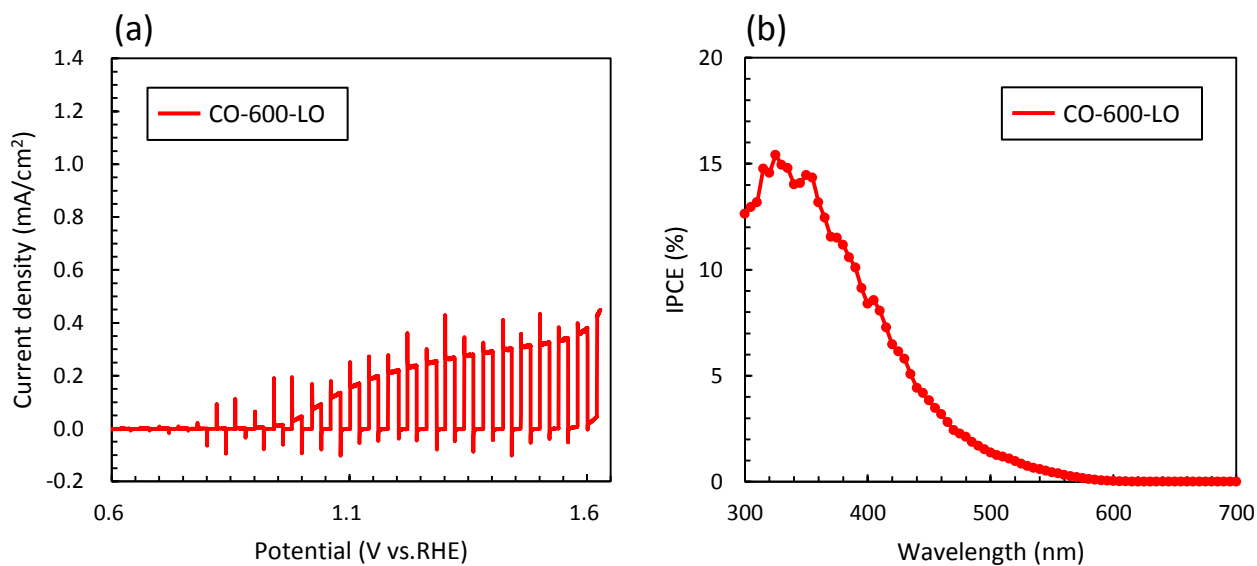


	750-LO	600-LO	750-Air	600-Air
Resistance ( $\Omega$ )	21.33	17.26	7.64	16.44

**Figure S5.** *I-V* curves and resistance value collected by conductivity measurements for FTO substrate annealed under various conditions.



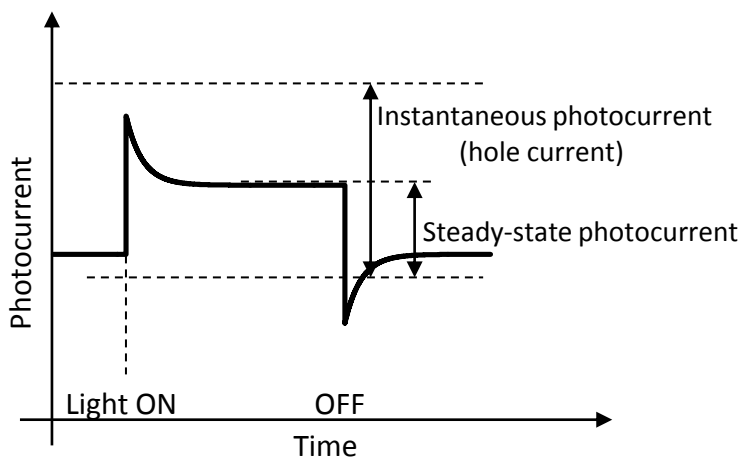
**Figure S6.** (a) Photocurrent-time ( $J-t$ ) curves and (b) amount of oxygen generation measured under illumination (AM 1.5 G,  $100 \text{ mW/cm}^2$ ) at 1.5 V vs. RHE in 1.0 M KOH electrolyte for  $\alpha\text{-Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  layers after annealing at 600 °C in 0.03%  $\text{O}_2\text{-Ar}$  ambient.



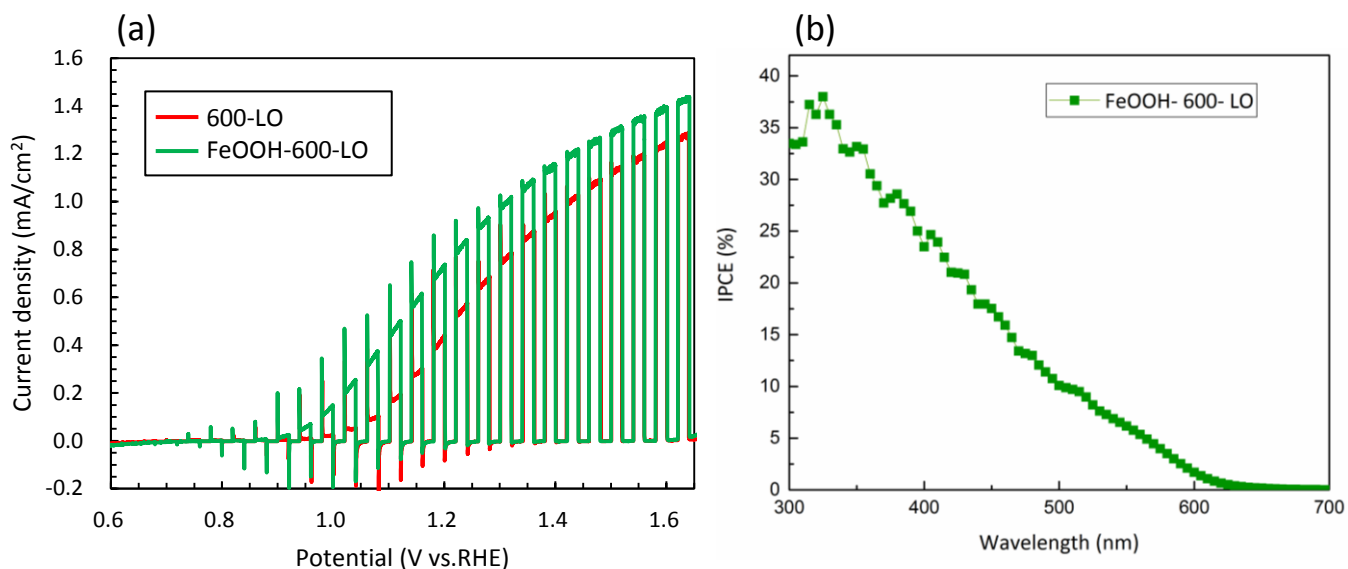
**Figure S7.** (a) Photocurrent-potential ( $J-V$ ) curves with chopped light illumination (AM 1.5G,  $100 \text{ mW/cm}^2$ ) and (b) IPCE spectra measured at 1.5 V vs. RHE for compact  $\alpha\text{-Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  layers annealed at 600 °C in 0.03%  $\text{O}_2\text{-Ar}$  ambient. All samples were measured in 1.0 M KOH electrolyte.

**Table S1.** EIS fitting results for  $\alpha$ -Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> annealed under various conditions.

	600-LO	750-Air	750-LO	600-Air
$R_s$ ( $\Omega$ )	301	13	151	13
$R_1$ ( $\Omega$ )	611	1980	2351	15800
$R_2$ ( $\Omega$ )	3526	3834	8861	19187
$C_1$ (F)	$5.05 \times 10^{-4}$	$3.33 \times 10^{-5}$	$2.47 \times 10^{-5}$	$5.94 \times 10^{-6}$
$C_2$ (F)	$2.44 \times 10^{-5}$	$8.70 \times 10^{-6}$	$4.10 \times 10^{-5}$	$2.39 \times 10^{-5}$



**Figure S8.** Typical transient photocurrent response of  $\alpha$ -Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> electrode.



**Figure S9.** (a) Photocurrent-potential ( $J$ - $V$ ) curves with chopped light illumination (AM 1.5G, 100 mW/cm<sup>2</sup>) and (b) IPCE spectra measurement at 1.5 V vs. RHE for  $\alpha$ -Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> layer decorated with FeOOH. All samples were measured in 1.0 M KOH electrolyte.

**Table S2.** photocurrent densities of recent reports and present study on anodized  $\alpha$ -Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> layer.

Fabrication technique	Substrate	Annealing		Material	Additional treatment	Electrolyte	Illumination	Photocurrent / mA cm <sup>-2</sup> at 1.5 V vs. RHE	Ref.
		Temp. / °C	Atmosphere						
Two-step anodization	Fe foil	400	O <sub>2</sub>	Hematite	-	0.01 M Na <sub>2</sub> SO <sub>4</sub>	AM 1.5 G, 100 mW/cm <sup>2</sup>	0.88 (at 0.6 V vs Ag/AgCl)	65
Anodization	FTO	500	10%H <sub>2</sub> -Ar	Hematite	-	1 M KOH	Xe lamp, 100 mW/cm <sup>2</sup>	0.6	66
Anodization	FTO	750	Ar	Hematite	-	1 M KOH	AM 1.5 G, 100 mW/cm <sup>2</sup>	0.4	32
Anodization	FTO	550	Air	Hematite	-	1 M NaOH	NA	0.47	67
Anodization	FTO	750	Air	Hematite	-	1 M NaOH	AM 1.5 G, 100 mW/cm <sup>2</sup>	0.2	33
Anodization	FTO	500	Air	Hematite Hematite/ Amorphous Ti-Oxide	-	1 M NaOH	AM 1.5 G, 100 mW/cm <sup>2</sup>	0.05 0.2	68
Anodization with rotation	Fe foil	500	Ar	Hematite Magnetite	-	1 M KOH	AM 1.5 G, 100 mW/cm <sup>2</sup>	0.11	69
Anodization	Mild steel	450	Air	Hematite Magnetite	L-Cysteine treatment	1 M NaOH	AM 1.5 G, 100 mW/cm <sup>2</sup>	0.8 0.1	70
Anodization with rotation	Fe rod	500	Ar	Hematite Magnetite	-	1 M KOH	AM 1.5 G, 100 mW/cm <sup>2</sup>	0.11	71
Modulated anodization	Fe foil	600	NA	Hematite Magnetite	- Sn-doped Co-Pi / Sn-doped	1 M KOH	AM 1.5 G, 100 mW/cm <sup>2</sup>	0.32 0.67 0.73	72
Anodization	FTO	600	0.03%O <sub>2</sub> -Ar	Hematite	- FeOOH	1 M KOH	AM 1.5 G, 100 mW/cm <sup>2</sup>	1.1 1.3	This study