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Supporting information

Synthesis and application of near infrared dyes based on sulfur-

substituted dicyanomethylene-4H-chromene and diarylethene

Yuesong Wang, Haoli Yu, Yan Chen, Mengyuan Cui, Min Ji*

State Key Laboratory of Bioelectronics, Jiangsu Laboratory for Biomaterials and Devices, School

of Biological Science and Medical Engineering, Southeast University, Nanjing, 210096, PR China.

*Corresponding author: 101010516@seu.edu.cn (M. Ji)

Contents

General synthetic procedures

- Scheme S1: Synthetic route of S-DCM-10
- Scheme S2: Synthetic route of S-DCM-2O
- Scheme S3: Synthetic route of S-DCM-3O
- Scheme S4: Synthetic route of S-DCM-4O
- Fig. S1: ¹H NMR spectra of compound 1
- Fig. S2: ¹H NMR spectra of compound 1b
- Fig. S3: HRMS spectra of compound 1b
- Fig. S4: ¹H NMR spectra of compound 11 (S-DCM-1O)
- Fig. S5: ¹³C NMR spectra of compound 11 (S-DCM-10)
- Fig. S6: HRMS spectra of compound 11 (S-DCM-10)
- Fig. S7: ¹H NMR spectra of compound S-DCM-10
- Fig. S8: ¹³C NMR spectra of compound S-DCM-10
- Fig. S9: HRMS spectra of compound S-DCM-10
- Fig. S10: ¹H NMR spectra of compound 11 (S-DCM-2O)
- Fig. S11: ¹³C NMR spectra of compound 11 (S-DCM-2O)
- Fig. S12: HRMS spectra of compound 11 (S-DCM-2O)
- Fig. S13: ¹H NMR spectra of compound S-DCM-2O

- Fig. S14: ¹³C NMR spectra of compound S-DCM-2O
- Fig. S15: HRMS spectra of compound S-DCM-2O
- Fig. S16: ¹H NMR spectra of compound 10 (S-DCM-3O)
- Fig. S17: ¹³C NMR spectra of compound 10 (S-DCM-3O)
- Fig. S18: HRMS spectra of compound 10 (S-DCM-3O)
- Fig. S19: ¹H NMR spectra of compound S-DCM-3O
- Fig. S20: ¹³C NMR spectra of compound S-DCM-3O
- Fig. S21: HRMS spectra of compound S-DCM-3O
- Fig. S22: ¹H NMR spectra of compound 8 (S-DCM-4O)
- Fig. S23: ¹³C NMR spectra of compound 8 (S-DCM-4O)
- Fig. S24: HRMS spectra of compound 8 (S-DCM-4O)
- Fig. S25: ¹H NMR spectra of compound S-DCM-4O
- Fig. S26: ¹³C NMR spectra of compound S-DCM-4O
- Fig. S27: HRMS spectra of compound S-DCM-4O
- Fig. S28: TEM images of S-DCM-10@PEG, S-DCM-20@PEG, S-DCM-30@PEG, and S-

DCM-40@PEG

Fig. S29: ζ-potentials of S-DCM-10@PEG, S-DCM-20@PEG, S-DCM-30@PEG, and S-

DCM-40@PEG

Fig. S30: ζ-potentials of S-DCM-10@PEG@PLL, S-DCM-20@PEG@PLL, S-DCM-30@PEG@PLL, and S-DCM-40@PEG@PLL

Fig. S31: TEM images of S-DCM-10@PEG@PLL, S-DCM-20@PEG@PLL, S-DCM-30@PEG@PLL, and S-DCM-40@PEG@PLL

Fig. S32: Time resolved fluorescence decay of S-DCM-10@PEG@PLL, S-DCM-20@PEG@PLL, S-DCM-30@PEG@PLL, and S-DCM-40@PEG@PLL ($\lambda_{ex} = 450 \text{ nm}$, $\lambda_{em} = 650 \text{ nm}$)

Fig. S33: Cell imaging experiment of 100 µg mL⁻¹ of S-DCM-10@PEG@PLL

Fig. S34: Cell imaging experiment of 100 µg mL⁻¹ of S-DCM-2O@PEG@PLL

- Fig. S35: Cell imaging experiment of 100 µg mL⁻¹ of S-DCM-3O@PEG@PLL
- Fig. S36: Cell imaging experiment of 100 µg mL⁻¹ of S-DCM-4O@PEG@PLL

Fig. **S37**: Cell imaging experiments of **S-DCM-1O@PEG@PLL** with the same concentration gradient (0-100 μg mL⁻¹)

Fig. **S38**: Cell imaging experiments of **S-DCM-2O@PEG@PLL** with the same concentration gradient (0-100 μg mL⁻¹)

Fig. **S39**: Cell imaging experiments of **S-DCM-3O@PEG@PLL** with the same concentration gradient (0-100 μg mL⁻¹)

Fig. **S40**: Cell imaging experiments of **S-DCM-4O@PEG@PLL** with the same concentration gradient (0-100 μg mL⁻¹)

In order to better investigate the changes of the fluorophore of sulfur-substituted dicyanomethylene-4*H*-chromene binding with different diarylethene units, compound **S-DCM-10**, **S-DCM-20**, **S-DCM-30**, and **S-DCM-40** were synthesized. As shown in Scheme S1, the synthetic steps of compounds 2-10 have been extensively reported in the literature, so we mainly discussed the synthesis of compounds 1, 1b, 11, and S-DCM-10.¹

General synthetic procedures

Synthesis of compound **1**. To a mixture of *p*-thiocresol (6.21 g, 50.0 mmol) and polyphosphoric acid (80 mL) was added ethyl acetoacetate (6.51 g, 50.0 mmol) dropwise at 363.15 K. After stirring for 0.5 h, the mixture was cooled to room temperature and stirred with ice water. The mixture was extracted with ethylacetate and dried over Na₂SO₄. Purification by silica gel column chromatography (petroleum ether/ethylacetate = 10:1, v/v) afforded compound **1** as white solids (7.30 g, 77%). M.p. 388-390 K; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 8.25 (s, 1H), 7.39 (d, *J* = 10.0 Hz, 1H), 7.35-7.33 (m, 1H), 6.78 (s, 1H), 2.40 (s, 3H), 2.39 (d, *J* = 5.0 Hz, 3H) (Fig. S1). Synthesis of compound **1b**. A mixture of compound **1** (0.35 g, 2.0 mmol) and malononitrile (1.32 g, 20.0 mmol) in acetic anhydride (7 mL) was stirred for 16 h at 413.15 K. After that, the mixture was cooled to 328.15 K, and methanol (11 mL) was added to stir for 3h. The solvent was removed by evaporation under reduced pressure, and the residue was subjected to silica gel chromatography (petroleum ether/ethylacetate = 20:1, v/v) as eluent, obtaining a yellow solid (0.10 g, 42%). M.p. 452-454 K; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 8.79 (s, 1H), 7.53 (d, *J* = 10.0 Hz, 1H), 7.46-7.44 (m, 1H), 7.40 (s, 1H), 2.51 (s, 6H) (Fig. S2); HRMS (ESI⁺) calcd for C₁₄H₁₁N₂S [M + H]⁺ 239.0643, found 239.0598 (Fig. S3).

Synthesis of compound **11**. Compound **10** (1.17 g, 2.2 mmol), pyridine (1 mL) and *p*-TsOH (0.29 g, 1.5 mmol) was added to a mixture of solution (acetone/water = 4:1, v/v, 7 mL). After stirring for 6 h, the solution obtained was concentrated. The resulting residue dissolved in ethylacetate and washed with H₂O. The organic layer was dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered and concentrated in vacuo. The residue was subjected to silica gel chromatography, obtaining compound **11** (0.97 g, 91%). M.p. 382-384 K; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₂Cl₂), δ (ppm): 9.94 (d, *J* = 10.0 Hz, 1H), 8.89 (s, 1H), 7.91-7.85 (m, 2H), 7.35 (d, *J* = 60.0 Hz, 1H), 6.72 (d, *J* = 50.0 Hz, 1H), 2.41 (d, *J* = 65.0 Hz, 3H), 1.91 (s, 3H), 1.80 (s, 3H) (Fig. S4); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CD₂Cl₂), δ (ppm): 191.75, 146.05, 132.32, 124.89, 123.81, 120.99, 14.03, 13.64, 13.39 (Fig. S5); HRMS (ESI⁺) calcd for C₂₂H₁₆F₆NOS₂ [M + H]⁺ 488.0577, found 488.0552 (Fig. S6).

Synthesis of compound **S-DCM-10**. A mixture of compound **11** (97 mg, 0.2 mmol), compound **1b** (48 mg, 0.2 mmol), piperidine (0.1 mL, 1.0 mmol) and acetic acid (0.1 mL, 2.0 mmol) in dry 10 mL toluene was stirred for 16 h at 383.15 K under N₂ atmosphere. The solution was removed by concentrated in vacuo under reduced pressure, and the residue was subjected to silica gel chromatography with a mixture of solution (petroleum ether/dichloromethane = 2:1, v/v) as eluent, obtaining compound **S-DCM-10** as an orange solid (30 mg, 21%). M.p. 512-514 K; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₂Cl₂), δ (ppm): 8.76 (s, 1H), 8.65 (s, 1H), 7.78 (d, *J* = 10.0 Hz, 1H), 7.66 (d, *J* = 20.0 Hz, 1H), 7.57 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 7.42 (d, *J* = 10.0 Hz, 1H), 7.37 (d, *J* = 10.0 Hz, 1H), 7.32 (s, 1H), 7.23 (d, *J* = 20.0 Hz, 1H), 6.68 (s, 1H), 2.43 (s, 3H), 2.35 (s, 3H), 1.90 (s, 3H), 1.81 (s, 3H) (Fig. S7); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CD₂Cl₂), δ (ppm): 154.95, 151.63, 146.48, 145.83, 142.77, 139.57, 138.49, 137.84, 137.40, 134.17, 132.95, 132.41, 131.35, 128.93, 128.55, 127.61, 126.80, 125.95, 124.83, 124.05, 123.80, 123.36, 122.48, 116.55, 115.20, 68.65, 29.15, 20.64, 14.26, 13.79, 13.55 (Fig. S8); HRMS (ESI⁺) calcd for C₃₆H₂₄F₆N₃S₃ [M + H]⁺ 708.1037, found 708.0967 (Fig. S9).

As shown in **Scheme S2**, the synthetic steps of compounds **2-10** have been extensively reported in the literature, so we mainly discussed the synthesis of compounds **11** and **S-DCM-2O**.²

General synthetic procedures

Synthesis of compound **11**. To compound **10** (2.33 g, 4.4 mmol) in a mixture of solution (acetone/water = 4:1, v/v, 14 mL) were added to pyridine (2 mL) and *p*-TsOH (0.58 g, 3.0 mmol).

After refluxing for 6 h, the solution obtained was concentrated. The resulting residue dissolved in ethylacetate and washed with H₂O. The solvent was removed by evaporation under reduced pressure. The residue was subjected to silica gel chromatography, obtaining compound **11** (1.80 g, 84%). M.p. 390-392 K; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₂Cl₂), δ (ppm): 9.91 (s, 1H), 7.80 (d, *J* = 10.0 Hz, 2H), 7.63 (d, *J* = 10.0 Hz, 2H), 7.36 (s, 1H), 6.67 (s, 1H), 2.34 (s, 3H), 1.84 (d, *J* = 40.0 Hz, 6H) (Fig. S10); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CD₂Cl₂), δ (ppm): 190.36, 142.80, 139.76, 139.34, 138.15, 137.59, 134.85, 129.55, 125.03, 123.88, 123.83, 14.03, 13.58, 13.31 (Fig. S11); HRMS (ESI⁺) calcd for C₂₃H₁₇F₆OS₂ [M + H]⁺ 487.0625, found 487.0613 (Fig. S12).

Synthesis of compound **S-DCM-2O**. To compound **11** (97 mg, 0.2 mmol) and compound **1b** (48 mg, 0.2 mmol) in a solution of toluene were added to piperidine (0.1 mL, 1.0 mmol) and acetic acid (0.1 mL, 2.0 mmol). After refluxing for 16 h at 383.15 K under N₂ atmosphere. The mixture was then cooled, and the solvent was removed under reduced pressure. The crude product was dissolved in CH₂Cl₂, extracted with water, and dried over sodium sulfate. The residue was subjected to silica gel chromatography with a mixture of solution (petroleum ether/dichloromethane = 3:1, v/v) as eluent, obtaining compound **S-DCM-2O** as an orange solid (61 mg, 43%). M.p. 532-534 K; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₂Cl₂), δ (ppm): 8.74 (s, 1H), 7.64-7.58 (m, 6H), 7.50 (d, *J* = 10.0 Hz, 1H), 7.32 (t, *J* = 17.5 Hz, 2H), 7.20 (d, *J* = 15 Hz, 1H), 6.75 (s, 1H), 2.51 (s, 3H), 2.42 (s, 3H), 1.96 (s, 3H), 1.89 (s, 3H) (Fig. S13); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CD₂Cl₂), δ (ppm): 154.89, 146.35, 141.73, 140.36, 139.34, 138.16, 137.51, 135.16, 134.04, 133.69, 132.68, 131.05, 127.52, 127.35, 126.54, 125.46, 125.14, 124.75, 124.64, 123.77, 123.52, 122.59, 121.11, 116.50, 115.25, 67.54, 28.94, 20.45, 14.09, 13.59, 13.37 (Fig. S14); HRMS (ESI⁺) calcd for C₃₇H₂₅F₆N₂S₃ [M + H]⁺ 707.1084, found 707.1026 (Fig. S15).

As shown in **Scheme S3**, the synthetic routes of compounds **2-9** have been extensively reported in the previous literature, so we mainly discussed the synthesis of compounds **10** and **S-DCM-3O**.³

General synthetic procedures

Synthesis of compound **10**. Compound **9** (1.30 g, 2.2 mmol), pyridine (1 mL) and *p*-TsOH (0.29 g, 1.5 mmol) was added to a mixture of solution (acetone/water = 4:1, v/v, 7 mL). After refluxing for 6 h, the mixture was cooled to room temperature and drained. The crude product was cleaned in a

mixed system of ethylacetate and water. The solvent was removed by evaporation under reduced pressure. The residue was subjected to silica gel chromatography, obtaining compound **10** (1.12 g, 93%). M.p. 397-399 K; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₂Cl₂), δ (ppm): 10.01 (s, 1H), 7.95 (d, *J* = 10.0 Hz, 2H), 7.89 (d, *J* = 10.0 Hz, 2H), 7.77 (s, 1H), 7.64 (d, *J* = 10.0 Hz, 2H), 7.52 (s, 1H), 7.43 (t, *J* = 10.0 Hz, 2H), 7.34 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1H), 2.00 (d, *J* = 15.0 Hz, 6H) (Fig. S16); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CD₂Cl₂), δ (ppm): 192.22, 143.18, 141.70, 141.19, 140.10, 137.81, 135.20, 132.40, 130.37, 129.16, 128.09, 125.62, 125.37, 125.22, 124.84, 124.80, 122.44, 14.07, 13.99 (Fig. S17); HRMS (ESI⁺) calcd for C₂₈H₁₈F₆OS₂ [M]⁺ 548.0703, found 548.0699 (Fig. S18).

Synthesis of compound **S-DCM-3O**. A mixture of compound **1b** (48 mg, 0.2 mmol), piperidine (0.1 mL, 1.0 mmol), compound **10** (110 mg, 0.2 mmol) and acetic acid (0.1 mL, 2.0 mmol) in dry 10 mL toluene was stirred for 16 h at 383.15 K under N₂ atmosphere. The mixture was removed by concentrated in vacuo under reduced pressure, and the crude product was subjected to silica gel chromatography with a mixture of solution (petroleum ether/dichloromethane = 3:1, v/v) as eluent, obtaining compound **S-DCM-3O** as an orange red solid (79 mg, 56%). M.p. 542-544 K; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CD₂Cl₂), δ (ppm): 8.74 (s, 1H), 7.64-7.55 (m, 8H), 7.50 (d, *J* = 10.0 Hz, 1H), 7.39 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 3H), 7.32-7.28 (m, 3H), 7.20 (d, *J* = 15.0 Hz, 1H), 2.51 (s, 3H), 2.01 (s, 6H) (Fig. S19); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CD₂Cl₂), δ (ppm): 154.88, 146.34, 140.59, 138.16, 135.14, 133.98, 133.75, 132.68, 132.52, 131.05, 128.25, 127.53, 127.35, 127.21, 126.54, 125.18, 124.89, 124.79, 124.64, 123.98, 122.51, 121.63, 121.13, 115.24, 67.56, 28.93, 20.45, 13.64, 13.12 (Fig. S20); HRMS (ESI⁺) calcd for C₄₂H₂₇F₆N₂S₃ [M + H]⁺ 769.1241, found 769.1136 (Fig. S21).

In order to make a better comparison, the fluorophore of sulfur-substituted dicyanomethylene-4*H*-chromene combined with symmetric diarylethene compound was synthesized. As shown in **Scheme S4**, the synthetic routes of compounds **2-7** have been extensively reported in the previous literature, so we mainly discussed the synthesis of compounds **8** and **S-DCM-4O**.⁴

General synthetic procedures

Synthesis of compound 8. Pyridine (1 mL) and *p*-TsOH (0.29 g, 1.5 mmol) was dissolved in a mixture of solution (acetone/water = 4:1, v/v, 7 mL). Compound 7 (1.46 g, 2.2 mmol) was added to solvent and refluxed for 6 h. The mixture was cooled to room temperature and the solvent was

evaporated in vacuo to dryness. The crude product was cleaned in a mixed system (ethylacetate and water) and applied to silica gel chromatography, obtaining compound **8** (1.08 g, 85%). M.p. 473-475 K; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 10.01 (s, 2H), 7.90 (d, J = 5.0 Hz, 4H), 7.69 (d, J = 10.0 Hz, 4H), 7.42 (s, 2H), 2.02 (s, 6H) (Fig. S22); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃), δ (ppm): 190.28, 142.33, 139.78, 137.75, 134.47, 129.53, 125.24, 124.80, 123.30, 13.71 (Fig. S23); HRMS (ESI⁺) calcd for C₂₉H₁₈F₆O₂S₂Na [M + Na]⁺ 599.0550, found 599.0543 (Fig. S24).

Synthesis of compound **S-DCM-4O**. To compound **1b** (96 mg, 0.4 mmol) and compound **8** (115 mg, 0.2 mmol) in toluene (10 mL) were added to piperidine (0.1 mL, 1.0 mmol) and acetic acid (0.1 mL, 2.0 mmol), the reaction mixture was refluxed for 16 h at 383.15 K under N₂ atmosphere. The mixture was then cooled, and the solvent was removed under reduced pressure. The crude product was subjected to silica gel chromatography with a mixture of solution (petroleum ether/dichloromethane = 2:1, v/v) as eluent to afford an orange red solid (134 mg, 66%). M.p. 552-554 K; ¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMF-*d*₇), δ (ppm): 8.73 (s, 2H), 7.95 (d, *J* = 10.0 Hz, 6H), 7.91 (s, 1H), 7.88 (s, 1H), 7.82 (d, *J* = 5.0 Hz, 4H), 7.75 (d, *J* = 5.0 Hz, 4H), 7.72 (d, *J* = 10 Hz, 2H), 7.55 (s, 1H), 7.52 (s, 1H), 2.52 (s, 6H), 2.15 (s, 6H) (Fig. S25); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMF-*d*₇), δ (ppm): 148.90, 143.17, 142.24, 139.50, 136.87, 135.97, 134.95, 134.62, 132.62, 129.66, 128.63, 128.42, 127.13, 126.49, 125.61, 124.60, 122.44, 118.27, 116.66, 79.62, 67.82, 21.24, 14.56 (Fig. S26); HRMS (ESI⁺) calcd for C₅₇H₃₄F₆N₄S₄Na [M + Na]⁺ 1039.1468, found 1039.1332 (Fig. S27).

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Scheme 1. Synthetic route to compound S-DCM-10.



Scheme 2. Synthetic route to compound S-DCM-2O.



Scheme 3. Synthetic route to compound S-DCM-3O.



Scheme 4. Synthetic route to compound S-DCM-4O.



Fig. S1



Fig. S2



Fig. S3



Fig. S4



Fig. S5



Fig. S6



Fig. S7



Fig. S8



Fig. S9



Fig. S10



Fig. S11



Fig. S12



Fig. S13



Fig. S14



Fig. S15



Fig. S16



Fig. S17



Fig. S18



Fig. S19



Fig. S20



Fig. S21



Fig. S22



Fig. S23



Fig. S24



Fig. S25



Fig. S26



Fig. S27



Fig. S28



Fig. S29



Fig. S30



Fig. S31



Fig. S32



Fig. S33



Fig. S34



Fig. S35



Fig. S36



Fig. S37



Fig. S38



Fig. S39



Fig. S40