Electronic Supplementary Information for

TADF-based purely organic heterogeneous photocatalyst with

hydrophobic domains for efficient oxidation of sulfide into sulfoxide

in water

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1 General

All chemicals were commercially available and used as received without further purification. Mass spectrometric data were obtained by a LTQ Orbitrap XL mass spectrometer of Thermo Scientific. Powder X-ray diffraction (PXRD) profiles were recorded on a Bruker D8 Advance diffractometer (40 KV, 40 mA, Cu-K α , λ = 1.5418 Å) from 5 - 40° with a step of 0.01° at a scan speed of 6° min⁻¹. Fourier Transform Infrared (FT-IR) spectra were recorded with a Nicolet IS50 FT-IR spectrophotometer of Thermo Scientific in the range of 400 to 4000 cm⁻¹. Scanning electron microscopy (SEM) images were recorded on a Nova NanoSEM 450 field emission scanning electron microscope of FEI and a gold layer was sputtered on the surface of each sample before the measurement. Thermogravimetric analysis (TGA) profiles were recorded on a SDT-Q600 simultaneous DSC-TGA instrument of TA from 25 °C to 800 °C with a temperature increasing rate of 10 °C min⁻¹. Water droplet contact angle (WCA) values were obtained by an OCA50 optical contact angle measuring and contour analysis system of DATAPHYSICS. Electron spin resonance (ESR) spectra were recorded on a Bruker E500 spectrometer in MeOH at room temperature. Absorption spectra were recorded on a Carry 60 UV-vis spectrophotometer of Agilent with a sample concentration of 5 µM in a quartz cuvette (1 cm×1 cm) at room temperature. Fluorescence spectra were recorded on a Cary Eclipse fluorescence spectrophotometer of Agilent with a sample concentration of 5 μ M and an excitation wavelength of 460 nm at room temperature. Both the excitation and emission slits are 5 nm and PMT detector voltage is 600 V. ¹H NMR and ¹³C NMR spectra were recorded on Bruker Avance II 400 and Vaian DLG400 spectrometer using DMSO-d6, CDCl₃, CD₃CN and 90% H₂O+10% D₂O as solvent. The chemical shift was internally referenced to tetramethylsilane signal (TMS: $\delta^{1}H = 0$) or residual solvent signals (DMSO- d_{6} : $\delta^{1}H =$ 2.50, $\delta^{13}C = 39.53$. CDCl₃: $\delta^{1}H = 7.26$, $\delta^{13}C = 77.06$. CD₃CN: $\delta^{1}H = 1.94$, $\delta^{13}C = 77.06$. 1.32. D₂O: δ ¹H = 4.79). ¹H-NMR are recorded as follows: chemical shift (δ , ppm), multiplicity (s = singlet, d = doublet, t = triplet, m = multiplet or unresolved, br = broad singlet, coupling constant(s) in Hz, integration). ¹³C-NMR are reported in terms of chemical shift (δ , ppm).

2 Synthesis

2.1 Synthesis of FL-CD



FL was synthesized according to the previously reported method¹.

FL (76 mg, 0.1 mmol) and DIPEA (33 μ L, 0.2 mmol) were dissolved in anhydrous DMF (5.0 mL). HATU (57 mg, 0.15 mmol) in anhydrous DMF (1.0 mL) was added dropwise to the solution at 0 °C. After stirring for 30 min, mono-(6-amino-6-deoxy)-beta-cyclodextrin (136 mg, 0.12 mmol) in anhydrous DMF (2.0 mL) was added dropwise and the reaction mixture was gradually raised to room temperature and continued stirring for 24 hours. Once the reaction was complete, the reaction mixture was poured into acetone and filtrated under reduced pressure to obtain the crude product. The crude product was further purified by a medium-pressure liquid chromatography system using a gradient elution of deionized water and ethanol at a flow rate of 10 mL/min, with ethanol from 10% to 50% in 30 min. After removal of the solvent under reduced pressure, the target product was obtained as a black solid (65 mg, 34%).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 8.41 (s, 1H), 8.12 – 7.92 (m, 4H), 7.77 – 7.51 (m, 4H), 6.97 (d, J = 2.6 Hz, 2H), 6.61 (s, 2H), 6.45 (s, 2H), 5.82 – 5.65 (m, 14H), 5.00 – 4.81 (m, 7H), 4.49 – 4.38 (m, 6H), 3.75 – 3.54 (m, 28H), 3.46 – 3.35 (m, overlaps with HOD), 2.44 – 2.22 (m, 6H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 171.9, 166.6, 163.5, 162.3, 161.4, 156.0, 154.4, 150.6, 135.8, 135.2, 129.8, 129.5, 128.8, 127.8, 126.9, 118.2, 115.4, 115.2, 110.4, 109.1, 105.6, 104.9, 102.0, 83.9, 81.7, 81.5, 73.1, 72.5, 72.2, 59.9, 54.9, 35.8, 30.8, 19.4. HRMS (ESI/TOF) m/z calcd for C₈₄H₉₀Cl₂N₅O₄₀⁻ ([M-H]⁻

): 1880.4510, found: 1880.4507.

2.2 Synthesis of FL-DNS and FL-PNS



Scheme S1 Synthesis of FL-DNS and FL-PNS

2.3 Synthesis of 2-ethylsulfonylethanol²

In order to better identify the overoxidation product from the reaction solution, 2ethylsulfonylethanol was synthesized according to the previously reported method. Specifically, to ethyl 2-hydroxyethyl sulfide (20 mmol, 2.1 mL), a 30% aqueous solution of H_2O_2 (5 mmol, 0.5 mL) was added dropwise, and the reaction mixture was heated at 75 °C for 3 h in a round-bottom flask equipped with a reflux condenser. After cooling to room temperature, a 30% aqueous solution of H_2O_2 (20 mmol, 2 mL) was added and the reaction mixture was heated at 75 °C for further 12 h. Additional H_2O_2 (20 mmol, 2 mL) was added when the total reaction time reached 15 h and 39 h, respectively. And the full conversion was reached in 63 h. After cooling to room temperature, Na₂SO₃ was added partially to neutralize excess H_2O_2 . The mixture was extracted with CH_2Cl_2 . The combined organic layers were washed with water and brine, and then dried over anhydrous Na₂SO₄. After removal of solvent under reduced pressure, the target product was obtained as a colorless liquid (2.30 g, 83%).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, Methanol- d_4) δ 3.99 – 3.94 (m, 2H), 3.22 (t, J = 5.6 Hz, 2H), 3.16 (q, J = 7.5 Hz, 2H), 1.34 (t, J = 7.5 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, Methanol- d_4) δ 56.8, 55.5, 49.9, 6.5. HRMS (ESI/TOF) m/z calcd for C₄H₁₀NaO₃S⁺ ([M+Na]⁺): 161.0248, found: 161.0238.

3 Characterization



Fig. S1 SEM images of (a) FL-DNS and (c) FL-PNS. Scale bar = 5 μ m. (b) and (d) are the details with enlarged scale of (a) and (c), respectively. Scale bar = 1 μ m.



Fig. S2 (a) PXRD profiles and (b) FT-IR spectra of FL-DNS, FL-PNS, and β -CD. (c) Absorption and (d) fluorescence spectra of FL-DNS, FL-PNS, and FL-CD.



Fig. S3 FT-IR spectra of FL-DNS, FL-PNS, and β -CD.

3.1 Determination of FL-CD content

The contents of FL-CD in FL-DNS and FL-PNS were determined by standard curve. FL-CD was dissolved in a mixed solvent of DMF, H_2O , and $NH_3 \cdot H_2O$ (2.5 : 0.4 : 0.1,

V/V) to prepare a stock solution with a concentration of 1 mmol/L (1 mM). Taking 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 μ L of the stock solution, respectively, and diluting to 3 mL with the above mentioned mixed solution to test the absorption spectra. Plotting the absorbance at 390 nm versus corresponding concentration to obtain the standard curve at the concentration range of 0 - 10 μ M.

 H_2O (0.8 mL) and $NH_3 \cdot H_2O$ (0.2 mL) were added to the appropriate amount of FL-DNS or FL-PNS and the resulting suspension was sonicated for 1 h to get a clear solution. Taking 0.5 mL of the solution and diluting to 3 mL with DMF to test the absorption spectra. And the content of FL-CD in FL-DNS or FL-PNS was calculated by the absorbance at 390 nm according to the standard curve.



Fig. S4 (a) Absorption spectra of FL-CD in a mixed solvent of DMF, H_2O and $NH_3 \cdot H_2O$ (2.5 : 0.4 : 0.1, V/V) at different concentrations. (b) The standard curve obtained by plotting the absorbance at 390 nm versus corresponding concentration.

Photocatalyst	Weight	٨	Content	
	/mg	A390nm	/(nmol/mg)	/(nmol/mg)
FL-DNS	4.00	0.146	7.08	_
	4.17	0.153	7.13	7.20
	5.69	0.213	7.39	-
FL-PNS	2.94	0.064	3.90	
	3.34	0.078	4.29	4.12
	3.60	0.081	4.16	-

Table S1 The FL-CD contents in FL-DNS and FL-PNS.



Fig. S5 TG curves of (a) FL-DNS and (b) FL-PNS.





Fig. S6 ¹H NMR spectra of the reaction solutions when using (a) $CDCl_3$ (b) CD_3CN and (c) H_2O , respectively, as solvents for photocatalytic aerobic oxidation of ethyl 2-hydroxyethyl sulfide to corresponding sulfoxide. Obviously, the catalytic reaction carried out in water was highly selective and no overoxidation product sulfone was detected.



Fig. S7 WCA measurements of (a) FL-DNS and (b) FL-PNS.

3.2 Verification of ¹O₂ and O₂⁻ generation.

FL-DNS or FL-PNS was dispersed in H₂O (2 mL) at a concentration of 5 μ M to test the generation of ¹O₂. 1 μ L ABDA (10 mM in DMSO) was added and the mixture was irradiated with a white-light LED (20 mW•cm²⁻) under stirring. The emission spectrum

of the mixture was recorded every 5 min with an excitation wavelength of 360 nm. The fluorescence intensity change of ABDA was defined as $(I_t-I_0)/I_0$, where I_t and I_0 referred to the fluorescence intensity at 407 nm after irradiation for t min and before irradiation, respectively. Plotting the fluorescence intensity change of ABDA versus the irradiation time to reveal the ability of FL-DNS or FL-PNS to generate 1O_2 .

FL-DNS or FL-PNS was dispersed in H₂O (2 mL) at a concentration of 5 μ M to test the generation of O₂^{•-}. 8 μ L of DHR 123 (2.5 mM in DMSO) was added and the mixture was irradiated with a white-light LED (20 mW•cm²⁻) under stirring. The emission spectrum of the mixture was recorded every 1 min with an excitation wavelength of 488 nm. The fluorescence intensity change of DHR 123 was defined as (I_t-I₀)/I₀, where I_t and I₀ referred to the fluorescence intensity at 528 nm after irradiation for t min and before irradiation, respectively. Plotting the fluorescence intensity change of DHR 123 versus the irradiation time to reveal the ability of FL-DNS or FL-PNS to generate O₂^{•-}.



Fig. S8 Time-course fluorescence intensity of (a) FL-DNS and ABDA, (b) FL-PNS and ABDA, and (c) ABDA alone after photoirradiation. (d) Chemical reactions of ABDA with ¹O₂.



Fig. S9 Time-course fluorescence intensity of (a) FL-DNS and DHR 123, (b) FL-PNS and DHR 123, and (c) DHR 123 alone after photoirradiation. (d) Chemical reactions of DHR123 with O_2^{-} .



Fig. S10 Time-resolved decay spectra of (a) FL-DNS and (b) FL-PNS in O_2 - saturated H_2O .

Catalysts	Solvents	τ_1/us	B ₁	τ_2/us	B ₂	τ ₃ /us	B ₃	τ/us	χ^2
	CH ₃ CN ^a	74.41	0.71	246.05	0.29	/	/	124.18	1.02
FL-DNS	$\mathrm{H}_2\mathrm{O}^\mathrm{a}$	207.51	0.49	546.72	0.51	/	/	380.51	1.02
	${\rm H_2O^b}$	0.13	0.87	7.82	0.13	/	/	1.13	0.96
FL-PNS	CH ₃ CN ^a	139.07	0.60	675.58	0.34	2732.17	0.06	477.07	1.00
	$\mathrm{H}_2\mathrm{O}^a$	88.06	1	/	/	/	/	88.06	0.98
	$\mathrm{H}_2\mathrm{O}^{\mathrm{b}}$	0.19	0.85	6.08	0.15			1.07	1.12

Table S2 The luminescence lifetimes of FL-DNS and FL-PNS.

^aIn argon ambience.

^bIn oxygen ambience.

4 Photocatalytic aerobic oxidation of sulfides into sulfoxides

4.1 Recycling experiments

For the recovery and reuse of FL-DNS, ethyl 2-hydroxyethyl sulfide (0.1 mmol, 10 μ L) and FL-DNS (0.2 mol%, based on FLCD contained in the photocatalyst) were suspended in O₂-saturated H₂O (5 mL) in a 10 mL glass vessel equipped with an O₂ balloon. Then the reaction vessel was irradiated with a white-light LED (20 mW•cm²⁻) for 80 min under stirring. After recovering by centrifugation and washing three times with H₂O, FL-DNS was reused in the next cycle. And the yield of 2-hydroxyethyl ethyl sulfoxide for each cycle was determined by ¹H NMR.



Fig. S11 (a) Fluorescence spectrum and (b) time-resolved decay spectrum of FL-DNS in deaerated H₂O after stirring in the dark for ten hours.

Conditions	τ_1/us	B ₁	τ_2/us	B ₂	τ/us	χ^2
stirring in the dark	189.34	0.50	520.33	0.50	354.84	1.01
after five cycles	91.59	0.37	301.43	0.63	223.79	0.99

Table S3 The luminescence lifetime of FL-DNS in deaerated H₂O.

4.2 NMR data of sulfoxides

2-(ethylsulfinyl)ethan-1-ol (1b)³

¹H NMR (400 MHz, H₂O+D₂O) δ 4.06 – 3.95 (m, 2H), 3.13 – 2.83 (m, 4H), 1.31 (t, J = 7.5 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, H₂O+D₂O) δ 54.8, 52.9, 44.7, 6.0.

2-(methylsulfinyl)ethan-1-ol (2b)⁴

о II s Он

¹H NMR (400 MHz, H₂O+D₂O) δ 3.83 – 3.77 (m, 2H), 2.97 – 2.81 (m, 2H), 2.55 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, H₂O+D₂O) δ 55.7, 54.8, 37.1.

(methylsulfinyl)benzene (3b)⁴

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.68 – 7.63 (m, 2H), 7.57 – 7.48 (m, 3H), 2.73 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 145.8, 131.1, 129.4, 123.6, 44.0.

1-methyl-4-(methylsulfinyl)benzene (4b)⁴

O S S

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.56 – 7.52 (m, 2H), 7.33 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 2.71 (s, 3H), 2.42 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 142.6, 141.5, 130.1, 123.6, 44.0, 21.4.

1-methoxy-4-(methylsulfinyl)benzene (5b)⁴



¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.63 – 7.57 (m, 2H), 7.07 – 7.00 (m, 2H), 3.86 (s, 3H), 2.70 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 162.0, 136.6, 125.5, 114.9, 55.5, 44.0. 1-fluoro-4-(methylsulfinyl)benzene (6b)⁵



¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.70 – 7.63 (m, 2H), 7.27 – 7.20 (m, 2H), 2.72 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 164.3 (d, J = 251.3 Hz), 141.1, 125.9, 125.8, 116.8, 116.6, 44.2 (d, J = 1.4 Hz).

1-chloro-4-(methylsulfinyl)benzene (7b)⁴



¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.62 – 7.57 (m, 2H), 7.54 – 7.49 (m, 2H), 2.72 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 144.3, 137.3, 129.7, 125.0, 44.1

1-chloro-2-(methylsulfinyl)benzene (8b)⁴

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.96 (dd, J = 7.8, 1.6 Hz, 1H), 7.54 (td, J = 7.5, 1.3 Hz, 1H), 7.48 – 7.38 (m, 2H), 2.83 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 143.7, 132.0, 129.8, 129.8, 128.2, 125.4, 41.7.

1-bromo-4-(methylsulfinyl)benzene (9b)⁵

Br S

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.70 – 7.65 (m, 2H), 7.56 – 7.50 (m, 2H), 2.72 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 144.9, 132.6, 125.5, 125.2, 44.0. 1-bromo-2-(methylsulfinyl)benzene (10b)⁵

O S Br

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.95 (dd, J = 7.8, 1.7 Hz, 1H), 7.63 – 7.54 (m, 2H), 7.38 (td, J = 7.8, 1.7 Hz, 1H), 2.83 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 145.4, 133.0, 132.3, 128.8, 125.7, 118.5, 41.9.

4-(methylsulfinyl)benzaldehyde (11b)⁵



¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 10.10 (s, 1H), 8.09 – 8.03 (m, 2H), 7.87 – 7.81 (m, 2H), 2.79 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 191.1, 152.5, 138.2, 130.4, 124.2, 43.8. (ethylsulfinyl)benzene (12b)⁴

0 S S

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.64 – 7.59 (m, 2H), 7.51 (qd, J = 8.3, 4.8 Hz, 3H), 2.96 – 2.72 (m, 2H), 1.20 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 143.4, 131.0, 129.2, 124.2, 50.4, 6.0.

(allylsulfinyl)benzene (13b)⁵

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.60 (dt, J = 6.7, 2.6 Hz, 2H), 7.56 – 7.47 (m, 3H), 5.65 (ddt, J = 17.5, 10.2, 7.5 Hz, 1H), 5.34 (dd, J = 10.2, 1.4 Hz, 1H), 5.20 (dt, J = 17.0, 1.3 Hz, 1H), 3.61 – 3.47 (m, 2H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 143.0, 131.1, 129.1, 125.3, 124.4, 123.9, 60.9.

((methylsulfinyl)methyl)benzene (14b)⁴

O S S

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.35 – 7.18 (m, 5H), 3.99 (d, J = 12.8 Hz, 1H), 3.85 (d, J = 12.8 Hz, 1H), 2.38 (s, 3H). ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 130.0, 129.7, 129.0, 128.5, 60.4, 37.3.

5. References

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Appendix

¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6) and ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, DMSO- d_6) spectra of FL-CD.



¹H NMR (400 MHz, MeOD) and ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, MeOD) spectra of 2ethylsulfonylethanol.





 ^1H NMR (400 MHz, H_2O+D_2O) and ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, H_2O+D_2O) spectra of 1b.

 ^1H NMR (400 MHz, H_2O+D_2O) and ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, H_2O+D_2O) spectra of 2b.

 $\begin{smallmatrix} 2.33\\ 2.52\\ 2.$



210 200 190 180 170 160 150 140 130 120 110 100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10 0 f1 (ppm)





 1 H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) and 13 C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) spectra of 4b.





 1 H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) and 13 C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) spectra of 5b.



¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) and ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) spectra of 6b.

210 200 190 180 170 160 150 140 130 120 110 100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10 0 -10 f1 (ppm) 1 H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) and 13 C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) spectra of 7b.







f1 (ppm)

 1 H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) and 13 C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) spectra of 9b.









 $^1\mathrm{H}$ NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) and $^{13}\mathrm{C}$ NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) spectra of 11b.







¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) and ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) spectra of 12b.



¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) and ¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) spectra of 13b.

