Supporting Information

High ammonia adsorption in copper-carboxylate materials: host-guest interactions and crystalline-amorphous-crystalline phase transitions

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1. Experimental Section

1.1 Synthesis of the MOF Materials and General Characterization

All the reagents were used as received from commercial suppliers without further purification. Syntheses of MFM-100, MFM-101, MFM-102, MFM-126, MFM-127, MFM-190(F), MFM-170, Cu-MOP-1a were carried out using previously reported methods.^{1–5} Powder X-ray diffraction (PXRD) patterns were collected using a Philips X'pert X-ray diffractometer (40kV and 30 mA) using Cu-Kα radiation ($\lambda = 1.5406$ Å). Ultravioletvisible (UV-vis) spectra were recorded on a UV-vis spectrophotometer (Shimadzu, UV 2600). Elemental analyses were performed using a Thermo Scientific iCAP 6000 Series ICP spectrometer and a Thermo Scientific Flash 2000 organic elemental analyser. N₂ adsorption isotherms were measured on a Tristar II PLUS (Micrometrics) instrument at 77 K, and XPS spectra were measured using a Kratos Axis Ultra instrument equipped with a monochromatic Al ka X-ray source $(E = 1486.6 \text{ eV})$. SEM (scanning electron microscopy) images were obtained with an Hitachi SU8000 cold field emission Scanning Electron Microscope.

1.2 Adsorption Isotherm and Cycling Experiment

Measurements of static adsorption isotherms $(0-1.0 \text{ bar})$ for NH₃ were carried out using an IGA gravimetric sorption analyser (Hiden Isochema, Warrington, UK). Desolvated (activated) samples of MFM-100, MFM-101, MFM-102, MFM-126, MFM-127, MFM-190(F), MFM-170, Cu-MOP-1a were generated *in situ* under dynamic vacuum (1×10^{-8} mbar) by heating at 373 K for 12 h. Research grade NH₃ was purchased from BOC and used as received. For cycling experiments, the pressure of NH₃ was increased from vacuum (1×10^{-8} mbar) to 150 mbar and the uptake recorded. The pressure was then reduced to regenerate the sample with no assisted heating and the uptake recorded. This cycling process was repeated for 5 cycles and the difference between adsorption and desorption uptake calculated.

1.3 Isosteric enthalpy and entropy calculation

The isosteric enthalpy of adsorption (ΔH_n below) and entropies (ΔS_n) for NH₃ uptake are calculated as a function of loading (*n*), all isotherms (273 K to 303 K) were fitted to the van't Hoff isochore:

$$
ln(p)_n = \frac{\Delta H_n}{RT} - \frac{\Delta S_n}{R}
$$

A plot of ln*(p)* versus 1*/T* at constant loading allows the differential enthalpy and entropy of adsorption and the isosteric enthalpy of adsorption (Q_{st}, n) to be determined.

1.4 Breakthrough and Thermal Programmed Desorption Measurement

Breakthrough experiments were performed on Hiden Isochema IGA-003 with ABR attachments and mass spectrometer for gas detection. The MOF samples were activated at 373 K under dynamic vacuum for 12 h before breakthrough experiments, and 600 mg of desolvated MOF sample was packed into the fixed-bed reactor. The sample was then heated at 373 K under He flow for 2 h to achieve further activation. The fixedbed was then cooled to 298 K and the breakthrough experiment performed with a stream of 1000 ppm NH₃ (diluted in He). The flow rate of the gas mixture was 15 mL min^{-1} . The gas concentration, C, of NH₃ at the

outlet was compared with the corresponding inlet concentration C_0 , where $C/C_0 = 1$ indicates complete breakthrough.⁶ NH₃-TPD experiments were carried out to test the NH₃ binding in the MOF materials. Typically, the activated sample was treated with a stream of 1000 ppm NH₃ diluted in He. A Bruker Matrix MG5 FTIR spectrometer was used to analyse the outlet gases for the detection of NH_3 , H_2O and CO_2 . The Bruker MATRIX-MG5 features a 5 m multi-reflection gas cell and is designed for the high-precision quantification of gas compounds from very low concentrations on the ppb level up to one hundred percent. The gas analysis system uses the certain sections of FTIR spectrum that are unique to a given gas to first identify the gas is present and then uses a fitting algorithm to quantity the amount of gas present. If other gases interfere with the signal, then the system also fits these interfering gases and takes them into account when performing the quantification. The system was calibrated and set up before use. When the outlet concentration of NH³ was equal to that of the inlet, 100 mL min-1 of pure He was used to flush the sample for about 2 h, removing the physically adsorbed NH₃. The NH₃-TPD experiments were then carried out at a heating rate of 5 °C min-1 from 30 °C to 300 °C.

1.5 *In situ* **Synchrotron X-ray Powder Diffraction**

Synchrotron powder X-ray diffraction was carried out on the ID22 high-resolution powder diffraction beamline at the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF). Data were collected between 0 and 35° with a 13 channel multianalyser stage under the wavelength of 0.354267(4) Å. Data were binned using a step size of 0.002°. A freshly synthesised sample of MFM-100, MFM-101, and MFM-102 was exchanged with acetone over the course of 1 week before being dried under dynamic vacuum and loaded into a 0.7 mm borosilicate capillary. The loaded capillary was activated *in situ* by heating to 100 °C under active vacuum for 2 h using a temperature-controlled Oxford Cryosystems open-flow N_2 gas cryostat. Activation of the sample was visualised by a colour change from light blue to purple and diffraction data was collected. 5% NH₃ in He was flowed into the capillary and diffraction data was collected after 1 h stabilization.

Rietveld refinement of the structure was carried out on data between 1 and 25° using the TOPAS software package. Atomic parameters for the reported structure of MFM-100 (CCDC no. 257470) were used as a starting point before adding successive NH₃ molecules (with hydrogens omitted) into the framework. Approximate positions for NH_3 molecules were found using the simulated annealing approach before further refinement to find the optimal orientation of the guest molecules. Accuracy of the final model was verified by the convergence of the weighted profile factor (Rwp), the chemical sense of the model and the good correlation between the observed and calculated diffraction patterns. Crystal data of MFM-100 NH₃ are deposited at Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre (CCDC) 2175724.

1.6 Single Crystal Synchrotron FTIR Micro-spectroscopy

In situ gas-loaded single crystal synchrotron FTIR micro-spectroscopy was carried out at the Multimode InfraRed Imaging and Microspectroscopy (MIRIAM) beamline at the Diamond Light Source, Harwell Science Campus (UK). The instrument is comprised of a Bruker Hyperion 3000 microscope in transmission mode with a 15 \times objective and condenser, and a liquid N₂ cooled MCT detector (mid-band, 50 um element), coupled to a Bruker Vertex 80V Fourier Transform IR interferometer using radiation generated from a bending magnet source. Spectra were collected (512 scans) in the range 500–4000 cm⁻¹ at 4 cm⁻¹ resolution and infrared spot size at the sample of approximately 30×30 µm. Samples were placed onto a zinc selenide (ZnSe) disk and placed within a Linkam FTIR 600 gas-tight sample cell, which was equipped with ZnSe windows, a heating stage and gas inlet and outlets.

NH³ was dosed volumetrically into the sample cell using mass flow controllers, and the total flow rate was maintained at 100 cm³ min⁻¹ for all experiments. The gases were directly vented to an exhaust system and the total pressure in the cell was maintained at 1 bar for all experiments. The single crystal samples of MFM-100, MFM-101 and MFM-102 were desolvated under a flow of dry N² at 100 cm³ min−1 and 373 K for 2 h, and then cooled to room temperature under a continuous flow of N_2 . For all single crystal samples, the initial gas flow was pure N₂ at a flow rate 100 cm³ min⁻¹, which was then switched to 1%, 2%, 5%, 10%, 20%, 40%, 60% of NH₃ diluted in dry N_2 .

1.7 Materials regeneration

The regenerated materials were obtained after contact with 1 bar NH_3 or after running the NH₃ isotherms at 1 bar. The physically adsorbed NH₃ was removed by placing loaded material under dynamic vacuum (1×10⁻⁸ mbar) for 1 h. The obtained MOF was placed in deionised water for 24 h and suspended by sonication for 0.5 hour. The mixture was then filtered and exchanged with acetone to afford the regenerated material.

1.8 X-ray Pair Distribution Function Analysis

XPDF patterns were collected at beamline I15- at Diamond Light Source with an X-ray wavelength *λ* = 0.189578 Å. Initial calibration measurements were performed on an empty 1 mm borosilicate capillary. Desolvated MFM-100, MFM-101 and MFM-102 were prepared by heating the sample at 100 °С under dynamic vacuum of 10⁻⁷ mbar. Research grade NH₃ was purchased from BOC and used as received for NH₃ adsorption. The samples after dosing of NH₃ were evacuated under 10^{-7} dynamic vacuum for 2 h and soaked in H2O for to afford the regenerated materials. The samples were then ground and loaded into 1 mm borosilicate capillaries for data collection. The data were processed using Gudrun X^7 and PDFGui⁸ software.

1.9 Electron Paramagnetic Resonance Spectroscopy

For electron paramagnetic resonance (EPR) studies, the tube size and tube position in the cavity were kept constant, and Q-band samples prepared in 1.6 mm capillaries for measurements. Desolvated MFM-100, MFM-101 and MFM-102 were prepared by heating the sample at 100 °С in a J. Young X-band EPR tube (4 mm) at 10^{-7} mbar. For NH₃ adsorption studies, the sample in a J. Young X-band EPR tube was dosed with NH₃. The samples after dosing with NH₃ were evacuated under 10^{-7} dynamic vacuum for 2 h, loaded with H₂O and kept under room temperature for 24 h in J. Young X-band EPR tubes. Low temperature CW EPR spectra (10 K and 150 K) were measured with a Bruker EMX 300 EPR spectrometer equipped with X-band (ca. 9.4 GHz) and

Q-band (ca. 35 GHz) resonator and a liquid He cryostat. Field corrections were applied by measuring relevant EPR standards (Bruker Strong Pitch). Simulation of the EPR spectra was performed with the EasySpin/MATLAB toolbox, which employs the exact diagonalization of the spin Hamiltonian matrix.⁹

2. Structures and Adsorption Isotherms

Figure S1. Views of ligands and crystal structures of the MOF/MOP materials in this study.

Figure S2. Adsorption-desorption isotherms for NH₃ at 273 K up to 1 bar.

MOF	$NH3$ Uptake (273K 1bar) /mmol g^{-1}	BET $/m2 g-1$	Pore Volume (Single Crystal) / $\rm cm^3\,g^{\text{-}1}$	Metal Centre Density /nm ³	$NH3$ Packing density in MOF pores/ $g \text{ cm}^{-3}$	$NH3$ storage density in MOFs /g cm^{-3}
MFM-100	19.8	1108	0.68	2.44	0.58	0.33
MFM-101	21.9	1722	1.08	1.55	0.63	0.33
MFM-102	20.4	2404	1.28	1.17	0.52	0.35
MFM-126	15.9	1004	0.52	1.74	0.75	0.36
MFM-127	21.5	1557	0.57	1.78	0.70	0.37
Cu-MOP-1a	14.2	751	0.38	1.23	0.79	0.25
MFM-170	17.2	2408	0.87	1.27	0.34	0.21
MFM-190(F)	16.8	2537	0.83	1.56	0.35	0.22

Table S1 Summary of ammonia adsorption of the materials in this study.

Figure S3. Adsorption-desorption isotherms for NH₃ at 273 K up to 1 bar in the materials studied herein.

Figure S4. PXRD pattern for materials before and after NH₃ isotherms at 273 K up to 1 bar.

Figure S5. Synchrotron PXRD patterns of MFM-100, MFM-101 and MFM-102: as synthesised, after adsorption of NH³ (5%) and regenerated (R1) materials (left: 2 θ before 37°; right: 2 θ before 10°; long: long term exposure to low concentration $NH₃$ after 2 hours).

3. Cycling Experiments and Calculation of *Qst*

Figure S6. Cycling performance of MFM-100, MFM-101 and MFM-102 for uptake of NH₃ at 298 K between 0 and 0.15 bar.

Figure S7. Isotherms and Q_{st} plots for MFM-100, MFM-101 and MFM-102.

4. Thermal Programmed Desorption Measurements and UV-vis Spectroscopy

Figure S8. Temperature-programmed desorption (TPD) of NH₃ in MFM-100, MFM-101 and MFM-102, showing variation of NH₃ concentration in the outlet gas stream as a function of temperature.

5. *In situ* **Synchrotron Powder X-ray diffraction**

Figure S9. Synchrotron PXRD pattern and Rietveld refinement for MFM-100. R*wp* = 9.23.

Figure S10. Synchrotron PXRD pattern and Rietveld refinement for MFM-100·4.4NH₃. R*wp* = 7.93.

6. Single Crystal Synchrotron FTIR Micro-spectroscopy

Figure S11. *In situ* synchrotron FTIR spectra for single crystals of MFM-100 under various concentrations of NH₃ diluted in dry N² (bottom left: aromatic C–H stretching; bottom right: aromatic C–H bending).

Figure S12. *In situ* synchrotron FTIR spectra for single crystals of MFM-101 under various concentrations of NH₃ diluted in dry N² (bottom left: aromatic C–H stretching; bottom right: aromatic C–H bending).

Figure S13. In situ synchrotron FTIR spectra for single crystals of MFM-102 under various concentrations of NH₃ diluted in dry N² (bottom left: aromatic C–H stretching; bottom right: aromatic C–H bending).

7. Material regeneration and characterization

Figure S14. Scheme for the regeneration of MOF materials.

Figure S15. SEM images for a) MFM-100-as synthesised, b) MFM-100-NH³ loaded and c) MFM-100-regenrated.

Figure S16. a-c) NH₃ isotherms of regenerated materials at 273K. d-f) PXRD patterns for regenerated materials. g-i) Elemental analysis of regenerated materials.

Figure S17. BET surface areas of MFM-100, MFM-101 and MFM-102 derived from N₂ isotherms at 77K: as-synthesised and regenerated (R1) materials.

8. X-ray Pair Distribution Function Analysis

Figure S18. XPDF patterns of MFM-100, MFM-101 and MFM-102 (bare material, ammonia-loaded and regenerated materials) from the short-range to long-range region.

9. Electron Paramagnetic Resonance Spectroscopy

Figure S19. Q-band EPR spectra of as-synthesised MFM-100, MFM-101 and MFM-102 at 150 K, showing the superposition of the spectra of different Cu(II) species

Figure S20. Q-band EPR spectra of regenerated MFM-100, MFM-101 and MFM-102 at 150 K.

Figure S21. X-band EPR spectra of MFM-100, MFM-101 and MFM-102 at 10 K (experimental: black; simulated: red).

Note: No spin echo signal was detected for the NH3-loaded and regenerated samples, due we believe to rapid relaxation of spins.

Table S2a. Spin-Hamiltonian parameter set extracted from Q-band CW EPR spectra of as-synthesized MFM-100, MFM-101 and MFM-102.

	Intra-nuclear exchange E'' Cu(II)	Interdinuclear exchange E'' Cu(II)	Monomeric E' Cu(II)
MFM-100	$g = [2.05, 2.3]$ $D = -0.33$ cm ⁻¹ $E = 0$ cm ⁻¹	$g = [2.05, 2.3]$ $Jinter = 1 cm-1$	$g = [2.063, 2.385]$ gStrain = $[0 0.1]$
$MFM-101$	$g = [2.07, 2.38]$ $D = -0.338$ cm ⁻¹ $E = 0$ cm ⁻¹	$g = [2.07, 2.38]$ $Jinter = 2 cm-1$	$g = [2.082, 2.385]$ gStrain = $[0 0.1]$
$MFM-102$	$g = [2.09, 2.33]$ $D = -0.345$ cm ⁻¹ $E = 0$ cm ⁻¹	$g = [2.085, 2.385]$ $Jinter = 2 cm-1$	$g = [2.063, 2.385]$ gStrain = $[0 0.1]$

Table S2b. Spin-Hamiltonian parameter set extracted from Q-band CW EPR spectra of regenerated MFM-100, MFM-101 and MFM-102.

*The names attributed to the three paramagnetic centres follow the usual convention: "E" indicates that the paramagnetic centre involves unpaired electrons; the number of apostrophes " ' " indicates the number of unpaired electrons actually involved in the centre.

Table S3. Spin-Hamiltonian parameter set extracted from X-band CW EPR spectra of as-synthesized, activated, NH3-loaded and regenerated MFM-100, MFM-101 and MFM-102.

**J'*= the exchange coupling constant. The simulation of the interdinuclear exchange line is following with the previous research, of which only one interdinuclear exchange path with the exchange coupling constant *J'* was considered.41

10. X-ray Photoelectron Spectroscopy

Figure S23. X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS) spectra of MFM-100, MFM-101 and MFM-102. A charge neutraliser was used to minimise charging and spectra are aligned on the binding energy scale relative to the hydrocarbon C-C/C-H peak at 284.8 eV. Spectra were fitted using the CASA XPS software using Voigtlike peak shapes. Spin-orbit splitting ratios and splitting energies are constrained to obtain physically meaningful fits.

11. Comparison of Ammonia Adsorption Capacity in MOFs

Table S4. Summary of the isothermal adsorption capacities for NH₃ and details of selected MOF materials.

Table S5. Summary of the dynamic adsorption capacities for dry NH₃ and details of selected MOF materials.

Table S6. Summary of the NH₃ storage density and packing density of selected MOF materials.

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