

2nd LATAM MEETING ON GREEN AMMONIA AND POWER-to-X

Materials for the electrochemical production of hydrogen

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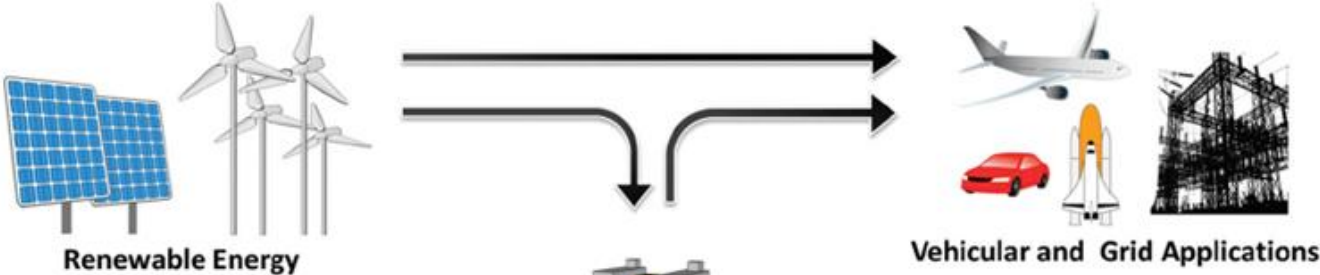


Grupo de Ciencia de Superficies y
Electrocatalisis

 Instituto de Materiales
y Nanotecnología
Universidad de La Laguna

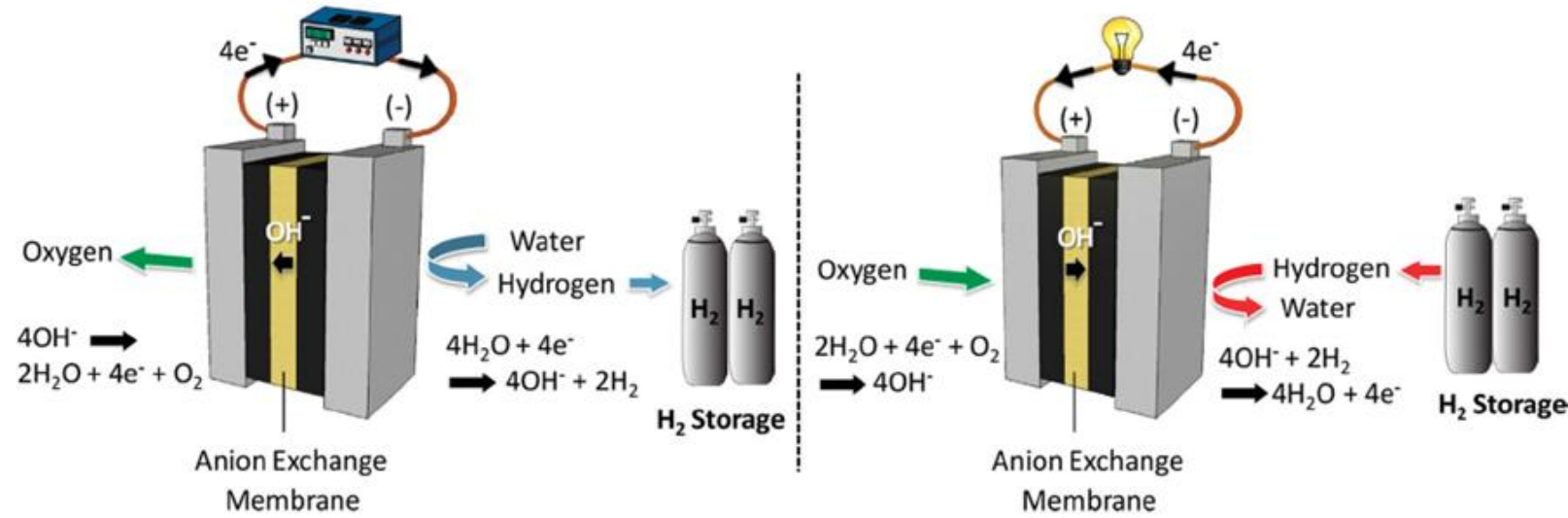


PEM devices

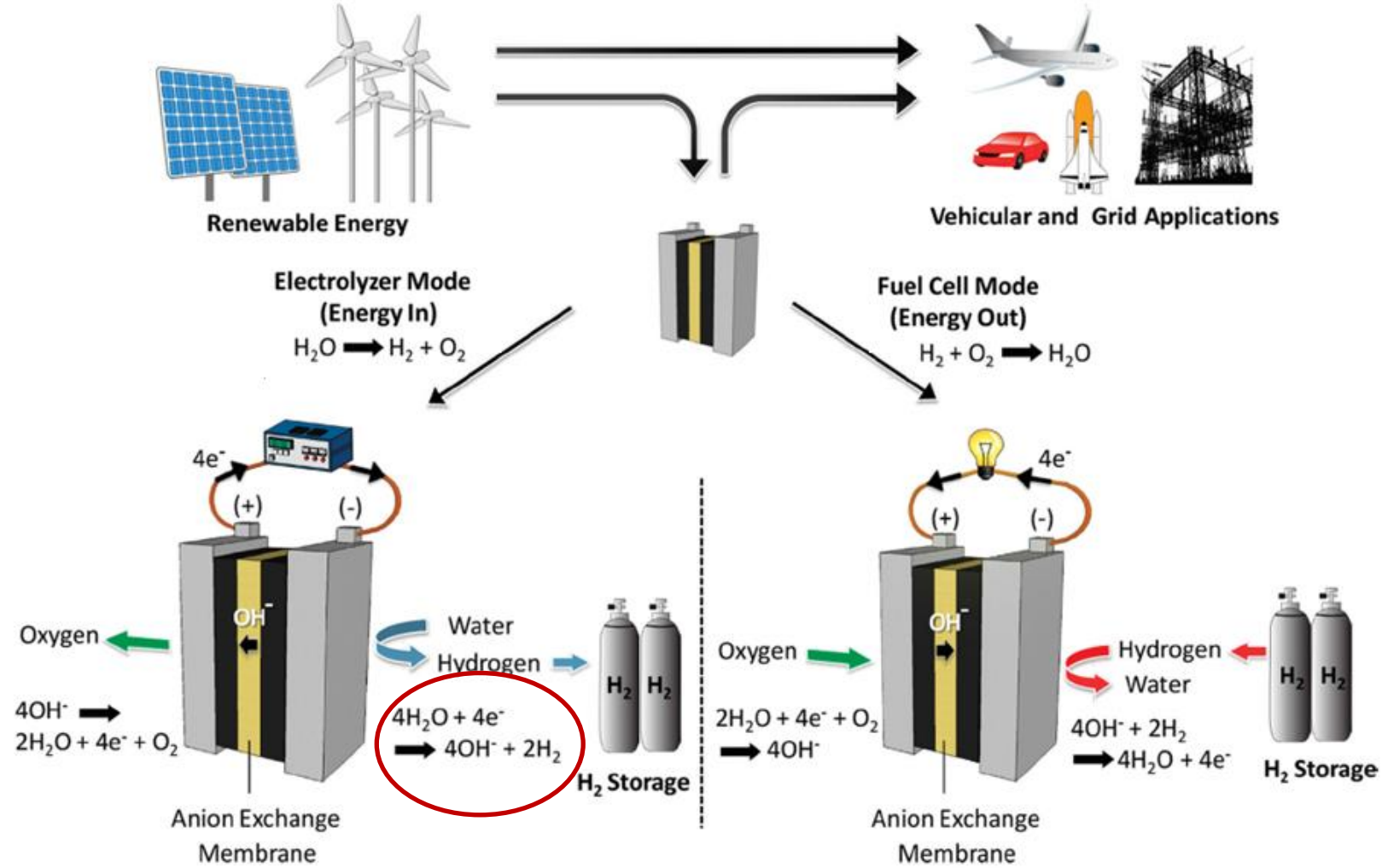


**Electrolyzer Mode
(Energy In)**
 $H_2O \rightarrow H_2 + O_2$

**Fuel Cell Mode
(Energy Out)**
 $H_2 + O_2 \rightarrow H_2O$

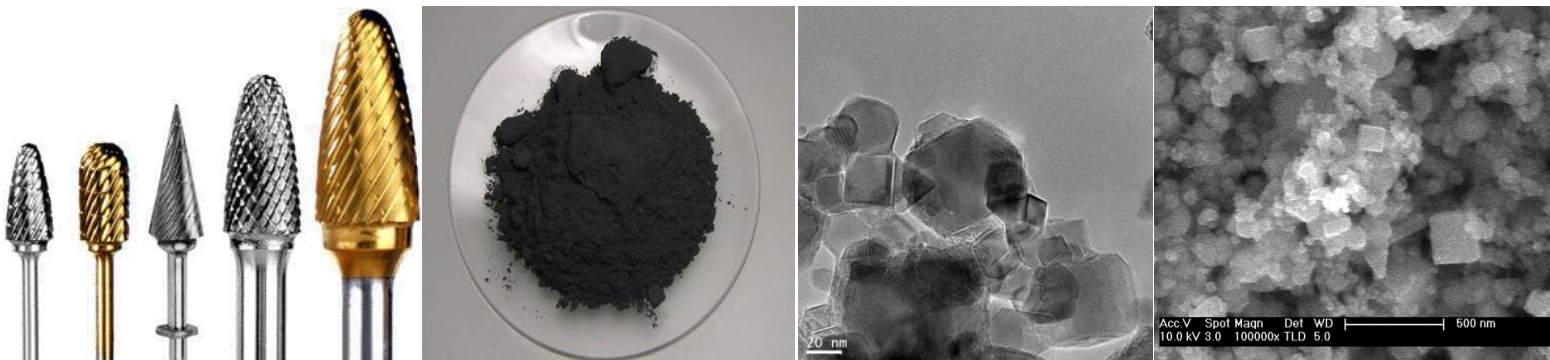


PEM devices

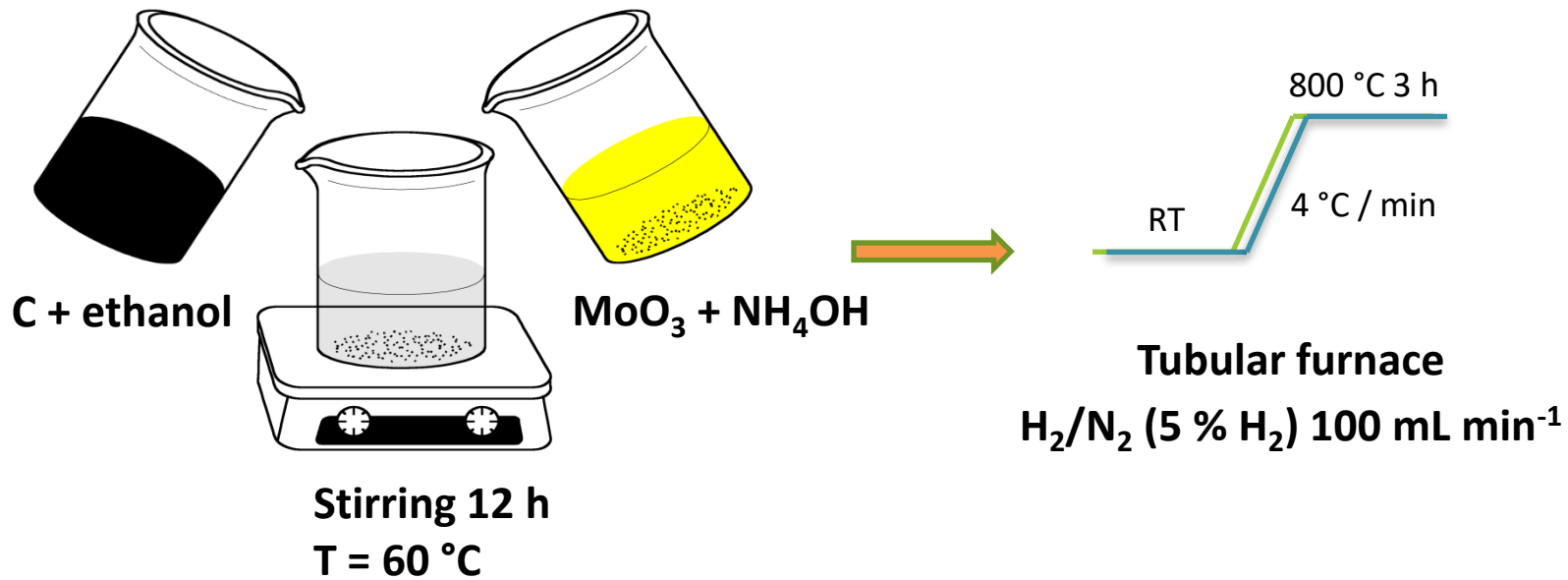


Alternative: metal carbides

- **Could be used as catalysts, catalyst supports and/or promoters**
- DFT: electronic structure near the Fermi level similar to noble metals (e.g., Pt and WC).
- High electrical conductivity
- Corrosion and wear resistant
- Low-cost

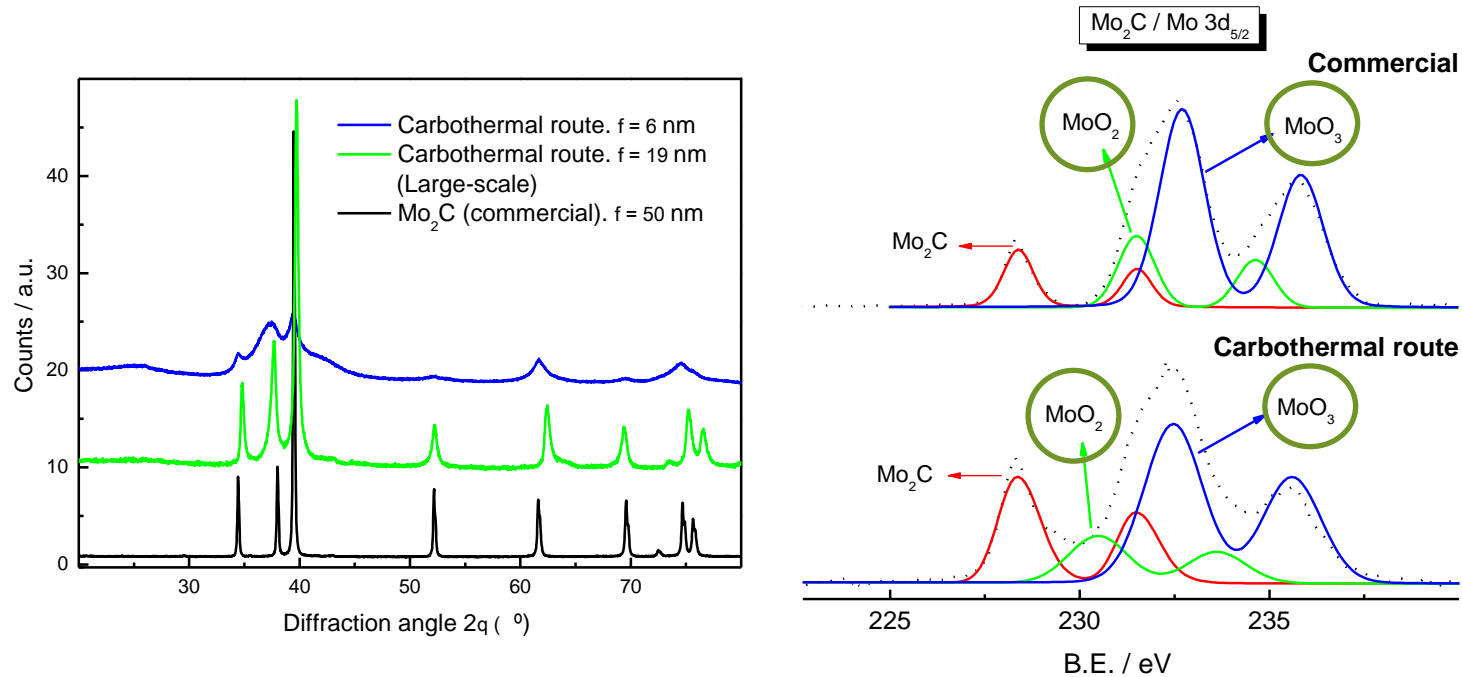


Synthesis of Mo₂C by the carbothermal route



Low-cost and easy method

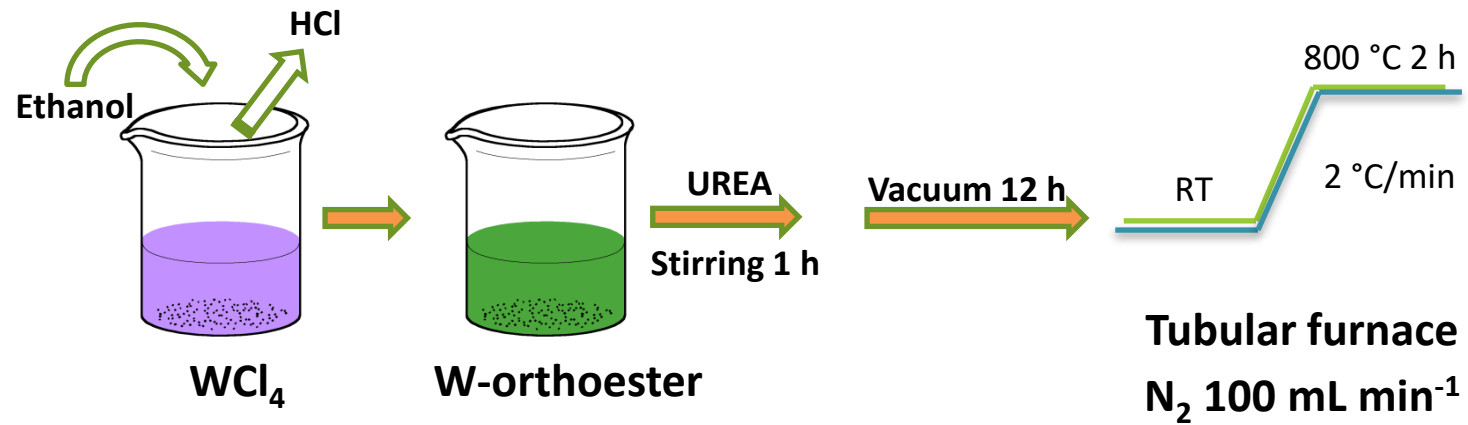
Synthesis of Mo₂C by the carbothermal route



Catalyst	Main phase/s	Secondary phase/s	Crystallite Size (nm)
Mo ₂ C (commercial)	Mo ₂ C	---	> 50
Mo ₂ C (carbothermal route)-0.1 gram	Mo ₂ C	---	6
Mo ₂ C (carbothermal route) Large-Scale	Mo ₂ C	---	19

Surface: metal carbide + transition metal oxides

Synthesis of W_2C by the urea-glass route



WCl₄ (1.21 M)
in CH₃CH₂OH

Urea:W molar ratio = R

R < 2 → W₂N

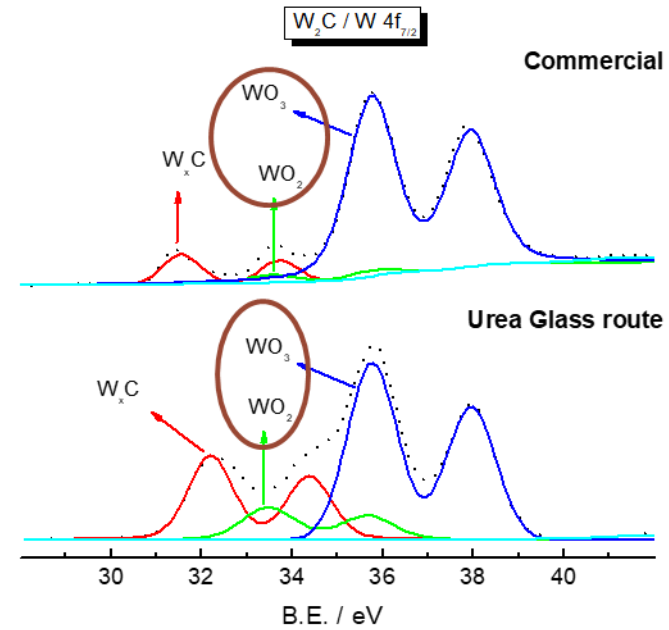
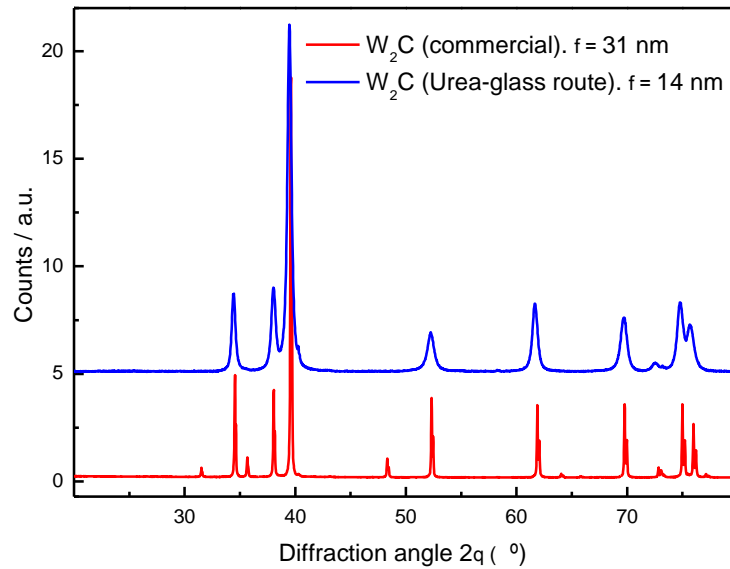
2 < R < 4 → W^o

R = 7 → W₂C

Modification of
Nano Lett., Vol. 8, No. 12, 2008

Low-cost

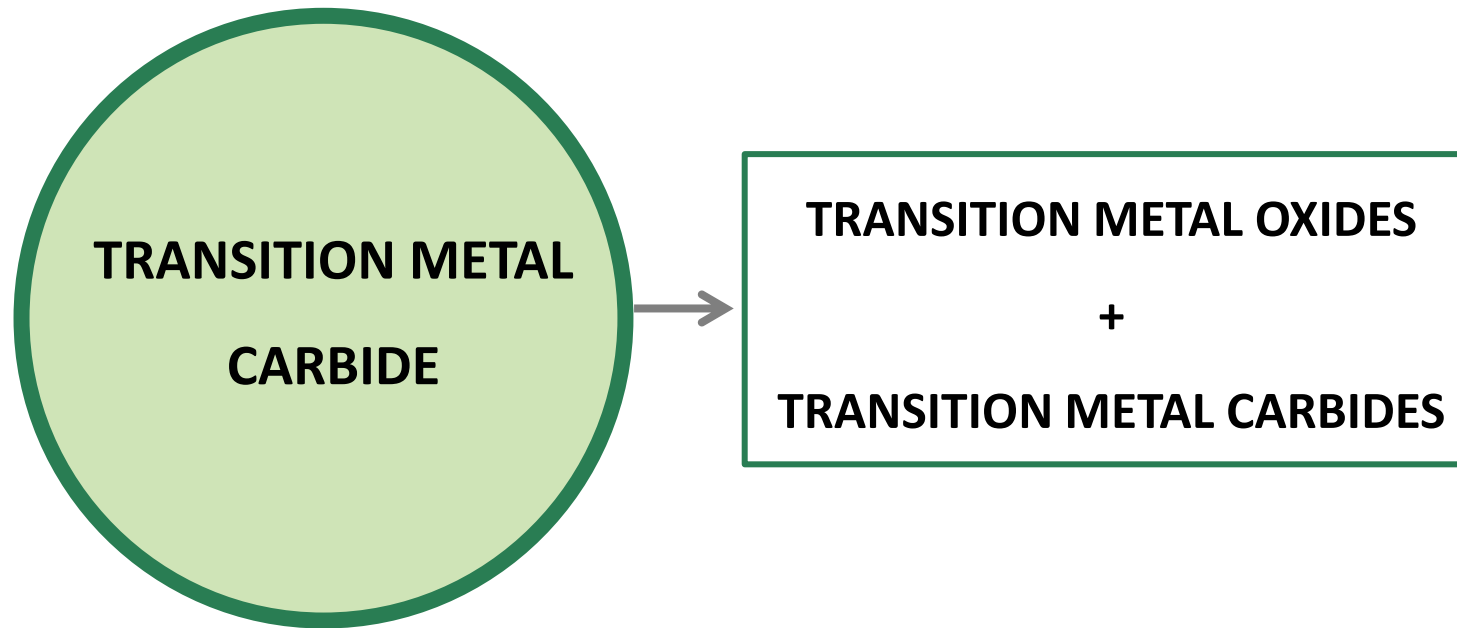
Synthesis of W_2C by the urea-glass route



Catalyst	Main phase/s	Secondary phase/s	Crystallite Size (nm)
W_2C (Commercial)	W_2C	WC	> 50
W_2C (urea glass route)	W_2C	----	14

Surface: metal carbide + transition metal oxides

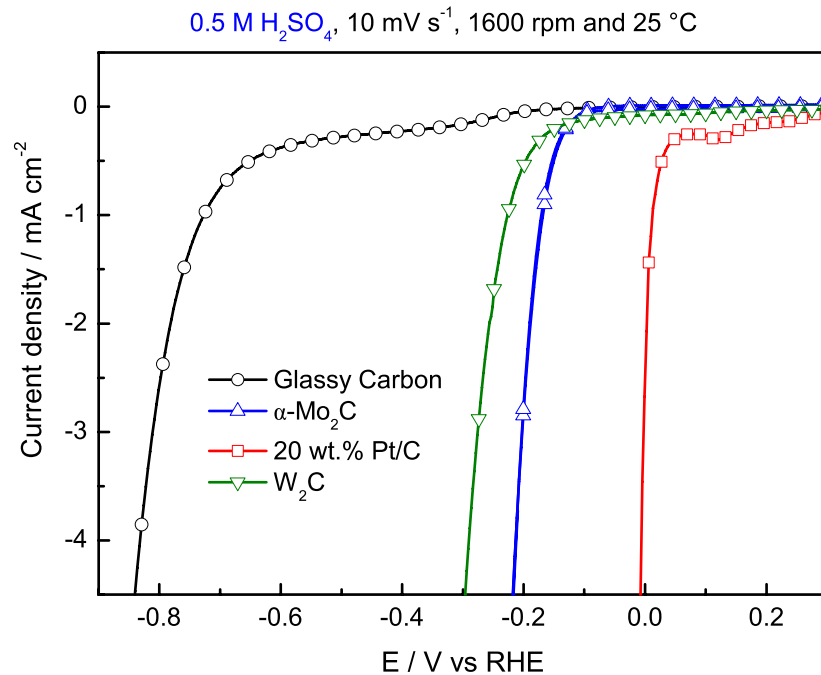
What are REALLY metal carbides?



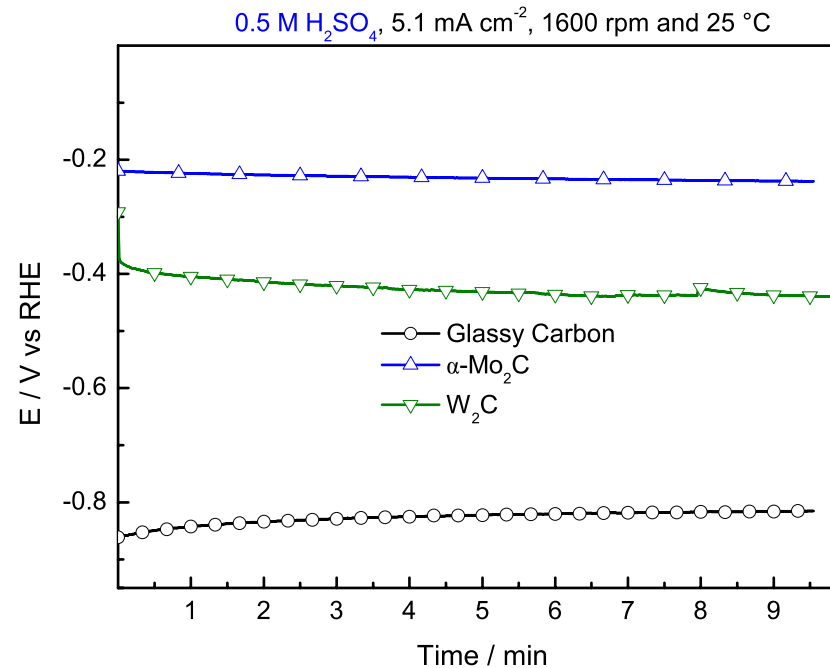
Good conductivity – Small particle size – Low-cost production

Noble metal free catalysts for the HER: metal carbides

Linear Sweep Voltammetry



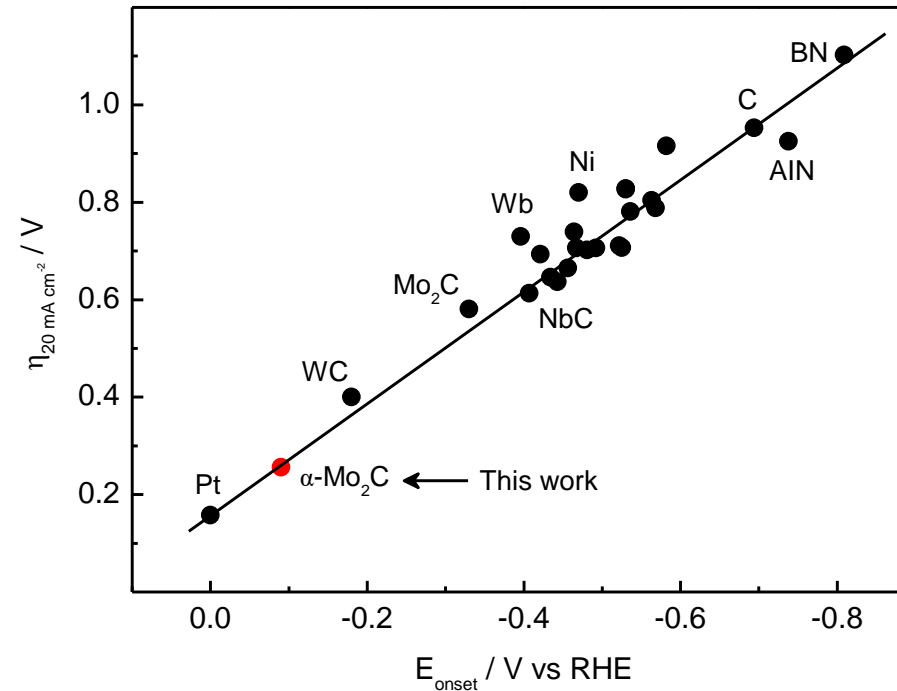
Chronopotentiometry



Onset potential strongly depends on the nature of the *metal*

Hydrogen evolution reaction

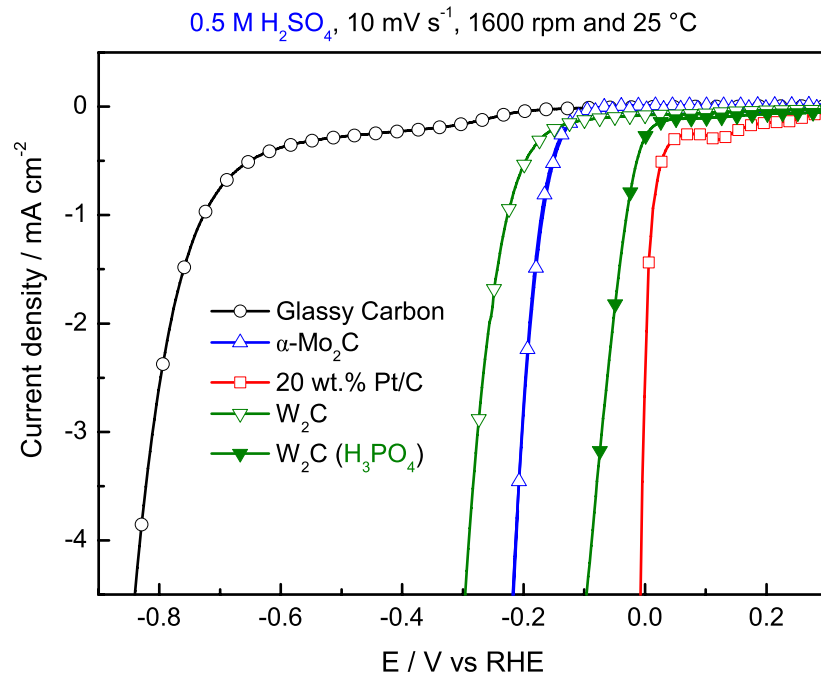
η @ 20 mA cm⁻² vs onset potential



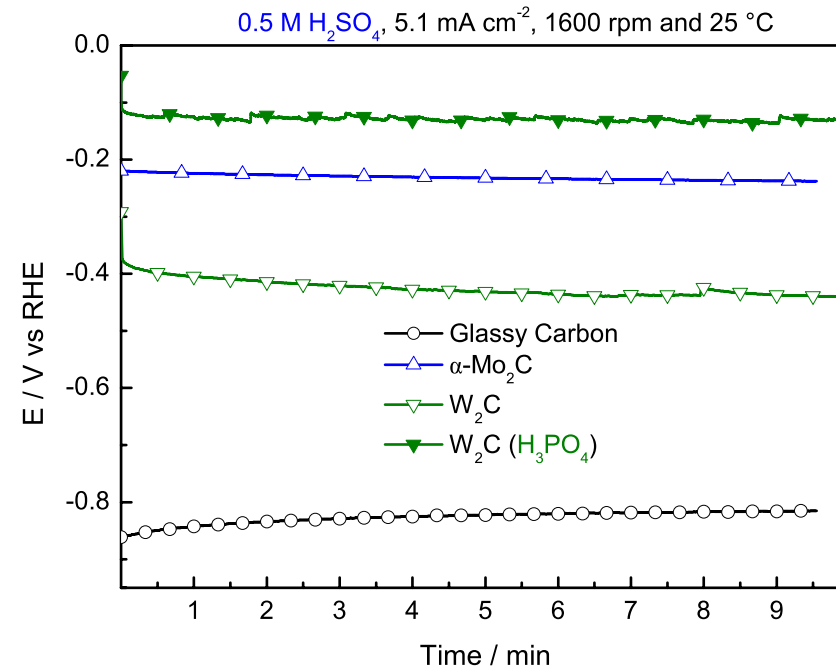
Mo₂C synthesized by the carbothermal route appears as one of the most active **non-noble material** toward the **HER**

Hydrogen evolution reaction

Linear Sweep Voltammetry



Chronopotentiometry



Onset potential strongly depends on the nature of the *metal* and the *electrolyte*

Hydrogen evolution reaction (HER)

Mechanism

	Acid media	Basic media
Volmer	$\text{H}_3\text{O}^+ + \text{e}^- \rightleftharpoons \text{H}_{\text{ads}} + \text{H}_2\text{O}$	$\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{e}^- \rightleftharpoons \text{H}_{\text{ads}} + \text{OH}^-$
Heyrovski	$\text{H}_{\text{ads}} + \text{H}_3\text{O}^+ + \text{e}^- \rightleftharpoons \text{H}_2 + \text{H}_2\text{O}$	$\text{H}_{\text{ads}} + \text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{e}^- \rightleftharpoons \text{H}_2 + \text{OH}^-$
Tafel	$\text{H}_{\text{ads}} + \text{H}_{\text{ads}} \rightleftharpoons \text{H}_2$	$\text{H}_{\text{ads}} + \text{H}_{\text{ads}} \rightleftharpoons \text{H}_2$

Tafel slopes $\rightarrow \eta$ vs $\log(|j|)$

- Volmer $120 \text{ mV}\cdot\text{dec}^{-1}$
- Heyrovski $40 \text{ mV}\cdot\text{dec}^{-1}$
- Tafel $30 \text{ mV}\cdot\text{dec}^{-1}$

Ni-Activated Transition Metal Carbides for Efficient Hydrogen Evolution in Acidic and Alkaline Solutions

Chenfan Yang, Rong Zhao, Hui Xiang, Jing Wu, Wenda Zhong, Wenlong Li, Qin Zhang,*
Nianjun Yang,* and Xuanke Li*

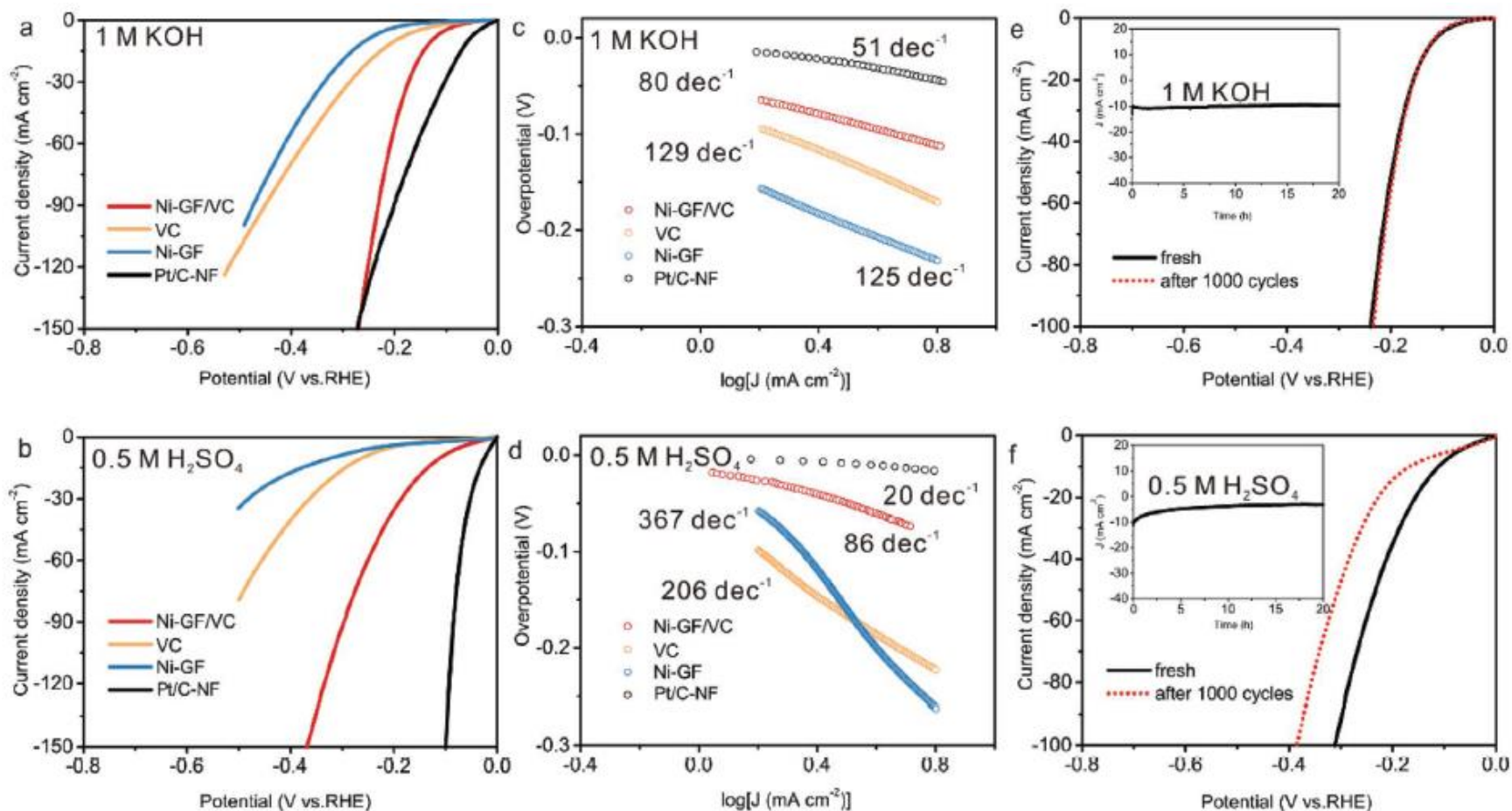
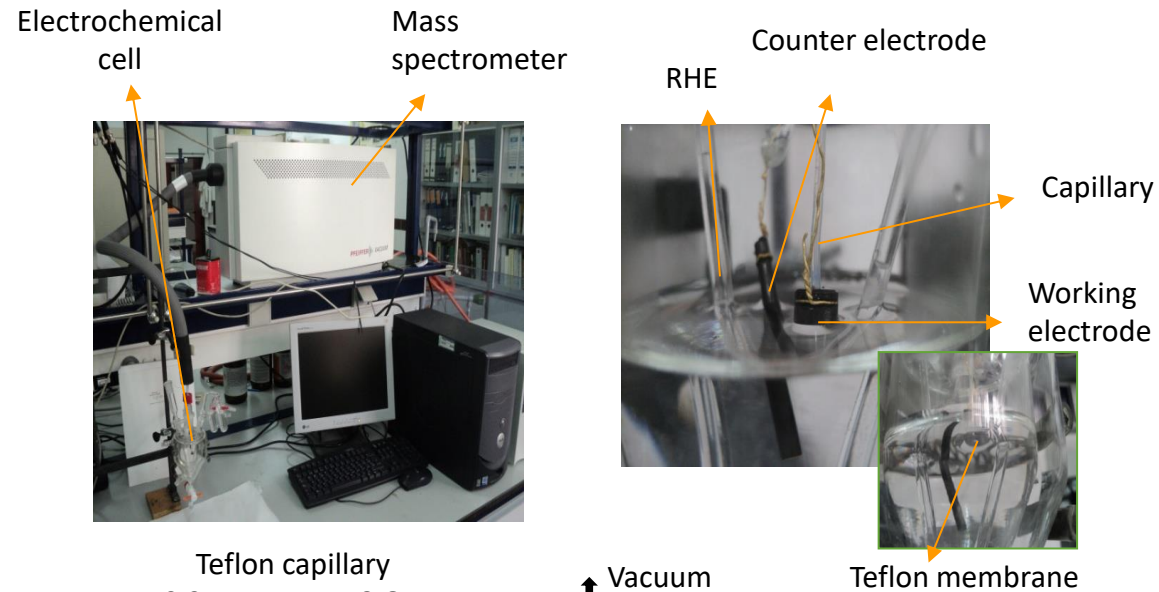


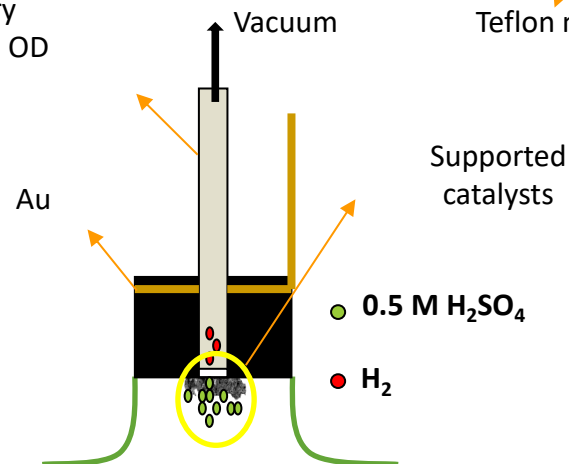
Figure 4. HER performance of the Ni-GF/VC catalyst: a,b) The iR -corrected LSVs and c,d) Tafel slopes of the Pt/C-NF, Ni-GF/VC, VC, and Ni-GF catalysts; e,f) the iR -corrected LSVs of the Ni-GF/VC catalyst in the 1st and 1000th cycles. The insets in (e) and (f) are the long-term stability tests over 20 h at a constant potential of -128 and -111 mV (vs RHE), respectively. The electrolytes were a,c,e) 1 M KOH and b,d,f) 0.5 M H₂SO₄. The scan rate in (a) and (b) is 5 mV s^{-1} .

Differential electrochemical mass spectrometry (DEMS)

Pfeiffer



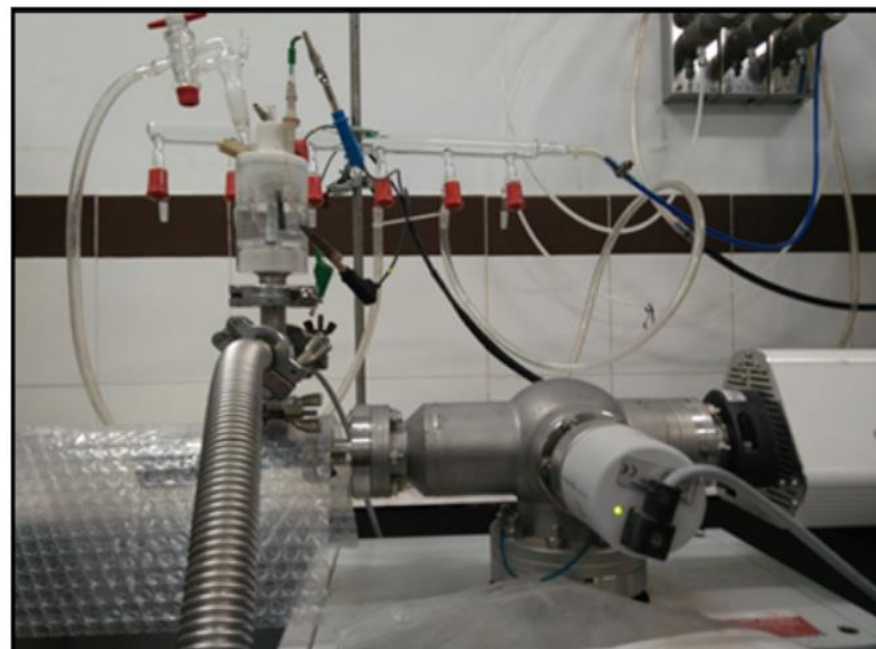
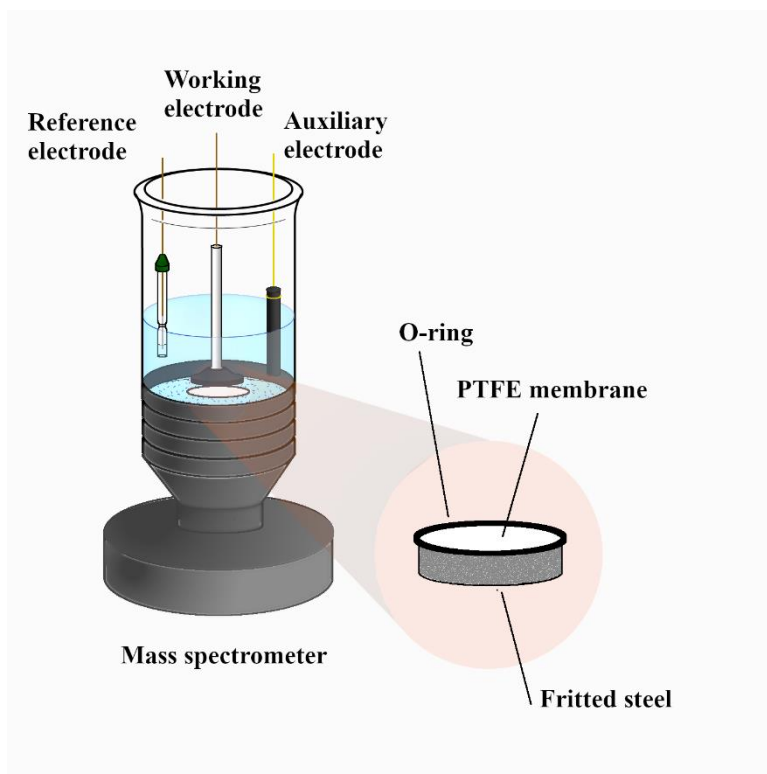
Teflon capillary
0.3mm ID x 1.58 OD



$$\left. \begin{aligned} i_i &= K^0 j_i \\ j_i &= \frac{N i_f}{n F} \end{aligned} \right\} i_i \propto i_f$$

Differential electrochemical mass spectrometry (DEMS)

Pfeiffer
"Arturito"

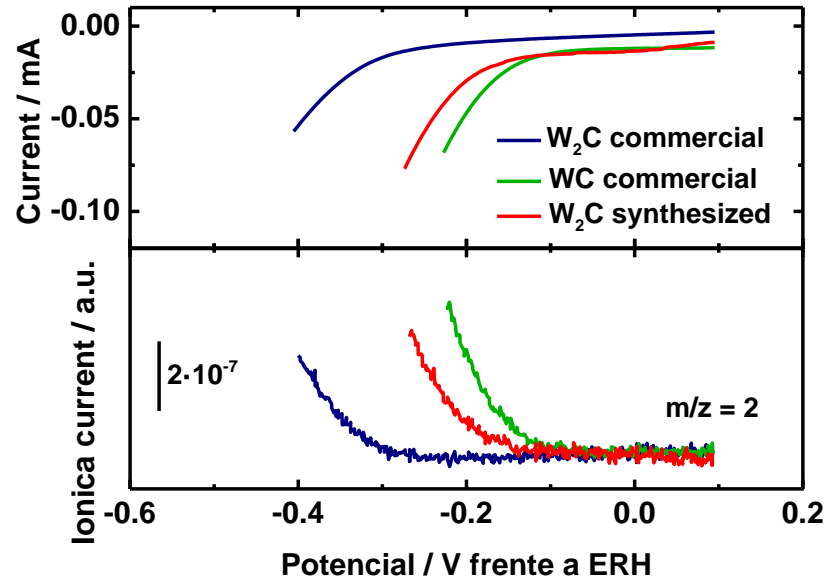


Differential electrochemical mass spectrometry (DEMS)

Hiden

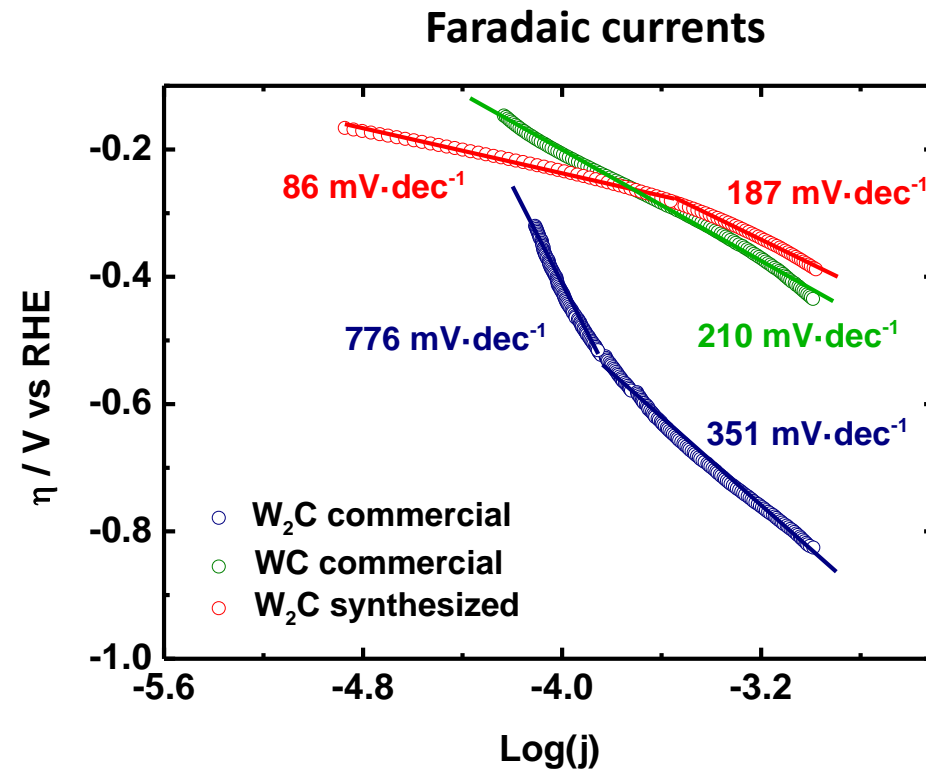


Hydrogen evolution reaction at metal carbides



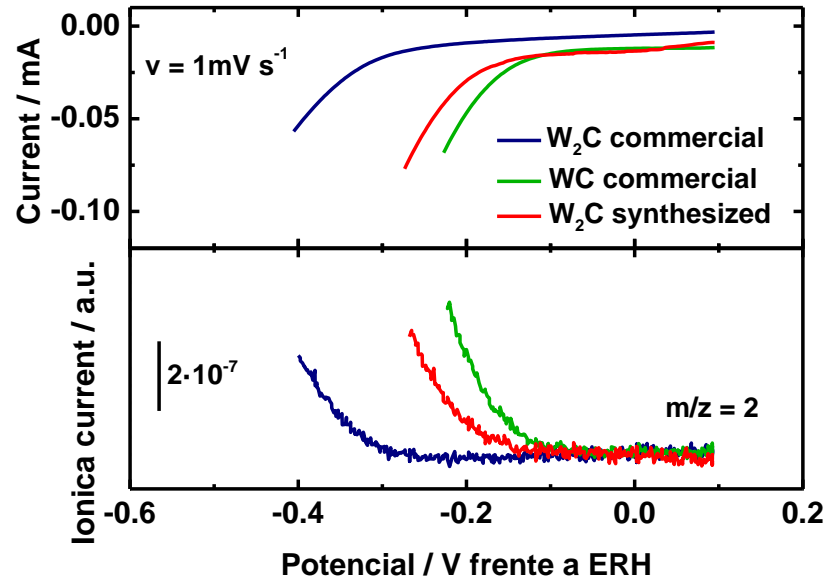
0.1 M NaOH, 1 mV/s

Tafel plot



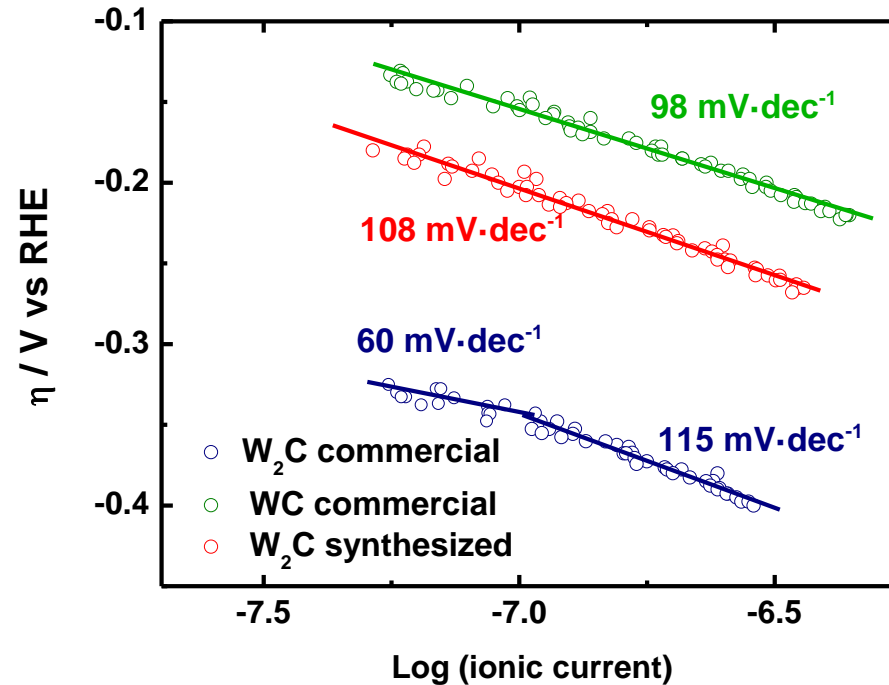
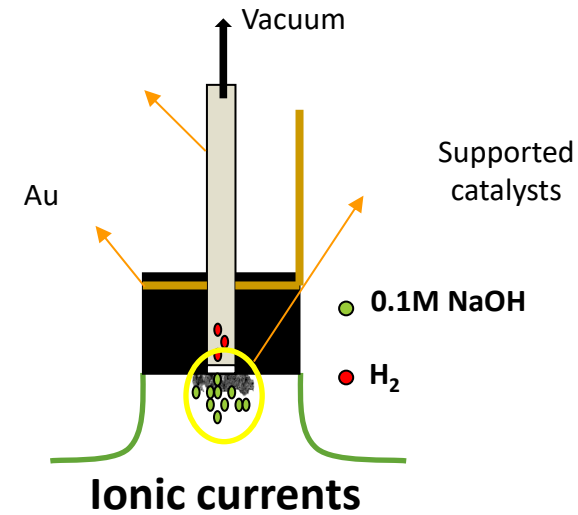
Hydrogen evolution reaction at metal carbides

DEMS



0.1 M NaOH, 1 mV/s

Tafel plot

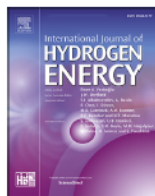




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Precise determination of Tafel slopes by DEMS. Hydrogen evolution on tungsten-based catalysts in alkaline solution

S. Díaz-Coello, G. García*, M.C. Arévalo, E. Pastor

Instituto de Materiales y Nanotecnología, Departamento de Química, Universidad de La Laguna, PO Box 456, 38200, La Laguna, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain

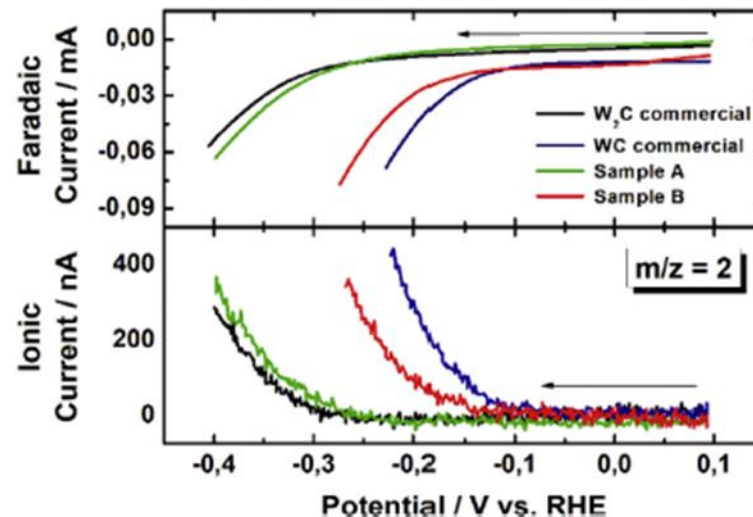


Fig. 3 – LSVs (top panel) and MSLSVs (bottom panel) for all employed catalysts in 0.1 M NaOH recorded at 1 mV s^{-1} .

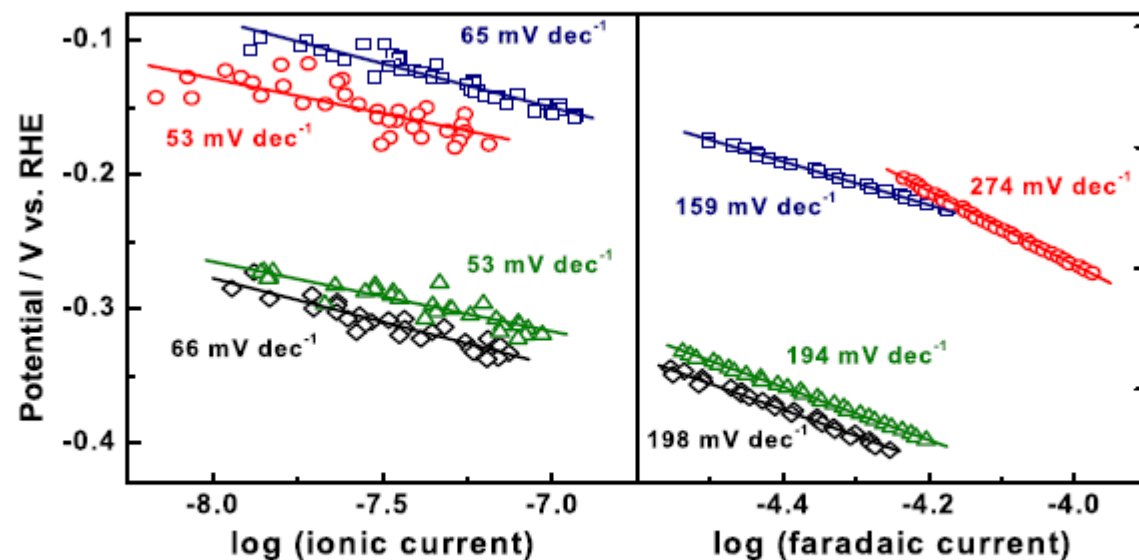


Fig. 4 – Tafel plots for the HER for commercial W_2C (black line- \diamond), commercial WC (blue line- \square), sample A (green line- \triangle) and sample B (red line- \circ) achieved from MSLSVs (left panel) and LSVs (right panel). (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the Web version of this article.)

Hydrogen evolution reaction at metal carbides

SUMMARY

NaOH 0.1 M

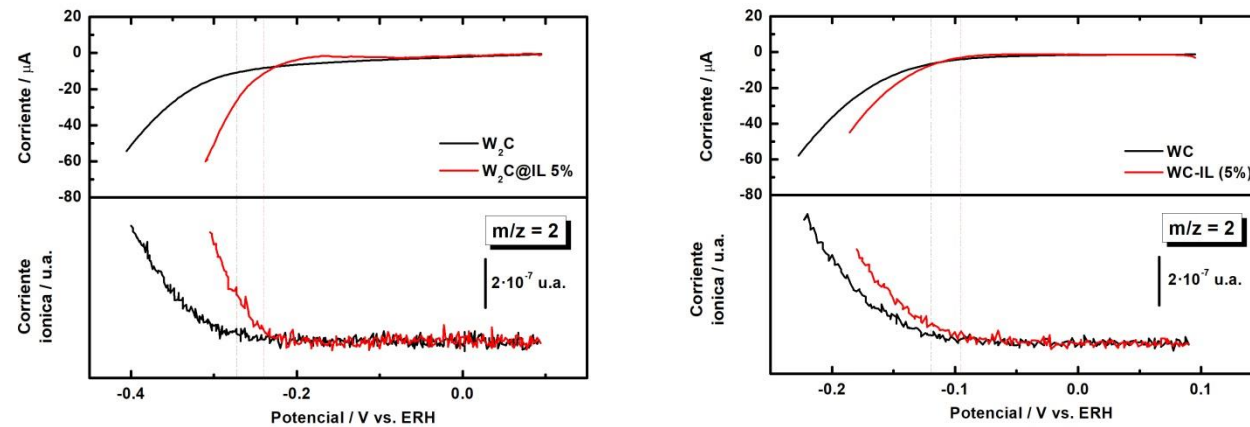
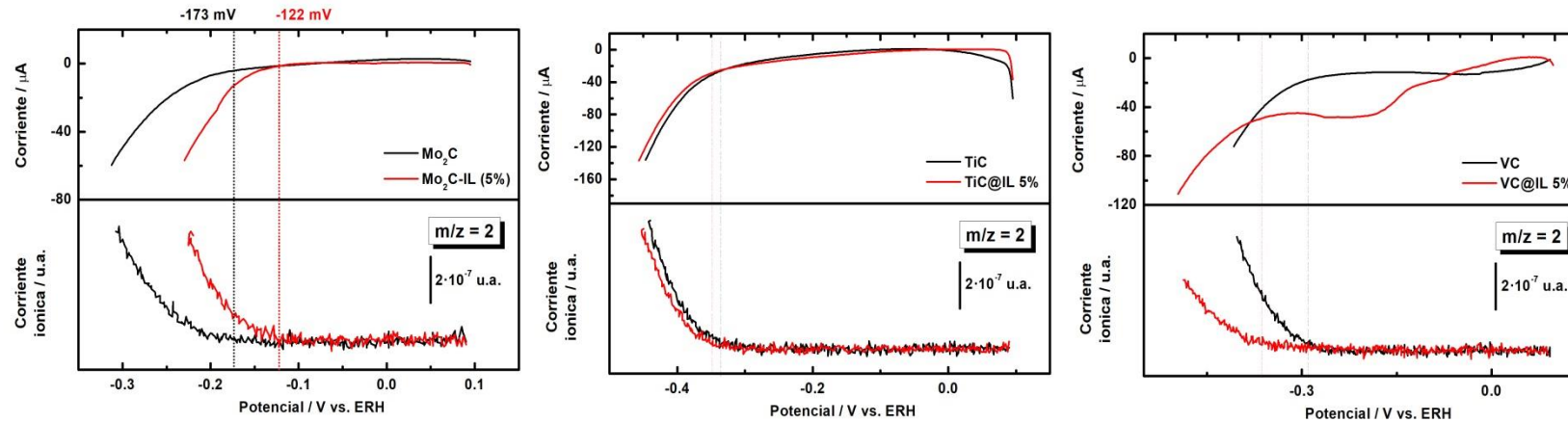
Catalyst	Onset potential	Tafel slope	rds	Faradaic current at -0.45 V vs RHE
W ₂ C commercial	-0.30 V vs. RHE	60, 115 mV·dec ⁻¹	Heyrovsky-Volmer	100 μA
WC commercial	-0.12 V vs. RHE	98 mV·dec ⁻¹	Volmer	800 μA
W ₂ C synthesized	-0.15 V vs. RHE	108 mV·dec ⁻¹	Volmer	2.2 mA

H₃PO₄ 0.5 M

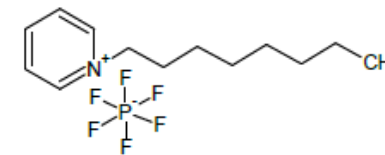
Catalyst	Onset potential	Tafel slope	rds	Faradaic current at -0.45 V vs RHE
W ₂ C commercial	-0.42 V vs. RHE	66,141 mV·dec ⁻¹	Heyrovsky-Volmer	8 μA
WC commercial	-0.21 V vs. RHE	130 mV·dec ⁻¹	Volmer	80 μA
W ₂ C synthesized	-0.21 V vs. RHE	113 mV·dec ⁻¹	Volmer	600 μA

Hydrogen evolution reaction at metal carbides

Effect of the addition of ionic liquid

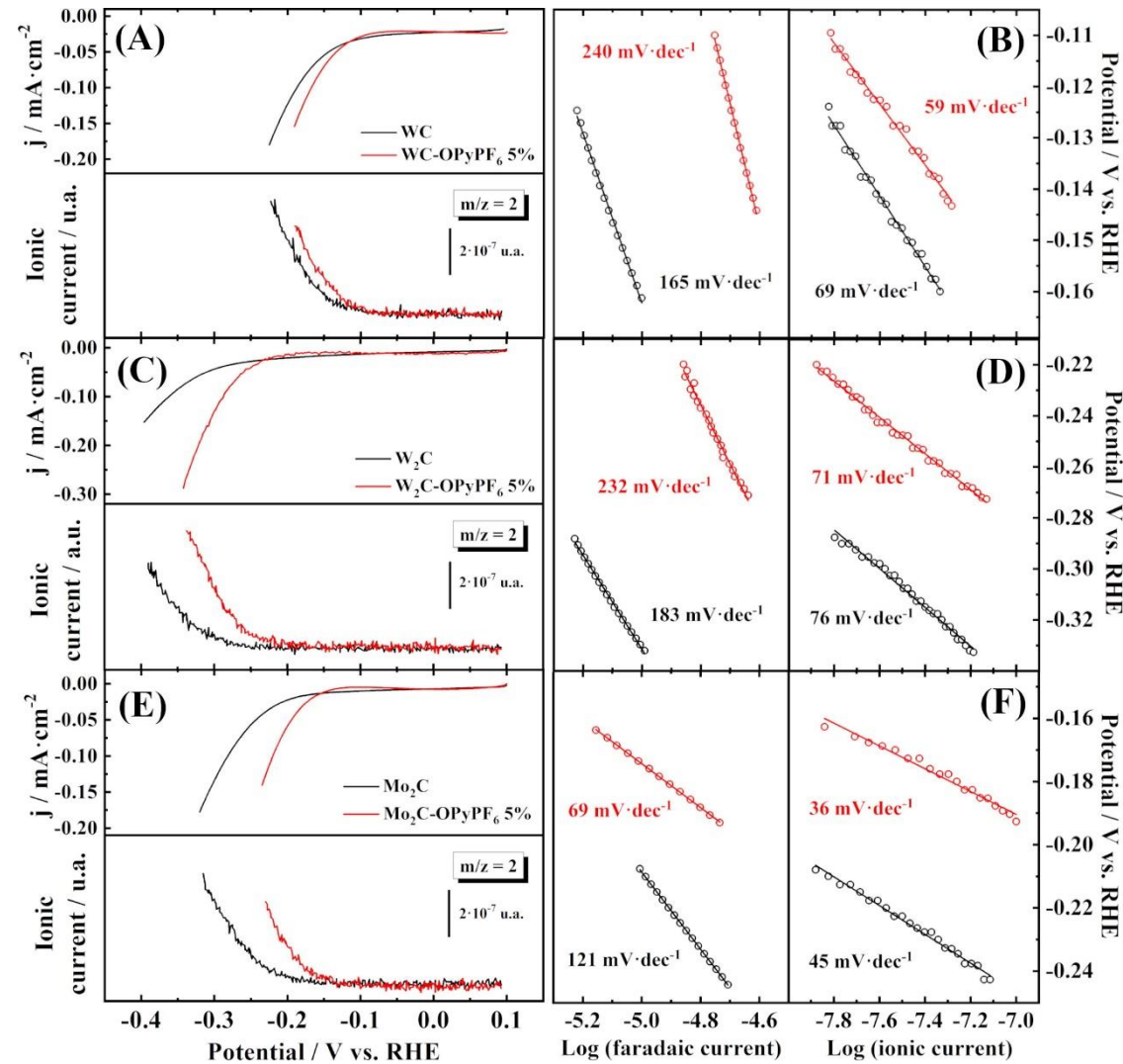


Octylpyridinium hexafluorophosphate



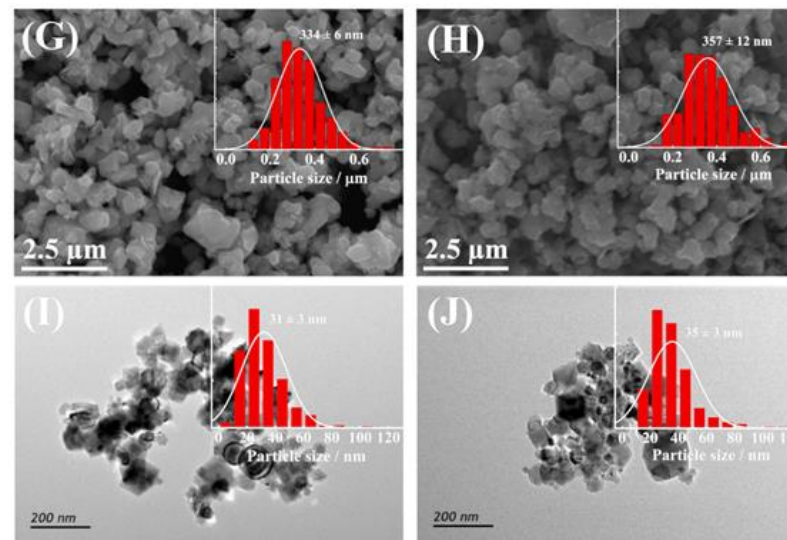
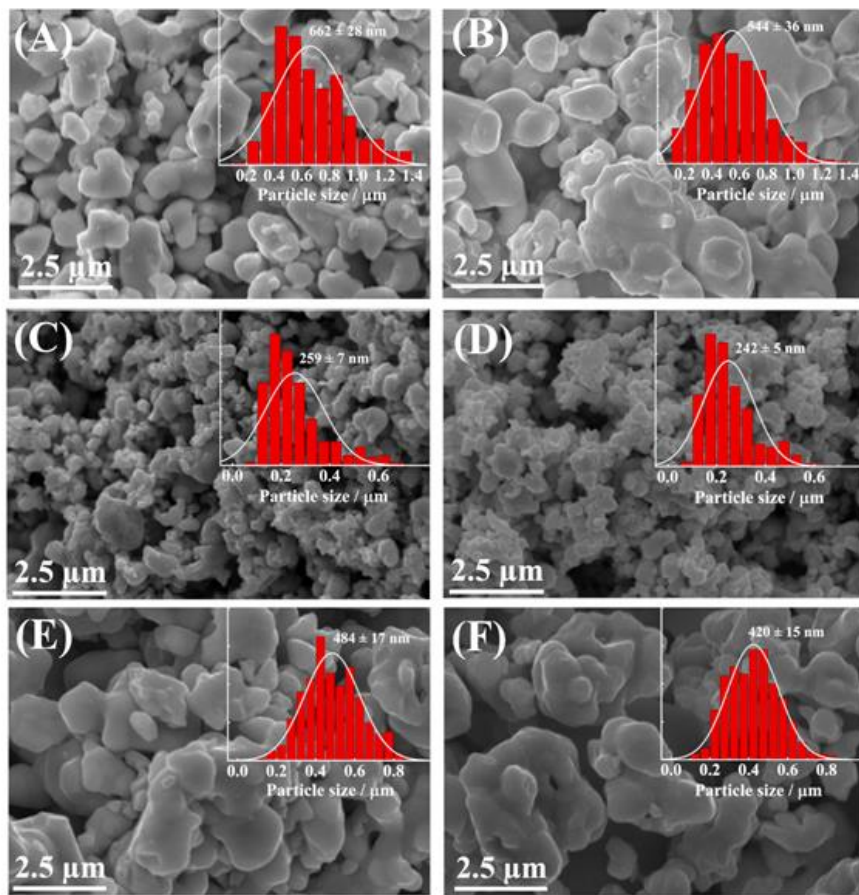
NaOH 0.1 M, 1 mV/s

Hydrogen evolution reaction at metal carbides



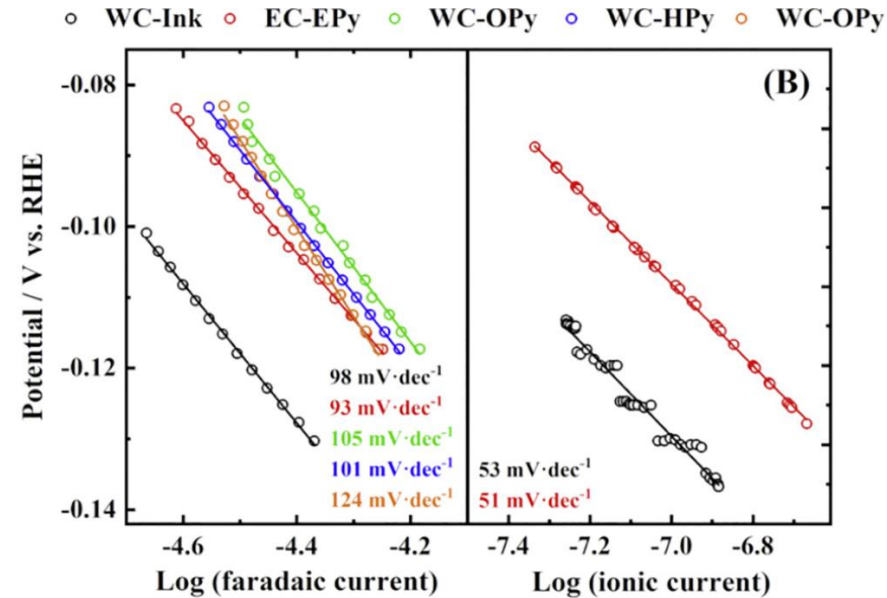
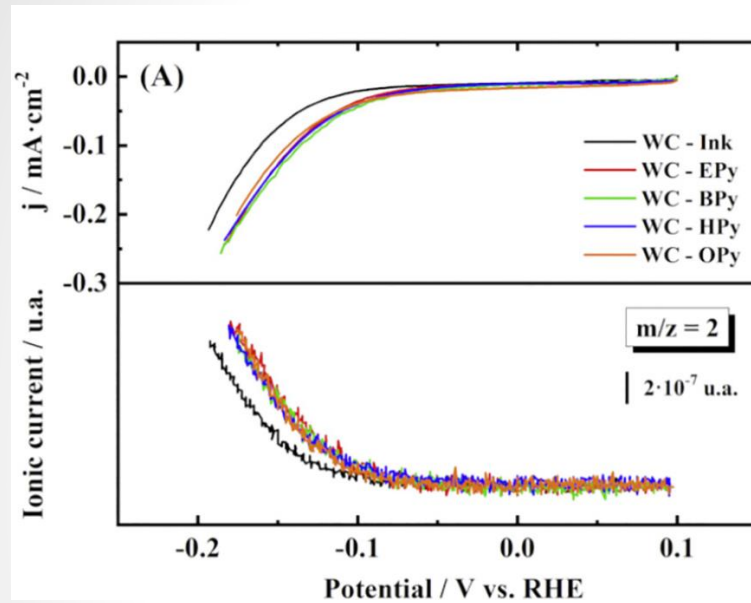
NaOH 0.1 M, 1 mV/s

SEM images of TMCs and TMCs + IL

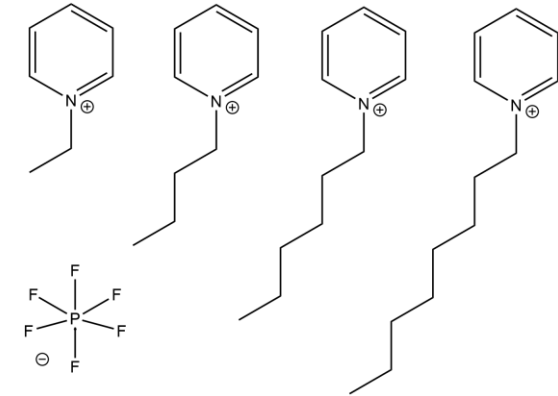


Sample	TMC / nm	TMC-IL / nm	Difference / nm
(A-B) W ₂ C	662	544	- 35
(C-D) WC	260	242	- 18
(E-F) Mo ₂ C	484	420	- 64
(G-H) VC	334	357	+ 23
(I-J) TiC	31	35	- 4

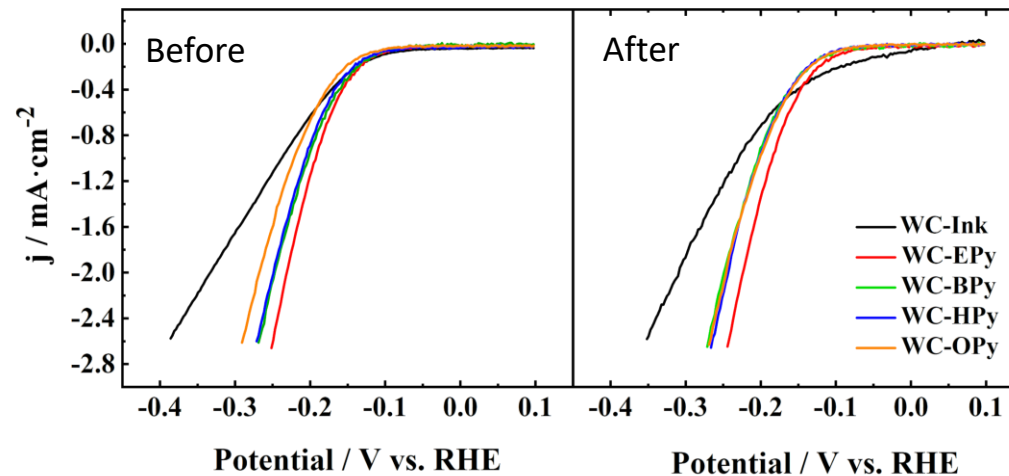
Hydrogen evolution reaction at metal carbides



Effect of the length of the chain

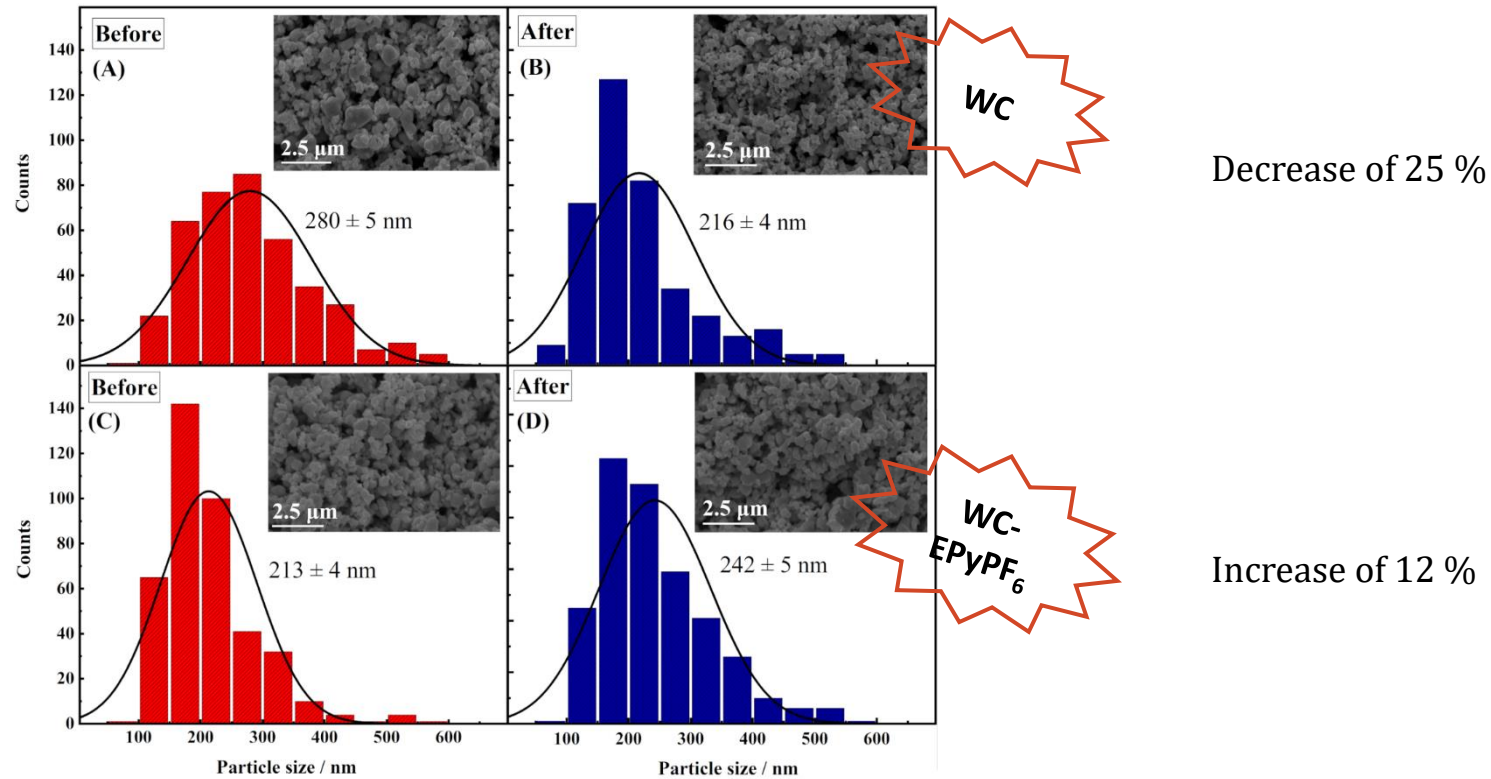


NaOH 0.1 M, 1 mV/s

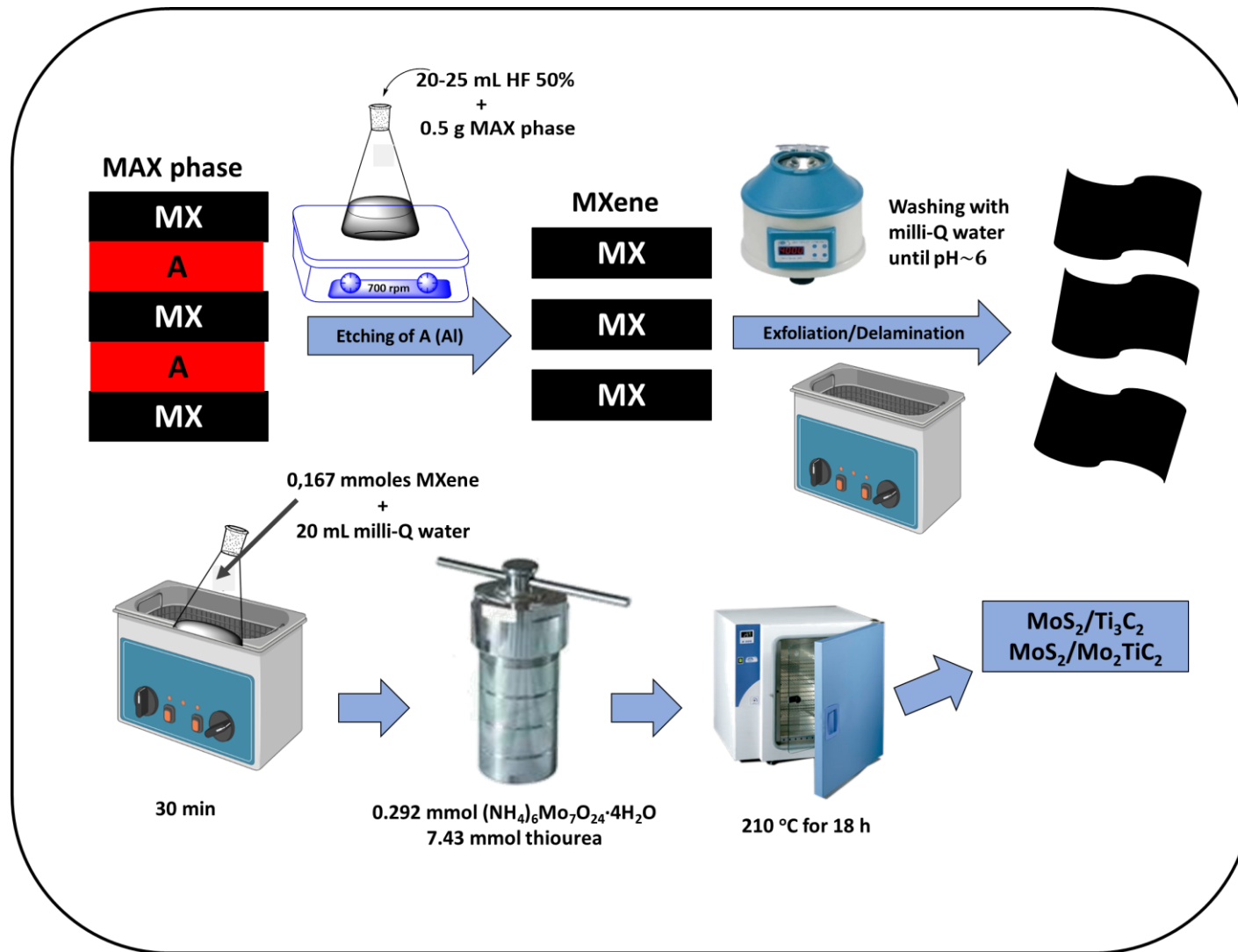


Durability. Stress tests
500 scans, 0.2 V/s

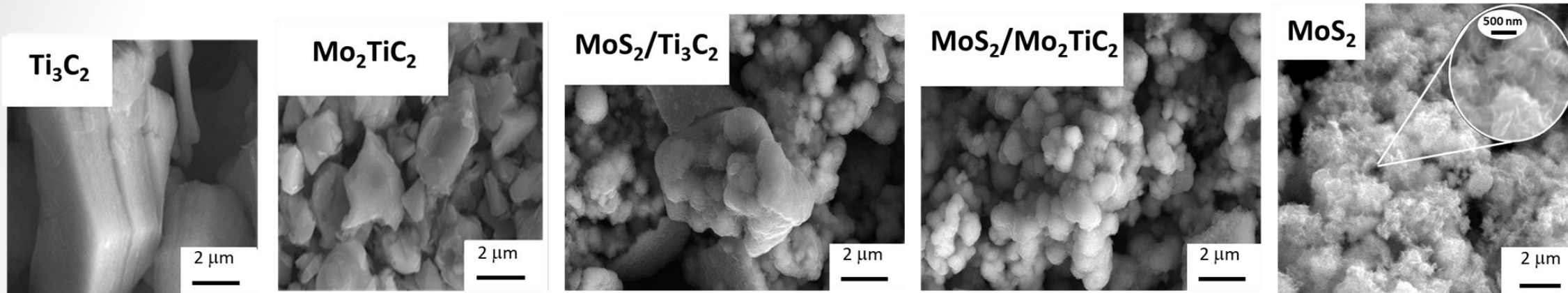
SEM images TMCs + IL. Stress tests



Synthesis of 2D carbides: MXenes and composites



Characterization of MAX phases, MXenes and composites

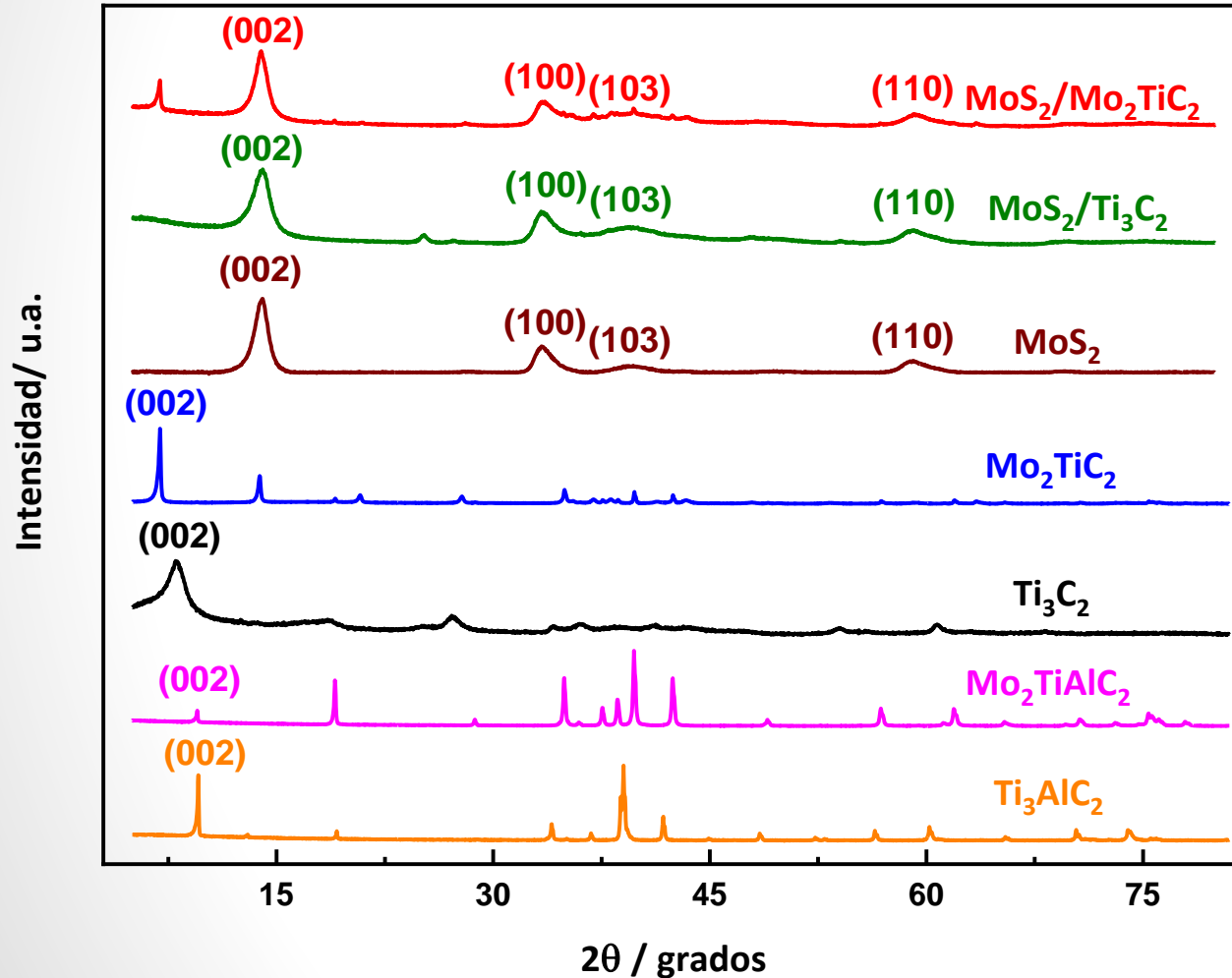


Material	Composition (at.)							Mo:S ratio
	C	O	F	Al	Mo	Ti	S	
Ti ₃ AlC ₂	30.2	-	-	11.8	-	58.0	-	-
Mo ₂ TiAlC ₂	48.4	10.6	-	10.6	19.8	10.6	-	-
Ti ₃ C ₂	22.6	35.5	11.6	0.3	-	30.0	-	-
Mo ₂ TiC ₂	45.6	22.5	3.3	0.6	18.7	9.4	-	-
MoS ₂	-	10.2	-	-	29.0	-	60.8	1: 2.1
MoS ₂ @Ti ₃ C ₂	36.2	9.3	-	-	16.4	3.5	34.6	1: 2.1
MoS ₂ @Mo ₂ TiC ₂	37.3	7.4	-	-	18.7	0.8	35.8	1: 1.9

SEM/EDX

Y. Remedios-Diaz et al.
ChemElectroChem
 2024, e202300673

Characterization of MAX phases, MXenes and composites



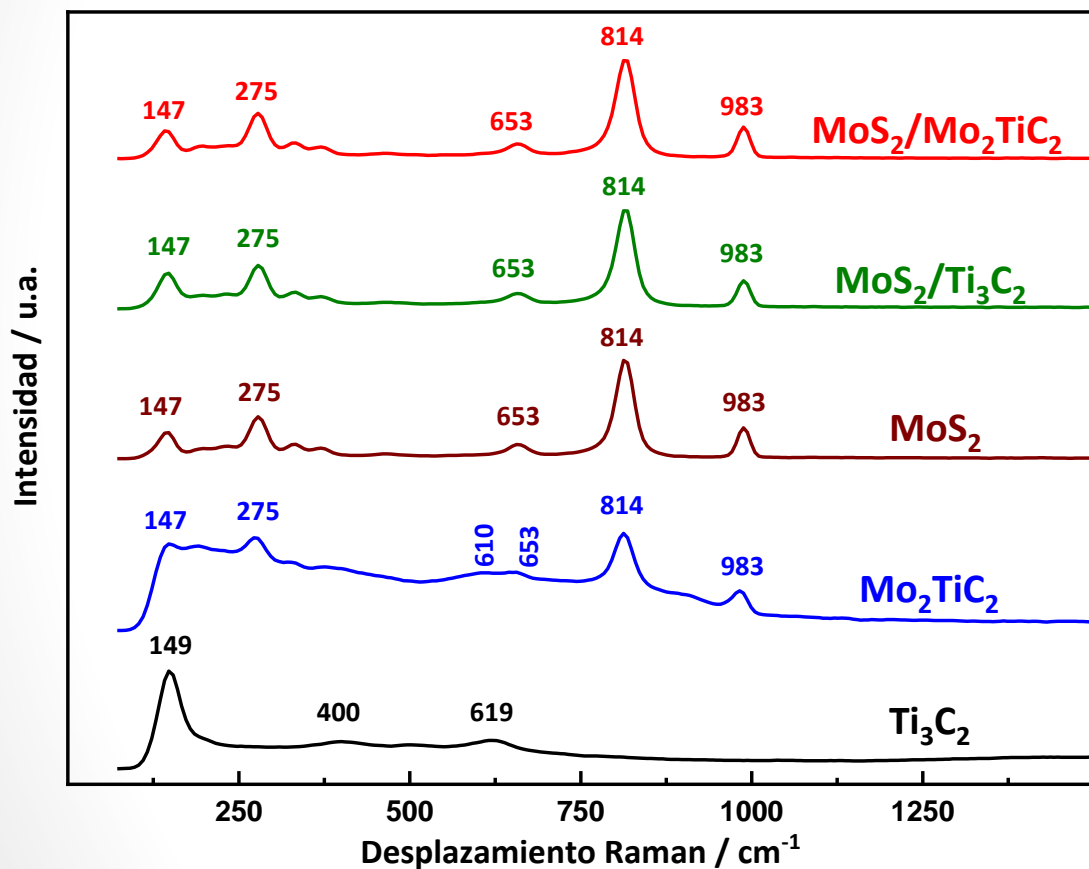
DRX

Catalyst	Crystallite size (002) /nm	Interplanar distance /nm
Ti_3AlC_2	79.6	0.92
$\text{Mo}_2\text{TiAlC}_2$	71.5	0.93
Ti_3C_2	5.8	1.10
Mo_2TiC_2	44.7	1.28
MoS_2	7.2*	0.63
$\text{MoS}_2@\text{Ti}_3\text{C}_2$	6.0*	0.63
$\text{MoS}_2@\text{Mo}_2\text{TiC}_2$	8.0*	0.64

* MoS_2

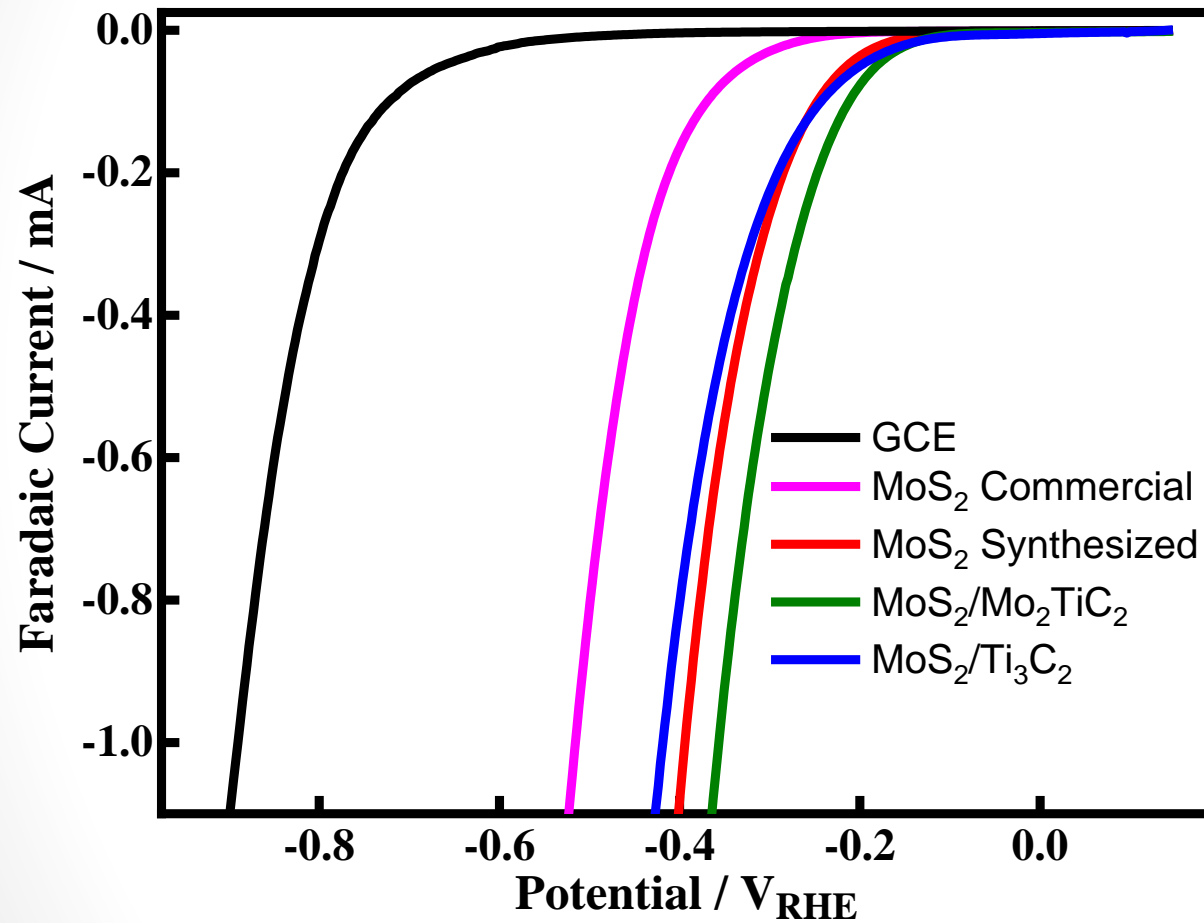
Characterization of MAX phases, MXenes and composites

Raman Spectroscopy



Catalyst	Raman shift / cm ⁻¹	Assignment	Vibration mode
Ti ₃ C ₂	149	O-Ti	B _{1g} (TiO ₆)
	619	O-Ti	A _{1g} (TiO ₆)
Mo ₂ TiC ₂	147	Lattice mode	-
	275	O=Mo	Bending
	653	O-Mo ₃	Stretching
	814	O-Mo ₂	Stretching
	983	O=Mo	Stretching
MoS ₂	147	Lattice mode	-
	275	O=Mo	Bending
	370	MoS ₂	in-plane E _{2g}
	400	MoS ₂	out-of-plane A _{1g}
	653	O-Mo ₃	Stretching
	814	O-Mo ₂	Stretching
983	O=Mo	Stretching	
MoS ₂ @Ti ₃ C ₂	147	Lattice mode	-
	275	O=Mo	Bending
	370	MoS ₂	in-plane E _{2g}
	400	MoS ₂	out-of-plane A _{1g}
	653	O-Mo ₃	Stretching
	814	O-Mo ₂	Stretching
983	O=Mo	Stretching	
MoS ₂ @Mo ₂ TiC ₂	147	Lattice mode	-
	275	O=Mo	Bending
	370	MoS ₂	in-plane E _{2g}
	400	MoS ₂	out-of-plane A _{1g}
	653	O-Mo ₃	Stretching
	814	O-Mo ₂	Stretching
983	O=Mo	Stretching	

HER for MoS₂/MXene composites

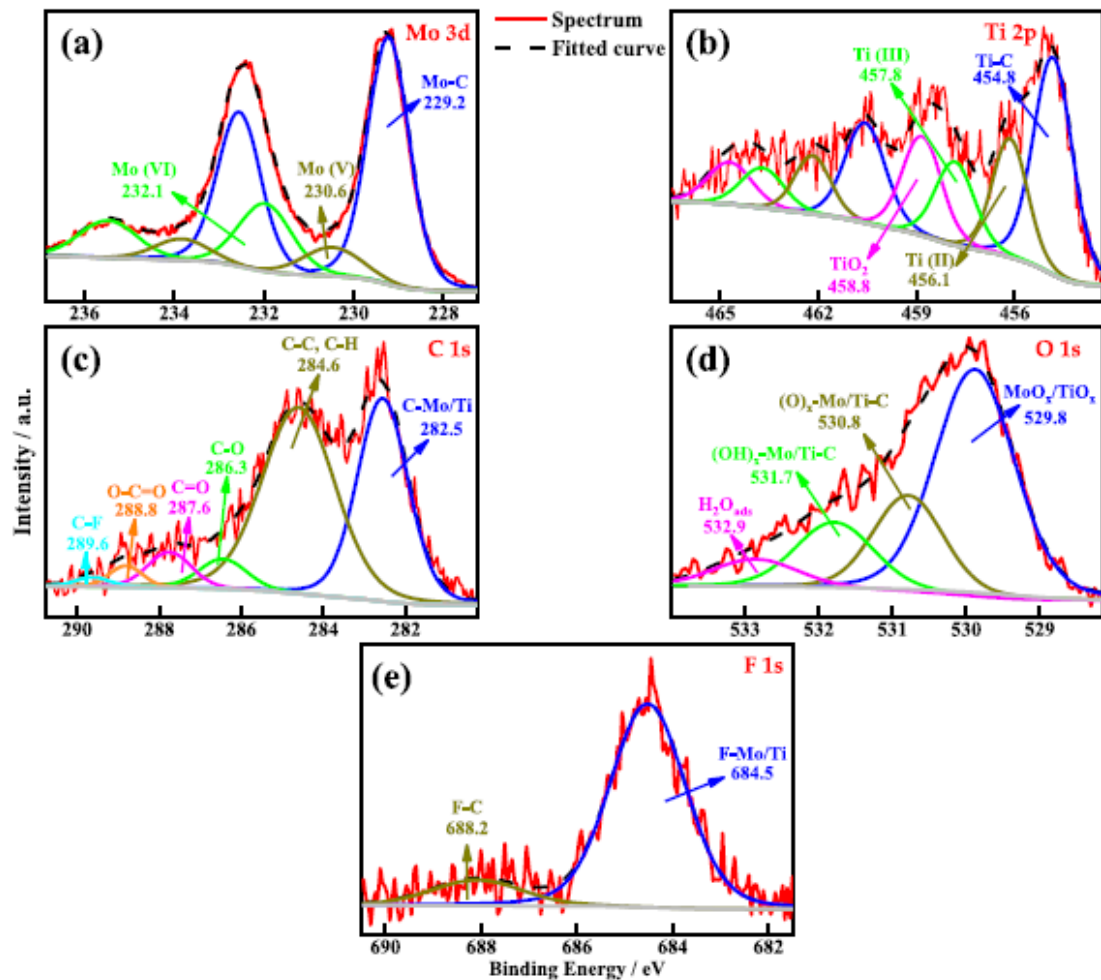


LSV, 0.5 M H₂SO₄, 2 mV·s⁻¹

Characterization of MAX phases, MXenes and composites

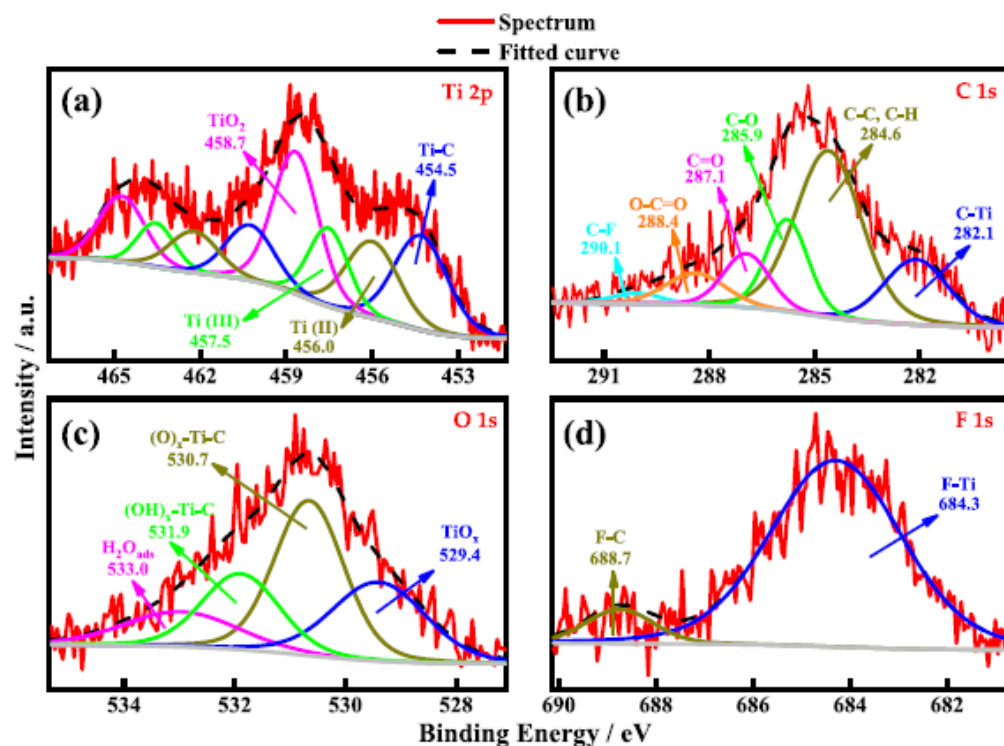
XPS

Mo₂TiC₂



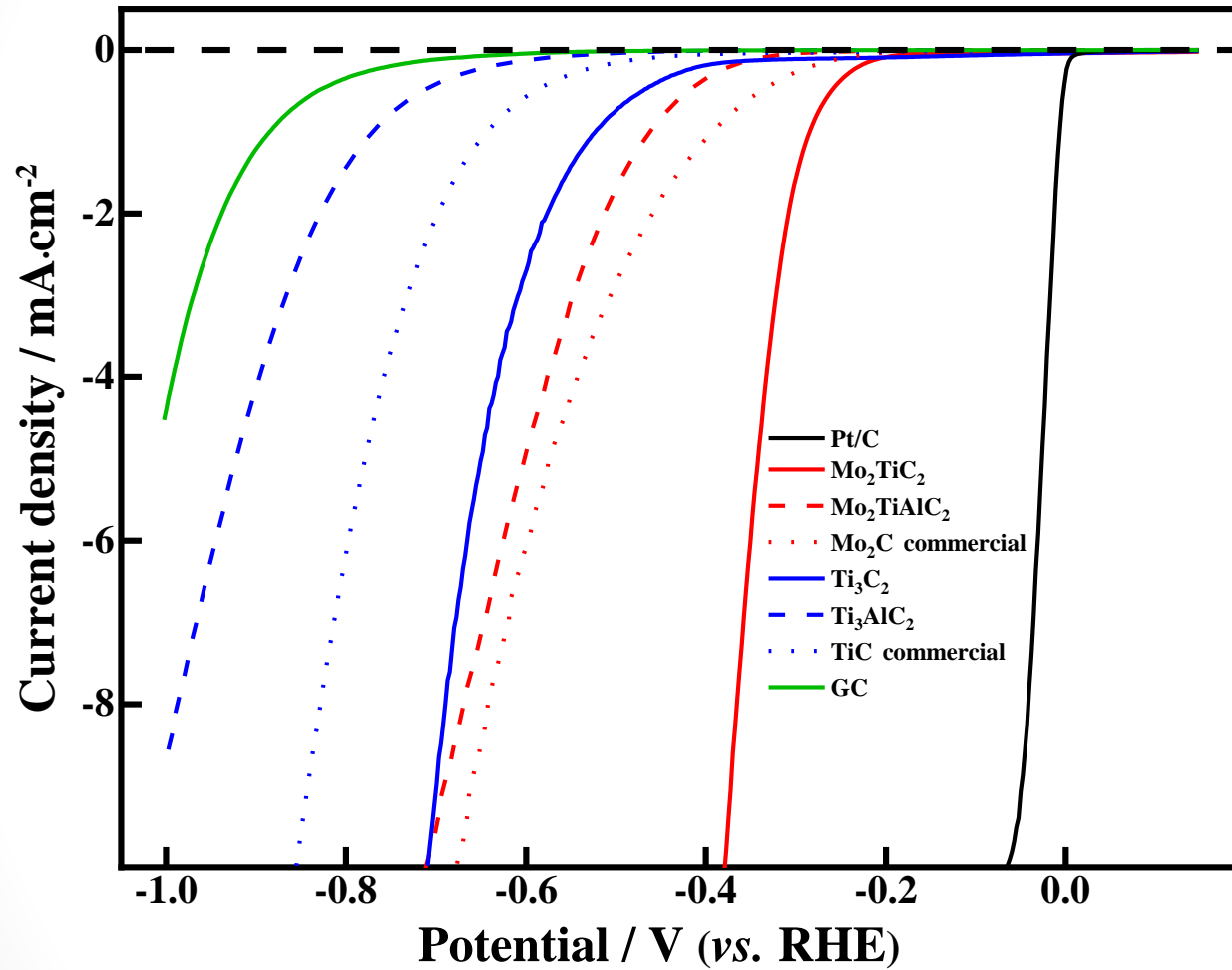
XPS spectra of Mo₂TiC₂: (a) Mo 3d, (b) Ti 2p, (c) C 1s, (d) O 1s and (e) F 1s.

Ti₃C₂



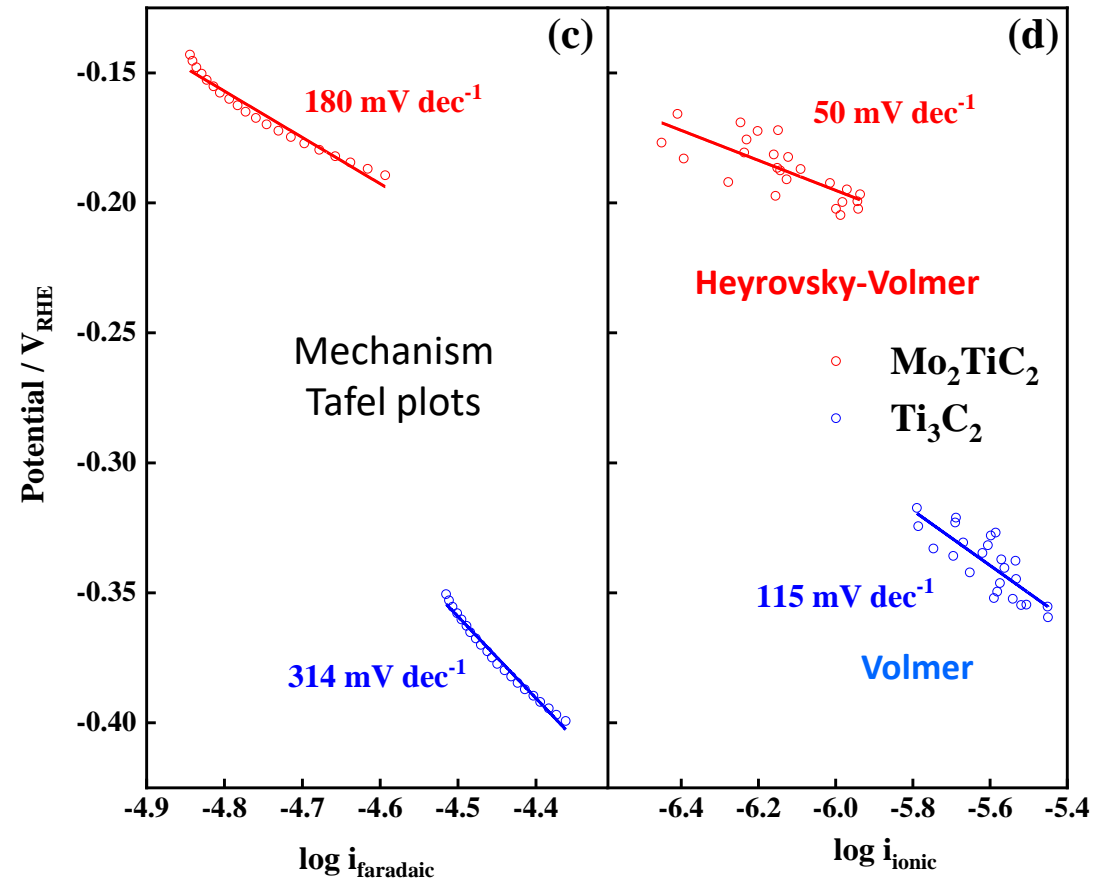
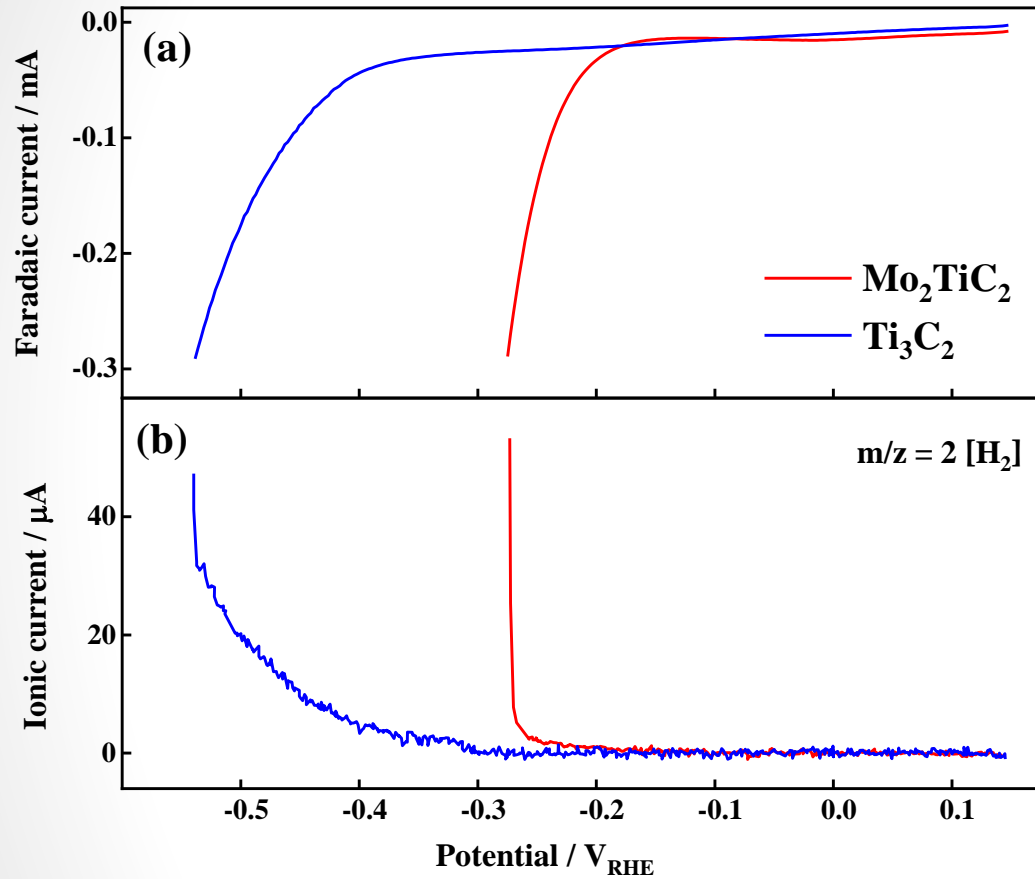
XPS spectra of Ti₃C₂: (a) Ti 2p, (b) C 1s, (c) O 1s and (d) F 1s.

HER for MAX phases and MXenes



LSV, 0.5 M H₂SO₄, 2 mV·s⁻¹

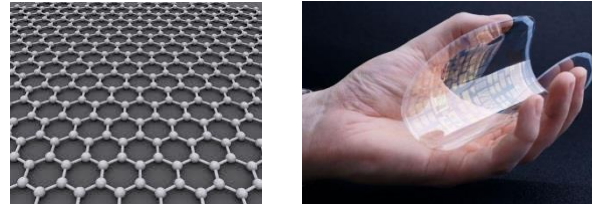
HER studied by DEMS



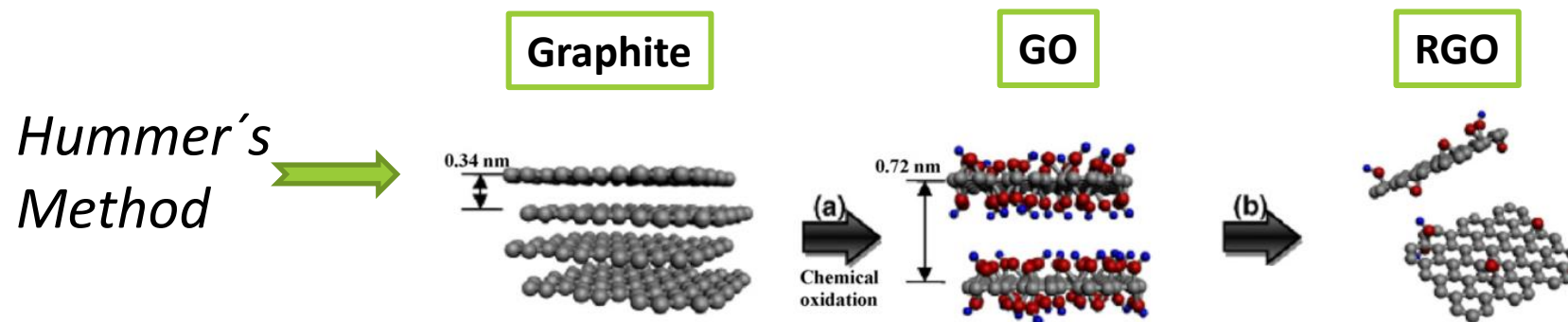
$2 \text{ mV} \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$, $0.5 \text{ M H}_2\text{SO}_4$

2D materials: graphene as catalyst support

- Graphene is a bidimensional nanometric material obtained by micromechanical exfoliation in 2004.
- It shows excellent mechanical, magnetic and electrical properties.



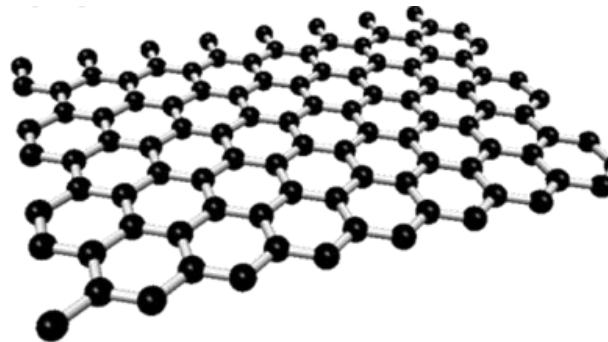
Synthesis of reduced graphene oxide



Graphene as catalyst support

Properties of a support for electrochemistry systems

- Stable ✓
- Good electric conductivity ✓
- Suitable surface chemistry (metal/support interaction) ✗
- High surface area ($2630 \text{ m}^2 \text{ g}^{-1}$) ✓



Graphene (G)

- The strong π - π interaction produces a weak interaction with the metals at the surface

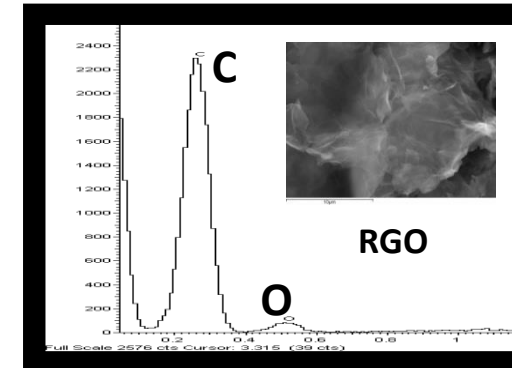
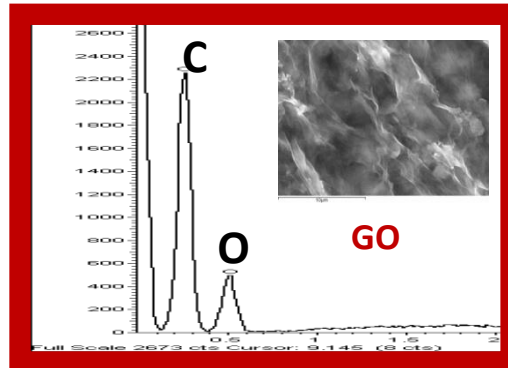
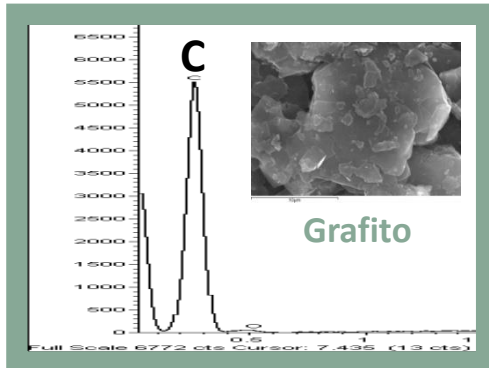
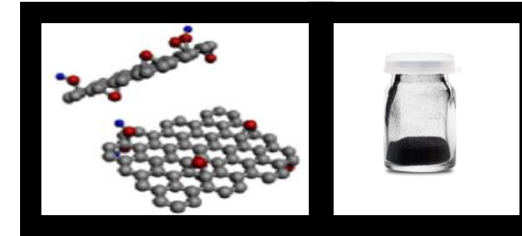
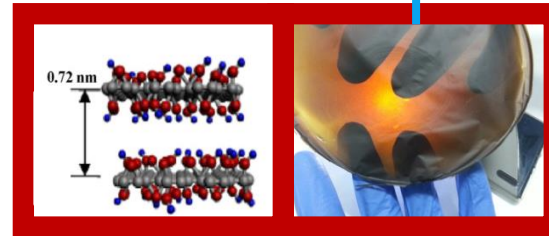
Synthesis of graphenic materials

Synthesis of GO

Synthesis of RGO

$H_2SO_4/KMnO_4$ (Hummers method)

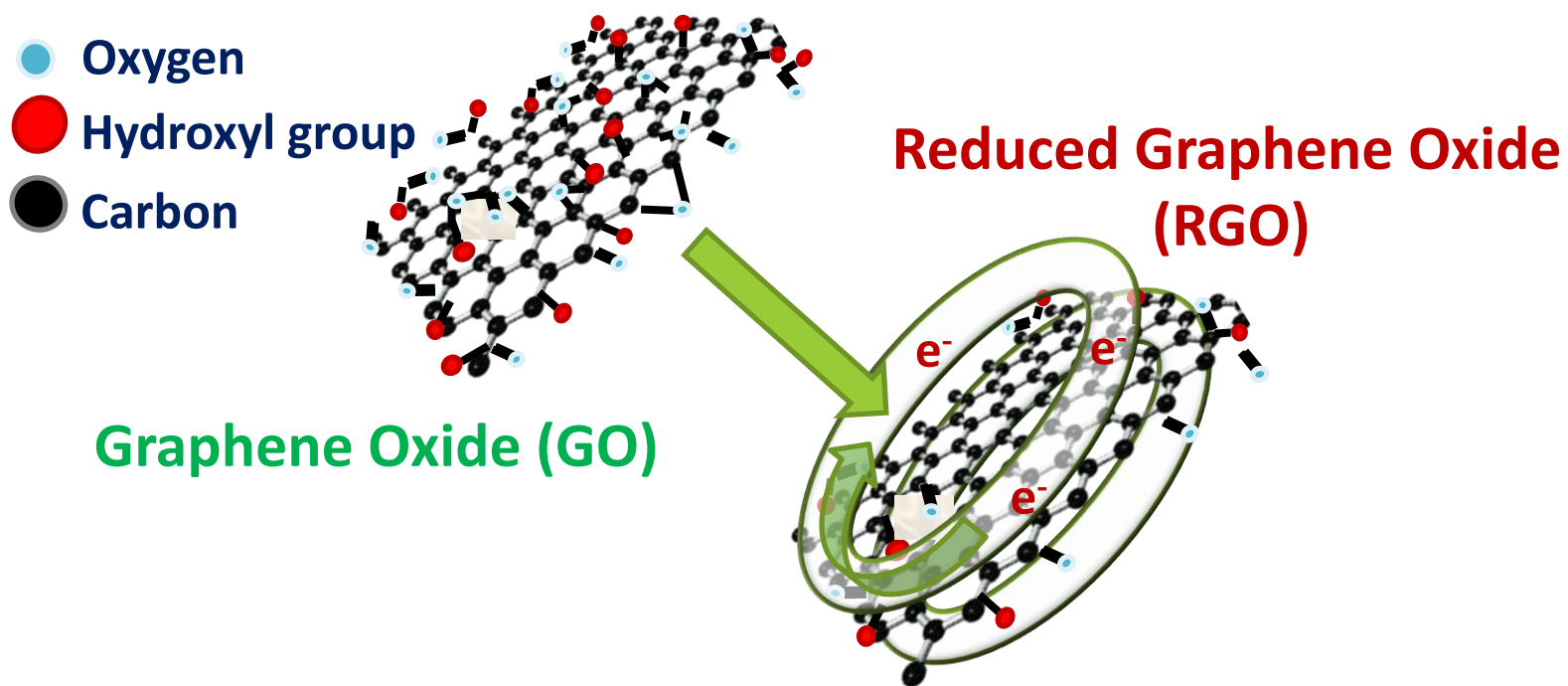
Thermal treatment $450\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$, N_2/H_2 5%



Reduced graphene oxide as catalyst support

Properties of a support for electrochemistry systems

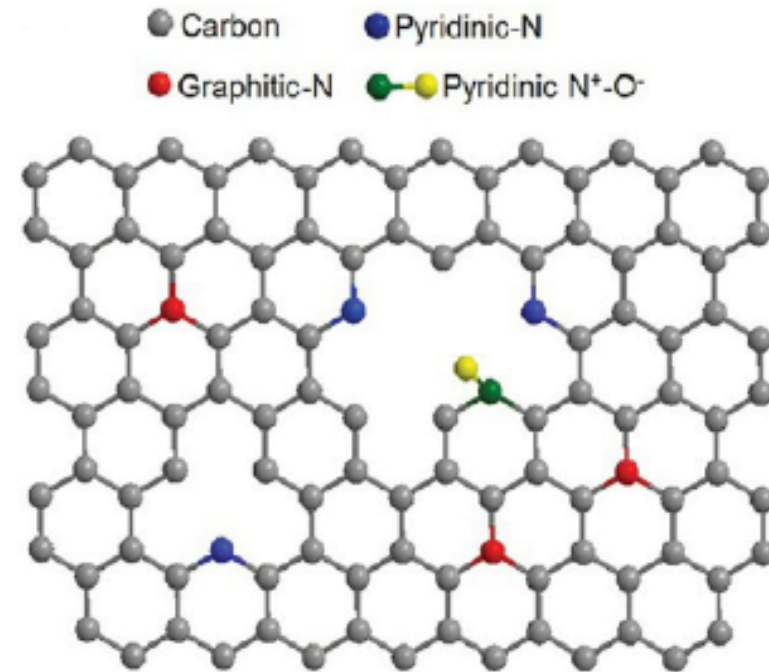
- Stable ✓
- Good electric conductivity ✓
- Suitable surface chemistry (metal/support interaction) ✓
- High surface area ($2630 \text{ m}^2 \text{ g}^{-1}$) ✓



Graphene materials (GMs)

Graphene based electrocatalysts:

- Inexpensive, widely available, high electrical conductivity, stability in acid/alkaline environments
- Doping process modifies electronic structure and tailor surface chemistry (can be used as catalyst)
- Defects could be active sites for electrocatalysis



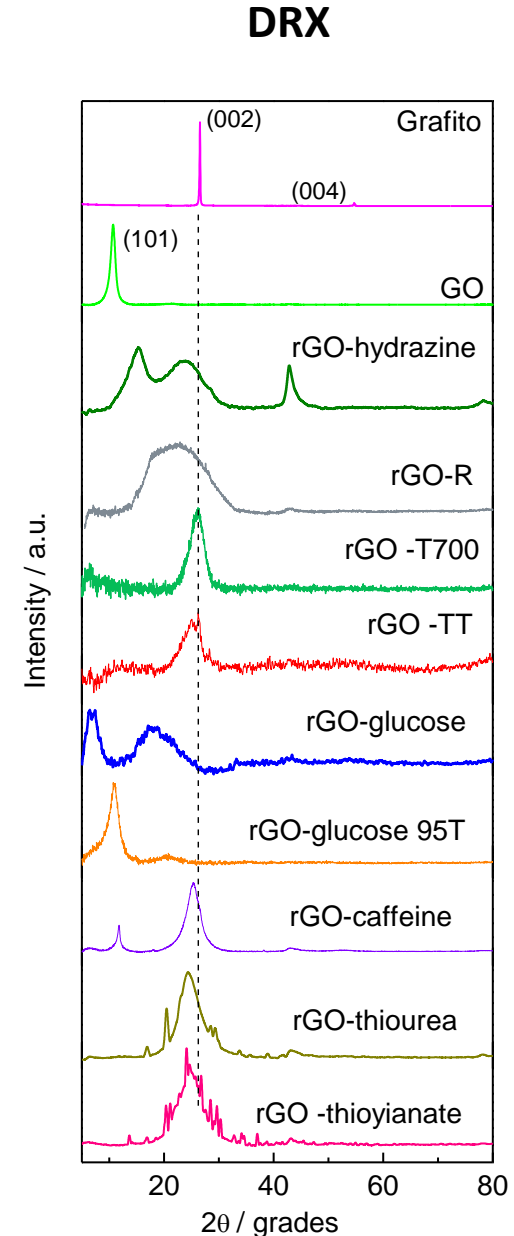
Synthesis of GMs

Green reduction agents

- sodium citrate
 - rGO - reflux
 - rGO -T700 reflux
- glucose
 - rGO -G Hidro
 - rGO -G 95T
- thermal treatment synthesis (rGO -TT)

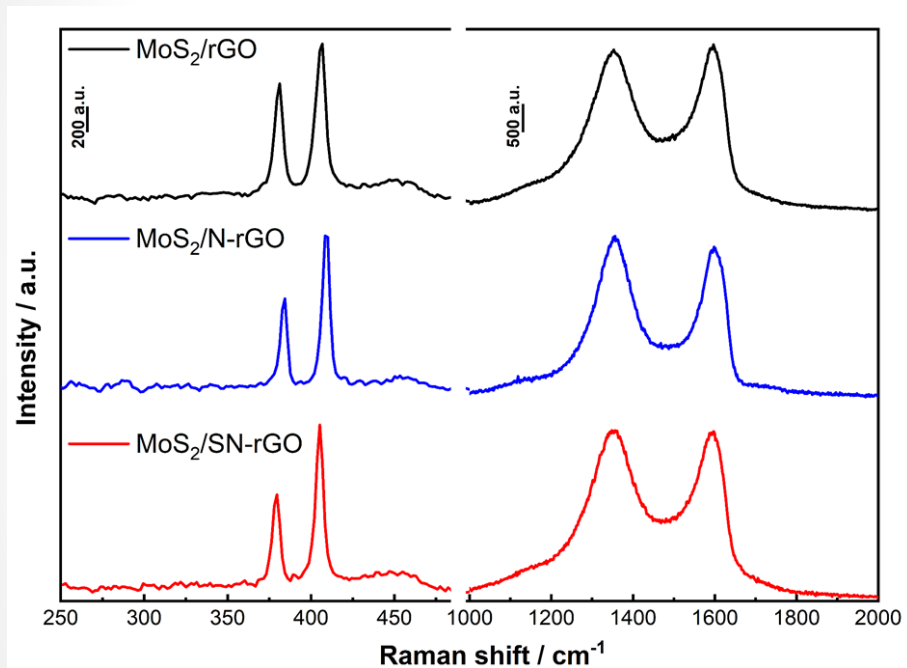
N and/or S doping

- hydrazine (rGO -hydrazine)
- caffeine (rGO -caffeine)
- dimethyl sulfoxide (S-rGO)
- thiourea (rGO -thiourea)
- ammonium thiocyanate (rGO -thiocyanate)

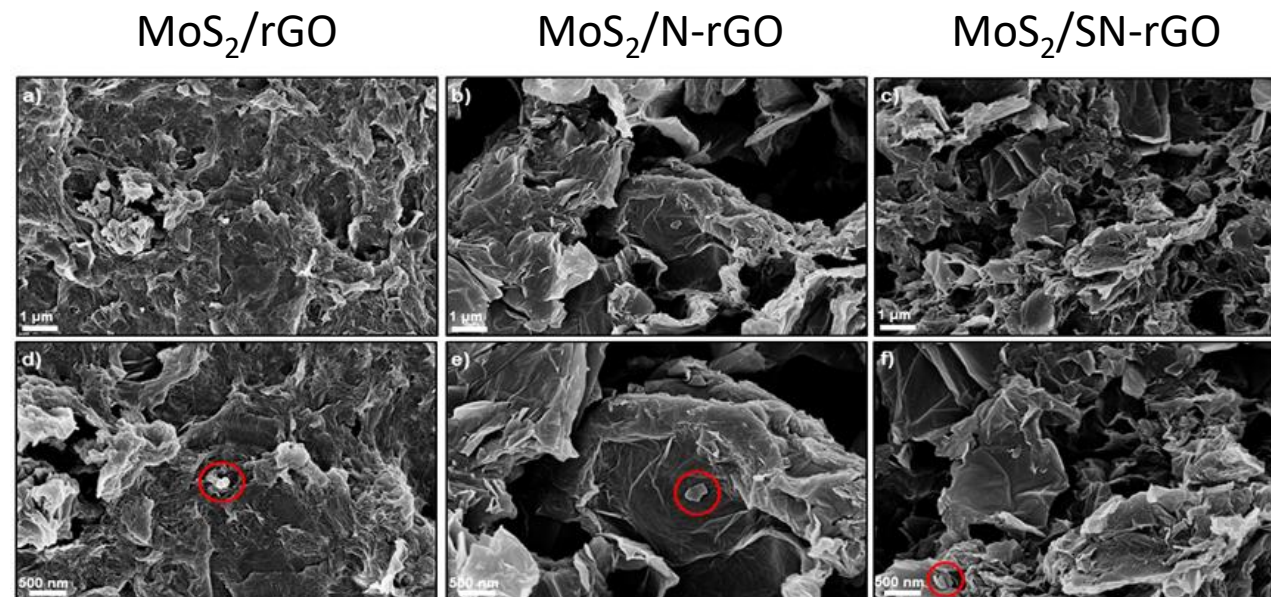


Physicochemical characterization of GMs and Mo_2S (1 %) composites

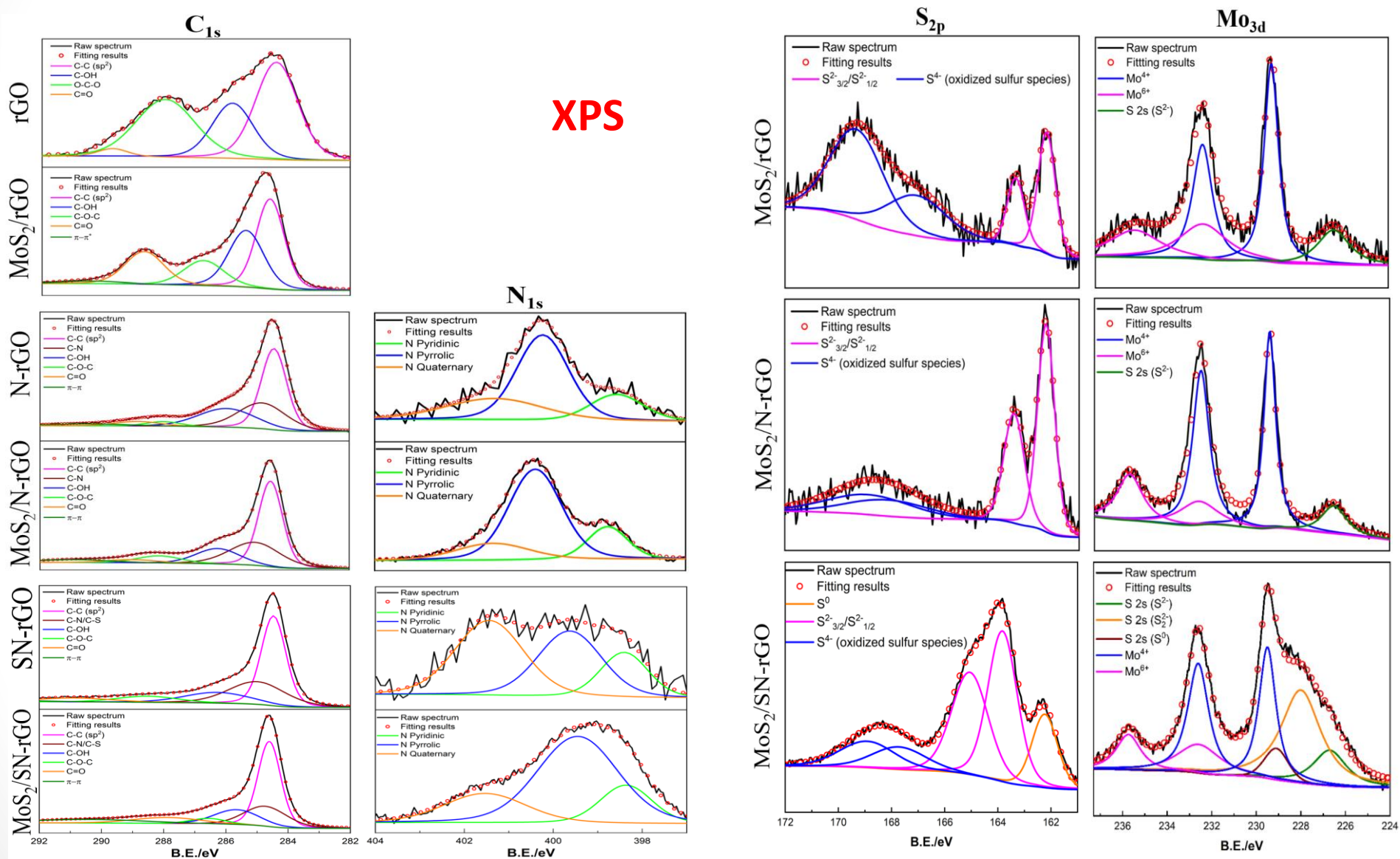
Raman Spectroscopy



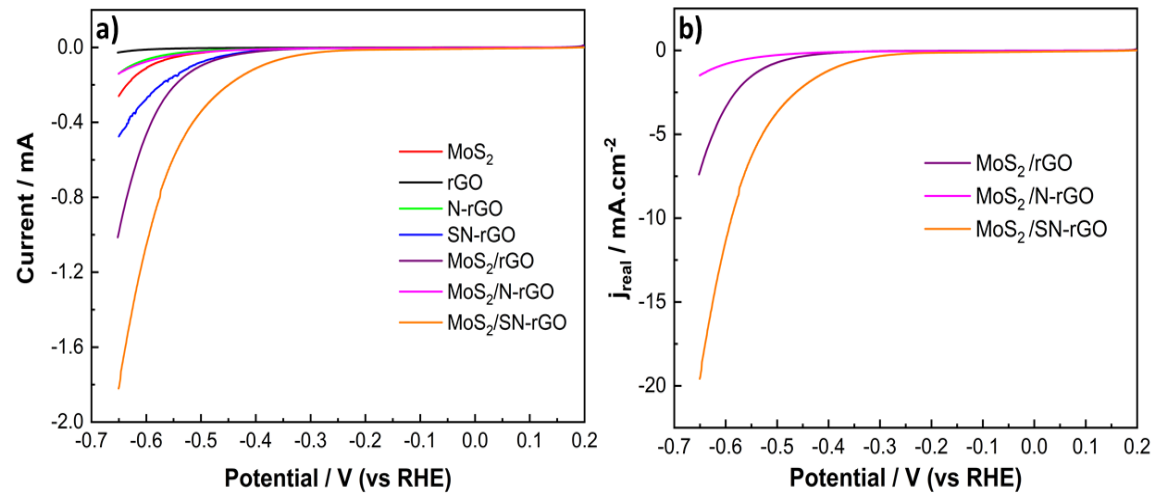
SEM



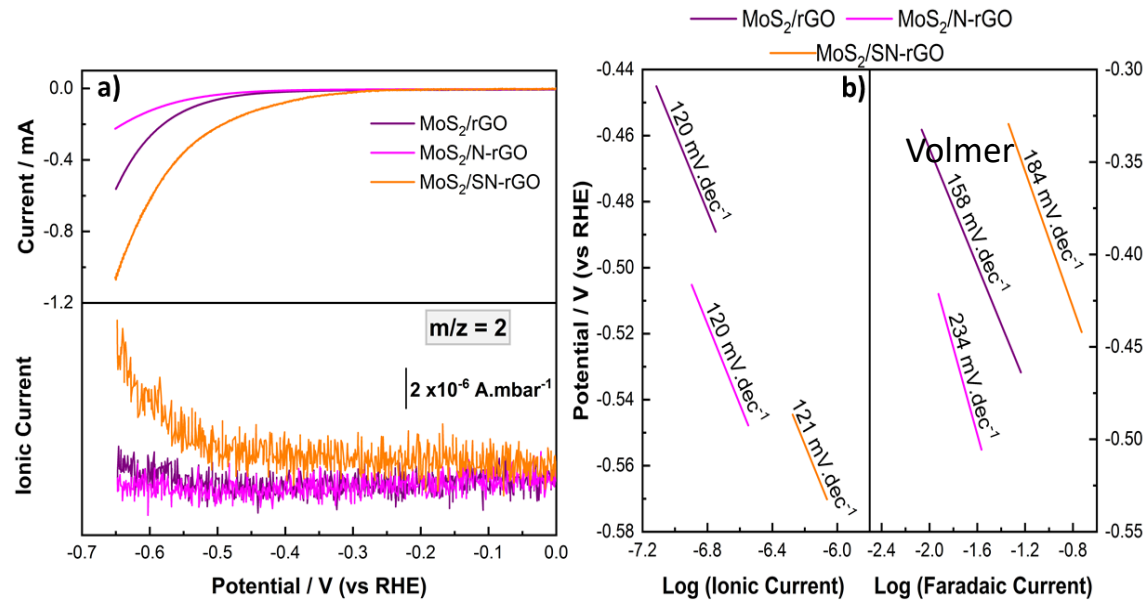
Physicochemical characterization of GMs and **Mo₂S** (1 %) composites



HER for GMs and Mo_2S (1 %) composites

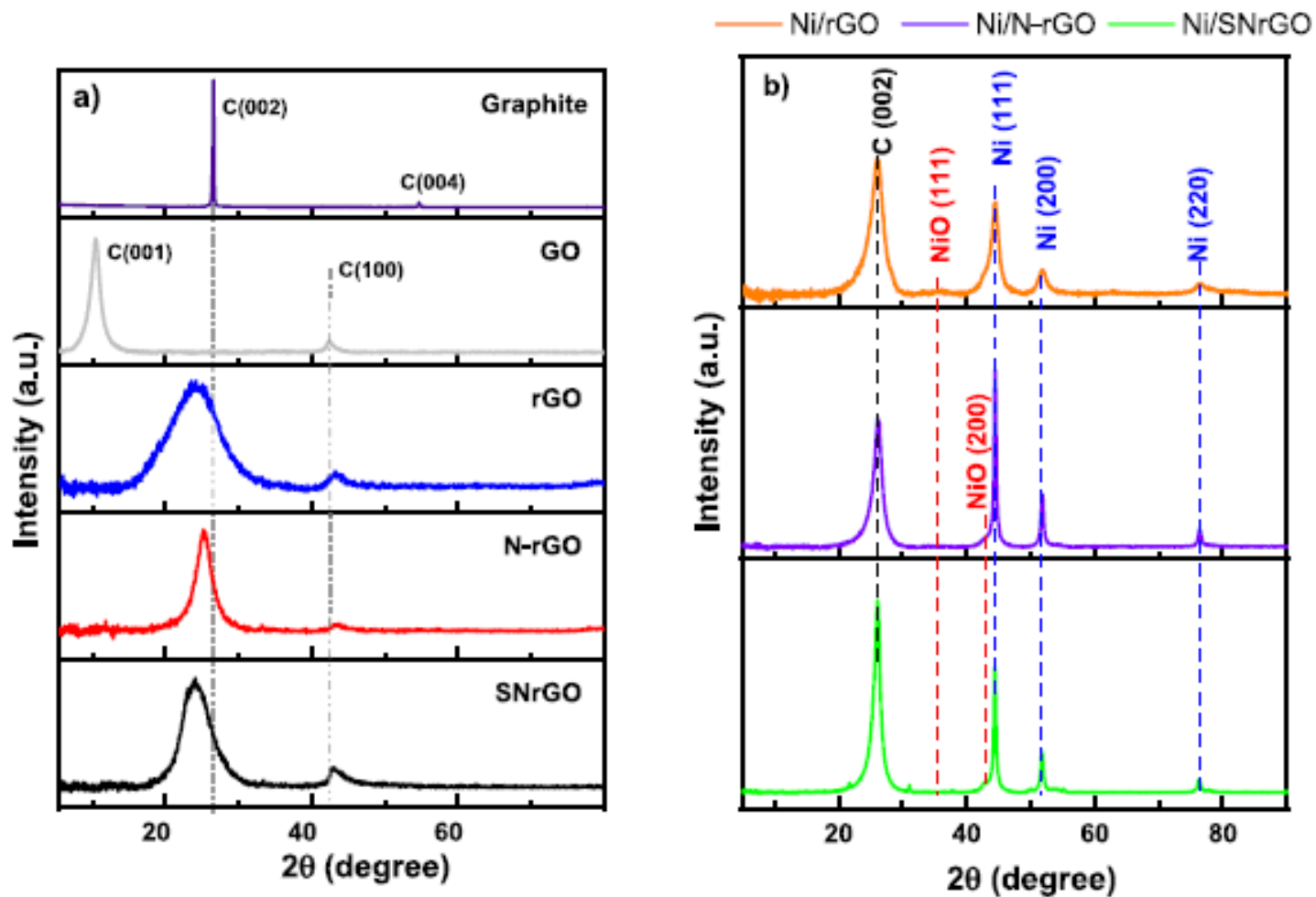


LSV, 0.5 M H₂SO₄, 2 mV·s⁻¹



Physicochemical characterization of Ni NPs/GMs

DRX



XRD patterns for a) supporting materials and b) Ni-based catalysts.

Physicochemical characterization of Ni NPs/GMs

XPS

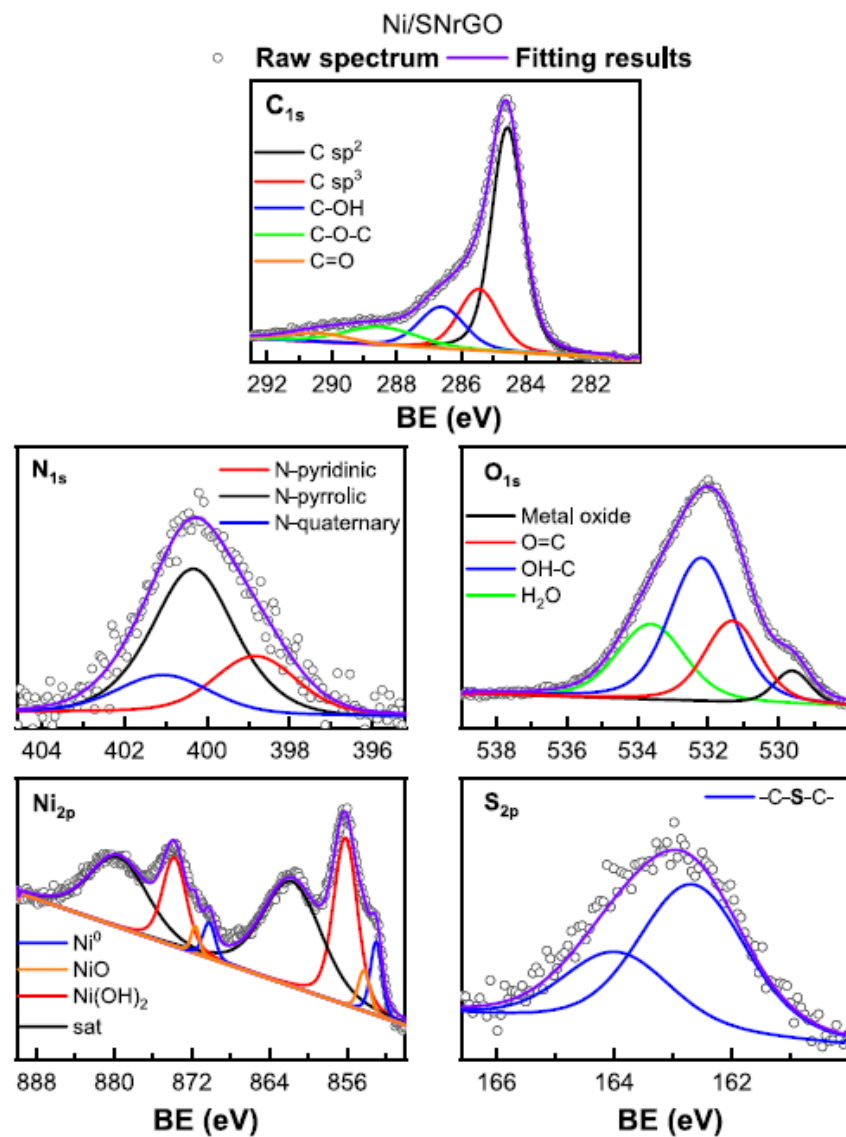


Fig. 3. XPS spectra of Ni/SNrGO.

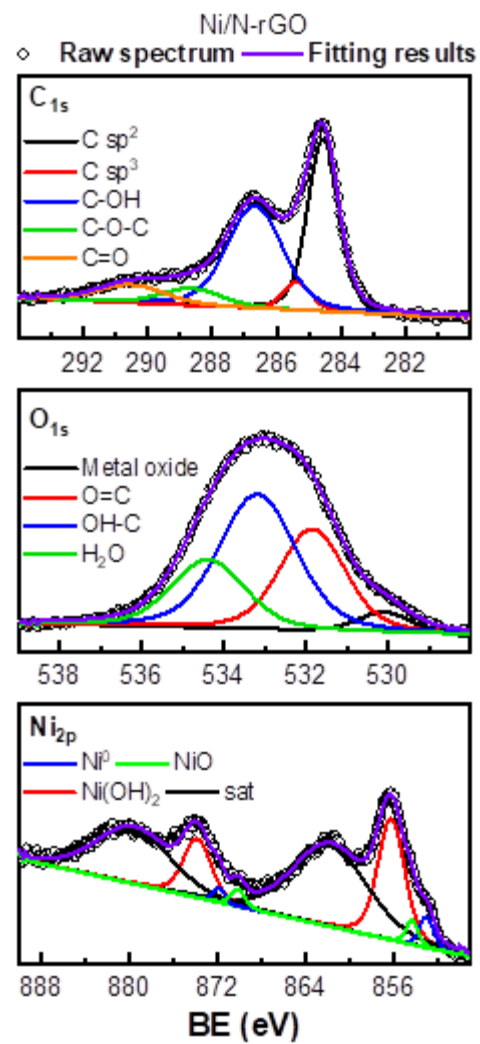
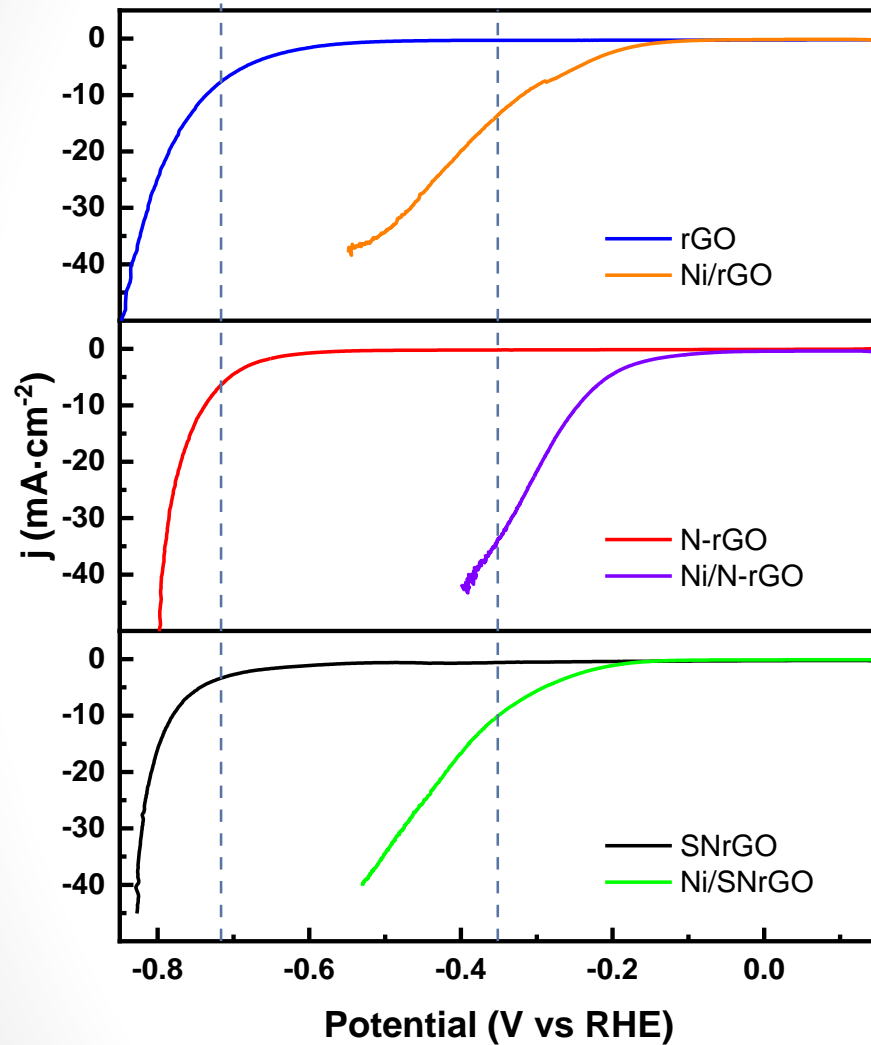
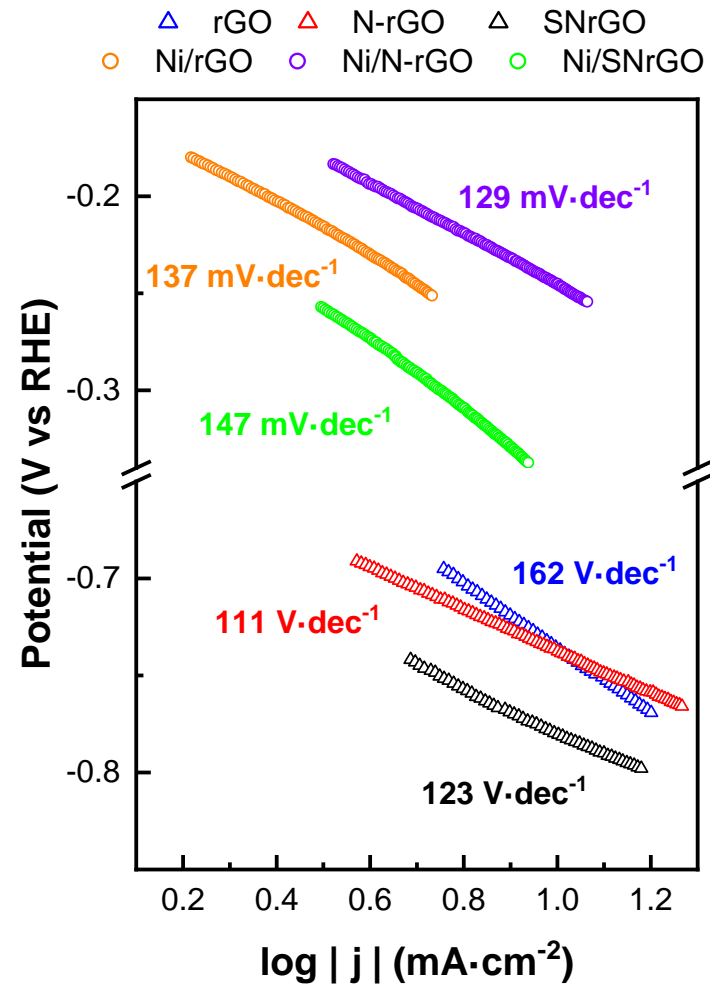


Figure S7. XPS spectra for Ni/N-rGO

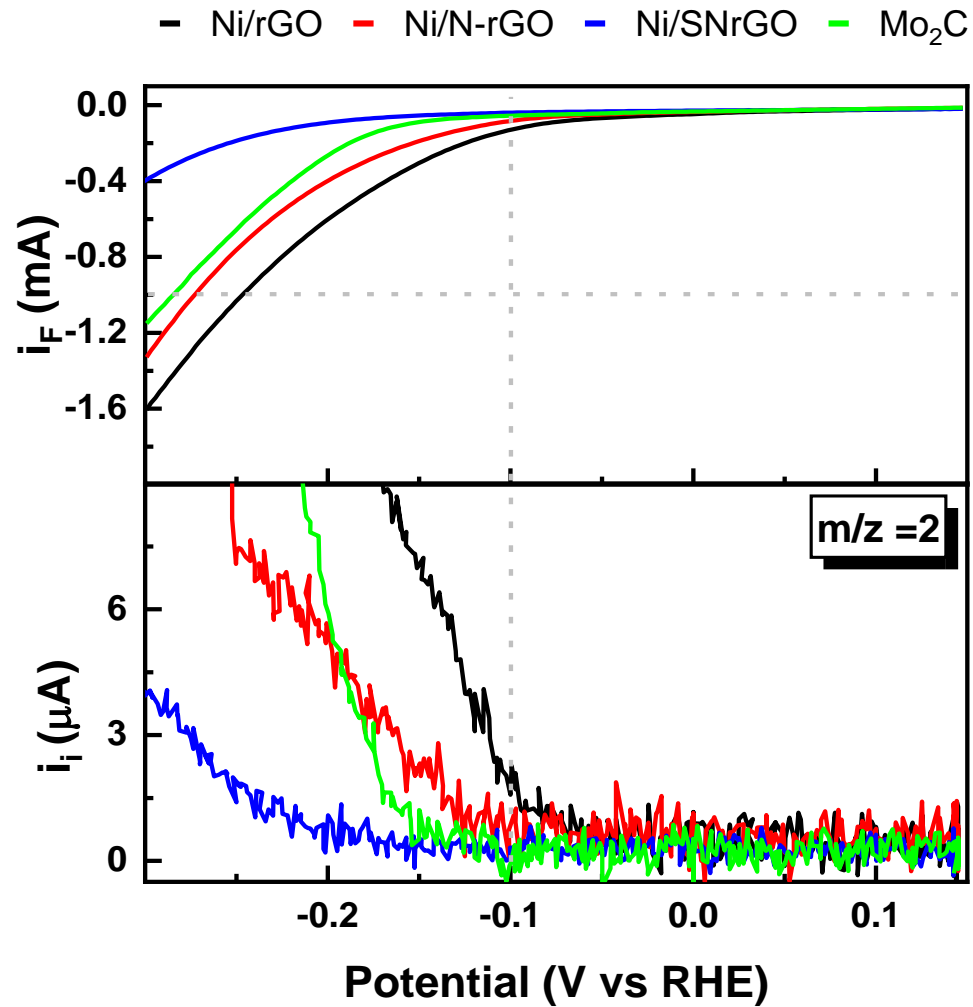
HER reaction for Ni NPs/GMs



LSV, $2 \text{ mV}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$, 1 M NaOH



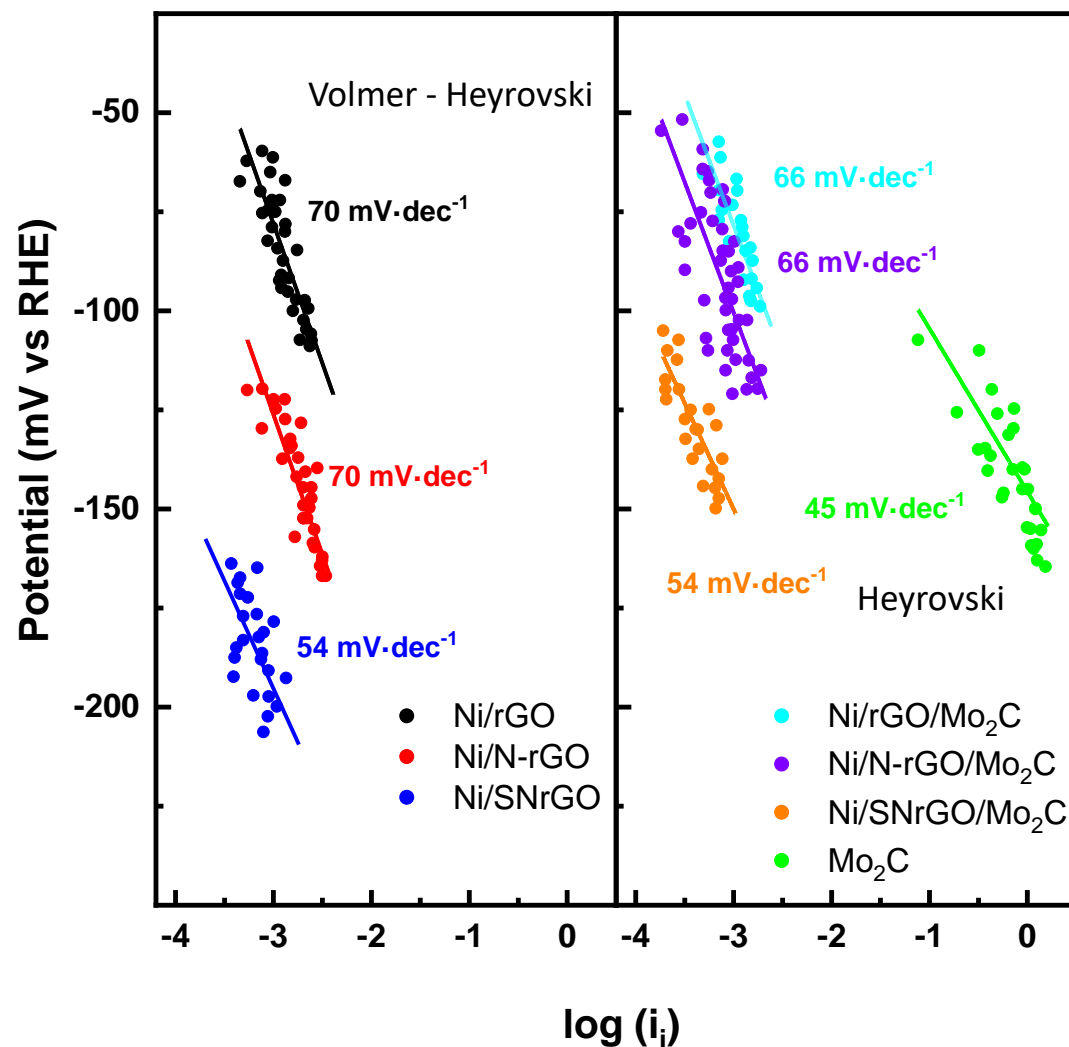
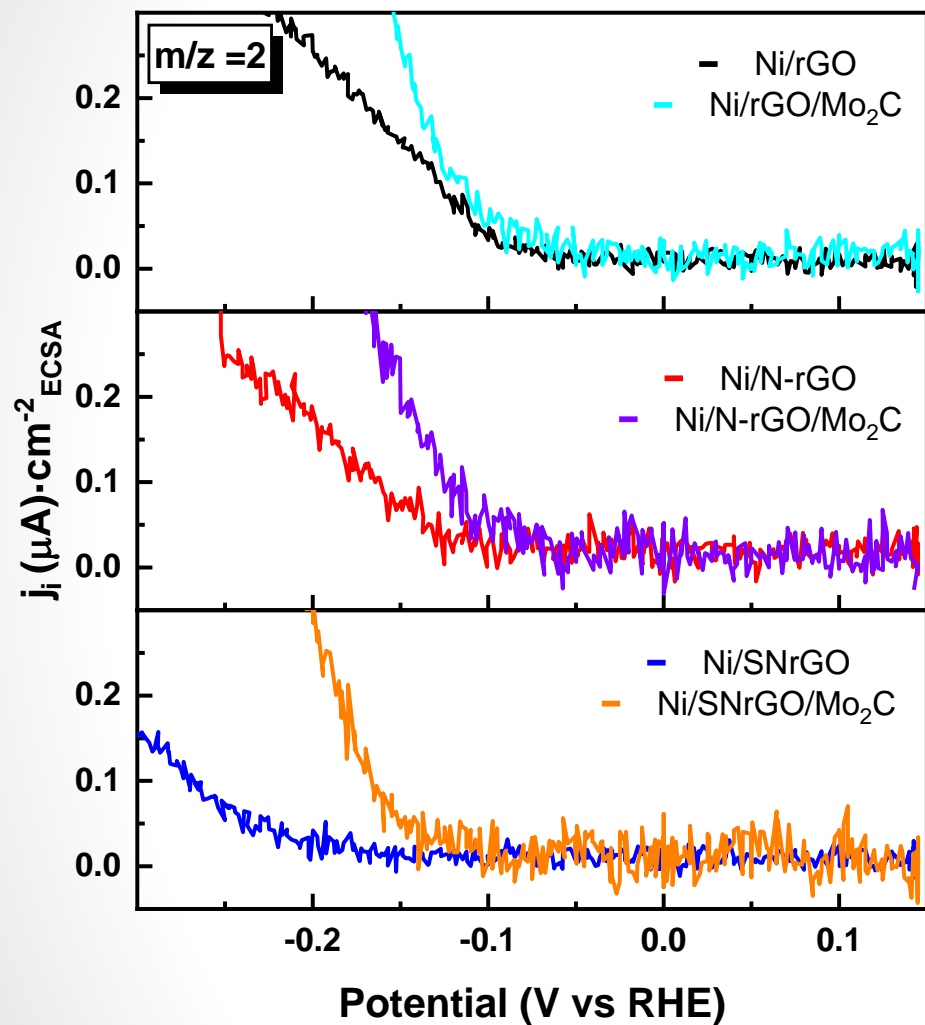
HER reaction for Ni NPs/GMs



LSV, $2 \text{ mV}\cdot\text{s}^{-1}$, 1 M NaOH

Stephanie J. Martínez et al. *Electrochim. Acta*,
submitted

HER reaction for Ni NPs/GMs/Mo₂C





Conclusions

- MC_x are suitable to be used as catalysts for the HER. Optimization of the synthesis can enhance the performance.
- Surface structure, nature of the metal and the electrolyte appear as main responsible for their electrochemical behavior.
- Ionic liquids seems to modified the activity towards the HER. This effect is strongly related with the modification of particle sizes after interaction with the IL.
- MXenes and dichalcogenides show good activity towards the HER.
- Doping of graphene materials allows to modulate the response of the catalysts towards the HER when used as supports (or co-catalysts).
- Design of 2D composites materials seems to be a good opportunity for increasing the activity of catalyst towards the HER.
- DEMS appears as an important tool for the elucidation of the mechanism of the HER.

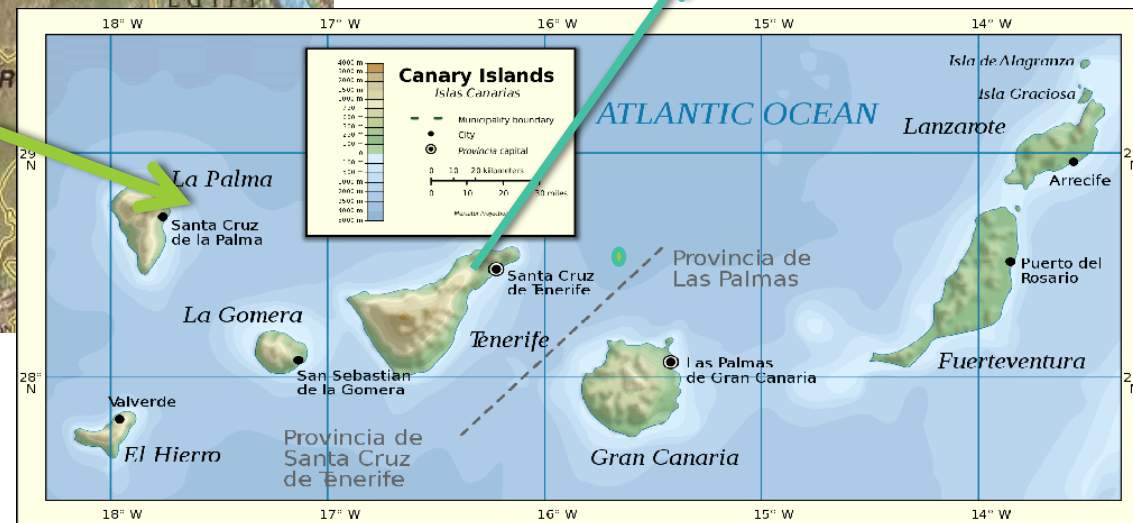
Where are we?



2nd LATAM MEETING ON GREEN AMMONIA AND POWER-to-X



University of La Laguna

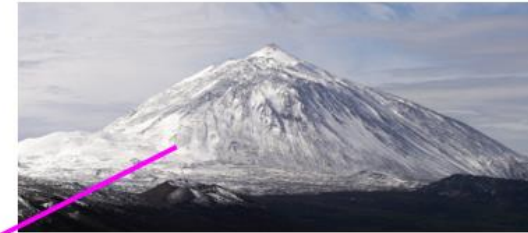


Life in Tenerife!!





2nd LATAM MEETING ON GREEN AMMONIA AND POWER-to-X



The ULL is located in north-eastern Tenerife, in the city of San Cristóbal de La Laguna, declared by the UNESCO as World Heritage site in December, 1999.

Surface Science and Electrocatalysis Group



Grupo de Ciencia de Superficies y Electrocatalisis



Prof. Elena Pastor Tejera



Prof. Carmen Arévalo Morales



Prof. José Luis Rodríguez Marrero



Dra. Ana L. López Machado



Dr. Sergio Díaz Coello



Prof. Juan Carlos Calderón Gómez



Prof. Gonzalo García Silvestro

Surface Science and Electrocatalysis Group



Stephanie Martínez



Sergio Fajardo Rodríguez



Yapci Remedios Díaz



Antonella Loiacono



Jennifer Rodríguez Díaz



Abraham Castilla Silvestre



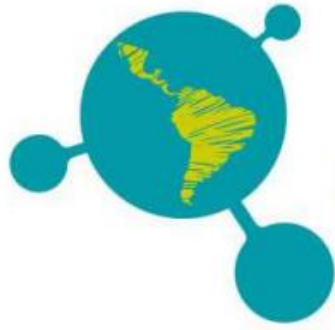
Stefan Delgado Barreto

Laboratorio electroquímico de tecnologías del hidrógeno y almacenamiento energético (LABH2)

Elena Pastor

Grupo de Ciencia de Superficies y Electrocatalisis





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✓ ÁREAS TEMÁTICAS

- Electroquímica de materiales
- Bioelectroquímica
- Conversión y almacenamiento de energía electroquímica
- Tecnología e ingeniería de los procesos electroquímicos
- Electroquímica fundamental
- Electroquímica molecular
- Electroanálisis

✓ FECHAS CLAVE

- 10 de febrero 2025: apertura del envío de comunicaciones y la web
- 30 de abril 2025: límite para el envío de comunicaciones
- 25 de mayo 2025: límite para la realización de inscripciones anticipadas
- 25 de junio 2025: cierre de inscripciones
- 15-18 de julio 2025: 45 GERSEQ

✓ INSCRIPCIÓN



	"Early" (hasta el 25 de mayo)	"Late" (desde el 25 de mayo)
Miembros RSEQ, GE-RSEQ	400 €	450 €
No miembros RSEQ, GE-RSEQ	480 €	530 €
Estudiantes (Miembros RSEQ, GE-RSEQ)	250 €	300 €
Estudiantes (No miembros RSEQ, GE-RSEQ)	330 €	380 €
Acompañantes	200 €	200 €
Estudiantes del Máster y Doctorado en "Electroquímica. Ciencia y Tecnología"	100 €	100 €



El Área de Química Física del Departamento de Química de la ULL organiza la XLV Reunión del Grupo Especializado de Electroquímica de la RSEQ del 15 al 18 de julio de 2025 en el Campus de Guajara. Les esperamos en la ULL.



<https://gerseq45.webs.ull.es>

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***!!! Thank you for your
attention!!!***