

Ambipolar-Transport Wide-Bandgap Perovskite Interlayer for Organic Photovoltaics with over 18% Efficiency

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ABSTRACT:

Anode interface layers (AILs) are of vital importance to the performance of organic photovoltaics (OPVs). Herein, MAPbBr₃ is firstly demonstrated as effective solution-processed AIL, featuring a 2.3-eV bandgap and high hole and electron mobility. PM6:BO-4Cl based on unannealed device with the MAPbBr₃ AIL exhibits an encouraging efficiency of 15.5%. F4TCNQ is further doped into MAPbBr₃ to increase work function and passivate defects, boosting the efficiency to 17.3%. Likewise, the unannealed devices based on PM6:BTP-eC9:PC₇₁BM achieved a high efficiency of 18.3% with MAPbBr₃/F4TCNQ AIL. The ambipolar ability of MAPbBr₃ in OPVs was further proved by inverted devices. Therefore, MAPbBr₃ successfully serves multiple functions: a down-conversion layer, an energy donor, and a textured seeding layer influencing BHJ morphology. This finding successfully demonstrates the practicability of wide-bandgap perovskite materials as highly promising OPV interfacial materials.

Introduction

Solution-processed organic photovoltaics (OPVs) are an emerging PV technology that combines benefits in flexibility, lightweight form factor, tunable color, and transparency.¹⁻⁴ OPV is also abundant and versatile in materials, and viable with large-area fabrication. In the previous fifteen years, the OPV performance in the laboratory has undergone intriguing advancement—from 4% to approaching 20% power conversion efficiency (PCE).⁵⁻²² Towards OPV commercialization, application-specific requirements on efficiency, stability, and printability should be met.^{23, 24}

Typically, single-junction OPVs comprise a bulk-heterojunction active layer sandwiched between an anode and a cathode. Excitons generated by the photo-active materials under illumination diffuse to the donor-acceptor interface and separate into free holes and electrons, which are collected by the corresponding electrodes afterward. The optimization of the interface between the electrode and the active layer is very critical to the device performance.^{25, 26} Interface engineering can modify the work function of the electrode, reduce the recombination of interfacial charges. Interface engineering can also physically modulate the surface of ITO, passivate the surface defects and pinholes, and impact the morphology evolution of the bulk-heterojunction (BHJ) layer atop the interface since it is critically correlated with the surface energy and surface texture of the seeding layers.²⁷

Anode interface layer (AIL) preferably increases the work function of the ITO anode, blocks electrons, physically modulates the ITO surface, and regulates the active-layer morphology. Notwithstanding the importance of AILs, the development of anode interface materials lags far behind that of photoactive materials. Only PEDOT:PSS and inorganic p-type transition metal oxides or sulfides (e.g. MoO₃ and WO₃) are extensively utilized in OPVs. The acidity and hygroscopicity characteristics of PEDOT:PSS raise the stability issue, as PEDOT: PSS can corrode the ITO anode, make the In ions diffuse into PEDOT: PSS and the active layer, and absorb moisture from the air. The inorganic AILs typically need vacuum

thermal evaporation and have strict requirement on thickness (typically < 10 nm) to realize high efficiency, which is incompatible with scalable processing.

Hybrid organic-inorganic perovskites (HOIPs), such as methylammonium lead iodide (FAPbI₃), have achieved certified PCE surpassing 25% in single-junction photovoltaic devices. The scientific community focuses on the narrow-bandgap and medium-bandgap HOIPs, leaving the wide-bandgap hybrid perovskite less studied. Recently, the Adachi group utilized thermal evaporated MAPbCl₃ to construct an extraordinarily thick transport layer for organic light-emitting diode (OLEDs). Owing to the high carrier mobilities and high visible light transparency, the thickness of the MAPbCl₃ layer is enlarged to 2,000 nm via co-evaporation of MAI and PbCl₂ without requiring high voltage and without reducing either internal electroluminescence quantum efficiency or operational durability.²⁸ Based on our previous exploration of perovskite solar cells,²⁹ we realized the wide-bandgap solution-processed HOIPs are of intriguing properties and very promising potential as OPV interlayers. First, the energy levels and bandgaps of solution-processed HOIPs can be tailored by varying the composition of halide, metal, and A-cation. The intermediate compositions with a mixture of different halides, metals, or A-cations form perovskite crystalline alloys with intermediate bandgaps, which allows the continuous bandgap tuning from 1.2 to over 3.0 eV. Second, wide-bandgap HOIPs show superior carrier transport properties with long electron-hole diffusion lengths and carrier lifetimes. Besides, the ambipolar carrier transport characteristics endow HOIPs with the potential to shape interconnecting layers in tandems. Third, wide-bandgap MAPbBr_{3-x}Cl_x (0 ≤ x ≤ 3) crystallizes in the same way - the perovskite phase forms a solid film directly from the colloidal solution state, which improved the alloying and phase stability compared with MAPbI_{3-x}Br_x (0 < x < 3) systems.³⁰

These considerations stimulated our exploitation of wide-bandgap HOIPs as interlayer materials of OPVs. We selected the wide-bandgap MAPbBr₃ as the AIL,³¹ which exhibits a wide optical bandgap of 2.3 eV with an absorption onset of 539 nm, an electron conductivity

of $5.88 \times 10^{-3} \text{ S m}^{-1}$, good ambipolar transport capability with a hole mobility of $1.74 \text{ cm}^2 \text{V}^{-1} \text{S}^{-1}$, and electron mobility of $2.04 \text{ cm}^2 \text{V}^{-1} \text{S}^{-1}$ (**Figure S1**).³² As a result, the conventional device with the structure of ITO/MAPbBr₃/PM6:BO-4Cl/PFNBr/Ag (without thermal annealing of active layer) exhibited an encouraging PCE of 15.5%, with a V_{OC} of 0.82V, a J_{SC} of 26.0 mA cm^{-2} , and an FF of 72.6%. The efficient Förster energy transfer between interface and donor is firstly observed. F4TCNQ is further doped into MAPbBr₃ to increase the work function and passivate the defects, boosting the PCE to 17.3%, along with a V_{OC} of 0.84V, a J_{SC} of 26.5 mA cm^{-2} , and an FF of 77.6%. Notably, the device performance shows insensitivity to the thickness of MAPbBr₃, which is of importance to the up-scaling processing. The ambipolar transporting ability of MAPbBr₃ was clearly shown by the unannealed device with a structure of ITO/MAPbBr₃/Naphen-DPO/PM6:BO-4Cl/MoO₃/Ag, which offers a PCE of 8.75%, along with a V_{OC} of 0.59V, a J_{SC} of 25.8 mA cm^{-2} , and an FF of 57.3%. We also utilized the PM6:BTP-eC9:PC₇₁BM ternary system and PM6:PY-IT all polymer system to study the universality of the MAPbBr₃ interfacial layer. The unannealed devices based on PM6:BTP-eC9:PC₇₁BM and PM6:PY-IT incorporating the MAPbBr₃(14 nm)/F4TCNQ AIL exhibited high PCEs of 18.3% and 15.1%, excelling the unannealed counterparts bearing the PEDOT:PSS AIL (17.4% and 14.2%). Our investigation shows that the solution-processed MAPbBr₃ is multifunctional and versatile in improving OPVs, serves as (a) ambipolar hole/electron transporting layer, (b) down-conversion layer that absorbs light in the range of 300-530 nm and reemits light in the range of 500-570 nm to boost J_{SC} , as well as (c) a textured interface layer that increases the crystallinity of the active layer.²⁷

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We investigated the optical and transport properties of the MAPbBr₃ film. From the steady-state absorption measurement, MAPbBr₃ showed an absorption onset of 539 nm and an optical bandgap of 2.3 eV (**Figure 1a and S2**). Space charge limited current (SCLC) analysis

based on electron-only devices with the structure of ITO/SnO₂/MAPbBr₃/PC₆₁BM/Au and hole-only devices with the structure of ITO/PEDOT:PSS/MAPbBr₃/MoO₃/Au was carried out to estimate the electron and hole mobilities, electron and hole trap densities, respectively (**Figure 1b** and **1c**). The trap-filled limit voltage (V_{TFL}) determined as the onset voltage of TFL regime ($n>3$) can be used to calculate trap density (N_t) with the equation:

$$N_t = 2\epsilon_0\epsilon_r V_{TFL}/qL^2$$

in which ϵ_0 is the vacuum permittivity, ϵ_r is the relative permittivity of perovskite, which can be taken as the value of 28.7 for MAPbBr₃, and L is the thickness of the perovskite film. The MAPbBr₃ perovskite film exhibited electron trap density of $1.7 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$, and hole trap density of $1.05 \times 10^{16} \text{ cm}^{-3}$. Charge transport property in the perovskite films can be estimated in the trap-free regime ($n=2$)³³ with the equation:

$$J = (9\mu_e\epsilon_0\epsilon_r V^2)/8L^3$$

MAPbBr₃ exhibited high and balanced hole and electron mobilities of 1.74 and 2.04 $\text{cm}^2\text{V}^{-1}\text{S}^{-1}$ in the vertical direction, which agreed with the former reports.

Ultraviolet photoelectron spectroscopy (UPS) displays the photoemission cut-off, from which the work function of the surface is extracted. As shown in **Figure 1d**, the PEDOT:PSS/ITO and MAPbBr₃/ITO exhibited large work function (WF) of 5.2 and 5.0 eV, respectively. Kelvin probe force microscope (KPFM) has been extensively used to measure the contact potential differences (CPD) between a conducting atomic force microscopy (AFM) tip and a sample, and allows to map the work function of the sample. KPFM was used here to probe the work function difference of PEDOT:PSS/ITO and MAPbBr₃/ITO (**Figure 1e**). At the same color scale, the contact potential difference between the KPFM tip and the MAPbBr₃ surface is estimated as -463 mV in the dark, and that between the KPFM tip and PEDOT:PSS surface is estimated as -600 mV, which is in line with the UPS result. According to the X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS) characterization, the Pb 4f 7/2 and Pb 4f 5/2 peaks (at 138.4 and 143.3 eV) observed in the MAPbBr₃ perovskite were shifted to the

direction with larger binding energy by 0.2 eV in the MAPbBr₃/F4TCNQ perovskite, indicative of the supramolecular interactions between the Lewis bases F4TCNQ and MAPbBr₃ (**Figure S3**).

Table 1. Photovoltaic parameters of unannealed OPV devices with the structure of ITO/AIL/PM6:BO-4Cl/PFNBr/Ag.

AIL	V_{OC} (V)	J_{SC} (mA cm ⁻²)	calc. J_{SC} (mA cm ⁻²)	FF (%)	PCE ^{a)} (%)
14 nm MAPbBr ₃	0.82	26.0	24.9	72.6	15.5 (15.2±0.2)
7 nm MAPbBr ₃ /F4TCNQ	0.83	26.1	25.0	72.2	15.5 (15.2±0.2)
14 nm MAPbBr ₃ /F4TCNQ	0.84	26.5	25.2	77.6	17.3 (16.8±0.3)
30 nm MAPbBr ₃ /F4TCNQ	0.83	25.9	25.0	77.3	16.6 (16.2±0.2)
45 nm MAPbBr ₃ /F4TCNQ	0.83	25.7	24.7	73.2	15.5 (14.9±0.3)
60 nm MAPbBr ₃ /F4TCNQ	0.81	25.4	24.2	72.0	14.8 (14.3±0.3)
30 nm PEDOT:PSS	0.84	25.2	24.1	74.0	15.6 (15.5±0.1)
w/o AIL	0.68	22.5	23.7	59.2	9.09 (7.58±1.20)

^{a)} Average value of 12 devices in parentheses.

Devices were fabricated based on conventional structures of ITO/AIL/PM6:BO-4Cl³⁴/PFNBr/Ag using non-halogen solvent³⁵ (o-xylene) and no thermal annealing step for all the active layers. (In this paper, the unannealed device means its active layer does not undergo thermal annealing treatment). **Figure S4** showed the UV-vis absorption spectra of PM6 and BO-4Cl. **Figure S5** showed the energy level distribution of related interfacial and active-layer materials. The current density versus voltage (J - V) characteristics were shown in **Figure 2a** and the key parameters of OPVs were summarized in **Table 1**. The unannealed control devices without AIL exhibited a champion PCE of 9.09%, accompanied with a V_{OC} of 0.68V, a J_{SC} of 22.5 mA/cm², and an FF of 59.2%. Besides, these AIL-free devices exhibited poor repeatability of efficiency. The unannealed control devices with PEDOT:PSS AIL displayed a PCE of 15.6%, with a V_{OC} of 0.84V, a J_{SC} of 25.2 mAcm⁻², and an FF of 74.0%. The experimental devices with MAPbBr₃ (14 nm) exhibited a comparable performance, affording a similar PCE of 15.5%, slightly lower V_{OC} of 0.82V and FF of 72.6%, and a higher J_{SC} of 26.0 mA cm⁻². We then adopted F4TCNQ to modify the MAPbBr₃ layer with favorable band alignment, which was expected to facilitate the extraction of holes from MAPbBr₃ to ITO

electrode.³⁶ F4-TCNQ is also shown to increase the WF of the MAPbBr₃/ITO substrate, which is confirmed by the UPS and KPFM characterization (**Figure 1d** and **1e**). Meanwhile, F4TCNQ improves the hole mobility of MAPbBr₃ from 1.74 to 2.49 cm²V⁻¹S⁻¹, and the electron mobility from 2.04 to 2.88 cm²V⁻¹S⁻¹ (**Figure S6-7**). After F4TCNQ doping, the device performance was successfully boosted to 17.3%, with a V_{OC} of 0.84V, a J_{SC} of 26.5 mAcm⁻² and an FF of 77.6%. Notably, even when the thickness of MAPbBr₃ interlayer is increased to 60 nm, the device still demonstrated a PCE of 14.8%, a V_{OC} of 0.81V, a J_{SC} of 25.4 mAcm⁻², and an FF of 72.0%. The OPV device exhibited excellent tolerance to the thickness of MAPbBr₃ due to the high hole mobility of MAPbBr₃, which is valuable for industrial fabrication. **Table S1** summarized photovoltaic parameters of annealed devices. After thermal annealing, the device with MAPbBr₃/F4TCNQ also exhibits a higher PCE of 17.5% than the counterpart with PEDOT:PSS (16.9%) (**Figure S8-9**). The stability of OPV devices with PEDOT:PSS and MAPbBr₃/F4TCNQ were also studied. These two kinds of devices exhibited comparable thermal stability; they both retained approximately 60-70% after 200 hours' thermal annealing at 80 °C in the glove box filled with N₂ (**Figure S10**).

The EQE characterization was carried out to evaluate the accuracy of J_{SC} measured from the J - V curves (**Figure 2b**). The OPV devices based on PEDOT:PSS and MAPbBr₃ AILs both exhibited high EQE response in the wavelength of 500-800 nm. The devices with MAPbBr₃ (7-30 nm) all presented higher EQE peaks at wavelength <400 nm (~70% at 380 nm) than the devices with PEDOT:PSS AIL (~62% at 380 nm) (**Figure 2c**). Such an interesting phenomenon encouraged us to further study how the MAPbBr₃ AIL contributed to the EQE in the short wavelength. The steady-state PL spectra of PM6 and MAPbBr₃ pure films, and PM6/MAPbBr₃ films (excited at 450 nm) were therefore plotted in **Figure 2d**. As for the MAPbBr₃ pure film, the PL Peak intensified with the increased thickness. The PL spectrum of the MAPbBr₃ pure film, featuring sharp peak at 526 nm, strongly overlapped the absorption of PM6 and afforded the possibility of energy transfer from MAPbBr₃ to PM6. In

the MAPbBr₃/PM6 film, the emission of MAPbBr₃ was entirely quenched by PM6 while that of PM6 showed some enhancement, indicating effective Förster resonance energy transfer from MAPbBr₃ to PM6. In the MAPbBr₃/PM6 composite film, the enhancement of PM6 peak became more obvious with the increasing thickness of MAPbBr₃. This phenomenon soundly proved that the wide-bandgap MAPbBr₃ can efficiently transfer energy to PM6, which accounted for the increased EQE response in the short wavelength for OPVs with MAPbBr₃. We also designed the device structure of ITO/PEDOT:PSS/MAPbBr₃/PM6/PFNBr/Ag to check if there existed charge transfer between PM6 and MAPbBr₃. The corresponding device showed an extremely small J_{SC} of 0.025 mAcm⁻², indicative of negligible charge transfer between them (**Figure 2e**).

To probe hole extraction of OPVs with different AILs, the photocurrent density (J_{ph})-effective voltage (V_{eff}) relationships were investigated (**Figure 2f**). $J_{ph} = J_L - J_D$ and $V_{eff} = V_0 - V_{appl}$, where V_{appl} represents the applied voltage, V_0 refers to the voltage value when $J_{ph} = 0$. When V_{eff} reaches a high value ($> 2.3V$), the generated excitons are assumed to be fully collected, and J_{ph} is equal to saturated current density (J_{sat}). The J_{SC}/J_{sat} and J_{max}/J_{sat} can be calculated to evaluate exciton dissociation (η_{diss}) and charge collection (η_{coll}) efficiency. The champion devices incorporating PEDOT:PSS, MAPbBr₃ (14 nm) and MAPbBr₃(14 nm)/F4TCNQ interlayers exhibited η_{diss}/η_{coll} of 98.1%/88.2%, 96.4%/84.5%, and 98.2%/90.3%, respectively. These results showed that the F4TCNQ doping can effectively improve the efficiency of charge collection, and devices with the F4TCNQ doped MAPbBr₃ AIL have comparable or even higher charge collection efficiency than controls with PEDOT:PSS.

To decipher the effect of replacing PEDOT:PSS with MAPbBr₃ in charge recombination, the power-law relation ($J \propto P_{light}^{\alpha}$) was used to fit J_{SC} as a function of the incident light intensity in the corresponding devices. A value of α equal to 1 means the ideal case where all the free carriers are swept out and collected at the electrodes before recombination. The devices with PEDOT:PSS, MAPbBr₃ and F4TCNQ doped MAPbBr₃ exhibited α values of

0.98, 0.98, and 0.99, indicative of negligible bimolecular recombination losses for all the devices (**Figure 2g**). To analyze the trap-assisted Shockley-Read-Hall (SRH) recombination, V_{OC} as a function of the incident light intensity was measured. The data were fitted according to the equation $V_{OC} \propto nkT/q \ln(P_{light})$, where k , T , and q are the Boltzmann constant, the temperature in kelvin, and elementary charge, respectively. The parameter n is generally in the range of 1-2 and reflects the presence of carrier traps across the active layer or at the interfaces. A value of n equal to 1 means the ideal case where the trap-assisted recombination does not exist. The fitted data derived n values of 1.17, 1.45 and 1.11, for devices with PEDOT:PSS, MAPbBr₃, and MAPbBr₃/F4TCNQ (**Figure 2h**). These results revealed that the doping of F4TCNQ effectively reduced trap-assisted recombination, which accounted for the PCE enhancement from 15.5% to 17.3%.

Contact angle (CA) measurement and atomic force microscopy (AFM) were performed to study the surface energy (γ) and surface morphology of MAPbBr₃ and PEDOT:PSS film on ITO substrates. The contact angle of MAPbBr₃ and PEDOT:PSS were shown in **Figure 3a, S11-12**.

According to Wu model,^{37, 38} the MAPbBr₃ thin film exhibited surface tension of 61.6 mNm⁻¹ with γ^d of 13.5 mN m⁻¹ and γ^p of 48.1 mNm⁻¹. By contrast, the PEDOT:PSS interface exhibited surface tension of 71.9 mN m⁻¹ with γ^d of 13.9 mN m⁻¹ and γ^p of 58.0 mN m⁻¹. Atomic force microscope (AFM) is one of the most widely used tools for surface morphology characterization, providing the basic information of surface morphology, mainly the surface topography with high spatial resolution within 10 nm. As **Figure 3b** shows, the PEDOT:PSS interlayer showed a uniform and flat surface with a R_q of 1.64 nm, whereas the MAPbBr₃ layer showed a coarse surface with a larger R_q of 5.37 nm. This kind of pattern might be advantageous for broadband light trapping over the full solar spectral range, and did not have bad influence on FF. The upper surfaces of PM6:BO-4Cl system solution-deposited on the PEDOT:PSS and MAPbBr₃ AILs exhibited similar roughness of 1.48 and 1.71 nm.

AFM only probes the surface information of the active layer, while the inward donor/acceptor configuration is pivotal for device performance. Grazing incidence wide-angle X-ray scattering (GIWAXS) was therefore adopted to investigate crystalline structures on the molecular scale, including information of the distance of the lamellar layers, π - π stacking, and crystalline coherence length (CCL).³⁹⁻⁴¹ The 2D diffraction patterns and 1D line-cuts were depicted in **Figures 3c, 3d** and **S13-17**, and the extracted data of GIWAXS in-plane peaks and out-of-plane peaks were summarized in **Tables S2** and **S3**. The Si/PEDOT:PSS sample only showed very weak scatter ring. By contrast, the Si/MAPbBr₃ sample displayed two peaks at $q_r=1.07 \text{ \AA}^{-1}$ ($d \approx 5.87 \text{ \AA}$), and 1.51 \AA^{-1} ($d \approx 4.16 \text{ \AA}$), and a peak at $q=1.51 \text{ \AA}^{-1}$ ($d \approx 4.16 \text{ \AA}$), in the direction of an angle of 45° relative to the substrate. The MAPbBr₃ thin film showed very strong orientation, which obviously varied from the MAPbBr₃ thick film.³⁰ The PM6 neat film exhibits a weak π - π peak at $q_z \approx 1.70 \text{ \AA}^{-1}$ ($d \approx 3.69 \text{ \AA}$) and an obvious lamellar peak at $q_z \approx 0.326 \text{ \AA}^{-1}$ ($d \approx 19.3 \text{ \AA}$), 0.663 \AA^{-1} ($d \approx 9.47 \text{ \AA}$), 0.954 \AA^{-1} ($d \approx 6.58 \text{ \AA}$). The PM6 neat film also exhibited a lamellar peak at $q_r \approx 0.273 \text{ \AA}^{-1}$ ($d \approx 23.0 \text{ \AA}$) along the in-plane (IP) direction. The BO-4Cl neat film displayed a preferential face-on orientation, with a strong π - π peak at $q_z \approx 1.79 \text{ \AA}^{-1}$ ($d \approx 3.51 \text{ \AA}$), and diffraction peaks at $q_r \approx 0.396 \text{ \AA}^{-1}$ ($d \approx 15.9 \text{ \AA}$) and $q_z \approx 0.590 \text{ \AA}^{-1}$ ($d \approx 10.6 \text{ \AA}$). The PEDOT:PSS/PM6:BO-4Cl film showed lamellar peaks at $q_r \approx 0.296 \text{ \AA}^{-1}$ ($d \approx 21.2 \text{ \AA}$) and $q_z \approx 0.315 \text{ \AA}^{-1}$ ($d \approx 20.0 \text{ \AA}$), and π - π peak at $q_z \approx 1.74 \text{ \AA}^{-1}$ ($d \approx 3.62 \text{ \AA}$). By comparison, the MAPbBr₃/PM6:BO-4Cl film exhibited lamellar peaks at $q_r \approx 0.299 \text{ \AA}^{-1}$ ($d \approx 21.0 \text{ \AA}$) and $q_z \approx 0.320 \text{ \AA}^{-1}$ ($d \approx 19.6 \text{ \AA}$), and π - π peak at $q_z \approx 1.76 \text{ \AA}^{-1}$ ($d \approx 3.57 \text{ \AA}$), indicative of the tighter packing of PM6:BO-4Cl on the MAPbBr₃ interlayer. Along the IP direction, the MAPbBr₃/PM6:BO-4Cl film also displayed broad peaks at 1.06 and 1.50 \AA^{-1} , which belongs to the characteristics of MAPbBr₃ film. The combined characteristics of PM6:BO-4Cl and MAPbBr₃ therein imply the rough interface between MAPbBr₃ and PM6:BO-4Cl, which is in accord with the AFM result. To quantitatively discuss the morphology evolution, the CCL of

the π - π peak was estimated by the equation $CCL = 1.8\pi/\text{FWHM}$, where FWHM referred to the full width at half maximum of the peak in the intensity profile. The CCL of π - π peak of PM6:BO-4Cl atop PEDOT:PSS interface was 21.0 Å, slightly smaller than that of PM6:BO-4Cl atop MAPbBr₃ interface (23.0 Å), indicating the coarse MAPbBr₃ film facilitated the aggregation of active-layer materials, and probably served as the crystalline seeding.

Ambipolar transport fuels many interesting prospects at both fundamental and technological levels to organic electronics society. Ambipolar transistors, for example, in which holes and electrons transport concurrently within a semiconducting channel, are finding new uses in lighting, display, memory, and neuromorphic computers for artificial intelligence. The MAPbBr₃ layer's ambipolar transporting nature may allow it to operate as a cathode interface layer (CIL) in OPVs, which we investigated using an inverted configuration.⁴³

Table 2. Photovoltaic parameters of unannealed OPV devices with the structure of ITO/cathode interface layer (CIL)/PM6: BO-4Cl/MoO₃/Ag.

CIL	V_{oc} (V)	J_{sc} (mA cm ⁻²)	calc. J_{sc} (mA cm ⁻²)	FF (%)	PCE ^{a)} (%)
w/o CIL	0.15	17.4	17.4	31.0	0.799 (0.750±0.021)
50 nm MAPbBr ₃ /Naphen-DPO	0.59	25.8	24.8	57.3	8.75 (8.42±0.13)
Naphen-DPO	0.80	25.6	24.7	68.8	14.2 (13.8±0.2)

a) Average value of 12 devices in parentheses.

Table 3. Photovoltaic parameters of unannealed OPV devices with the structure of ITO/AIL/active layer/PFNBr/Ag.

Active Layer	AIL	V_{oc} (V)	J_{sc} (mA cm ⁻²)	calc. J_{sc} (mA cm ⁻²)	FF (%)	PCE (%)
PM6:PY-IT	PEDOT:PSS	0.93	22.0	21.1	69.2	14.2 (14.0±0.1)
PM6: PY-IT	14 nm MAPbBr ₃ /F4TCNQ	0.93	22.7	21.6	71.1	15.1 (14.7±0.2)
PM6:BTP-eC9:PC ₇₁ BM	PEDOT:PSS	0.86	26.5	25.3	76.6	17.4 (17.1±0.2)
PM6:BTP-eC9:PC ₇₁ BM	14 nm MAPbBr ₃ /F4TCNQ	0.86	26.7	25.9	79.5	18.3 (17.9±0.2)

a) Average value of 12 devices in parentheses.

The inverted devices featuring the architecture of ITO/MAPbBr₃/PM6:BO-4Cl/MoO₃/Ag displayed negligible J_{sc} and PCE, which was because (a) the high-WF MAPbBr₃ cannot form energy level alignment with the LUMO level of BO-4Cl, and (b) MAPbBr₃ and MoO₃ have

similar WF, which forms a hole-only device (**Figure S18**). The control inverted device with the structure of ITO/PM6:BO-4Cl/MoO₃/Ag exhibited a V_{OC} of 0.15V, a J_{SC} of 17.4 mA cm⁻², an FF of 31.0%, and a PCE of 0.799% (**Table 2**). The poor performance is ascribed to the mismatch of the work function of ITO and the LUMO level of BO-4Cl. Therefore, a very thin Naphen-DPO layer was inserted between MAPbBr₃ and the PM6:BO-4Cl active layer to facilitate electron collection. The corresponding device with the architecture of ITO/MAPbBr₃ (*ca.* 50 nm)/Naphen-DPO/PM6:BO-4Cl/MoO₃/Ag exhibited a PCE of 8.75%, along with a V_{OC} of 0.59V, a J_{SC} of 25.8 mAcm⁻² and an FF of 57.3%. (**Figure 4a-b, S19**) The results showed clearly that MAPbBr₃ can effectively transport electrons in OPV as long as the energy level aligns and thus electron extraction is efficient. This proved the ambipolar ability of MAPbBr₃ in OPV, in which it allowed both electron and hole transports, in opposite directions.

To demonstrate the universality of the MAPbBr₃ interfacial layer in OPVs, we also utilized the PM6:BTP-eC9⁴⁴:PC₇₁BM ternary system and PM6:PY-IT⁴⁵ all polymer system to construct the corresponding conventional device. (**Table 3, Figure 4c-d**) The unannealed device with the structure of ITO/PEDOT:PSS/PM6:BTP-eC9:PC₇₁BM/PFNBr/Ag exhibited a PCE of 17.4%, a V_{OC} of 0.86V, an FF of 76.6%, and a J_{SC} of 26.5 mA cm⁻². By comparison, the unannealed experimental device incorporating the architecture of ITO/MAPbBr₃(14 nm)/F4TCNQ/PM6:BTP-eC9:PC₇₁BM/PFNBr/Ag successfully demonstrated a high PCE of 18.3%, accompanied with a V_{OC} of 0.86V, an FF of 79.5%, and a J_{SC} of 26.7 mA cm⁻². It is noteworthy this efficiency is among the highest for the devices without thermal annealing. As for the PM6:PY-IT all polymer system, the unannealed device incorporating the MAPbBr₃(14 nm)/F4TCNQ AIL exhibited a high PCE of 15.1%, excelling the unannealed counterpart bearing the PEDOT:PSS AIL (14.2%).

CONCLUSION

To summarize, we first successfully demonstrated one of the solution-processed wide-bandgap perovskites (MAPbBr_3 , $E_g=2.3$ eV) as the anode interfacial layer for highly-efficient conventional OPV device with an encouraging efficiency of 15.5%. F4TCNQ doping of MAPbBr_3 increased the work function, passivated the defects, and thereby boosted the efficiency to 17.3%. Parallely, the unannealed device based on PM6:BTP-eC9:PC₇₁BM and PM6:PY-IT incorporating the MAPbBr_3 (14 nm)/F4TCNQ AIL afforded high efficiencies of 18.3% and 15.1%, exceeding the unannealed controls bearing the PEDOT:PSS AIL (17.4% and 14.2%). The efficiency of 18.3% is among the highest for the devices without thermal annealing. The ambipolar ability of MAPbBr_3 in OPVs was proved by inverted devices. The MAPbBr_3 interface layer therefore serves multiple purposes: novel ambipolar OPV hole/electron transporting layer, a down-conversion layer, an energy donor, and a textured layer to influence the active-layer morphology. Considering the myriad of methods reported to modulate the optoelectronic property of perovskite, this work provides a unique perspective on designing high-performing and cost-effective interlayers for organic photovoltaics.

EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES

Resource availability

Lead contact

Further information and requests for resources and materials should be directed to and will be fulfilled by the Lead Contact: Gang Li (gang.w.li@polyu.edu.hk)

Materials availability

This work does not generate new materials.

Data and code availability

This work does not generate program and coding.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Supplemental information can be found online at xxx.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

G. L. and C. Y. proposed the idea. C. Y. fabricated devices. C. Y. and J. Y. completed the draft. Y. L. and X. L. did the GIWAXS and GISAXS measurements. P. F. performed in-situ absorption measurements. R. D. and J. H. performed KPFM measurements. K. L., H. X., and Z. R. performed correlated analysis. G. L. revised the draft and supervised the work.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The authors declare no competing interests.

Figure 1. Basic optoelectronic properties of MAPbBr₃.

(a) The UV-vis absorption spectrum of MAPbBr₃. (b) The dark current density- voltage curve of hole-only device with a structure of ITO/PEDOT:PSS/MAPbBr₃/MoO₃/Au. (c) The dark current density-voltage curve of electron-only device with a structure of ITO/SnO₂/MAPbBr₃/PC₆₁BM/Au. (d) The UPS spectra of MAPbBr₃, MAPbBr₃/F4TCNQ and PEDOT:PSS on ITO substrates. (e) The KPFM images of MAPbBr₃, MAPbBr₃/F4TCNQ and PEDOT:PSS on ITO substrates (1.5 $\mu\text{m} \times 1.5 \mu\text{m}$).

Figure 2. Comparison between devices with PEDOT:PSS, MAPbBr₃ and MAPbBr₃/F4TCNQ anode interface layers.

The *J-V* curve (a) and EQE spectra (b) of devices with the structures of ITO/PM6:BO-4Cl/PFNBr/Ag, ITO/PEDOT:PSS/PM6:BO-4Cl/PFNBr/Ag, ITO/MAPbBr₃/PM6:BO-4Cl/PFNBr/Ag, and ITO/MAPbBr₃/F4TCNQ/PM6:BO-4Cl/PFNBr/Ag. (c) The EQE difference between devices with the structures of ITO/PEDOT:PSS/PM6:BO-4Cl/PFNBr/Ag and ITO/MAPbBr₃(14 nm)/F4TCNQ/PM6:BO-4Cl/PFNBr/Ag. (d) The PL spectra of MAPbBr₃, PM6 and MAPbBr₃/PM6 on ITO substrates. (λ_{ex} =450 nm) (e) The *J-V* curve of devices with the structures of ITO/PEDOT:PSS/MAPbBr₃/PM6/PFNBr/Ag. (f) Photocurrent density (J_{ph})

versus effective voltage (V_{eff}) curves of devices with structures of ITO/PEDOT:PSS/PM6:BO-4Cl/PFNBr/Ag, ITO/MAPbBr₃(14 nm)/PM6:BO-4Cl/PFNBr/Ag, and ITO/MAPbBr₃(14 nm)/F4TCNQ/PM6:BO-4Cl/PFNBr/Ag. Light intensity dependence of (g) J_{SC} and (h) V_{OC} of devices with the structures of ITO/PEDOT:PSS/PM6:BO-4Cl/PFNBr/Ag, ITO/MAPbBr₃(14 nm)/PM6:BO-4Cl/PFNBr/Ag, and ITO/MAPbBr₃(14 nm)/F4TCNQ/PM6:BO-4Cl/PFNBr/Ag.

Figure 3. Contact angle measurement of anode interfacial layers and morphology characterization of anode interfacial interlayers and active layers.

(a) The contact angles of H₂O and ethylene glycol (GL) on the PEDOT:PSS and MAPbBr₃ substrates. (b) The AFM height images ($1\mu\text{m} \times 1\mu\text{m}$), (c) The 2D GIWAXS patterns, and (d) The GIWAXS profiles along the out-of-plane (OOP) and in-plane (IP) directions of PEDOT, MAPbBr₃, PEDOT:PSS/PM6:BO-4Cl, and MAPbBr₃/PM6:BO-4Cl.

Figure 4. Photovoltaic properties of inverted devices based on PM6:BO-4Cl and conventional devices based on PM6:PY-IT and PM6:BTP-eC9:PC₇₁BM. (a) The J - V curve and (b) the EQE spectra of the devices with the structure of ITO/PM6:BO-4Cl/MoO₃/Ag, ITO/MAPbBr₃/Naphen-DPO/PM6:BO-4Cl/MoO₃/Ag, and ITO/Naphen-DPO/PM6:BO-4Cl/MoO₃/Ag. (c) The J - V curve and (d) EQE spectra of devices with the structures of ITO/PEDOT:PSS/PM6:PY-IT/PFNBr/Ag, ITO/MAPbBr₃(14nm)/F4TCNQ/PM6:PY-IT/PFNBr/Ag, ITO/PEDOT:PSS/PM6:BTP-eC9:PC₇₁BM/PFNBr/Ag, and ITO/MAPbBr₃(14nm)/F4TCNQ/PM6:BTP-eC9:PC₇₁BM/PFNBr/Ag.

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