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### Fluorination-enabled interface of PtNi electrocatalysts for highperformance high-temperature proton exchange membrane fuel cells

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ABSTRACT High-temperature proton exchange membrane fuel cells (HT-PEMFCs) bring new opportunities for portable power generation due to their outstanding advantages such as high tolerance to fuel/air impurities and simplified heat/water management. However, carbon-supported nanostructured Ptbased catalysts running at temperatures over 150°C are challenged by the severe aggregation and carbon corrosion, thus leading to poor durability. Herein, we demonstrate that dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles supported on fluorinated carbon black (white carbon black) could significantly enhance the performance and durability of HT-PEMFCs as the cathode catalysts running at 160°C due to the strong interaction of the F and Ni atoms to form a Ni<sub>x</sub>F<sub>y</sub> interface on Pt-Ni nanoparticles. With the formation of a stable Ni<sub>x</sub>F<sub>y</sub> interface, this integrated HT-PEMFC reached peak power densities of 906 mW cm<sup>-2</sup> and demonstrated excellent durability at 160°C under anhydrous  $H_2/O_2$  conditions. This mitigation strategy was applied to Pt-alloy/C electrocatalysts and resulted in the elimination of Pt dissolution in practical fuel cells.

Keywords: fuel cells, fluorinated carbon, interaction, activity, stability

#### **INTRODUCTION**

High-temperature (~120–250°C) proton exchange membrane fuel cells (HT-PEMFCs), which are increasingly used in promising energy devices, have attracted widespread attention because of their advantages of fast reaction kinetics, high tolerance to fuel/air impurities, and simplified heat and water management [1–3]. The performance of HT-PEMFCs mainly depend on electrocatalysts (the most used one is carbon-supported Pt nanoparticles), but the catalyst degradation is accelerated owing to the enhanced tendency of Pt oxidation, dissolution, Ostwald ripening, and carbon corrosion at high temperatures [4–6]. The main challenges to improve the HT-PEMFC performance and durability are the development of highly durable electrocatalysts and supports that are suitable to run at elevated temperatures with long durability. Carbon supports undergo corrosion leading to delamination of catalyst particles and collapse of the catalyst-layer, further speeding up the dissolution and Ostwald ripening of Pt-based nanoparticles, and resulting in performance degradation or failure of fuel cells [7–11].

In the course of searching electrocatalysts for high-performance electrodes that are suitable for HT-PEMFCs, efforts should be devoted not only to improving both the intrinsic activity and durability of Pt-based nanoparticles, but also to improving the durability of carbon supports. The issues associated with Pt-based catalysts could be resolved to some extent by alloving Pt metals with other metals and by suitable changes in the carbon support [12–17]. Alloying the Pt metal with other metals represents a promising approach to enhance the electrocatalytic performance of Pt-based electrocatalysts, in which the exposure of highly active sites with optimum performance can be maximized [18-26]. Nevertheless, the dealloying of lessnoble elements from Pt alloys remains an issue for catalyst stability, particularly in HT-PEMFC operating environments [24,27]. To overcome these problems, various strategies to stabilize alloy components and structures have been developed, including surface engineering and architectural design [28,29]. Fluorine, with the largest electronegativity, shows doughty bond energy with transition metals [30-32]. Additionally, fluorinated carbon materials show outstanding thermodynamic stability because of the high covalent bond energy of C-F (ca. 480 kJ mol<sup>-1</sup>) [33-35]. Thus, using fluorinated carbon as a support and constructing F-containing transition-metal compounds are beneficial to stabilizing the Pt alloy structure and achieving enhanced catalytic performance and durability in an HT-PEMFC operating environment.

Herein, we report dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles supported on white carbon black (fluorinated XC-72R, the color of the sample changed from black to white, labeled as WCB), which exhibits high oxygen reduction reaction (ORR) activity and increased durability in HT- PEMFCs (Fig. 1a). In the cathode catalyst layer (CCL), a  $Ni_xF_y$  interface on the dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles is formed *via* the interaction between F and Ni atoms. The  $Ni_xF_y$  interface inhibits the dealloying process of dendritic Pt-Ni

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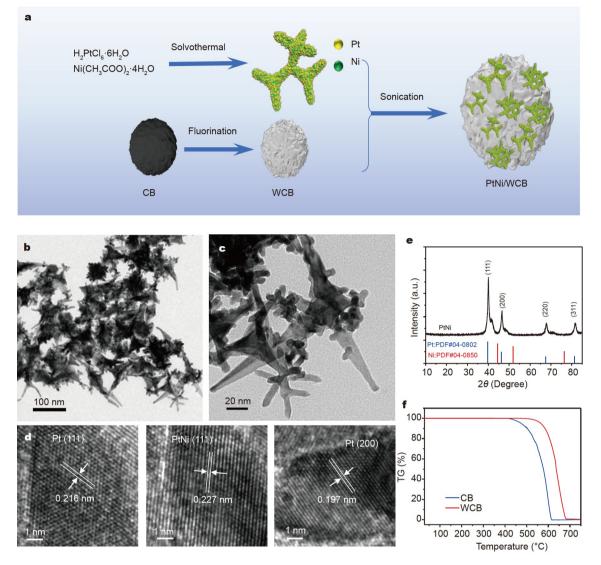


Figure 1 (a) Illustration for the PtNi/WCB fabrication process. (b, c) TEM images of dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles. (d) HR-TEM images of dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles. (e) XRD patterns of dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles. (f) Thermogravimetric analysis (TGA) spectra of CB and WCB.

nanoparticles, and results in the confinement effect of dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles which is beneficial for restraining the oxidation, dissolution, Ostwald ripening, and agglomeration of Pt. Simultaneously, WCB has better thermal stability, acid resistance, oxidation resistance and corrosion resistance than carbon black (XC-72R), which is also one of the key factors for the stable operation of HT-PEMFCs. Moreover, WCB provides an efficient transport channel for oxygen because of its hydrophobicity. Benefitting from the rational design, the PtNi/WCB catalyst exhibits excellent catalytic activity with durable performance in the rotating disk electrode (RDE) and HT-PEMFC measurements.

#### **EXPERIMENTAL SECTION**

#### Materials

Chloroplatinic acid hexahydrate ( $H_2PtCl_6\cdot 6H_2O$ , >99.99%), nickel acetate tetrahydrate (Ni(OCOCH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>·4H<sub>2</sub>O, 99.99%), cetyltrimethylammonium bromide (CTAB, 99%), and oleyl amine (OAm, 90%) were all obtained from Sigma-Aldrich (St. Louis, MO). Carbon black (XC-72R) was obtained from Cabot Corporation. Isopropanol, ethanol, cyclohexane, and *N*,*N*-dimethyl acetamide were purchased commercially (Aladdin, China) and used without further purification. Deionized (DI) water (18.2 M $\Omega$  cm<sup>-1</sup>) obtained by purification through a Milli-Q system (Millipore, USA) was used throughout the experiments.

#### Synthesis of dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles

Typically,  $H_2PtCl_6\cdot 6H_2O$ , Ni(OCOCH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>·4H<sub>2</sub>O, CTAB and OAm were added into a vial and ultrasonicated for 1 h to obtain a homogeneous solution. Subsequently, the mixture was transferred into a Teflon lined autoclave and heated to 180°C and maintained for 8 h. The resultant product was then collected by centrifugation and washed five times with an ethanol/cyclohexane mixture (volume ratio of 2/1).

#### Synthesis of WCB

The CB powder was placed in reactor and the fluorination was performed using 10%  $F_2/N_2$  gas at temperatures of 300 °C for at

least 12 h to ensure complete reaction. The white fluorinated products were labeled as WCB.

#### Synthesis of dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles/WCB

The catalysts were prepared by loading the synthesized dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles on the WCB, and the loading amount was controlled at 40 wt%. In brief, 40 mg of the obtained products and 60 mg of WCB were mixed in isopropanol under stirring for 12 h, and then the mixture was dried in an oven at 50°C overnight. The obtained catalyst was denoted as PtNi/WCB. For comparison, commercial Pt/C (JM 40 wt%) was used as the baseline.

#### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The PtNi/WCB catalyst was synthesized through a two-step method, and Fig. 1a displays the scheme for synthesizing the PtNi/WCB catalyst. First, dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles were synthesized in 98% yield from chloroplatinic acid hexahydrate, nickel acetate tetrahydrate, CTAB, and OAm mixtures. They were ultrasonicated and then heated at 180°C in a Teflon lined autoclave for 8 h (Fig. 1a). As shown in the transmission electron microscopy (TEM) images (Fig. 1b, c), disorderly dendritic Pt-Ni nanocrystals were formed due to the fast reduction and aggregation of small Pt and Ni nuclei at high temperature and confined space [36,37]. The high-resolution TEM (HR-TEM) images (Fig. 1d) reveal lattice fringes of 0.216 and 0.197 nm corresponding to the (111) and (200) planes of Pt, respectively. Lattice fringes of 0.227 nm correspond to the (111) Pt-Ni alloy [18]. The X-ray diffraction (XRD) patterns of dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles (Fig. 1e) indicate that the dendritic structure consists of Pt and PtNi alloy crystal phases, which may be attributed to phase separation caused by different reduction rates between Pt and Ni [38]. The inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry (ICP-MS) result informs 51/49 as the atomic ratio of Pt/Ni of dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles. The X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS) survey spectra (Fig. S1) also verify the coexistence of Pt and Ni in the as-prepared dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles, from which the surface atomic ratio of Pt/Ni is determined to be 53/47. According to the XPS spectra, the Pt in Pt/C, Pt/WCB, PtNi/CB, PtNi/WCB is mainly in the form of metallic Pt and Pt<sup>2+</sup>. In many similar literature, platinum exists in both oxidation state and metal state [39,40]. The existence of Pt<sup>2+</sup> is due to the existence of Pt-O bond and Pt-Ni-O bond [41].

Fluorinated carbon black, which was labeled as WCB, was synthesized by direct fluorination using dilute F<sub>2</sub> gas (20 vol%) in N<sub>2</sub> gas at 300°C to form CF<sub>x</sub> compounds. After fluorination treatment, the color of the samples changed from black to white. WCB had better thermal stability than CB because of the stronger C-F bond (Fig. 1f). The XRD (Fig. S2) broadened diffraction peaks of CB at 24.4° disappeared, corresponding to the interlayer spacing of the carbon sheets. These results indicated that the graphene hexagonal system was completely fluorinated and maintained the dominant features of amorphous carbon [42-44]. The disordered structures of WCB were confirmed in TEM images (Fig. S3). The XPS spectra of WCB (Fig. S4) suggest the effective fluorination of carbon black. The fluorine and carbon atomic concentrations in the prepared WCB are 52.85% and 47.15%, respectively, corresponding to a molar ratio of fluorine to carbon (F/C) of 1.12.

The prepared WCB was mixed with dendritic Pt-Ni nano-

particles to prepare a PtNi/WCB catalyst. Considering both the interfacial mass transfer and electron delivery behavior, CB was added to the PtNi/WCB catalyst to improve the electro-conductibility. Thus, the prepared PtNi/WCB mixed with CB (the mass ratio of WCB/CB is 1:1) shows better performance (Fig. S5). For comparison, Pt/WCB, Pt/CB, and PtNi/CB were prepared. The Ni<sub>x</sub>F<sub>y</sub> signal was observed in high-resolution XPS Ni 2p spectra of PtNi/WCB (Fig. S6a) indicating the formation of a Ni<sub>x</sub>F<sub>y</sub> interface during the synthesis of PtNi/WCB. More importantly, the binding energy of Pt in PtNi/WCB slightly decreases by 0.16 eV compared with bare dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles (Fig. S6b), indicating a strong interaction between the atomic Pt and the Ni<sub>x</sub>F<sub>y</sub> interface [3].

The ORR performances of PtNi/WCB, PtNi/CB, Pt/WCB, Pt/ CB, and commercial Pt/C were investigated by cyclic voltammograms (CVs) and linear sweep voltammetry (LSV). The CV of the catalysts was performed in a N2-saturated HClO4 solution  $(0.1 \text{ mol } L^{-1})$  at a sweep rate of 50 mV s<sup>-1</sup> at room temperature (Fig. 2a). The electrochemically active surface area (ECSA) was measured by the hydrogen underpotential deposition (HUPD), which was determined by measuring the charge collected in the hydrogen desorption region and assuming a value of  $210 \ \mu C \ cm^{-2}$  for a monolayer hydrogen adsorption. The ECSA of PtNi/WCB was 71.4 m<sup>2</sup> g<sup>-1</sup><sub>Pt</sub>, larger than those of PtNi/CB  $(50.5 \text{ m}^2 \text{ g}^{-1}_{\text{Pt}})$ , Pt/WCB  $(60.1 \text{ m}^2 \text{ g}^{-1}_{\text{Pt}})$ , and Pt/CB  $(53.2 \text{ m}^2 \text{ g}^{-1}_{\text{Pt}})$  (Table S1). The enhanced ECSA of PtNi/WCB can be attributed to the formation of a  $Ni_xF_y$  interface which results in the enhanced dispersion of the PtNi nanostructure and improves the exposure of a Pt-rich structure. The positive-going ORR LSV curves of the catalysts are further recorded in Fig. 2b. The half-wave potential of PtNi/WCB was 0.934 V<sub>RHE</sub> (RHE: reversible hydrogen electrode), which are 25, 16, 53 and 45 mV higher than those of PtNi/CB, Pt/WCB, Pt/CB and commercial Pt/C, respectively. Except for the commonly accepted enhanced ORR performance through Pt-Ni alloying, the better ORR activity of PtNi/WCB and Pt/WCB than PtNi/CB and Pt/CB was attributed to the hydrophobicity and aerophilicity of WCB, which means much better gas affinity in the HClO<sub>4</sub> solution [45-47]. The hydrophobicity of the liquid/gas/solid triphasic interface accelerates the trapping of sufficient oxygen because it affects both the interfacial mass transfer and electron delivery behavior [45,48,49]. Furthermore, the ORR performance of PtNi/WCB was enhanced with Ni leaching, which exposed more active sites after the formation of the  $Ni_xF_v$  interface [18]. The XPS Pt 4f spectrum of PtNi/WCB showed a lower binding energy than other catalysts (Fig. S7), indicating that the formation of the  $Ni_xF_y$  interface would downshift the Pt d-band centre, lowering the binding affinity between Pt and oxygen intermediates and thus enhancing the ORR activity [41,50].

The durability of the catalysts was evaluated through an accelerated durability test (ADT) between 0.6 and 1.05  $V_{RHE}$  in 0.1 mol L<sup>-1</sup> HClO<sub>4</sub> at a scan rate of 100 mV s<sup>-1</sup>. The CV and positive LSV curves of the catalysts before and after ADTs are shown in Figs S8–S12. To better understand the durability, the kinetic currents of the catalysts were estimated based on the Koutecky-Levich equation and then normalized against the ECSA and Pt mass to obtain the specific activity (SA) and mass activity (MA) (Fig. 2c, d and Table S1), respectively. The half-wave potential for commercial Pt/C has been negatively shifted by 30 mV after 10,000 cycles, and the ORR performances based on SA and MA at 0.9 V declined by 38.3% and 38.5%, respec-

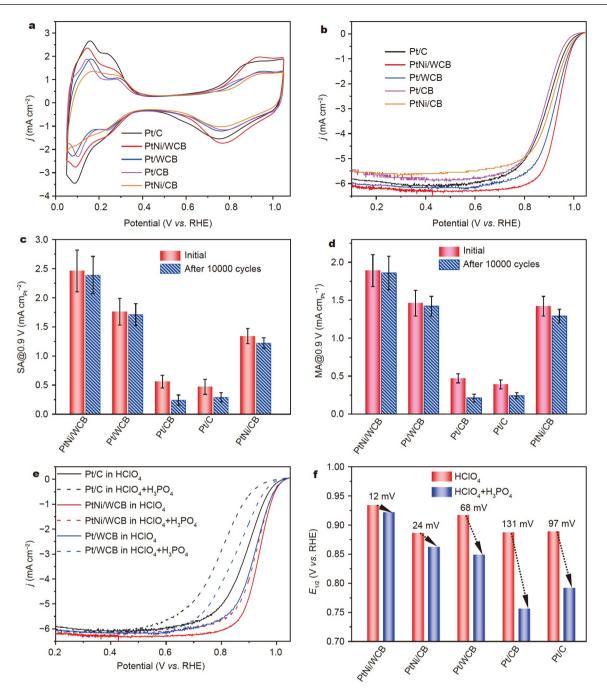


Figure 2 Electrocatalytic ORR performances of commercial Pt/C, PtNi/WCB, PtNi/CB, Pt/WCB, and Pt/CB. (a) CV curves recorded in N<sub>2</sub>-saturated HClO<sub>4</sub> solutions (0.1 mol L<sup>-1</sup>) at room temperature with a sweep rate of 50 mV s<sup>-1</sup>. (b) LSV curves recorded in O<sub>2</sub>-saturated HClO<sub>4</sub> solutions (0.1 mol L<sup>-1</sup>) with a sweep rate of 10 mV s<sup>-1</sup> and a rotation rate of 1600 r min<sup>-1</sup>. (c) SAs at 0.9 V<sub>RHE</sub>. (d) MAs at 0.9 V<sub>RHE</sub>. (e) LSV curves in O<sub>2</sub>-saturated HClO<sub>4</sub> (0.1 mol L<sup>-1</sup>) with and without the addition of 0.2 mol L<sup>-1</sup> H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>. (f) Summary of half-wave potential with and without H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>.

tively, which is consistent with the reported references [14]. In contrast, the PtNi/WCB material shows significantly higher durability. The half-wave potential only negatively shifted by 5 mV after the ADT, and the SA and MA only slightly dropped by 0.85% and 1.59%, respectively. Moreover, PtNi/WCB demonstrated higher durability than Pt/CB and commercial Pt/C, which can be attributed to the strong interaction of PtNi with WCB from a Ni<sub>x</sub>F<sub>y</sub> interface to stabilize the PtNi nanostructure. Furthermore, the stable WCB support also contributed to the higher stability. As shown in the Ni 2p XPS spectra (Fig. S13),

the peaks of Ni<sub>x</sub>F<sub>y</sub> were retained. Furthermore, the F distribution intersected the entire area of the Ni and Pt distribution in the TEM-energy dispersive X-ray spectroscopy (EDS) mapping of the PtNi/WCB catalyst after ADTs of 10,000 cycles (Fig. S14), further indicating that Ni<sub>x</sub>F<sub>y</sub> was still distributed on the interface of dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles. These results show that the structure of Ni<sub>x</sub>F<sub>y</sub> remains stable after ADTs, resulting in the high durability of the PtNi/WCB catalyst. HT-PEMFCs run at high temperatures above 120°C and depend on H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> as a dopant to assist the proton conduction in both the proton

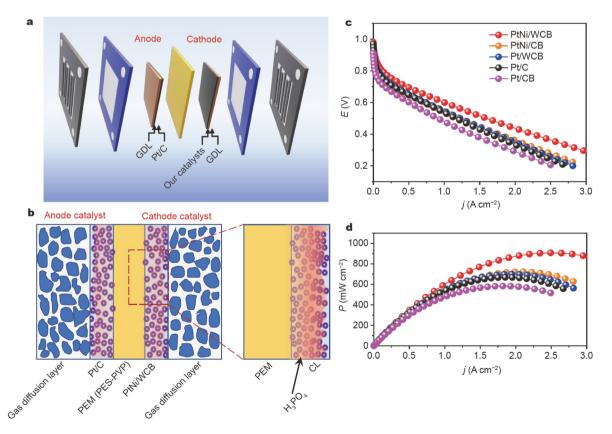
exchange membrane and the catalyst layer [2]. Thus, it is important to investigate the influence of phosphate anions on the ORR performance of Pt-based catalysts. The anti-poisoning properties of the catalysts for H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> were demonstrated in O<sub>2</sub>saturated  $HClO_4$  (0.1 mol L<sup>-1</sup>) with and without the addition of H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> (Fig. 2e). As shown in Fig. 2e, PtNi/WCB exhibited higher resistance to H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> than Pt/WCB and commercial Pt/C. The half-wave potential of PtNi/WCB only negatively shifted by 12 mV after the addition of H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>, which is significantly lower than that of 24, 68, 131, and 97 mV for PtNi/CB, Pt/WCB, Pt/CB and Pt/C, respectively (Fig. 2f). PtNi/WCB and PtNi/CB exhibited better resistance to H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> than Pt/WCB and Pt/CB. The results reflected that the anti-poisoning property of H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> was mainly attributed to the alloy effect of PtNi and partially due to the hydrophobic property of WCB, which relieves the adsorption of phosphate anions.

The performance of HT-PEMFCs using the catalysts as the cathode catalyst was evaluated at 160°C under anhydrous  $H_2/O_2$  at atmospheric pressure using commercial Pt/C as the anode. The design of HT-PEMFC fixture is shown in Fig. 3a. A  $H_3PO_4$ -doped poly(ethersulfone)-poly(vinyl pyrrolidone) (PES-PVP) membrane was used as the electrolyte [51,52]. In our previous study, the synthesis method and specific parameters of the membrane have been reported [53]. The sandwich-like structure of PtNi/WCB MEA (MEA: membrane electrode assembly) prepared by catalyst-coated substrates (CCS) is shown in Fig. 3b [54,55]. Fig. 3c, d compare the HT-PEMFC performance of the MEAs. The PtNi/WCB MEA exhibited a superior performance

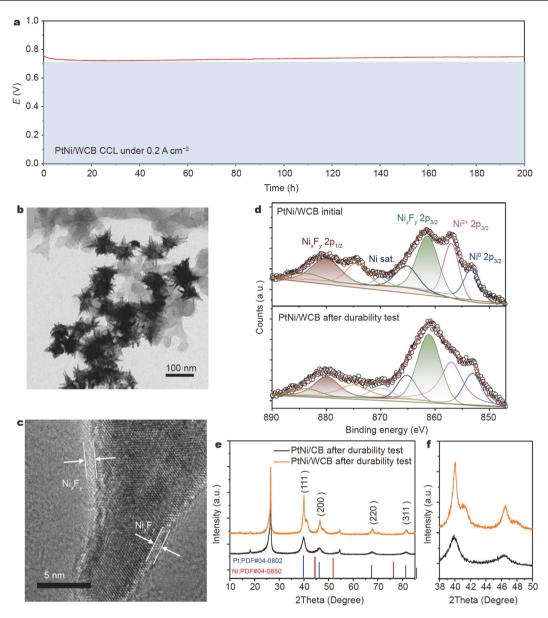
compared with that of other MEAs (including PtNi/CB, Pt/WCB, Pt/CB, and commercial Pt/C MEAs), consistent with previous ORR performance. The peak power density of the PtNi/WCB MEA is 906 mW cm<sup>-2</sup>, which is approximately 1.26 and 1.36 times that of the PtNi/CB MEA and Pt/C MEA with 718 and 666 mW cm<sup>-2</sup>, respectively.

The durability test of the MEAs was performed under a constant cell current density of  $0.2 \text{ A cm}^{-2}$  at 160°C (Fig. S15). The PtNi/WCB shows a voltage of 0.763 V to achieve a current density 0.2 A cm<sup>-2</sup> after 25 h, which is higher than that of 0.717, 0.731, 0.707, and 0.654 V for PtNi/CB, Pt/WCB, commercial Pt/C and Pt/CB MEAs, respectively, which is consistent with the LSV results in Fig. 2b. It is worth noting that the PtNi/WCB MEA exhibited stable performance under different current densities from 0.2 to 2.0 A cm<sup>-2</sup> (Fig. S16). These results clearly demonstrate the superior durability of the fuel cell using PtNi/WCB as the cathode catalyst.

To better understand the durability mechanism of PtNi/WCB, a long-term durability test of PtNi/WCB MEA under 0.2 A cm<sup>-2</sup> was evaluated at 160°C for 200 h (Fig. 4a). The cell voltage to achieve a current density of 0.2 A cm<sup>-2</sup> remains at ~0.75 V after 200 h of testing, indicating the high durability of the PtNi/WCB MEA. After the long-term durability test, the peak power density of the PtNi/WCB MEA only slightly decreased by 3.2% (29 mW cm<sup>-2</sup>) (Fig. S17). In addition, the charge transport resistance of the PtNi/WCB MEA was quantified by electrochemical impedance spectroscopy (EIS) (Fig. S18). As shown in Fig. S18, the charge transport resistance ( $R_{ct}$ ) of PtNi/WCB is



**Figure 3** H<sub>2</sub>/O<sub>2</sub> HT-PEMFC performances of commercial Pt/C, PtNi/WCB, PtNi/CB, Pt/WCB, and Pt/CB as cathode catalysts. (a) Schematic diagram of HT-PEMFCs fixture. GDL stands for gas diffusion layer. (b) The structure of membrane electrode assembly. (c) Polarization curves. (d) Specific power density curves. Testing conditions: 1.0 mg cm<sup>-2</sup> commercial Pt/C in the anode, >1.0 mg cm<sup>-2</sup> catalysts in the cathode; all the fuel cell performance was measured at H<sub>2</sub>/O<sub>2</sub> (200/200 mL min<sup>-1</sup>) under 101.3 kPa without humidification at 160°C.



**Figure 4** Durability and structural fluctuation of PtNi/WCB MEA. (a) Durability test under 0.2 A  $cm^{-2}$ ; (b) TEM and (c) HR-TEM images of the PtNi/WCB cathode catalyst after long-term durability test of 200 h. (d) Ni 2p XPS spectra of PtNi/WCB before and after long-term durability test of 200 h. (e, f) XRD patterns of PtNi/WCB and PtNi/CB after durability test.

fitted as 89.6 m $\Omega$  cm  $^2$  and manifests only a slight increase of 0.5 m $\Omega$  cm  $^2$  after durability test for 200 h.

The TEM micrographs of the PtNi/WCB catalyst after the long-term durability test indicated no sign of change in the structural morphology of the dendritic architecture (Fig. 4b), further supporting the stable structure of the PtNi/WCB catalyst layer. In addition, an obvious coating at the interface of the dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles can be observed, which is assigned to the Ni<sub>x</sub>F<sub>y</sub> interface (Fig. 4c). As shown in TEM-EDS mapping of the PtNi/WCB cathode catalyst after a durability test of 200 h. (Fig. S19), the distribution of F intersects the entire region of Ni and Pt, while the C signal is inconspicuous in the intersecting region, indicating that F atoms are adsorbed on dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles. To better understand the origin of the high durability of the PtNi/WCB, the structures of the PtNi/WCB MEA before and after the long-term durability test were investigated.

As shown in cross-sectional SEM images of PtNi/WCB CCL (Fig. S20), the distribution and morphology of Pt-Ni nanoparticles were not changed after the long-term durability test. The Ni 2p and Pt 4f XPS spectra of the PtNi/WCB CCL before and after the long-term durability test were compared (Fig. 4d and Fig. S21). As shown in the Ni 2p XPS spectrum (Fig. 4d), the deconvolution of the Ni peak shows that the intensity for  $Ni_xF_y$ rises after the long-term durability test due to the in-situ growth of  $Ni_xF_y$  under electrochemical conditions. Simultaneously, the Pt 4f peaks of the PtNi/WCB (Fig. S21b) shift to higher binding energies because of the further formation of  $Ni_xF_y$  interface, resulting in more exposure to platinum atoms. To further confirm the superiority of  $Ni_x F_y$ , we compared the physical phases of the PtNi/WCB and PtNi/CB catalysts by XRD (Fig. 4e, f). The PtNi alloy crystal phase was still observed in the XRD pattern of PtNi/WCB after the durability test, whereas the alloy signal disappeared in PtNi/CB, indicating severe dealloying without the Ni<sub>x</sub>F<sub>y</sub> interface. The XPS spectra of PtNi/CB further indicated the dealloying of Ni atoms (Fig. S22). After the durability test for 200 h, the surface atomic ratio of Ni was decreased to 0.17 at% compared with 2.07 at% before the durability test (Table S2). However, the surface atomic ratio of Pt/Ni of PtNi/WCB only exhibited slight volatility after durability test for 200 h. In contrast, the commercial Pt/C in the cathode catalyst demonstrated poor stability and the size of Pt nanoparticles exhibited a significant increase after the durability test (Fig. S23).

#### CONCLUSIONS

In summary, high-performance PtNi/WCB catalysts were constructed with high performance and better durability in HT-PEMFCs by loading dendritic Pt-Ni nanoparticles onto fluorinated carbon black. The PtNi/WCB MEA in the HT-PEMFCs reached a peak power density of 906 mW cm<sup>-2</sup> at 160°C under H<sub>2</sub>/O<sub>2</sub> conditions and only slightly decreased by 29 mW cm<sup>-2</sup> after the 200h long-term durability tests, substantially outperforming commercial Pt/C MEA. A nanoscale Ni<sub>x</sub>F<sub>y</sub> interface were observed and demonstrated, which results in the high durability due to strong catalyst-support interactions and suppressed dealloying under electrochemical conditions. This study offers a robust and potential methodology for improving the activity and durability of HT-PEMFCs.

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**Conflict of interest** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

**Supplementary information** Experimental details and supporting data are available in the online version of the paper.



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## ARTICLES

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### 氟化物界面抑制PtNi电催化剂去合金化及其高温质 子交换膜燃料电池性能研究

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摘要 高温质子交换膜燃料电池(HT-PEMFCs)以其杂质耐受性高、系 统简化等突出优势为燃料电池的发展带来了新机遇.目前广泛使用的 铂碳催化剂存在严重的颗粒团聚、载体腐蚀等耐久性较差问题.本文 采用氟化碳黑(白碳黑)负载的枝状Pt-Ni纳米颗粒作为HT-PEMFCs阴 极催化剂,由于Ni、F强相互作用并在Pt-Ni合金表面形成了Ni<sub>x</sub>F,界面,可显著提升器件性能和耐受性,在160°C、干燥H<sub>2</sub>/O<sub>2</sub>条件下峰功率密 度可达906 mW cm<sup>-2</sup>.本文成功利用Ni<sub>x</sub>F,界面提升合金催化剂的活性 和稳定性,对于HT-PEMFCs催化剂的设计具有指导意义.