

# Influence of Halide Substitution and External Stimuli on Ion Transport in Inverted $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{1-x}\text{Br}_x)_3$ Perovskite Solar Cells

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## ABSTRACT

The coupled electronic-ionic response in various  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{1-x}\text{Br}_x)_3$ -based inverted perovskite solar cells (PSCs) is studied *in-operando* by impedance spectroscopy (IS) under varied AM1.5G light intensities and electrical biases. We show that the concentration of Br<sup>-</sup> in the composition significantly alters the capacitance and resistive response of the PSC under external stimuli. For example, we observed that the low frequency capacitance does not increase proportionally with light intensity, instead it is highly dependent on the amount of Br<sup>-</sup> in the composition. We found

that the recombination resistance ( $R_{\text{rec}}$ ) has a linear inverse relationship with light intensity in  $\text{MAPbI}_3$  and  $\text{MAPbBr}_3$  whereas, the mixed compositions show deviation. Interestingly, the deviation of  $R_{\text{rec}}$  from linearity also scales with the increase in Br<sup>-</sup> concentration. Upon applying an electrical bias, a large deviation of  $R_{\text{rec}}$  from linearity was observed all mixed halide compositions exhibited a non-linear inverse trend. We further report the diffusion coefficient ( $D$ ) for each  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{1-x}\text{Br}_x)_3$  composition under different light intensity. Notably, the  $D$  values decreased on changing the composition from  $\text{MAPbI}_3$  ( $10^{-7} \text{ cm}^2 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ) to  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{0.8}\text{Br}_{0.2})_3$  and  $\text{MAPbBr}_3$  ( $10^{-8} \text{ cm}^2 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ). On the other hand, mixed compositions containing more than 20% Br<sup>-</sup> concentration show faster diffusion kinetics. Overall, our results emphasize on the complex and intertwined nature of electronic and ionic response in PSC that is tunable by changing the halide composition.

## INTRODUCTION

Light-induced ion migration has been widely observed in hybrid organic-inorganic perovskites (HOIPs).<sup>1-4</sup> However, the implications of light-induced ion transport on device performance remain unclear.<sup>5</sup> For example, the instability of HOIPs under prolonged exposure to light has been attributed to ion migration,<sup>6</sup> and yet, self-healing induced by ion migration under cycled illumination may increase the short-term stability.<sup>7</sup> Although the mobility of A- and B-site ions is still an ongoing debate, there has been agreement on the transport of halide ions under illumination.<sup>8</sup> Various experimental and theoretical studies suggest that halide migration is dependent on the HOIP composition, but a systematic study to quantify this effect is still lacking.<sup>9</sup>

Mixed halide HOIPs employing I<sup>-</sup> and Br<sup>-</sup> have been extensively employed in perovskite solar cells (PSCs). The halide ratio in  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{1-x}\text{Br}_x)_3$  is often modified to achieve a required band-gap

or to improve a structural stability which is vital for improving the device performance.<sup>10</sup> However, changing the composition influences the halide migration hence, their distribution in the perovskite film. For example, in mixed I<sup>-</sup> and Br<sup>-</sup> compositions, the Br<sup>-</sup> ions have lower activation energy ( $E_A$ ) barrier for migration compared to I<sup>-</sup>,<sup>11</sup> therefore, they typically located near the interfaces and grain boundaries.<sup>12,13</sup> Although, ion migration has become a popular feature of PSCs, further experimental studies are required to understand the fundamental nature and implications of this phenomenon. Previous studies have linked ion migration with illumination and electrical bias,<sup>10,14,15</sup> but the influence of halide composition on ion migration has been widely overlooked. Similarly, the interplay between the halide composition, ion migration, illumination and electrical bias needs to be studied to hone our understanding about these peculiar yet remarkable photovoltaic materials.

Herein, we report a detailed impedance spectroscopy (IS) analysis of different p-i-n MAPb(I<sub>1-x</sub>Br<sub>x</sub>)<sub>3</sub>-based devices *in-operando* under variable AM1.5G illumination intensities and electrical bias. We found that the concentration of Br in the composition significantly alter the capacitance and resistive response under varying light intensity and electrical bias. We observed that the high frequency electronic response is coupled with the low frequency ionic responses, hence, they cannot be analyzed independently. However, the low frequency capacitance, unlike previous reports, did not increase proportionally with light intensity.<sup>16,17</sup> Instead, the increase in capacitance with light intensity was accompanied by the shift of capacitance curve towards higher frequencies. Notably, this effect is more significant in Br<sup>-</sup> containing compositions. Furthermore, we show that the recombination resistance ( $R_{rec}$ ) has a linear inverse relationship with light intensity in MAPbI<sub>3</sub> and MAPbBr<sub>3</sub> whereas, the mixed compositions deviate from the linearity. This deviation becomes more pronounced with the increase in Br<sup>-</sup> concentration. Similar to the effect of light intensity, the slope of  $R_{rec}$  vs electrical bias plot increases for low Br<sup>-</sup> compositions *i.e.* MAPb(I<sub>0.8</sub>Br<sub>0.2</sub>)<sub>3</sub> and

MAPb(I<sub>0.6</sub>Br<sub>0.4</sub>)<sub>3</sub>. Thus, we surmise that a large Br<sup>-</sup> concentration is favorable for charge screening. Furthermore, we calculated the ionic diffusion coefficient (*D*) for each MAPb(I<sub>1-x</sub>Br<sub>x</sub>)<sub>3</sub> composition under different light intensity and found that the *D* values decreased on changing the composition from MAPbI<sub>3</sub> (10<sup>-7</sup> cm<sup>2</sup> s<sup>-1</sup>) to MAPbBr<sub>3</sub> (10<sup>-8</sup> cm<sup>2</sup> s<sup>-1</sup>). We present a detailed analysis and complete picture of how the ion transport properties evolve with I/Br ratio in MAPb(I<sub>1-x</sub>Br<sub>x</sub>)<sub>3</sub> devices under different illumination intensities and electrical biases.

## EXPERIMENTAL SECTION

**Device fabrication.** ITO-coated glass substrates (20 ± 5 ohms sq<sup>-1</sup>) were obtained from Thin Film Devices Inc. and were cleaned by ultrasonication in detergent, water, acetone and isopropyl alcohol for 10 min each. Poly(benzothiadiazole vinylene-alt-2,5-bis(4-sodium sulfonate)butoxy)-1,4-phenylenevinylene) (PVBT-SO<sub>3</sub>) (see structure, Figure S8a) was dissolved in water and then spin coated atop of ITO coated glass substrate at 3500 rpm. No thermal annealing was performed post-spin coating. For MAPbI<sub>3</sub> and MAPbBr<sub>3</sub> devices, a 1.4 M precursor solution of MAI/MABr (Dyesol) and PbI<sub>2</sub>/PbBr<sub>2</sub> (Sigma Aldrich) (1:1) in gamma-butyrolactone (GBL)/dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) (v/v 7:3) was prepared and stirred overnight. For mixed halide perovskites, the concentration of Br<sup>-</sup> was increased by adjusting the relative mole ratios of MAI, MABr, PbBr<sub>2</sub>, and PbI<sub>2</sub> accordingly. The precursor solutions were then spin coated on the HTM by a two-step spin-coating procedure: 1500 rpm for 20 s and 2000 rpm for 60 s. During the second step, chlorobenzene (antisolvent) was dripped onto the substrate after 20 s. As-cast films were left at room temperature for 1 min followed by thermal annealing at 100 °C for 5 min inside the N<sub>2</sub>-filled glovebox (<1 ppm of O<sub>2</sub>, <1 ppm of H<sub>2</sub>O). A solution of Phenyl-C<sub>61</sub>-butyric acid methyl ester (PC<sub>61</sub>BM) (20 mg ml<sup>-1</sup>) in chlorobenzene was spin coated atop the perovskite layer at 1000 rpm

for 60 s. Then, C<sub>60</sub>-N (3 mg mL<sup>-1</sup>) (see structure, Figure S8b) in 2,2,2-Trifluoroethanol (TFE) was spin coated at 4000 rpm to give a 15 nm film. Finally, 100 nm Ag metal (6 mm<sup>2</sup>) was thermally deposited onto the active layer under high vacuum ( $2 \times 10^{-6}$  mbar).

**Characterization.** The *J-V* studies were conducted inside the N<sub>2</sub>-filled glovebox under AM1.5G (100 mW cm<sup>-2</sup>) irradiation using Newport 91160 300-W solar simulator. All *J-V* scans were obtained from -0.5 to 1.5 V at a scan rate of  $\sim 0.26$  V s<sup>-1</sup>. The light intensity was adjusted using NREL-calibrated Si solar cell with a KG-5 filter. For intensity-dependent measurements, power was varied, and the resulting intensity was calibrated. Before each measurement, the device was left in the dark for 5 min to avoid degradation from extended light exposure.

Electrochemical impedance measurements were conducted using Agilent 4294A Precision Impedance Analyzer under varying light intensities of AM1.5G at short-circuit condition under constant 50 mV AC amplitude. The frequency was swept from 1 MHz to 40 Hz, and the resulting response was fit from 0.2 MHz to 100 Hz. Before every IS measurement under different light intensity, the device was left in the dark for  $\sim 2$  min to minimize the effect of previous scan.

Powder X-ray diffraction (PXRD) measurements were carried out on perovskite samples coated on clean glass substrates with a PANalytical X'Pert3 X-ray diffractometer having a Ni filter, 1/2 in. diverging slit, vertical goniometer, and X'Celerator detector. Measurements were taken from  $2\theta = 10^\circ$  to  $50^\circ$  under Cu K $\alpha$  (1.542 Å).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We fabricated MAPb(I<sub>1-x</sub>Br<sub>x</sub>)<sub>3</sub>-based p-i-n devices where  $x = 0, 0.2, 0.4, 0.6, 0.8$  and  $1.0$ . Powder x-ray diffraction pattern confirmed the formation of the three-dimensional perovskite in each of these compositions. We observed a shift from a tetragonal (*I4/mcm*) to a cubic (*Pm $\bar{3}m$* )

structure when we changed the composition from MAPbI<sub>3</sub> to MAPbBr<sub>3</sub>, consistent with the reported structure for each compound (SI Figure S1).<sup>18,19</sup>

We employed the IS to study the electronic and ionic capacitive responses in different MAPb(I<sub>1-x</sub>Br<sub>x</sub>)<sub>3</sub> compositions *in-operando*. In IS measurements, the impedance was measured by applying a 20 mV AC voltage whose frequency was swept from 300 kHz to 40 Hz. The scan time was limited to 30 sec, minimizing the effects of non-steady-state conditions. Each composition was exposed to different light intensities in order to study the composition dependent capacitive response. The capacitive response of PSC can be divided into three distinct frequency regimes namely, low ( $f < 100$  Hz), intermediate ( $100 \text{ Hz} < f < 0.1 \text{ MHz}$ ), and high ( $f > 0.1 \text{ MHz}$ ).<sup>20</sup> The high and intermediate frequency is often related to the chemical capacitance and dipole contributions,<sup>21</sup> respectively, whereas the low frequency response represents the electrode polarization due to the accumulation of charges<sup>22</sup> and ion migration.<sup>23</sup> As shown in **Figure 1**, the high frequency capacitance does not change with light intensity hence, it can be treated as a geometric capacitance. Such independent response of high frequency capacitance on light intensity was also observed by Pockett and co-workers.<sup>21</sup> Conversely, the intermediate and low frequency capacitance increased significantly with increasing light intensity. Upon plotting the low frequency capacitance per unit length against light intensity for MAPbI<sub>3</sub>, MAPb(I<sub>0.8</sub>Br<sub>0.2</sub>)<sub>3</sub> and MAPbBr<sub>3</sub> resulted in a slope of 0.5, 0.48, and 0.87, respectively (**Figure 2**). This data shows that the low frequency capacitance does not increase proportionally with the light intensity, hence, this observation is inconsistent with the origin of the measured capacitance arising from photogenerated charges in the HOIP layer. This subjugates some previous studies that have reported a proportional increase in low frequency capacitance with increasing light intensity.<sup>16,17</sup> We surmise that the difference in the observation could be due to the different perovskite

composition, device architecture, morphology and fabrication method. Our results support the complex nature of the capacitance in perovskite solar cells which was suggested by Pockett and co-workers.<sup>24</sup> Rather than treating the capacitance as purely electronic, we believe that it originates due to coupled electronic-ionic relaxations where the distribution of ionic vacancies can modify the electronic impedance. A similar observation was reported by Moia and co-workers.<sup>25</sup> Here, it is important to mention that the ionic environment is entirely dependent on the composition of perovskite. Since we are changing the ratio of halide ions in  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{1-x}\text{Br}_x)_3$ , both the nature and number of ionic vacancies would vary.

In our previous work, we showed that the low frequency capacitance was modulated under an electrical bias.<sup>26</sup> Here, we extended our analysis to study the nature of the low frequency capacitance upon changing the halide composition in  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{1-x}\text{Br}_x)_3$  under applied bias. The low frequency capacitance showed an increase with the applied bias in each composition (**Figure 3**). This increase in capacitance under electrical bias was larger in magnitude compared to the enhancement observed upon increasing light intensity. We hypothesize that the photogenerated charges and mobile ionic defects scale with the applied bias. This is different from the effect of light intensity where only the density of free carriers is altered.<sup>2</sup> We also monitored the capacitance per unit length at 100 Hz under different applied bias in different halide compositions (**Figure 4**). In general, the capacitance does not change at lower applied biases but increases drastically at biases above 500 mV. To understand this we employed the model that was proposed by our group previously.<sup>26</sup> The capacitance increases when the sum of applied bias ( $V_{\text{App}}$ ) and photovoltage ( $V_{\text{Ph}}$ ) exceeds the built-in voltage ( $V_{\text{bi}}$ ) of a device. In this situation, the ionic defects also screen the charges and prevent recombination.

The fact that both light intensity and bias have similar effect on the low frequency capacitance indicate that the electronic and ionic processes are coupled. To test our hypothesis, we changed the bias and light intensity simultaneously for  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{0.8}\text{Br}_{0.2})_3$  composition. We found under low light intensity, there was a significant increase in the capacitance at biases  $>500$  mV. When the light intensity was increased, a lower magnitude of bias was required to induce this same capacitance increase (Figure S2). Doubling the light intensity shifts the knee to a lower bias by  $\sim 46$  mV. This shift correlates with the increase in  $V_{\text{Ph}}$  with light intensity that can overcome the  $V_{\text{bi}}$  at a lower  $V_{\text{App}}$ .

To investigate the interdependence of ionic distribution and charge recombination, we plotted the electronic recombination resistance ( $R_{\text{rec}}$ ), extrapolated from the high-frequency regime of IS data, against light intensity for each  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{1-x}\text{Br}_x)_3$  composition. For  $\text{MAPbI}_3$  and  $\text{MAPbBr}_3$ , the  $R_{\text{rec}}$  had a linear inverse relationship with light intensity with a slight deviation from linearity (**Figure 5**). This linear inverse relationship could be expected from a PSC, provided that the dark and light responses of a cell are additive.<sup>21</sup> Notably, for mixed halide compositions, there is more deviation from the linearity of these plots, the slope of which scales with the increase in the Br concentration. The slope changes from -0.65 in  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{0.8}\text{Br}_{0.2})_3$  to -0.17 in  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{0.2}\text{Br}_{0.8})_3$ . A possible explanation for this observation is the favorable screening of charges by the Br defects. As the concentration of Br defects increase, the probability of charge recombination decreases even upon increasing light intensity. Therefore, the decrease in  $R_{\text{rec}}$  is not very significant in  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{0.2}\text{Br}_{0.8})_3$  and  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{0.4}\text{Br}_{0.6})_3$  (Figure 5). Due to the well documented phase segregation effect in mixed halide HOIPs, it is safe to assume that halide defects are dominant in mixed compositions compared to the pristine ones hence, the latter follow linearity with light intensity. This is intuitive because the phase segregation in mixed halide compositions could cause an



inhomogeneous distribution of ions in the film thus, increasing the possibility of point defects due to the lack of stoichiometry.

We also plotted the  $R_{\text{rec}}$  as a function of applied bias. Unlike  $R_{\text{rec}}$  vs intensity plot, the curves exhibited a non-linear decrease upon increasing electrical bias (Figure S3). This is due to the increased contribution of ionic defects under bias compared to light intensity. Similar to the effect of light intensity on  $R_{\text{rec}}$ , the rate of decrease in  $R_{\text{rec}}$  is higher in low Br<sup>-</sup> compositions *i.e.* MAPb(I<sub>0.8</sub>Br<sub>0.2</sub>)<sub>3</sub> and MAPb(I<sub>0.6</sub>Br<sub>0.4</sub>)<sub>3</sub>. The compositions containing larger Br<sup>-</sup> concentration ( $x > 0.4$ ) show less decrease in  $R_{\text{rec}}$ .

The IS data for MAPb(I<sub>1-x</sub>Br<sub>x</sub>)<sub>3</sub> compositions under different light intensities (Figure S4) was fitted with an equivalent circuit model that we have already developed.<sup>23,27</sup> The linear response in the low-frequency part of the Nyquist plot followed by a curvature back towards the real axis (Figure S6a) was modeled with a Warburg element, which is characteristic of mass diffusion to either a reactive or adsorbing boundary.<sup>28</sup> The fitted data for MAPbI<sub>3</sub> and MAPbBr<sub>3</sub> is shown in Figure S5a and 5c, and the corresponding values for each element are tabulated in Tables S1 and S3. In previous reports, we associated the Warburg response with the diffusion of methylammonium (MA<sup>+</sup>) in MAPbI<sub>3</sub> because the impedance response changed as a function of organic cation substitution.<sup>29</sup> This observation was also corroborated by Maier and co-workers.<sup>2</sup> The MA<sup>+</sup> migration has also been reported by other groups.<sup>30</sup> Additionally, computational studies indicate that iodide migration occurs on timescales  $< \mu\text{s}$ , much lower than the ms timescale in which we observe the Warburg response.<sup>29</sup> Conversely, numerous groups interpret it as a halide diffusion.<sup>8,31,32</sup> Analysis of the Warburg component provides us information about ion diffusion both to the interfaces as well as through the bulk because, in case of thin films, length of the depletion zone approaches the active layer thickness. MAPbI<sub>3</sub> devices show mass diffusion to an

adsorbing boundary, while MAPbBr<sub>3</sub> devices exhibit semi-infinite diffusion in the frequency range analyzed (Figure 5c). The ionic diffusion coefficients ( $D$ ) can be calculated using the Warburg time constant ( $T_w$ ) values from the Warburg impedance equation and the relationship:<sup>23</sup>

$$D = \frac{L_D^2}{T_w}$$

where  $L_D \sim 300$  nm, the film thickness as measured by profilometry. The  $T_w$  values for MAPbI<sub>3</sub> and MAPbBr<sub>3</sub> are  $\sim 0.0047$  s and  $\sim 0.018$  s, respectively, under 1 Sun illumination intensity. To validate our data, we also calculated the Warburg time constant for MAPbI<sub>3</sub> from the characteristic ankle frequency between the capacitive and Warburg domains in the low frequency IS response as reported by Bisquert and co-workers.<sup>33</sup> The time constants calculated from our model match well with the ones calculated using their method (Table S5). This comparison further validates our model.

The  $D$  values scale with light intensity in MAPbI<sub>3</sub> due to an increase in the photogenerated field that favors the migration of positive/negative charged defects towards the contact layers where they get stabilized by charge carrier accumulation (**Figure 6**). Such stabilization of defects provides the driving force for migration towards the electrodes. As shown in Figure 6,  $D$  values in MAPbBr<sub>3</sub> do not show a significant change with increasing light intensity. This trend could be understood using the defect migration model proposed by DeAngelis and co-workers.<sup>29</sup> Under illumination, the photogenerated field causes vacancies to move towards interfaces which in turn creates an electrostatic potential gradient across the perovskite that opposes the field. In case of MAPbBr<sub>3</sub>, the Br<sup>-</sup> related defects can reach selective contacts on very short timescales and generate a strong internal field to compensate the photogenerated field, which impedes the transport of slower migrating defects like  $V_{MA}$ . Excess of Br<sup>-</sup> related defects under strong illumination retards

the diffusion of  $\text{MA}^+$  towards the interface, so the  $D$  values decrease. The calculated  $D$  values from the Warburg element decrease by an order of magnitude as the composition is changed from  $\text{MAPbI}_3$  ( $10^{-7} \text{ cm}^2 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ) to  $\text{MAPbBr}_3$  ( $10^{-8} \text{ cm}^2 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ) implying that the diffusing species may be  $\text{MA}^+$ . Our conclusion is based on the activation energy ( $E_A$ ) barriers calculated for  $\text{MA}^+$ , I $^-$  and Br $^-$  in  $\text{MAPbI}_3$  and  $\text{MAPbBr}_3$ .<sup>11,29</sup> The activation energy barrier for  $\text{MA}^+$  migration increases from 0.46 eV in  $\text{MAPbI}_3$  to 0.56 eV in  $\text{MAPbBr}_3$  and decreases for halides, 0.16 eV (I $^-$ ) in  $\text{MAPbI}_3$  to 0.09 eV (Br $^-$ ) in  $\text{MAPbBr}_3$ . This trend in  $E_A$  for ion migration in  $\text{MAPbI}_3$  and  $\text{MAPbBr}_3$  is also observed by Grätzel and co-workers.<sup>11</sup> Thus, if we were observing halide diffusion, we would expect  $D$  values to be higher in  $\text{MAPbBr}_3$  than  $\text{MAPbI}_3$ . We also calculated the  $D$  values for  $\text{MAPbI}_3$  from the method reported by Bisquert and co-workers for probing ion diffusion and found that our  $D$  values match perfectly with the ones calculated from their method (Table S5).<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, our  $D$  values are in close agreement with the experimental diffusion coefficients reported in the literature for  $\text{MA}^+$ .<sup>23,27</sup>

Similarly, IS data for each mixed halide  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{1-x}\text{Br}_x)_3$  composition (Figure S4b-e) was fitted with our established equivalent circuit model.<sup>23</sup> An example of the fitted plot for  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{0.8}\text{Br}_{0.2})_3$  and the values of circuit parameters for each composition are included as shown in Figure S5b and Table S6, respectively. The  $D$  values for each mixed halide  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{1-x}\text{Br}_x)_3$  composition are plotted as a function of light intensity in **Figure 6**. The  $D$  values in  $x = 0.2$  match  $\text{MAPbBr}_3$  under low intensities ( $10^{-8} \text{ cm}^2 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ) but increase a little at higher intensities ( $10^{-7} \text{ cm}^2 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ). Unlike  $x = 0.2$ , the mid-range compositions  $x = 0.4$  and  $0.6$  do not exhibit a clear trend with varying light intensities. Notably, compositions with large Br $^-$  concentration have large  $D$  values. This observation indicates that increasing the Br $^-$  concentration, in mixed halide compositions, lowers the migration barrier. Low migration barrier in compositions  $x > 0.2$  result from the structural transition from tetragonal

to cubic. As a result of mismatch in the size of halide, the compositions  $x > 0.2$  phase segregate under illumination.<sup>27</sup> The  $x = 0.4$  and  $0.6$  compositions are expected to phase segregate into two separate regions, an iodide-rich and a bromide-rich region.<sup>34</sup> The phase segregation occurred when the sample was exposed to low light intensity, after which  $D$  values became constant. We are unable to distinguish the  $\text{MA}^+$  diffusion in the iodide-rich and bromide-rich phases at this time because of similar  $\text{MA}^+$  diffusion rates; we only observe a single Warburg feature. In conclusion, the trend in  $D$  values show that phase segregation occurs in  $x = 0.4$  and  $0.6$  compositions under the employed illumination intensity range whereas in  $x = 0.2$  it does not.<sup>34</sup>

As aforementioned, we expect that the activation energy barrier for Br ion transport (0.09 eV) in  $\text{MAPbBr}_3$  will be lower than that of the I<sup>-</sup> (0.16 eV) in  $\text{MAPbI}_3$ .<sup>11,29</sup> Despite the addition of a faster mobile ion (Br), analysis of the low-frequency component in the IS resulted in a slower diffusion coefficient for  $\text{MAPbBr}_3$  devices. Thus, we inferred that the low-frequency component in IS was associated with  $\text{MA}^+/\text{V}_{\text{MA}}$  migration. On the other hand, we believe that the high-frequency semicircle in the IS contains information about both the electronic and halide ion/defect relaxation. Therefore, we conclude that stable HOIP devices can be only achieved by impeding the transport of both the organic cation and the halide anion.

Several studies report strategies to mitigate the transport of either the organic cation or the halide through interface engineering,<sup>35,36</sup> minimizing defects,<sup>37,38</sup> incorporating additives<sup>39-41</sup> and mixing various compositions.<sup>42,43</sup> We suggest that ion migration could be attenuated by introducing larger-sized and polar cations that are more sterically bound in the lattice and can interact with the inorganic framework via hydrogen bonding. Recently, Petra and co-workers showed that by introducing larger cations the activation energy barrier for halide diffusion is increased.<sup>31</sup> If this is

true, incorporation of a bulky and polar organic cation will increase the migration barrier for both the A-site cation and halide, resulting in a stable composition under illumination. This opens up an avenue for exploring potential A-site organic cations that could fit in a HOIP lattice and exhibit higher light stability without compromising the device performance. Furthermore, it would be interesting to study the effect of replacing  $MA^+$  with different dipole containing A-site organic cations on the electronic response of the HOIP.<sup>44,45</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

Ion transport has been implicated as the source of instability of PSCs under illumination. Therefore, it is imperative to develop an unequivocal understanding of ion transport so that this problem could be solved. Here, we have investigated the effect of halide substitution in  $MAPb(I_{1-x}Br_x)_3$ -based devices *in-operando*. We also studied the impact of light intensity and electrical bias on ion transport in these compositions. We found that the concentration of Br in the composition significantly alters the resistive and capacitive response under varying light intensity and electrical bias. For example, the recombination resistance ( $R_{rec}$ ) showed a linear inverse relationship with light intensity in  $MAPbI_3$  and  $MAPbBr_3$  whereas, the mixed compositions deviated from the linearity upon increasing Br<sup>-</sup> concentration. This effect was more prominent under bias where we observed a non-linear decrease in  $R_{rec}$  which, interestingly, was more significant in low Br compositions *i.e.*  $MAPb(I_{0.8}Br_{0.2})_3$  and  $MAPb(I_{0.6}Br_{0.4})_3$ . This indicates that increasing the Br concentration in  $MAPb(I_{1-x}Br_x)_3$  favors charge screening. Moreover, contrary to the previous notion about low frequency capacitance, we show that the low frequency capacitance does not increase proportionally with light intensity. Furthermore, we calculated the diffusion coefficient ( $D$ ) for each  $MAPb(I_{1-x}Br_x)_3$  composition under different light intensity and found that the  $D$  values decreased on changing the composition from  $MAPbI_3$  ( $10^{-7} \text{ cm}^2 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ) to  $MAPbBr_3$  ( $10^{-8} \text{ cm}^2 \text{ s}^{-1}$ ). On

the other hand,  $D$  values increased upon increasing the Br<sup>-</sup> concentration in mixed compositions. We believe that the slow ionic response is coupled with the fast-electronic processes, where the increase in Br<sup>-</sup> concentration modulates charge transport.

## ASSOCIATED CONTENT

X-ray diffraction of MAPbI<sub>3</sub>, Capacitance as a function of applied bias for MAPb(I<sub>0.8</sub>Br<sub>0.2</sub>)<sub>3</sub> under different light intensities,  $R_{\text{rec}}$  as a function of bias for mixed halide compositions of MAPb(I<sub>1-x</sub>Br<sub>x</sub>)<sub>3</sub>, Nyquist plots of MAPb(I<sub>1-x</sub>Br<sub>x</sub>)<sub>3</sub> compositions as a function of light intensity, Nyquist plots and equivalent circuit fits for MAPbI<sub>3</sub>, MAPb(I<sub>0.8</sub>Br<sub>0.2</sub>)<sub>3</sub> and MAPbI<sub>3</sub> devices, IS model fit parameters and % error for MAPbI<sub>3</sub>, IS model fit parameters and % error for MAPbBr<sub>3</sub>, Comparison of time constants and  $D$  values calculated from our model and literature, Structure of PVBT-SO<sub>3</sub> and C<sub>60</sub>-N.

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### **Author Contributions**

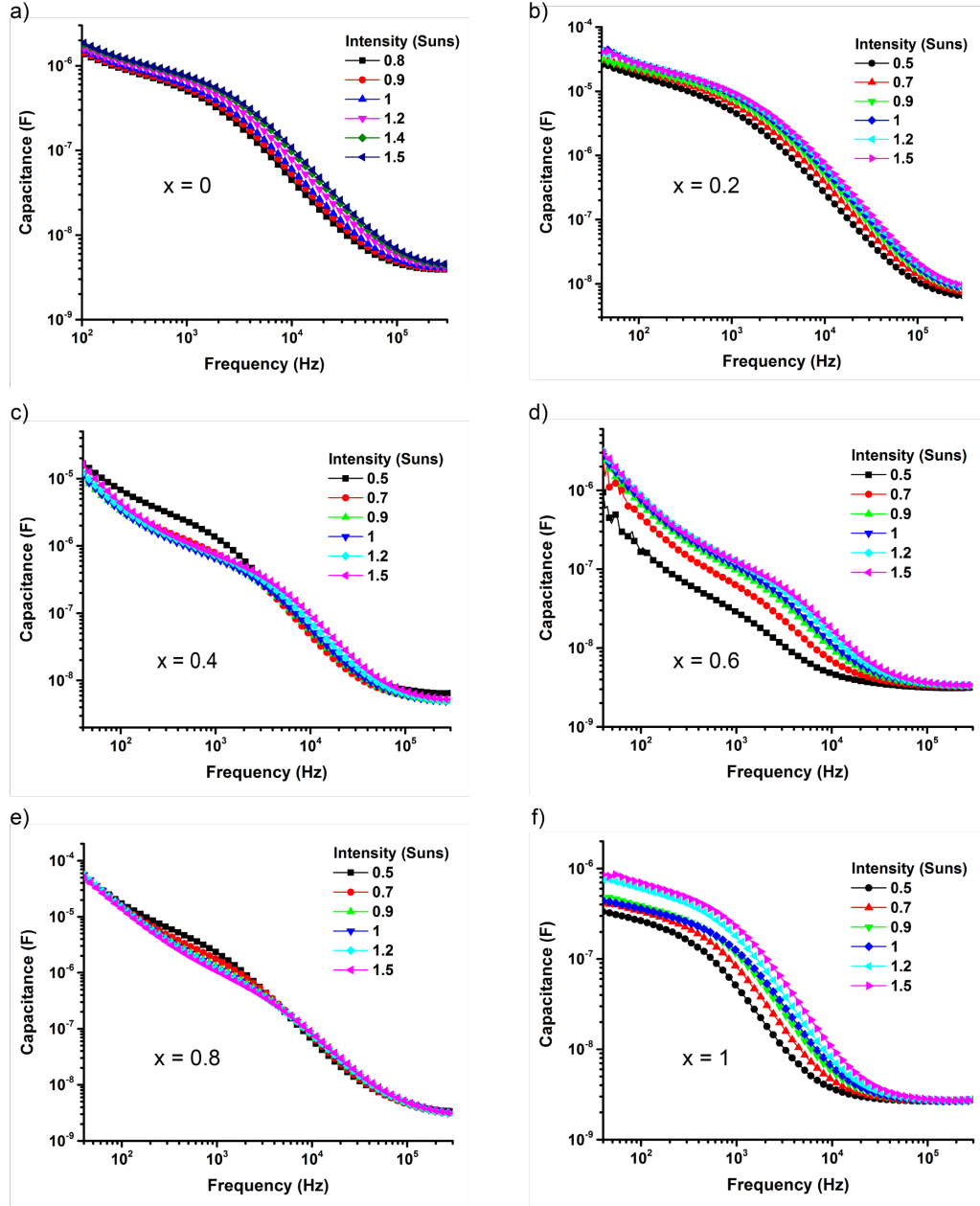
The manuscript was written through contributions of all authors. All authors have given approval to the final version of the manuscript.

### **Notes**

The authors declare no competing financial interests.

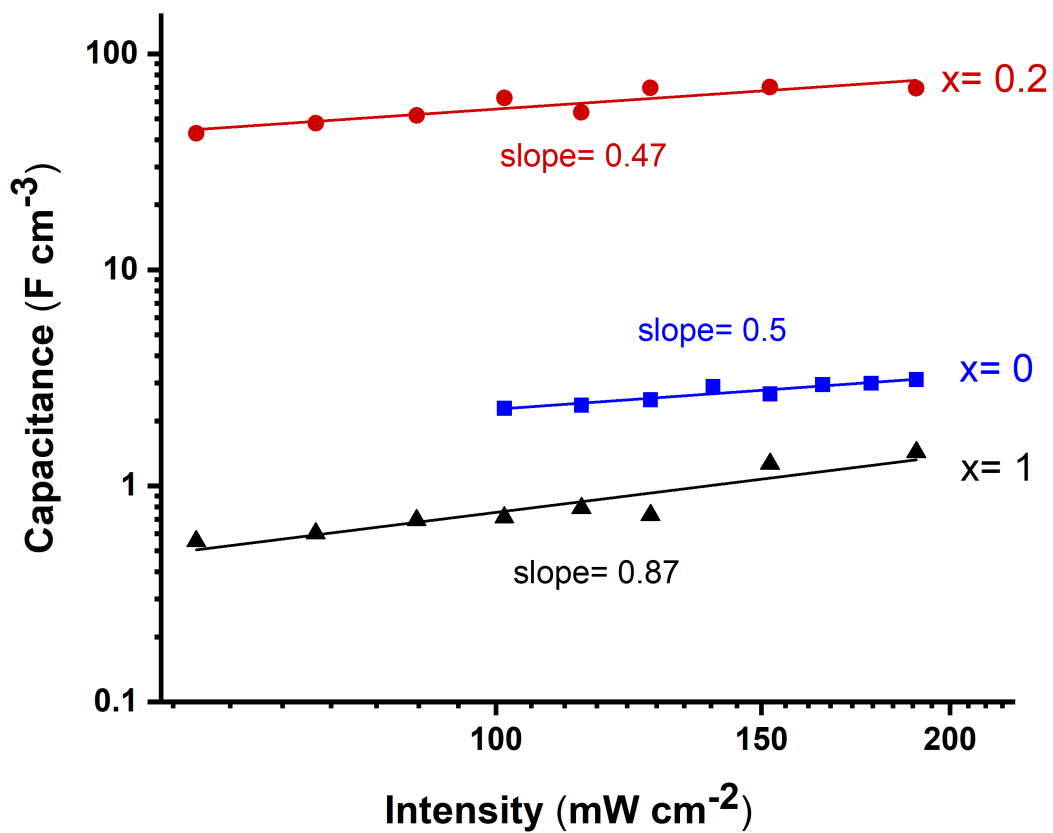
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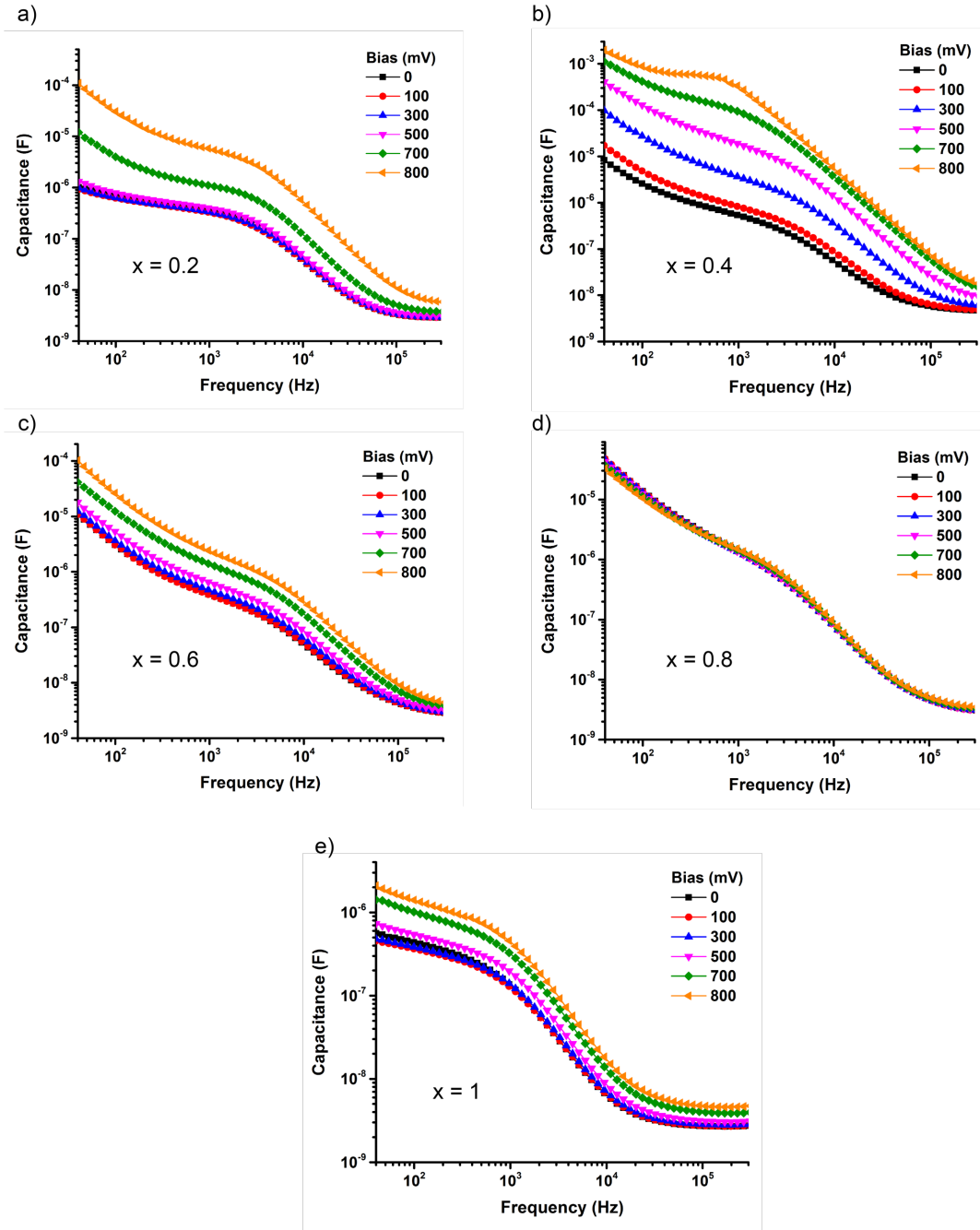


**Figure 1.** The log-log plot of capacitance and frequency for different compositions of  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{1-x}\text{Br}_x)_3$  under various light intensities.

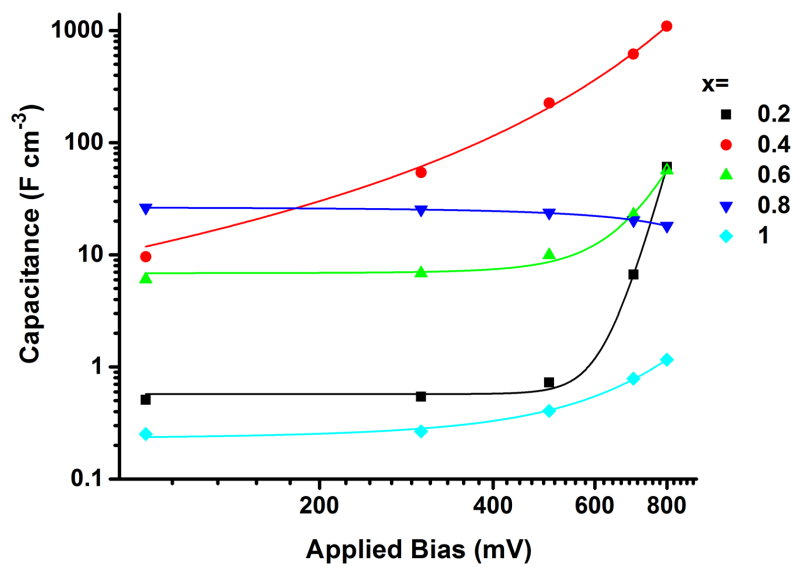




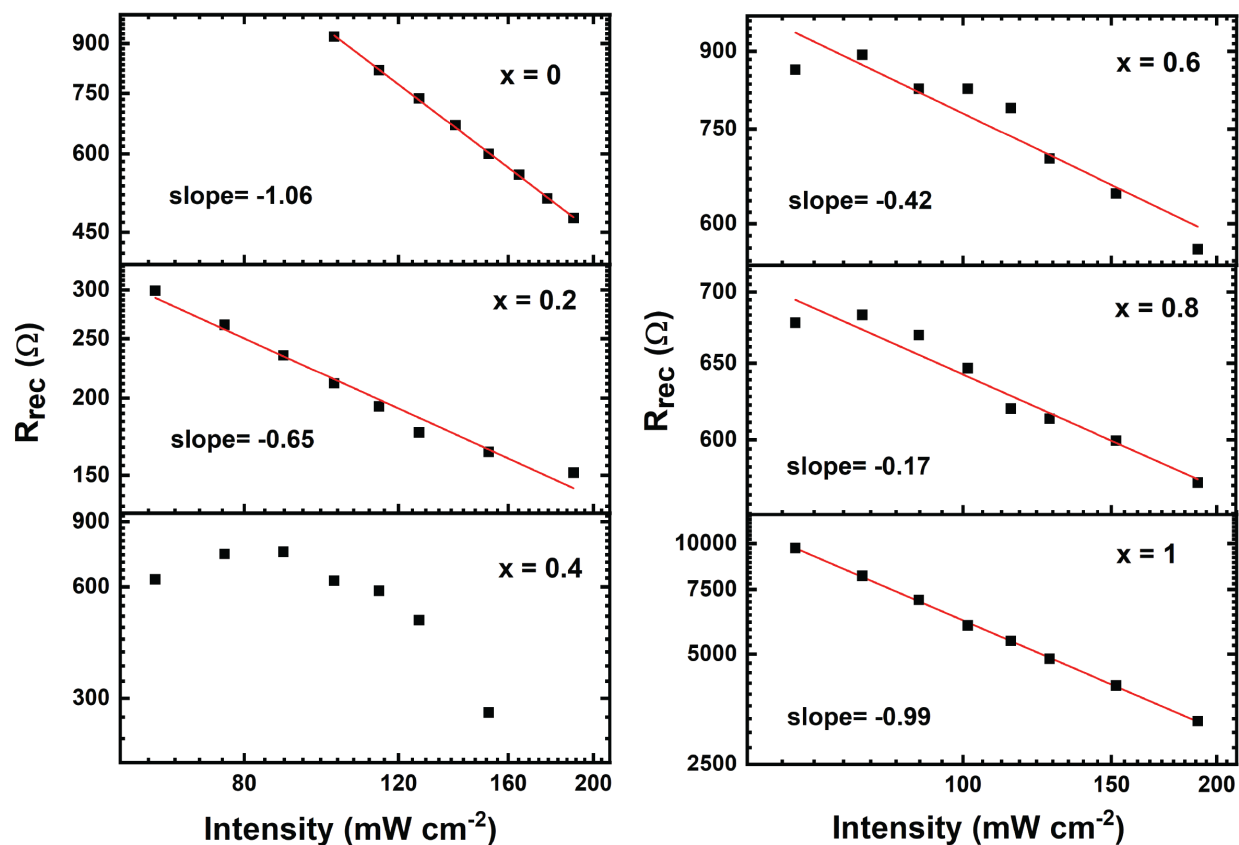
**Figure 2.** Accumulation capacitance of different  $\text{MAPb(I}_{1-x}\text{Br}_x)_3$  compositions extracted from the low-frequency ( $< 100$  Hz). Capacitance per unit length as a function of the light intensity show the non-proportional dependence with light intensity.



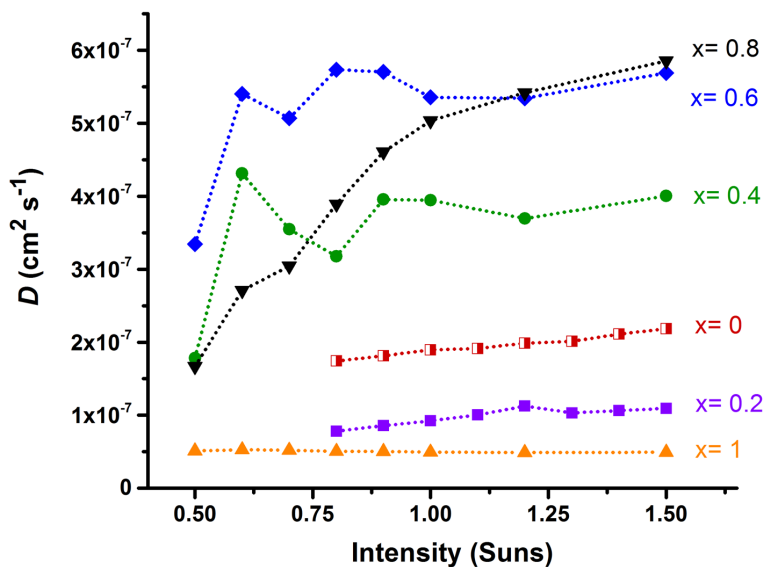
**Figure 3.** Capacitance spectra measured in short-circuit conditions for different compositions of  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{1-x}\text{Br}_x)_3$  under various applied biases.



**Figure 4.** The plot of accumulated capacitance as a function of applied bias in Br<sup>-</sup> containing MAPb(I<sub>1-x</sub>Br<sub>x</sub>)<sub>3</sub> compositions.



**Figure 5.** The change in recombination resistance ( $R_{\text{rec}}$ ) as a function of light intensity for  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{1-x}\text{Br}_x)_3$  compositions.



**Figure 6.** Diffusion coefficient ( $D$ ) for different compositions of  $\text{MAPb}(\text{I}_{1-x}\text{Br}_x)_3$  were plotted against light intensity.

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