Second Act

Public Workshop on Durability Issues in PEMFC and DMFC

FCH FUEL CELLS AND HYDROGEN JOINT UNDERTAKING

Degradation behavior of PEMFC

P. Gazdzicki, J. Mitzel, A. Dreizler, M. Schulze, K.A. Friedrich

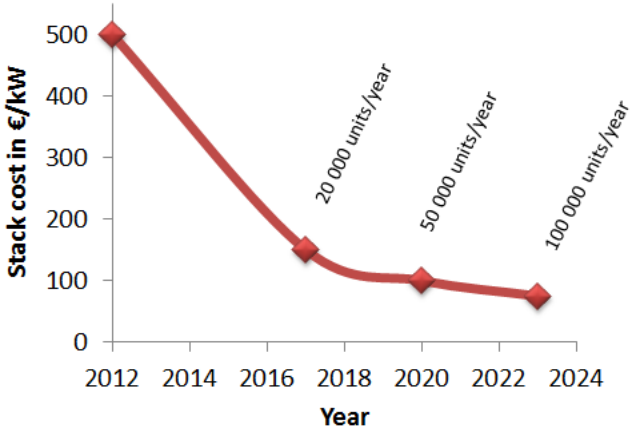
German Aerospace Center (DLR), Institute of Engineering Thermodynamics,
Pfaffenwaldring 38-40, 70569 Stuttgart, Germany

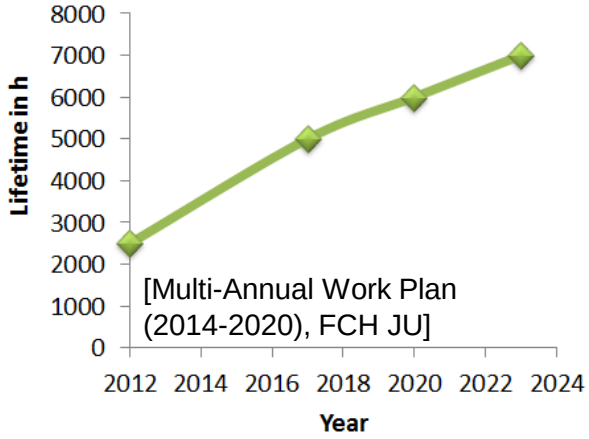
DLR

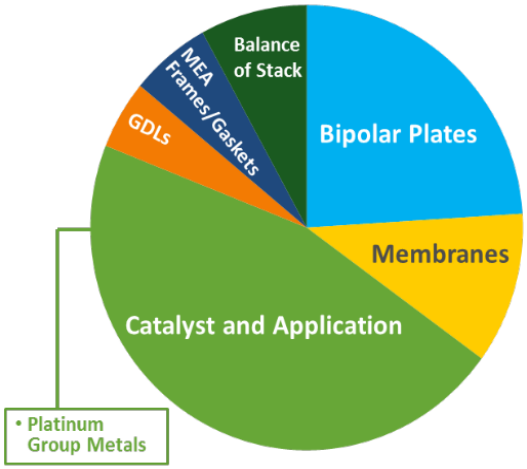
Contents

Requirements for PEMFC development

- Reduction of manufacturing cost at increased durability in order to compete with conventional technologies







[U.S. DOE 2015 Annual Merit Review]

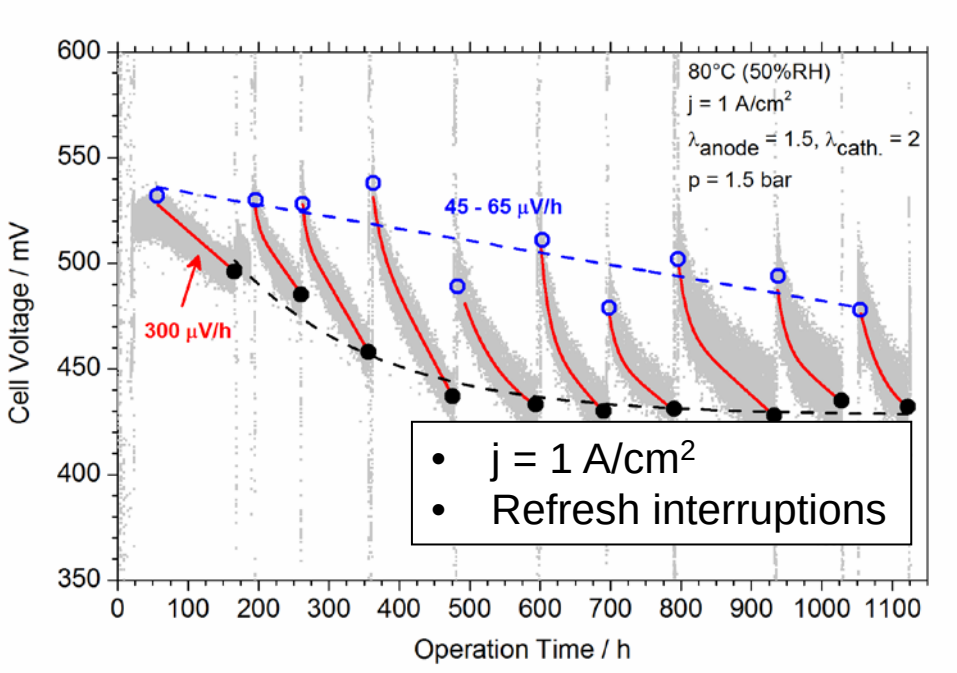
- Most promising regarding cost reduction: catalyst layer (45 % of stack cost)
  - **Low loadings**
  - Alternative catalysts

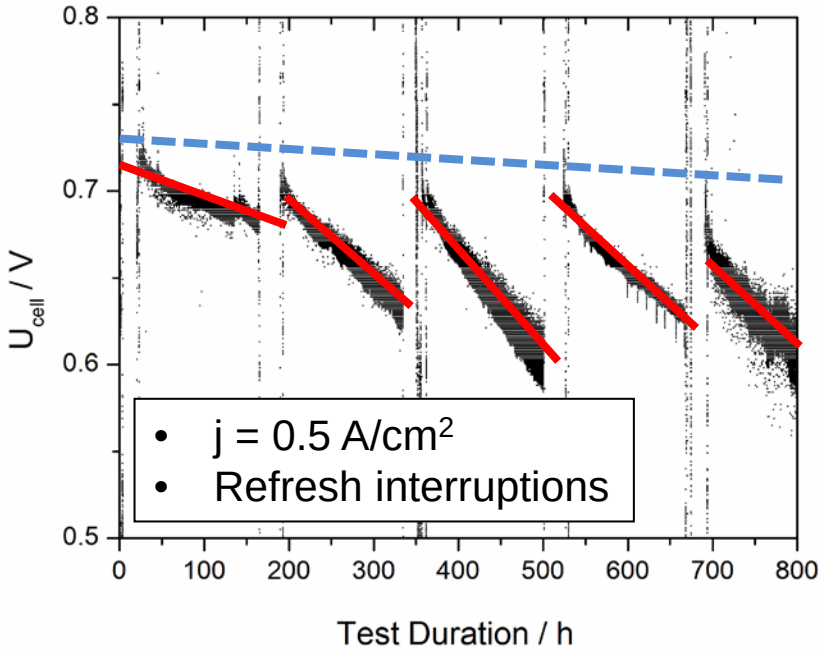
Motivation

Performance targets clearly defined and well verifiable, BUT

determination of **degradation rates** is not well defined.
➔How to determine if **durability goals** are achieved?

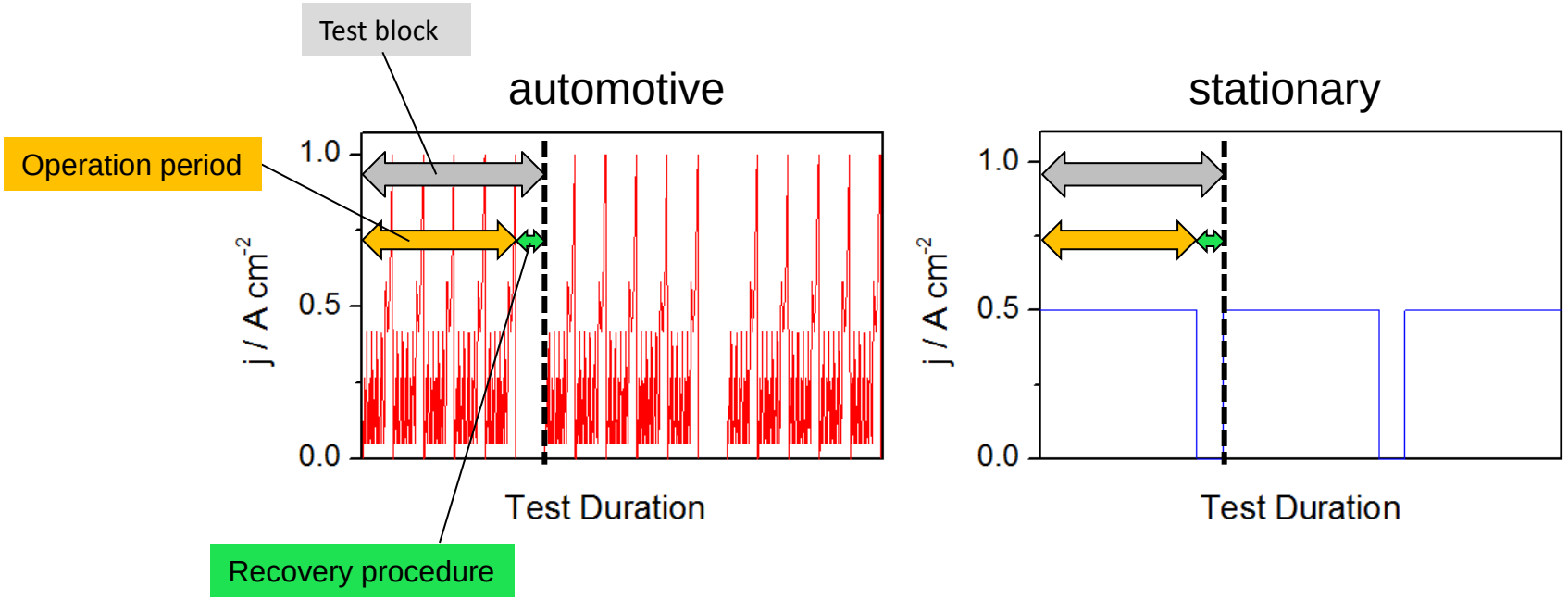
Discrimination between **reversible** and **irreversible** degradation needed





Evaluation of irreversible degradation

Durability tests consist of several test blocks of an **operation period** and a **recovery procedure**



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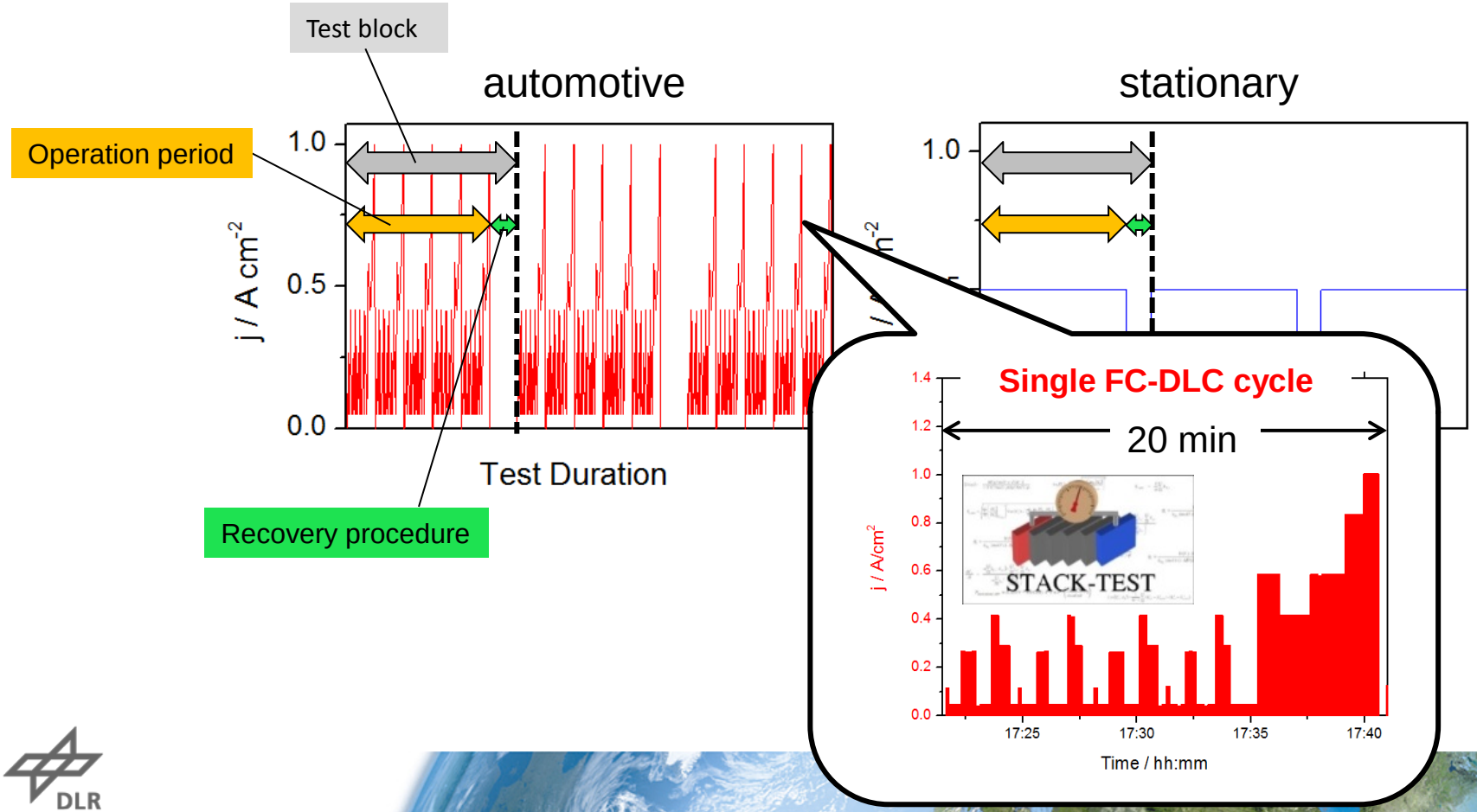
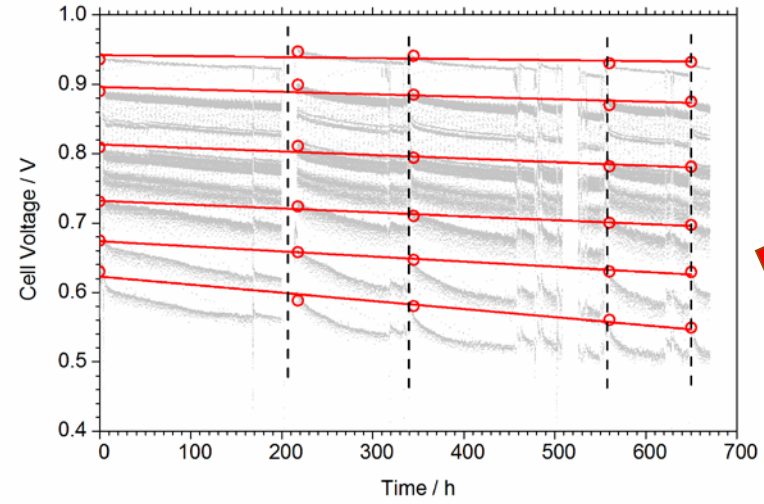
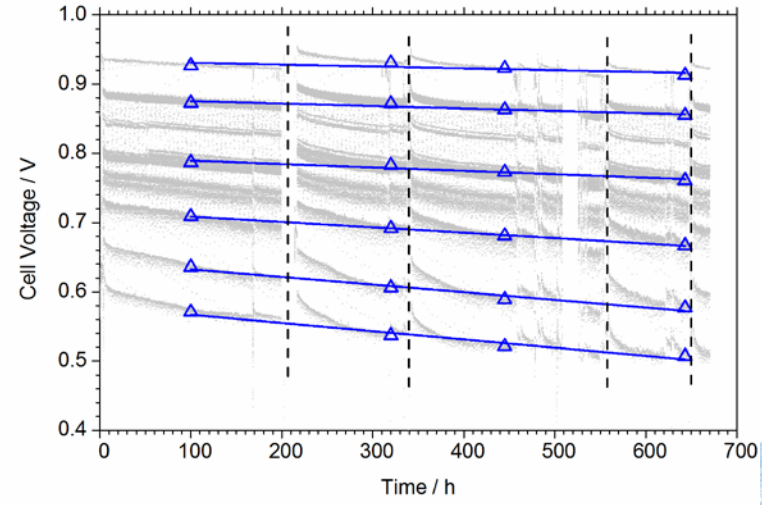
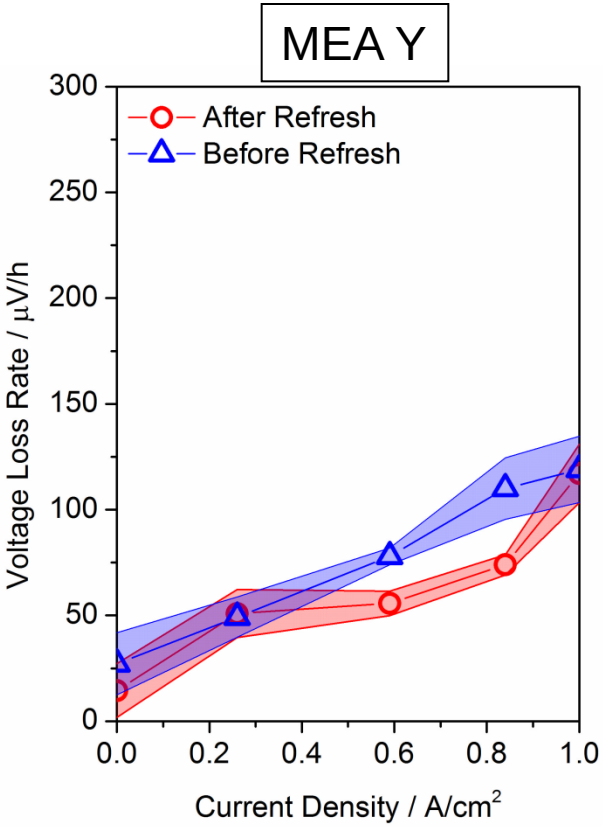


Evaluation of irreversible degradation

Use voltage values before or after refresh?







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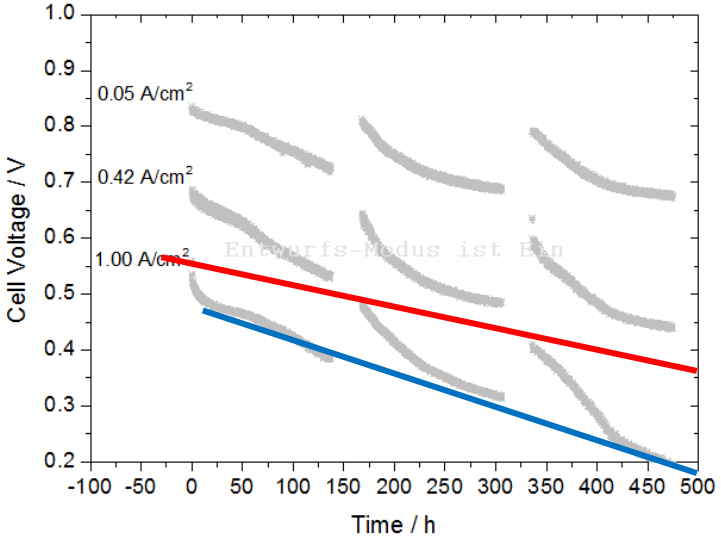

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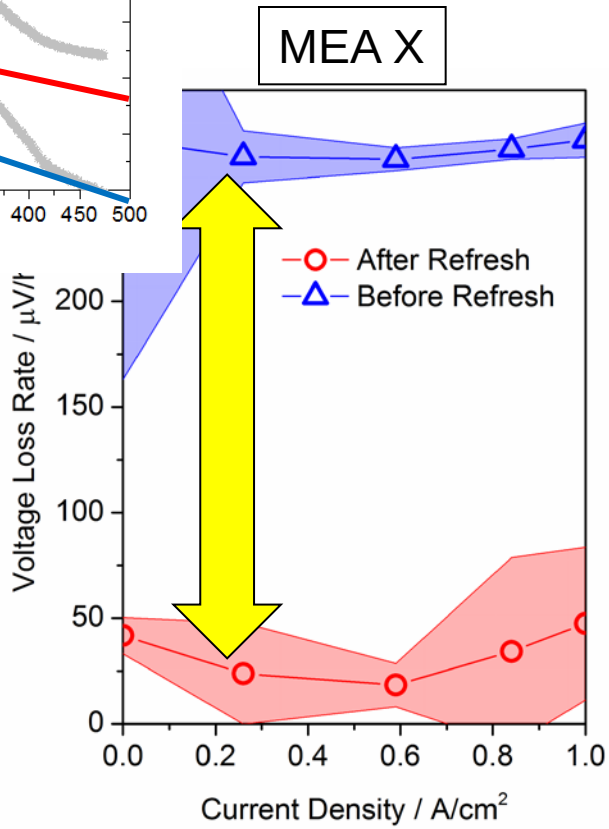
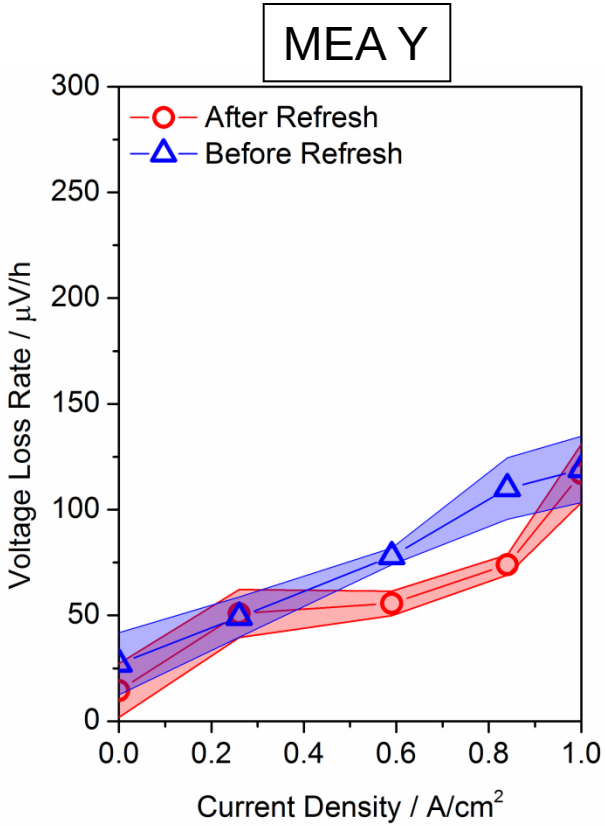


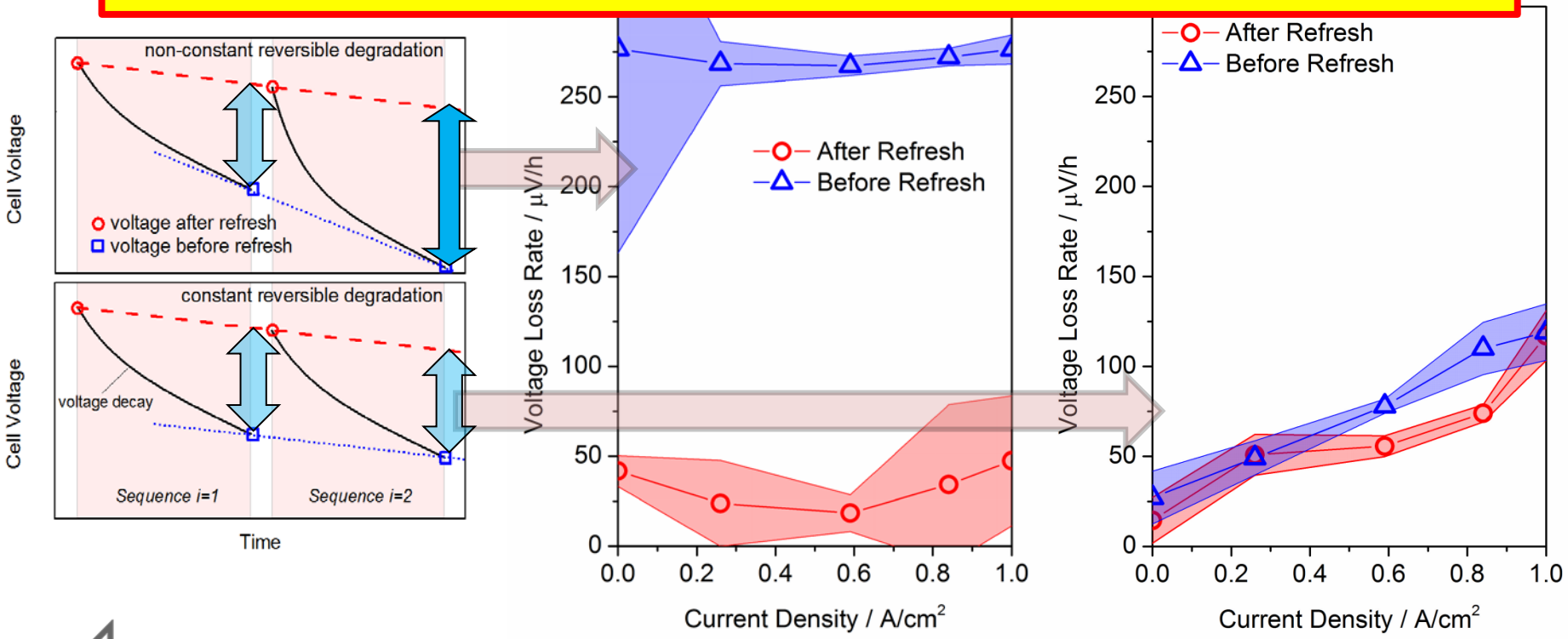


Evaluation of irreversible degradation

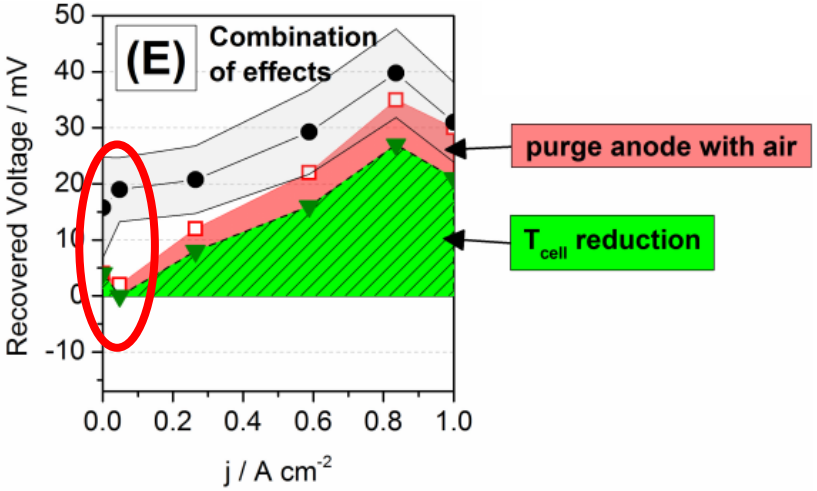
Constant and non-constant reversible degradation

➔ decay rate(...): combination or **reversible** an **irreversible** degradation

➔ decay rate(---): **irreversible** degradation



Recovery of reversible degradation



Recovery test	Intention	Recovered voltage @ 0.2 A cm^{-2}	Recovered voltage @ 0.8 A cm^{-2}
Purging anode with dry H_2	Remove water from anode	-28 %	-20 %
Purging cathode with dry air	Remove water from cathode	19 %	-10 %
Reduction of cell temperature	Increase humidity and decrease mechanical membrane stress	38 %	68 %
OCV-Test	Drying of MEA and increase of cathode potential	0 %	0 %
Purging anode with air	Increase anode potential to remove contaminants	19 %	20 %
Stopping gas flow	Increase anode potential to remove contaminants	0 %	10 %
Purging cathode with N_2	Decrease cathode potential to reduce platinum oxide	14 %	21 %

- Water management plays major role in recovery
- Reason for recovery at low loads unclear

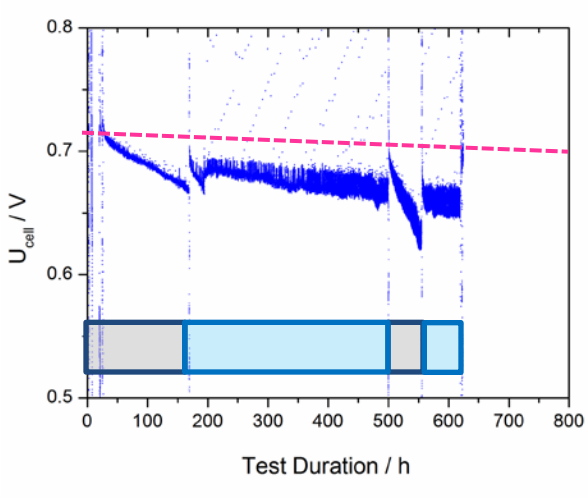
Gazdzicki et al. (2016) J. Power Sources, doi: 10.1016/j.jpowsour.2016.07.049

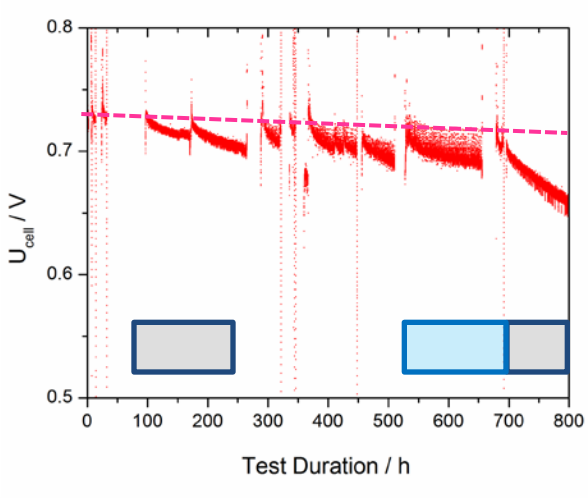
Reversible degradation

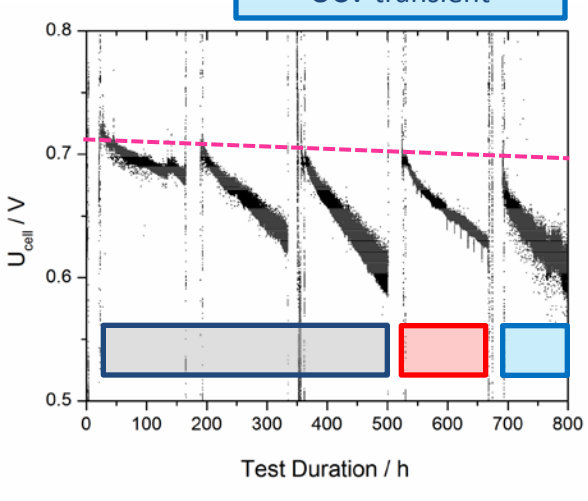
const. load 80%RH

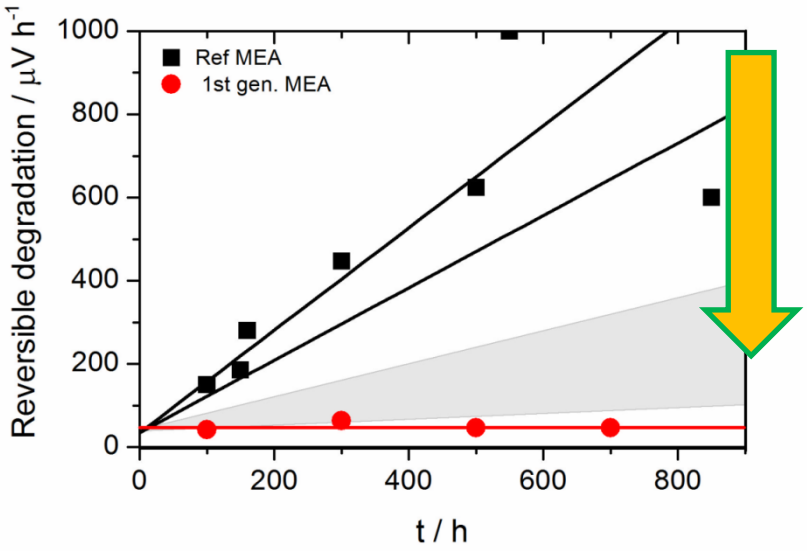
const. load 50%RH

OCV transient



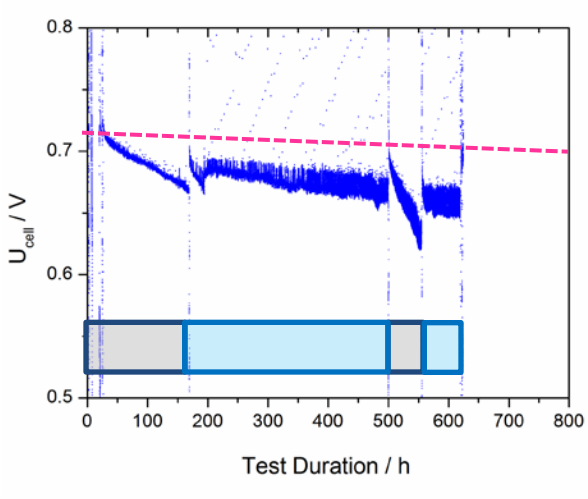




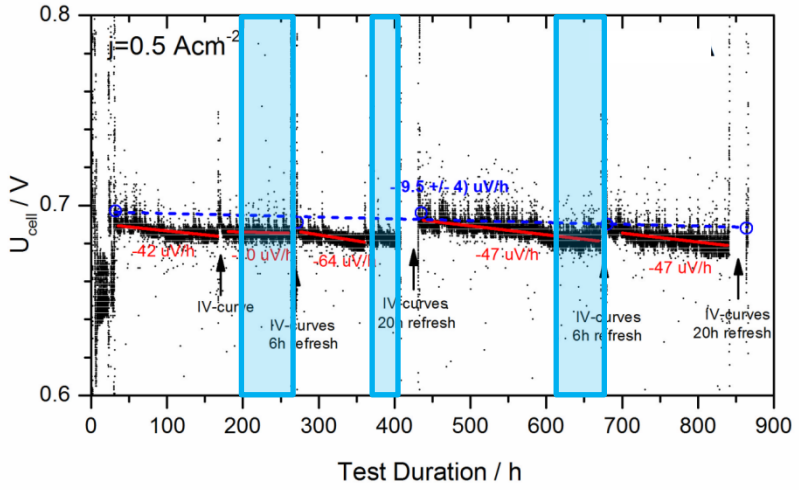


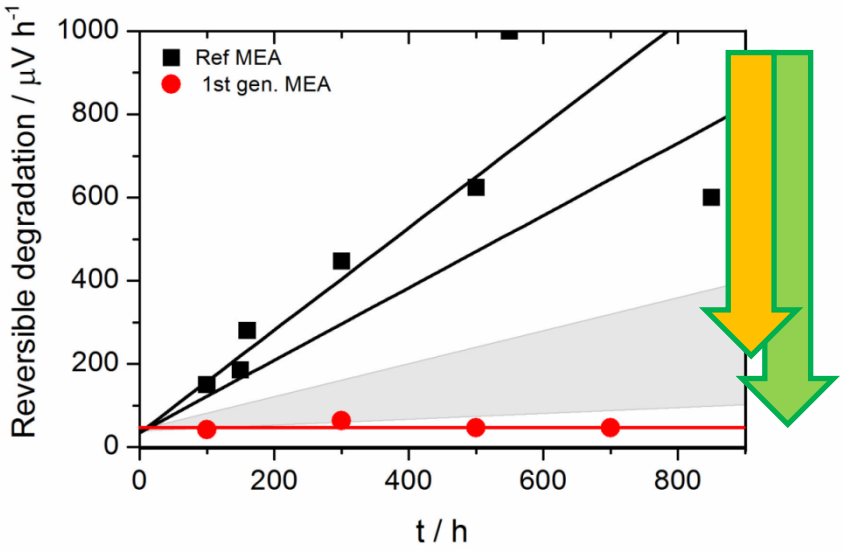
- Reversible degradation very sensitive to operation conditions
  ➔ mitigation by e.g. OCV transient

Reversible degradation



Improved MEA components

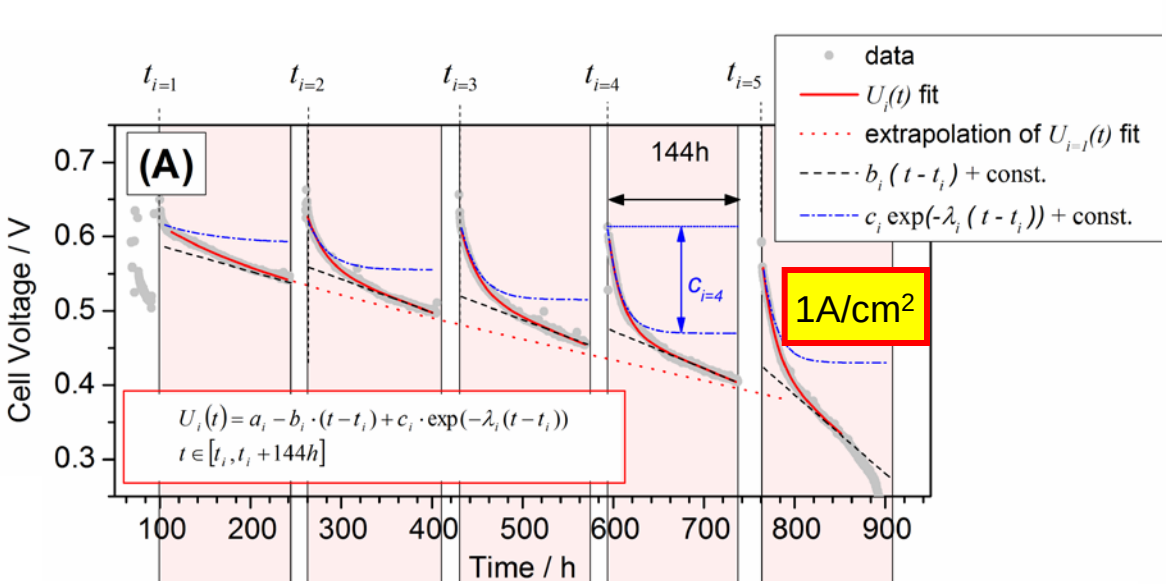




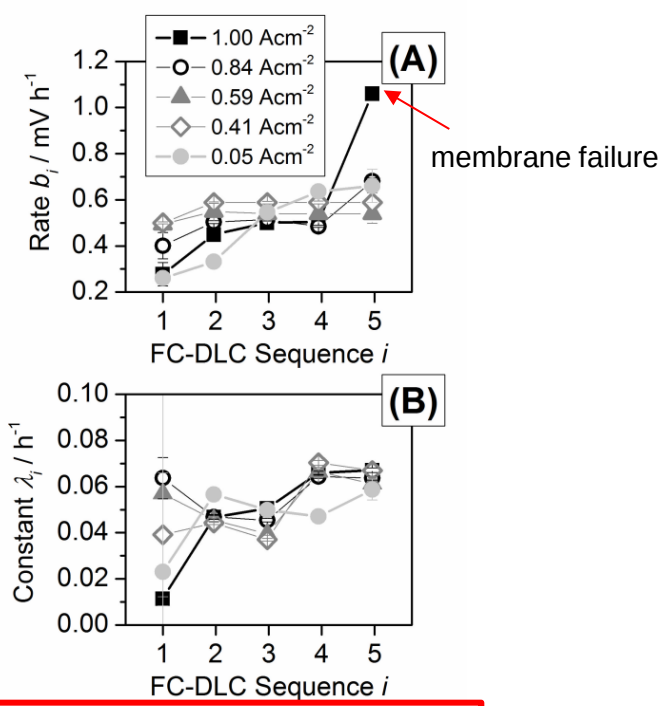
- Reversible degradation very sensitive to operation conditions
  ➔ mitigation by e.g. OCV transient
- Mitigation by MEA modification

Evaluation of reversible degradation

Mathematical description of reversible degradation

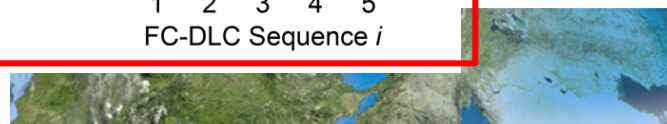


1A/cm²



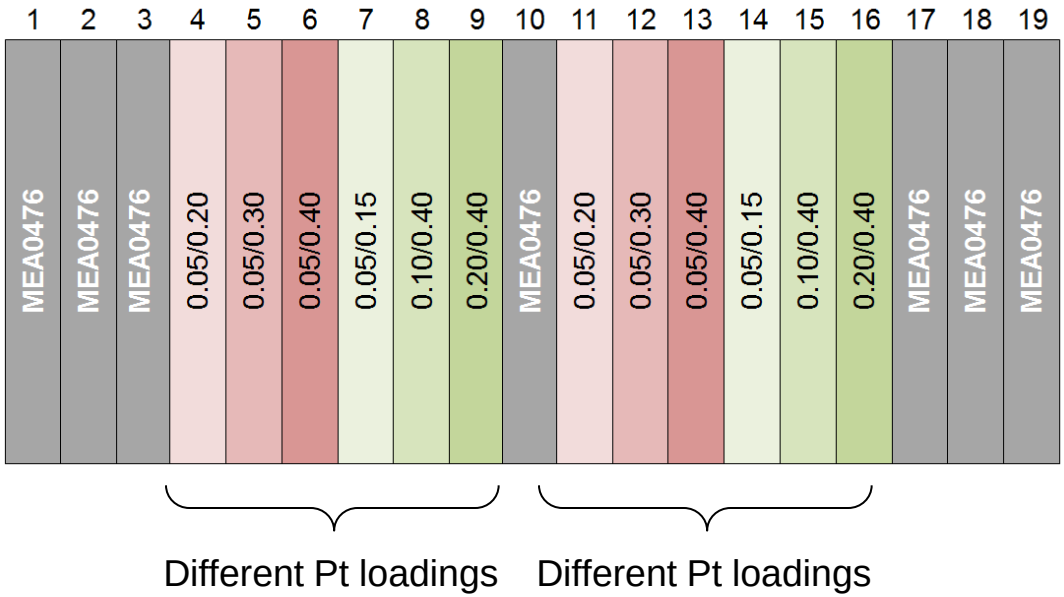
membrane failure

Amplitude of exp. part responsible for increase of reversible degradation with operation time

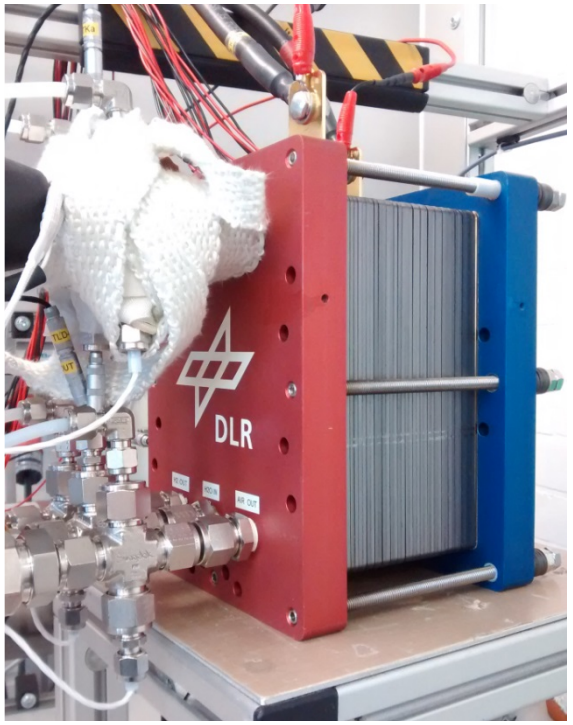


Pt-Loading Rainbow Stack Study

Pt-loadings at anode/cathode in mg_{Pt}/cm^2

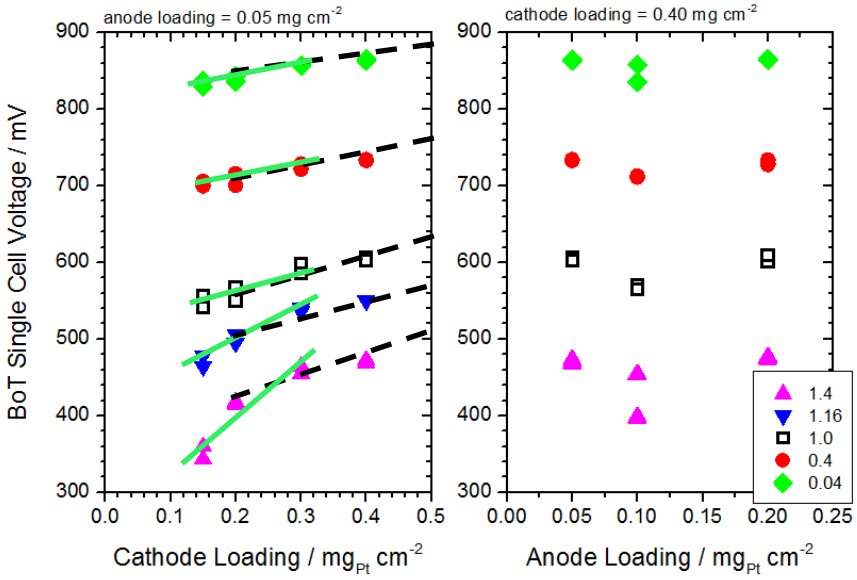


DLR Rainbow-Stack



Performance Vs Pt-loading

BoT Voltages versus Loading



Const. anode loading

Const. cathode loading

- Clear dependence of Cell Voltage on cathode Pt loading
- No dependence of Cell Voltage on anode Pt loading

Performance Vs Pt-loading

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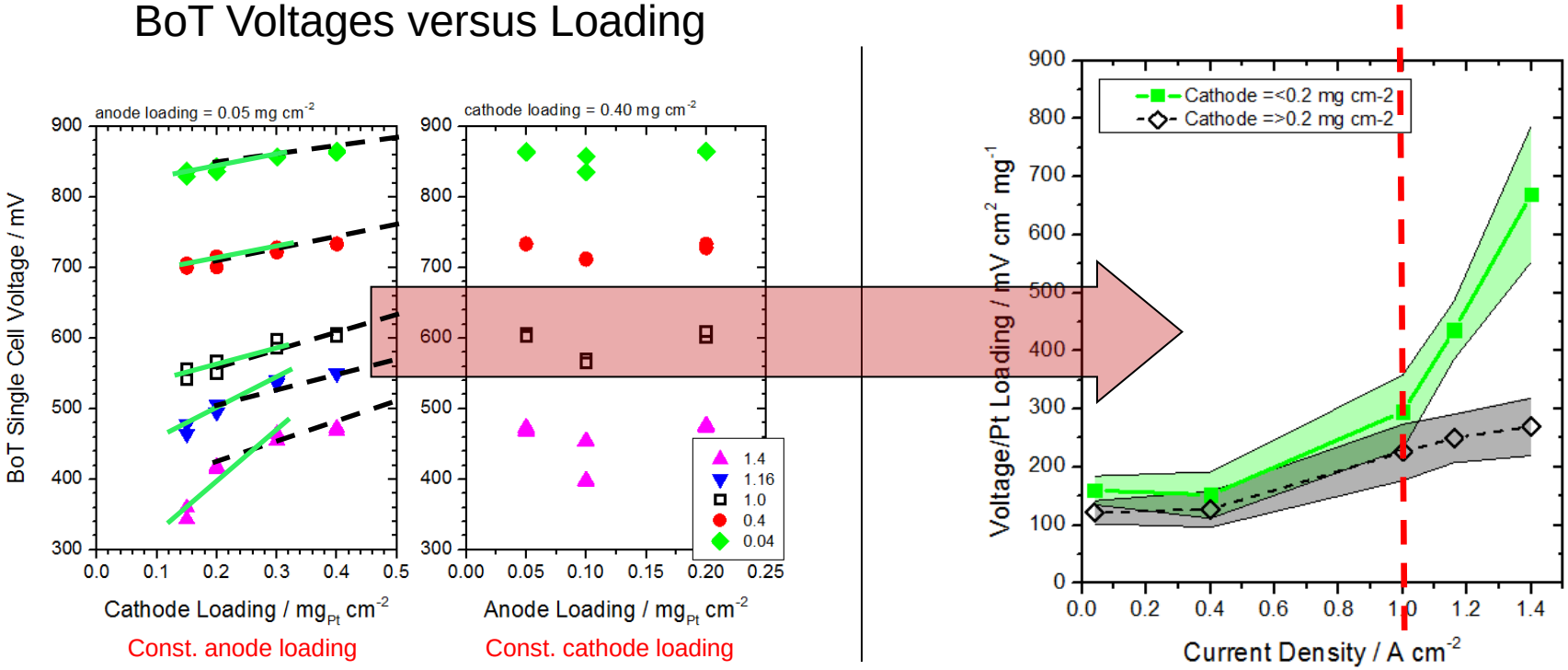

- Clear dependence of Cell Voltage on cathode Pt loading
- No dependence of Cell Voltage on anode Pt loading
- Onset of mass transport issues observed at cathode loading <=0.2 mg/cm2 and j>1 A/cm2

Performance Vs Pt-loading

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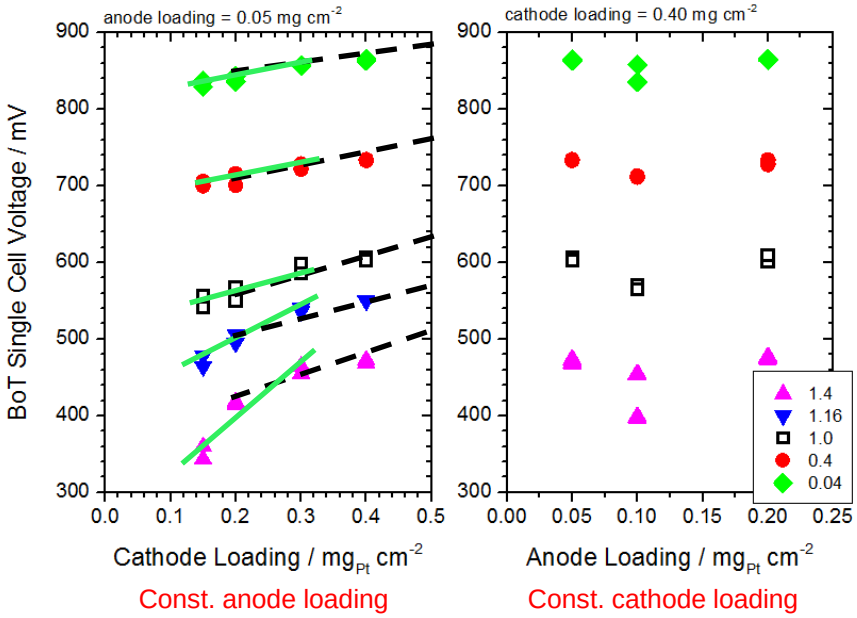
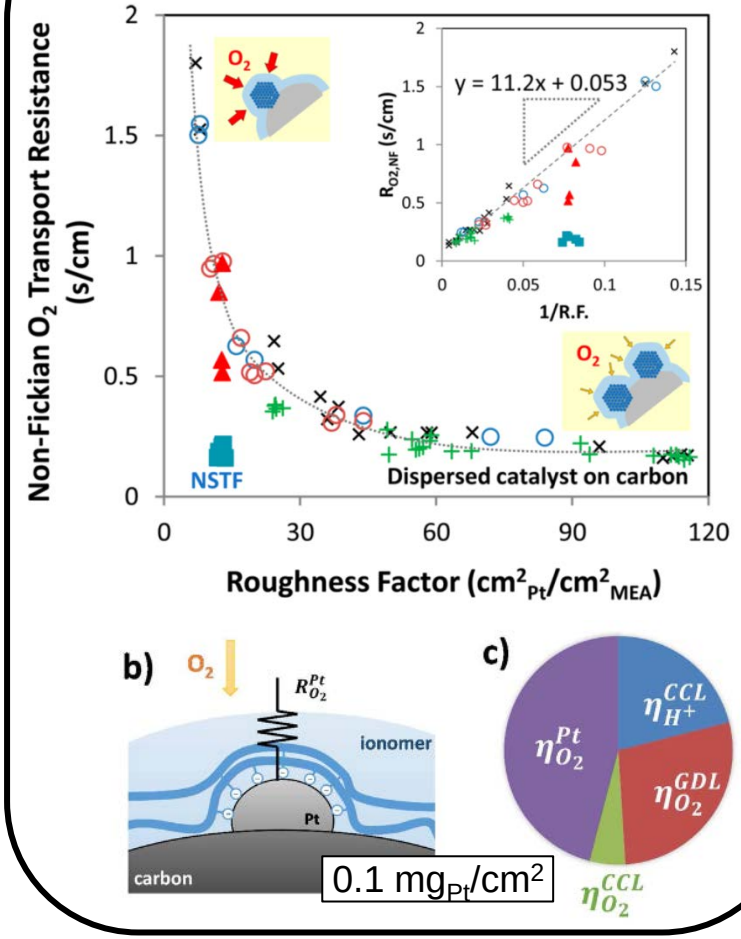


Const. anode loading

Const. cathode loading

SOURCE: A. Kongkand and M.F. Mathias, J. Phys. Chem. Lett. (2016), 7, 1127



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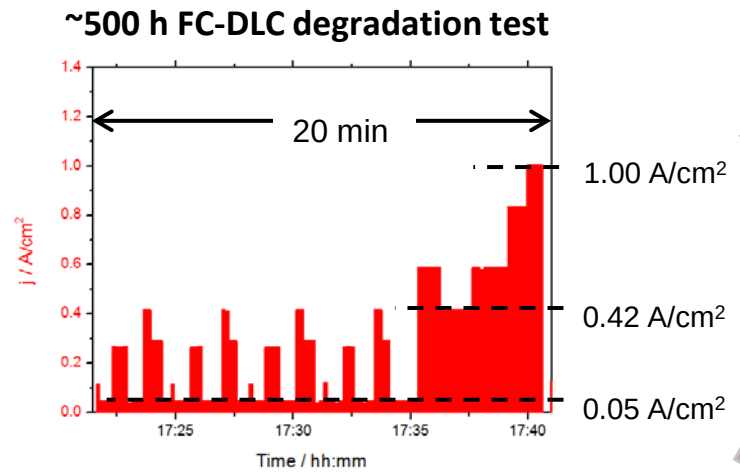
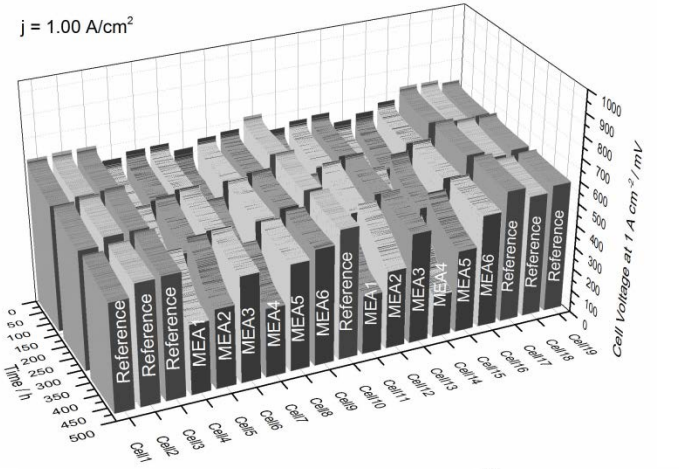
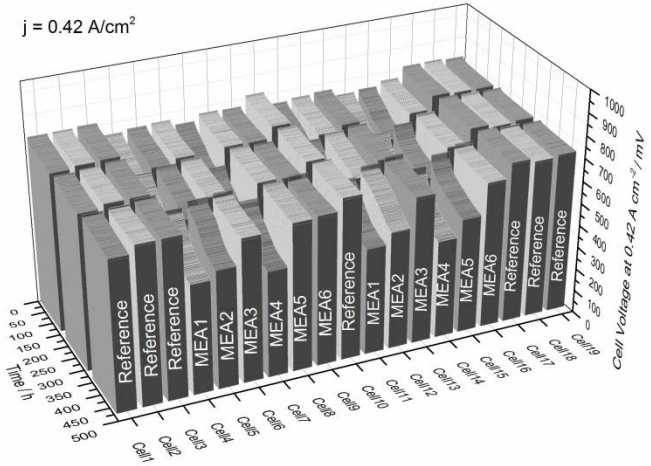
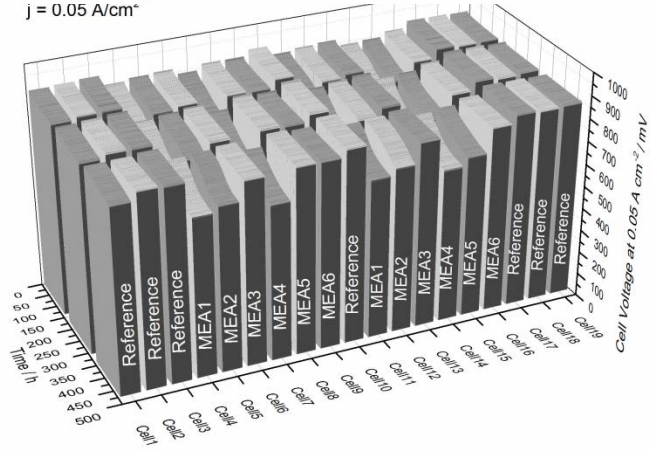
Degradation Vs Pt-loading

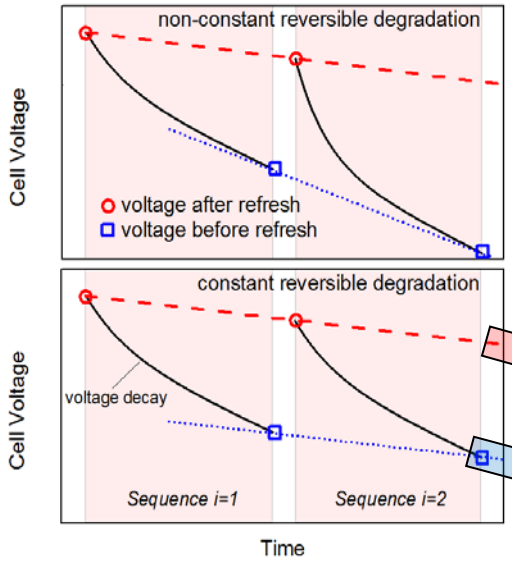


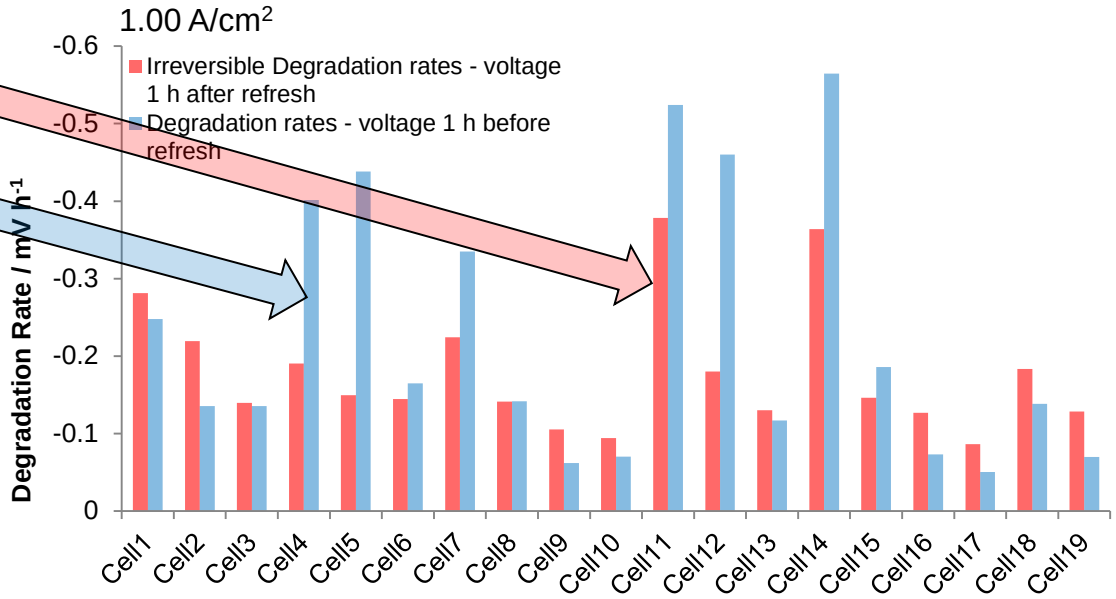






Degradation Vs Pt-loading: evaluation of rev. degradation





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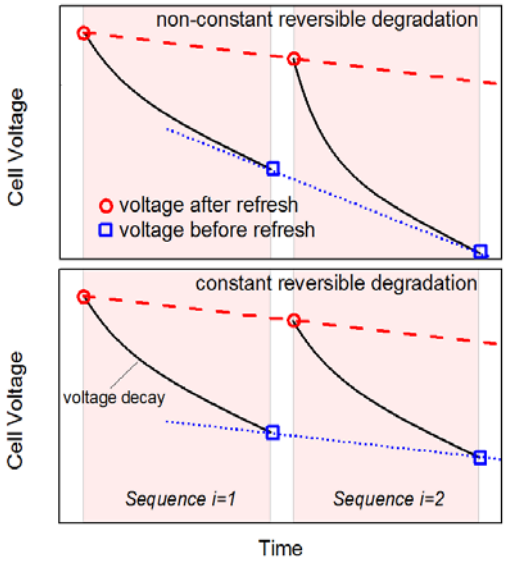

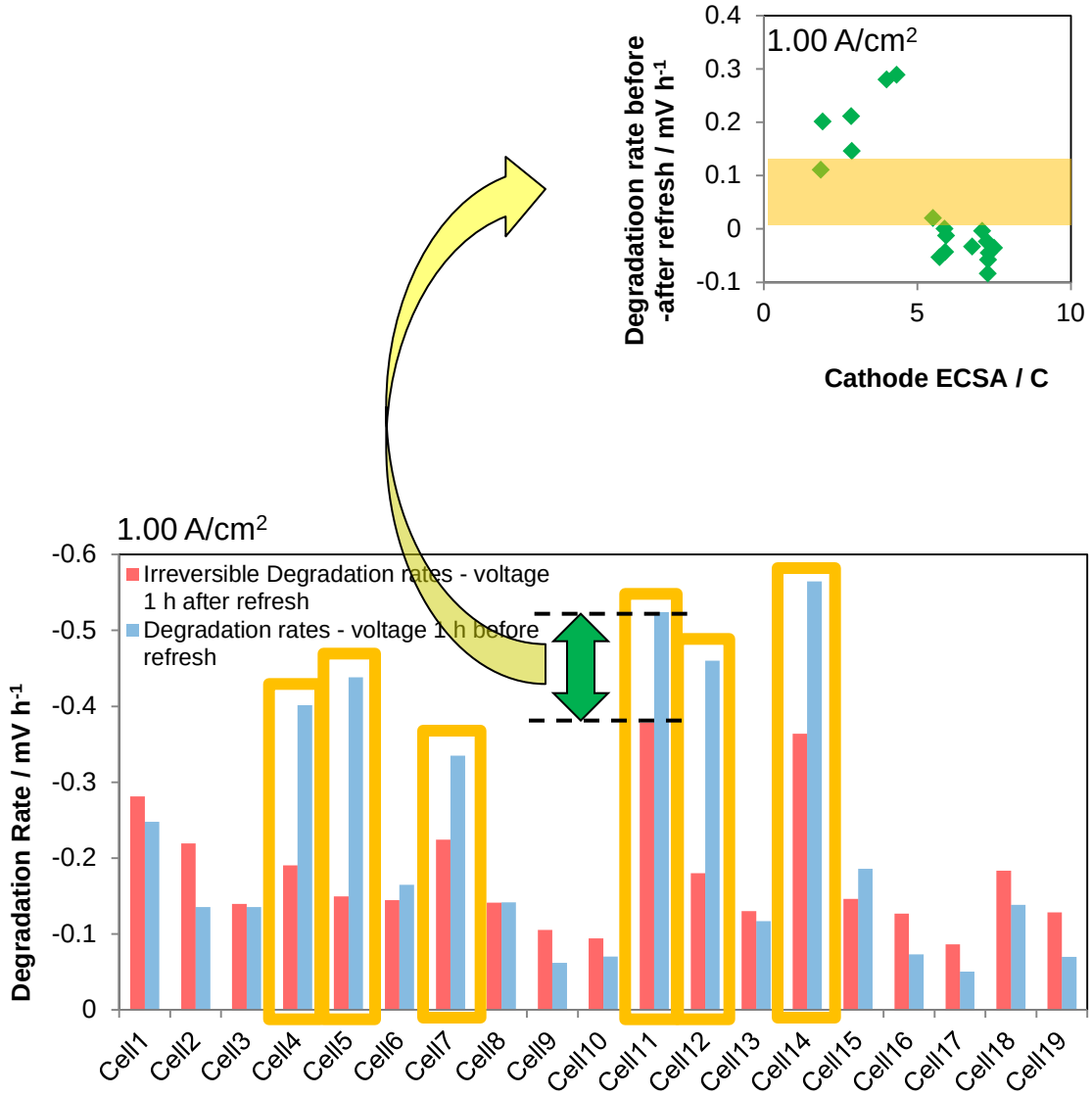

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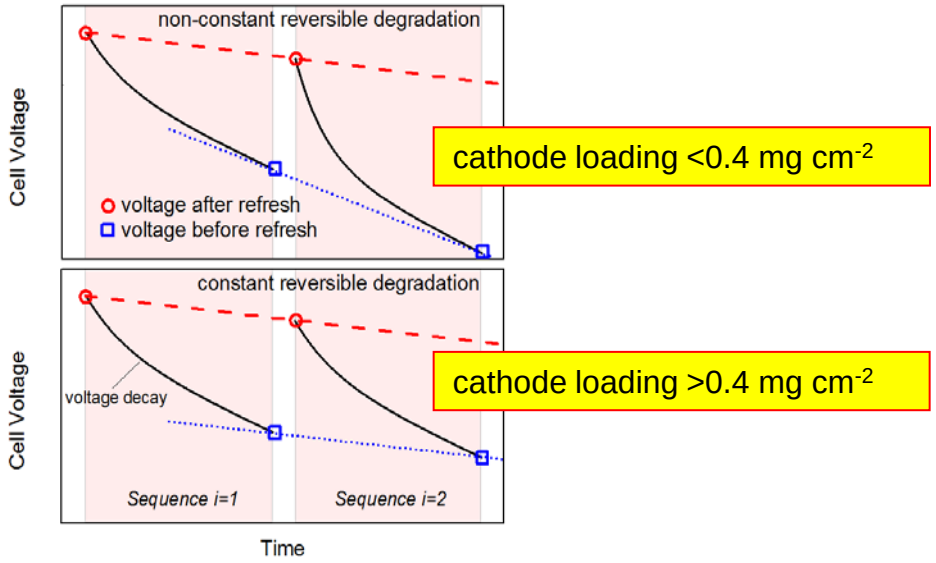
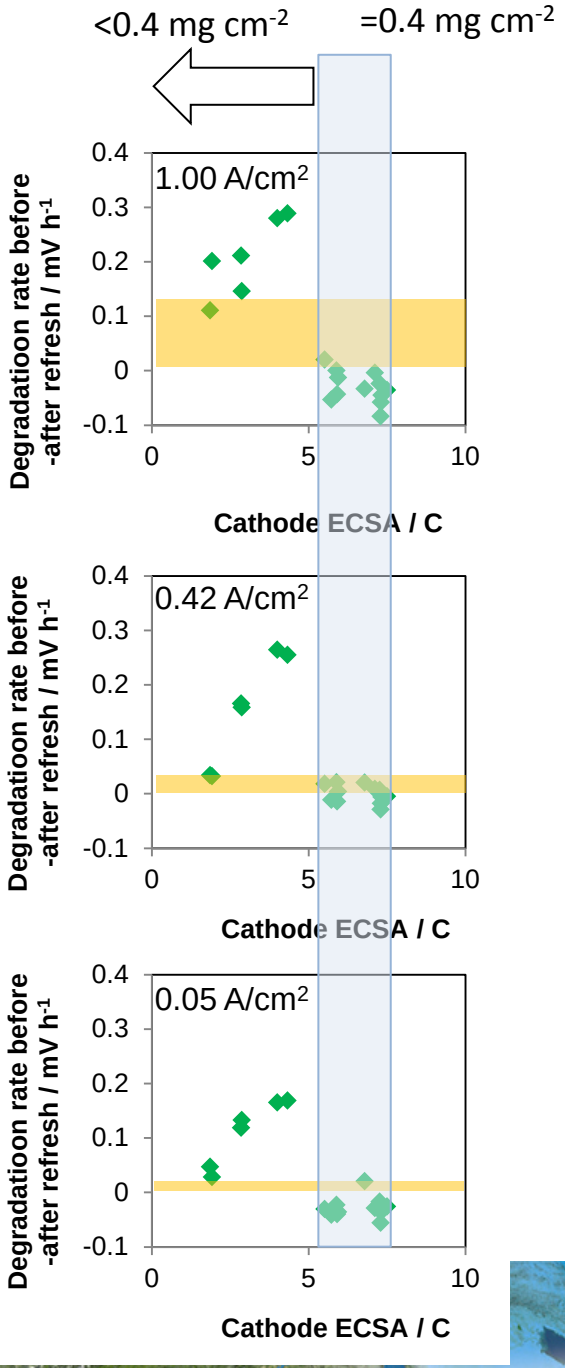
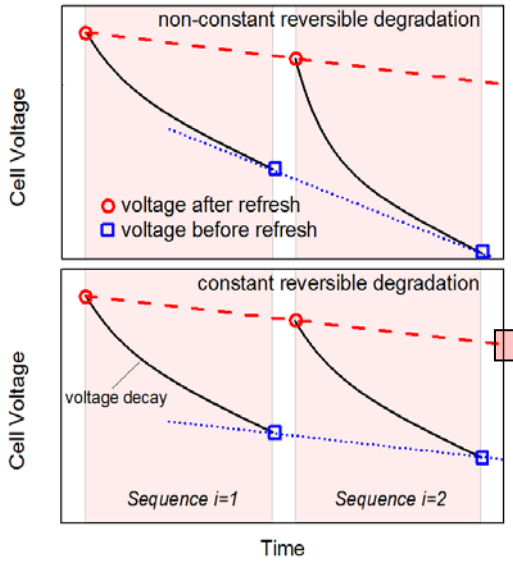




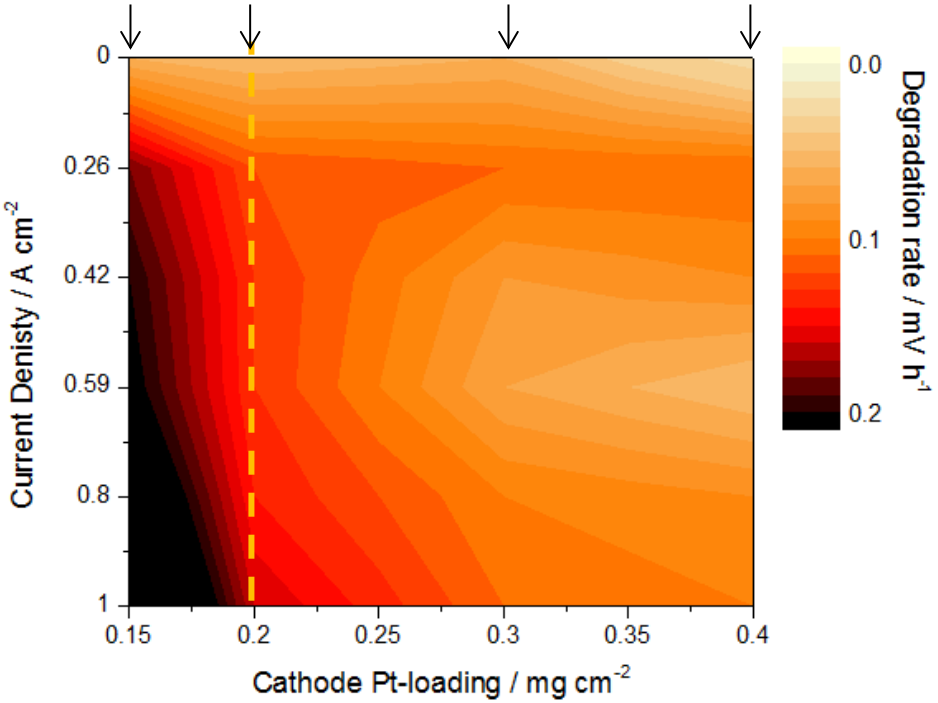
- MEAs with cathode loading <0.4 mg cm^{-2} exhibit non-constant reversible degradation
- Effect strongest at high current density

Degradation Vs Pt-loading: evaluation of irrev. degradation

Significant increase of irrev. degradation for cathode loading <0.2 mg/cm^2 and high loads

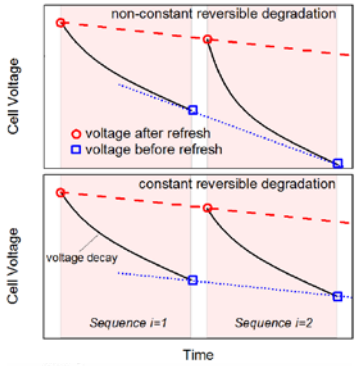


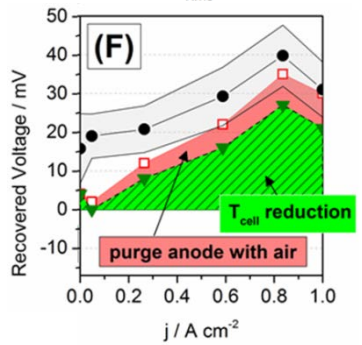
Determination of irrev. degradation (cells 4..9)

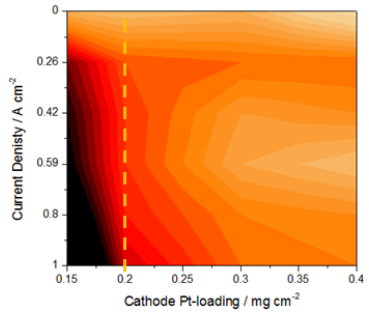


Summary

- Irreversible degradation rate: linear regression of voltage values after refresh
- Voltage recovery: water management, removal of anodic contaminants
- Degradation Vs Pt-loading:
  - accelerated rev. degradation for cathode loadings <0.4 mg cm^{-2}
  - increased irrev. degradation for cathode loading <0.2 mg cm^{-2}







Acknowledgements

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