Nafion-Carbon Quantum dots (Nafion-CQDs) composite membrane for vanadium redox flow battery systems

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Vanadium redox flow battery (VRFB), a type of energy storage system (ESS), can be designed easily and is excellent in terms of lifespan and stability. VRFB membrane is considered high hydrogen ion conductivity, low vanadium ion permeability and high stability in acidic solutions. Fluorine-based Nafion membrane, manufactured by Dupont, has excellent stability in acidic solutions, but lifespan is reduced due to high vanadium ion permeation. In order to improve above disadvantage, this study utilized a Nafion-CQDs composite membrane prepared by carbon quantum dots (CQDs) with an eco-friendly hydrothermal synthesis method. Carbon quantum dots composed of nano-sized particles have abundant functional groups, which not only enhances hydrogen ion conduction, but also prevents penetration of vanadium ions as a barrier to maintain a long lifespan. Therefore, Nafion-CQDs membrane was significantly improved from 72% (present Nafion membrane) to 86%.