

## Supplementary Materials for **Design of flexible polyphenylene proton-conducting membrane for next-generation fuel cells**

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## Supplementary Figures

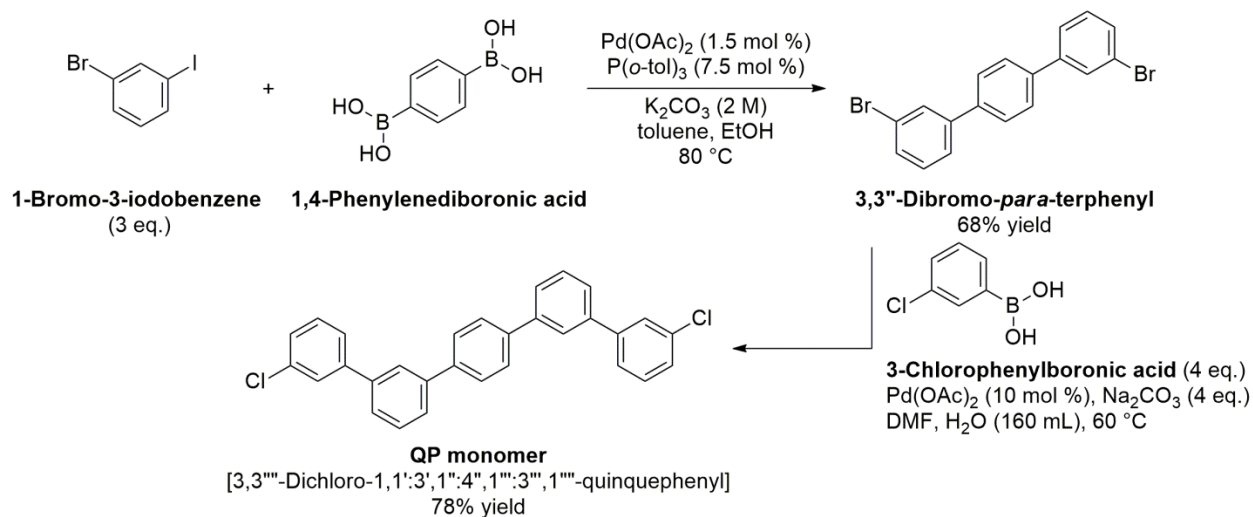


fig. S1. Synthesis of QP monomer.

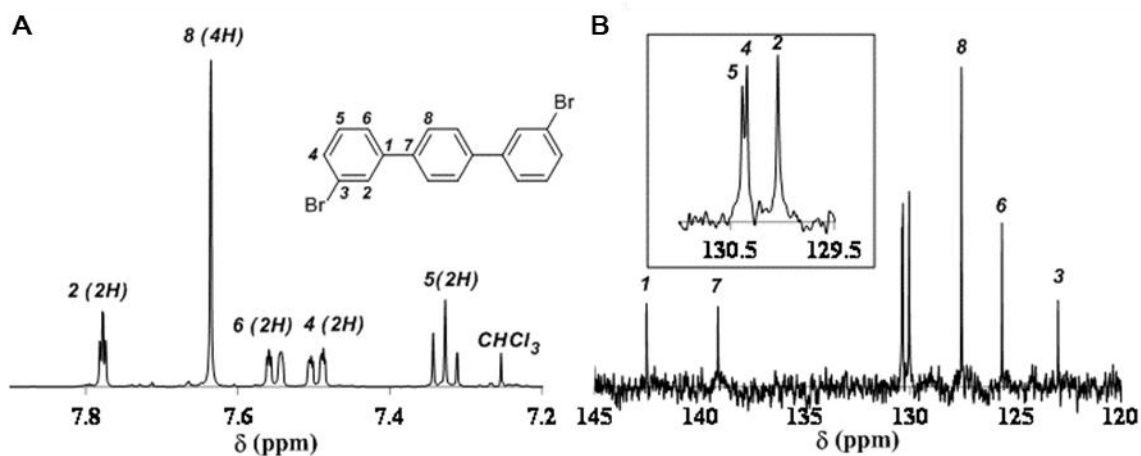
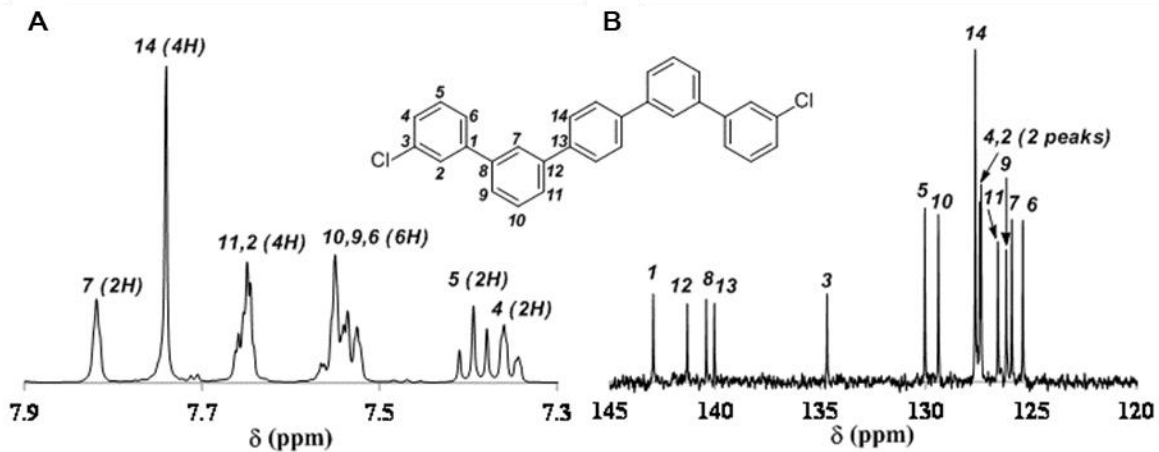
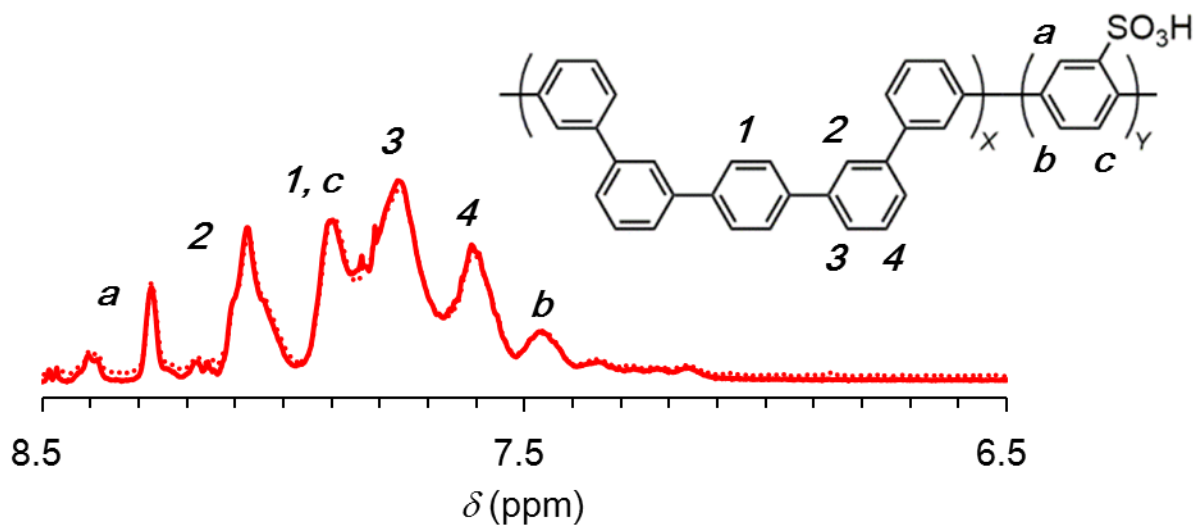


fig. S2. NMR assignment of 3,3''-dibromo-*para*-terphenyl. (A)  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (500 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) spectrum;  $\delta$  7.33 (dd,  $J = 8.0, 8.0$  Hz, 2H), 7.48–7.51 (m, 2H), 7.54–7.57 (m, 2H), 7.64 (s, 4H), 7.78 (m, 2H). (B)  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (125 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ ) spectrum;  $\delta$  123.0, 125.6, 127.6, 130.0, 130.3, 139.1, 142.5.

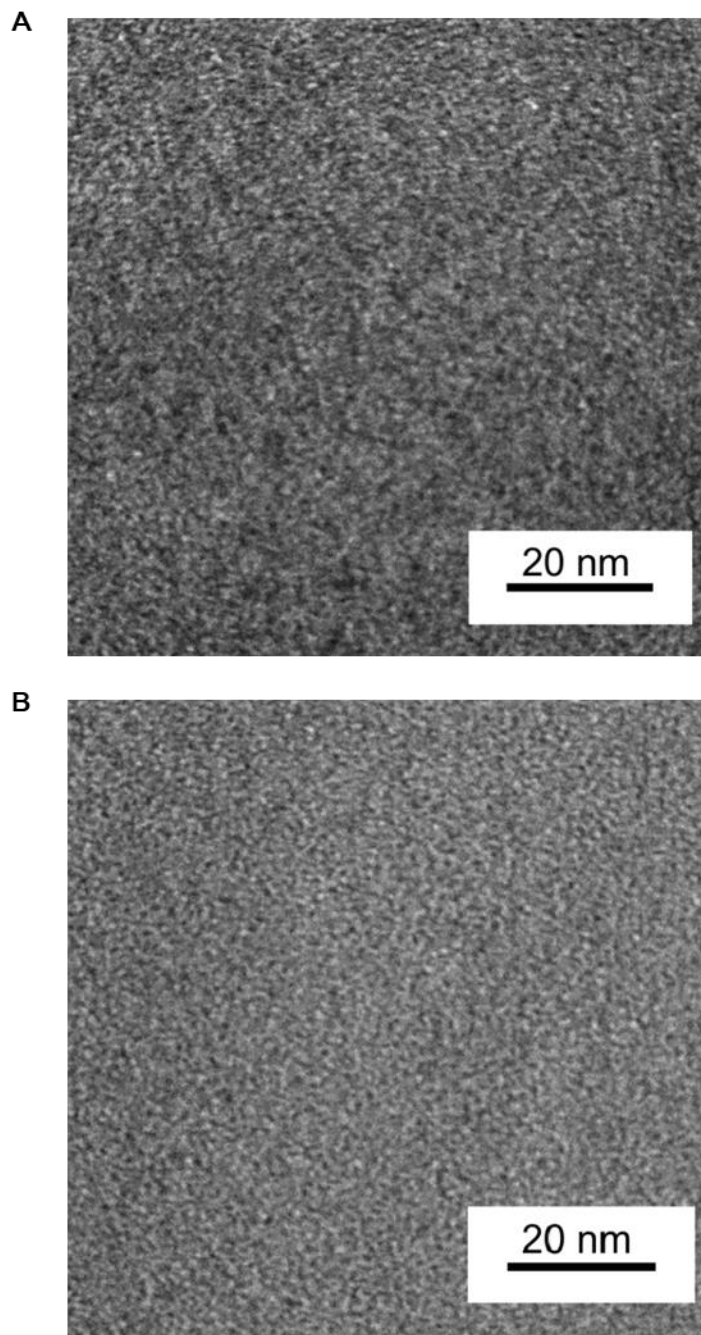


**fig. S3. NMR assignment of QP monomer.** (A) <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) spectrum; δ 7.36–7.37 (m, 2H), 7.41 (dd, *J* = 7.8, 7.8 Hz, 2H), 7.52–7.59 (m, 6H), 7.65–7.68 (m, 4H), 7.75 (s, 4H), 7.83 (m, 2H). (B) <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) spectrum; δ 125.4, 125.9, 126.1, 126.6, 127.37, 127.44, 127.6, 129.4, 130.0, 134.7, 140.0, 140.4, 141.3, 142.9.

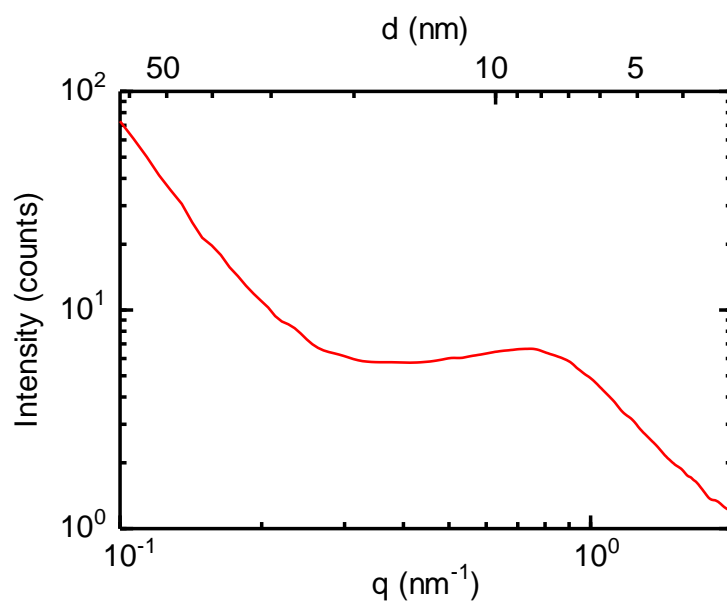


**fig. S4.** <sup>1</sup>H NMR assignment of SPP-QP (titrated IEC = 2.4 mmol g<sup>-1</sup>) copolymer.

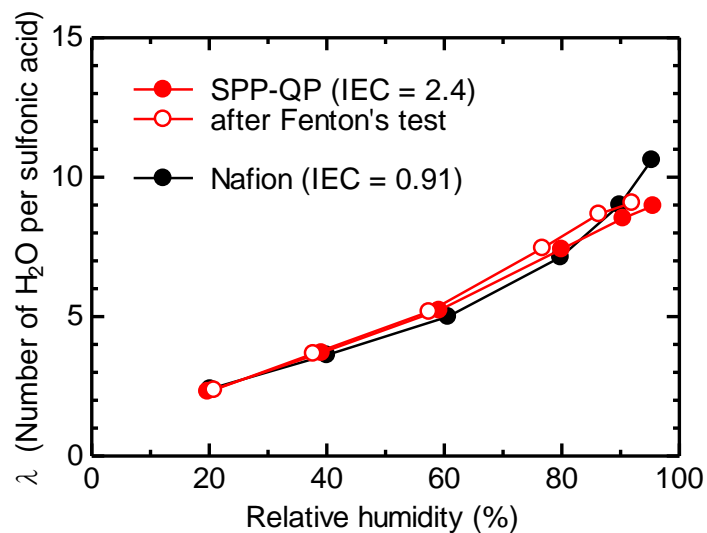
Comparison of before (**solid line**) and after (**dotted line**) the oxidative stability test in Fenton's solution (aqueous solution containing 3% H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> and 2ppm Fe<sup>2+</sup>) at 80 °C for 1 h. The <sup>1</sup>H NMR measurement was conducted at 80 °C in DMSO-*d*<sub>6</sub>.



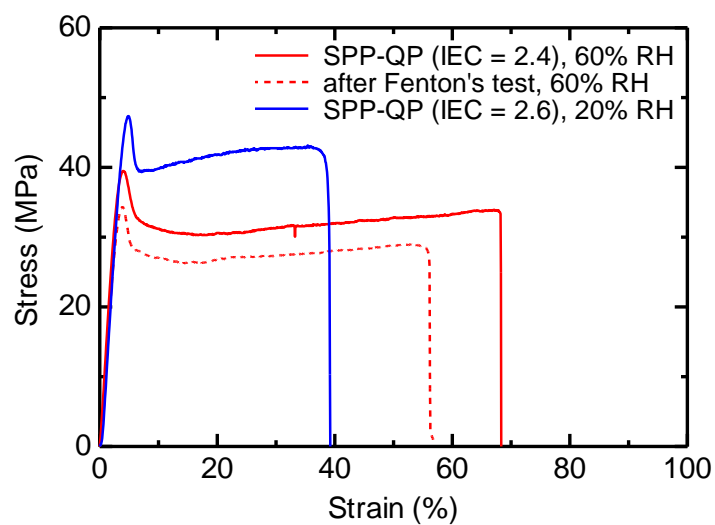
**fig. S5. Morphology of SPP-QP (titrated IEC = 2.4 mmol g<sup>-1</sup>) membrane.** TEM images of (A) before and (B) after the oxidative stability test in Fenton's solution (aqueous solution containing 3% H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> and 2ppm Fe<sup>2+</sup>) at 80 °C for 1 h. The samples were stained with lead ions (Pb<sup>2+</sup>) prior to the observation.



**fig. S6. SAXS profile.** The measurement was conducted with the SPP-QP membrane (titrated IEC = 2.7 mmol g<sup>-1</sup>) at 80 °C and 30% RH.

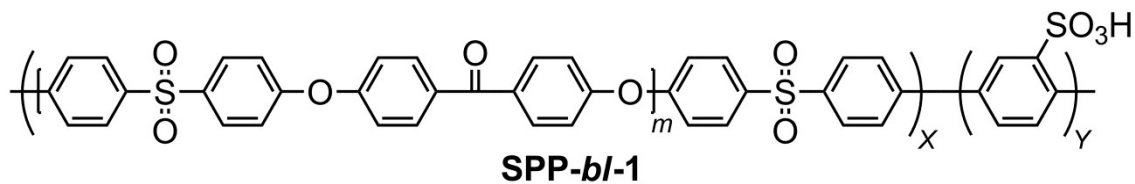


**fig. S7. Number of absorbed water molecules per sulfonic acid group ( $\lambda$ ).** The  $\lambda$  values of PEMs at 80 °C as a function of relative humidity (RH). The IEC values ( $\text{mmol g}^{-1}$ ) in parentheses were determined by acid-base titration. Fenton's test was conducted by immersing the membrane in Fenton's solution (aqueous solution containing 3%  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  and 2ppm  $\text{Fe}^{2+}$ ) at 80 °C for 1 h. The solid lines are guides for the eye.

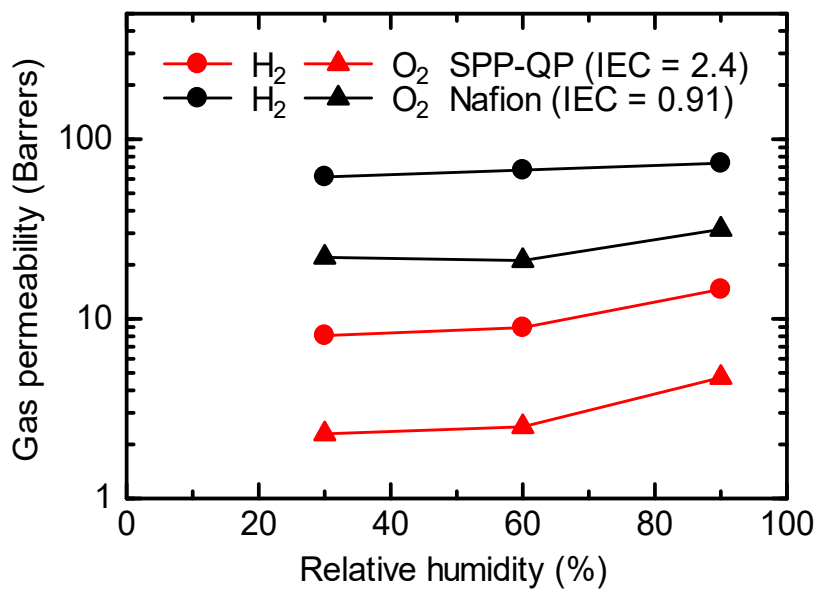


**fig. S8. Stress versus strain curves.** The measurement was conducted at 80 °C and 60% RH or 20% RH. Fenton's test was conducted by immersing the membrane in Fenton's solution (aqueous solution containing 3% H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> and 2ppm Fe<sup>2+</sup>) at 80 °C for 1 h.

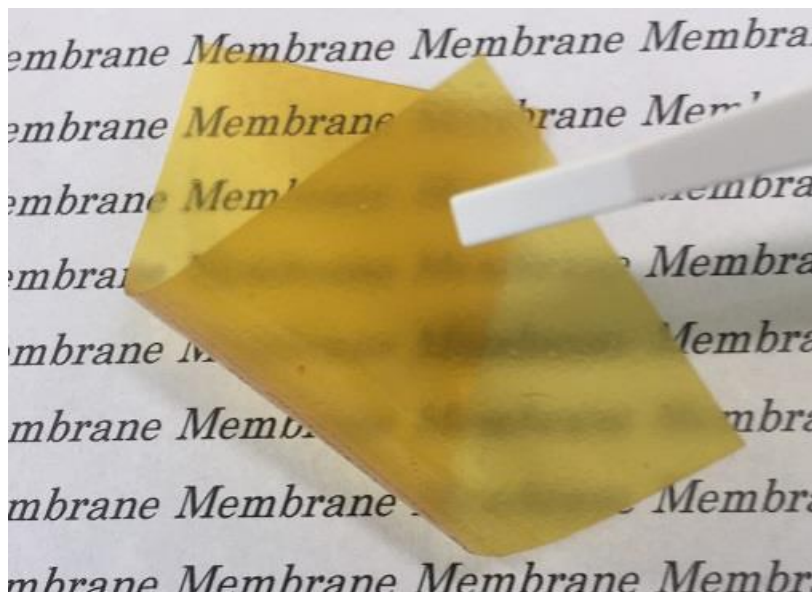




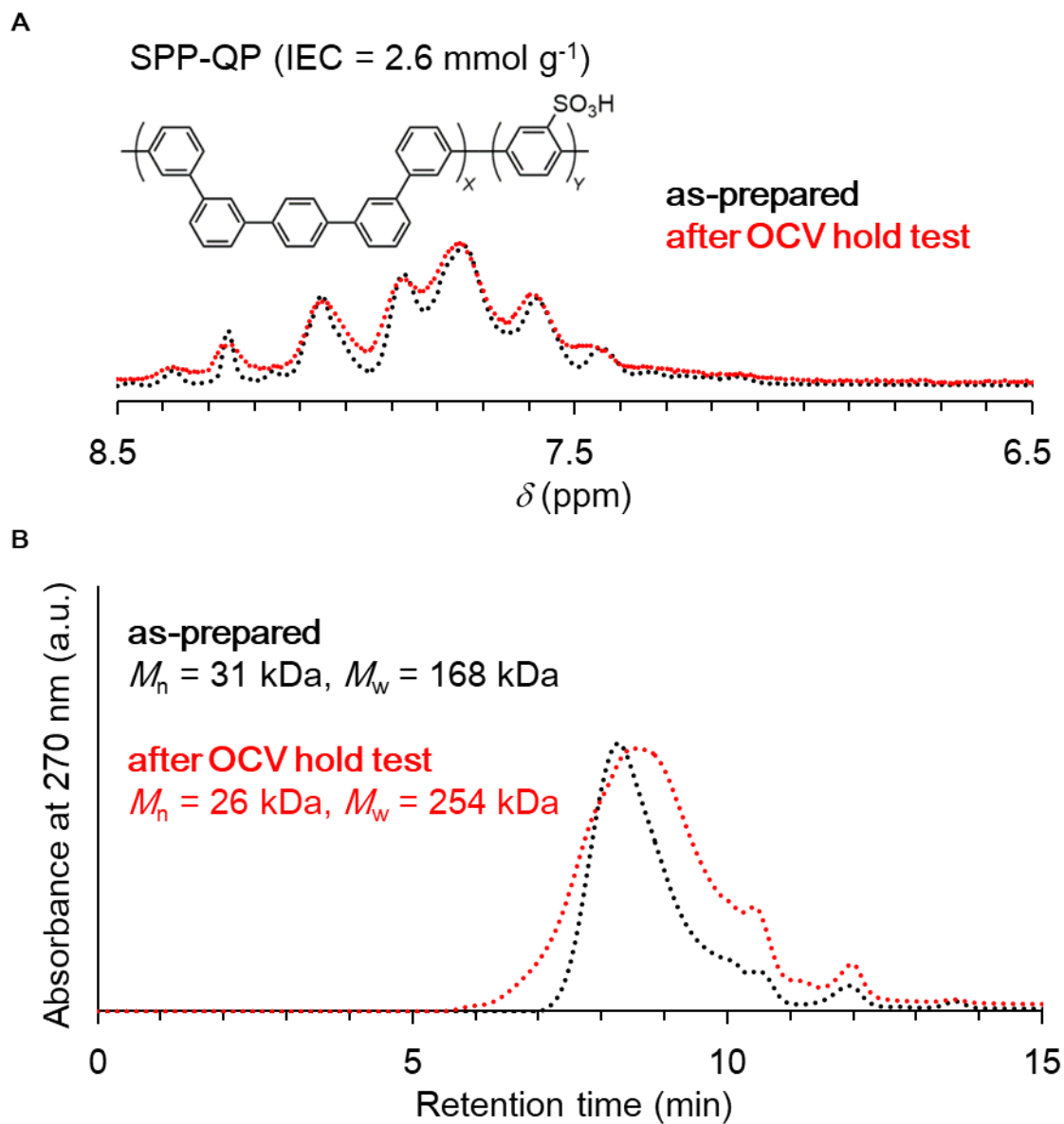
**fig. S9.** Chemical structure of the SPP-bl-1 copolymer.



**fig. S10. Hydrogen and oxygen permeability.** The measurement was conducted at 80 °C as a function of RH. The solid lines are guides for the eye. 1 Barrer =  $10^{-10}$  cm<sup>3</sup> (STD) cm cm<sup>-2</sup> s<sup>-1</sup> cmHg<sup>-1</sup>.



**fig. S11. Membrane durability and flexibility.** The picture was taken after immersing the SPP-QP membrane (titrated IEC = 2.4 mmol g<sup>-1</sup>) in Fenton's solution (aqueous solution containing 3% H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> and 2ppm Fe<sup>2+</sup>) at 80 °C for 1 h.

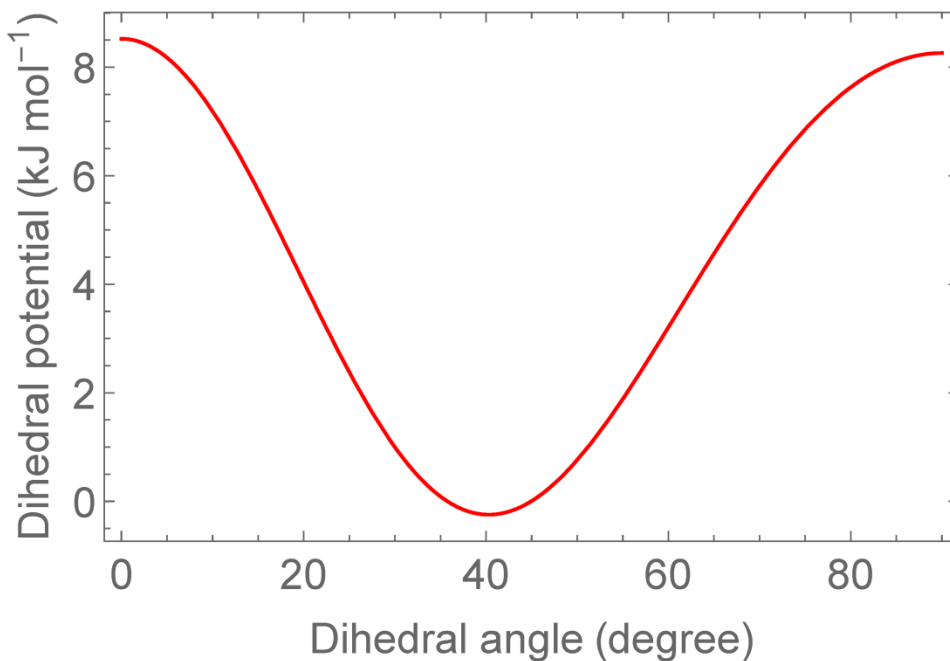


**fig. S12.** The effect of the OCV hold test on the molecular structure of the SPP-QP membrane (IEC = 2.6 mmol g<sup>-1</sup>). (A) <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectra at 80 °C in DMSO-*d*<sub>6</sub>. (B) GPC profiles. OCV hold test: 30% RH, H<sub>2</sub>/air, 80 °C, 1000 h.

## Mathematica Notebook

### • Torsional potential of biphenyl

```
bpfitf[x_]=4.184*1.003626-4.184*0.155120 Cos[2Pi (x) / 180]+4.184*1.002066 Cos[4Pi (x) / 180]+4.184*0.186577 Cos[6Pi (x) / 180]
4.19917 -0.649022 Cos[(π x)/90]+4.19264 Cos[(π x)/45]+0.780638 Cos[(π x)/30]
Plot[bpfitf[x],{x,0,90},PlotStyle->{Red,Thickness[0.004]},PlotRange->All,Frame->True,Axes->False,FrameTicks->True,FrameLabel->{"Dihedral angle (degree)","Dihedral potential (kJ mol-1)"},LabelStyle->Directive[FontFamily->"Arial",16]]
```



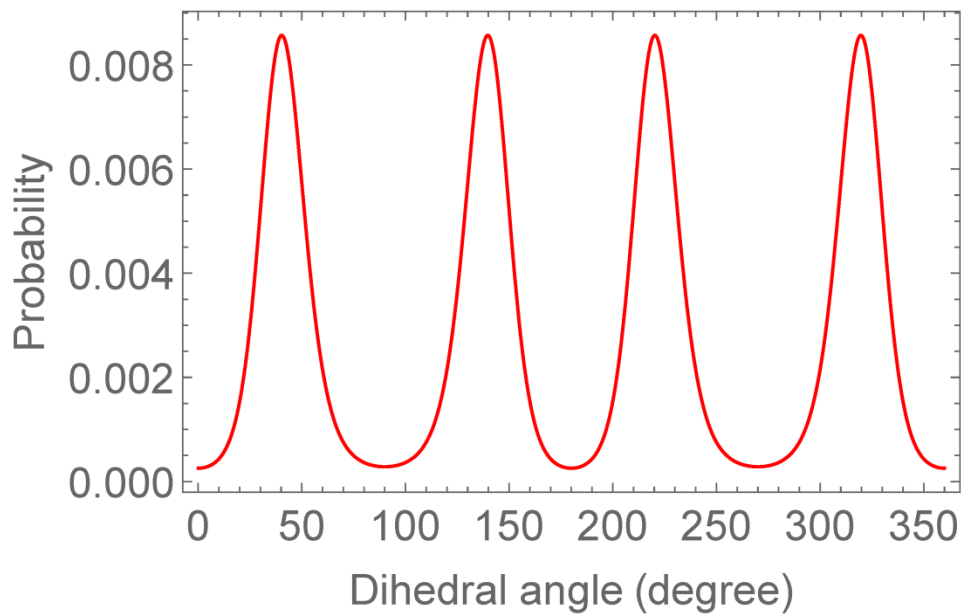
### • Dihedral distribution of biphenyl using Boltzmann Factors

```
kTval=300 QuantityMagnitude["MolarGasConstant", "Kilo""Joules"/("Kelvins" "Moles")]
2.49434
normVal=4 NIntegrate[Exp[-bpfitf[x]/kTval],{x,0,90}];
Clear[prob];
```

```

prob[x_]:=Exp[-bpfitt[x]/kTval]/normVal;/;0<=x<=90;
prob[x_]:=prob[180-x]/;90<x<=180;
prob[x_]:=prob[x-180]/;180<x<=270;
prob[x_]:=prob[360-x]/;270<x<=360;
Plot[prob[x],{x,0,360},PlotStyle->{Red,Thickness[0.004]},PlotRange->All,Frame-
>True,FrameTicks->True,FrameLabel->{"Dihedral angle (degree)","Probability"},LabelStyle-
>Directive[FontFamily->"Arial",16]]

```

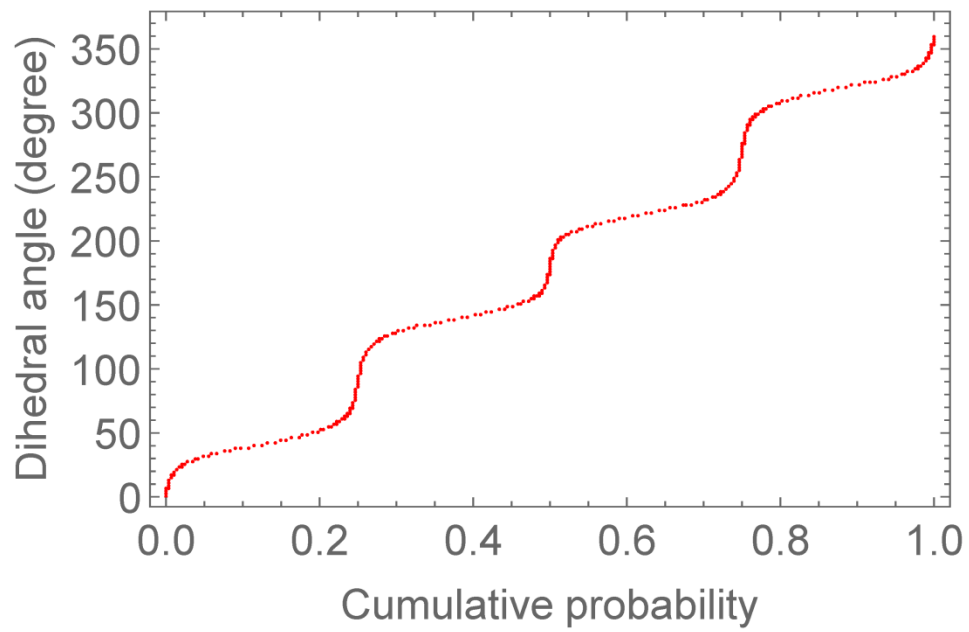


• **Cumulative probability for biphenyl**

```

pIntTable=Quiet[Table[{NIntegrate[prob[xp],{xp,0,x}],x},{x,0,360}]];
ListPlot[pIntTable,PlotStyle->{Red,PointSize[0.004]},Frame->True,FrameTicks->True,
FrameLabel->{"Cumulative probability","Dihedral angle (degree)"},
LabelStyle->Directive[FontFamily->"Arial",16]]

```



```
bp[prob_]=Interpolation[pIntTable][prob];
```

*meta:100%*

- **Molecular geometry**

```
lccc=2.42690;
```

```
lcc=1.48358;
```

```
e[1]=lccc{0,0,1};
```

```
e[2]=lcc{Sin[Pi/6.],0,Cos[Pi/6.]};
```

```
e[3]=lccc{0,0,1};
```

```
e[4]=lcc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};
```

```
chain[n_]:=Prepend[Accumulate[Table[e[Mod[k,4,1]],{k,1,n}],{0,0,0}]
```

```
drawChain[pts_]:=Graphics3D[{PointSize[0.01],Point/@pts,
```

```
Table[{Hue[(1/2)Mod[i,2]],Line[{pts[[i]],pts[[i+1]]}],{i,1,Length[pts]-1}}]
```

```
drawChain[chain[20]]
```



- **Rotation matrix to rotate a backbone dihedral angle**

```
dihedralRotate[pts_,nb_?EvenQ,theta_]:=Module[{}
```

```
vec=pts[[nb+1]]-pts[[nb]];
```

```
origin=pts[[nb]];
```

```
rot=RotationMatrix[theta,vec];
```

```
Join[Take[pts,nb],origin+(rot.(#-origin))&/@Drop[pts,nb]]]
```

- **Tangent-tangent correlation function**

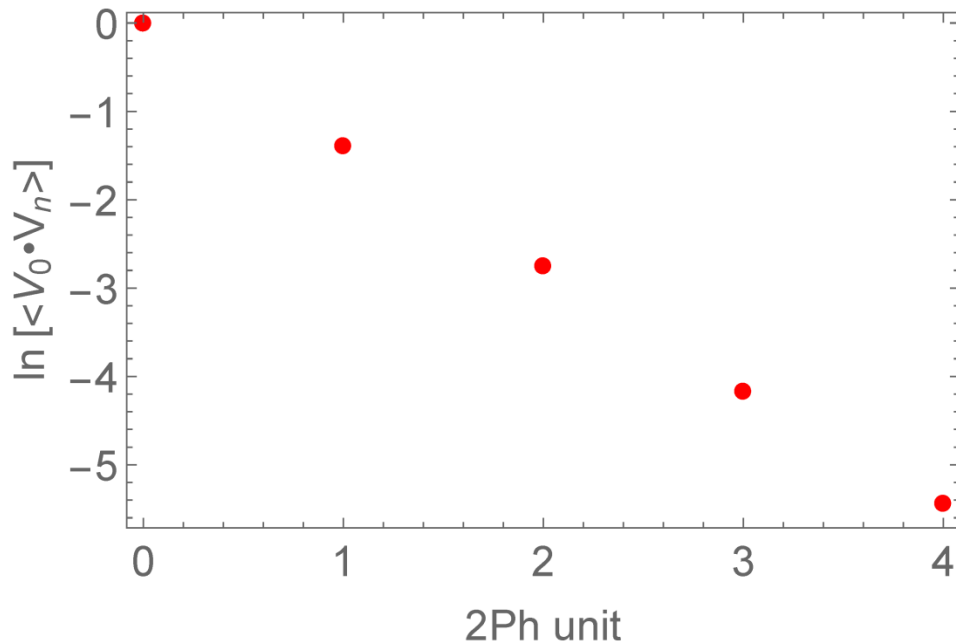
```
cosVals[pts_]:=Table[(pts[[k]]-pts[[k-1]]).(pts[[3]]-pts[[2]])/
```

```
(Norm[pts[[k]]-pts[[k-1]]]Norm[pts[[3]]-pts[[2]]]),{k,3,Length[pts],4}]
```

```

randomRotate[pts_]:=Module[{},
  newpts=pts;
  Do[newpts=dihedralRotate[newpts,k,bp[RandomReal[]],{k,2,Length[pts],2}];
  newpts]
Clear[ch];
ch=chain[40];
cosList=ParallelTable[cosVals[randomRotate[ch]],{100000}];
corr=Plus@@cosList/100000;
ListPlot[Table[{i-1,Log[corr[[i]]]},{i,1,5}],
  PlotStyle->{Red,PointSize[0.02]},Frame->True,FrameTicks->True,
  FrameLabel->{"2Ph unit","ln [<V0•Vn>"]},
  LabelStyle->Directive[FontFamily->"Arial",16]]

```





• **Calculation of persistence length (lp)**

$\log\text{FitallmetaPh2}[x\_]=\text{Fit}[\text{Log}[\text{corr}[[1;4]]],\{1,x\},x]$

1.38649 -1.38475 x

$-1/\log\text{FitallmetaPh2}'[x]$

0.722152

$lp=\text{Norm}[\sum_{i=1}^4 e[i]]*0.722152/10$

0.536085

*meta:80%*

• **Molecular geometry**

lccc=2.42690;

lcc=1.48358;

lcccc=2.80996;

e[1]=lccc{0,0,1};

e[2]=lcc{Sin[Pi/6.],0,Cos[Pi/6.]};

e[3]=lccc{0,0,1};

e[4]=lcc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};

e[5]=lcccc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};

e[6]=lcc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};

e[7]=lccc{0,0,1};

e[8]=lcc{Sin[Pi/6.],0,Cos[Pi/6.]};

e[9]=lccc{0,0,1};

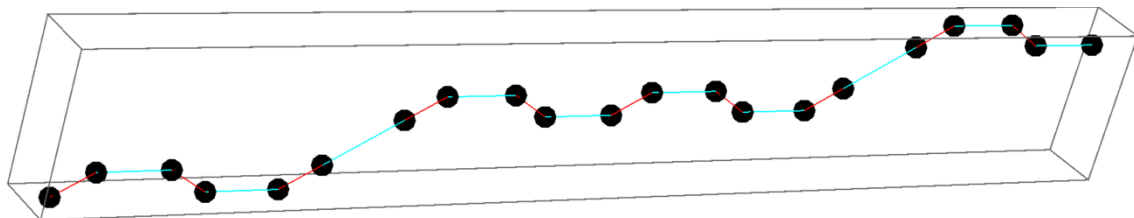
e[10]=lcc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};

chain[n\_]:=Prepend[Accumulate[Table[e[Mod[k,10,1]],{k,1,n}],{0,0,0}]

drawChain[pts\_]:=Graphics3D[{PointSize[0.02],Point/@pts,

Table[{Hue[(1/2)Mod[i,2]],Line[{pts[[i]],pts[[i+1]]}],{i,1,Length[pts]-1}}]

drawChain[chain[20]]

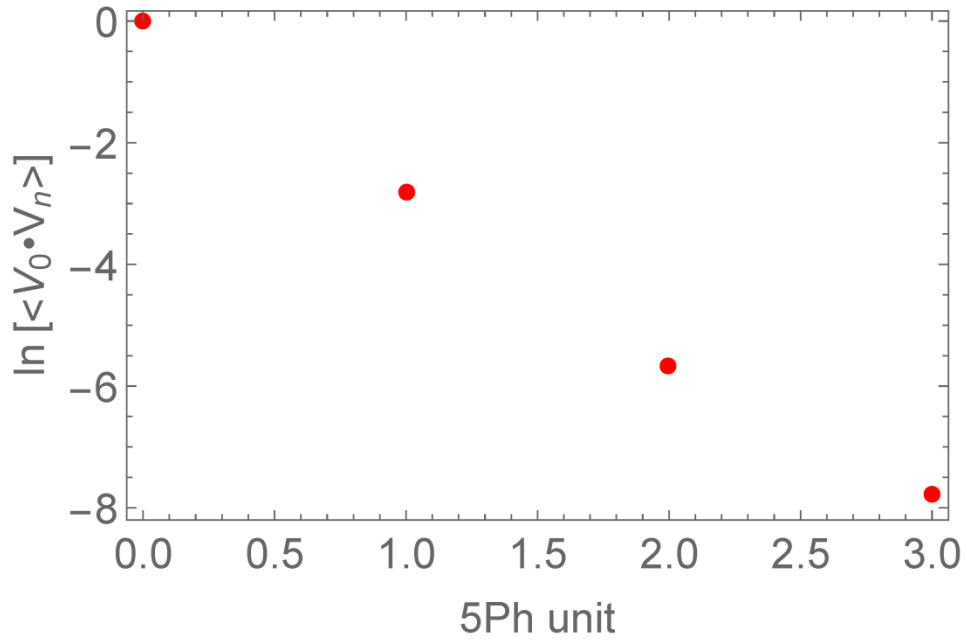


- **Rotation matrix to rotate a backbone dihedral angle**

```
dihedralRotate[pts_,nb_?EvenQ,theta_]:=Module[{ },
  vec=pts[[nb+1]]-pts[[nb]];
  origin=pts[[nb]];
  rot=RotationMatrix[theta,vec];
  Join[Take[pts,nb],origin+(rot.(#-origin))&/@Drop[pts,nb]]]
```

- **Tangent-tangent correlation function**

```
cosVals[pts_]:=Table[(pts[[k]]-pts[[k-1]]).(pts[[3]]-pts[[2]])/
  (Norm[pts[[k]]-pts[[k-1]]]Norm[pts[[3]]-pts[[2]]]),{k,3,Length[pts],10}]
randomRotate[pts_]:=Module[{ },
  newpts=pts;
  Do[newpts=dihedralRotate[newpts,k,bp[RandomReal[]]],{k,2,Length[pts],2}];
  newpts]
Clear[ch];
ch=chain[100];
cosList=ParallelTable[cosVals[randomRotate[ch]],{100000}];
corr=Plus@@cosList/100000;
ListPlot[Table[{i-1,Log[corr[[i]]]},{i,1,4}],
  PlotStyle->{Red,PointSize[0.02]},Frame->True,FrameTicks->True,
  FrameLabel->{"5Ph unit", "ln [ $\langle V_0 \cdot V_n \rangle$ ]"},
  LabelStyle->Directive[FontFamily->"Arial",16]]
```



• **Calculation of persistence length (lp)**

`logFitQP[x_]=Fit[Log[corr[[1;;3]]],{1,x},x]`

2.83261 -2.82565 x

`-1/logFitQP'[x]`

0.353901

`lp=Norm[ $\sum_{i=1}^{10} e[i]$ ]*0.353901/10`

0.661402

*meta:50%*

- **Molecular geometry**

```
lccc=2.42690;
```

```
lcc=1.48358;
```

```
lcccc=2.80996;
```

```
e[1]=lccc{0,0,1};
```

```
e[2]=lcc{Sin[Pi/6.],0,Cos[Pi/6.]};
```

```
e[3]=lcccc{Sin[Pi/6.],0,Cos[Pi/6.]};
```

```
e[4]=lcc{Sin[Pi/6.],0,Cos[Pi/6.]};
```

```
e[5]=lccc{0,0,1};
```

```
e[6]=lcc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};
```

```
e[7]=lcccc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};
```

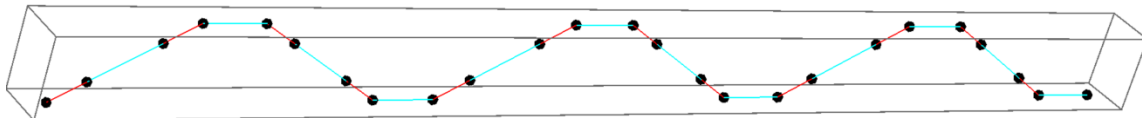
```
e[8]=lcc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};
```

```
chain[n_]:=Prepend[Accumulate[Table[e[Mod[k,8,1]],{k,1,n}]],{0,0,0}]
```

```
drawChain[pts_]:=Graphics3D[{PointSize[0.01],Point/@pts,
```

```
Table[{Hue[(1/2)Mod[i,2]],Line[{pts[[i]],pts[[i+1]]}],{i,1,Length[pts]-1}}]
```

```
drawChain[chain[24]]
```



- **Rotation matrix to rotate a backbone dihedral angle**

```
dihedralRotate[pts_,nb_?EvenQ,theta_]:=Module[{},
```

```
vec=pts[[nb+1]]-pts[[nb]]; 
```

```
origin=pts[[nb]]; 
```

```
rot=RotationMatrix[theta,vec];
```

```
Join[Take[pts,nb],origin+(rot.(#-origin))&/@Drop[pts,nb]]]
```

• **Tangent-tangent correlation function**

```
cosVals[pts_]:=Table[(pts[[k]]-pts[[k-1]]).(pts[[3]]-pts[[2]])/
```

```
(Norm[pts[[k]]-pts[[k-1]]]Norm[pts[[3]]-pts[[2]]]),{k,3,Length[pts],8}]
```

```
randomRotate[pts_]:=Module[{},
```

```
newpts=pts;
```

```
Do[newpts=dihedralRotate[newpts,k,bp[RandomReal[]]],{k,2,Length[pts],2}];
```

```
newpts]
```

```
Clear[ch];
```

```
ch=chain[80];
```

```
cosList=ParallelTable[cosVals[randomRotate[ch]],{100000}];
```

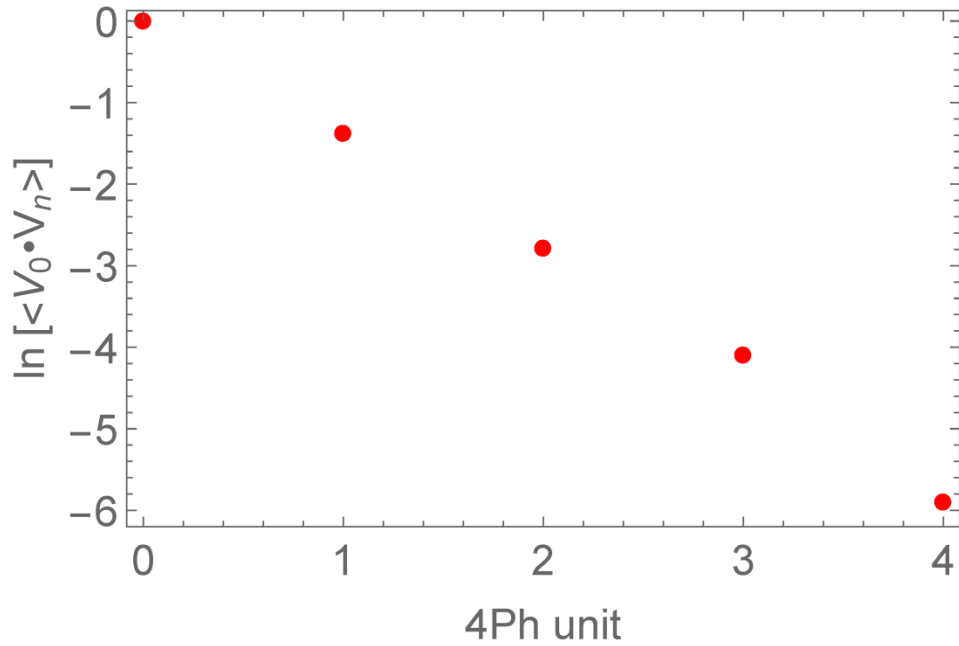
```
corr=Plus@@cosList/100000;
```

```
ListPlot[Table[{i-1,Log[corr[[i]]]},{i,1,5}],
```

```
PlotStyle->{Red,PointSize[0.02]},Frame->True,FrameTicks->True,
```

```
FrameLabel->{"4Ph unit","ln [ $\langle V_0 \cdot V_n \rangle$ "]},
```

```
LabelStyle->Directive[FontFamily->"Arial",16]]
```



• **Calculation of persistence length (lp)**

$\text{logFitm1p1Ph4}[x\_]=\text{Fit}[\text{Log}[\text{corr}[[1;;3]]],\{1,x\},x]$

1.3978 -1.39148 x

$-1/\text{logFitm1p1Ph4}'[x]$

0.718658

$\text{lp}=\text{Norm}[\sum_{i=1}^8 e[i]]*0.718658/10$

1.06793

*meta:20%*

• **Molecular geometry**

lccc=2.42690;

lcc=1.48358;

lcccc=2.80996;

e[1]=lccc{0,0,1};

e[2]=lcc{Sin[Pi/6.],0,Cos[Pi/6.]};

e[3]=lcccc{Sin[Pi/6.],0,Cos[Pi/6.]};

e[4]=lcc{Sin[Pi/6.],0,Cos[Pi/6.]};

e[5]=lcccc{Sin[Pi/6.],0,Cos[Pi/6.]};

e[6]=lcc{Sin[Pi/6.],0,Cos[Pi/6.]};

e[7]=lcccc{Sin[Pi/6.],0,Cos[Pi/6.]};

e[8]=lcc{Sin[Pi/6.],0,Cos[Pi/6.]};

e[9]=lcccc{Sin[Pi/6.],0,Cos[Pi/6.]};

e[10]=lcc{Sin[Pi/6.],0,Cos[Pi/6.]};

e[11]=lccc{0,0,1};

e[12]=lcc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};

e[13]=lcccc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};

e[14]=lcc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};

e[15]=lcccc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};

e[16]=lcc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};

e[17]=lcccc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};

e[18]=lcc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};

e[19]=lcccc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};

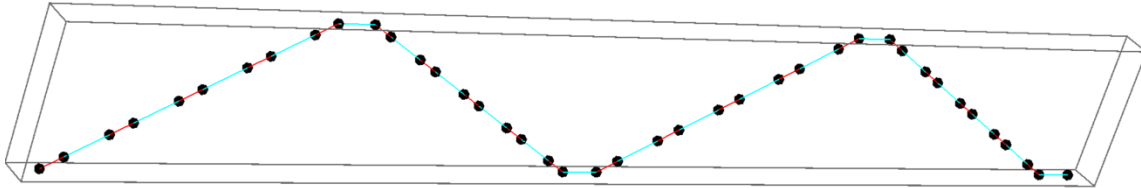
e[20]=lcc{Sin[-Pi/6.],0,Cos[-Pi/6.]};

chain[n\_]:=Prepend[Accumulate[Table[e[Mod[k,20,1]],{k,1,n}]],{0,0,0}]

drawChain[pts\_]:=Graphics3D[{PointSize[0.01],Point/@pts,



```
Table[{Hue[(1/2)Mod[i,2]],Line[{pts[[i]],pts[[i+1]]}],{i,1,Length[pts]-1}}]
drawChain[chain[40]]
```



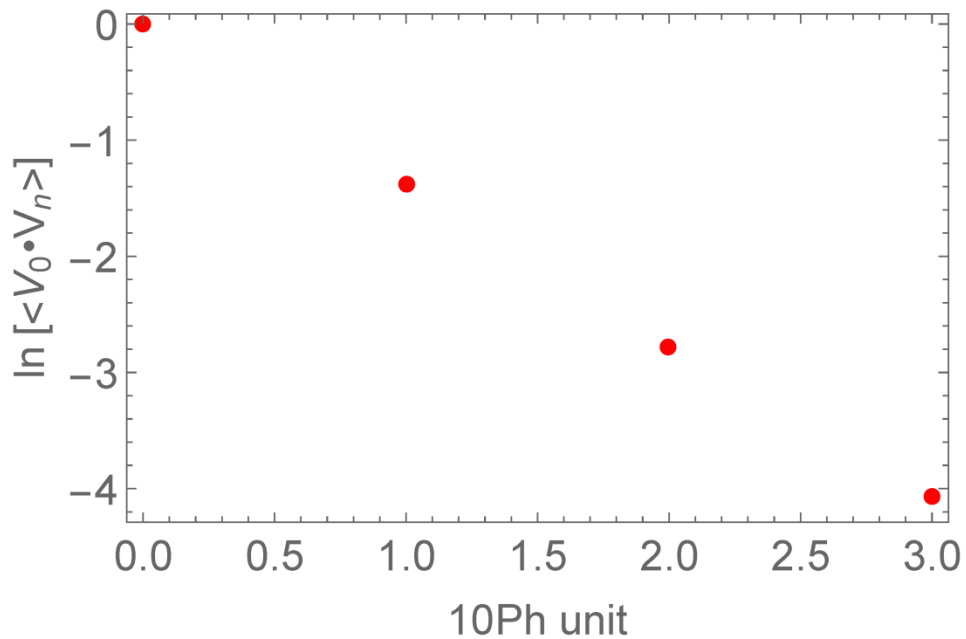
- **Rotation matrix to rotate a backbone dihedral angle**

```
dihedralRotate[pts_,nb_?EvenQ,theta_]:=Module[{ },
vec=pts[[nb+1]]-pts[[nb]];
origin=pts[[nb]];
rot=RotationMatrix[theta,vec];
Join[Take[pts,nb],origin+(rot.(#-origin))&/@Drop[pts,nb]]]
```

- **Tangent-tangent correlation function**

```
cosVals[pts_]:=Table[(pts[[k]]-pts[[k-1]]).(pts[[3]]-pts[[2]])/
(Norm[pts[[k]]-pts[[k-1]]]Norm[pts[[3]]-pts[[2]]]),{k,3,Length[pts],20}]
randomRotate[pts_]:=Module[{ },
newpts=pts;
Do[newpts=dihedralRotate[newpts,k,bp[RandomReal[]]],{k,2,Length[pts],2}];
newpts]
Clear[ch];
ch=chain[200];
cosList=ParallelTable[cosVals[randomRotate[ch]],{100000}];
corr=Plus@@cosList/100000;
```

```
ListPlot[Table[{i-1,Log[corr[[i]]]},{i,1,4}],
PlotStyle->{Red,PointSize[0.02]},Frame->True,FrameTicks->True,
FrameLabel->{"10Ph unit","ln [<V0•Vn>"]},
LabelStyle->Directive[FontFamily->"Arial",16]]
```



• **Calculation of persistence length (lp)**

```
logFitm1p4Ph10[x_]=Fit[Log[corr[[1;;3]]],{1,x},x]
```

```
1.39169 -1.38967 x
```

```
-1/logFitm1p4Ph10[x]
```

```
0.719597
```

```
lp=Norm[ $\sum_{i=1}^{20} e[i]$ ]*0.719597/10
```

```
2.67474
```

*meta:0%*

- **Molecular geometry**

```
lcccc=2.80996;
```

```
lcc=1.48358;
```

```
e[1]=lcccc{0,0,1};
```

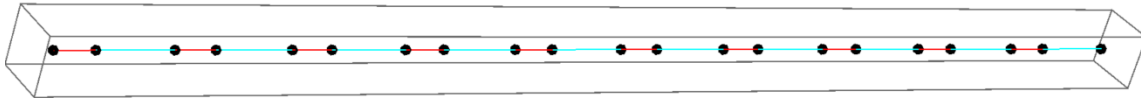
```
e[2]=lcc{0,0,1};
```

```
chain[n_]:=Prepend[Accumulate[Table[e[Mod[k,2,1]],{k,1,n}],{0,0,0}]
```

```
drawChain[pts_]:=Graphics3D[{{PointSize[0.01],Point/@pts,
```

```
Table[{Hue[(1/2)Mod[i,2]],Line[{pts[[i]],pts[[i+1]]}],{i,1,Length[pts]-1}}]
```

```
drawChain[chain[20]]
```



- **Rotation matrix to rotate a backbone dihedral angle**

```
dihedralRotate[pts_,nb_?EvenQ,theta_]:=Module[{ },
```

```
vec=pts[[nb+1]]-pts[[nb]];
```

```
origin=pts[[nb]];
```

```
rot=RotationMatrix[theta,vec];
```

```
Join[Take[pts,nb],origin+(rot.(#-origin))&/@Drop[pts,nb]]]
```

- **Tangent-tangent correlation function**

```
cosVals[pts_]:=Table[(pts[[k]]-pts[[k-1]]).(pts[[3]]-pts[[2]])/
```

```
(Norm[pts[[k]]-pts[[k-1]]]Norm[pts[[3]]-pts[[2]]]),{k,3,Length[pts],2}]
```

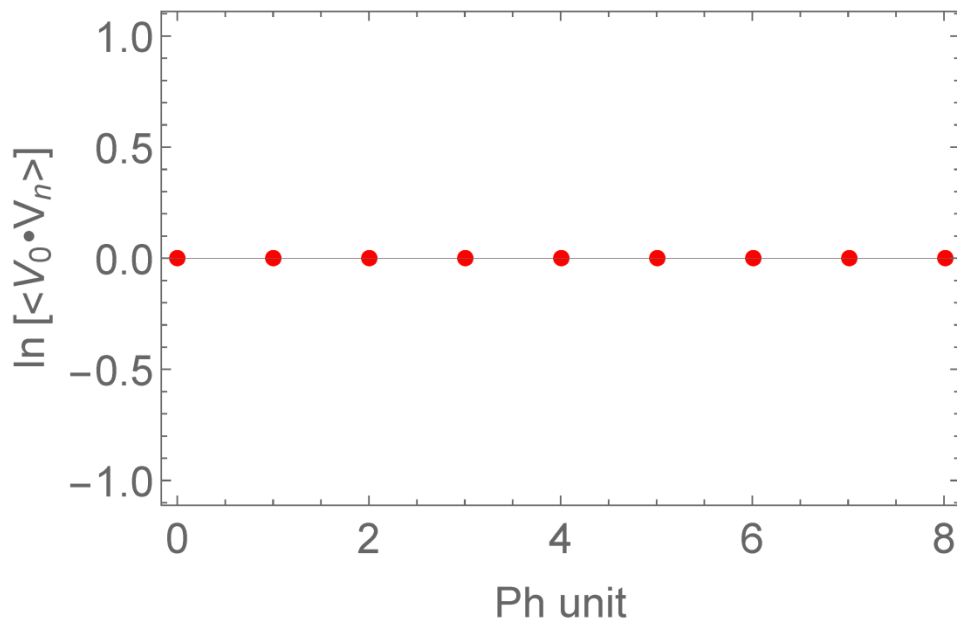
```
randomRotate[pts_]:=Module[{ },
```

```
newpts=pts;
```

```

Do[newpts=dihedralRotate[newpts,k,bp[RandomReal[]],{k,2,Length[pts],2}];
newpts]
Clear[ch];
ch=chain[20];
cosList=ParallelTable[cosVals[randomRotate[ch]],{100000}];
corr=Plus@@cosList/100000;
ListPlot[Table[{i-1,Log[corr[[i]]]},{i,1,9}],
PlotStyle->{Red,PointSize[0.02]},Frame->True,FrameTicks->True,
FrameLabel->{"Ph unit","ln [<V0•Vn>]"},
LabelStyle->Directive[FontFamily->"Arial",16]]

```



- **Calculation of persistence length (lp)**

```
logFitallparaPh1[x_]=Fit[Log[corr[[1;;8]]],{1,x},x]
```

0.

Thus, lp is calculated to be infinity.