

# Dopant Diffusion in Sequentially Doped Poly(3-hexylthiophene) Studied by Infrared and Photoelectron Spectroscopy

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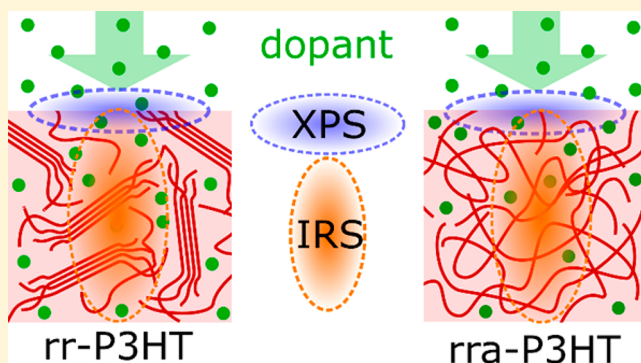
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**S** Supporting Information

**ABSTRACT:** The diffusivity of dopants in semiconducting polymers is of high interest as it enables methods of sequential doping but also affects device stability. In this study, we investigate the diffusion of a bulky sequentially deposited p-dopant in poly(3-hexylthiophene) (P3HT) thin films using nondestructive *in situ* infrared (IR) spectroscopy and photoelectron spectroscopy (PES). We probe dopant diffusion into the polymer film at varying coverage by differentially evaluating electron transfer in the bulk and at the surface. Thereby it is possible to determine dopant coverages at which both electron transfer and incorporation of dopants are saturated. By use of PES, neutral and charged dopants can be distinguished, revealing that charged dopants are less mobile in the diffusion process than neutral molecules. We further compare the diffusivity in semicrystalline and fully amorphous P3HT. We find that at high coverage semicrystalline P3HT seems to yield a higher capacity for dopants than fully amorphous P3HT. A temperature-dependent measurement of sequential doping shows directly that the incorporation of dopants is thermally activated and requires temperatures close to room temperature.



## INTRODUCTION

Doping of organic semiconductors can significantly increase the free charge-carrier concentration, which usually results in a rise in conductivity.<sup>1</sup> This allows for specifically designing electronic properties<sup>1,2</sup> of charge-transport layers<sup>3,4</sup> and for reducing contact resistances by creating ohmic junctions<sup>5,6</sup> to various metals or metal-like oxides.<sup>7,8</sup> By improving the electronic properties of conjugated organic polymers, they also become promising candidates for use in low-cost thermoelectric applications due to their low thermal conductivity.<sup>9–12</sup>

However, the diffusivity of dopants is expected to negatively affect the lifetime and long-term stability of many types of organic electronic devices.<sup>13</sup> It is known that dopants can cause exciton quenching in photoactive layers<sup>14–17</sup> and at donor–acceptor interfaces, which reduces the efficiency of organic light-emitting diodes, organic solar cells, or organic photodiodes. In early studies, halogens<sup>18</sup> and alkali metals<sup>19</sup> were

used to successfully dope polymers. However, due to their small size and high volatility, in the case of halogens, they were found to be disadvantageous for creating stable p–n structures.<sup>20</sup> Small molecular dopants are larger and seemingly less mobile and can achieve doping efficiencies around 40% for low concentrations.<sup>21</sup> Typical molecules for p-doping like 2,3,5,6-tetrafluoro-7,7,8,8-tetracyanoquinodimethane (F<sub>4</sub>TCNQ) and molybdenum tris(1,2-bis(trifluoromethyl)ethane-1,2-dithiolene) (Mo(tfd)<sub>3</sub>) possess a high electron affinity and enable an integer or partial electron transfer from the host molecule.<sup>22</sup> In addition to the exact charge-transfer mechanism,<sup>22–24</sup> drift and diffusion of molecular dopants and their reactions at interfaces gained more attention recently.<sup>25–30</sup> For conjugated host molecules stable doped layers

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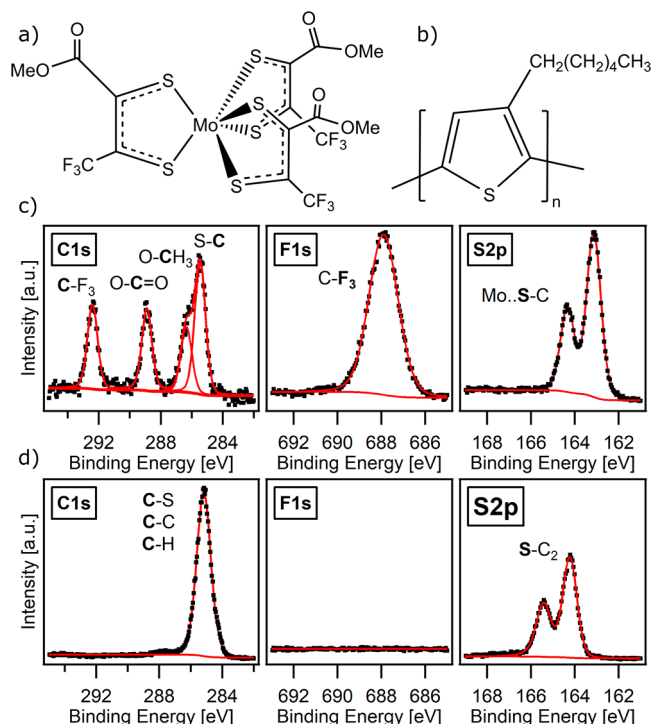


63 have been achieved with  $F_4TCNQ$  and  $Mo(tfd)_3$  in  $N,N'$ -di(1-  
64 naphthyl)- $N,N'$ -diphenyl-(1,1'-biphenyl)-4,4'-diamine ( $\alpha$ -  
65 NPD).<sup>31,32</sup> In more crystalline materials like zinc phthalocya-  
66 nine (ZnPc) and 4,4'-bis( $N$ -carbazolyl)-1,1'-biphenyl (CBP),  
67  $F_4TCNQ$  was still found to diffuse toward a metal electrode  
68 modifying its surface potential.<sup>27,28</sup> In polymers, however, a  
69 much higher diffusivity of dopants is usually observed than in  
70 small molecular host materials, which makes stable doping  
71 more difficult. On the other hand, the high mobility of dopants  
72 in polymers can be beneficially used for sequential  
73 doping.<sup>11,33,34</sup> Here, it is possible to evaporate or solution-  
74 process mobile dopants on top of already produced thin films.  
75 This enables at the same time doped and, at least in some  
76 cases, highly ordered polymer films with coherent charge  
77 transport.<sup>26,35</sup> In order to prevent unwanted diffusion after  
78 sequential doping, certain strategies have been proposed.<sup>29,36,37</sup>  
79 To suppress an intermixing of adjacent layers, an additional  
80 dopant-confining interlayer can be introduced by soft-contact  
81 transfer lamination.<sup>36</sup> The interlayer is formed from a blend of  
82 a polymer and a fullerene acceptor, which presumably fills the  
83 diffusion path of the dopant.<sup>36</sup>  
84 In general, it is perceived that the diffusion depends on both  
85 size and shape of the dopant as well as on the host material. In  
86 this context, observations of thermally activated diffusion of  
87 dopants in conjugated molecular hosts generally show that  
88 larger dopants have better morphological stability.<sup>25</sup> Regarding  
89 blends for organic solar-cell applications, the diffusion of a  
90 fullerene derivative in the hole-transporting polymer poly(3-  
91 hexylthiophene) (P3HT) was quantitatively analyzed, and  
92 diffusion constants  $D$  of  $\sim 10^{-11}$  and  $\sim 10^{-14}$   $cm^2 s^{-1}$  at around  
93 140 °C were obtained.<sup>38–40</sup> As another example, the diffusion  
94 constants of ions in polymers from electrolyte dielectrics used  
95 in organic thin-film transistors were evaluated to be  $10^{-12}$ –  
96  $10^{-14}$   $cm^2 s^{-1}$  at room temperature.<sup>41,42</sup> Very recently, also the  
97 diffusion constant of the dopant  $F_4TCNQ$  and a derivative in  
98 which one of the cyano moieties is replaced by an alkyl ester  
99 group was measured in P3HT using confocal fluorescence  
100 microscopy.<sup>43</sup> It was found that charged  $F_4TCNQ$  ( $D =$   
101  $\sim 10^{-13}$   $cm^2 s^{-1}$ ) is less mobile than neutral  $F_4TCNQ$  ( $D =$   
102  $\sim 10^{-11}$   $cm^2 s^{-1}$ ) and that its monoester-substituted derivative  
103 is more than 1 order of magnitude less mobile than the parent  
104  $F_4TCNQ$ .<sup>43</sup> However, fewer studies have focused on how the  
105 host morphology and doping concentration may affect the  
106 diffusivity of dopants. Diffusion of solvents and other liquid  
107 small molecules in rubbery or glassy polymers has been widely  
108 studied in the literature.<sup>44,45</sup> The penetration of solvents into  
109 polymers is frequently described by models based on free-  
110 volume<sup>46,47</sup> and partial immobilization concepts.<sup>48–50</sup> The  
111 temperature dependence of the diffusion in such systems can  
112 be best described by Arrhenius law and involves an activation  
113 energy for transport.<sup>44</sup> Consequently, similar phenomena  
114 could be expected for solid-state dopants, taking into account  
115 neutral and charged penetrants.  
116 In this study, the diffusion of the soluble  $Mo(tfd)_3$  derivative  
117 molybdenum tris(1-(methoxycarbonyl)-2-(trifluoromethyl)-  
118 ethane-1,2-dithiolene) ( $Mo(tfd-CO_2Me)_3$ )<sup>51,52</sup> is investigated  
119 following its evaporation onto P3HT thin films with varying  
120 crystallinity in a sequential doping scheme. We use in situ IR  
121 spectroscopy during the sequential dopant deposition and  
122 subsequent photoemission spectroscopy to monitor the whole  
123 diffusion process since both techniques are capable of  
124 detecting bulk and interface doping.<sup>53–55</sup> As  $Mo(tfd-$   
125  $CO_2Me)_3$  is larger than, for example,  $F_4TCNQ$ , the dopant

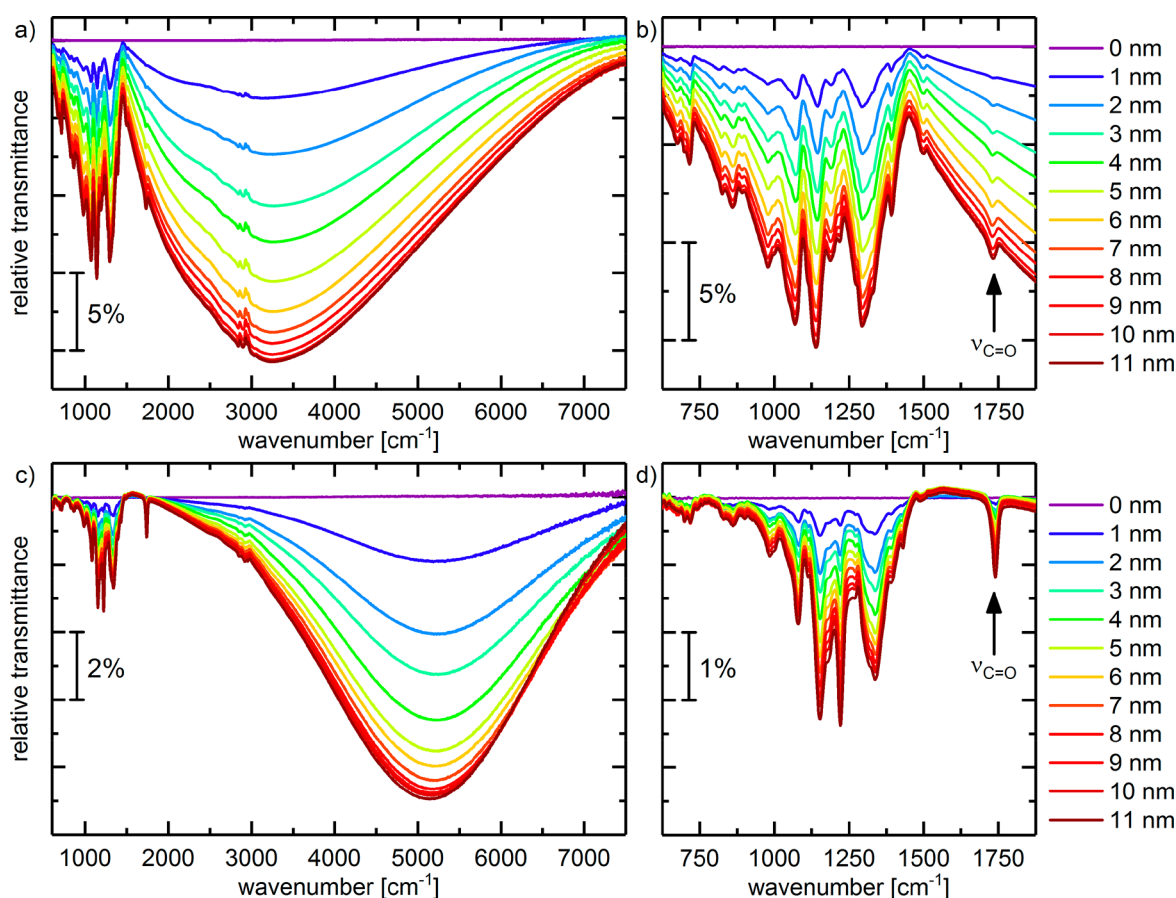
is expected to be unable to enter the  $\pi$ - $\pi$  stacking of P3HT  
crystallites below the glass-transition temperature, which may  
affect the diffusion behavior when comparing different  
morphologies. By applying *in situ* IR spectroscopy during the  
preparation process, an instantaneous doping, independent of  
the polymer crystallinity, was observed for low coverage. By  
cooling the substrate and the polymer film prior to dopant  
evaporation and in situ monitoring during the warm-up, the  
thermal activation of the diffusion process was identified.  
Further X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS) measure-  
ments show a difference in the diffusion properties for high  
coverage of  $Mo(tfd-CO_2Me)_3$  in regioregular P3HT (rr-  
P3HT) compared to regiorandom P3HT (rra-P3HT) thin  
films. The changes observed in the molar doping ratios at the  
surface of the polymer film can be described by a simple  
analytical diffusion model and suggest a lower diffusivity in rra-  
P3HT for high concentrations. A possible explanation could  
involve a higher free volume in grain boundaries or connecting  
amorphous regions of the semicrystalline P3HT.

## EXPERIMENT

**Materials.** For all films discussed below, rr-P3HT from  
Merck (>93% regularity,  $M_w = 24$  kg mol<sup>-1</sup>) and rra-P3HT  
from Rieke Metals ( $M_w = 57$  kg mol<sup>-1</sup>) were used without  
further treatment. The dopant  $Mo(tfd-CO_2Me)_3$  was synthe-  
sized and purified as previously described.<sup>51</sup> The chemical  
structures of P3HT and  $Mo(tfd-CO_2Me)_3$  can be found in  
Figure 1. The polymer materials were dissolved in analytical  
grade chlorobenzene and were stirred on a hot plate at 50 °C



**Figure 1.** Figure shows the structural formula of  $Mo(tfd-CO_2Me)_3$  (a) and P3HT (b) with corresponding XPS core-level spectra of a pure  $Mo(tfd-CO_2Me)_3$  layer in (c) and a pure P3HT layer in (d). The peak components of the C 1s emission of  $Mo(tfd-CO_2Me)_3$  can be clearly assigned to the distinct carbon species in binding energy and intensity ratio. The C 1s inset in (c) is expanded in intensity compared to the C 1s spectrum in (d).



**Figure 2.** Relative transmission spectra of a sequentially doped rr-P3HT layer for varying dopant coverage from 0 to 11 nm in the whole MIR range (a) and in the fingerprint range (b). Relative transmission spectra of a sequentially doped rra-P3HT layer for varying dopant coverage from 0 to 11 nm in the whole MIR range (c) and in the fingerprint range (d). The characteristic C=O stretching vibration of Mo(tfd-CO<sub>2</sub>Me)<sub>3</sub> is marked on the right. Note the different ordinate scales of (a–d).

for at least 20 h. The concentrations of rra-P3HT and rr-P3HT solutions were set to 11 and 13.5 mg mL<sup>-1</sup>, respectively. We used 1.5 × 1.5 cm<sup>2</sup> cut silicon wafers (intrinsic,  $\sigma > 5000 \Omega \text{ cm}$ ) with a native oxide layer as substrates. The silicon substrates were cleaned with acetone and isopropanol in an ultrasonic bath for 30 min.

**Sample Fabrication.** The P3HT solutions were directly spin-cast at 1200 rpm for 30 s in a nitrogen glovebox with both water content and oxygen concentration below ca. 10 ppm. Subsequently, the backside of the substrate was cleaned with chlorobenzene, and the sample was briefly exposed to ambient conditions in a clean room during transfer to the evaporation chamber. After evaporation, ultrahigh vacuum (UHV) conditions were maintained for XPS and IR studies. The initial film thickness was measured with ellipsometry and a DEKTAK profilometer to be  $L_0 = 50 \pm 6 \text{ nm}$ . The dopant Mo(tfd-CO<sub>2</sub>Me)<sub>3</sub> was evaporated at a pressure of  $10^{-8} \text{ mbar}$  and adsorbs on organic materials as well as on silicon at room temperature in UHV.

**IR Spectroscopy.** All samples for IR transmission measurements were prepared and measured in situ in an UHV chamber that is connected to a Fourier-transform IR spectrometer (Vertex 80v) from Bruker. The complete beam path was evacuated to 3 mbar to prevent absorption from ambient air (water and CO<sub>2</sub>). A mercury–cadmium–telluride (MCT) detector and a resolution of 4 cm<sup>-1</sup> were used for spectra acquisition, and 200 scans were averaged for each spectrum.

The deposition rates for the dopant molecules were set between 0.1 and 1 nm min<sup>-1</sup> and were monitored by a quartz crystal microbalance. The resulting nominal layer thickness  $L_d$  then provides a measure of the total amount of dopants deposited.

**X-ray Photoemission Spectroscopy (XPS).** For XPS measurements Mo(tfd-CO<sub>2</sub>Me)<sub>3</sub> was evaporated at a rate of ca. 1 nm min<sup>-1</sup> onto the pristine P3HT films, which were subsequently transferred to the XPS chamber. Core-level spectra were recorded over time employing a PHI 5000 Versa probe scanning photoelectron spectrometer equipped with a monochromated Al K $\alpha$  X-ray source. The binding energy is referenced to the Fermi edge of a sputter-cleaned silver surface. The focused X-ray beam (200  $\mu\text{m}$  diameter) was moved along the surface within one data series to avoid radiation damage. The combined background-subtracted core-level emission of carbon, sulfur, and fluorine, shown in Figure 1, can be used to determine the molar concentration at the surface.

**Data Analysis.** In order to calculate element ratios, the area of each core level peak  $I$  is weighted with atomic sensitivity factors  $\tilde{I} = I/\text{ASF}$ , which are specific to the spectrometer and account for analyzer transmission, cross section, and average electron mean free path. Since both dopant and matrix contain sulfur and carbon, the molar ratio of dopants  $n_d$  to matrix monomers  $n_m$  is inferred from solving



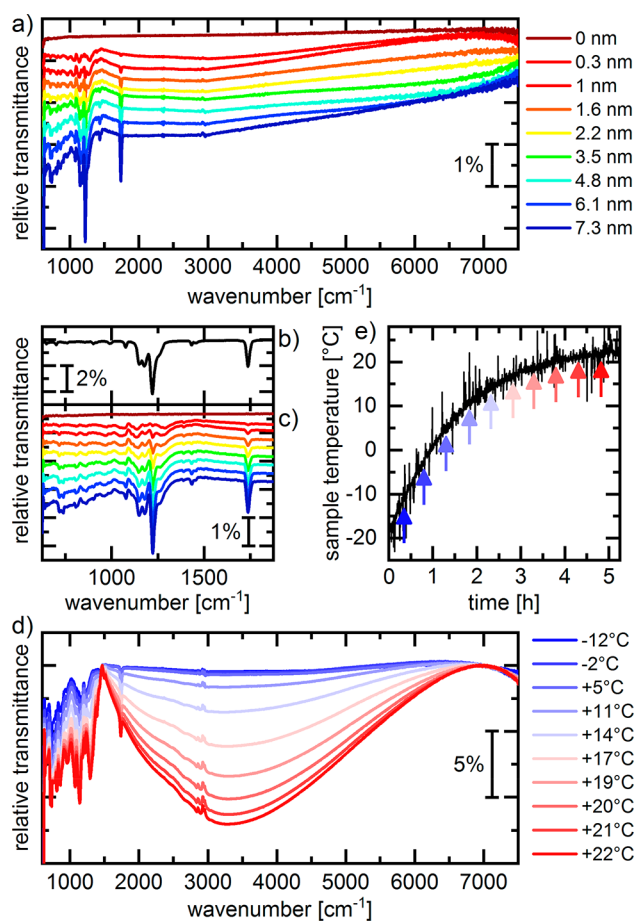
$$\frac{\tilde{I}(\text{F } 1s)}{\tilde{I}(\text{C } 1s, \text{S } 2p)} = \frac{N_d(\text{F})n_d}{N_m(\text{C}, \text{S})n_m + N_d(\text{C}, \text{S})n_d} \quad (1)$$

where  $N_d(\text{C}, \text{F}, \text{S})$  and  $N_m(\text{C}, \text{S})$  denote the number of atoms (C, F, S) in dopant and matrix monomers, respectively. Uncertainties in carbon and sulfur intensities lead to comparably large errors at high molar ratios of dopants. Therefore, a peak component fit of the C 1s emission is used instead of eq 1, attributing the carbon species to Mo(tfd-CO<sub>2</sub>Me)<sub>3</sub> or P3HT (see Figure 1).

## RESULTS

**IR Analysis.** The diffusion of dopant molecules into P3HT layers throughout the sequential doping process was monitored by *in situ* IR spectroscopy. For this purpose, IR spectra of P3HT layers on silicon substrates were measured in transmission geometry before and continuously during the thermal deposition of Mo(tfd-CO<sub>2</sub>Me)<sub>3</sub>. In Figure 2 relative transmission spectra of sequentially doped P3HT layers for varying dopant coverage from 0 to 11 nm are shown. The spectrum of the undoped P3HT was used as reference and is given in the Supporting Information (see Figure S1). Broad polaronic absorption bands around 3250 cm<sup>-1</sup> for rr-P3HT and around 5000 cm<sup>-1</sup> for rra-P3HT, as well as strong IR-active vibrational (IRAV) modes below 1500 cm<sup>-1</sup>, which are typical doping-induced spectral changes, can be observed with increasing dopant coverage for both types of P3HT.<sup>56</sup> These spectral features are attributed to electron transfer from the P3HT to the dopant molecules, resulting in a positively charged polymer backbone, i.e., the formation of positive polarons. The blue-shift in the excitation energy of the polaron feature for rra-P3HT compared to rr-P3HT is caused by the stronger localization of the polaron due to the lower conjugation length along the polymer chain and the suppressed intermolecular  $\pi$ - $\pi$  stacking.<sup>56</sup> Most of the vibrational modes of Mo(tfd-CO<sub>2</sub>Me)<sub>3</sub> are relatively weak compared to the strong IRAV modes of the polymer (see Supporting Information or Figure 3b for IR spectrum of Mo(tfd-CO<sub>2</sub>Me)<sub>3</sub>). Therefore, only the characteristic C=O stretching vibration at 1735 cm<sup>-1</sup>, which is well-separated from the IRAV modes of P3HT, can be used as indicator of the presence of dopant molecules in the doped layer (see Figure 2b,d). The spectra reveal that the doping and, thus, also the diffusion of dopant molecules start simultaneously with the evaporation for both types of P3HT. The strongest spectral changes can be observed for low coverage followed by a continuous saturation for higher coverages. For very high coverages above 8 nm there are almost no additional doping-induced changes, but the vibrational modes of neutral dopant molecules can be detected (see Figures S2 and S3). This observation does not depend on the polymer crystallinity and implies that a further deposition of dopant molecules does not induce additional electron-transfer reactions. Because IR spectroscopy probes the whole layer stack and the spectral resolution of the experiments is limited to 4 cm<sup>-1</sup>, we cannot distinguish between the formation of an adlayer of neutral Mo(tfd-CO<sub>2</sub>Me)<sub>3</sub> on top of the P3HT layer and neutral dopant molecules that are diffusing into the P3HT layer.

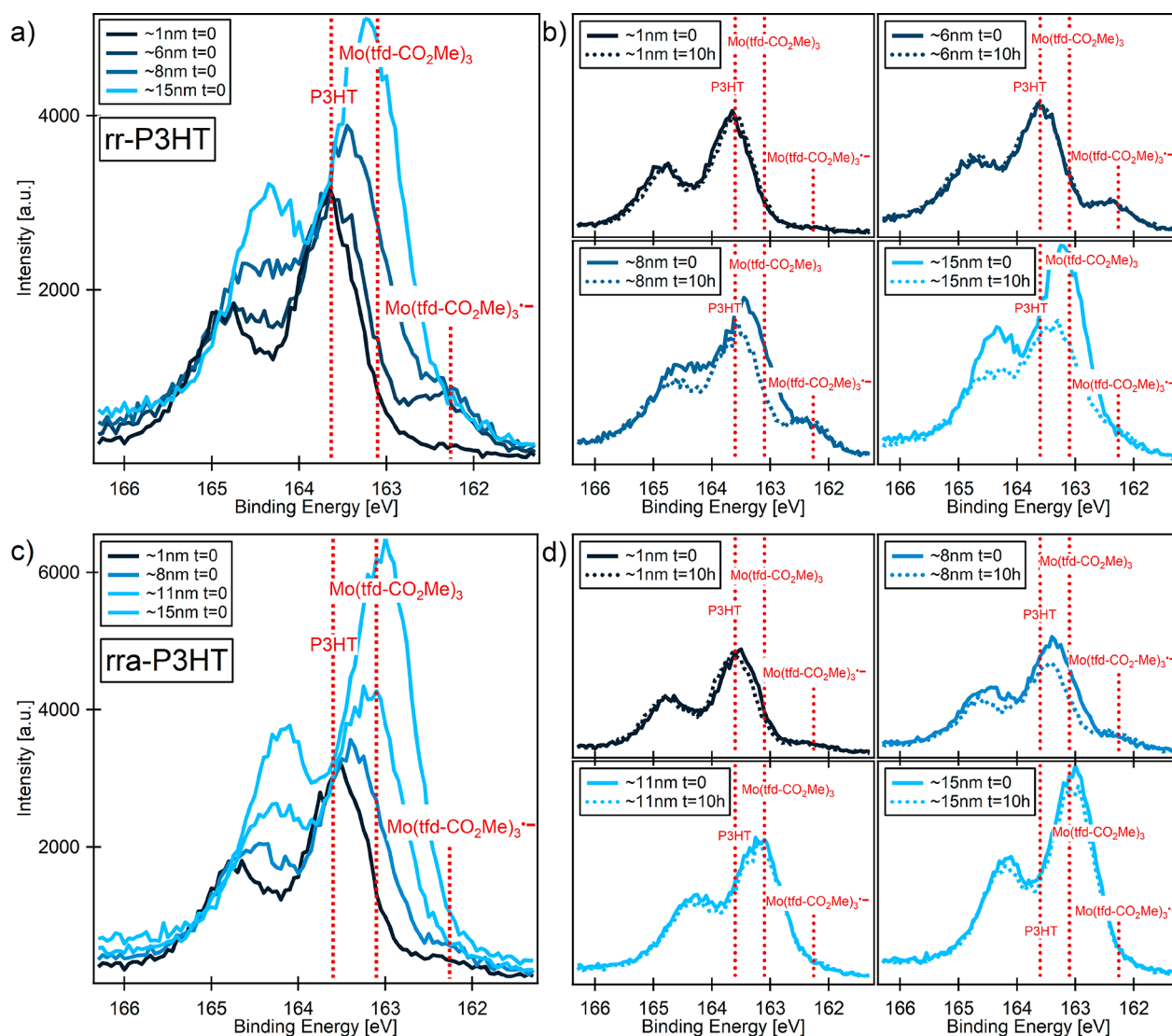
To ensure that the observed doping of P3HT at room temperature (RT) is not only a surface-doping effect and to demonstrate the thermally activated character of the proposed diffusion process, we performed temperature-dependent IR measurements. Prior to dopant evaporation the substrate



**Figure 3.** Relative transmission spectra of a sequentially doped rr-P3HT layer (cooled to  $-80^{\circ}\text{C}$  during Mo(tfd-CO<sub>2</sub>Me)<sub>3</sub> deposition) for varying dopant coverage from 0 to 7.3 nm in the whole MIR range (a) and in the fingerprint range (c). For comparison, a relative transmission spectrum of a thermally deposited 19 nm thick Mo(tfd-CO<sub>2</sub>Me)<sub>3</sub> layer is shown in (b). Baseline corrected relative transmission spectra of a cooled and sequentially doped rr-P3HT layer measured during warm-up to RT are given in (d). (e) Evolution of the sample temperature during the warm-up. The temperatures for the shown spectra in (d) are marked with arrows and are coded by colors given in the legend.

(silicon + rr-P3HT) was cooled to  $-80^{\circ}\text{C}$  using liquid nitrogen, and IR spectra were measured in transmission geometry before and continuously during the deposition process as shown in Figure 3.

Because of the decreased substrate temperature, the ability for dopant diffusion into the P3HT should be strongly suppressed, and a layer of the pure dopant on top of the pure rr-P3HT layer can be expected. The spectrum for a nominal dopant coverage of 0.3 nm shows the characteristic spectral changes (IRAV modes + polaron), indicating electron transfer at the interface between P3HT and the dopant adlayer. For higher coverages the vibrational modes of the neutral dopant molecule clearly can be observed as deduced from the comparison of the spectra in the fingerprint range in Figure 3c and the spectrum of a layer consisting only of Mo(tfd-CO<sub>2</sub>Me)<sub>3</sub> in Figure 3b. When the sample is warmed up, drastic spectral changes occur as shown in Figure 3d. With increasing sample temperature the polaron feature at around 3250 cm<sup>-1</sup>, and the IRAV modes below 1500 cm<sup>-1</sup>, significantly increase in intensity. Both features saturated when the sample reached



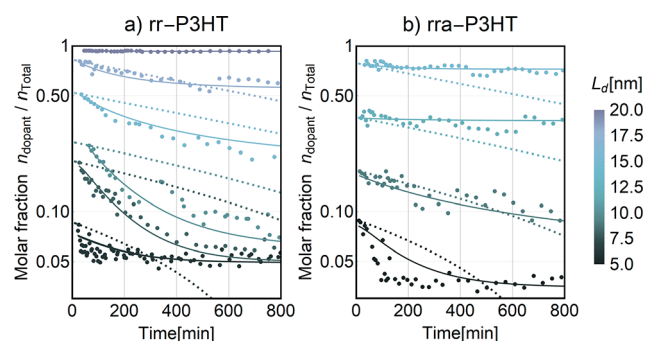
**Figure 4.** Sulfur 2p core-level spectra for rr-P3HT (a) and rra-P3HT (c) with varying dopant coverage directly after dopant evaporation. Time-dependent sulfur 2p core-level spectra for rr-P3HT (b) and rra-P3HT (d). The solid lines show the spectra recorded directly after evaporation, and the dashed lines show the spectra recorded 10 h later. The assignment of the S 2p<sub>3/2</sub> emission line for different chemical components is marked in red in each plot. The shift of the core level line with deposited amounts of Mo(tfd-CO<sub>2</sub>Me)<sub>3</sub> is also affected by a Fermi level shift in the sample with doping, especially compared to pure P3HT (not shown here).<sup>59</sup>

RT (after 3 h). This observation clearly reveals that a thermally activated diffusion process takes place. By evaluating the relative transmittance at IRAV mode and polaron peak positions with respect to the sample temperature, the onset temperature for the diffusion can be determined to occur in the range from 5 to 10 °C (see Figure S4). In addition to the increased thermal energy of the dopant molecules, the initiation of the diffusion process might also be related to a glass transition in the P3HT layer which was reported to take place in this temperature range.<sup>57</sup> Interestingly, from the comparison of IR spectral features of different sequentially doped rr-P3HT layers (from solution or evaporation at RT or at −80 °C and warming up afterward) it is evident that the total number of transferred electrons does not depend on the doping conditions details within the limits of accuracy (see Figure S5).

In conclusion, IR spectroscopy revealed doping-induced spectral changes indicating the diffusion of dopant molecules into neat layers of P3HT. At RT the instantaneous evolution of

these features during the short evaporation procedure (20–30 min) implies a rather fast diffusion, at least of the small amount of dopant molecules that are relevant for the doping process, independent of the P3HT crystallinity. For higher coverage a further deposition of dopant molecules does not induce additional electron transfer, and presumably a dopant adlayer is formed. Thermal activation of the diffusion process was demonstrated by monitoring the deposition of Mo(tfd-CO<sub>2</sub>Me)<sub>3</sub> onto a cooled rr-P3HT layer and the subsequent warming up of the bilayer to RT. But, since IR spectroscopy probes the whole layer stack, this method is not able to detect the diffusion profile of neutral and charged dopant molecules inside the P3HT layer. Because the migration of dopants is an important degradation mechanism in organic electronic devices,<sup>13,16</sup> in the following it will be inspected with XPS how chemical composition in a limited surface region changes with time for various initial dopant layer thicknesses.

**XPS Analysis.** Photoemission spectroscopy provides information complementary to that obtained from IR spec-



**Figure 5.** Surface molar fractions of  $\text{Mo}(\text{tfd-CO}_2\text{Me})_3$  to P3HT monomers for rr-P3HT (a) and rra-P3HT (b). The color legend on the right side indicates the approximate nominal layer thickness  $L_d$  of  $\text{Mo}(\text{tfd-CO}_2\text{Me})_3$ . The solid lines represent the fit according to the model in eqs 2–4. Relative errors for molar ratios can be estimated to be as high as 15%. The dashed lines represent an estimate of desorption considering a top layer of dopants on pure P3HT with a desorption rate of  $r = 0.05 \text{ nm h}^{-1}$  (for details see the Supporting Information).

dopant surface concentration, derived from F 1s and C 1s emission spectra, can be observed in Figure 5 for rr-P3HT and less pronounced for rra-P3HT at certain coverages. The decreasing amount of dopants in the surface layer can be explained by either desorption or slow diffusion of the dopant molecules into the bulk. From a desorption measurement of a thin film of  $\text{Mo}(\text{tfd-CO}_2\text{Me})_3$  on Si we estimated a desorption rate  $r \lesssim 0.05 \text{ nm h}^{-1}$  (see Figure S7). This estimate is further corroborated by IR measurements and suggests that the decrease in dopant concentration seen in the XPS data is primarily due to diffusion.

Time-dependent changes of the surface concentration of a solution-doped P3HT film (with a similar average but homogeneous dopant distribution) were not observed in UHV (see Figure S8).

The decrease in molar surface fraction as it is depicted in Figure 5 is now compared to a one-dimensional model that is formulated in terms of concentration  $c$  and accounts for dopant absorption, bulk diffusion of dopants, charging of dopants, and a finite sorption capacity of the thin film. The model is applied to XPS data taken with the samples at room temperature, i.e., about 5–10 min after the deposition process that likely differs in temperature and kinetics. From the nominal dopant layer thicknesses  $L_d$  (calculated from the deposition rate and time) of the various samples we estimated the amount of dopants  $n_d$  from which molar fractions  $n_d/(n_d + n_m)$  is calculated by using the respective molecular weight and an approximate density for  $\text{Mo}(\text{tfd-CO}_2\text{Me})_3$  and P3HT (for details see the Supporting Information). Molar fractions are locally proportional to molar concentrations  $c$  if a mean density and molar weight is introduced. Therefore, molar concentrations directly correspond to the experimentally derived molar fractions plotted in Figure 5. The total film thickness  $L$  for this simulation is approximated by  $L = L_d + L_0$ , where  $L_0$  denotes the initial thickness of the pristine P3HT film. Within the model we distinguish between the concentration of charged dopants  $c_c$ , neutral mobile dopants  $c_n$ , and dopants adsorbed only at the surface  $c_a$ . The surface region at which  $c_a$  is defined is set to 3 nm, which roughly matches the information depth of XPS as well as the surface roughness of P3HT. In this region, dopants from the surface are expected to be absorbed and, in our model, transformed to neutral, mobile dopants. From Figure 4

trospectroscopy after deposition, as it is a surface-sensitive technique. Chemical states are detected only at the surface with an information depth of only a few nanometers, and neutral and charged dopants can be distinguished.

In Figure 4a,b the high-resolution spectra of the sulfur S 2p emission of sequentially doped rr-P3HT and rra-P3HT are plotted for varying nominal dopant coverage. The relative amount of sulfur in a  $\text{Mo}(\text{tfd-CO}_2\text{Me})_3$  molecule is higher than in a P3HT monomer, which leads to an overall increase in the S 2p intensity as the molar density of sulfur increases with increasing dopant concentration. Moreover, electron transfer from P3HT to the dopant molecule leads to an additional negative charge on the functional core of the metal complex, in particular on the  $\text{C}_2\text{S}_2$  portions of dithiolene ligands.<sup>32,58</sup> Consequently, the core-level energy of the sulfur atoms of the complex is significantly affected, and the shoulder toward lower binding energy can be assigned to  $\text{Mo}(\text{tfd-CO}_2\text{Me})_3^{\bullet-}$ , as marked in Figure 4. First, the amount of charged dopants at the surface increases with increasing coverage, meaning that most dopants detected at the surface are charged. This holds up to a coverage which corresponds to an equivalent nominal thickness of pure dopant of  $L_d \approx 5 \text{ nm}$ , monitored by a microbalance. For higher coverages of rr-P3HT with  $\text{Mo}(\text{tfd-CO}_2\text{Me})_3$ , additional charge transfer does not occur at the surface, which suggests an accumulation of neutral dopants. Moreover, the total amount of charged dopants seems to be lower in the case of rra-P3HT in comparison to rr-P3HT.

To study the further evolution of dopant concentration at the thin-film surface, XPS measurements were performed for various waiting times with the sample being at room temperature. For rr-P3HT these measurements reveal a clear continuous decrease of the uncharged surface fraction for coverages above 6 nm (see Figure S6). The decrease can be clearly seen in Figure 4b, where the S 2p core level spectra are plotted directly after the evaporation and 10 h later. This observation indicates that the dopants diffuse into the rr-P3HT layer. The corresponding measurements on rra-P3HT show that this effect is much less pronounced (see Figure 4d). But, it should be mentioned that the shoulder toward lower binding energies does not further decrease with waiting time for either type of P3HT regardless of the dopant coverage, which suggests that charged dopants do not leave the probed area although we do not expect an even dopant distribution in the film. This indicates that neutral dopants are more mobile than charged dopants, which are likely Coulombically bound to the host matrix.

To investigate the diffusion process of the neutral molecular species in more detail, a comprehensive analysis of the surface ratio of dopant molecules to P3HT monomers was conducted according to eq 1. In Figure 5, the surface fraction as obtained from XPS data analysis is plotted versus waiting time (on a log scale) for the various nominal dopant coverages (quantified by a corresponding dopant layer thickness,  $L_d$ ). A dense adlayer of dopants could be expected if there were only dopant molecules detected within the inelastic electron mean free path of a few nanometers. But, the measured molar ratio of  $\text{Mo}(\text{tfd-CO}_2\text{Me})_3$  to P3HT monomers at the surface shows that there is in fact no dense adlayer of  $\text{Mo}(\text{tfd-CO}_2\text{Me})_3$  present at the surface (already at the first XPS measurement) up to a nominal dopant layer thickness of 18 nm for rr-P3HT and 14 nm for rra-P3HT. This observation agrees with IR results where the penetration of dopant molecules into the P3HT film was already seen during evaporation. A further decrease of the



429 4b,d we have deduced that changes in surface concentration  
 430 are mainly governed by neutral dopants and that the amount of  
 431 charged dopants remain constant with time. Consequently, we  
 432 treat charged dopants as immobile and only neutral dopants to  
 433 be diffusive. The bulk diffusion of neutral dopants is  
 434 approximated by a Fickian diffusion with a diffusion constant  
 435  $D_c$  that is independent of concentration and the diffusion  
 436 current is set to zero at the boundary of the thin film. For  
 437 simplicity, absorption or uptake of dopants and charging of  
 438 neutral dopants are modeled by linear isothermal sorption (in  
 439 eqs 3 and 4) including a saturation capacity.<sup>60</sup> The total  
 440 capacity of dopants in P3HT is denoted by  $S_{\text{tot}}$  and the upper  
 441 bound of the charged fraction is given by  $S_c$ . The coupled  
 442 system of differential equations then reads as

$$443 \quad \partial_t c_n(x, t) = D_c \partial_x^2 c_n(x, t) - \partial_t c_c(x, t) - \partial_t c_a(x, t) \quad (2)$$

$$444 \quad \partial_t c_c(x, t) = k_c c_n(x, t) \left( 1 - \frac{c_c(x, t)}{S_c} \right) \quad (3)$$

$$445 \quad \partial_t c_a(x, t) = -k_a c_a(x, t) \left( 1 - \frac{c_c(x, t) + c_n(x, t)}{S_{\text{tot}}} \right) \quad (4)$$

446 Here, the sorption constants are denoted by  $k_c$  and  $k_a$  for  
 447 charged and adsorbed dopants, respectively. The initial  
 448 conditions for modeling assume that the dopants adsorbed  
 449 on the surface match the molar fraction first measured by XPS  
 450 directly after evaporation, and because of the fast incorporation  
 451 of  $\text{Mo}(\text{tfd-CO}_2\text{Me})_3$  into the P3HT film during the  
 452 evaporation process as observed with IR spectroscopy, a  
 453 remaining dopant fraction is already distributed evenly within  
 454 the P3HT film (for details see the [Supporting Information](#)).  
 455 The total concentration of dopants  $c(0, t)$  is fitted to the data in  
 456 [Figure 5](#). For the fitting routine we set  $S_c$  fixed since it can be  
 457 inferred from the data in [Figure 4a,c](#) that there is a maximal  
 458 number of charged dopants. We chose  $S_c = 0.05$  for rr-P3HT  
 459 and  $S_c = 0.035$  for rra-P3HT. The sorption constant  $k_c$  was set  
 460 sufficiently high to allow for an immediate charge transfer as  
 461 observed with IR spectroscopy. From the model fit we then  
 462 obtain a value of  $k_a \approx 0.015 \text{ min}^{-1}$  for both types of P3HT but  
 463 different values for the total capacity  $S_{\text{tot}}$ . We get a larger value  
 464 of  $S_{\text{tot}}$  for rr-P3HT than for rra-P3HT, meaning that rr-P3HT  
 465 has a higher capacity or free volume for dopants. The fitted  
 466 molar fraction of  $S_{\text{tot}}$  is given by 0.084 for rr-P3HT and 0.058  
 467 for rra-P3HT. In order to achieve the best agreement with our  
 468 experimentally derived data, the diffusion constant  $D_c$  has to be  
 469 high enough to allow for a very fast movement into the bulk,  
 470 which means that in this case the diffusion process is limited by  
 471 the dopant uptake. A lower limit of  $D_c$  can be estimated and  
 472 yields  $D_c \gtrsim 10^{-15} \text{ cm}^2 \text{ s}^{-1}$  for rr-P3HT and  $D_c \gtrsim 3 \times 10^{-16} \text{ cm}^2$   
 473  $\text{s}^{-1}$  for rra-P3HT (for details see the [Supporting Information](#)).  
 474 To understand the differences in  $\text{Mo}(\text{tfd-CO}_2\text{Me})_3$  capacity  
 475  $S_{\text{tot}}$  between rr- and rra-P3HT at high concentrations, it is  
 476 necessary to consider the morphology of such thin films.  
 477 Electron diffraction measurements (see [Figure S12](#)) show that  
 478 rra-P3HT does not exhibit any signature of crystalline packing.  
 479 In contrast, the diffraction patterns of rr-P3HT reveal a clear  
 480 signature of a semicrystalline morphology with crystallites  
 481 being embedded in an amorphous matrix. These measure-  
 482 ments on the materials confirm the results of previous  
 483 studies.<sup>61</sup> As an amorphous matrix with a slightly lower  
 484 density rra-P3HT likely has a larger fractional free volume,  
 485 which would suggest that rra-P3HT would provide a higher

free volume than rr-P3HT. However, the observed behavior of  
 the diffusion of  $\text{Mo}(\text{tfd-CO}_2\text{Me})_3$  in rra- and rr-P3HT does  
 not follow this trend. There is evidence<sup>62</sup> that the noncrystal-  
 line phase in rr-P3HT between the crystalline grains has a  
 lower density than fully amorphous rra-P3HT.

Hence, the regions at grain boundaries in ordered polymers  
 might be important for the diffusion of  $\text{Mo}(\text{tfd-CO}_2\text{Me})_3$  in rr-  
 P3HT and as such could offer an explanation for a higher  
 dopant acceptance of rr-P3HT in comparison to rra-P3HT,  
 here observed for dopant layers with  $L_d > 14 \text{ nm}$ . The free  
 volume in such regions should also affect the mobility of  
 dopants at low concentrations (in this study, in the beginning  
 of the dopant layer deposition). For example, the mobility  
 model of solvent molecules in polymers (as derived from a  
 statistical treatment) proposes a volatility<sup>44,47</sup> which is given by  
 the relation

$$m_d = A_d e^{-B_d/f} \quad (5)$$

where  $m_d$  denotes the mobility,  $A_d$  is a shape-dependent  
 proportionality factor,  $f$  the fractional free volume, and  $B_d$   
 refers to the void size that dopants require to perform a  
 jump.<sup>46</sup> However, at present there is no proof for this  
 hypothesis which would require the direct identifying and  
 imaging of dopant pathways.

## CONCLUSION

In summary, we analyzed the penetration of a bulky metal-  
 organic complex acting as p-dopant into a common polymer  
 matrix. The dopant was sequentially evaporated in UHV on rr-  
 P3HT and rra-P3HT films at room temperature. We conclude  
 that the dopant is readily diffusing into the polymer matrix and  
 doping the P3HT film, which is resolved by identifying  
 electron transfer due to characteristic absorption bands in IR  
 spectra and chemical states from XPS binding energies. The  
 diffusion process requires thermal activation energy close to  
 room temperature, which was shown by evaporating dopants  
 on a liquid-nitrogen-cooled rr-P3HT film and subsequent  
 rewarming of the substrate. With IR spectroscopy we can  
 monitor electron transfer during evaporation, which suggests  
 that both rra-P3HT and rr-P3HT quickly incorporate dopants.  
 Differences of the diffusion behavior between rr- and rra-P3HT  
 could be observed from a certain coverage on. Time-  
 dependent XPS measurements allow for determining changes  
 in doping ratios at the surface for varying dopant coverage. We  
 observed a decrease of neutral dopants at the surface for rr-  
 P3HT with time at higher coverage, which is much less  
 apparent for rra-P3HT. The time dependency of sorption and  
 diffusion was numerically modeled, which yields total  
 capacities for dopant uptake in the polymer layers and limits  
 for the diffusion constant at room temperature. Our data show  
 that the sequential doping approach is clearly applicable to the  
 p-doping of P3HT films. On the other hand, in order to  
 prevent an unwanted diffusion of dopants into the full depth of  
 a P3HT film, a fully amorphous interlayer and a controlled  
 filling of voids using a second suitable molecular transport  
 material or redox-inactive molecule could be viable strategies.

## ASSOCIATED CONTENT

### Supporting Information

The Supporting Information is available free of charge on the  
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IR and XPS data, TEM data, and additional information on data analysis (PDF)

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### Notes

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## ABBREVIATIONS

Mo(tfd-CO<sub>2</sub>Me)<sub>3</sub>, molybdenum tris(1-(methoxycarbonyl)-2-(trifluoromethyl)ethane-1,2-dithiolene); P3HT, poly(3-hexylthiophene); rr-P3HT, regioregular P3HT; rra-P3HT, regiorandom P3HT.

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