

## Theory



55<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL  
CHEMISTRY OLYMPIAD  
SWITZERLAND 2023

# A2-1

English (Official)

## Electrochemical CO<sub>2</sub> Reduction

5% of total								
Question	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	Total
Points	2	8	3	3	5	8	4	33
Score								

**2.1** (2 pt)

**Write and balance** the chemical equation of the half-cell reactions for the following electrochemical reduction processes in acidic environment (i) CO<sub>2</sub> to ethanol; (ii) CO<sub>2</sub> to *n*-propanol.

(i)

(ii)

**2.2** (8 pt)

**Combine** the half-cell of the reduction process with an H<sub>2</sub>/2H<sup>+</sup> half-cell where the latter acts as anode. **Calculate** the value of the standard cell potential of the CO<sub>2</sub> to **ethanol** reduction.

$E_{(\text{CO}_2 \text{ to ethanol})}$  \_\_\_\_\_ V

**2.3** (3 pt)

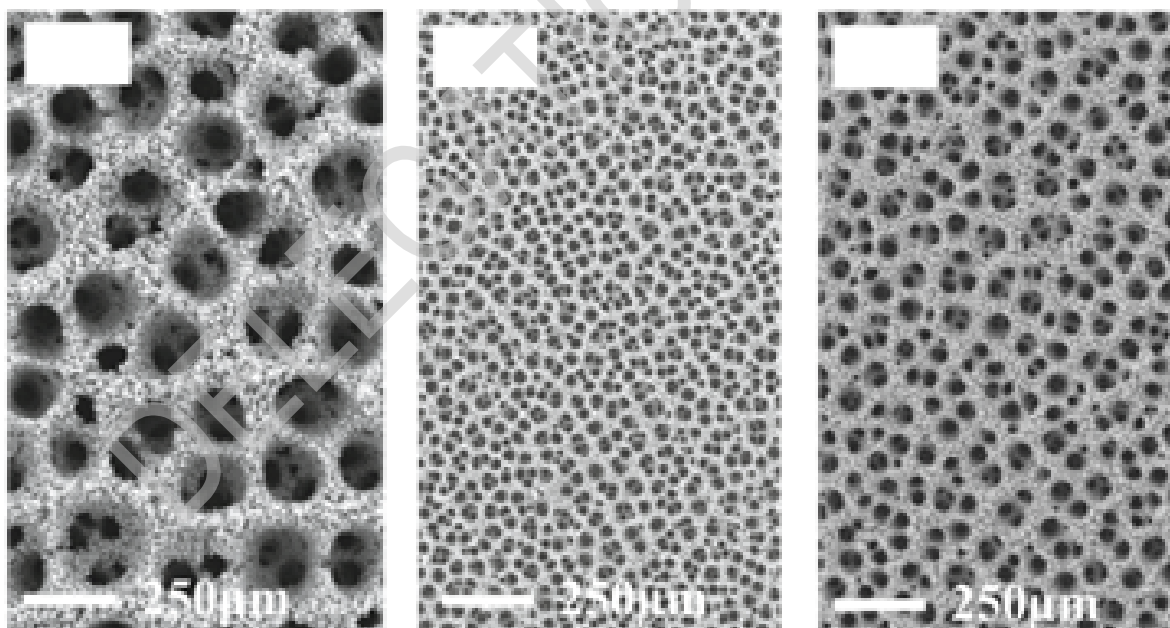
**Write** all the reduction and oxidation half-cell reactions taking place at the cathode and the anode, respectively.

Anode reaction(s):

Cathode reaction(s):

**2.4** (3 pt)

Considering this mechanism, **assign** the correct deposition time to the Cu foams shown in **Figure 2** below (**white boxes upper left corner**).



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2.5 (5 pt)

**Calculate** the Faradaic efficiency (FE in %) of this metal deposition process. FE is defined as  $Q_{\text{product}}/Q_{\text{total}} \cdot 100\%$ .  $Q$  denotes the charge.

$FE =$  \_\_\_\_\_ %

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# A2-4

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**2.6** (8 pt)

**Calculate** the current densities required for the formation of (a) ethanol ( $MW_{\text{ethanol}} = 46.08 \text{ g mol}^{-1}$ ) and (b) *n*-propanol ( $MW_{\text{n-propanol}} = 60.10 \text{ g mol}^{-1}$ ) assuming that the current densities do not change with electrolysis time.

(a)  $j(\text{ethanol}) =$  \_\_\_\_\_  $\text{A cm}^{-2}$

(b)  $j(\textit{n}\text{-propanol}) =$  \_\_\_\_\_  $\text{A cm}^{-2}$

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# A2-5

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**2.7** (4 pt)

**Calculate** the volume of the formed hydrogen on the 1 cm<sup>2</sup> catalyst area at 298.15 K and 1 bar, assuming ideal behavior of the formed hydrogen, and its complete release into the gas phase.

*If you did not get a result in **Task 2.5**, continue with  $FE_{(EtOH)} = 45.1\%$  and  $FE_{(PrOH)} = 4.8\%$ .*

$V_{H_2} =$  \_\_\_\_\_  $cm^3$