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Development of Atomic Layer Etching (ALEt) for GaN-based materials

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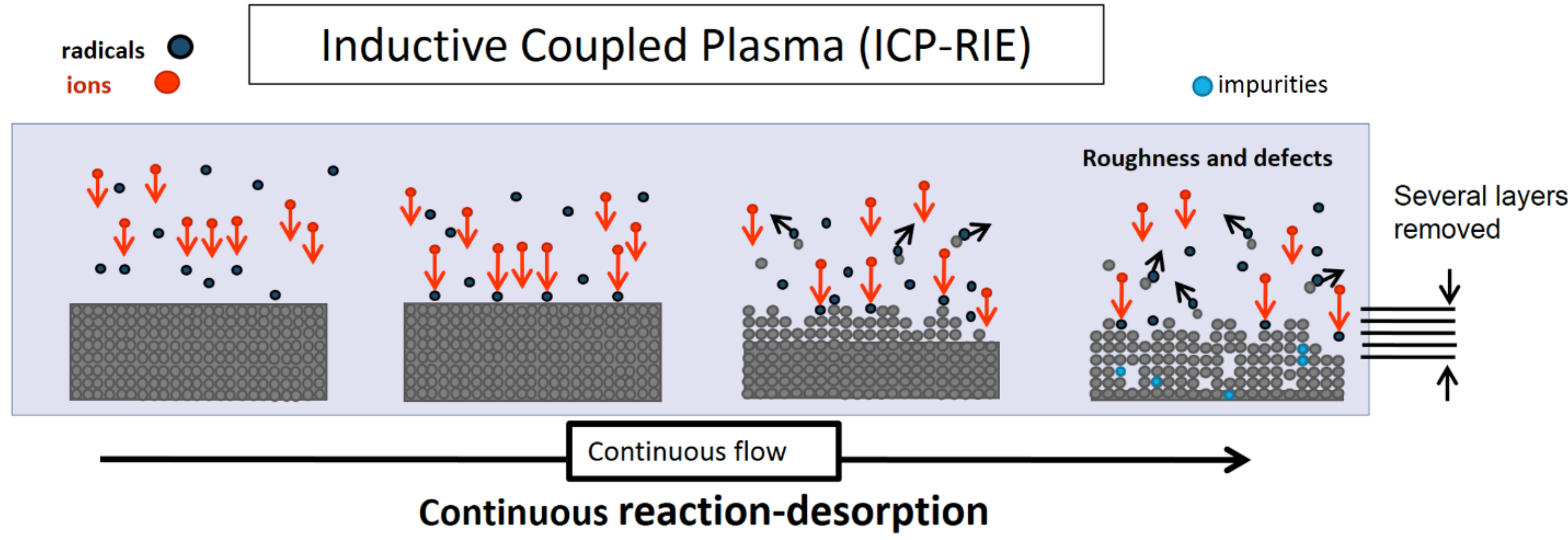
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1. What is Atomic Layer Etching (ALEt)?

Conventional Dry Etching process for GaN-based materials



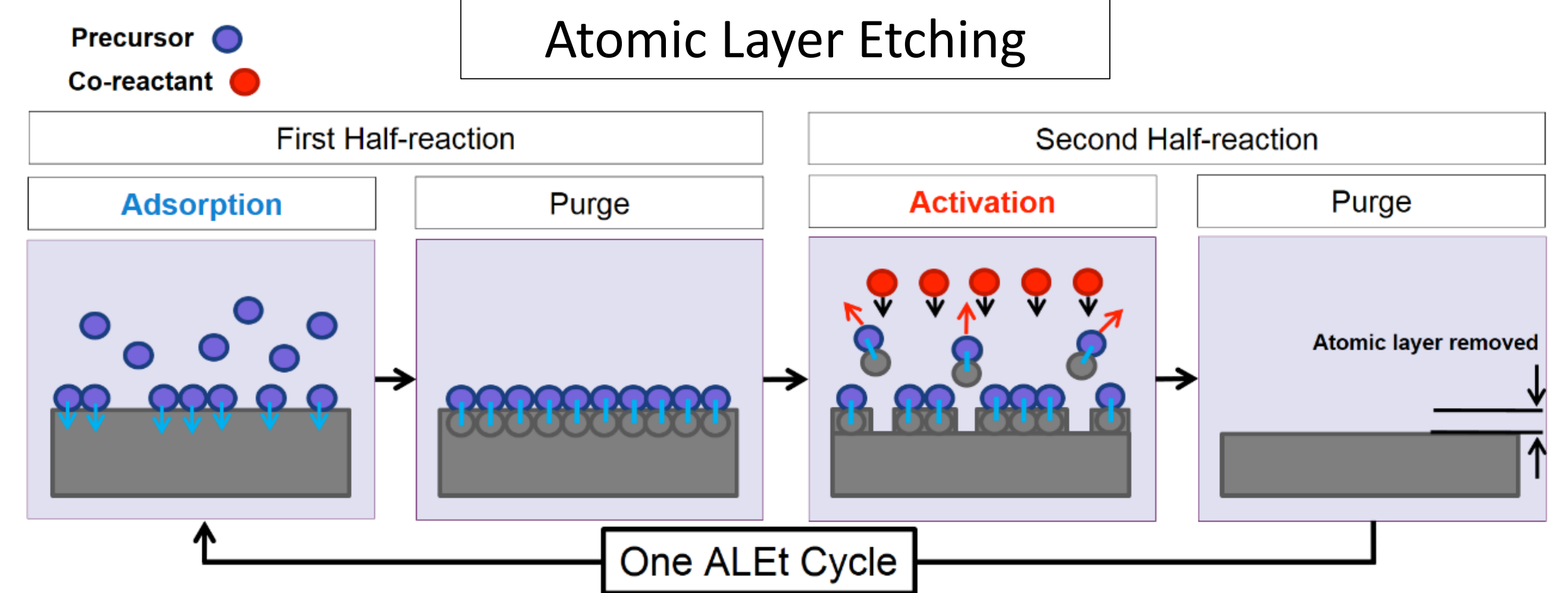
Advantages:

- Fast and deep etching
- Separate controlled of Plasma density (neutrals, radicals, ions), Ionic Fluxes and Ions Energies

Limitations:

- Simultaneous effect of chemistry and ionic bombardment
- Difficult to control Surface States (morphology and composition)

Atomic Layer Etching



Advantages:

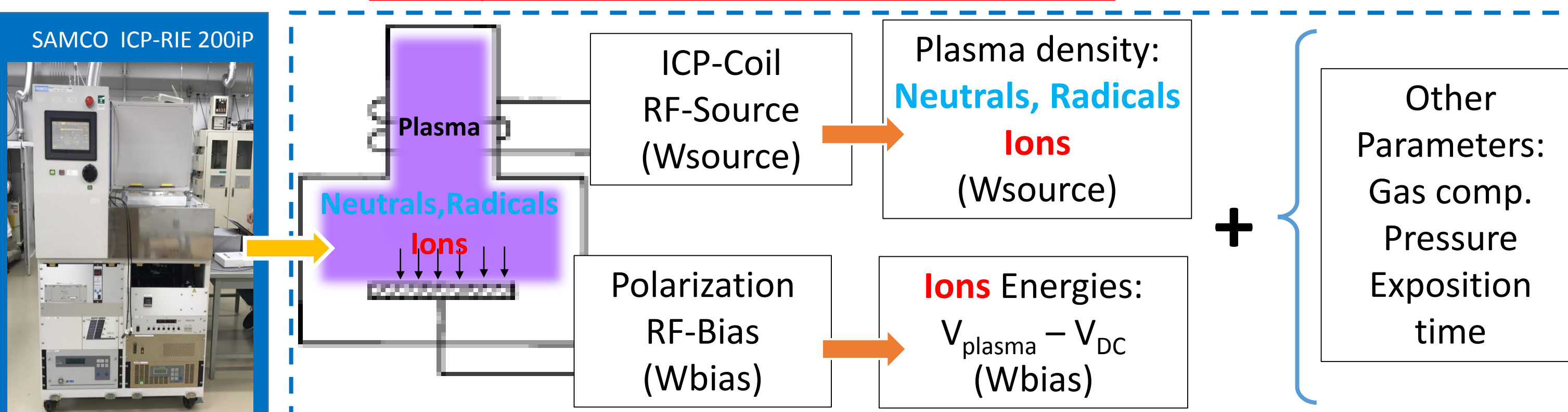
- Separation: **Chemistry (precursor)/ionic bombardment (co-reactant)**
- Etch rate controlled by Numb. of cycles
- Different plasma (or gases): for **chemistry** and **ionic bombardment**

Challenges:

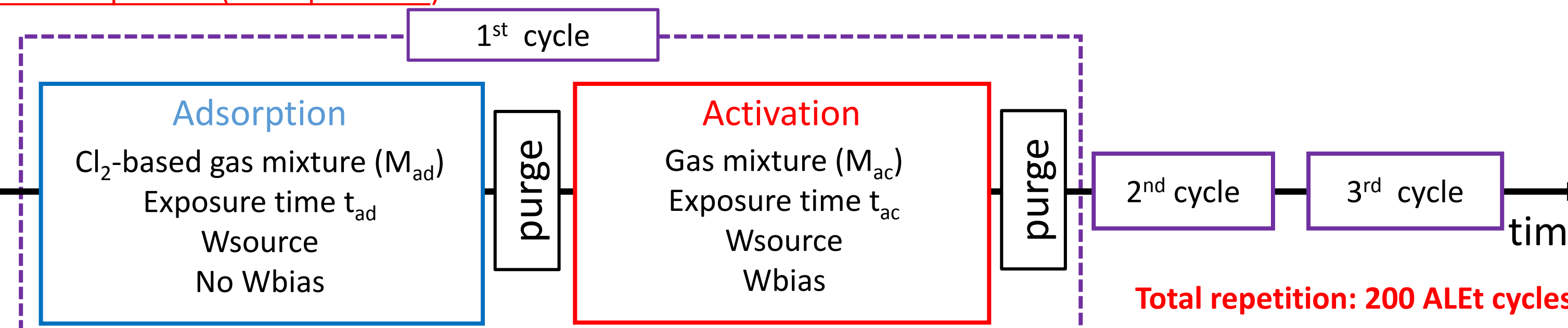
- Keep the "self-limiting" feature
- Slow: Etch profile defined by Numb. of cycles (< 1nm/cycle)
- Monitoring of etched thickness

2. Experimental procedures

Development of ALEt on SAMCO ICP-RIE 200 iP



Our ALE process (to be patented):

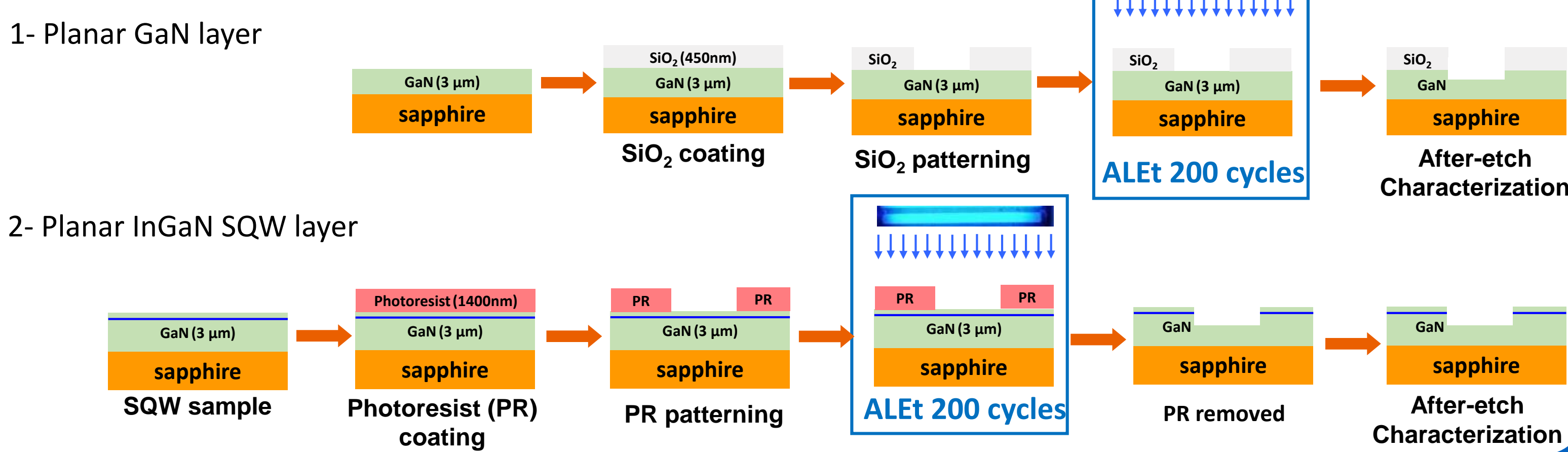


Deposition:
GaN layers with embedded InGaN Single Quantum Well (SQW)

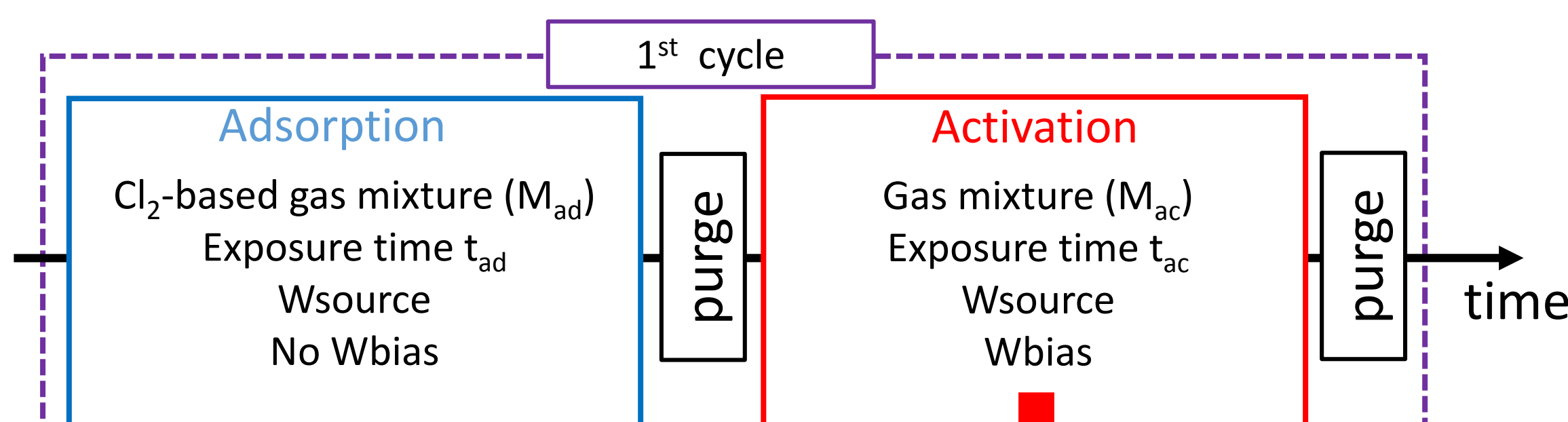


Capping layer: GaN (5 nm)
Single quantum well: InGaN with 18% In (2.75 nm; 750°C)
GaN (20 nm; 850°C)
Underlayer: InGaN with 3-5% In (50 nm; 750°C)

Holes fabrication process and Experimental procedures:



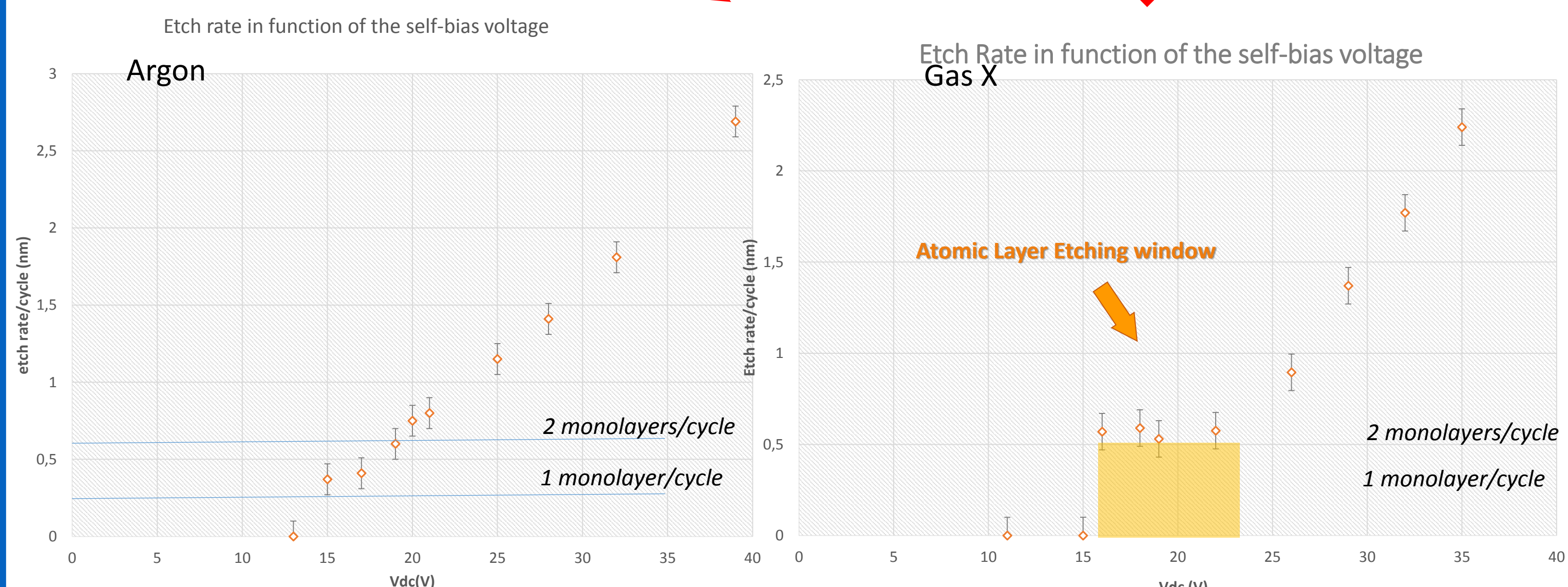
3. ALEt Etch rate as a function of Activation Bias



Effect of W_{bias} on ALE etching rate and (Self-bias voltage and ion energy)

$M_{ac} = Ar$

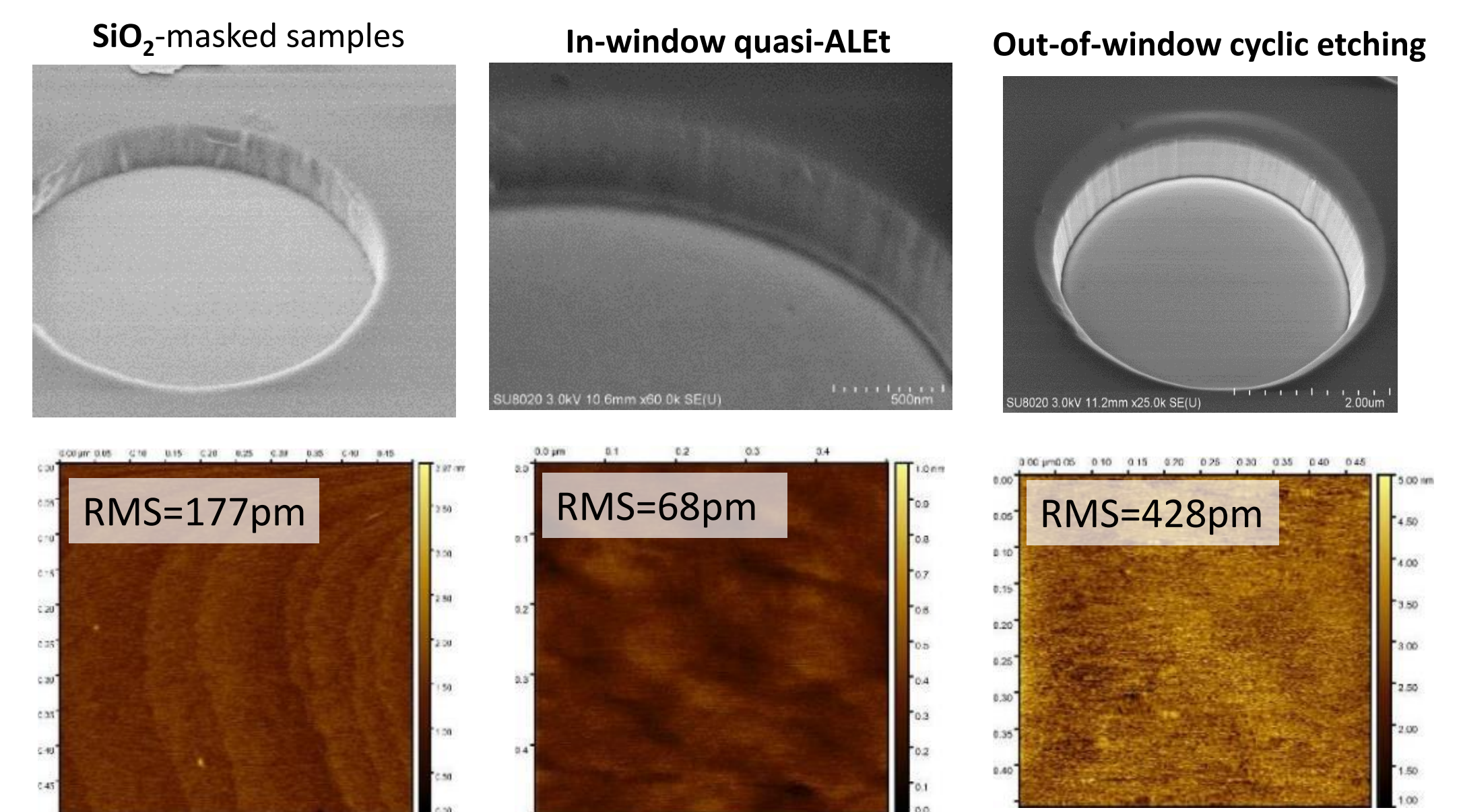
$M_{ac} = X$



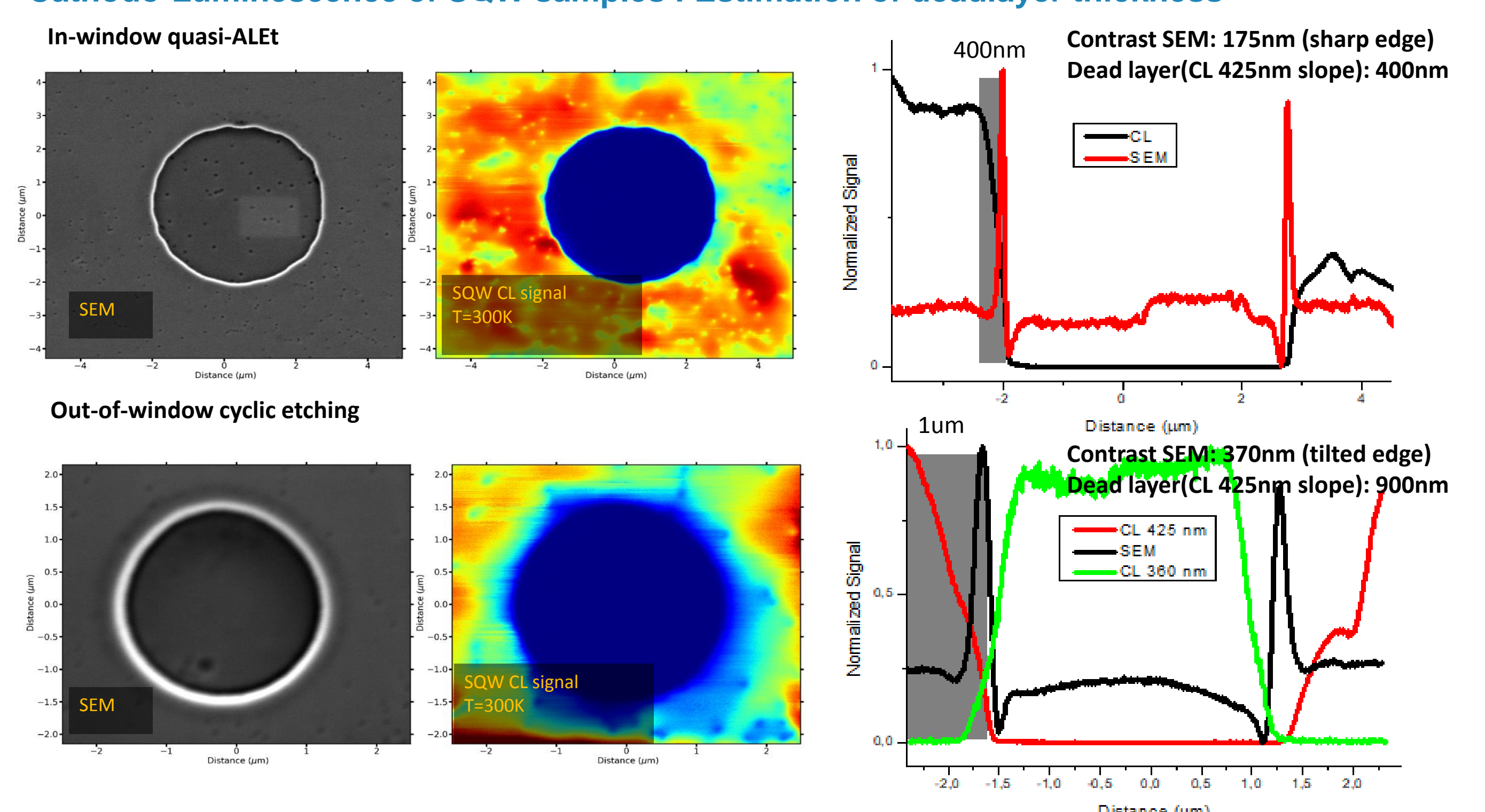
Etching rate = etched thickness (SEM)/200

Optimization of the Activation step:
The best Etch rate: near 2 monolayers/ cycle
Gas X have a better control of ALEt

4. Comparison of in- and out-of ALEt window etched samples

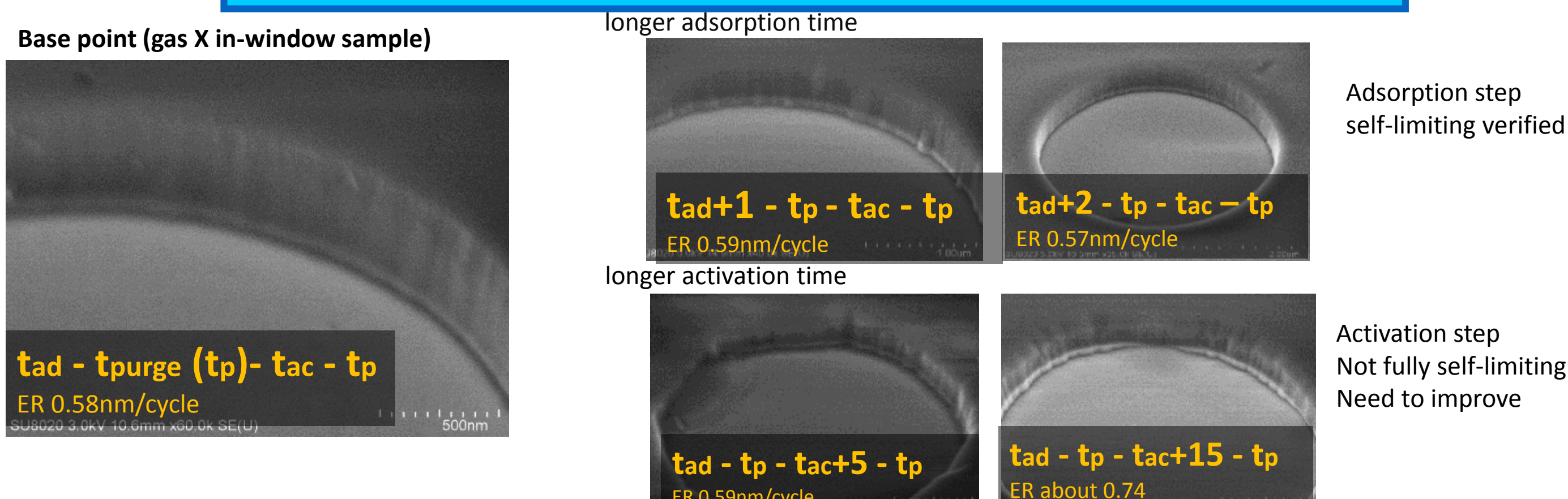


Cathodo-Luminescence of SQW samples : Estimation of deadlayer thickness



etched SQW samples with gas X: ICP/Bias 100/25W (Vdc=19V) (top) and ICP/Bias 100/45W (Vdc=32V) (down) and dead layer on the etch edge

5. Demonstration of the self-limiting



6. Conclusions and perspectives

- Gas X has a better etch control on the ALEt process
 - Quasi ALEt has a better etch quality: sharp border; thinner dead layer
- Optimizations → real ALEt + limiting the dead layer
Improve the Activation step (take a Bias on the ALEt window → change the ICP power); change pressure in different steps, etc
verify other advanced properties → Apply to Electronic/optoelectronic device



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