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1 **Solar-assisted efficient cleanup of high-viscosity oil spills using magnetic porous**  
2 **biochar**

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14 **Abstract:** Efficient cleanup of oil spills is still a global challenge due to the high  
15 viscosity of crude oil and complicated topographic features. Herein, magnetic porous  
16 carbon powders (MPCs) with photothermal effect prepared at a  $\text{Fe}(\text{NO}_3)_3$ : bamboo  
17 mass ratio was 1/1 carbonized at 700 °C. After modifying with the n-octadecylamine,  
18 the oleophilic MPCs exhibited rapid and selective absorption of different oils from  
19 polluted water, with an optimal absorption capacity of 3.2–8.1 g/g. Since oil's viscosity  
20 is highly temperature-sensitive, MPCs with photothermal characteristics offer apparent  
21 advantages in absorbing high viscosity oil. Moreover, due to the incorporation of  
22 magnetic components, powder-like MPCs can be conveyed to a specified oil pollution  
23 spot (including gaps or cracks) conveniently and collected through a remote magnetic  
24 field. This work demonstrates a simple and low-cost way of designing and producing  
25 oil/water separation materials, particularly floating high-viscosity oil recovery.

26 **Keywords:** High viscosity; Oil spill; Photothermal effect; Magnetic biochar; Oil/water  
27 separation

28

## 29 **Introduction**

30 The oil spill caused by offshore oil extraction or transportation causes enormous  
31 ecological disasters for the marine biosphere and the entire ecosphere of the earth [1-  
32 5]. The spilt oils will cover the water, block light and oxygen from reaching the deep  
33 ocean, and destroy marine life. Therefore, several cleanup solutions, including  
34 automated collection, biological breakdown, controlled burning, and chemical  
35 dispersants, have been proposed for oil spills [6-10]. Nonetheless, the implementation  
36 of these solutions has been hampered by a number of problems, including hazardous  
37 production, slow degradation, secondary pollution, etc. Consequently, it is essential to  
38 utilize more environmentally friendly methods for cleaning up the oil spill.

39 Using sorbent to recover oil from water is the most practical and effective method due  
40 to its minimal impact on the natural environment [11-13]. Porous materials have been  
41 regarded as effective absorbents, particularly oleophilic porous absorbents that can  
42 extract oil from water efficiently. Numerous materials, such as carbon-based aerogels,  
43 polymer sponges, and silica aerogels, have been produced based on this concept [14-  
44 16]. Upon application of these materials, several variables that influence their sorption  
45 ability must be considered. One parameter that impacts the separation speed and  
46 efficiency is the absorbent's shape. In the ocean, oil typically exists as emulsified  
47 droplets. Inadequate contact with the porous absorbent will significantly reduce  
48 separation efficiency [17, 18]. Therefore, a block-shaped absorbent is less effective due  
49 to its vast size, which results in inadequate interaction with the oil in the complicated  
50 topography [19, 20]. Alternatively, powder-like substances with a high specific surface  
51 area can produce successful oil-water separation in certain circumstances due to their  
52 sufficient interaction with tiny oil droplets [21-23]. In addition, by incorporating  
53 magnetic components into the powder absorbents, it is possible to achieve quick oil  
54 recycling by applying an external magnetic field and easily entering cracks or gaps.

55 Besides the influence of the absorbent's shape, the viscosity of the oil is also an essential  
56 component that influences the adsorption efficiency. The viscosity of crude oil is

57 usually as high as  $10^3\sim 10^5$  mPa·s, which makes it difficult to be absorbed into porous  
58 absorbents[24]. Numerous studies have been conducted to reduce the viscosity of crude  
59 oil and boost the absorbent's adsorption efficiency. Yu et al. demonstrated a graphene-  
60 coated sponge, which could clean viscous crude oil as the Joule heating effect was  
61 stimulated [25]. Their following work also reported a ferrimagnetic sponge with a  
62 magnetocaloric effect [26]. When the sponge was exposed to an alternating current  
63 magnetic field, the viscosity of the crude oil around the sponge decreased due to  
64 magnetic heating. However, the electric-consumption activation method for the Joule  
65 heat effect is uneconomical in the maritime environment.

66 Solar energy is more environmentally benign and adaptable to the ocean than electrical  
67 energy. In this field, developing photothermal absorbents that can rapidly convert solar  
68 energy to thermal energy will be advantageous [27-29]. Due to its broad-spectrum solar  
69 light absorption, ultralow density, high porosity, high lipophilicity, environmental safety,  
70 and physical/chemical stability, carbon-based materials, such as graphene, carbon  
71 nanotubes, and carbon fiber, have been widely studied [30-33]. However, these carbon  
72 nanoparticles are too costly for widespread use. Considering that the carbon source  
73 from biomass is abundant, renewable, biodegradable, and low-cost, there has been an  
74 increased focus on developing carbon-based materials from renewable resources, such  
75 as agricultural wastes and natural products [34-36]. However, few investigations have  
76 been conducted to create magnetic and photothermal powder absorbents generated from  
77 sustainable natural resources for viscous oil treatment.

78 In this work, the agricultural waste bamboo powders and ferric nitrate were employed  
79 as a carbon source to manufacture magnetic porous carbon powders (MPCs) with  
80 desirable photothermal performance for viscous oil cleanup. We utilized a method  
81 inspired by mussel to graft nonpolar n-octadecylamine (ODA) onto MPCs using  
82 polydopamine (PDA). The hydrophobic product ODA-MPCs developed displayed a  
83 high capacity for oil absorption and a high tolerance for acidic, alkaline, and hypersaline  
84 conditions. Meanwhile, the MPCs successfully generated heat effects under solar

85 radiation, significantly increasing the oil's fluidity. When the oil's viscosity reaches  
86 5000 mPa·s, its absorption capacity reaches its maximum of 8.1 g/g.

## 87 **Experiments**

### 88 **Materials**

89 Bamboo powders were obtained from a local wood factory (Changsha, China). 3-  
90 hydroxytryptamine hydrochloride (dopamine), methylbenzene, n-hexane and tris-  
91 (hydroxymethyl) aminomethane (TRIS, 99%, a buffer agent) were purchased from  
92 Sigma-Aldrich Co., Ltd (Shanghai, China). n-octadecylamine (ODA) and ethanol were  
93 purchased from Aladdin Reagent Co., Ltd (Shanghai, China). The peanut oil was  
94 purchased from the local grocery store. Dow Chemical Company supplied silicon oil  
95 (Michigan, America). We purchased tetrahydrofuran and ethyl acetate from Sinopharm  
96 Chemical Reagent Co., Ltd. (Shanghai, China). The procurement of conduction oil  
97 from MOJIEZUO Co., Ltd. (Shanghai, China). Liaohe Oilfield was the source of  
98 petroleum (Panjin, China). All chemical reagents and solvents were used as received  
99 without further purification.

### 100 **Preparation of magnetic porous carbons**

101 The bamboo powders were firstly immersed in ferric nitrate solution at 90 °C under  
102 constant stirring until the complete evaporation of visible water. After being dried at  
103 100 °C for 6 h, the red powders were transferred to a tube furnace and carbonized at  
104 high temperatures for 2 h with 100 mL min<sup>-1</sup> of Ar flow protection. The pyrolyzed black  
105 powders are washed with *n*-hexane three times and dried at 60 °C for 2 h. The obtained  
106 MPCs were labeled as C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4 and C-5, respectively, according to different  
107 fabricated preparation conditions. (**Table 1**).

108 **Table 1.** Formulas and preparation conditions for MPCs

MPCs	Mass ratio (Fe(NO <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>3</sub> :bamboo)	sintering temperature
C-1	1:2	600
C-2	1:1	600
C-3	2:1	600
C-4	1:1	700

**109 Oleophilic modification of porous carbon**

110 As-prepared MPCs were dispersed in 100 mL buffer solution (10 mM, pH=8.5)  
111 followed by adding 270 mg dopamine. After a bath sonication of 10 min, the suspension  
112 was stirred at room temperature for 24 h. The PDA-coated MPCs were then collected  
113 via solid-liquid separation and a water-washing treatment before being dried in a  
114 vacuum oven at 50 °C for 24 h. Subsequently, PDA-coated MPCs were redispersed in  
115 100 mL ethanol containing 2 mmol ODA for oleophilic modification. After stirring for  
116 24 hours, the collected solids were filtrated and rinsed with ethanol to remove unreacted  
117 ODA. Finally, the modification product MPCs-ODA was dried at 50 °C under a vacuum  
118 for 24 h.

**119 Material characterizations**

120 The morphologies of all samples were observed by scanning electron microscope  
121 (SEM). X-ray diffraction (XRD) measurements were carried out on an X-ray powder  
122 diffractometer (Bruker D8 Advance, Germany). N<sub>2</sub> adsorption/desorption isotherms  
123 were measured using a surface area and porosimetry analyzer (Micromeritics ASAP  
124 2460, America) at 77 K in the relative pressure range of P/P<sub>0</sub>. The specific surface area  
125 was determined by the Brunauer-Emmett-Teller (BET) method. The magnetic  
126 properties of the powders were measured by JDAW-2000C&D vibrating sample  
127 magnetometer (VSM). The morphologies of the powders were characterized by JEOL  
128 JSM-6490LV scanning electron microscope (SEM). Fourier Transform Infrared spectra  
129 (FTIR) were recorded using a Fourier transform infrared spectrometer (Thermo  
130 Scientific Nicolet iS50, America) over 4000-400 cm<sup>-1</sup>. The samples were pressed into  
131 compact wafers using a stainless steel die under the pressure of 5 MPa for several  
132 minutes, a SL20QB contact angle meter was used to detect the contact angle using water  
133 as the droplet. Thermal images of the pellets were taken by an infrared thermal imaging  
134 camera (Fluke, apparatus model).

**135 Sorption capacity test towards oil and organic solvents**

136 Typically, 0.5 g dry carbon powders were added into a beaker filled with 20 g organic  
137 liquid without stirring. After 30 min, the soaked powders were magnetically collected,  
138 and the remaining oil in the beaker was weighed. The maximum oil sorption capacity  
139 of the powders was calculated by

$$140 \quad q = \frac{20 - C_f}{0.5}$$

141 where  $q$  is the maximum sorption capacity ( $\text{g}_{\text{oil}}/\text{g}_{\text{sorbent}}$ ), and  $C_f$  is the final weight of the  
142 oil.

### 143 **Recycling test**

144 After the oil-absorption test, the oil-containing superhydrophobic particles were  
145 magnetically removed from the mixtures and reused after three tetrahydrofuran rinses.  
146 Then, the clean powders were dried at 50 °C for the next oil-absorption cycle. The  
147 recyclability was evaluated by calculating the oil-absorption capacity of powders that  
148 experienced 20-cycles absorption. Also, the CA measurement was operated to evaluate  
149 the superhydrophobicity of reused powders.

### 150 **Chemical stability tests**

151 The chemical stability of magnetic powders was carried out in a series of solutions with  
152 pH in the range of 3-13 at room temperature. Firstly, 1 g powders were sprinkled into a  
153 beaker and mixed with 100 mL pre-made solution with a stable pH value. After 24 hours,  
154 the powders were recollected and dried. And then, the CA and adsorption capacity of  
155 powders were measured to determine pH stability. With the same method, a NaCl  
156 solution was prepared to imitate the seawater to investigate the stability of powders in  
157 a marine environment.

### 158 **Results and discussion**





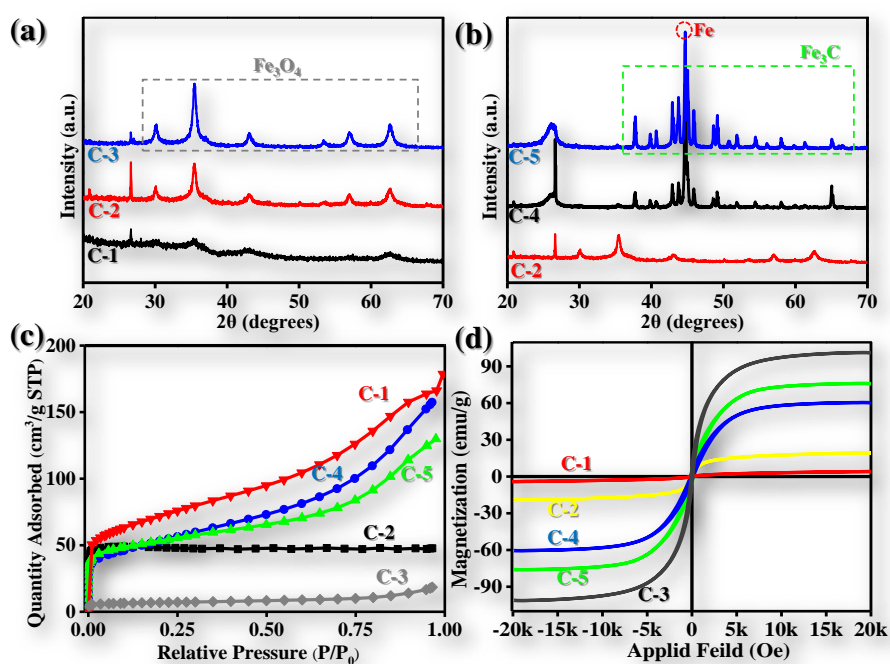
159

160 **Fig. 1** Schematic diagram for the fabrication of hydrophobic magnetic carbon powder.

161 As illustrated in **Fig. 1**, the bamboo powder was used as a carbon precursor and was  
 162 then mixed with Fe(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub> solution. Magnetic particles were formed during the  
 163 pyrolysis of the biomass-derived carbon. Additional bio-inspired surface modification  
 164 conferred optimal hydrophobicity on the powders via grafting of long-chain alkane[37,  
 165 38].

166 The crystalline structure of the produced magnetic carbon powders was determined by  
 167 XRD analysis. As shown In **Fig. 2a**, the XRD patterns of composite powders are  
 168 manufactured with different ratios of basic materials. All three types of powders had  
 169 distinctive face-centered cubic Fe<sub>3</sub>O<sub>4</sub> (JCPDS NO.19-0629) peak shapes. When the  
 170 Fe(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub> ratio in raw materials increases, the peaks become sharper and more intense,  
 171 indicating a higher Fe<sub>3</sub>O<sub>4</sub> crystalline content. The presence of graphitized carbon also  
 172 causes a significant peak near about 26.5°. XRD patterns were also employed to  
 173 examine the impact of sintering temperatures on powder phase transitions. As shown in  
 174 **Fig. 2b**, iron-containing crystalline phases, including Fe<sub>3</sub>O<sub>4</sub> (JCPDS NO.19-0629),  
 175 Fe<sub>3</sub>C (JCPDS NO.35-0772), and Fe (JCPDS NO.06-0696), appeared. Specifically, for  
 176 the C-2 fabricated at 600 °C, recognizable Fe<sub>3</sub>O<sub>4</sub> peaks together with graphite carbon  
 177 could be seen. As the temperature rose to 700°C, the Fe peak became apparent, and the

178 Fe<sub>3</sub>O<sub>4</sub> peaks faded in the curve of C-4. When the temperature reaches 800 °C, sharp Fe  
 179 peaks, several Fe<sub>3</sub>C peaks, and amorphous carbon peaks can be seen. Therefore, it can  
 180 be inferred that the Fe-containing compounds were gradually reduced to elemental Fe  
 181 with the increased sintering temperature. The BET test was subsequently used to  
 182 determine the precise surface areas of the objects. In **Fig. 2c**, the nitrogen adsorption  
 183 curves in C-2 and C-3 have attained saturation at low pressure. Due to micropores and  
 184 mesopores, a characteristic type-IV isotherm was seen in C-1, C-4, and C-5[39]. As  
 185 shown in **Table 2**, C-1, C-4, and C-5 had BET surface areas of 201.0, 186.2, and 178.3  
 186 m<sup>2</sup>/g, respectively, which were more significant than the other two samples and  
 187 advantageous for oil absorption. VSM evaluated the magnetic properties of the samples  
 188 at room temperature due to the presence of Fe-containing components. The magnetic  
 189 hysteresis curves of C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, and C-5 revealed saturation magnetizations  
 190 (Ms) of 3.8, 19.2, 101.1, 60.5, and 76.0 emu/g (**Fig. 2d**). The MPC magnetic hysteresis  
 191 loops exhibited paramagnetic behavior between 20000 and -20000 Oe, devoid of  
 192 remanence or coercivity. Magnetic saturation values of samples were also impacted by  
 193 Fe(NO<sub>3</sub>)<sub>3</sub>/bamboo ratios and sintering temperatures. The paramagnetic characteristic  
 194 and the ability to tailor the saturation values of the magnetic field significantly  
 195 improved the operability of powder-like oil absorbers.



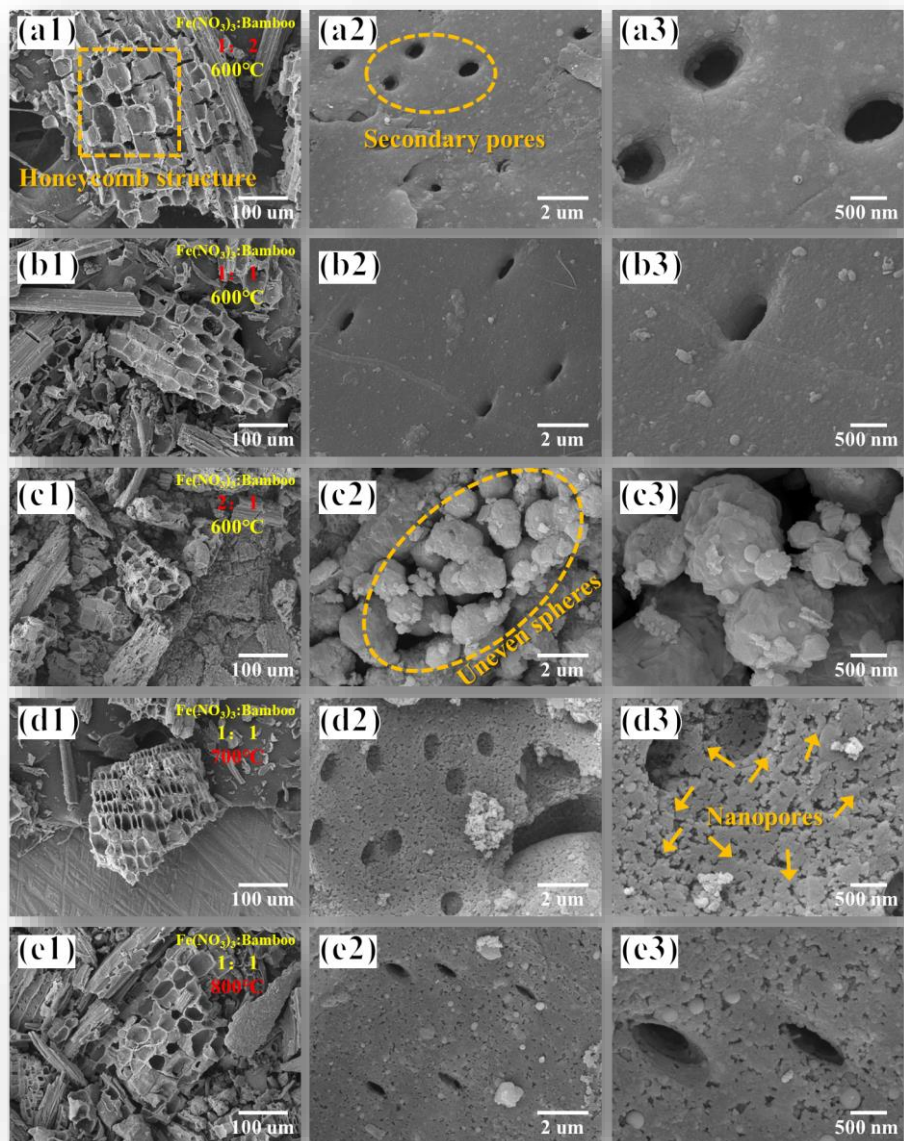
197 **Fig. 2** XRD patterns of samples prepared at different ratios of raw materials (a) and  
198 prepared at different temperatures (b); Nitrogen adsorption-desorption isotherms (c)  
199 and Magnetization hysteresis loops of samples (d).

200 **Table 2.** Specific surface area and saturation magnetization of samples.

Sample	C-1	C-2	C-3	C-4	C-5
Specific surface area (m <sup>2</sup> /g)	201.0	143.2	22.8	186.2	178.3
Saturation magnetization (emu/g)	3.8	19.2	101.1	60.6	76.0

201 **Fig. 3a1-e1** illustrates the microstructures of MPCs. All MPCs had a honeycomb-like  
202 structure with cell diameters of 20–50  $\mu\text{m}$  at low magnification. Additionally, the  
203 magnified images (**Fig. 3a2-e2**) revealed the presence of numerous secondary pores in  
204 the cell wall, except for C-3, with sizes of roughly 1  $\mu\text{m}$ . After pyrolysis, the porous C-  
205 3 debris converted into uneven spheres due to the excess ferric salts. The photos in **Fig.**  
206 **3a3-e3** provided further detail on the pore wall. We discovered that the walls of C-1  
207 and C-2 were relatively smooth. While the walls of C-4 and C-5 were coated with a  
208 dense network of nanopores. Additionally, as illustrated in **Fig. 3c2**, the stratified  
209 microstructures of nanospheres in C-3 were revealed. C-4 and C-5 reflected hierarchical  
210 structures with honeycomb-like morphologies, including submillimeter-, micro-, and  
211 nanopores. The multilevel hierarchical structure was more conducive to oil storage and  
212 made it easier for oil to penetrate the interiors of MPCs. In comparison, C-1 and C-2  
213 allow for the selection of only two types of pores.

214 The current work's target absorbents required a high absorption capacity and magnetic  
215 intensity. Both C-4 and C-5 had a desirable  $M_s$  value and a large specific surface area,  
216 which translated to a high absorption capacity and ease of use in oil spill remediation.  
217 Thus, considering the energy required for preparation and the functional properties, C-  
218 4 generated at 700  $^{\circ}\text{C}$  was chosen as the subject of the ensuing inquiry.

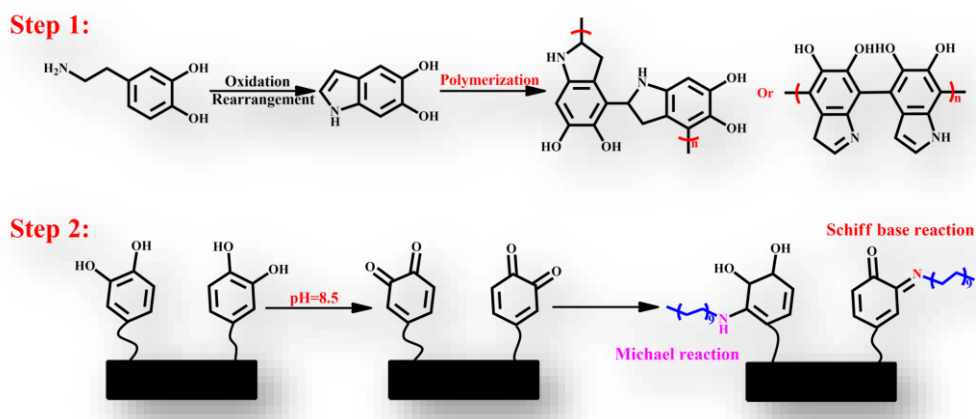


219

220 **Fig. 3** SEM images of C-1 (a1-3), C-2 (b1-3), C-3 (c1-3), C-4 (d1-3) and C-5 (e1-3).

221 As mentioned before, MPCs' hydrophobicity and capacity to float are critical for oil  
 222 spill remediation. However, due to their high density and hydrophilic surface, the MPCs  
 223 in their prepared state cannot float stably over water. However, this problem could be  
 224 solved by a bio-inspired surface grafting technique employed to endow the MPCs with  
 225 hydrophobicity and avoid secondary contamination from absorbents. Through the  
 226 typical Schiff base reaction and Michael addition caused by dopamine polymerization,  
 227 ODA with a long alkyl chain was successfully grafted onto PDA-covered MPCs in this  
 228 study. The detailed synthesis technique, as depicted in **Fig. 4**: Dopamine polymerization

229 first formed a PDA layer that shielded MPCs from corrosion and supplied functional  
 230 groups as a site for grafting hydrophobic chemicals. After that, the ODA was covalently  
 231 grafted onto MPCs-PDA via a standard Michael addition or Schiff base reaction  
 232 between amino and quinone groups.



233

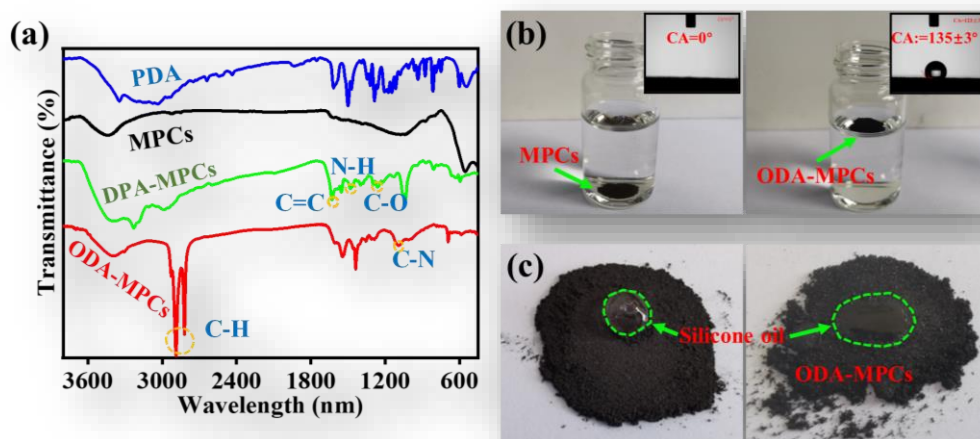
234 **Fig. 4** Reaction mechanism of dopamine and ODA during the dip-coating process.

235 In order to compare the surface properties between the samples before and after coating,  
 236 the FTIR spectra of pure MPCs and ODA-MPCs were compared in **Fig. 5a** to indicate  
 237 MPCs' surface functionalization. The absorption peaks at approximately  $1610\text{ cm}^{-1}$   
 238 ( $\text{C}=\text{C}$  stretching),  $1485\text{ cm}^{-1}$  ( $\text{N}-\text{H}$  scissoring), and  $1284\text{ cm}^{-1}$  ( $\text{C}-\text{O}$  stretching) prove  
 239 that PDA was coated on the MPCs. The new peaks at  $2915$  and  $2848\text{ cm}^{-1}$  on the ODA-  
 240 MPCs curve were connected with  $\text{CH}$  stretching vibrations, which were contributed by  
 241 the abundant methyl and methylene groups in ODA molecules. The peak at  $1150\text{ cm}^{-1}$   
 242 might be attributable to the secondary amine's  $-\text{C}-\text{N}-$  stretching vibration, which  
 243 provided the presence of an interaction between ODA and PDA. FTIR analysis  
 244 confirms that ODA was successfully grafted onto the surface of MPCs.

245 MPCs were anticipated to be hydrophobic and float in water after the decoration of  
 246 ODA. As a result, the clean MPCs and ODA-MPCs were dispersed into the sea surface  
 247 independently. After 24 hours, nearly all pure MPCs sank to the bottom of the vial,  
 248 whereas ODA-MPCs powders remained afloat on the water surface. The surface  
 249 wetting test was used to determine the further hydrophilicity-to-hydrophobicity



250 transition. MPCs had a contact angle of approximately  $0^\circ$ , whereas ODA-MPCs had a  
251 contact angle of  $135.5^\circ$ . (**Fig. 5b**). Additionally, when an oil droplet was added to the  
252 unmodified MPCs, as demonstrated in **Fig. 5c**, the oil droplets were put to the MPCs  
253 and entirely repelled. In comparison, oil droplets could easily permeate ODA-MPCs  
254 due to their increased hydrophobicity. Based on the preceding, it can be concluded that  
255 ODA-coated MPCs exhibit superior water repellency, oil affinity, and floatability that  
256 can be used to address maritime oil spills.

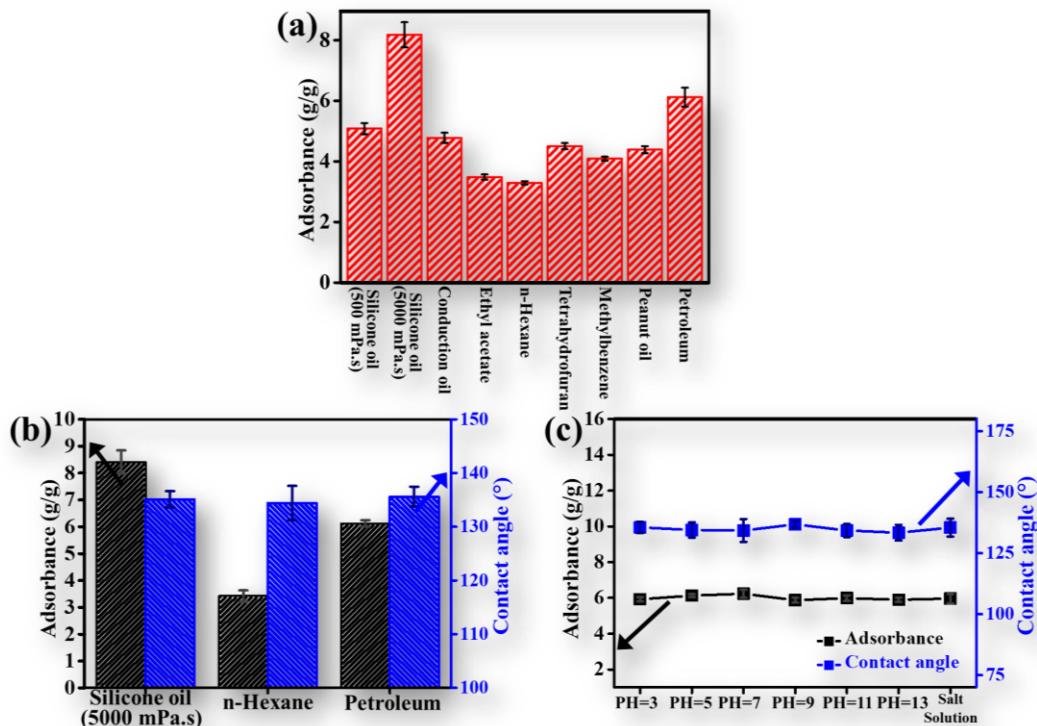


257  
258 **Fig. 5** FTIR spectra of PDA, MPCs, PDA-MPCs and ODA-MPCs (a); comparison of  
259 floatability (b) (inset: water contact angle); comparison of oil wettability (c).  
260 Subsequently, the uptake capacity of ODA-MPCs was established. As shown in **Fig.**  
261 **6a**, ODA-MPCs had a favorable sorption capability for various oils and nonpolar  
262 organic solvents, including high viscosity petroleum and silicone oils. Calculations  
263 indicate that the modified magnetic powders have absorption capacities ranging from  
264 3.2 to 8.1 g/g. Due to the higher viscosity, the absorbed silicone oil (5000 cP•s) and  
265 petroleum can be successfully retained in hierarchically porous architectures of  
266 powders. We compare our work to many previously published powder-based oil  
267 sorbents using a literature search (**Table 3**) [21, 23, 40-42]. Although ODA-MPCs have  
268 a lower sorption capacity than other sorbents, their manufacture is simpler and less  
269 expensive. The raw materials are primarily constituted of biodegradable agricultural  
270 and forest byproducts.

**Table 3.** Comparison of powder sorbents reported in recent literature

materials	sorption capacity (g/g)	magnetic response	photothermal effect	references
fly ash composites	1.69	√	×	[40]
Fe <sub>3</sub> O <sub>4</sub> @C/Cu core-shell sub-micron materials	3.38	×	×	[21]
sawdust	3.59 to 7.83	√	×	[42]
silver nanocomposite	10.95 ± 0.47	×	×	[41]
hollow carbon microsphere	6.5 to 10.8	√	×	[23]
<b>MPC</b>	<b>3.2 to 8.1</b>	√	√	<b>This work</b>

272 **Fig. 6b** illustrates the absorption capability of ODA-MPCs after they have been  
 273 subjected to a 20-cycles absorption experiment. In comparison to the data in **Fig. 6a**,  
 274 the change in either sorption capacity or the water contact angles was negligible for the  
 275 high-viscosity silicone oil, n-hexane, and petroleum, indicating improved cycling  
 276 performances of ODA-MPCs. The absorbent used in practice must be able to survive  
 277 in acidic, alkaline, and hypersaline environments, which are prevalent in the marine  
 278 environment. Thus, the absorption capacity and contact angles of ODA-MPCs were  
 279 measured after 24 hours of immersion in 3 percent salty water with varying pH values.  
 280 As shown in **Fig. 6c**, the absorption capacity of ODA-MPCs for crude oil remained  
 281 constant at approximately 6.2 g/g under diverse circumstances. Additionally, the  
 282 contact angle values vary somewhat between 132° and 134°. These findings suggested  
 283 that ODA-MPCs can reserve their capacity for surface wetting and oil absorption into  
 284 the ocean.



285

286 **Fig. 6** (a) Absorption capacity of the ODA-MPCs for different oils and solvents; (b)  
 287 Effect of pH value on the oil-absorption capacity and contact angles of the hydrophobic  
 288 ODA-MPCs; (c) Absorption capacities towards different oils and organic solvents after  
 289 20 cycles of usage and remanent contact angle.

290 **Fig. 7a** presents the processes of removing crude oil from the water by ODA-MPCs  
 291 under an external magnetic field. When the powers were cast to an oil layer floating on  
 292 the water surface, the crude oil gradually accumulated around the powders and was  
 293 absorbed within 60 s. The absorption-saturated particles were drawn out of the water  
 294 by a magnetic column due to the introduction of magnetic compounds, thereby  
 295 releasing clean water. The above test supports the applicability of MPCs under practical  
 296 marine conditions. Concerning the oil/water separation process, the hydrophobicity and  
 297 lipophilicity of ODA-MPCs were related to the grafted long-chain alkane and rough  
 298 surface on substrates, in accordance with the theory of wettability on the solid surface.  
 299 [43]. The introduced alkane chains decreased the surface tension, limiting the wetting  
 300 of water droplets. Generally, the influence of surface roughness on wettability could be  
 301 explained by Wenzel and Cassie's model. For ODA-MPCs, the air bubbles trapped on



302 the rough surface also drastically reduced the contact area of water with the substrates  
303 and led to the hydrophobic performance described by the traditional Cassie model:

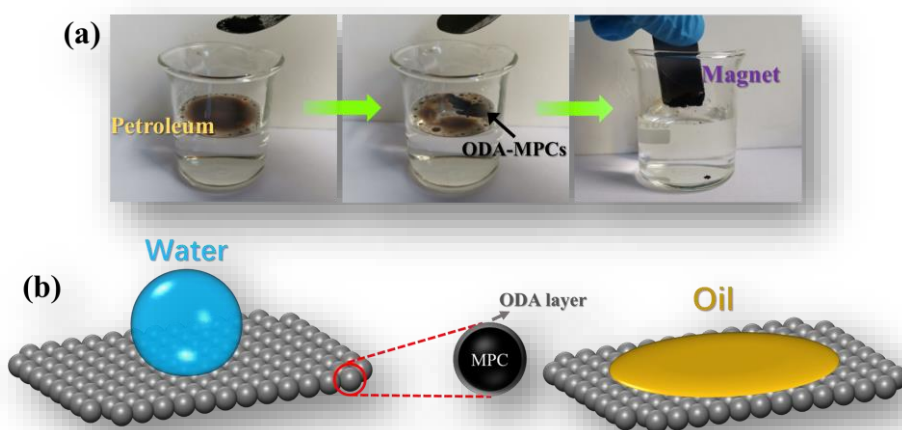
304 
$$\cos \theta_r = \varphi \cos \theta_e + \varphi - 1$$

305 where  $\theta_r$  is the water CA on the rough surface,  $\theta_e$  is the equilibrium water CA on the  
306 smooth surface, and  $\varphi$  is the fraction of the drop footprint area in contact with the solid  
307 (the solid fraction) ( $\varphi < 1$ ).

308 Unlike water droplets, the wetting performance was dramatically enhanced, and the true  
309 contact angle was significantly enlarged when the substrate of ODA-MPCs suffered  
310 from the oils. The Wenzel model could explain this phenomenon:

311 
$$\cos \theta_r = \frac{1}{f} \cos \theta_e$$

312 Where  $\theta_r$  is the oil CA on the rough surface,  $\theta_e$  is the equilibrium oil CA on the smooth  
313 surface, and  $f$  is the roughness factor, defined as the ratio of the actual area of the rough  
314 surface to the geometric projected area ( $f > 1$ ). It could be predicted that the long chains  
315 are aggregated to build a thin layer of hydrophobic film to repulse water while they can  
316 be well stretched to form a transitional layer in the oil droplets (**Fig.7b**). Therefore, the  
317 modified MPCs exhibit desirable hydrophobicity and lipophilicity.

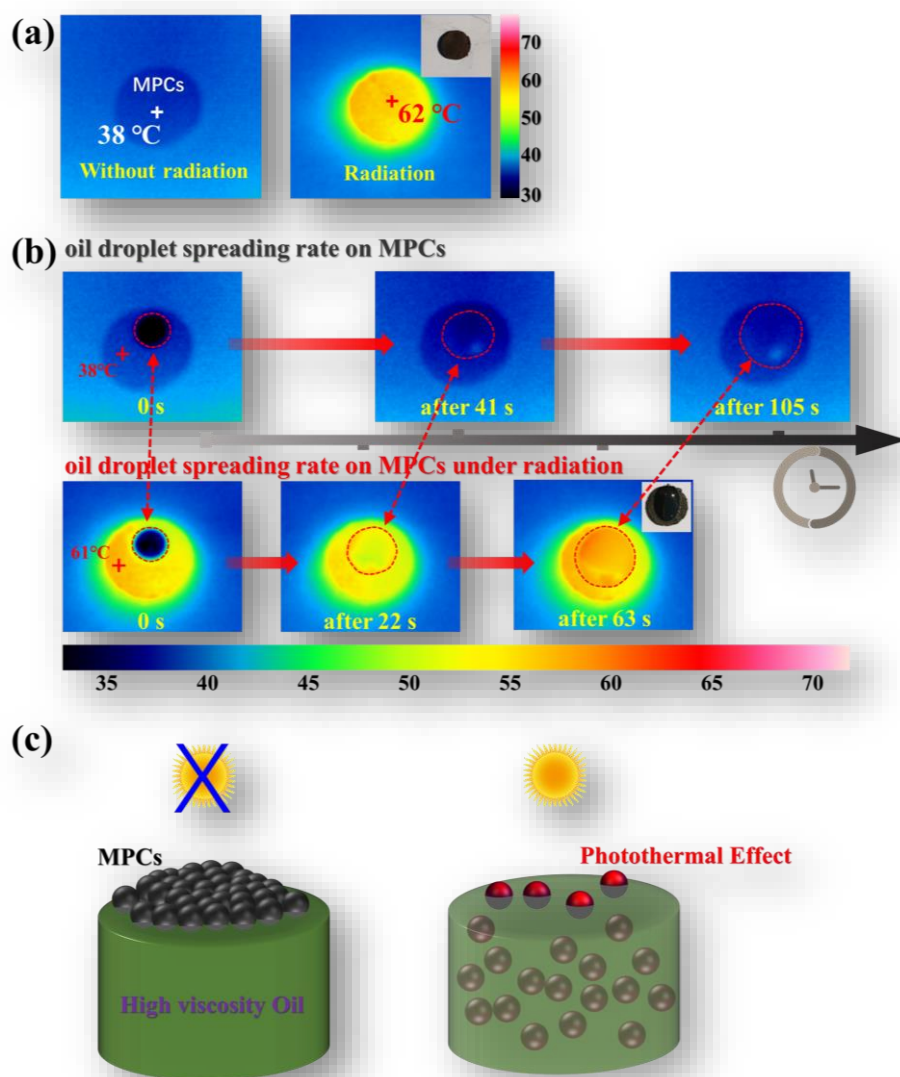


318

319 **Fig. 7** Removal of petroleum from water surface by ODA-MPCs with a magnetic field  
320 (a); schematic illustration for wettability of ODA-MPCs (b).

321 Compared to common organic solvents, oils with high viscosity diffuse slowly due to

322 their low fluidity. However, the rheology properties of the oil are temperature-  
323 dependent. Thus, employing a photothermal approach to achieve efficient oil recovery  
324 provides several specific advantages in a marine environment. Due to their broad-  
325 spectrum solar light absorption, carbon-based materials are an excellent photothermal  
326 absorbent for the fast adsorption of high-viscosity oil. **Fig. 8a** showed thermal infrared  
327 pictures of ODA-MPCs demonstrating the normal photothermal effect. When exposed  
328 to sunlight, powders reach an equilibrium temperature of 62 °C in a matter of seconds,  
329 but without sunlight, they reach a temperature of roughly 38 °C (in summer). A  
330 difference of 24 °C in temperature notably influences the viscosity of high-viscosity oil.  
331 To demonstrate the effect, we studied the spreading behavior of oil droplets on ODA-  
332 MPCs. The evolution of the droplet's diameter with different exposure durations is  
333 recorded by the thermal infrared images in **Fig.8b**. Under sunlight, it took 22 seconds  
334 for the diameter of the oil droplet to double and just 63 seconds for it to reach its  
335 maximum diameter. However, in the absence of direct sunlight, the diameter of the oil  
336 droplet spreads to twice its initial diameter in 41 seconds and achieves its maximum  
337 diameter in 105 seconds. The different spread speeds of the oil droplets with and  
338 without sunlight exposure indicated that the increased temperature caused by sunlight  
339 might promote the fluidity and diffusion of heavy crude oil, which consequently  
340 facilitates the adsorption of high-viscosity oil. In **Fig.8c**, a schematic representation of  
341 the photothermal effect being activated in magnetic porous biochar to reduce the  
342 viscosity of oils was shown. Due to their low fluidity, the powder-like MPCs are  
343 typically difficult to spread into such thick fluids. When exposed to the sun, the  
344 generated heat significantly reduces the viscosity of the oil, boosting powder dispersion  
345 and absorption efficiency.



346  
 347 **Fig 8.** Infrared images: comparison of temperature in MPCs without solar radiation and  
 348 under solar radiation (a); time-dependent the spreading rate of an oil droplet on surface  
 349 MPCs without solar radiation and under solar radiation (b). schematic illustration of  
 350 solar-heated ODA-MPCs for the fast adsorption of high viscosity oil (c).

351 **Conclusions**

352 In this study, we produced porous carbon powders with hydrophobicity, photothermal  
 353 conversion capacity, and magnetic responsiveness for use in crude oil spill recovery.  
 354 The essential components were inexpensive and ecologically sustainable bamboo  
 355 powder. By altering the powders modified with ODA, the crude oil absorption capacity  
 356 increased to greater than 6.2 g/g. Meanwhile, the powders produced could be utilized

357 in acidic, alkaline, and hypersaline settings. In addition, by applying the magnetic field,  
358 the porous carbon particles could be localized in the oil-water region for sorption and  
359 recovery. In addition, by leveraging the photothermal effect, the area surrounding the  
360 powders became much hotter when exposed to sunshine, facilitating the efficient  
361 absorption of high-viscosity oil. As a result, we expect that this form of carbon powder  
362 will be widely utilized in crude oil spills.

363

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366

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