

## 一种水中稳定的锌(II)金属有机骨架用于检测四环素

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**摘要:** 采用溶剂热法合成1个锌(II)金属有机骨架(Zn-MOF):  $[\text{Zn}(\text{H}_2\text{L})(4,4'\text{-bpy})]_n$  (**1**), 其中  $\text{H}_4\text{L}$ =1,1'-乙烷基联苯-3,3',5,5'-四羧酸, 4,4'-bpy=4,4'-联吡啶。通过单晶X射线衍射、元素分析和热重分析等方法对其结构进行表征。单晶结构分析表明, **1**属于单斜晶系  $C2/c$  空间群,  $\text{H}_2\text{L}^{2-}$  配体采取单齿配位模式连接Zn(II)形成一维链, 4,4'-bpy连接一维链构筑成二维波浪状网。该化合物在水中表现出良好的稳定性, 并且可作为高灵敏度、高选择性荧光探针检测四环素(TET), 其检出限为  $0.17 \mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ 。**1**可成功用于延河水中TET的测定。此外, 还研究了**1**对TET的荧光猝灭机理。

**关键词:** 金属有机骨架; 晶体结构; 四环素; 荧光传感器

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## A stable Zinc(II) metal-organic framework in water for the detection of tetracycline

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**Abstract:** A Zinc(II) metal-organic framework (Zn-MOF), namely  $[\text{Zn}(\text{H}_2\text{L})(4,4'\text{-bpy})]_n$  (**1**), where  $\text{H}_4\text{L}$ =1,1'-ethylbiphenyl-3,3',5,5'-tetracarboxylic acid, 4,4'-bpy=4,4'-bipyridine, was successfully synthesized under solvothermal conditions. The structure was characterized by single-crystal X-ray diffraction, elemental analysis, and thermogravimetric analysis. The single crystal structure analysis shows that **1** belongs to the monoclinic  $C2/c$  space group and  $\text{H}_2\text{L}^{2-}$  ligands adopt monodentate coordination mode, connecting with Zn(II) to form 1D chains. Finally, the 1D chains are connected by 4,4'-bpy to form a 2D wavelike network. **1** shows good stability in water, and can be used as a highly sensitive and selective fluorescent probe to detect tetracycline (TET) with a detection limit of  $0.17 \mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ . **1** can be successfully used for the determination of tetracycline in Yanhe River water. In addition, the possible fluorescence quenching mechanisms of **1** were also studied. CCDC: 2212375, **1**.

**Keywords:** metal-organic framework; crystal structure; tetracycline; fluorescent sensor

In recent years, the emergence of antibiotics as a new class of organic pollutants in the natural water environment has attracted extensive attention from domestic scholars. Tetracycline (TET) antibiotics are

one of the most widely used antibiotics in China due to their low cost and low toxicity. They have a high half-life in water. They often accumulate in trace form in water, and enter mammals through drinking water and

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the food chain, causing liver damage, increasing drug resistance, and threatening environmental safety<sup>[1]</sup>. Therefore, it is of great significance to study the detection of TET.

Metal-organic frameworks (MOFs) are porous materials that have recently attracted a great deal of attention due to their high potential for use in molecule design<sup>[2-3]</sup>. These materials are constructed from inorganic clusters and organic molecules to form 1D, 2D, or 3D structures. Due to its many advantages, MOFs have been successfully applied in fields such as heterogeneous catalysis<sup>[4-7]</sup>, gas storage and separation<sup>[8-10]</sup>, drug delivery<sup>[11]</sup>, sensing<sup>[12-13]</sup>, energy storage<sup>[14]</sup>, and conductivity<sup>[15]</sup>. A large number of MOFs with luminescent sensing properties were synthesized and used for the detection of specific metal ions, small organic molecules, antibiotics, and nitroaromatic compounds (NACs)<sup>[16-18]</sup>. Especially, the MOFs of transition metal ions with  $d^{10}$  electronic structure have better luminescence properties, because the metal ions may shift and enhance the emission of organic ligands<sup>[19-21]</sup>.

Herein, we report a new MOF, which was constructed with 1,1'-ethylbiphenyl-3,3', 5,5'-tetracarboxylic acid ( $H_4L$ ), 4,4'-bipyridine (4,4'-bpy) as well as Zn(II) ion, namely  $[Zn(H_2L)(4,4'-bpy)]_n$  (**1**). It has good stability and fluorescence properties in water and can be used as a highly sensitive and selective fluorescence probe to detect TET with a detection limit of  $0.17 \mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ . In addition, the fluorescence quenching mechanism of **1** is also discussed in detail.

## 1 Experimental

### 1.1 Reagents and instruments

All reagents and solvents were commercially available and used directly without further purification. The C, H, and N elemental analyses were conducted with a PerkinElmer PE-2400 elemental analyzer. The crystal

data were collected on a Bruker SMART APEX- II single-crystal X-ray diffractometer. Powder X-ray diffraction (PXRD) patterns were recorded with a Bruker D8 ADVANCE diffractometer operating at 40 kV and 40 mA using Cu  $K\alpha$  radiation ( $\lambda=0.15418 \text{ nm}$ ) at a scanning rate of  $2^\circ\cdot\text{min}^{-1}$  from  $5^\circ$  to  $50^\circ$ . Thermal gravimetric analysis (TGA) was performed with a NETZSCH STA 449F3 thermal gravimetric analyzer in flowing nitrogen at a heating rate of  $10^\circ\text{C}\cdot\text{min}^{-1}$ . The UV-Vis spectra were measured using a UV-2700 spectrophotometer. Fluorescence experiments were carried out on a Hitachi F-7100 Fluorescence Spectrophotometer.

### 1.2 Synthesis of MOF 1

A mixture of  $Zn(NO_3)_2\cdot 6H_2O$  (0.1 mmol, 0.029 g),  $H_4L$  (0.05 mmol, 0.0179 g), and 4,4'-bpy (0.05 mmol, 0.0078 g) were dissolved in a mixed solvent of DMF (3 mL),  $H_2O$  (3 mL), and  $HNO_3$  (0.1 mL,  $6 \text{ mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ ). And then the mixed solution was placed in a 10 mL glass bottle and reacted at  $95^\circ\text{C}$  for 3 d. Finally, colorless bulk transparent crystals were obtained. Yield: 47% (based on Zn). Anal. Calcd. for  $C_{28}H_{20}N_2O_8Zn$  (%): C, 58.15; H, 3.46; N, 4.85. Found (%): C, 58.21; H, 3.45; N, 4.64.

### 1.3 Crystal structure determination

The crystal with regular shape and moderate size was selected, and the single crystal data of **1** were collected on the Bruker SMART APEX- II diffractometer (Mo  $K\alpha$  radiation and  $\lambda=0.071073 \text{ nm}$ ). The diffraction data were corrected by semi-empirical absorption using the SADABS program. The crystal structure was solved using direct methods and then refined by the full-matrix least-squares techniques on  $F^2$  using SHELXL. All non-hydrogen atoms were refined anisotropically. The crystallographic data of MOF **1** is shown in Table 1. Selected bond lengths and bond angles are listed in Table 2.

CCDC: 2212375, **1**.

Table 1 Crystal data and structure refinement parameters for **1**

Parameter	<b>1</b>	Parameter	<b>1</b>
Formula	$C_{28}H_{20}N_2O_8Zn$	$V/\text{nm}^3$	2.398 1(6)
Formula weight	577.81	$Z$	4
Crystal system	Monoclinic	$D_c/(g\cdot\text{cm}^{-3})$	1.595
Space group	$C2/c$	$F(000)$	1 176

Continued Table 1

$a / \text{nm}$	2.029 1(3)	Goodness-of-fit (on $F^2$ )	1.021
$b / \text{nm}$	1.0105 5(14)	$R_1, wR_2 [I > 2\sigma(I)]$	0.038 5, 0.092 5
$c / \text{nm}$	1.419 233(19)	$R_1, wR_2$ (all data)	0.049 1, 0.098 4
$\beta / (^\circ)$	124.508(2)		

Table 2 Selected bond lengths (nm) and angles ( $^\circ$ ) for **1**

Zn1—O1	0.197 93(16)	Zn1—O1A	0.197 93(16)	Zn1—N1	0.207 03(18)
Zn1—N1A	0.207 04(18)				
O1—Zn1—O1A	13.803(11)	O—Zn1—N1	10.786(7)	O1A—Zn1—N1	9.937(7)
O—Zn1—N1A	9.937(7)	O1A—Zn1—N1A	10.786(7)	N1—Zn1—N1A	9.807(10)

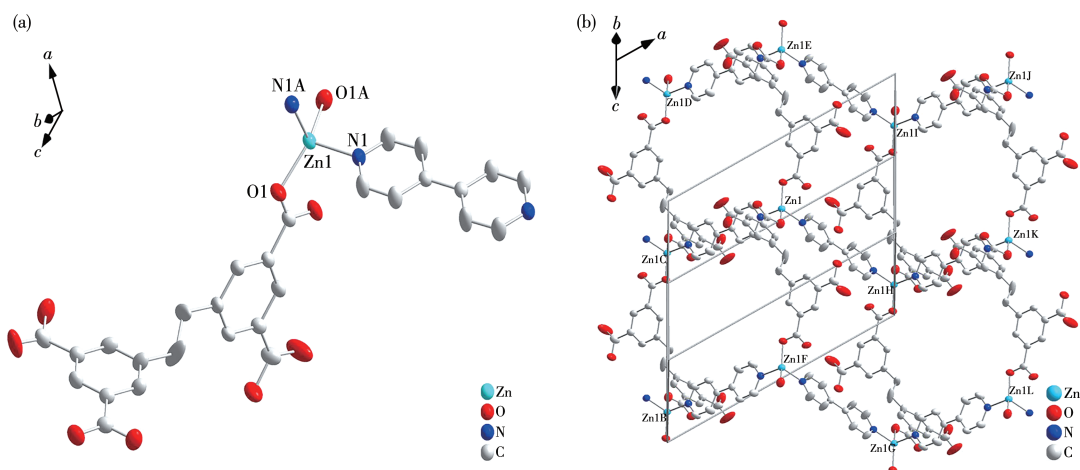
Symmetry code: A:  $1-x, y, 0.5-z$ .

## 2 Results and discussion

### 2.1 Crystal structure

MOF **1** crystallizes in the monoclinic crystal system with the  $C2/c$  space group. The asymmetric unit of **1** consists of one Zn(II) ion, one  $\text{H}_2\text{L}^{2-}$  ligand, and one 4,4'-bpy ligand. As shown in Fig.1a, each Zn(II) is four-coordinated by two O atoms (O1, O1A) from two different  $\text{H}_2\text{L}^{2-}$  ligands, two nitrogen atoms (N1, N1A) from

4,4'-bpy ligands. All the Zn—O (0.197 93 (16) nm) and Zn—N (0.207 03(18) - 0.207 04(18) nm) bond lengths fall into the normal ranges (Table 2). As shown in Fig. 1b, the single crystal structure analysis shows that  $\text{H}_2\text{L}^{2-}$  ligands adopt monodentate coordination mode, connecting with Zn(II) to form 1D chains. Finally, the 1D chains are connected by 4,4'-bpy to form a 2D wavelike network.



50% ellipsoid probability; Symmetry codes: A:  $1-x, y, 0.5-z$ ; B:  $0.5-x, 0.5-y, 1-z$ ; C:  $0.5-x, 0.5-y, -z$ ; D:  $0.5-x, 0.5-y, -1-z$ ; E:  $x, y, -1-z$ ; F:  $x, y, 1+z$ ; G:  $1.5-x, 0.5-y, 2-z$ ; H:  $1.5-x, 0.5-y, 1-z$ ; I:  $1.5-x, 0.5-y, -z$ ; J:  $1+x, y, z$ ; K:  $1+x, y, 1+z$ ; L:  $1+x, y, 2+z$

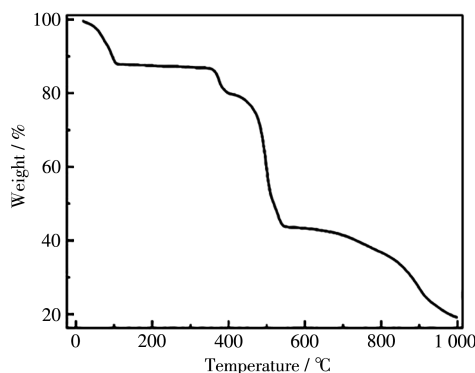
Fig.1 (a) Ellipsoid diagram of the molecular structure of MOF **1**; (b) 2D wavelike network of **1**

### 2.2 Thermal stability

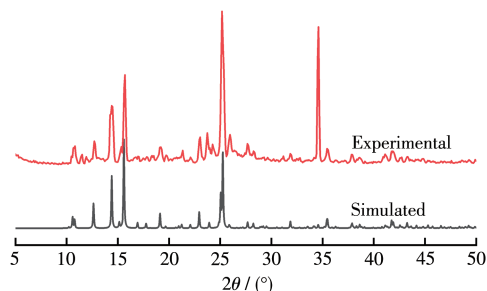
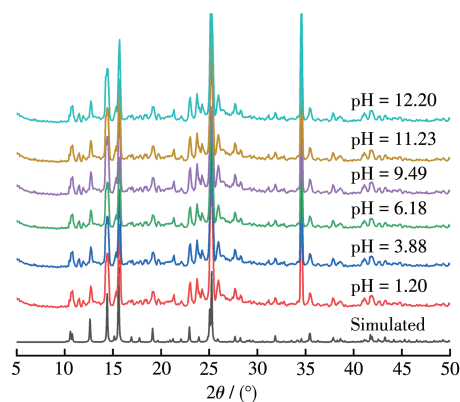
To identify the thermal stability of MOF **1**, the TGA was performed. As shown in Fig.2, the weight loss of **1** was 12.1% before 110  $^\circ\text{C}$ , which corresponds to the release of the free water. The 2D networks started to decompose upon further heating up to about 400  $^\circ\text{C}$ .

### 2.3 Purity and skeleton stability

To confirm the purity of MOF **1**, the PXRD pattern of **1** was measured. The position of the diffraction peak in the PXRD experiment was consistent with those of single crystal structure simulation, implying the pure phase of **1** (Fig.3). The skeleton is basically

Fig.2 TGA curve of MOF **1**

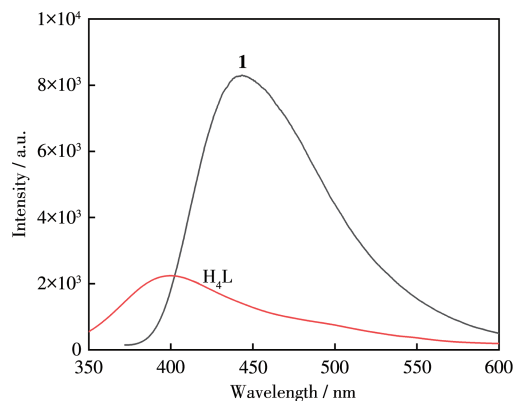
unchanged when **1** was immersed in acidic and basic aqueous solutions for 24 h, indicating that **1** has good acid and alkali resistance (Fig.4).

Fig.3 PXRD patterns of MOF **1**Fig.4 PXRD patterns of MOF **1** immersed in the aqueous solutions with different pH values for 24 h

## 2.4 Photoluminescence property

Due to the excellent luminescence properties of  $d^{10}$  metal MOFs, the luminescence of **1** and the  $H_4L$  ligand were investigated. As shown in Fig.5,  $H_4L$  had an emission peak at 444 nm ( $\lambda_{ex}=362$  nm). Compared to the fluorescence spectrum of the ligand, the fluorescence intensity of **1** was stronger than that of the ligand, which may be due to coordination interactions<sup>[22]</sup>. The

emission spectrum of **1** had a partial redshift, which may be caused by the charge transfer between  $H_4L$  and  $Zn(II)$ <sup>[23]</sup>.

Fig.5 Solid luminescent spectra of MOF **1** and ligand  $H_4L$ 

## 2.5 Antibiotics sensing

The wanton use of antibiotics has caused great pollution to the water system and environment. Therefore, it is very urgent for us to find a simple and efficient method to detect antibiotics<sup>[24]</sup>. Therefore, the luminescence sensing of **1** for different antibiotics was investigated, including lincomycin hydrochloride (LIN), metronidazole (MDZ), ornidazole (ODZ), TET, roxithromycin (ROX), chloramphenicol (CAP), gentamicin sulfate (GEN), azithromycin (AZM), cefixime (CEF) and penicillin sodium (PEN). As shown in Fig.6a, when TET was added, the fluorescence of **1** showed the maximum quenching. In the presence of other antibiotics, anti-interference experiments were carried out for TET. The experimental results showed that the fluorescence of **1** was also quenched to a large extent when TET was added in the presence of other antibiotics (Fig.6b). Subsequently, the quantitative experiment of TET was carried out. When the concentration of TET increased, the fluorescence intensity of **1** gradually decreased. When the concentration of TET reached  $250 \mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ , the quenching efficiency of TET was as high as 97.97% (Fig. 6c). And  $I_0/I$  value was also linearly correlated with a low TET concentration (Fig.6d). The detection limit was calculated using  $3\sigma/k$  ( $\sigma$ : standard deviation,  $k$ : slope), and the detection limit for **1** towards TET was  $0.17 \mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$ . In addition, after four cycles, we found that the fluorescence intensity could still be restored to

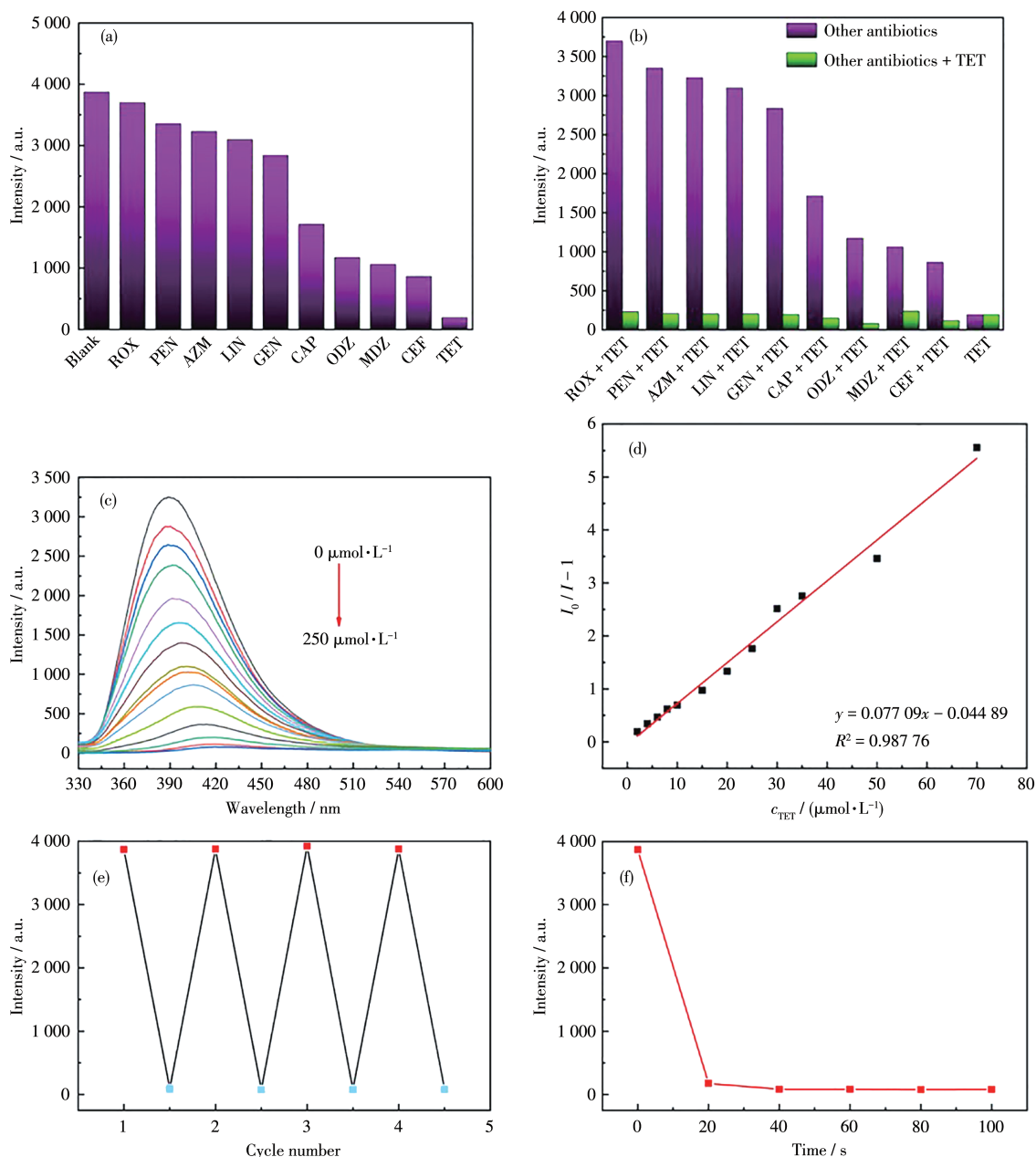


Fig.6 (a) Luminescent intensity of **1** in different antibiotics; (b) Luminescence intensity of **1** in mixed antibiotics; (c) Emission spectra of **1** with different concentrations of TET; (d) Stern-Volmer plot for MOF **1** detecting TET in low concentration; (e) Cycle stability of **1** for the detection of TET (red square: **1**, blue square: **1** + TET); (f) Effect of response time on the fluorescent intensities upon the addition of TET

the original intensity. **1** may be a recyclable fluorescent sensor (Fig. 6e). It was found that when TET of  $250\ \mu\text{mol}\cdot\text{L}^{-1}$  was added, the luminescence intensities decreased rapidly and the fluorescence hardly changed after 20 s (Fig. 6f).

## 2.6 Possible sensing mechanism

The reasons for fluorescence quenching that have been reported are as follows: (I) the collapse and disin-

tegration of the crystal framework, (II) the mechanism of energy competition and absorption, (III) the exchange of central metal ions, (IV) the mechanism of energy transfer, (V) the mechanism of photoinduced electron transfer (PET)<sup>[25-31]</sup>. First of all, as shown in Fig. 7, PXRD patterns of **1** were consistent with as-synthesized samples immersed in TET solution for 24 h, indicating that the crystal structure was intact. Therefore, framework col-

lapse is not the reason for fluorescence quenching. Secondly, because **1** detects antibiotics, it indicates that there is no metal ion exchange during fluorescence quenching. Another possible mechanism is energy allocation and transfer. We can see that there is a partial overlap between the emission spectrum of **1** and the UV absorption (300-400 nm) spectrum of TET (Fig.8). The reason for the fluorescence quenching of **1** may be due to energy absorption and energy transfer. Finally, the LUMO level of TET (−2.72 eV) is lower than **1** (Fig.9). The reason for fluorescence quenching may be that the electron transfers from the LUMO level of **1** to

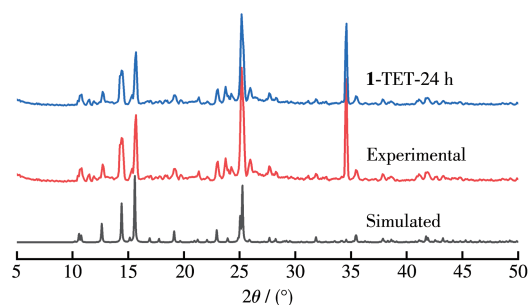


Fig.7 PXRD patterns of **1** and as-synthesized samples immersed in TET solution for 24 h

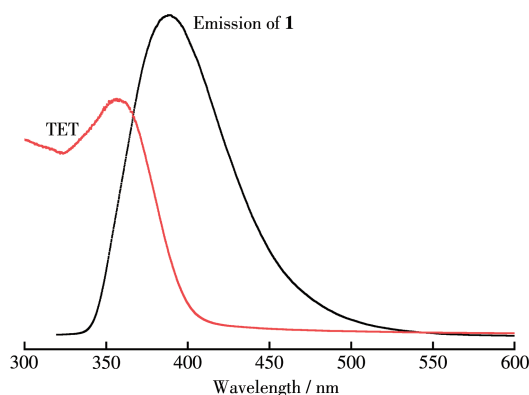


Fig.8 UV-Vis absorption spectrum of TET and emission spectrum of **1**

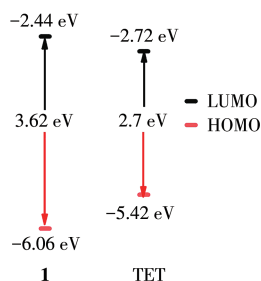


Fig.9 HOMO and LUMO energy levels of **1** and TET

TET. At the same time,  $I_0/I$  value was also linearly correlated with low TET concentration (Fig.6d), indicating that the mechanism for fluorescence quenching should be more than one. When the concentration is low, it is linear, indicating that the competitive absorption is weak. With the increase in concentration, it is nonlinear, and the absorption also increases<sup>[32-34]</sup>.

## 2.7 Practical application in Yanhe River water

To prove the practicability of this method, TET was tested in Yanhe River water through the spiked recovery experiment. As shown in Table 3, the spiked recoveries at different concentrations were obtained, ranging from 94% to 103%. The relative standard deviation (RSD) values were 1.7% - 2.4%, indicating the reliability and practicability of **1** to detect TET in real samples.

Table 3 Recovery test of TET spiked in Yanhe River water samples

Spiked / ( $\mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ )	Detected / ( $\mu\text{mol} \cdot \text{L}^{-1}$ )	RSD* / %	Recovery / %
0	Not detected	—	—
5	4.7	1.7	94
15	15.1	1.9	101
30	30.8	2.4	103

\* $n=3$

## 3 Conclusions

In summary, a Zn-MOF (**1**) is successfully synthesized under solvothermal conditions. Structural analysis shows that **1** is a 2D wavelike network. It has high selectivity and sensitivity for the detection of TET by fluorescence quenching. Through the spiked recovery experiment, TET in the actual water samples along the river can also be detected. Finally, the sensing mechanism is discussed in detail. The cause of TET quenching might be energy resonance transfer or electron transfer.

**Conflicts of interest:** The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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