

# Bioinspired Sulfo Oxygen Bridges Optimize Interfacial Water Structure for Enhanced Hydrogen Oxidation and Evolution Reactions

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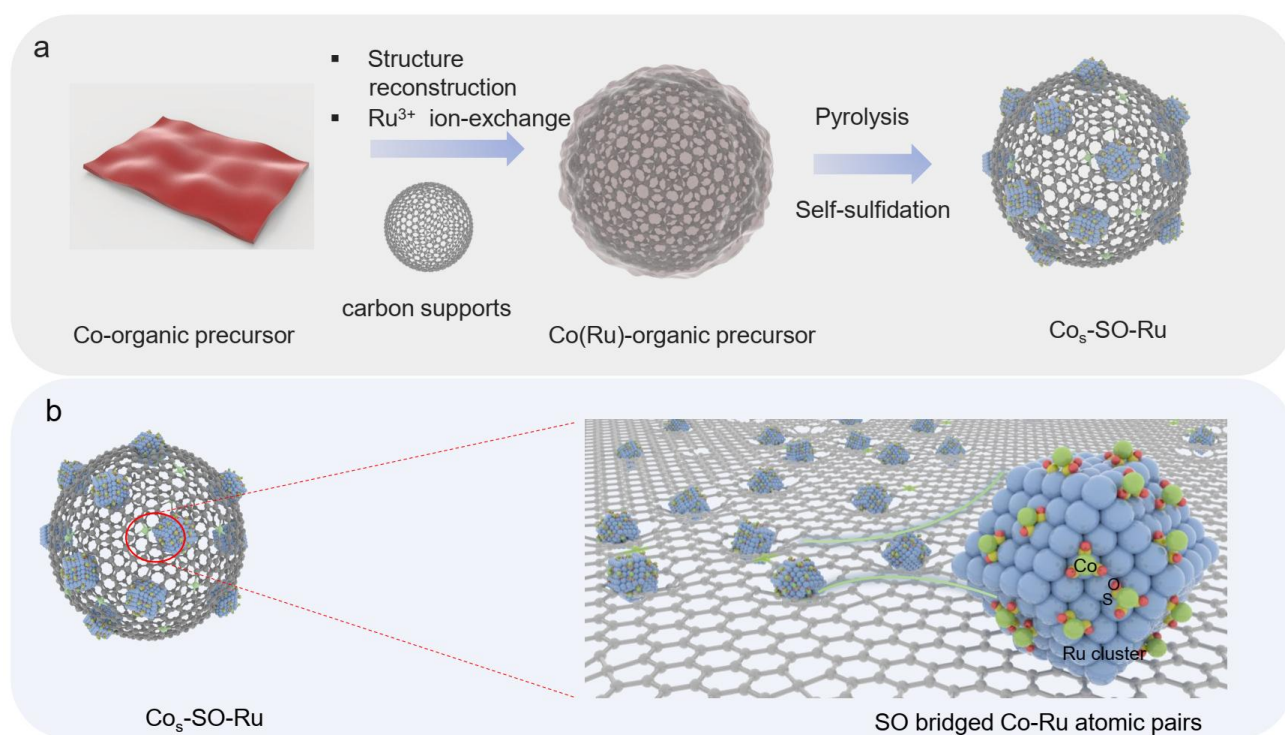
<sup>2</sup> Engineering Research Center of Advanced Rare Earth Materials, Department of Chemistry, Tsinghua University, Beijing 100084, China

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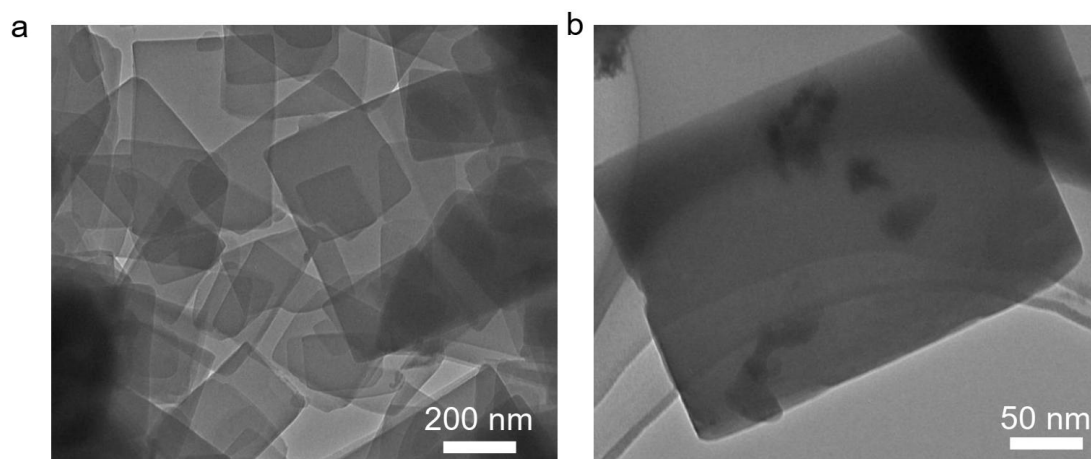
\*Correspondence to: Prof. Chong Cheng, [chong.cheng@scu.edu.cn](mailto:chong.cheng@scu.edu.cn); Prof. Dingsheng Wang, [wangdingsheng@mail.tsinghua.edu.cn](mailto:wangdingsheng@mail.tsinghua.edu.cn); Prof. Jintao Zhang, [jtzhang@sdu.edu.cn](mailto:jtzhang@sdu.edu.cn)

§ These authors contributed equally to this work.

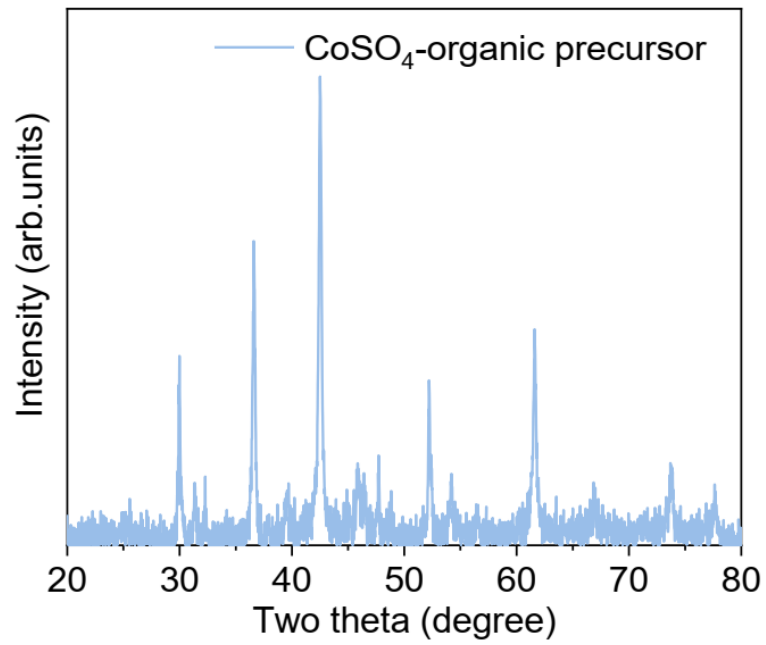
## Supplementary Figures



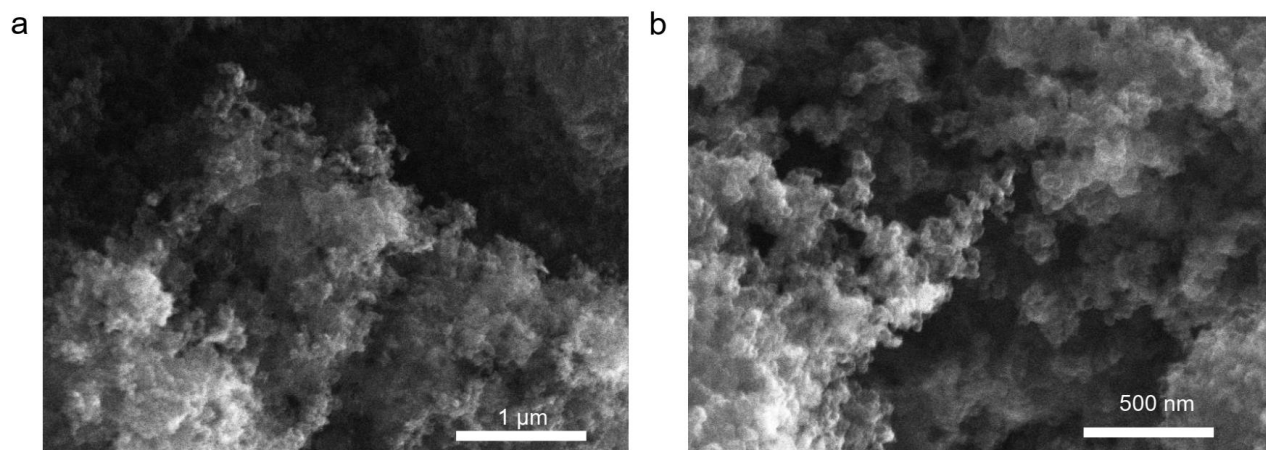
**Supplementary Figure 1. a** Schematic illustration of the synthetic processes of Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru. **b** Schematic illustration of the structure of Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru.



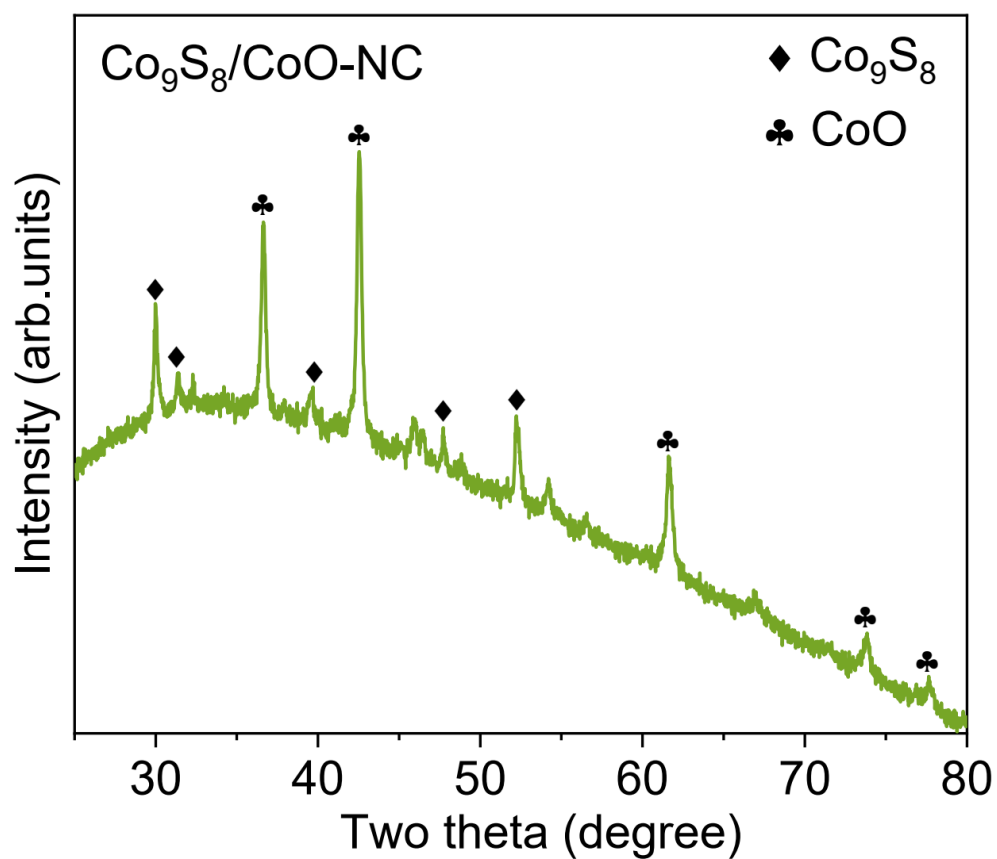
**Supplementary Figure 2. a, b** FE-SEM images of Co-organic precursor. As exhibited, the Co-organic precursor shows a typical 2D nanoplate that is consistent with previous reports.



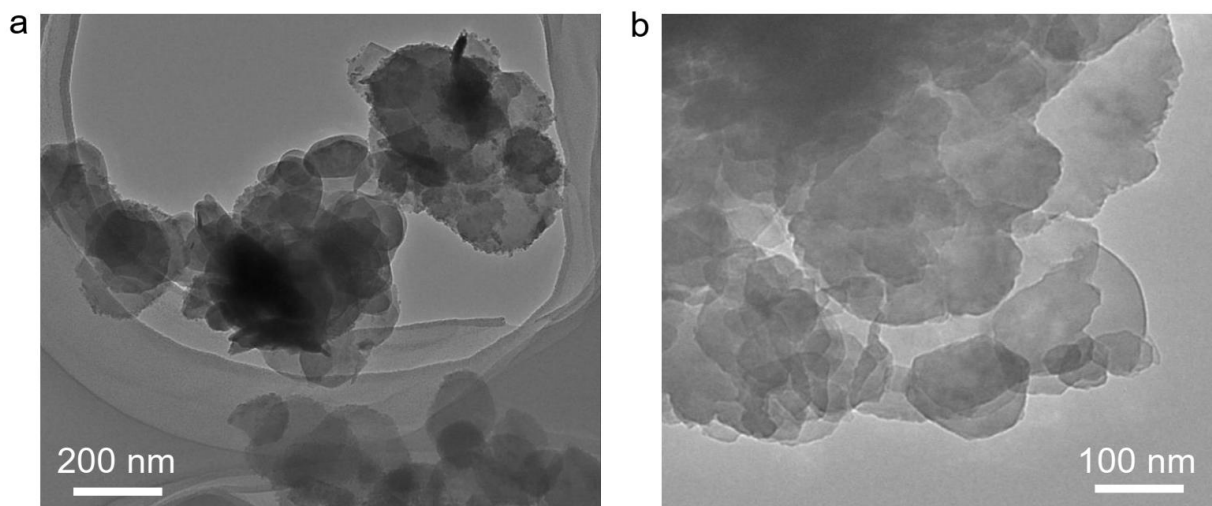
**Supplementary Figure 3.** XRD patterns of Co-organic precursor, which was prepared using  $\text{CoSO}_4$  as Co source.



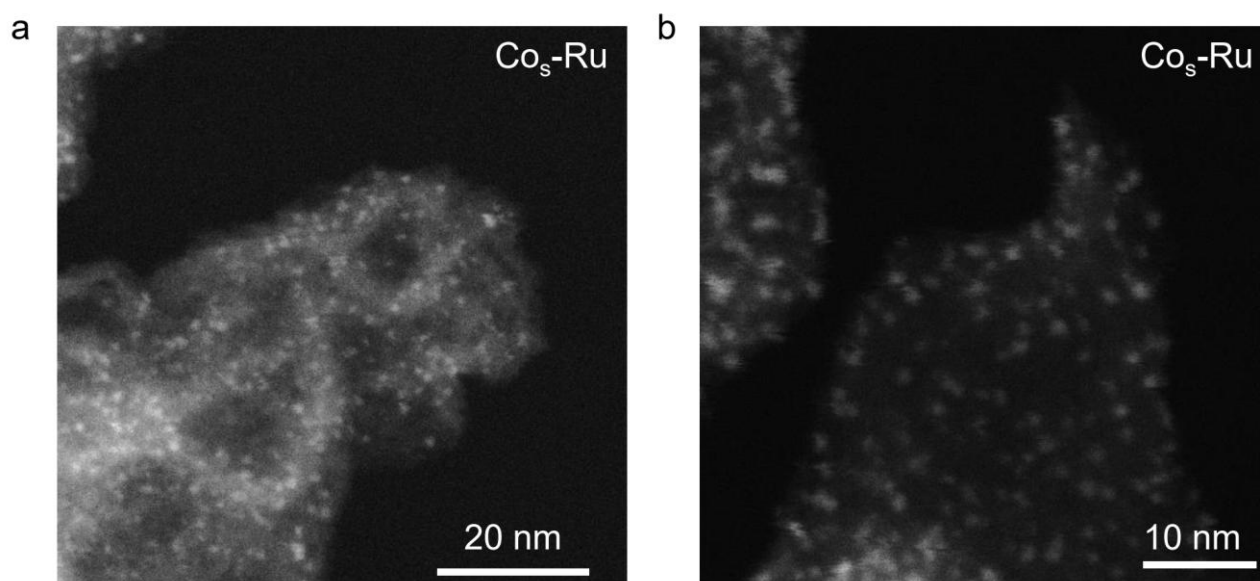
**Supplementary Figure 4. a, b** FE-SEM images of nanocarbon supported Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru.



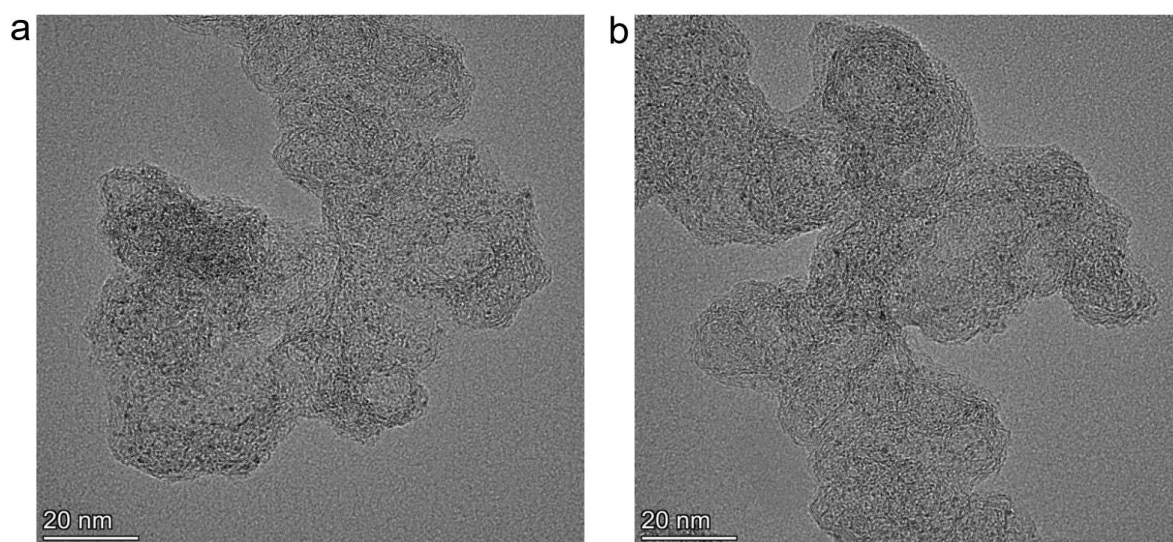
**Supplementary Figure 5.** XRD patterns of  $\text{Co}_9\text{S}_8/\text{CoO-NC}$ . The  $\text{Co}_9\text{S}_8/\text{CoO-NC}$  is obtained by pyrolyzing the Co-organic precursor under the Ar atmosphere without extra sulfur source. The formation of  $\text{Co}_9\text{S}_8$  crystals can be attributed to the “self-sulfidation” procedure.



**Supplementary Figure 6. a, b** FE-SEM images of  $\text{CoNO}_3$ -organic precursor. The  $\text{CoNO}_3$ -organic precursor was synthesized based on the same process as the Co-organic precursor, except that the cobalt salt was changed to  $\text{Co}(\text{NO}_3)_2$ .

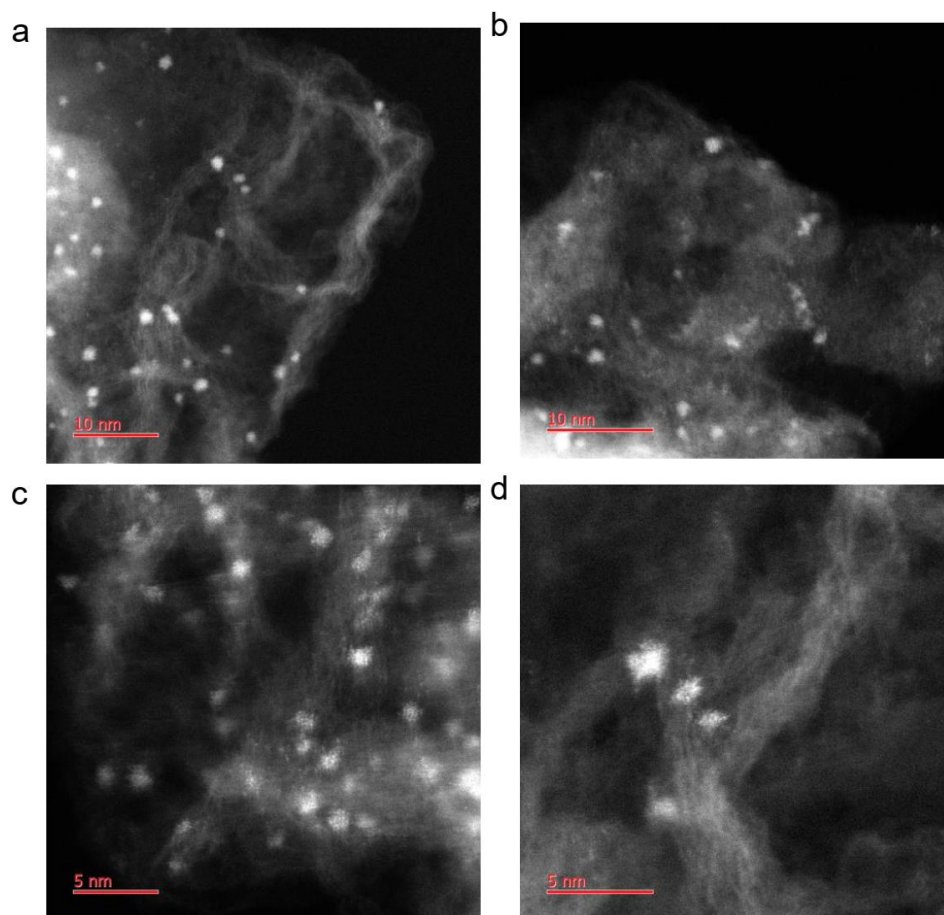


**Supplementary Figure 7. a, b** STEM images of the nanocarbon-supported  $\text{Co}_s\text{-Ru}$ .

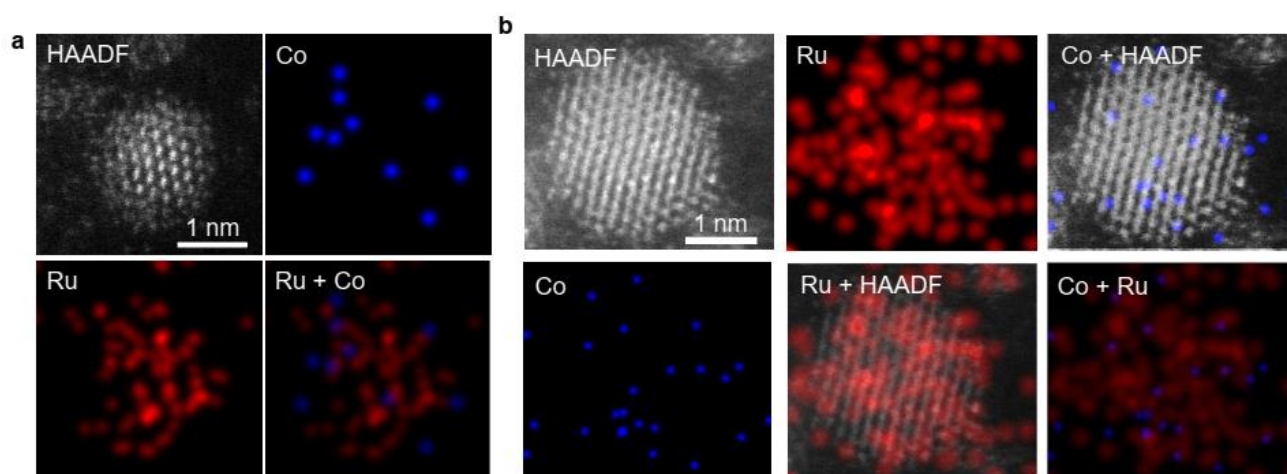


**Supplementary Figure 8. a, b** TEM images of the nanocarbon-supported  $\text{Co}_s\text{-SO-Ru}$ .

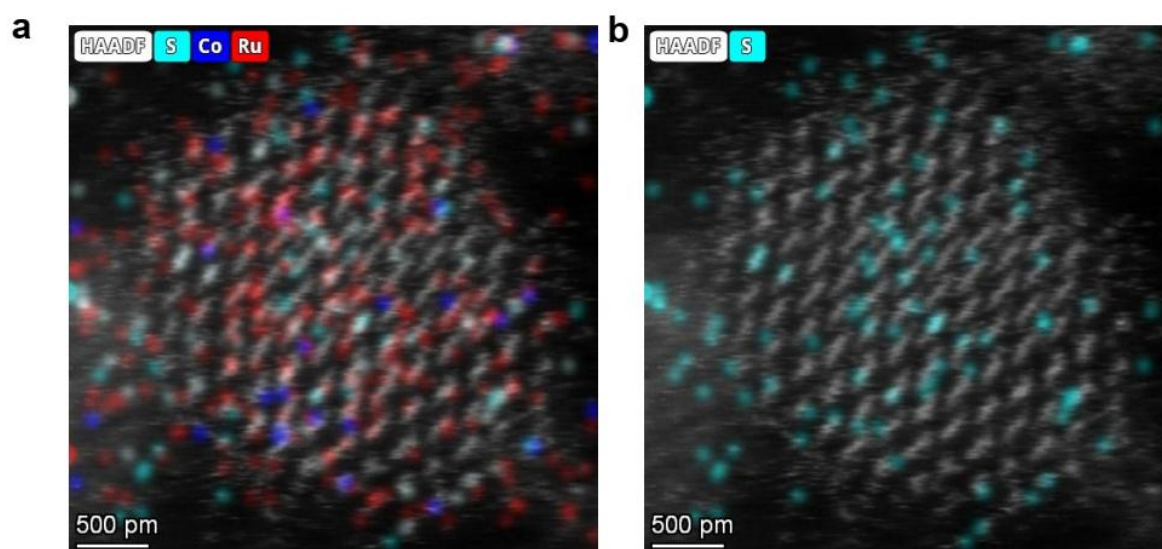




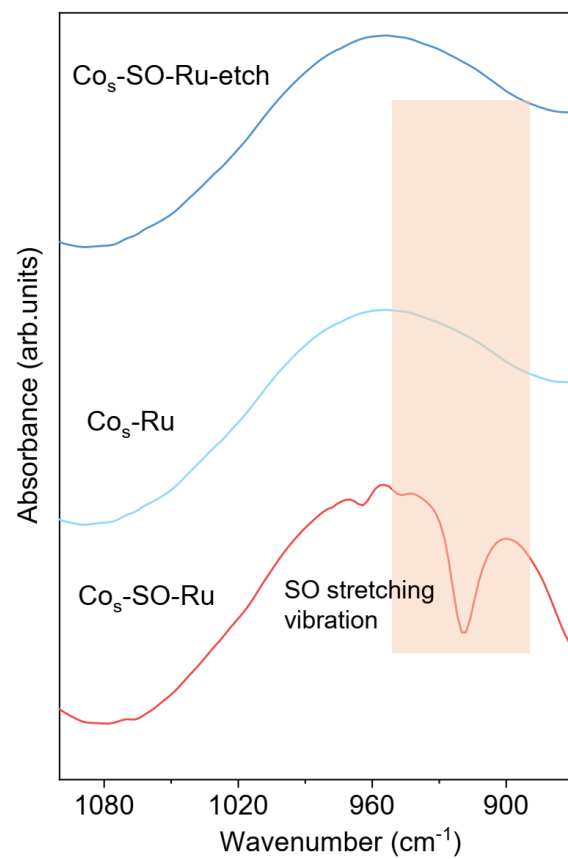
**Supplementary Figure 9. a-d** Atomic-resolution HAADF-STEM images of  $\text{Co}_8\text{-SO-Ru}$ .



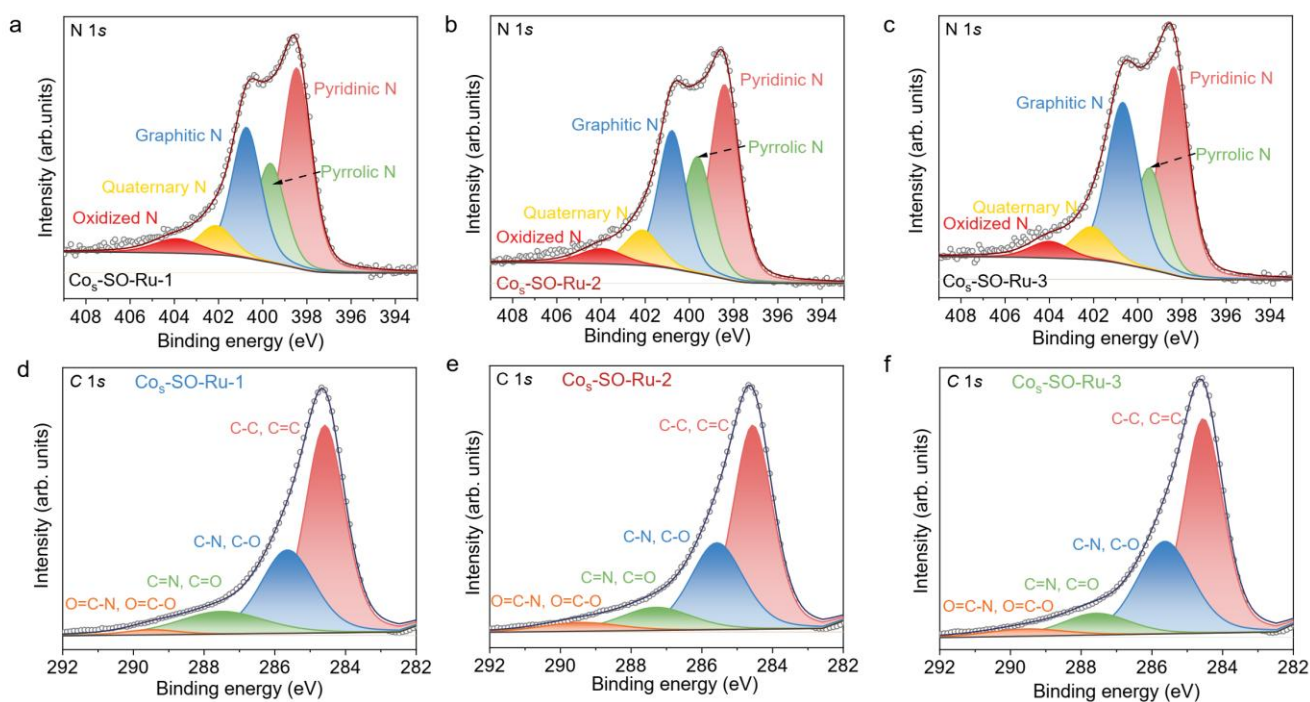
**Supplementary Figure 10. a, b** HAADF-STEM images of Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru and corresponding EDX mappings.



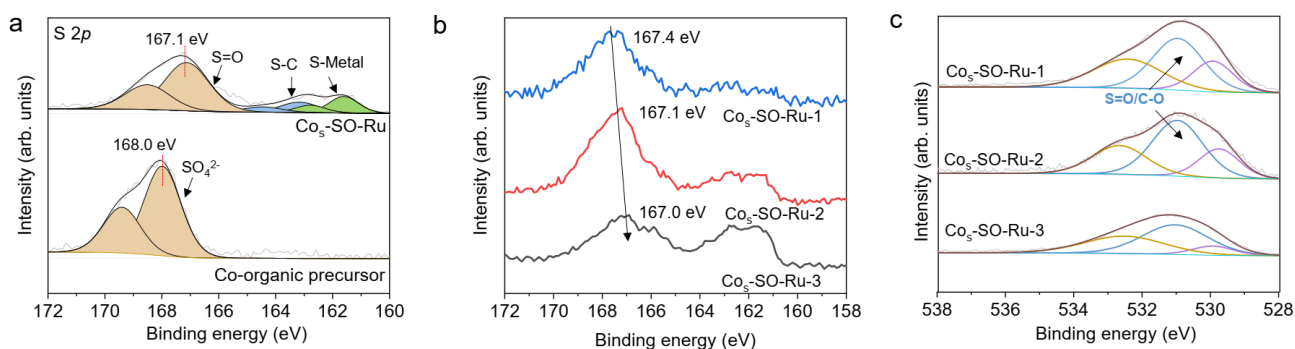
**Supplementary Figure 11. a, b** HAADF-STEM image of Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru and corresponding EDX mappings.



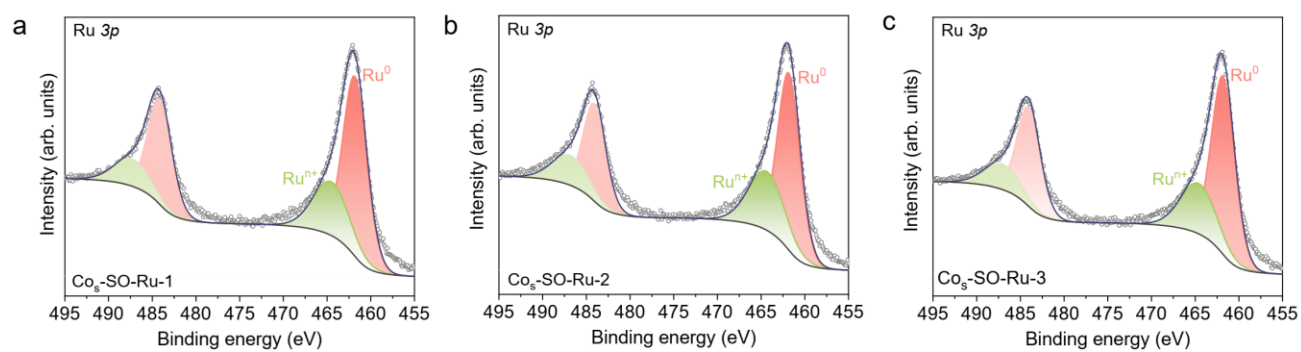
**Supplementary Figure 12.** FT-IR spectra of Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru, Co<sub>s</sub>-Ru, and Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru-etch.



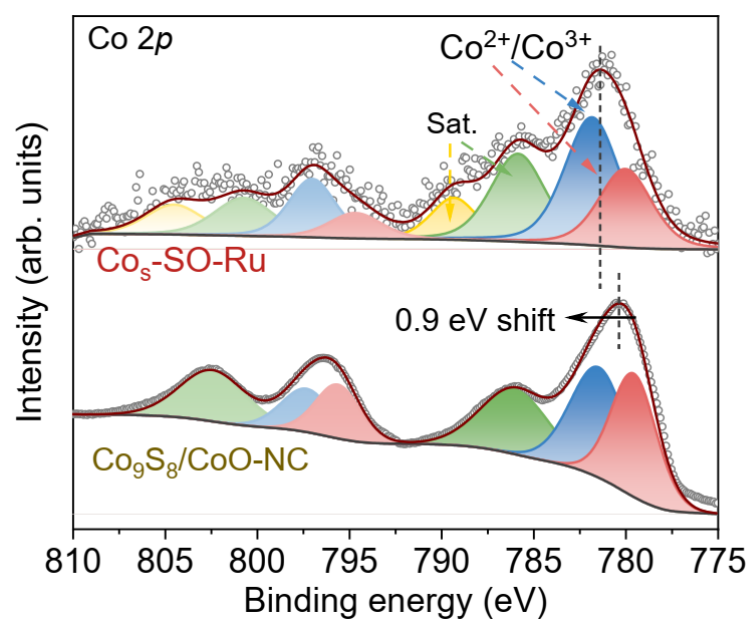
**Supplementary Figure 13.** **a-c** The N 1s XPS spectra of Co<sub>5</sub>-SO-Ru-1/2/3. **d-f** The C 1s XPS spectra of Co<sub>5</sub>-SO-Ru-1/2/3.



**Supplementary Figure 14.** **a** The S 2*p* XPS spectra of Co-organic precursor and Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru. **b** The S 2*p* XPS spectra of Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru-1/2/3. **c** The O 1*s* XPS spectra of Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru-500/600/700. The Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru-1/2/3 samples are obtained by pyrolyzing the Co(Ru)-organic precursor at 500, 600, and 700 °C, respectively. As shown, increasing the carbonization temperature results in a shift of the binding energy of S=O bonds to a lower position, indicating the deoxygenation process of SO<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup> counter anion. Meanwhile, the decreased intensity of S=O peaks also demonstrate the reduction of SO<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup> anion, which is likely facilitated by the reductive nature of the carbon support during pyrolysis. The increase in S-metal bond intensity further suggests that the S=O bonds are ultimately converted into metallic sulfide. Besides, with increasing the carbonization temperature, the decreased intensity of O 1*s* peaks would be attributed to the reduction of S=O bonds under higher carbonization temperatures.

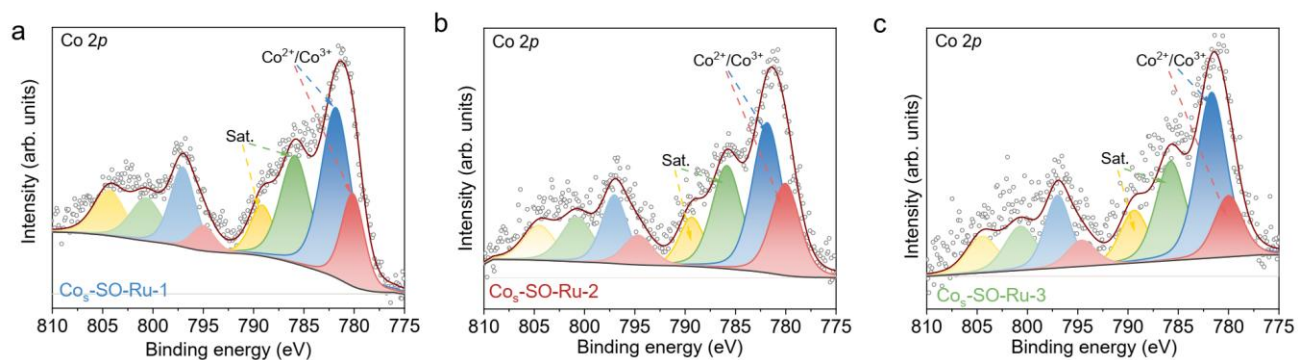


**Supplementary Figure 15. a-c** XPS spectra of Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru-1/2/3 in Ru 3p regions, which are obtained by introducing different contents of Ru species in Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru.

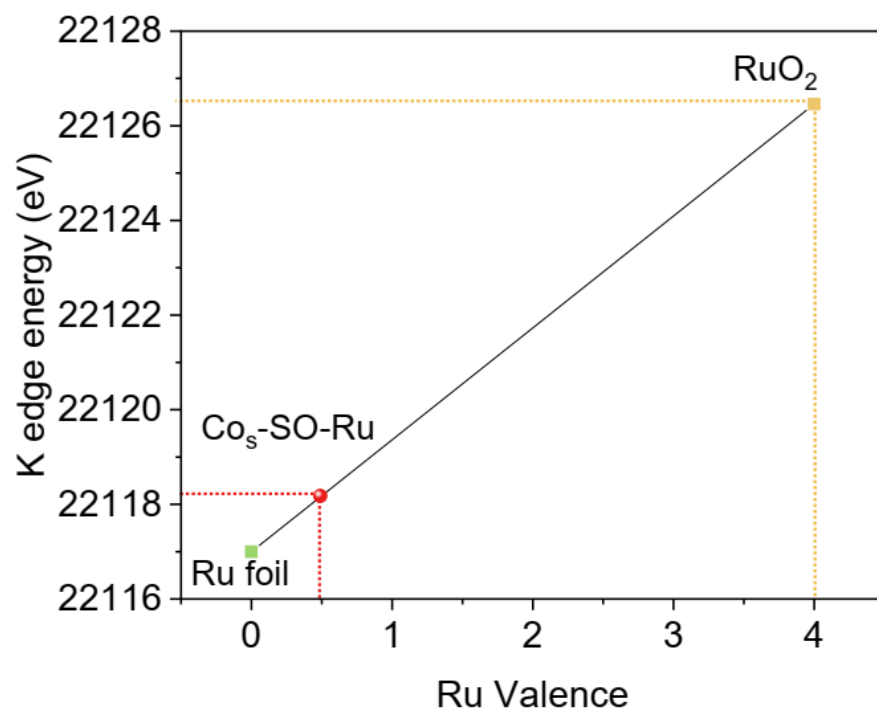


**Supplementary Figure 16.** The Co 2*p* XPS spectra of Co<sub>5</sub>-SO-Ru and Co<sub>9</sub>S<sub>8</sub>/CoO-NC.

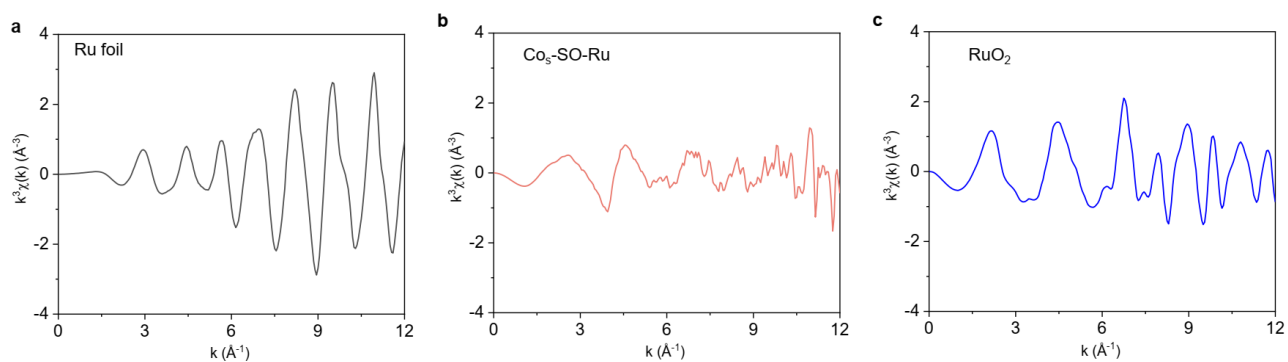




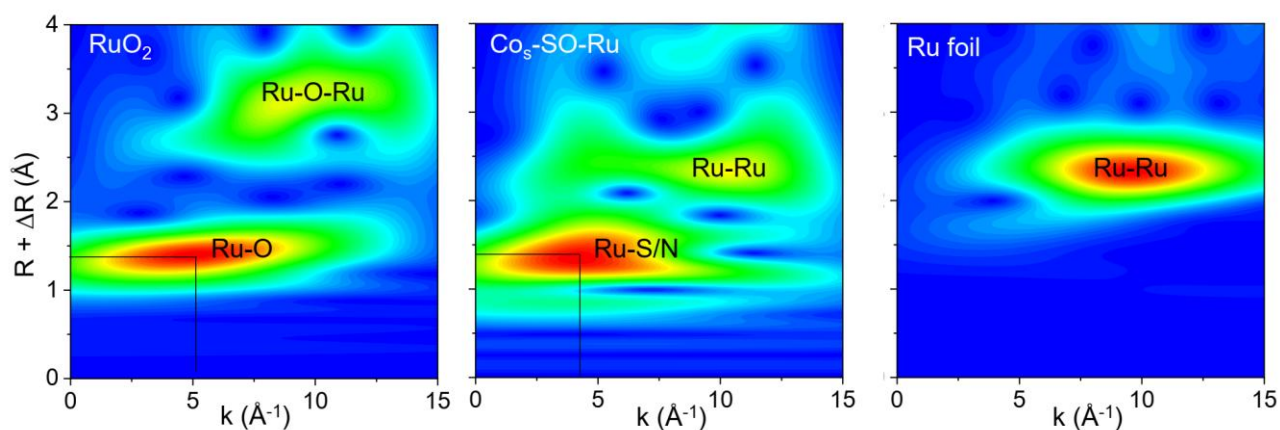
**Supplementary Figure 17. a-c** The Co 2p XPS spectra of  $\text{Co}_s\text{-SO-Ru-1/2/3}$ .



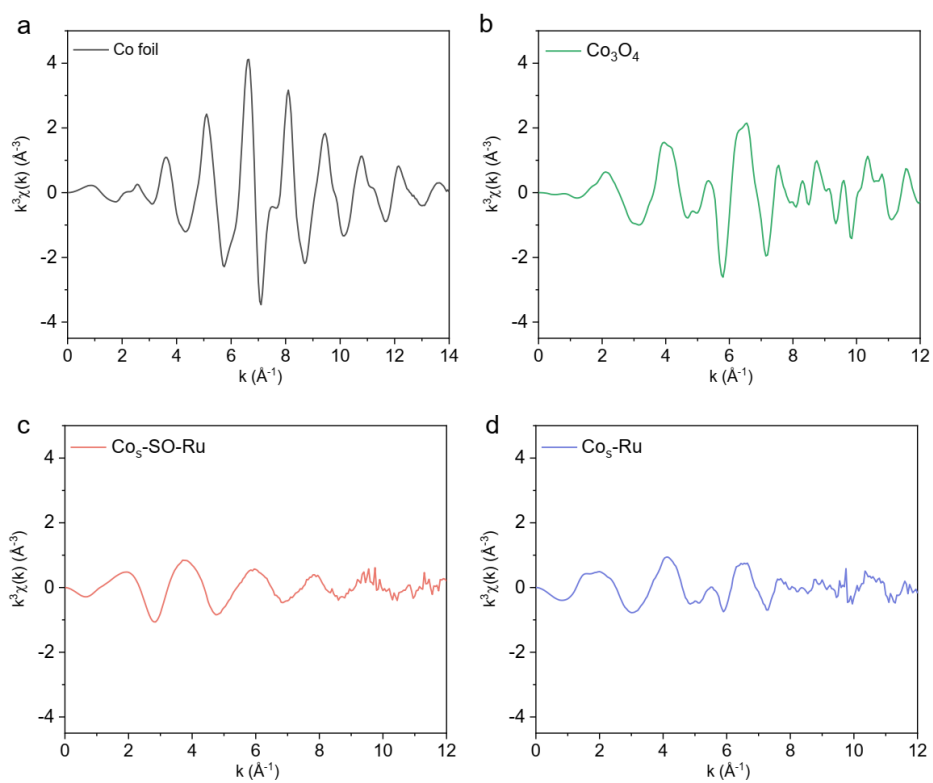
**Supplementary Figure 18.** The valence analysis of Ru elements in Ru foil, Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru, and RuO<sub>2</sub>.



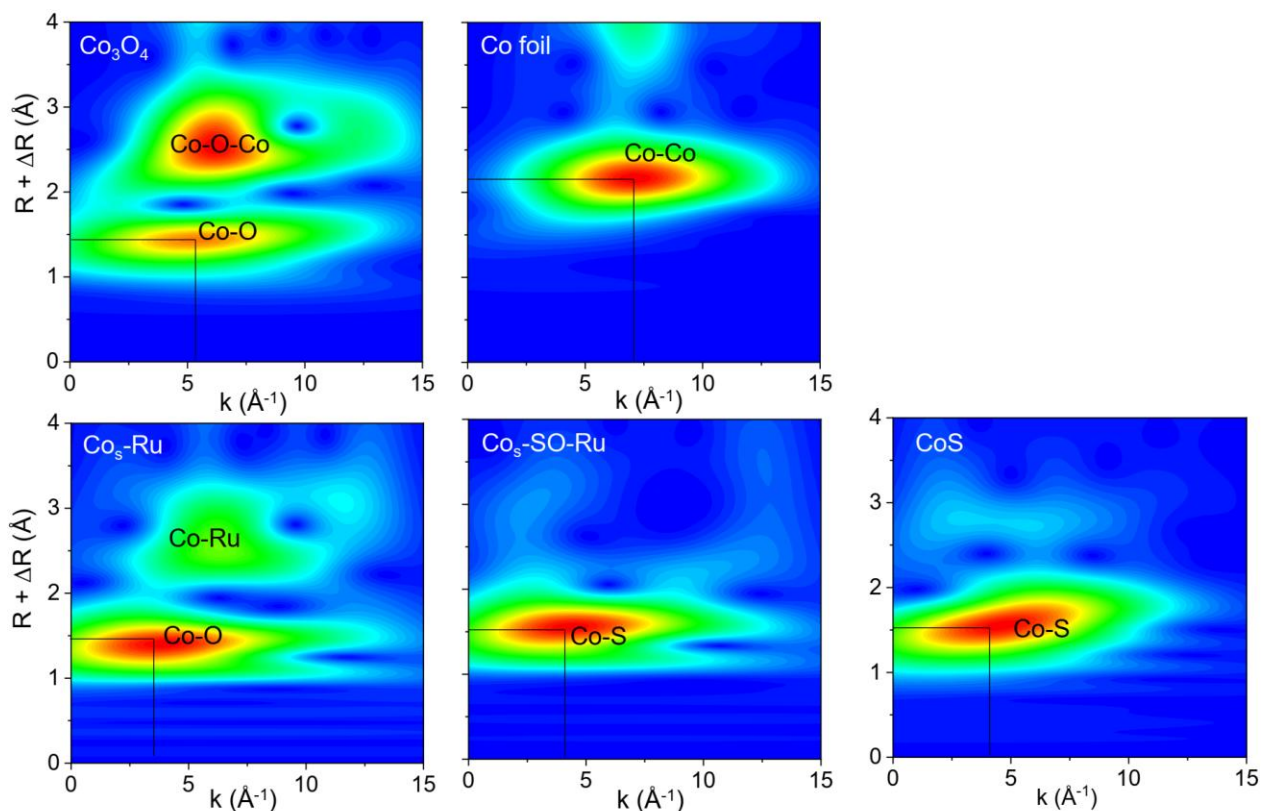
**Supplementary Figure 19.** The  $k^3$ -weighted EXAFS curves of Ru  $K$ -edge in  $k$ -space for **a** Ru foil, **b** Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru, and **c** RuO<sub>2</sub>.



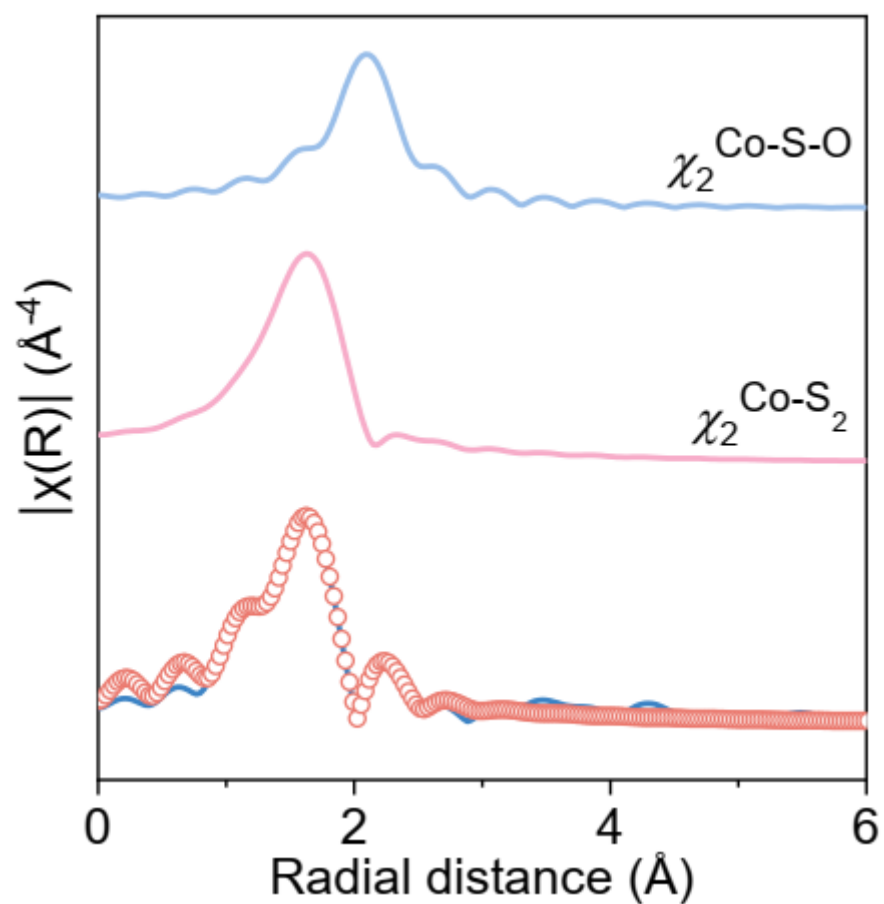
**Supplementary Figure 20.** WT-EXAFS for Ru foil, Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru, and RuO<sub>2</sub>. WT-EXAFS images for Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru exhibit slightly longer Ru-S/N bonds than Ru-O bonds, indicating the mixture coordination of Ru-S/N with the relatively long Ru-S bonds.



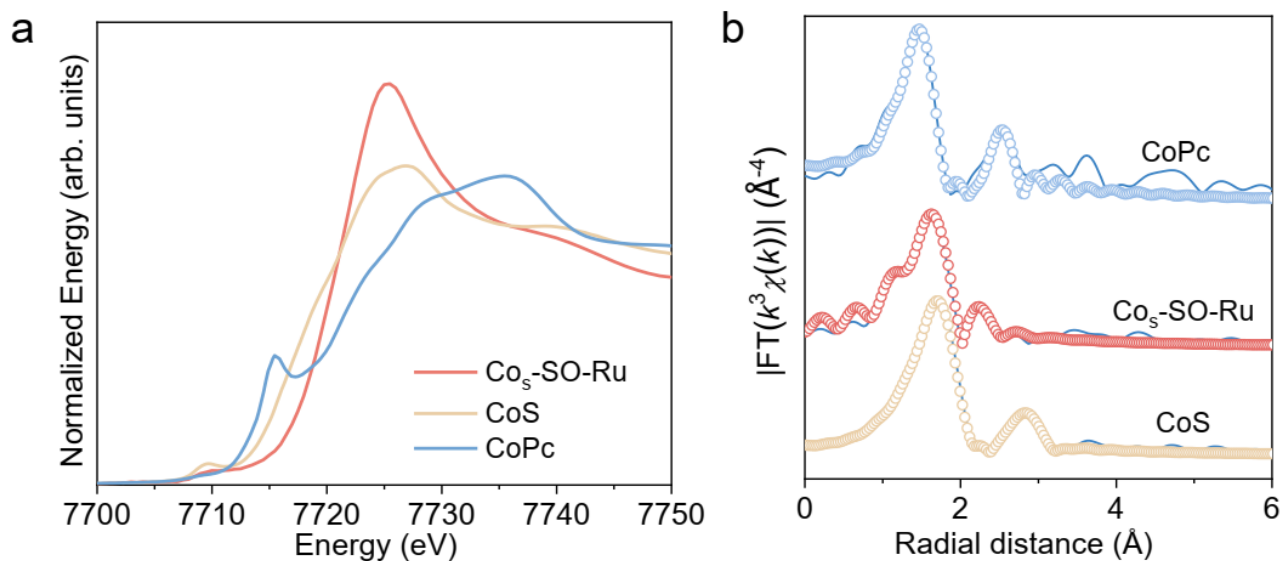
**Supplementary Figure 21.** The  $k^3$ -weighted FT curves of Co  $K$ -edge in  $k$ -space for **a** Co foil, **b**  $\text{Co}_3\text{O}_4$ , **c**  $\text{Co}_5\text{-SO-Ru}$ , and **d**  $\text{Co}_5\text{-Ru}$ .



**Supplementary Figure 22.** WT-EXAFS for Co foil,  $\text{Co}_3\text{O}_4$ ,  $\text{Co}_s\text{-Ru}$ , and  $\text{Co}_s\text{-SO-Ru}$ . Importantly, WT images at the Co *K*-edge show the predominant Co-S bonds (2.23 Å) in the first coordination shell similar with that of CoS, demonstrating the formation of sulfo-oxygen bonds bridged Co single-atoms. Besides, the  $\text{Co}_s\text{-Ru}$  exhibits a longer Co-Ru bond than that of Co-Co bond in Co foil, confirming that the Co single-atoms are doped onto the surface of Ru clusters.

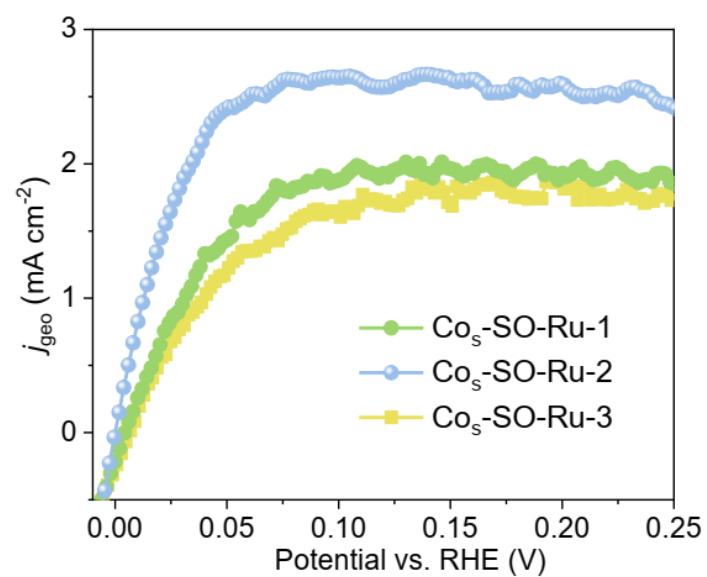


**Supplementary Figure 23.** Detailed EXAFS fitting of  $\text{Co}_s\text{-SO-Ru}$  at Co K-edge, inset curves are the Co-S and Co-S-O path signals ( $\chi_2$ ) involved in the total fitting curve. All the original EXAFS data are processed without phase corrections.

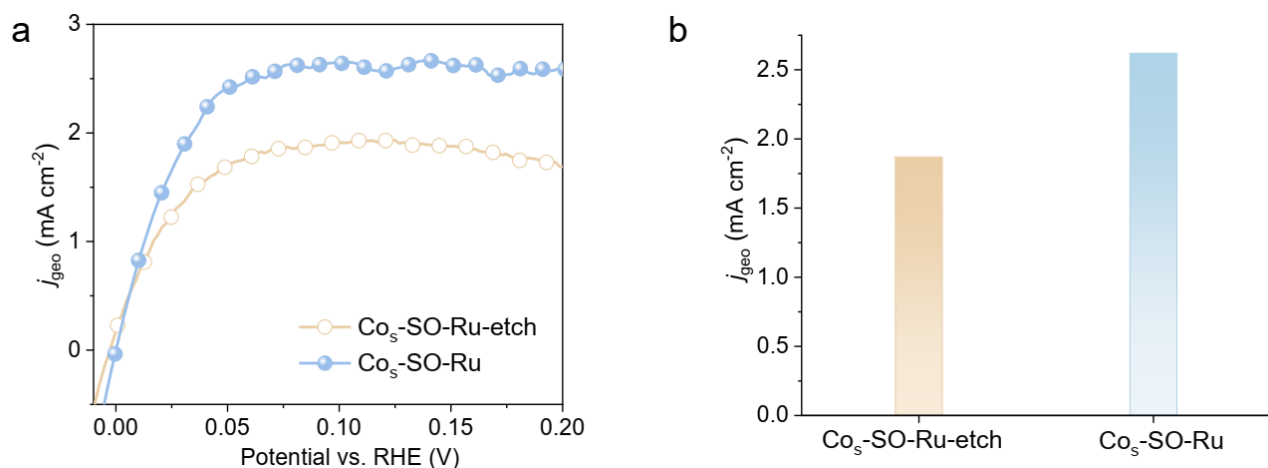


**Supplementary Figure 24.** **a** XANES spectra taken at Co *K*-edge for CoPc, CoS, and CoS-SO-Ru. **b** FT-EXAFS in R-space and corresponding fitting curves. All the original EXAFS data are processed without phase corrections.

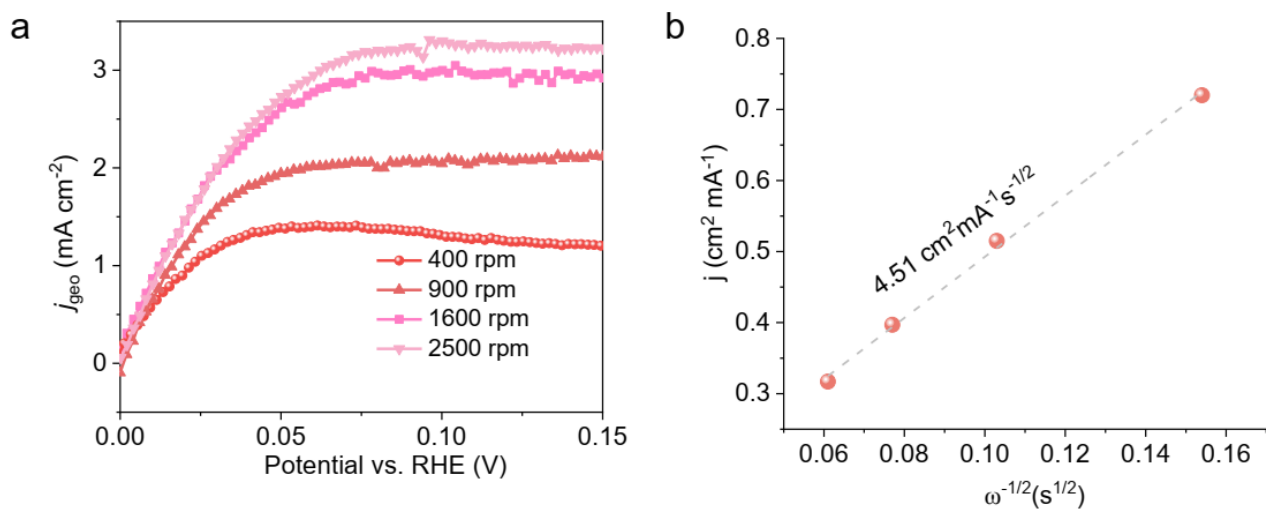




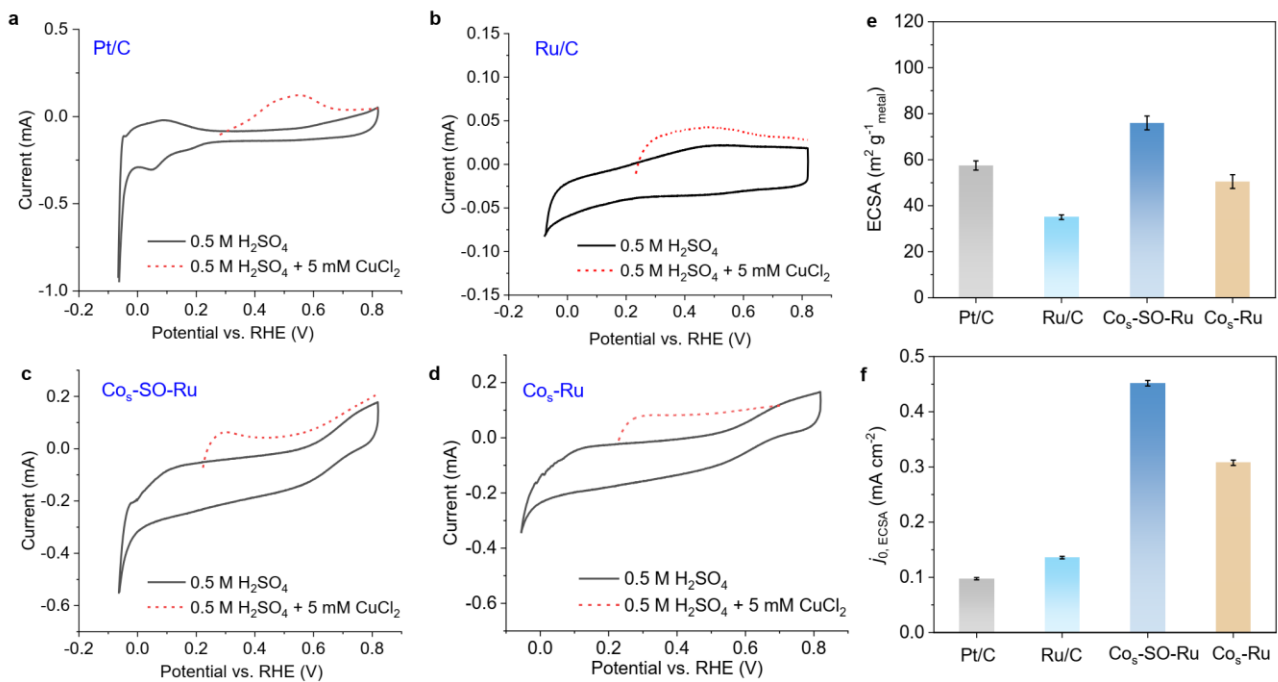
**Supplementary Figure 25.** HOR polarization curves of different catalysts in  $\text{H}_2$ -saturated 0.1 M KOH.



**Supplementary Figure 26.** **a** HOR polarization curves of different catalysts in  $\text{H}_2$ -saturated 0.1 M KOH. **b** The current density of different catalysts obtained at an overpotential of 50 mV.



**Supplementary Figure 27. a** HOR polarization curves of Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru at different rotating speeds. **b** The slope for HOR at Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru electrode.

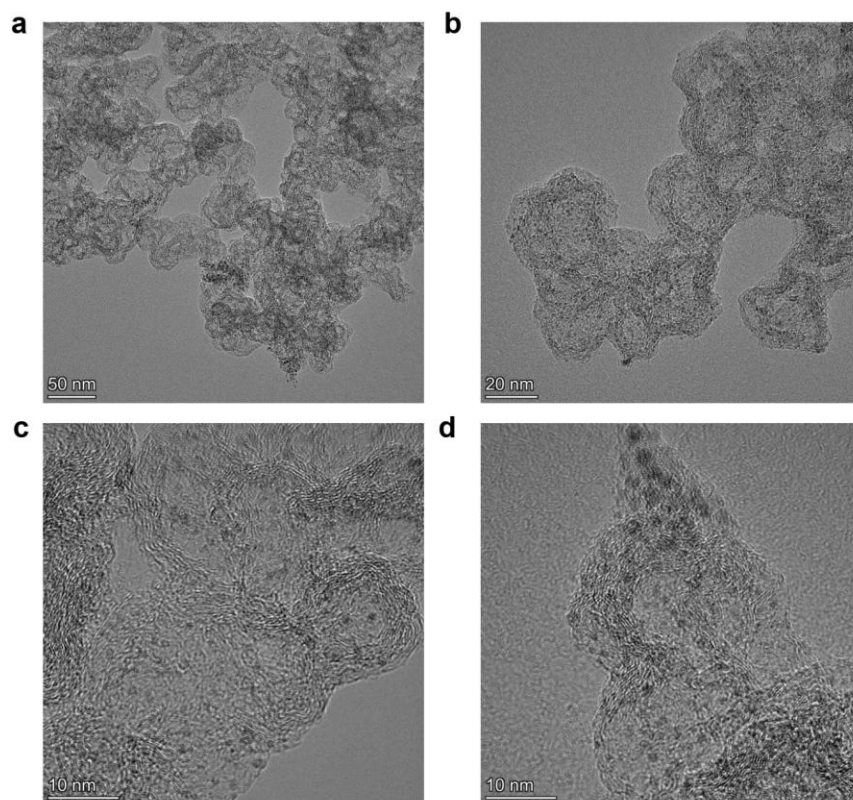


**Supplementary Fig. 28** Calculation of ECSA via the Cu underpotential deposition (Cu-UPD) methods for **a** Pt/C, **b** Ru/C, **c** Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru, and **d** Co<sub>s</sub>-Ru. **e** The summary of the ECSA value for different catalysts. **f** The calculated  $j_{0, ECSA}$  of different catalysts. The CV curves are performed in 0.5 M H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> electrolyte in the absence (black) and presence (red) of 5 mM CuCl<sub>2</sub>. As exhibited, the Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru exhibits higher ECSA (76 m<sup>2</sup> g<sup>-1</sup>) than that of Co<sub>s</sub>-Ru (50 m<sup>2</sup> g<sup>-1</sup>), which may be attributed to that the S=O bonds would depress the agglomeration of Ru clusters during pyrolysis process. Moreover, the Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru shows the highest ECSA normalized exchange current density ( $j_{0, ECSA}$ , 0.451 mA cm<sup>-2</sup>) than that of Co<sub>s</sub>-Ru (0.307 mA cm<sup>-2</sup>), Pt/C (0.097 mA cm<sup>-2</sup>), and Ru/C (0.135 mA cm<sup>-2</sup>), indicating outstanding HOR catalytic activity of Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru.

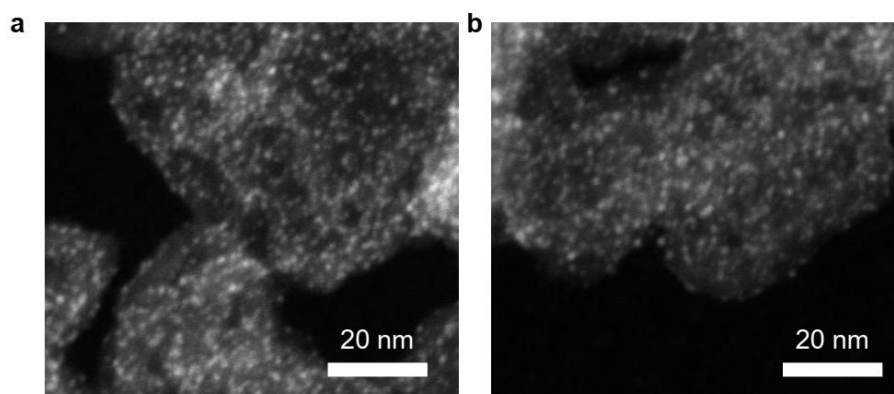
To obtain monolayered Cu atoms on metallic sites, the Pt/C and Ru-based electrodes were polarized at underpotentially deposited potentials for 100 s in 0.5 M H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> with 5 mM CuCl<sub>2</sub>. The Cu-UPD stripping processes were conducted via oxidation of the monolayered Cu between 0.2-0.7 V. The ECSA was calculated via the integral areas of Cu-UPD peaks ( $Q_{Cu}$ ) with the subtraction of the background and a charge density of 420 μC cm<sup>-2</sup> ( $Q_s$ ):

$$ECSA \left( m_{metal}^2 / g \right) = Q_{Cu} / (M_{metal} * Q_s)$$

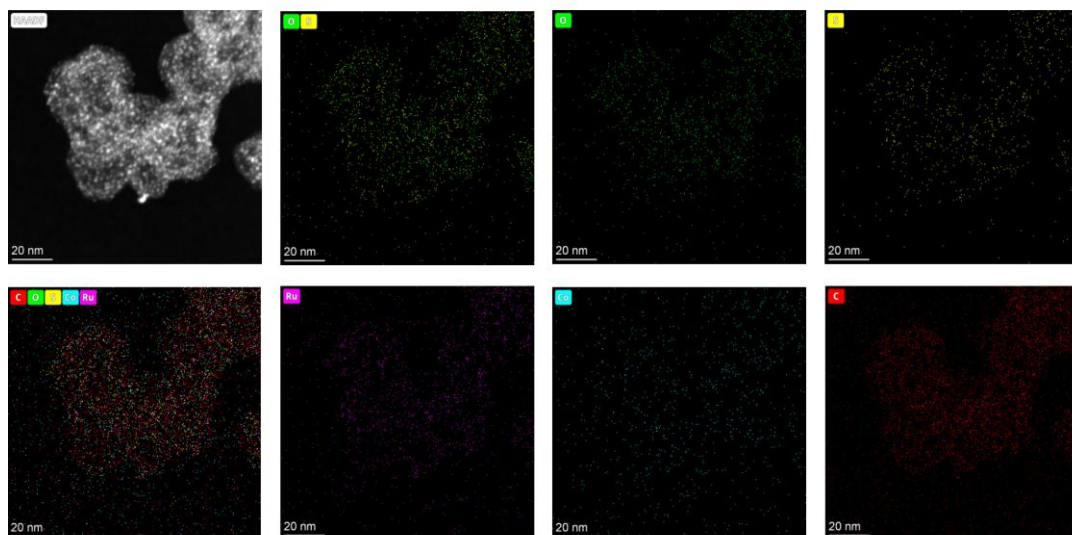
where the  $M_{metal}$  is the loaded metal mass on the working electrode.



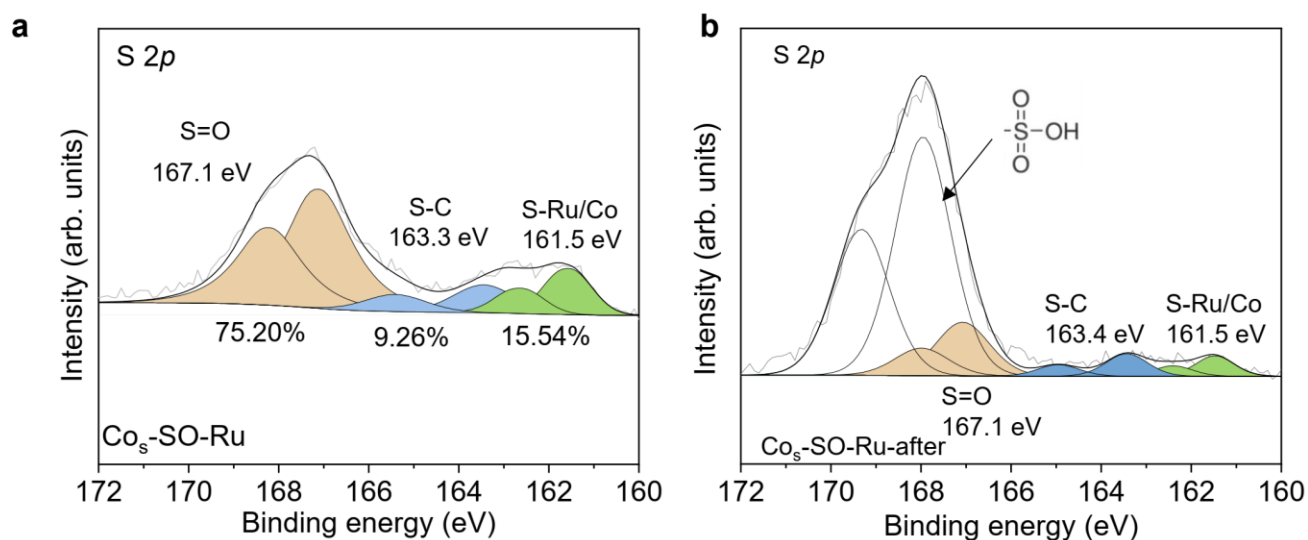
**Supplementary Figure 29. a-d** TEM images of the nanocarbon-supported  $\text{CoS-SO-Ru}$ -after.



**Supplementary Figure 30. a, b** HAADF-STEM images of the nanocarbon-supported Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru-after.



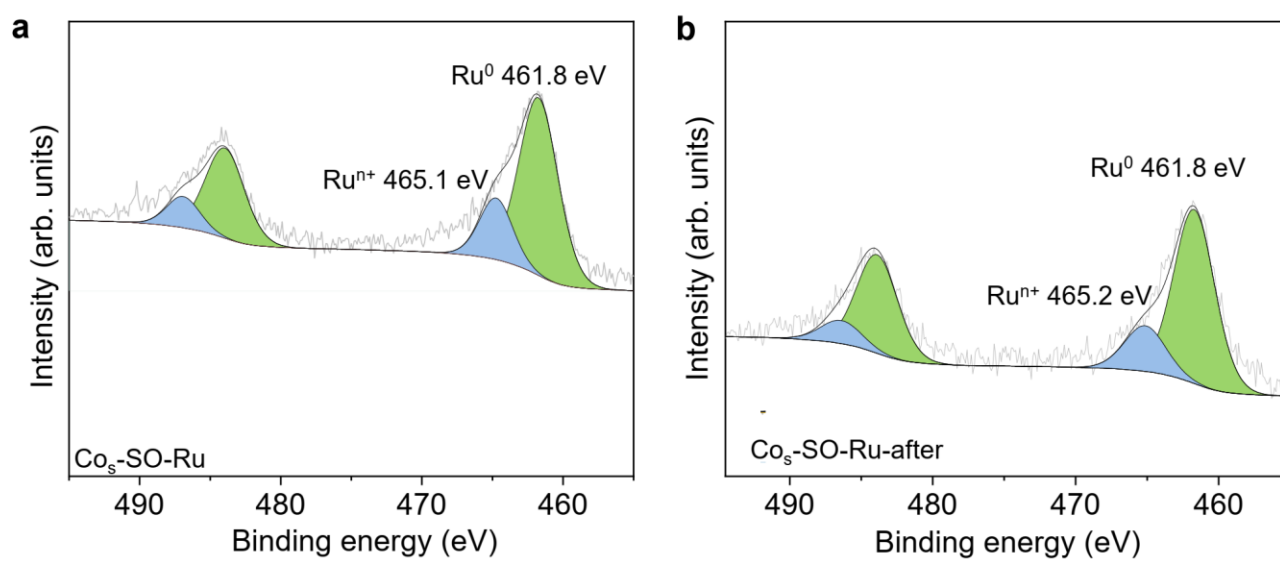
**Supplementary Figure 31.** HAADF-STEM image of Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru-after and corresponding EDX mappings.



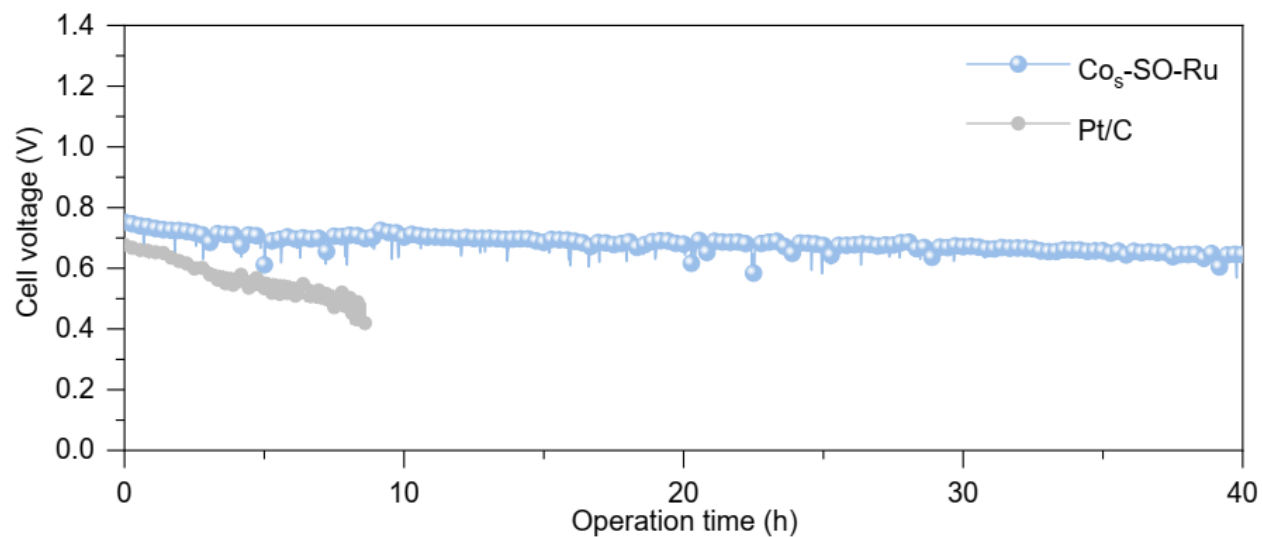
**Supplementary Figure 32.** XPS spectra of **a** Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru and **b** Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru-after in S 2p regions.

It should be noted that the strong peak at 168.1 eV in **b** would be attributed to presence of  $\text{-SO}_3\text{H}$  groups due to the Nafion polymers covering the surface of catalysts.

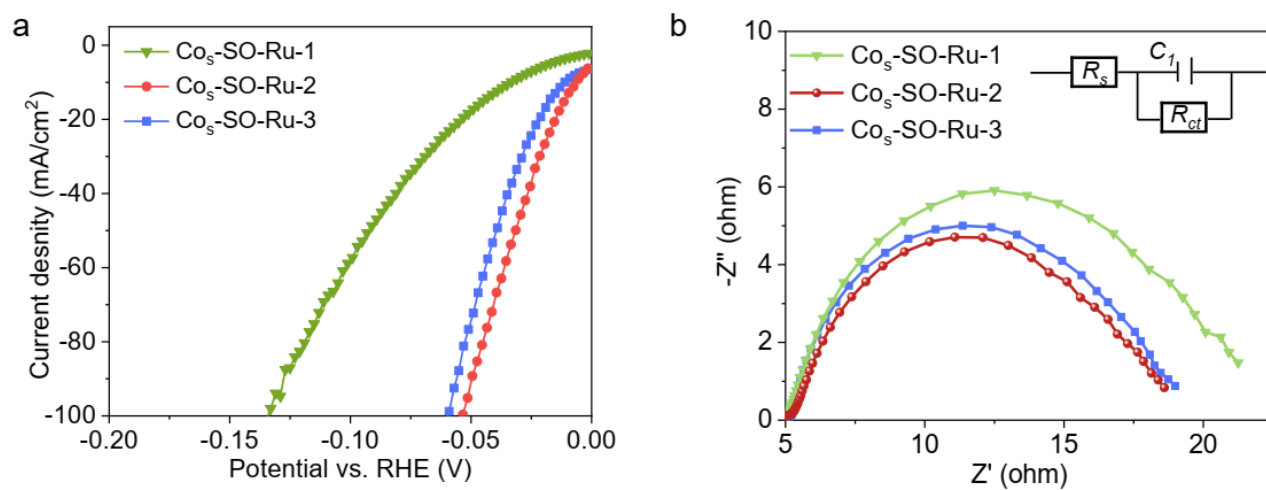




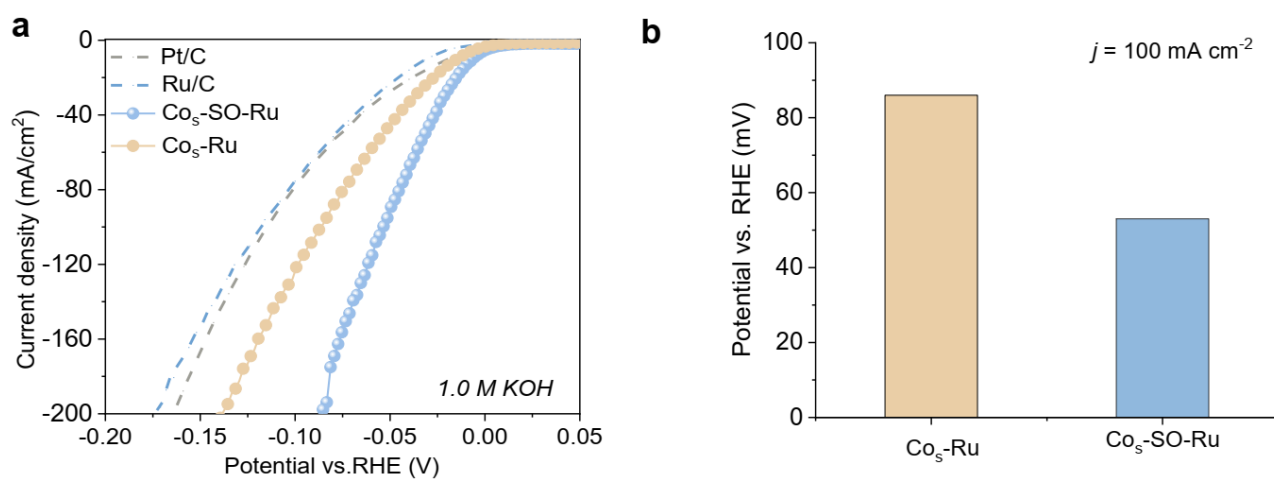
**Supplementary Figure 33.** XPS spectra of **a** Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru and **b** Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru-after in Ru 3p regions.



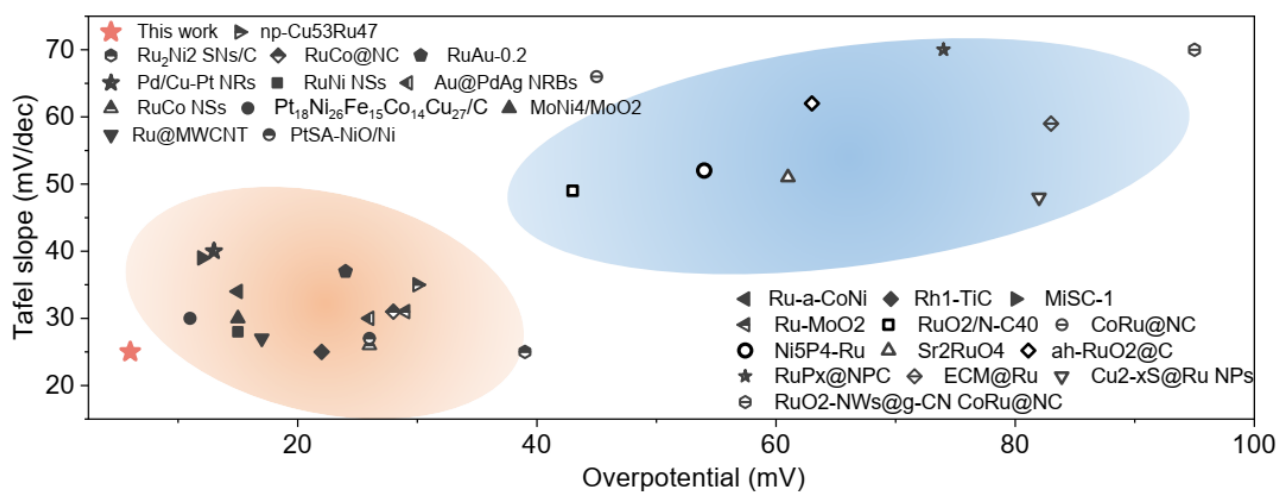
**Supplementary Figure 34.** The long-term durability test for HEMFCs using Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru or Pt/C as anode with current density of 500 mA cm<sup>-2</sup>.



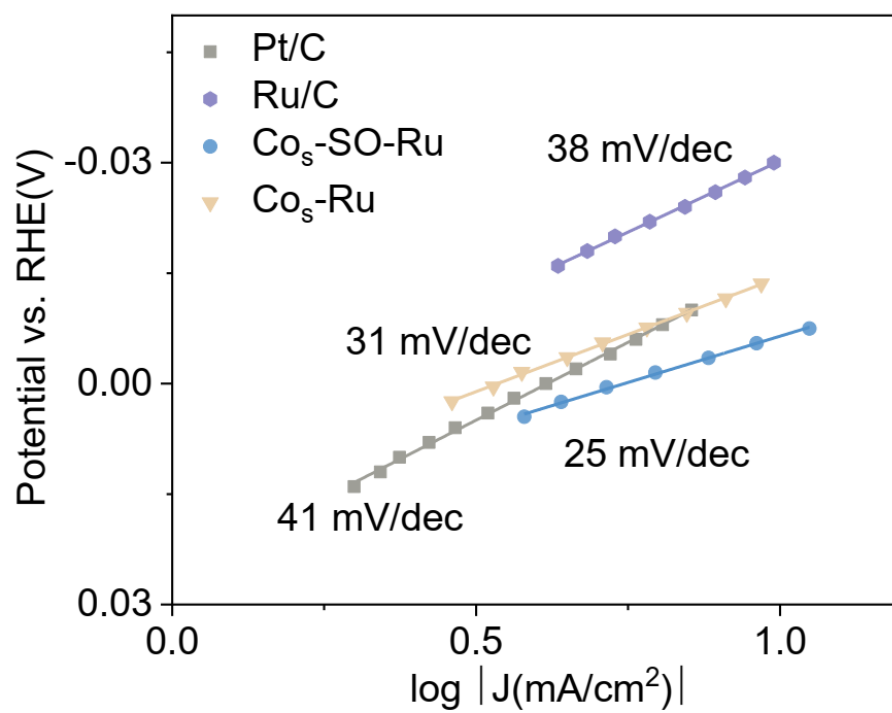
**Supplementary Figure 35.** **a** Comparison of HER polarization curves of  $\text{Co}_\text{s}$ -SO-Ru-1/2/3 in 1.0 M KOH. **b** The electrochemical impedance spectra of different samples in 1.0 M KOH.



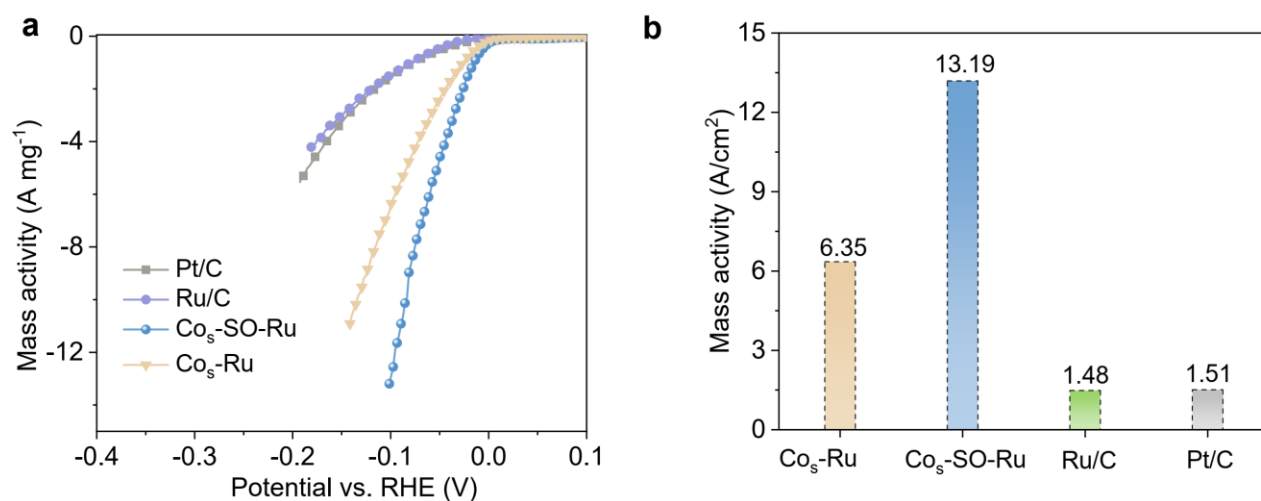
**Supplementary Figure 36. a** Comparison of HER polarization curves of different catalysts in 1.0 M KOH. **b** The overpotentials of different catalysts with current density of  $100 \text{ mA cm}^{-2}$ .



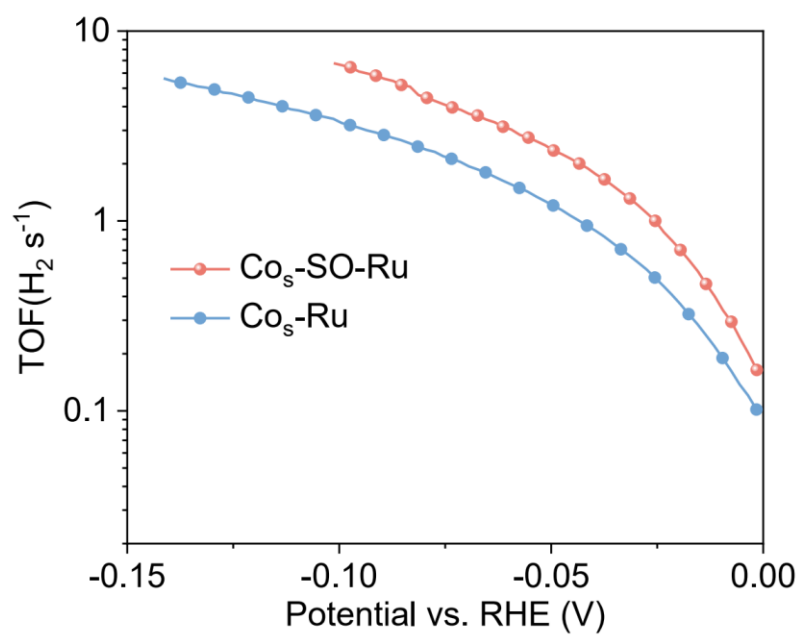
**Supplementary Figure 37.** The comparison of the Tafel slope and overpotential of Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru and other Ru-based materials.



**Supplementary Figure 38.** The Tafel slope of different samples.

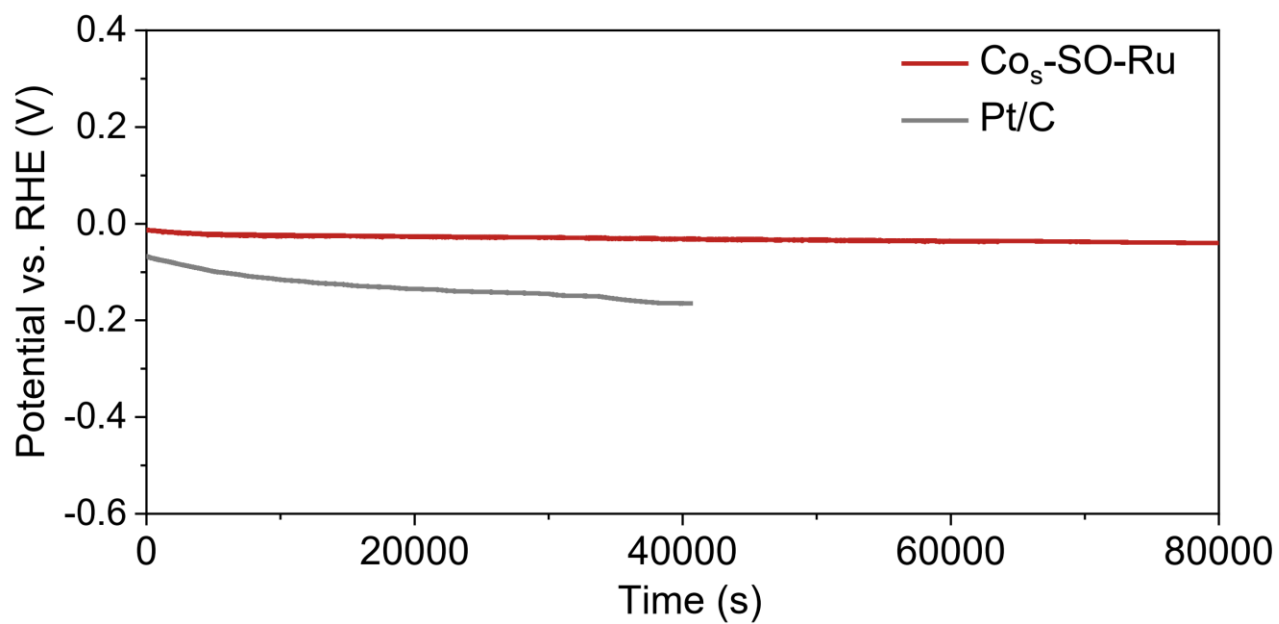


**Supplementary Figure 39.** **a** The mass activity of different catalysts in alkaline conditions that normalized by the noble metal mass. **b** The mass activity of different catalysts obtained with potential of -0.1 V.

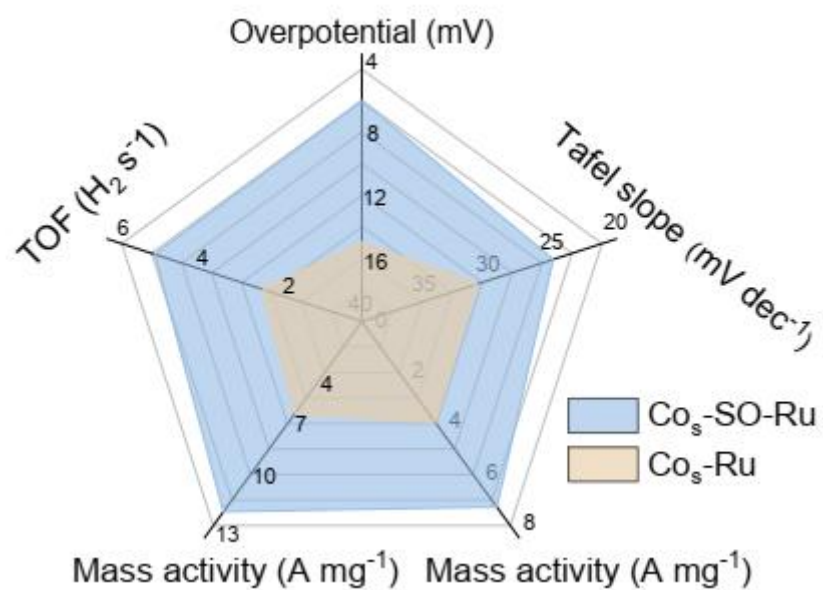


**Supplementary Figure 40.** The turnover frequency (TOF) of different catalysts in alkaline conditions is normalized by the noble metal mass.

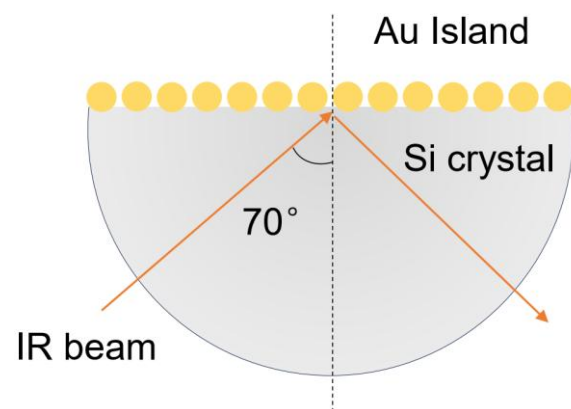




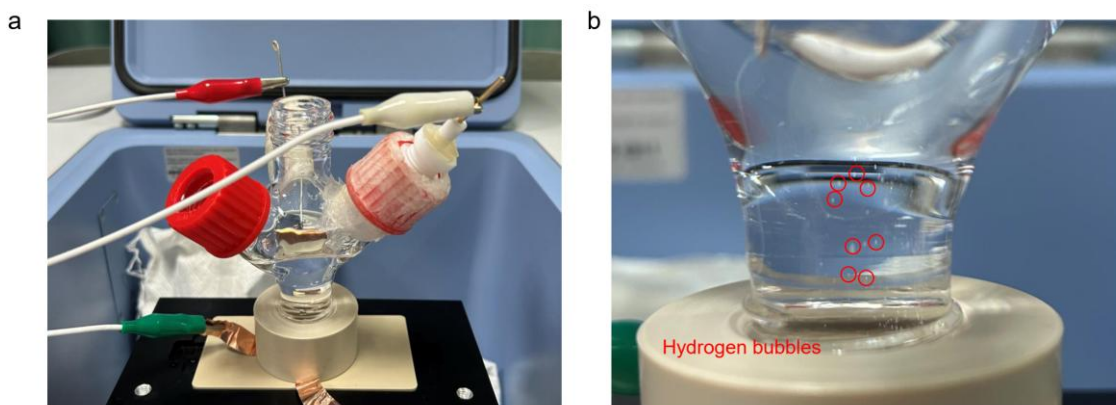
**Supplementary Figure 41.** Chronopotentiometric curves of Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru and Pt/C in alkaline condition.



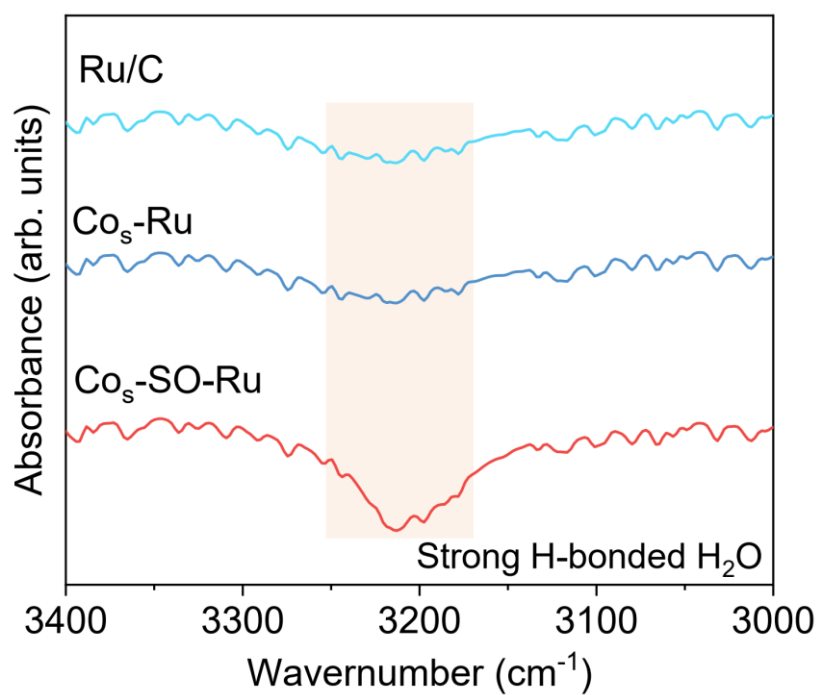
**Supplementary Figure 42.** Comparison of overpotential, TOFs, Mass activity, and Tafel slope for different catalysts.



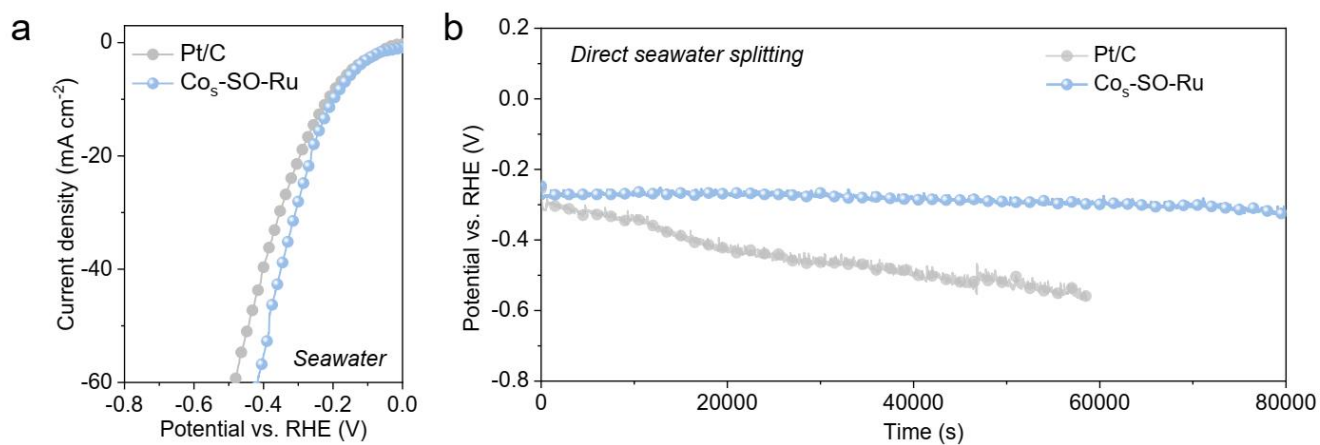
**Supplementary Figure 43.** Schematic illustration of in situ ATR-SEIRAS tests.



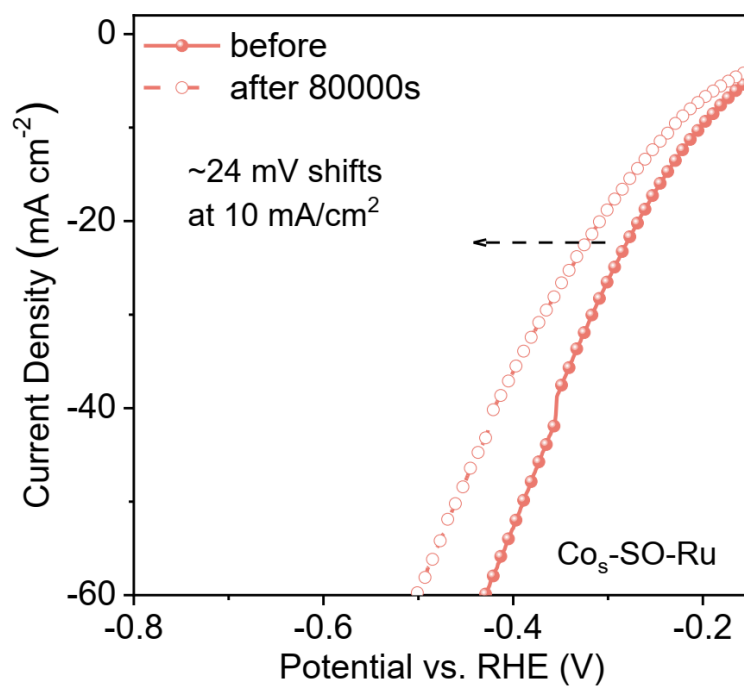
**Supplementary Figure 44.** **a** The photograph of in situ ATR-SEIRAS experimental setup. **b** The hydrogen bubbles generated during ATR-SEIRAS tests.



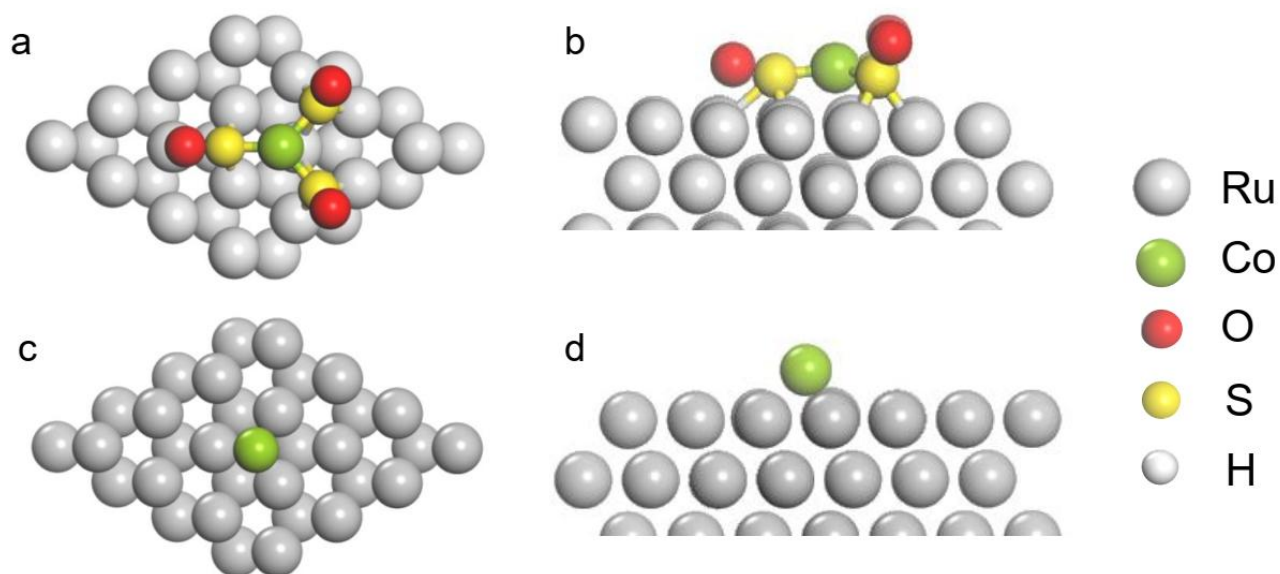
**Supplementary Figure 45.** The FT-IR spectra of different catalysts. As shown, the Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru catalyst exhibits strongly hydrogen-bond H<sub>2</sub>O, which can be attributed to the adsorbed H<sub>2</sub>O in air.



**Supplementary Figure 46.** **a** HER curves of different catalysts in seawater conditions. **b** Chronopotentiometric curves for direct seawater dissociation.

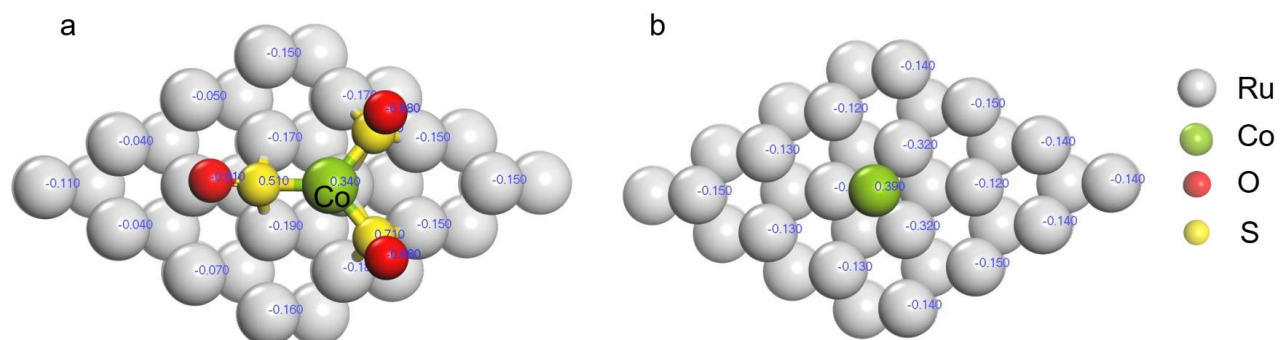


**Supplementary Figure 47.** The LSV curves of  $\text{Co}_s\text{-SO-Ru}$  before and after long-term tests in seawater condition.

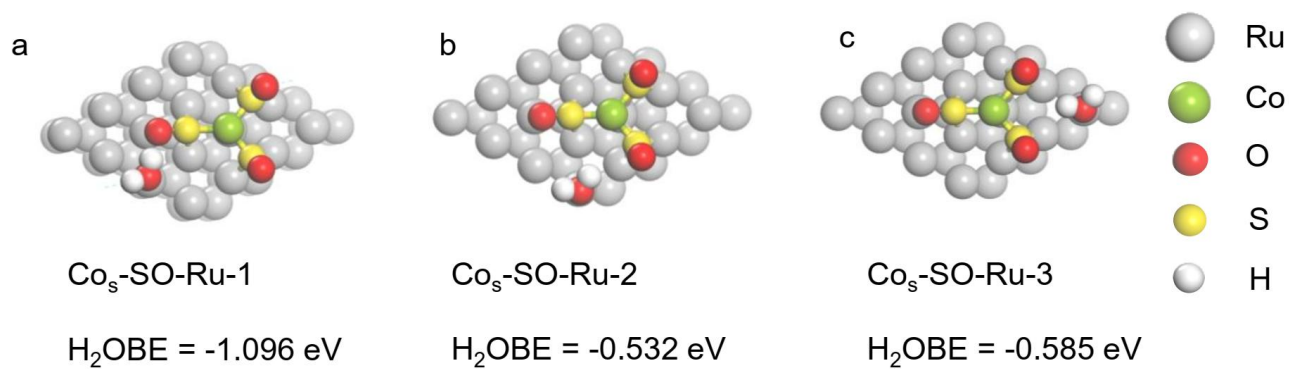


**Supplementary Figure 48.** The theoretical structures of **a, b** Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru and **c, d** Co<sub>s</sub>-Ru.

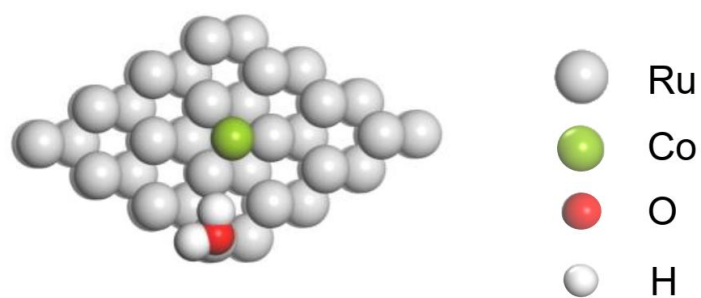




**Supplementary Figure 49.** The calculated charge distribution of **a** Co<sub>5</sub>-SO-Ru and **b** Co<sub>5</sub>-Ru.



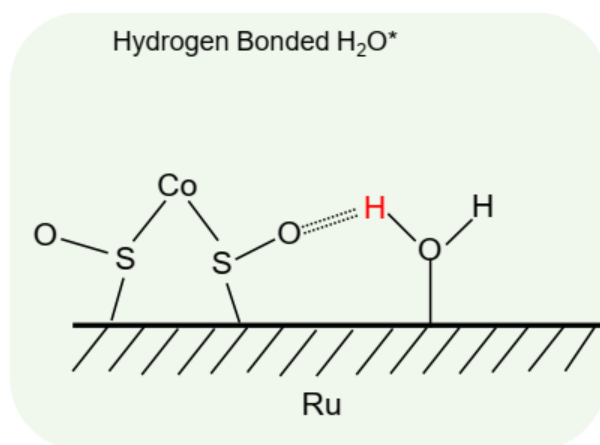
**Supplementary Figure 50. a-c** The H<sub>2</sub>O\* binding energy on different sites of Co<sub>8</sub>-SO-Ru.



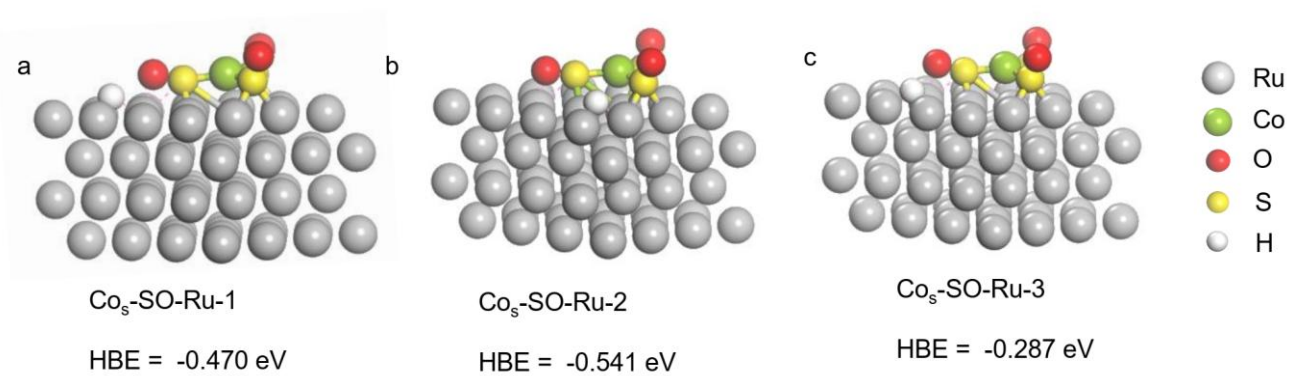
Co<sub>5</sub>-Ru

H<sub>2</sub>OBE = -0.459 eV

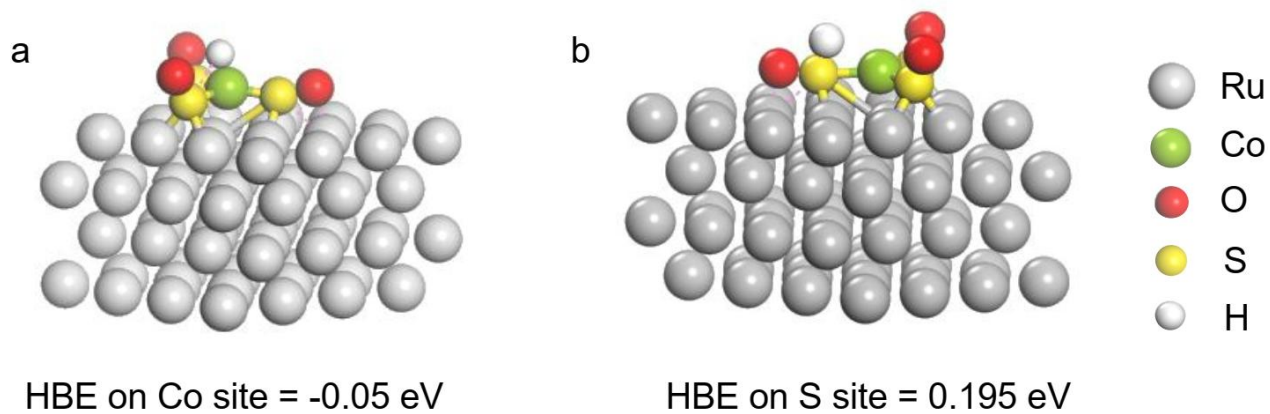
**Supplementary Figure 51.** The H<sub>2</sub>O\* binding energy on Co<sub>5</sub>-Ru.



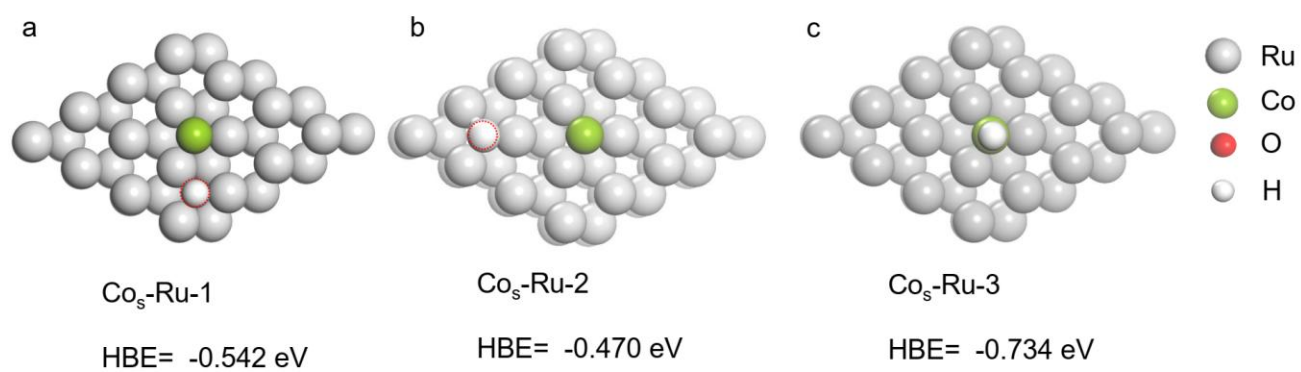
**Supplementary Figure 52.** The schematic illustration of the strongly H-bond water configuration.



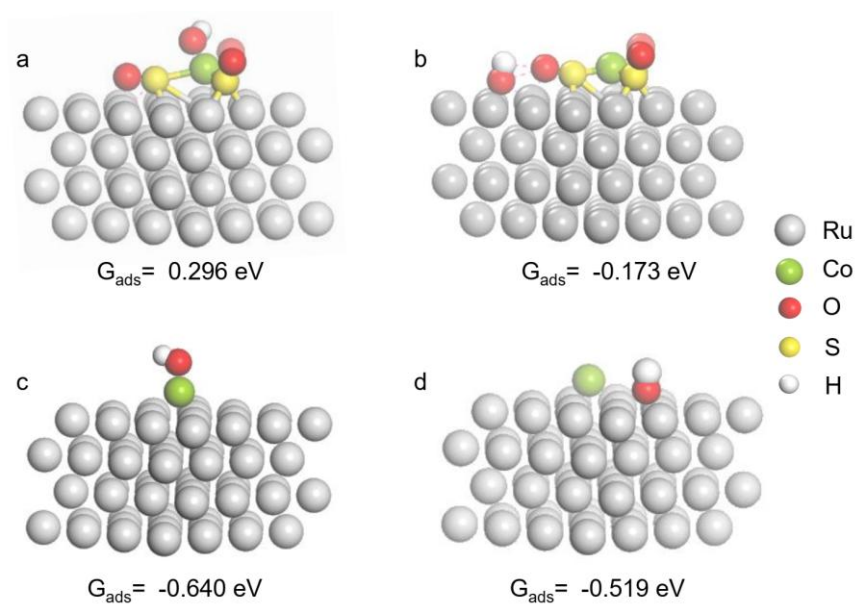
**Supplementary Figure 53. a-c** The H\* binding energy on different Ru sites of Co<sub>5</sub>-SO-Ru.



**Supplementary Figure 54.** The H\* binding energy on **a** Co and **b** S sites of Co<sub>5</sub>-SO-Ru.



**Supplementary Figure 55. a-c** The H\* binding energy on different Ru sites of Co<sub>5</sub>-Ru.



**Supplementary Figure 56. a-d** The Gibbs free energy of OH\* on different Ru sites of Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru and Co<sub>s</sub>-Ru.



## Supplementary Tables

**Supplementary Table 1.** The contents of C, O, N, S, Co, and Ru species in the Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru catalyst were obtained from the XPS results.

| Co <sub>s</sub> -SO-Ru | Contents (wt.%) | Contents (at.%) |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| C                      | 83.39           | 91.28           |
| N                      | 0.88            | 0.74            |
| O                      | 7.58            | 6.32            |
| S                      | 1.22            | 0.51            |
| Co                     | 1.10            | 0.25            |
| Ru                     | 5.83            | 0.85            |

**Supplementary Table 2.** The contents of C, O, N, Co, and Ru species in the Co<sub>s</sub>-Ru catalyst were obtained from the XPS results.

| <b>Co<sub>s</sub>-Ru</b> | <b>Contents (wt.%)</b> | <b>Contents (at.%)</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| C                        | 84.15                  | 92.79                  |
| N                        | 1.26                   | 1.09                   |
| O                        | 5.89                   | 4.89                   |
| Co                       | 1.00                   | 0.22                   |
| Ru                       | 7.70                   | 1.01                   |

**Supplementary Table 3.** EXAFS fitting parameters at the Ru *K*-edge for various samples ( $S_0^2=0.75$ )

| Samples                | shell | CN      | R(Å)      | $\sigma^2$ | $\Delta E_0$ | R factor |
|------------------------|-------|---------|-----------|------------|--------------|----------|
| Ru foil                | Ru-Ru | 12      | 2.68±0.01 | 0.0041     | -4.8±0.7     | 0.01     |
| RuO <sub>2</sub>       | Ru-O  | 5.5±0.6 | 1.97±0.01 | 0.0021     | 4.3±1.7      | 0.008    |
|                        | Ru-Ru | 7.8±2.6 | 3.16±0.02 | 0.0087     | 4.4±2.5      |          |
|                        | Ru-Ru | 4.4±1.3 | 3.60±0.01 | 0.0032     | 12.0±2.5     |          |
| Co <sub>s</sub> -SO-Ru | Ru-S  | 2.0±1.2 | 1.99±0.04 | 0.0070     | 2.6±4.4      | 0.023    |
|                        | Ru-Ru | 2.4±0.7 | 2.68±0.04 | 0.0134     |              |          |

<sup>a</sup>N: coordination numbers; <sup>b</sup>R: bond distance; <sup>c</sup> $\sigma^2$ : Debye-Waller factors; <sup>d</sup>  $\Delta E_0$ : the inner potential correction. *R* factor: goodness of fit.  $S_0^2$  was set to 0.75, according to the experimental EXAFS fit of Ru foil reference by fixing CN as the known crystallographic value;  $\delta$ : percentage.

**Supplementary Table 4.** EXAFS fitting parameters at the Co *K*-edge for various samples ( $S_0^2=0.75$ )

| Samples                        | shell  | CN      | R(Å)      | $\sigma^2$ | $\Delta E_0$ | R factor |
|--------------------------------|--------|---------|-----------|------------|--------------|----------|
| Co foil                        | Co-Co  | 12      | 2.49±0.02 | 0.0063     | 7.4±0.4      | 0.001    |
| Co <sub>3</sub> O <sub>4</sub> | Co-O   | 5.2±0.5 | 1.91±0.01 | 0.0027     | -8.1±1.6     | 0.003    |
|                                | Co-Co  | 4.7±1.6 | 2.86±0.01 | 0.0038     |              |          |
|                                | Co-Co  | 9.1±2.2 | 3.36±0.01 | 0.0062     |              |          |
| CoS                            | Co-S   | 6.4±0.1 | 2.21±0.01 | 0.0089     | -8.4±0.4     | 0.001    |
|                                | Co-Co  | 6.0±0.4 | 3.25±0.01 | 0.0113     |              |          |
| Co <sub>s</sub> -Ru            | Co-O   | 3.0±0.5 | 1.92±0.02 | 0.0054     | -5.0±2.7     | 0.020    |
|                                | Co-Ru  | 1.0±0.3 | 2.51±0.09 | 0.0129     |              |          |
| Co <sub>s</sub> -SO-Ru         | Co-N   | 0.8±0.4 | 1.86±0.05 | 0.0027     | -5.1±2.0     | 0.003    |
|                                | Co-S   | 2.8±0.5 | 2.23±0.01 | 0.0141     |              |          |
|                                | Co-S-O | 3.0     | 2.80±0.03 | 0.0049     |              |          |

<sup>a</sup>N: coordination numbers; <sup>b</sup>R: bond distance; <sup>c</sup> $\sigma^2$ : Debye-Waller factors; <sup>d</sup>  $\Delta E_0$ : the inner potential correction. R factor: goodness of fit.  $S_0^2$  was set to 0.75, according to the experimental EXAFS fit of Ru foil reference by fixing CN as the known crystallographic value;  $\delta$ : percentage.

**Supplementary Table 5.** Comparison of mass-normalized HOR activities with various recently reported state-of-the-art noble-metal-based catalysts in 0.1 M KOH.

| Catalysts                                                               | Catalysts loading ( $\mu\text{g cm}^{-2}$ ) | $j_{k,m}$ ( $\text{A mg}_{\text{metal}}^{-1}$ ) | Reference                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Co <sub>8</sub> -SO-Ru                                                  | 14.5                                        | 3.44                                            | <i>This work</i>                                    |
| Co <sub>8</sub> -Ru                                                     | 17.5                                        | 1.38                                            | <i>This work</i>                                    |
| Mn <sub>1</sub> O <sub>x</sub> (OH) <sub>y</sub> @Ru/C                  | 230                                         | 0.29                                            | <i>Nat. Catal.</i> 3, 454-462 (2020)                |
| Ru-Cr <sub>1</sub> (OH) <sub>x</sub> -1.1                               | 60                                          | 0.43                                            | <i>Nat. Commun.</i> 13, 5894 (2022).                |
| Ru/RuO <sub>2</sub> -180                                                | 20                                          | 0.92                                            | <i>Adv. Mater.</i> 2023, 35, 2208821.               |
| Ru-Ru <sub>2</sub> P/C                                                  | 8.33                                        | 1.26                                            | <i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> 2022, 63, 202215585    |
| Ru/VOC                                                                  | 18.47                                       | 3.44                                            | <i>J. Am. Chem. Soc.</i> 2023, 145, 27867-27876     |
| Ru-V <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> /OC                                    | 22.5                                        | 1.02                                            |                                                     |
| RuNi <sub>1</sub>                                                       | 8.8                                         | 2.7                                             | <i>Nano Lett.</i> 2020, 20, 3442-3448               |
| Ru <sub>2</sub> P/C                                                     | 6.45                                        | 0.877                                           | <i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> 2024, 63, e202406888.  |
| PtRu/Mo <sub>2</sub> C-W <sub>2</sub> C                                 | 13                                          | 0.40                                            | <i>ACS Catal.</i> 11, 932-947 (2021)                |
| RuP/NOC                                                                 | 18.1                                        | 3.25                                            | <i>Adv. Mater. Interfaces</i> 2022, 9, 2102193.     |
| O-Pt <sub>3</sub> In/rGO <sup>a</sup>                                   | 10                                          | 2.306                                           | <i>J. Am. Chem. Soc.</i> 2024, 146, 29, 20323–20332 |
| Pt NCs <sup>a</sup>                                                     | 10                                          | 2.128                                           | <i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2022, 13, 1596.                 |
| PtMo NPs/C <sup>a</sup>                                                 | /                                           | 0.805                                           | <i>Adv. Mater.</i> 2023, 35, e2211854               |
| Co <sub>0.2</sub> Ru <sub>0.7</sub> Pt <sub>0.1</sub> /PNC <sup>a</sup> | 15                                          | 1.84                                            | <i>Angew. Chem., Int. Ed.</i> 2023, 62, e202306881. |
| La <sub>1</sub> Pt@HCS <sup>a</sup>                                     | 10                                          | 2.42                                            | <i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2023, 14, 3767                  |
| PmPt@IrPd <sup>a</sup>                                                  | 9                                           | 1.05                                            | <i>J. Am. Chem. Soc.</i> 2023, 145, 4088-4097.      |
| HEA-PdNiRuIrRh <sup>a</sup>                                             | 6.98                                        | 3.25                                            | <i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> 2023, 62, e202217976   |
| Pt SACs/CrN <sup>a</sup>                                                | 4.5                                         | 2.8                                             | <i>Adv. Mater.</i> 2023, 35, 2208799                |
| Ni-Ir(BSC)/G <sup>a</sup>                                               | 31.8                                        | 0.33                                            | <i>J. Am. Chem. Soc.</i> 2023 145 (25), 13805-13815 |

<sup>a</sup> Pt or Ir-based catalysts for alkaline HOR.

**Supplementary Table 6.** Comparison of exchange current density and mass-normalized HOR activity with previously reported state-of-the-art noble-metal-based catalysts in 0.1 M KOH.

| Catalysts                                          | Scan rate<br>(mV s <sup>-1</sup> ) | $j_0$ (mA cm <sup>-2</sup> ) | Mass-normlized $j_{0,m}$<br>(mA mg <sup>-1</sup> ) | Reference                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Co <sub>s</sub> -SO-Ru                             | 5                                  | 3.51                         | 280                                                | <i>This work</i>                                   |
| Co <sub>s</sub> -Ru                                | 5                                  | 2.45                         | 140                                                | <i>This work</i>                                   |
| Pt <sub>6</sub> NCs/C                              | 5 <sup>a</sup>                     | 3.23                         | /                                                  | <i>Nat. Commun.</i> 13, 1596 (2022)                |
| Ru colloidosomes                                   | 5 <sup>a</sup>                     | 2.86                         | 50.18                                              | <i>J. Am. Chem. Soc.</i> 11138-11147 (2022)        |
| Ru@TiO <sub>2</sub>                                | 10                                 | 2.0                          | 79.78                                              | <i>Nat. Catal.</i> 3, 454-462 (2020)               |
| Ni-H <sub>2</sub> -NH <sub>3</sub>                 | 8.33                               | ~1.10                        | 21.95                                              | <i>Nat. Mater.</i> 21, 804-810 (2022)              |
| Ru <sub>2</sub> P                                  | 10                                 | 1.98                         | 389                                                | <i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> 2024, 63, e202406888. |
| RuP                                                | 10                                 | 1.13                         | 207                                                |                                                    |
| PdCu/C-500 °C                                      | 1                                  | 1.63                         | 127.62                                             | <i>J. Am. Chem. Soc.</i> 140, 16580-16588 (2018)   |
| Ir <sub>3</sub> Pd <sub>1</sub> Ru <sub>6</sub> /C | 5                                  | 2.55                         | 728.57                                             | <i>J. Am. Chem. Soc.</i> 139, 6807-6810 (2017).    |
| RuP@RuP <sub>2</sub> /C                            | 10 <sup>a</sup>                    | 2.65                         | 49.26                                              | <i>Adv. Mater.</i> 34, 2204624 (2022)              |
| pc Pt with 1-methylimidazole                       | 10                                 | ~1.30                        | /                                                  | <i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> e202207197 (2022)     |

**Supplementary Table 7.** Comparison of ECSA-normalized HOR activity with previously reported state-of-the-art noble-metal-based catalysts in 0.1 M KOH.

| Catalysts                                              | ECSA-normlized $j_{0,\text{ECSA}}$ (mA $\text{cm}_{\text{metal}}^{-2}$ ) | Reference                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Co <sub>s</sub> -SO-Ru                                 | 0.45                                                                     | <i>This work</i>                                    |
| Co <sub>s</sub> -Ru                                    | 0.31                                                                     | <i>This work</i>                                    |
| Mn <sub>1</sub> O <sub>x</sub> (OH) <sub>y</sub> @Ru/C | 0.177                                                                    | <i>J. Am. Chem. Soc.</i> 2024 146 (24), 16619-16629 |
| Pt/C                                                   | 0.216                                                                    |                                                     |
| Ru-CrO <sub>x</sub> @CN                                | 1.04                                                                     | <i>Nat. Catal.</i> 7, 441–451 (2024).               |
| Ru@CN                                                  | 0.95                                                                     |                                                     |
| Ru-Cr <sub>1</sub> (OH) <sub>x</sub> -2.2              | 0.28                                                                     | <i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2022, 13, 5894.                 |
| Ru <sub>2</sub> P/C                                    | 0.389                                                                    | <i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> 2024, 63, e202406888.  |
| Rh <sub>2</sub> Sb NBs                                 | 0.506                                                                    | <i>Adv. Mater.</i> 2021, 33, e2105049.              |
| Ir@Pd                                                  | 0.294                                                                    | <i>Adv. Mater.</i> 2021, 33, 2105400.               |
| di-RuNi MLNS/C                                         | 0.367                                                                    | <i>Adv. Funct. Mater.</i> 2023, 33, 2210328.        |
| HEA/C                                                  | 1.19                                                                     | <i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> 2023, 62, e202217976.  |
| PtRuNiCoFeMo HEA SNWs                                  | 0.969                                                                    | <i>Nat. Commun.</i> 2021, 12, 6261.                 |

**Supplementary Table 8.** Comparison of long-term HOR stability of Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru with various recently reported state-of-the-art noble-metal-based catalysts in 0.1 M KOH.

| Catalysts                                                  | Reaction time (h) | Decreased activity (%) | Reference                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Co <sub>s</sub> -SO-Ru                                     | 200               | 8.8                    | <i>This work</i>                                   |
| Ir <sub>SA</sub> -Mo <sub>2</sub> C/C                      | 120               | ~5                     | <i>Nat. Commun.</i> 15, 4236 (2024).               |
| Ru@TiO <sub>2</sub>                                        | 100               | 10.6                   | <i>Nat. Catal.</i> 3, 454–462 (2020).              |
| Ru-WC <sub>x</sub>                                         | 40                | 6.63                   | <i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> 2023, 62, e202311937. |
| Ni/V <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>                           | 16                | 1.5%                   | <i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> 2023, 62, e202217275  |
| Mn <sub>1</sub> O <sub>x</sub> (OH) <sub>y</sub> @Ru/C     | 3                 | 11.30                  | <i>J. Am. Chem. Soc.</i> 2024, 146, 16619-16629    |
| 2H-Pd@2H-NiRh NRs                                          | 10                | 16                     | <i>J. Am. Chem. Soc.</i> 2024, 146, 24141-24149    |
| Ru–Cr <sub>1</sub> (OH) <sub>x</sub>                       | 50                | 12                     | <i>Nat. Commun.</i> 13, 5894 (2022).               |
| Ru/VOC                                                     | 3                 | 9.3                    | <i>J. Am. Chem. Soc.</i> 2023, 145, 27867-27876    |
| HEA                                                        | 1                 | 19                     | <i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> 2023, e202217976      |
| Co <sub>0.2</sub> Ru <sub>0.7</sub> Pt <sub>0.1</sub> /PNC | 1                 | 14.20                  | <i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> 2023, e202306881      |
| i-ZnIn-PR                                                  | 2.778             | 6.1                    | <i>Nat. Commun.</i> 15, 1097 (2024)                |
| Ru-MnO/C                                                   | 1                 | 8.6                    | <i>Adv. Energy Mater.</i> 2024, 2404266.           |
| (RuCo) <sub>NC+SAs</sub> /N-CNT                            | 10                | 14.7                   | <i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> 2024, 63, e202404761. |
| fcc <sub>0.42</sub> Ru-Sn                                  | 14                | 35                     | <i>Energy Environ. Sci.</i> , 2024, 17, 5922-5930  |
| Ru/RuO <sub>2</sub> -180                                   | 8                 | 10                     | <i>Adv. Mater.</i> 2023, 35, 2208821.              |



**Supplementary Table 9.** Comparison of the overpotential and Tafel slope between Co<sub>s</sub>-SO-Ru and other state-of-the-art Ru-based HER catalysts.

| Catalysts                                                                               | Overpotential (mV) | Tafel slope (mV dec <sup>-1</sup> ) | References                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Co <sub>s</sub> -SO-Ru                                                                  | 6                  | 25                                  | <i>This work</i>                                             |
| np-Cu <sub>53</sub> Ru <sub>47</sub>                                                    | 30                 | 35                                  | <i>ACS Energy Lett.</i> <b>5</b> , 192-199 (2020)            |
| Ru <sub>2</sub> Ni <sub>2</sub> SNs/C                                                   | 39                 | 25                                  | <i>Nano Energy</i> <b>47</b> , 1-7 (2018).                   |
| RuCo@NC                                                                                 | 28                 | 31                                  | <i>Nat. Commun.</i> <b>8</b> , 14969 (2017).                 |
| RuAu-0.2                                                                                | 24                 | 37                                  | <i>Adv. Energy Mater.</i> <b>9</b> , 1803913 (2019).         |
| Pd/Cu-Pt NRs                                                                            | 13                 | 40                                  | <i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> <b>56</b> , 16047-16051 (2017). |
| RuNi NSs                                                                                | 15                 | 28                                  | <i>Nano Energy</i> <b>66</b> , 104173 (2019).                |
| Au@PdAg NRBs                                                                            | 26                 | 30                                  | <i>J. Am. Chem. Soc.</i> <b>138</b> , 1414-1419 (2016).      |
| RuCo NSs                                                                                | 26                 | 26                                  | <i>Adv. Energy Mater.</i> <b>10</b> , 2002860 (2020).        |
| Pt <sub>18</sub> Ni <sub>26</sub> Fe <sub>15</sub> Co <sub>14</sub> Cu <sub>27</sub> /C | 11                 | 30                                  | <i>Nat. Commun.</i> <b>11</b> , 5437 (2020).                 |
| MoNi <sub>4</sub> /MoO <sub>2</sub>                                                     | 15                 | 30                                  | <i>Adv. Mater.</i> <b>29</b> , 1703311 (2017).               |
| Ru@MWCNT                                                                                | 17                 | 27                                  | <i>Nat. Commun.</i> <b>11</b> , 1278 (2020).                 |
| PtSA-NiO/Ni                                                                             | 26                 | 27                                  | <i>Nat. Commun.</i> <b>12</b> , 3783 (2021).                 |
| Ru-a-CoNi                                                                               | 15                 | 34                                  | <i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> <b>61</b> , e202114160 (2022).  |
| Rh <sub>1</sub> -TiC                                                                    | 22                 | 25                                  | <i>Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.</i> <b>60</b> , 19085-19091 (2021). |
| MiSC-1                                                                                  | 12                 | 39                                  | <i>Adv. Energy Mater.</i> <b>11</b> , 2100141 (2021).        |
| Ru-MoO <sub>2</sub>                                                                     | 29                 | 31                                  | <i>J. Mater. Chem. A</i> <b>5</b> , 5475-5485 (2017).        |
| RuO <sub>2</sub> /N-C40                                                                 | 43                 | 49                                  | <i>Chem. Commun.</i> <b>54</b> , 4613-4616 (2018).           |
| CoRu@NC                                                                                 | 45                 | 66                                  | <i>Nanotechnology</i> <b>29</b> , 225403 (2018).             |
| Ru <sub>2</sub> P@PNC/CC-900                                                            | 50                 | 66                                  | <i>ACS Appl. Energy Mater.</i> <b>1</b> , 3143-3150 (2018).  |
| Ni <sub>5</sub> P <sub>4</sub> -Ru                                                      | 54                 | 52                                  | <i>Adv. Mater.</i> <b>32</b> , 1906972 (2020).               |
| Sr <sub>2</sub> RuO <sub>4</sub>                                                        | 61                 | 51                                  | <i>Nat. Commun.</i> <b>10</b> , 149 (2019).                  |
| ah-RuO <sub>2</sub> @C                                                                  | 63                 | 62                                  | <i>Nano Energy</i> <b>55</b> , 49-58 (2019).                 |
| RuP <sub>x</sub> @NPC                                                                   | 74                 | 70                                  | <i>ChemSusChem</i> <b>11</b> , 743-752 (2018).               |

|                                       |    |    |                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------|----|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ECM@Ru                                | 83 | 59 | <i>Adv. Energy Mater.</i> <b>10</b> , 2000882 (2020).             |
| Cu <sub>2</sub> -xS@Ru NPs            | 82 | 48 | <i>Small</i> <b>13</b> , 1700052 (2017).                          |
| RuO <sub>2</sub> -NWs@g-CN<br>CoRu@NC | 95 | 70 | <i>ACS Appl. Mater. Interfaces</i> <b>8</b> , 28678-28688 (2016). |

