

## **Supporting Information**

### ***Graphene oxide / polyethyleneimine modified cation exchange membrane for efficient selective recovery of ammonia nitrogen from wastewater***

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**Figure S1.** Photograph of the Donnan dialysis unit used.

**Table S1.** Design of ionic concentration investigations

| Liquid <sup>a</sup> concentration (mM) |      | Membrane type | Sampling interval time (h) | Running times (h) |
|--|------|---------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| NH <sub>4</sub> Cl                     | NaCl |               |                            |                   |
| 5                                      | 10   | CEM           | 1                          | 9                 |
| 10                                     | 20   |               |                            |                   |
| 25                                     | 50   |               |                            |                   |
| 50                                     | 100  |               |                            |                   |

<sup>a</sup> NH<sub>4</sub>Cl is the feed solution and NaCl is the receiving solution.

**Table S2.** Design of deposition conditions

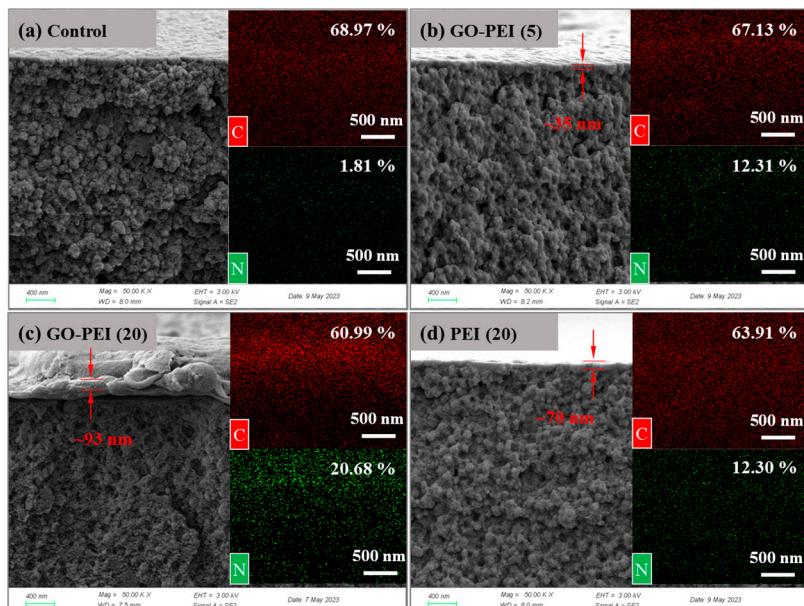
| Deposition conditions |          | Membrane type            | Liquid type |           | Sampling interval time (h) | Running time (h) |
|-----------------------|----------|--------------------------|-------------|-----------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Time (min)            | Material |                          | Feed        | Receiving |                            |                  |
| 0                     |          |                          |             |           |                            |                  |
| 5                     |          |                          |             |           |                            |                  |
| 15                    | GO-PEI   |                          |             |           |                            |                  |
| 20                    |          | 25 mM NH <sub>4</sub> Cl |             |           |                            |                  |
| 30                    |          | or                       | 50 mM NaCl  |           |                            |                  |
| 40                    |          | 2.5 mM MgCl <sub>2</sub> |             |           |                            |                  |
| 5                     |          |                          |             |           |                            |                  |
| 20                    | PEI      |                          |             |           |                            |                  |
| 40                    |          | CEM                      |             |           | 1                          | 9                |
| 0                     |          |                          |             |           |                            |                  |
| 5                     |          |                          |             |           |                            |                  |
| 15                    | GO-PEI   |                          |             |           |                            |                  |
| 20                    |          | 25 mM NH <sub>4</sub> Cl |             |           |                            |                  |
| 30                    |          | and                      | 50 mM NaCl  |           |                            |                  |
| 40                    |          | 2.5 mM MgCl <sub>2</sub> |             |           |                            |                  |
| 5                     |          |                          |             |           |                            |                  |
| 20                    | PEI      |                          |             |           |                            |                  |
| 40                    |          |                          |             |           |                            |                  |

**Table S3.** Exploratory design of the effect of Mg<sup>2+</sup> concentration

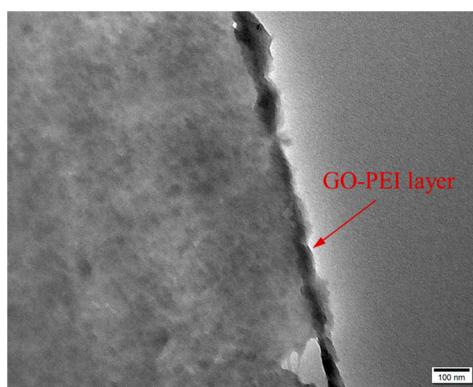
| Liquid concentration (mM) |           |                    | C[NH <sub>4</sub> <sup>+</sup> ] : C[Mg <sup>2+</sup> ] | Membrane type              | Sampling interval time (h) | Running time (h) |
|---------------------------|-----------|--------------------|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Feed                      | Receiving | NH <sub>4</sub> Cl |   |                            |                            |                  |
| MgCl <sub>2</sub>         | NaCl      |                    |   |                            |                            |                  |
| 25                        | 2.5       | 50                 | 10:1  | GO-PEI                     |                            |                  |
| 25                        | 12.5      | 50                 | 2:1   | membrane/<br>PEI membrane/ | 1                          | 9                |
| 25                        | 25        | 50                 | 1:1   | CEM                        |                            |                  |

**Table S4.** EDS scan data for membrane surfaces and cross-sections

| Membrane type | Elemental content (%) |       |      |       |               |       |      |       |
|---------------|-----------------------|-------|------|-------|---------------|-------|------|-------|
|               | Surface               |       |      |       | Cross-section |       |      |       |
|               | C                     | O     | S    | N     | C             | O     | S    | N     |
| Control       | 73.56                 | 17.88 | 7.39 | 0.00  | 68.97         | 19.99 | 3.91 | 1.81  |
| GO-PEI (5)    | 72.64                 | 10.11 | 6.87 | 5.77  | 67.13         | 10.66 | 2.34 | 12.31 |
| GO-PEI (20)   | 64.92                 | 16.37 | 4.11 | 11.38 | 60.99         | 12.97 | 1.98 | 20.68 |
| PEI (20)      | 66.96                 | 14.02 | 5.08 | 9.79  | 63.91         | 16.46 | 3.60 | 12.30 |



**Figure S2.** SEM and EDS scans of C (red) and N (green) elements images of (a) control membrane, (b) GO-PEI (5) membrane, (c) GO-PEI (20) membrane and (d) PEI (20) membrane cross-section.



**Figure S3.** A TEM image of a cross-sectional section of the GO-PEI (20) membrane.