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## Supplementary material

### *Material and methods*

**Reagents preparation.** Analytical grade solid  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4$  (>99.0%), solid  $\text{Nd}_2(\text{SO}_4)_3 \cdot 8\text{H}_2\text{O}$  (99.9%),  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4 \cdot 10\text{H}_2\text{O}$  (mirabilite), and deionized water were used as starting materials and for preparation of sulfate-saturated solution. Gem-grade quartz crystal from Donghai in eastern China was used. The quartz crystal was crushed and milled in a mortar for 20 minutes to reduce the grain sizes to  $\sim 100 \mu\text{m}$ .

**HDAC apparatus and experiment conduction.** An HDAC (Bassett et al., 1996) was used for the experiments. Two opposed low-fluorescence diamond anvils with 1 mm diameter culets were seated upon a tungsten carbide seat respectively. The anvils were heated by two nickel-chromium heaters wound around the seats to subject the samples to high P-T condition (up to 550 °C). The sample chamber was sealed by compressing the two diamond anvils against a 400  $\mu\text{m}$  diameter hole in the center of a 200  $\mu\text{m}$  thick Re gasket. Temperature inside the sample chamber was measured by two K-type thermocouples attached to each of the diamond anvils, calibrated by measuring the melting points of native sulfur (112 °C) and sodium nitrate (307 °C) (Yuan et al., 2016). Heating rate was controlled at  $< 2 \text{ }^\circ\text{C}/\text{min}$  near phase transitions. Quartz was used as a Raman spectroscopic pressure sensor, with pressure uncertainty of about  $\pm 50 \text{ MPa}$  (Schmidt and Ziemann, 2000).

Sulfate(s) and water were loaded into the sample chamber in four methods: (i) loading  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4$  crystal(s) and then  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4$ -saturated water solution; (ii) loading only mirabilite to quantify the



20  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4/\text{H}_2\text{O}$  ratio; (iii) loading mirabilite and  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4$  piece(s) to get bulk compositions with  
21  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4/\text{H}_2\text{O}$  ratios  $>0.1$ ; and (iv) loading mirabilite and  $\text{Nd}_2(\text{SO}_4)_3 \cdot 8\text{H}_2\text{O}$  to investigate Nd  
22 solubility in sulfate-rich solution. To prevent mirabilite from dehydrate (up to  $32.4^\circ\text{C}$ ), it was  
23 loaded at  $\sim 30^\circ\text{C}$  in a refrigerator. HDAC and Re gaskets were also kept in the refrigerator for at  
24 least 20 minutes before sample loading, to make sure that mirabilite would not “melt” on the warm  
25 anvils.

26 The Re gaskets were one-time use and repeated heating and cooling of the samples was  
27 avoided to minimize reactions between sulfate and Re gasket. The major effect of this reaction is a  
28 decrease in the fluid sulfate concentration. Electronic microscopic observation shows that trace  
29 amounts of Re-sulfide was generated, but can be neglected compared to the very high bulk sulfate  
30 contents of the system. Minor changes in the fluid redox might also happen, but it would not  
31 influence the phase relationships.

32 Gold-lined gaskets were used for experiments with repeating heating and cooling (results  
33 shown in [Fig. 1](#)), to avoid reaction between fluid and Re gaskets. The gold-lined gasket was made  
34 by filling metallic gold in the hole of the Re gasket and then drilling a smaller ( $\sim 300\text{ }\mu\text{m}$  diameter)  
35 hole in the center.

36 The phase diagram of [Figure 1](#) was constituted by results of five runs of experiments with the  
37 same bulk  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4/\text{H}_2\text{O}$  ratio. One run of the experiments was carried using gold-line gasket while  
38 others using common Re gasket. The phase diagram shows consistent P- and T-dependences of  
39 phase boundaries, suggesting that the bulk compositions of the five runs remained nearly identical  
40 and unchanged during heating, i.e., limited degree of fluid-Re reaction.

41 After the experiments of the silica-bearing systems, a pair of new diamond anvils was used for



the quartz-absent “blank control” experiments (Fig. DR2). The anvils were carefully washed in HF solution (10 wt.%) to avoid any contamination by silica.

**Raman spectra acquisition and processing.** The Raman spectra were acquired using a HORIBA Jobin Yvon confocal LabRAM HR Evolution micro-Raman system installed at Peking University. The system is equipped with a frequency doubled Nd:YAG green laser (532.06 nm), a 20× long-working distance objective with 0.25 numerical aperture, and a stigmatic 800 mm spectrometer with a 1800 groove/mm grating. The laser power was 100 mW at the source. The confocal hole was set at 500 μm and the corresponding spectral resolution was  $\pm 0.7 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ . During the experiments, Raman spectra between 100 and 1300  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  were recorded, with a continuing time of 10 and 15 seconds for sodium sulfate and quartz, respectively.

An external light source generated by a Philips 8-watt fluorescent lamp was used as a standard (at 1463  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  for the 532.06 nm laser) to calibrate the spectroscopy drift during the experiments (Yuan et al., 2016). The spectra of the fluorescent lamp were collected after the acquisitions of each quartz spectra (Lu et al., 2007; Scott et al., 2004). The calibrated Raman positions ( $\nu_{\text{corr}}$ ) of quartz were calculated from Raman band value ( $\nu_{\text{measured}}$ ) using the following relationship:

$$\nu_{\text{corr}} (\text{cm}^{-1}) = \nu_{\text{measured}} - \nu_l + \nu_{l, \text{standard}}$$

where  $\nu_{\text{measured}}$  denotes the measured Raman position of quartz, and  $\nu_l$  is the position of lamp fluorescence collected after each quartz spectra, and  $\nu_{l, \text{standard}}$  is that of lamp fluorescence that was collected at the beginning of each run of HDAC experiment. The Peakfit 4.0 package of the SYSTAT Software Inc. was used to process the Raman spectra. The peaks of sodium sulfate, quartz and fluorescent lamp were all fitted with Pearson IV amplify functions because of the asymmetric properties of those peaks (Yuan and Mayanovic, 2017).



63       **Scanning electron microscopic observation.** Quenched sulfate melt attached to the Re gasket  
64       was collected after the HDAC experiment and coated with gold. The sulfate was observed and  
65       compositionally analyzed using the Phenom XL benchtop scanning electron microscope with an  
66       accelerating potential of 15 kV at the Civil and Resource Engineering School of University of Science  
67       and Technology Beijing.

68       **Thermodynamic modeling.** The thermodynamic modeling was carried out using the HCh  
69       program (Bastrakov, 1999). Activity coefficients for charged aqueous species were calculated using  
70       the b-dot equation (Bastrakov, 1999; Helgeson and Kirkham, 1974), and those for neutral species  
71       were unit. The simulations were performed by calculating the full speciation of solutions that are  
72       saturated in fluorite, fluorapatite, calcite, and monazite-(Nd) and contains 5 molal of dissolved CO<sub>2</sub>,  
73       2 molal of NaCl, and 2 molal of Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> from 300 to 500 °C at 150 MPa. In the quartz-absent  
74       simulation, solid Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>(s) and Nd<sub>2</sub>(SO<sub>4</sub>)<sub>3</sub>(s) are included in the model, and therefore the  
75       retrograde solubility can be reproduced via the precipitation of the solids at high temperatures.

76       The interaction between silica and sulfate ion cannot be directly simulated due to the lack of  
77       available thermodynamic data. The immediate consequence of the presence of quartz is an  
78       elevation in the solubility of sulfate salts, and the quartz-saturated experiment (Fig. 2) shows that  
79       the high-temperature (300 to 500 °C) solubility of Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>(s) and Nd<sub>2</sub>(SO<sub>4</sub>)<sub>3</sub>(s) are much higher  
80       than the concentrations of dissolved sulfate (2 molal) and Nd (up to ~50 ppm), although the  
81       experiment is not quantitative. Therefore, the elevated sulfate solubility in the presence of quartz  
82       can be simulated simply by removing sulfate solids from the system and sulfate in the system was  
83       thus forced to be fluid-borne through the whole temperature range. This simple approach cannot  
84       precisely reproduce the silica-sulfate interaction but can simulate the elevated sulfate



concentration, which has the first-order control in the hydrothermal speciation and mobility of REE(III). Thermodynamic properties used in the simulation are listed in [Table DR2](#).

## ***Experimental details***

**Confirmation of sulfate melting by optical observation.** In some cases, especially at the beginning stages of melting, the molten sulfate can hardly be distinguished from sulfate solid by the appearance. In these scenarios, the phenomenon that two sulfate melt droplets merges into a single bigger drop ([Fig. DR3](#)) provide a solid evidence for the liquid state of the sulfate.

**Confirmation of incipient melting of sulfate.** The coupling between incipient melting and the transition from Type III to I polymorphs is evidenced by the presence of amorphous sulfate in samples that was quenched shortly after the solid-solid phase transition ([Fig. DR4](#)). The quenching was done in a dry state, as described in the main text.

**Confirmation of the equilibrium of the experimental system.** To evaluate whether the phase relationship shown in [Figure 1](#) is stable or metastable, one run of experiment using gold-lined gasket and mirabilite and quartz as starting materials was carried out and the heating and cooling cycle was repeated three times. Upon heating, the reproducibility of the measured solidus and total homogenization temperature is within  $\pm 2$  °C. We therefore conclude that the phase boundaries determined during heating represent stable assemblages. Metastable assemblages (supercooling) occur over a narrow temperature range during cooling. For example, the homogenization temperatures obtained during the three runs of cooling (i.e., exsolution of the melt) are in overall  $\sim 20$  °C lower than that determined during heating.



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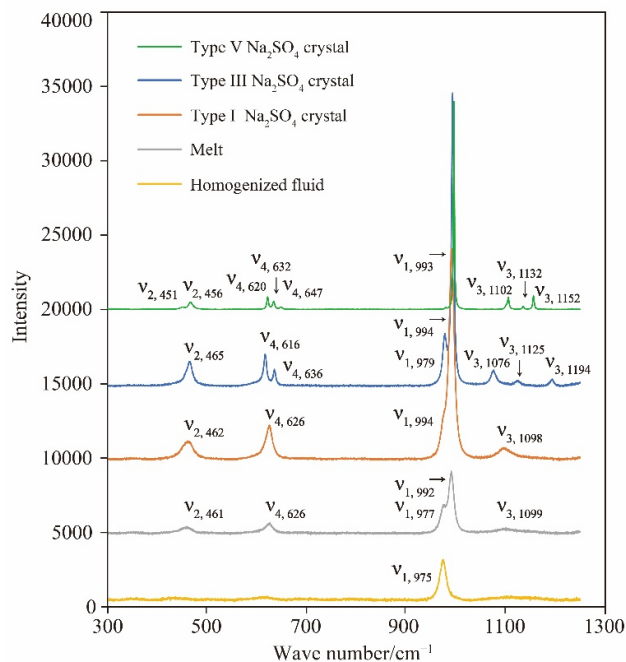
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201



202 **Supplementary figures**



203

204 **Figure DR1. Raman spectroscopy for different sulfate phases.** Three polymorphs of solid Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> (Type V, III

205 and I) were recognized by Raman spectroscopy (Murugan et al., 2000). Type V crystal is characterized by two

206 sub-peaks of ν<sub>2</sub> located at 451 cm<sup>-1</sup> and 456 cm<sup>-1</sup> and triplet for ν<sub>3</sub> located at 1102 cm<sup>-1</sup>, 1132 cm<sup>-1</sup> and 1152 cm<sup>-1</sup>,

207 respectively. Type III crystal also has a triplet for ν<sub>3</sub>, but the sub-peaks are different from those of Type V. Type I

208 crystal is characterized by a singlet for ν<sub>3</sub> at 1098 cm<sup>-1</sup>. Sulfate melt has weaker and broader peaks compared to the

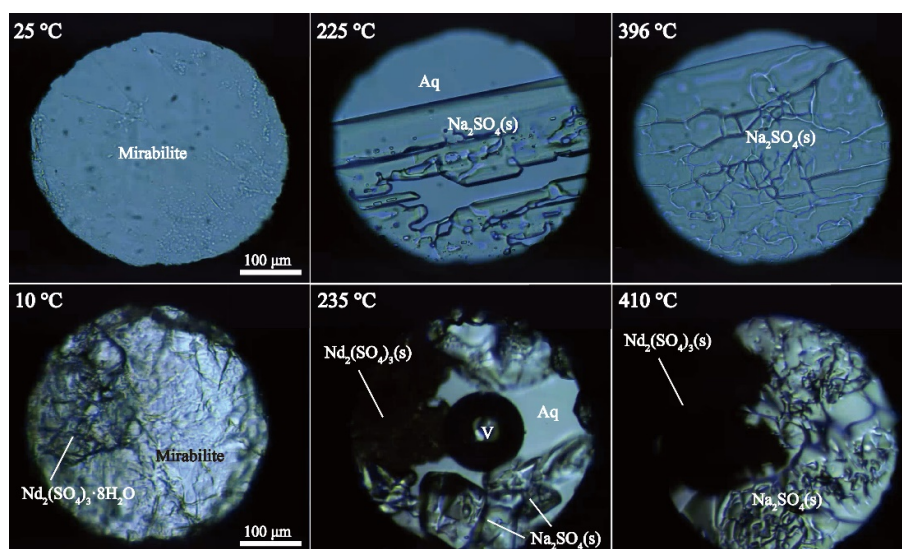
209 crystal counterparts with subpeaks at 992 and 997 cm<sup>-1</sup>, which are vibrations of monodentate Na<sup>+</sup>-SO<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup> ion pair or

210 polymer and free sulfate ion SO<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup>, respectively (Rudolph et al., 1999). The spectroscopy for homogenized fluid

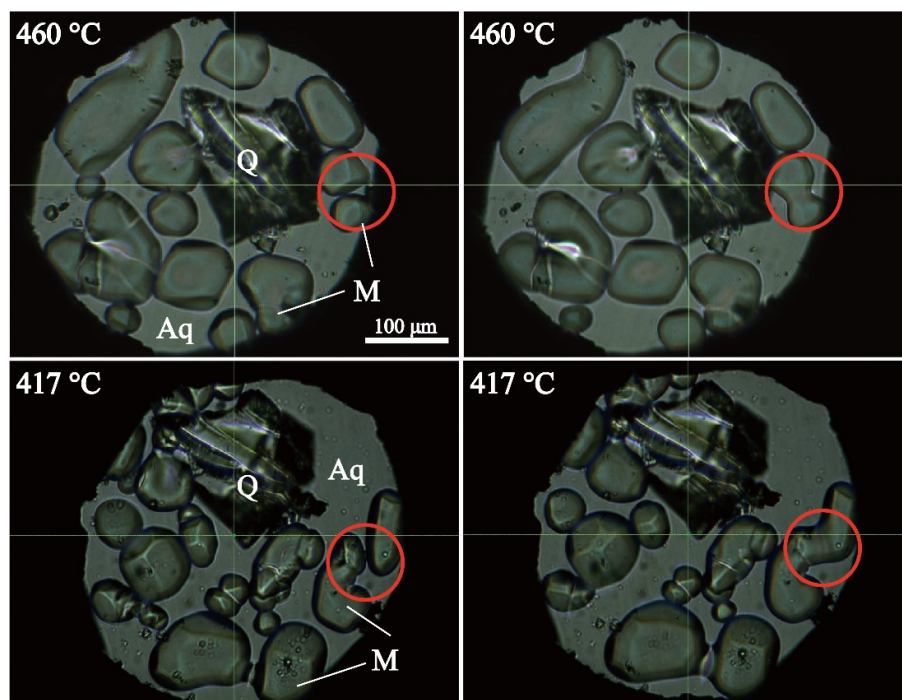
211 only has a main peak at 975 cm<sup>-1</sup>, the signal of free SO<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup> (Rudolph et al., 1999).

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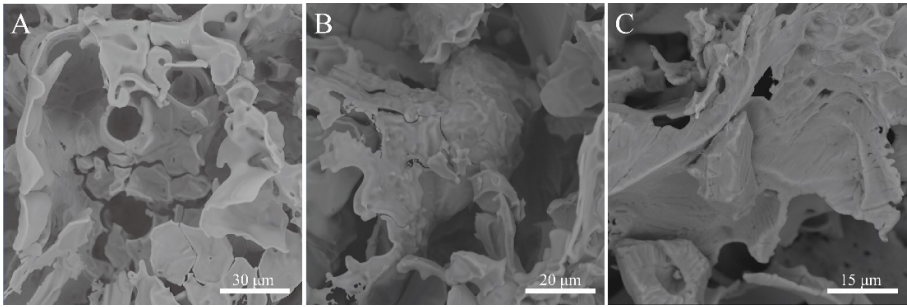
213  
 214 **Figure DR2.** HDAC results of the  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4\text{-H}_2\text{O}$  (top) and  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4\text{-Nd}_2(\text{SO}_4)_3\text{-H}_2\text{O}$  (bottom) systems. In the  
 215 absence of quartz, sulfates are characterized by retrograde solubility. Mirabilite and  $\text{Nd}_2(\text{SO}_4)_3 \cdot 8\text{H}_2\text{O}$  were loaded as  
 216 starting materials.



218  
 219 **Figure DR3.** Merging of sulfate droplets observed at 460 and 417 °C, respectively.  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4$  crystal,  
 220  $\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4$ -saturated solution and quartz were loaded as starting materials.



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223 **Figure DR4. Backscattered electron images of amorphous sulfate from samples that were quenched shortly**  
224 **after the Type III to I phase transition.**

225

226 ***Supplementary table***

227 **Table DR1. Phase transition boundaries determined from three runs of experiments with**  
228 **Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>/H<sub>2</sub>O molar ratio >0.1. The experiments were conducted using gold-lined Re gaskets.**

	Phase III to I (solidus)	Total homogenization
Round 1	267 °C, 257 MPa	434 °C, 573 MPa
Round 2	260 °C, 253 MPa	450 °C, 753 MPa
Round 3	280 °C, 132 MPa	397 °C, 494 MPa

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236 **Table DR2. Solid and aqueous species used in the modeling and sources of thermodynamic**  
 237 **properties.**

Species	Formula/Equation of states	Reference
<b>Solids</b>		
Fluorite	$\text{CaF}_2$	<a href="#">Robie et al., 1979</a>
Calcite	$\text{CaCO}_3$	<a href="#">Berman, 1988</a>
Monazite-(Nd)	$\text{NdPO}_4$	<a href="#">Popa and Konings, 2006</a>
$\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4(\text{s})$	$\text{Na}_2\text{SO}_4$	<a href="#">Knacke et al., 1991</a>
$\text{Nd}_2(\text{SO}_4)_3(\text{s})$	$\text{Nd}_2(\text{SO}_4)_3$	<a href="#">Knacke et al., 1991</a>
$\text{NdF}_3(\text{s})$	$\text{NdF}_3$	<a href="#">Knacke et al., 1991</a>
OH-apatite	$\text{Ca}_5(\text{PO}_4)_3\text{OH}$	<a href="#">Robie et al., 1979</a>
<b>Aqueous species</b>		
$\text{H}_2\text{O}$		<a href="#">Kestin et al., 1984</a>
$\text{H}^+$		<a href="#">Marshall and Franck, 1981</a>
$\text{OH}^-$		<a href="#">Marshall and Franck, 1981</a>
$\text{H}_2(\text{aq})$	Revised HKF	<a href="#">Johnson et al., 1992</a>
$\text{O}_2(\text{aq})$	Revised HKF	<a href="#">Johnson et al., 1992</a>
$\text{CH}_4(\text{aq})$	Revised HKF	HCh build-in (Unitherm) ( <a href="#">Bastrakov, 1999</a> )
$\text{CO}_3^{2-}$	Revised HKF	<a href="#">Johnson et al., 1992</a>
$\text{HCO}_3^-$	Revised HKF	<a href="#">Johnson et al., 1992</a>
$\text{CO}_2(\text{aq})$	Revised HKF	HCh build-in (Unitherm) ( <a href="#">Bastrakov, 1999</a> )
$\text{PO}_4^{3-}$	Revised HKF	HCh build-in (Unitherm) ( <a href="#">Bastrakov, 1999</a> )



$\text{H}_2\text{PO}_4^-$	Revised HKF	HCh build-in (Unitherm) (Bastrakov, 1999)
$\text{HPO}_4^{2-}$	Revised HKF	HCh build-in (Unitherm) (Bastrakov, 1999)
$\text{H}_3\text{PO}_4(\text{aq})$	Revised HKF	HCh build-in (Unitherm) (Bastrakov, 1999)
$\text{S}_2^{2-}$	Revised HKF	Johnson et al., 1992
$\text{HS}^-$	Revised HKF	Shock and Helgeson, 1988
$\text{H}_2\text{S}(\text{aq})$	Revised HKF	Plyasunov and Shock, 2001
$\text{S}_2\text{O}_3^{2-}$	Revised HKF	Johnson et al., 1992
$\text{HS}_2\text{O}_3^-$	Revised HKF	Shock et al., 1997
$\text{H}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_3(\text{aq})$	Revised HKF	Shock et al., 1997
$\text{SO}_2(\text{aq})$	Revised HKF	Johnson et al., 1992
$\text{SO}_3^{2-}$	Revised HKF	Johnson et al., 1992
$\text{HSO}_3^-$	Revised HKF	Johnson et al., 1992
$\text{SO}_4^{2-}$	Revised HKF	Johnson et al., 1992
$\text{HSO}_4^-$	Revised HKF	Johnson et al., 1992
$\text{S}^{3-}$	Revised HKF	Pokrovski and Dubessy., 2015
$\text{F}^-$	Revised HKF	HCh build-in (Unitherm) (Bastrakov, 1999)
$\text{HF}(\text{aq})$	Revised HKF	HCh build-in (Unitherm) (Bastrakov, 1999)
$\text{HF}_2^-$	MRB model	Malinin 1983
$\text{Cl}^-$	Revised HKF	Shock et al., 1997
$\text{HCl}(\text{aq})$	Revised HKF	Tagirov et al., 1997
$\text{Na}^+$	Revised HKF	Johnson et al., 1992
$\text{NaOH}(\text{aq})$	Revised HKF	SUPCRT95 (Pokrovski, 1998)



NaCl(aq)	Revised HKF	<a href="#">Sverjensky et al., 1997</a>
NaF(aq)	Revised HKF	SUPCRT95 ( <a href="#">Pokrovski, 1998</a> )
NaHS(aq)	MRB model	Calculated from the assumption: $pK(\text{NaHS}) = pK(\text{NaCl})$
$\text{NaCO}_3^-$	MRB model	<a href="#">Smith and Martell 1976</a>
NaHCO <sub>3</sub> (aq)	MRB model	<a href="#">Smith and Martell 1976</a>
$\text{NaSO}_4^-$	Revised HKF	<a href="#">Pokrovski et al., 1995</a>
$\text{Ca}^{2+}$	Revised HKF	HCh build-in (Unitherm) ( <a href="#">Bastrakov, 1999</a> )
$\text{CaOH}^+$	Revised HKF	<a href="#">Akinfiev 1998</a>
$\text{CaF}^+$	MRB model	<a href="#">Malinin 1983</a>
$\text{CaCl}^+$	Revised HKF	SUPCRT95 ( <a href="#">Pokrovski, 1998</a> )
$\text{CaCl}_2(\text{aq})$	Revised HKF	SUPCRT95 ( <a href="#">Pokrovski, 1998</a> )
$\text{CaCO}_3(\text{aq})$	Revised HKF	SUPCRT95 ( <a href="#">Pokrovski, 1998</a> )
$\text{Ca}(\text{HCO}_3)^+$	Revised HKF	<a href="#">Akinfiev 1998</a>
$\text{CaSO}_4(\text{aq})$	Revised HKF	SUPCRT95 ( <a href="#">Pokrovski, 1998</a> )
$\text{Nd}^{3+}$	Revised HKF	<a href="#">Shock and Helgeson, 1988</a>
$\text{NdCO}_3^+$	Revised HKF	<a href="#">Haas et al., 1995</a>
$\text{NdHCO}_3^{2+}$	Revised HKF	<a href="#">Haas et al., 1995</a>
$\text{NdH}_2\text{PO}_4^{2+}$	Revised HKF	<a href="#">Haas et al., 1995</a>
$\text{NdSO}_4^+$	MRB mode	<a href="#">Migdisov et al., 2006</a>
$\text{Nd}(\text{SO}_4)_2^-$	MRB mode	<a href="#">Migdisov et al., 2006</a>
$\text{NdOH}^{2+}$	MRB mode	<a href="#">Wood et al., 2002</a>



$\text{Nd}(\text{OH})_2^+$	MRB mode	<a href="#">Wood et al., 2002</a>
$\text{Nd}(\text{OH})_3(\text{aq})$	MRB mode	<a href="#">Wood et al., 2002</a>
$\text{NdF}^{2+}$	Revised HKF	<a href="#">Migdisov et al., 2009</a>
$\text{NdCl}^{2+}$	Revised HKF	<a href="#">Migdisov et al., 2009</a>
$\text{NdCl}_2^+$	Revised HKF	<a href="#">Migdisov et al., 2009</a>



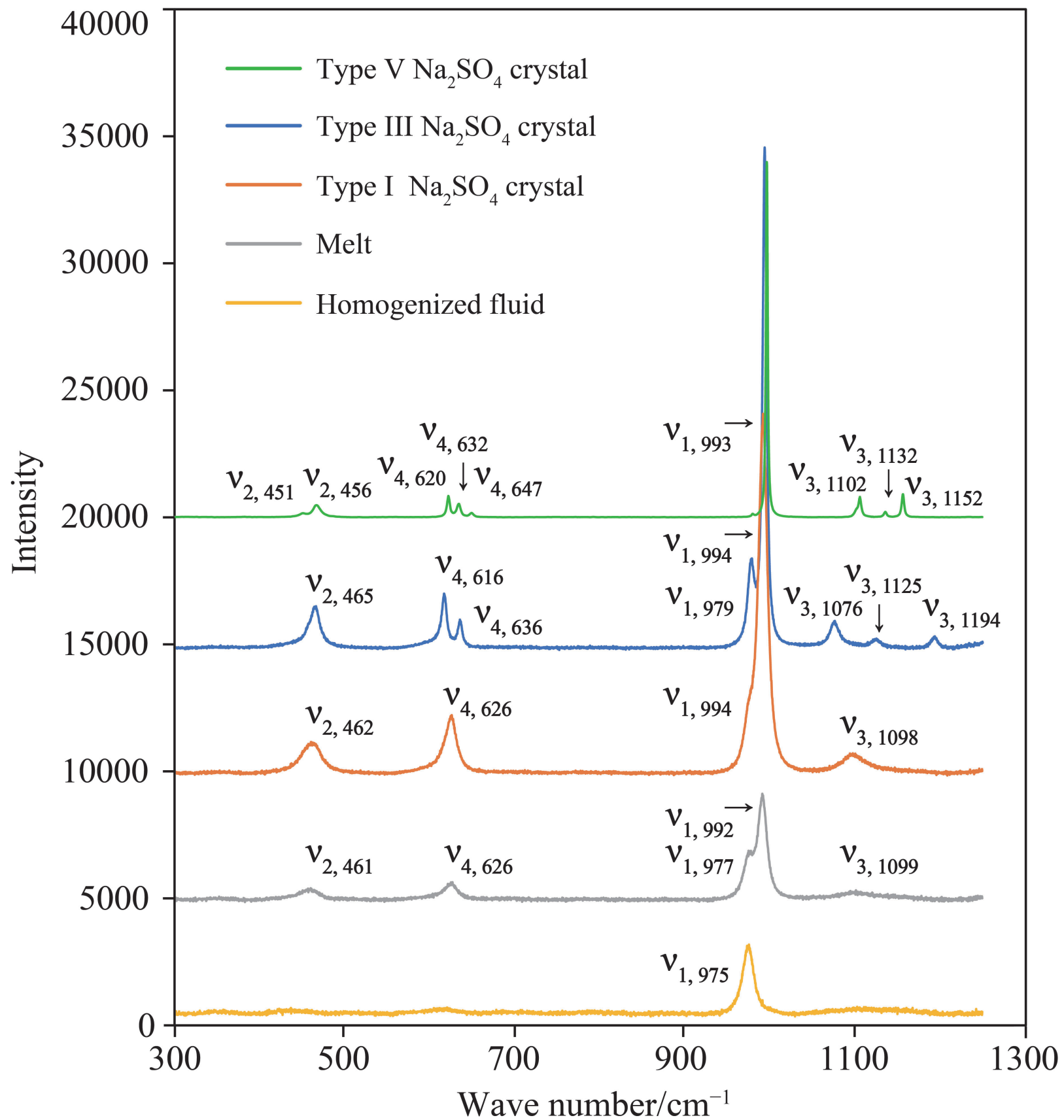


Fig. DR1



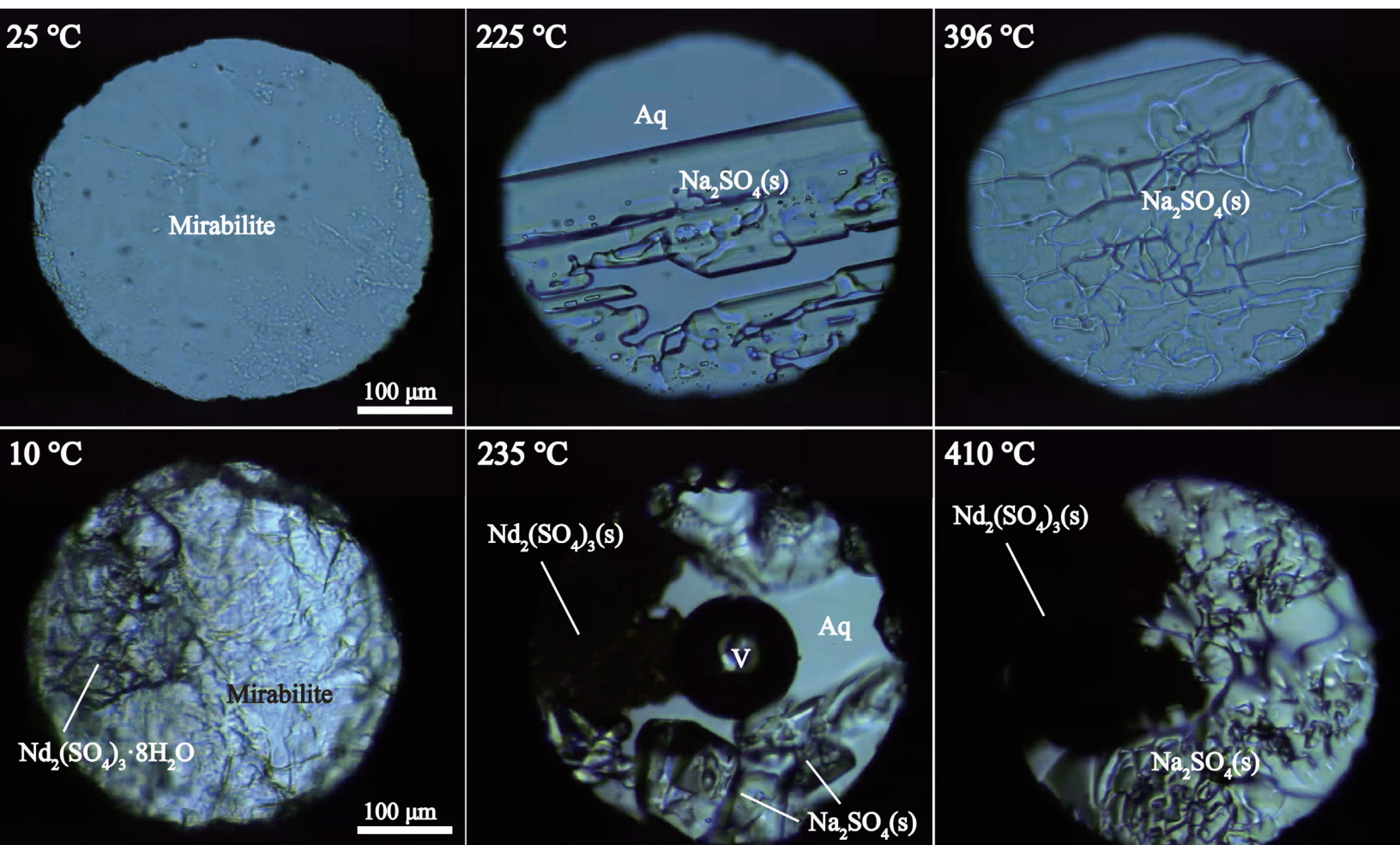


Fig. DR2



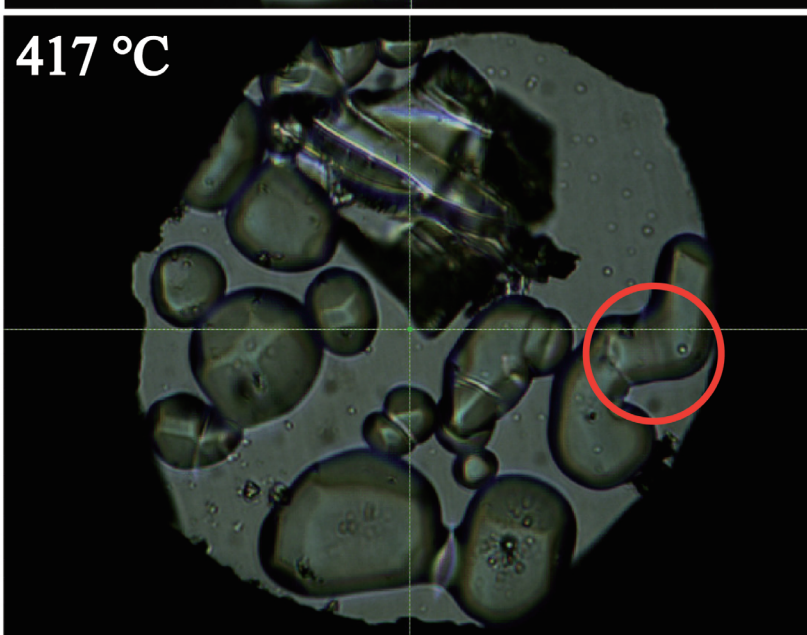
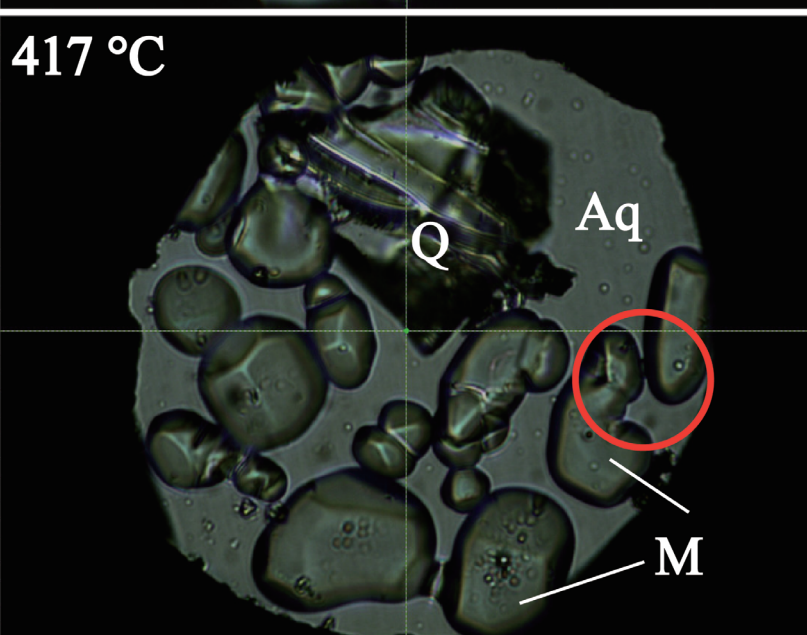
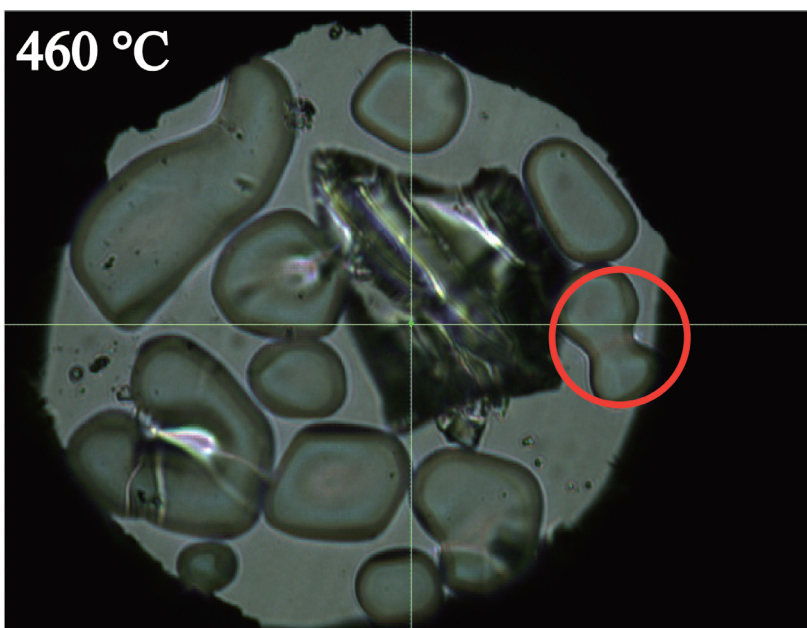
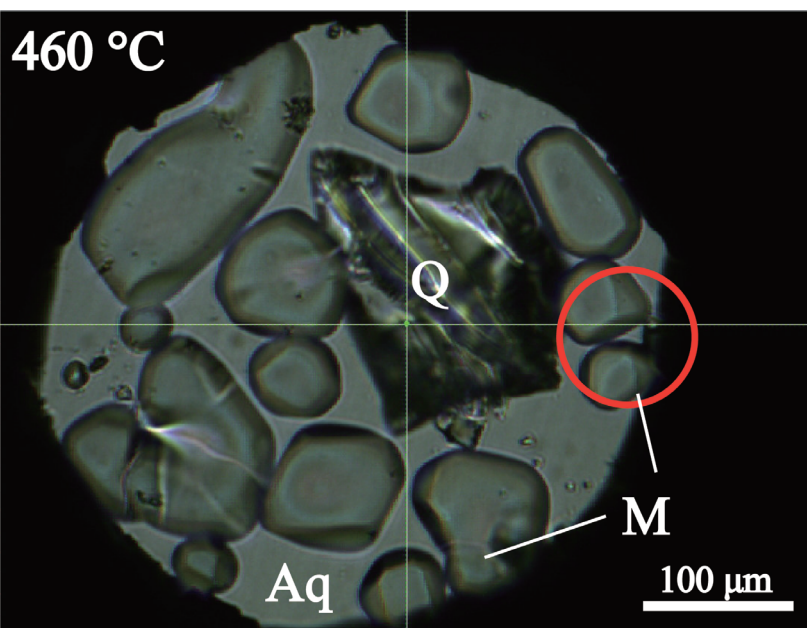


Fig. DR3



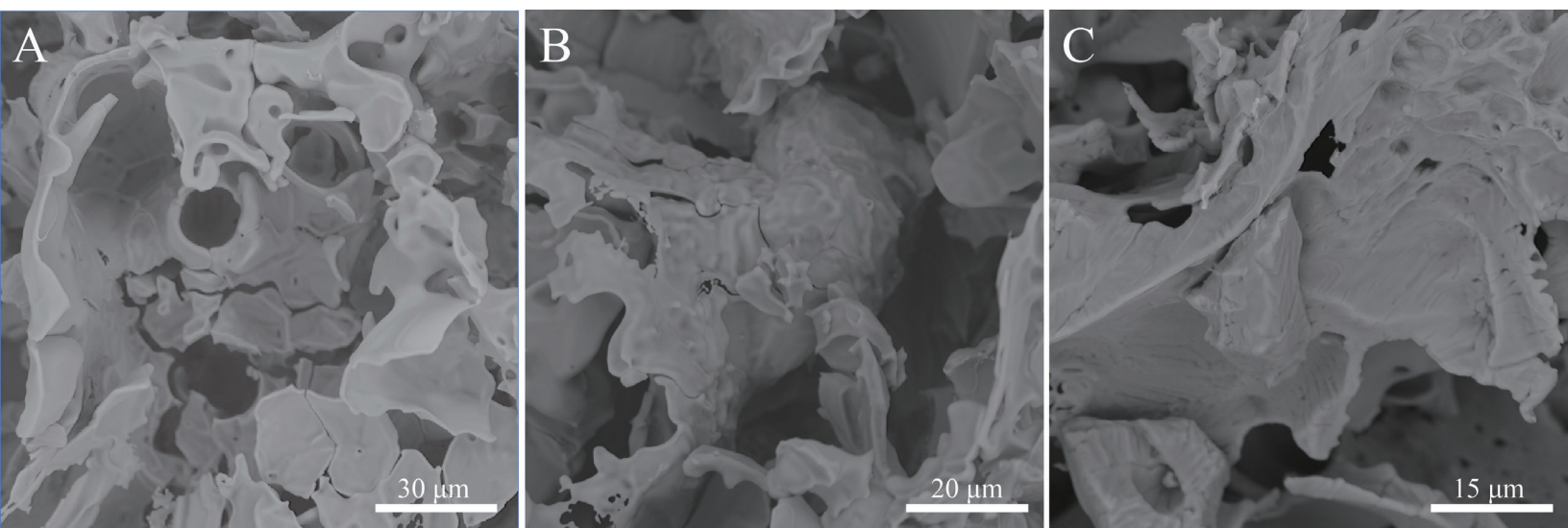


Fig. DR4