

FIBER PHOTOVOLTAIC DEVICES AND APPLICATIONS THEREOF

PRIOR RELATED U.S. APPLICATION DATA

This application hereby claims priority to United States Provisional Patent
5 Application Serial No. 60/796,608, filed May 1, 2006.

STATEMENT OF GOVERNMENT LICENSE RIGHTS

This invention was made through the support of the Department of Defense
(United States Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR) Grant No. FA9550-
10 04-1-0161). The Federal Government may retain certain license rights in this
invention.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to organic optoelectronic devices and, in
15 particular, to organic photovoltaic devices having a fiber structure.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Optoelectronic devices using organic materials are becoming increasingly
desirable in a wide variety of applications for a number of reasons. Materials used to
20 construct organic optoelectronic devices are relatively inexpensive in comparison to
their inorganic counterparts thereby providing cost advantages over optoelectronic
devices produced with inorganic materials. Moreover, organic materials provide
desirable physical properties, such as flexibility, permitting their use in applications
unsuitable for rigid materials. Examples of organic optoelectronic devices comprise
25 organic photovoltaic cells, organic light emitting devices (OLEDs), and organic
photodetectors.

Photovoltaic devices convert electromagnetic radiation into electricity by
producing a photo-generated current when connected across a load and exposed to
light. The electrical power generated by photovoltaic cells can be used in many
30 applications including lighting, heating, battery charging, and powering devices
requiring electrical energy.

When irradiated under an infinite load, a photovoltaic device produces its
maximum possible voltage, the open circuit voltage or V_{oc} . When irradiated with its
electrical contacts shorted, a photovoltaic device produces its maximum current, I

short circuit or I_{sc} . Under operating conditions, a photovoltaic device is connected to a finite load, and the electrical power output is equal to the product of the current and voltage. The maximum power generated by a photovoltaic device cannot exceed the product of V_{oc} and I_{sc} . When the load value is optimized for maximum power generation, the current and voltage have the values I_{max} and V_{max} respectively.

A key characteristic in evaluating a photovoltaic cell's performance is the fill factor, ff . The fill factor is the ratio of the photovoltaic cell's actual power to its power if both current and voltage were at their maxima. The fill factor of a photovoltaic cell is provided according to equation (1).

$$ff = (I_{max} V_{max}) / (I_{sc} V_{oc}) \quad (1)$$

The fill factor of a photovoltaic is always less than 1, as I_{sc} and V_{oc} are never obtained simultaneously under operating conditions. Nevertheless, as the fill factor approaches a value of 1, a device demonstrates less internal resistance and, therefore, delivers a greater percentage of electrical power to the load under optimal conditions.

Photovoltaic devices may additionally be characterized by their efficiency of converting electromagnetic energy into electrical energy. The conversion efficiency, η_p , of a photovoltaic device is provided according to equation (2) where P_{inc} is the power of the light incident on the photovoltaic.

$$\eta_p = ff * (I_{sc} V_{oc}) / P_{inc} \quad (2)$$

Devices utilizing crystalline or amorphous silicon dominate commercial applications, and some have achieved efficiencies of 23% or greater. However, efficient crystalline-based devices, especially of large surface area, are difficult and expensive to produce due to the problems in fabricating large crystals free from crystalline defects that promote exciton recombination. Commercially available amorphous silicon photovoltaic cells demonstrate efficiencies ranging from about 4 to 12%.

Constructing organic photovoltaic devices having efficiencies comparable to inorganic devices poses a technical challenge. Some organic photovoltaic devices demonstrate efficiencies on the order of 1% or less. The low efficiencies displayed in organic photovoltaic devices results from a severe length scale mismatch between exciton diffusion length (L_D) and organic layer thickness. In order to have efficient absorption of visible electromagnetic radiation, an organic film must have a thickness of about 500 nm. This thickness greatly exceeds exciton diffusion length which is typically about 50 nm, often resulting in exciton recombination.

Organic photovoltaic devices comprising a fiber structure and the use of wave-guiding in a method of converting electromagnetic energy to electrical energy have been developed, as set forth in PCT Application entitled *Organic Optoelectronic Devices and Applications Thereof*, filed May 1, 2006 and assigned to Wake Forest University. Organic photovoltaic devices having a fiber structure can provide conversion efficiencies comparable to and greater than inorganic devices. It would be desirable, however, to further enhance the efficiencies of organic photovoltaic devices having a fiber structure.

10 SUMMARY

Embodiments of the present invention seek to provide organic photovoltaic devices having a fiber structure.

In accordance with a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided an photovoltaic apparatus comprising a first electrode comprising an indium tin oxide fiber, at least one photosensitive organic layer surrounding the first electrode and electrically connected to the first electrode, and a second electrode surrounding the organic layer and electrically connected to the organic layer.

In accordance with a second aspect of the present invention, there is provided a photovoltaic apparatus comprising an optical fiber core, a radiation transmissive first electrode surrounding the fiber core, at least one photosensitive organic layer surrounding the first electrode and electrically connected to the first electrode, and a second electrode surrounding the organic layer and electrically connected to the organic layer, wherein the photosensitive organic layer comprises at least one upconverter, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof.

In accordance with a third aspect of the present invention, there is provided an optoelectronic device comprising at least one pixel comprising at least one photovoltaic cell, the photovoltaic cell comprising a first electrode comprising an indium tin oxide fiber, at least one photosensitive organic layer surrounding the first electrode and electrically connected to the first electrode, and a second electrode surrounding the organic layer and electrically connected to the organic layer.

In accordance with a fourth aspect of the present invention, there is provided an optoelectronic device comprising at least one pixel comprising at least one photovoltaic cell, the photovoltaic cell comprising an optical fiber core, a radiation transmissive first electrode surrounding the optical fiber core, at least one
5 photosensitive organic layer surrounding the first electrode and electrically connected to the first electrode, and a second electrode surrounding the organic layer and

electrically connected to the organic layer, wherein the photosensitive organic layer comprises at least one upconverter material, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof.

5 In some embodiments, a pixel comprises a plurality of photovoltaic cells. In other embodiments, an optoelectronic device comprises an array of pixels. In a further embodiment, an optoelectronic device comprises an array of pixels, each pixel comprising a plurality of photovoltaic cells.

Embodiments of the present invention additionally seek to provide methods for converting electromagnetic energy into electrical energy.

10 In accordance with a fifth aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method for converting electromagnetic energy into electrical energy comprising receiving electromagnetic radiation along the longitudinal axis of an optical fiber, transmitting the electromagnetic radiation into at least one photosensitive organic layer through a radiation transmissive first electrode surrounding the optical fiber, generating
15 excitons in the at least one photosensitive organic layer, and separating the excitons into electrons and holes, wherein the at least one photosensitive organic layer comprises at least one upconverter material, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof.

In accordance with a sixth aspect of the present invention, there is provided a
20 method for converting electromagnetic energy into electrical energy comprising receiving electromagnetic radiation along the longitudinal axis of an indium tin oxide fiber, transmitting the electromagnetic radiation into at least one photosensitive organic layer surrounding the indium tin oxide fiber,

generating excitons in the organic layer, and separating the excitons into electrons and holes.

In some embodiments of methods of the present invention, the electromagnetic radiation received comprises visible electromagnetic radiation, infrared electromagnetic radiation, ultraviolet electromagnetic radiation, or combinations thereof.

These and other embodiments of the present invention are described in greater detail in the detailed description of the invention which follows.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

Figure 1 illustrates cross sectional view of a photovoltaic device comprising a fiber structure according to an embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 2 illustrates cross sectional view of a photovoltaic device comprising a fiber structure according to an embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 3 illustrates cross sectional view of a photovoltaic device comprising a fiber structure according to an embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 4 illustrates absorption intensity spectra as a function of incident angle at a fiber end face of an organic photovoltaic device according to an embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 5 illustrates refraction of electromagnetic radiation traveling in a fiber photovoltaic device according to an embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 6 displays theoretical curves for incident angles as a function of refractive index to achieve total internal reflection at an interface of a photosensitive organic layer according to an embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The present invention provides organic photovoltaic devices having a fiber structure. In one embodiment, the present invention provides an organic photovoltaic device comprising a first electrode comprising an indium tin oxide fiber, at least one photosensitive organic layer surrounding the first electrode and electrically connected to the first electrode, and a second electrode surrounding the organic layer and electrically connected to the organic layer.

In another embodiment, the present invention provides an organic photovoltaic device comprising an optical fiber core, a radiation transmissive first electrode surrounding the optical fiber core, at least one photosensitive organic layer surrounding the first electrode and electrically connected to the first electrode, and a
5 second electrode surrounding the organic layer and electrically connected to the organic layer, wherein the organic layer comprises at least one upconverter material, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof.

Compositions suitable for components of photovoltaic devices according to
10 embodiments of the present invention, including optical fiber cores, first and second electrodes, and photosensitive organic layers, are set forth in the PCT application entitled *Organic Optoelectronic Devices and Applications Thereof*, filed May 1, 2006.

Turning now to components that can be included in various embodiments of photovoltaic devices of the present invention, photovoltaic devices of the present
15 invention comprise an optical fiber core. In some embodiments the present invention, an optical fiber core of a photovoltaic device of the present invention comprises an indium tin oxide fiber. When the optical fiber core comprises an indium tin oxide fiber, a separate and distinct first electrode may be optional. The indium tin oxide fiber core, in some embodiments, serves as both the optical fiber core and first
20 electrode. In other embodiments, a first electrode comprising a radiation transmissive conducting oxide may be disposed on the surface of the indium tin oxide fiber. In such embodiments, the radiation transmissive conducting oxide can comprise gallium indium tin oxide (GITO), zinc indium tin oxide (ZITO), antimony tin oxide (ATO), or indium tin oxide.

25 In another embodiment, a first electrode comprising a metal having a thickness operable to at least partially transmit visible radiation may be disposed on the surface of the indium tin oxide fiber. Metals suitable for serving as a radiation transmissive first electrode, in some embodiments, comprise elementally pure metals or alloys. In some embodiments, suitable metals comprise metals having a high work function
30 such as gold and silver. In one embodiment, for example, a high work function metal has a work function greater than 4.7 eV. A first electrode comprising a metal can have a thickness operable to at least partially pass visible radiation. In some embodiments, a radiation transmissive first electrode comprising a metal has a thickness ranging from about 50 nm to about 200 nm. In other embodiments, a

radiation transmissive first electrode comprising a metal can have a thickness ranging from about 75 nm to about 150 nm. In a further embodiment, a radiation transmissive first electrode comprising a metal has a thickness ranging from about 100 nm to about 125 nm.

5. In a further embodiment, a radiation transmissive first electrode comprising a composite material comprising a nanoparticle phase dispersed in a polymeric phase may be disposed on the surface of an indium tin oxide fiber. The nanoparticle phase, in one embodiment, can comprise carbon nanotubes, fullerenes, or mixtures thereof.

Moreover, in some embodiments, an optical fiber core comprises glass optical
10 fibers, quartz optical fibers, or plastic optical fibers (POF). Plastic optical fibers, in some embodiments, are constructed of polymethyl methacrylate. In other embodiments, plastic optical fibers are constructed of perfluorocyclobutane (PFBC) containing polymers, such as perfluorocyclobutane poly(arylether)s. Optical fibers, according to some embodiments of the present invention, can comprise single mode
15 optical fibers and multi-mode optical fibers. Optical fibers for use in the present invention, in some embodiments, are flexible.

In some embodiments, an optical fiber core of a photovoltaic device of the present invention has a diameter ranging from about 1 μm to about 2 mm. In other embodiments, an optical fiber core can have a diameter ranging from about 90 μm to about 1 mm. In a further embodiment, a fiber core has a diameter ranging from about
20 20 μm to about 800 μm .

An optical fiber core, according to some embodiments, has a length ranging from about 500 nm to about 100 mm. In other embodiments, an optical fiber core has a length ranging from about 1 μm to about 1 mm. In a further embodiment, an optical
25 fiber core has a length ranging from about 10 μm to about 100 μm .

In a further embodiment, an optical fiber core of an organic photovoltaic device can be beveled or tapered at one or both ends. Beveling or tapering one or both ends of an optical fiber core, in some embodiments, can enhance reception of electromagnetic radiation by the core. In other embodiments, optical concentrators
30 and/or lenses can be used to increase the amount of electromagnetic radiation received by optical fiber cores of organic photovoltaic devices of the present invention.

Photovoltaic devices, in some embodiments of the present invention, comprise a radiation transmissive first electrode surrounding the optical fiber core. Radiation

transmissive, as used herein, refers to the ability to at least partially pass radiation in the visible region of the electromagnetic spectrum. In some embodiments, radiation transmissive materials can pass visible electromagnetic radiation with minimal absorbance or other interference. Moreover, electrodes, as used herein, refer to layers that provide a medium for delivering photo-generated current to an external circuit or providing bias voltage to the optoelectronic device. An electrode provides the interface between the photoactive regions of an organic photovoltaic device and a wire, lead, trace, or other means for transporting the charge carriers to or from the external circuit.

10 A radiation transmissive first electrode, according to some embodiments of the present invention, comprises a radiation transmissive conducting oxide. Radiation transmissive conducting oxides, in some embodiments, comprises indium tin oxide (ITO), gallium indium tin oxide (GITO), antimony tin oxide (ATO), and zinc indium tin oxide (ZITO). In another embodiment, the radiation transmissive first electrode
15 comprises a radiation transmissive polymeric material such as polyaniline (PANI) and its chemical relatives. In some embodiments, 3,4-polyethylenedioxythiophene (PEDOT) is a suitable radiation transmissive polymeric material for the first electrode. In other embodiments, a radiation transmissive first electrode comprises a carbon nanotube layer having a thickness operable to at least partially pass visible
20 electromagnetic radiation.

In another embodiment, a radiation transmissive first electrode comprises a composite material comprising a nanoparticle phase dispersed in a polymeric phase. The nanoparticle phase, in one embodiment, can comprise carbon nanotubes, fullerenes, or mixtures thereof. In a further embodiment, a radiation transmissive first
25 electrode comprises a metal layer having a thickness operable to at least partially pass visible electromagnetic radiation. In some embodiments, a metal layer can comprise elementally pure metals or alloys. Metals suitable for use as a radiation transmissive first electrode can comprise high work function metals, as described herein.

In some embodiments, a radiation transmissive first electrode has a thickness
30 ranging from about 10 nm to about 1 μ m. In other embodiments, a radiation transmissive first electrode has a thickness ranging from about 100 nm to about 900 nm. In another embodiment, a radiation transmissive first electrode has a thickness

ranging from about 200 nm to about 800 nm. In a further embodiment, a radiation transmissive first electrode can have a thickness greater than 1 μm .

Photovoltaic devices, in some embodiments of the present invention, comprise at least one photosensitive organic layer comprising at least one upconverter material, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof. Photovoltaic devices, according to some embodiments, can comprise a plurality of photosensitive organic layers.

In some embodiments, a photosensitive organic layer has a thickness ranging from about 30 nm to about 1 μm . In other embodiments, a photosensitive organic layer has a thickness ranging from about 80 nm to about 800 nm. In a further embodiment, a photosensitive organic layer has a thickness ranging from about 100 nm to about 300 nm.

A photosensitive organic layer, according to embodiments of the present invention, comprises at least one photoactive region in which electromagnetic radiation is absorbed to produce excitons which may subsequently dissociate into electrons and holes. In some embodiments, a photoactive region can comprise a polymer. Polymers suitable for use in a photoactive region of a photosensitive organic layer, in one embodiment, can comprise conjugated polymers such as thiophenes including poly(3-hexylthiophene) (P3HT), poly(3-octylthiophene) (P3OT), and polythiophene (PTh).

In some embodiments, polymers suitable for use in a photoactive region of a photosensitive organic layer can comprise semiconducting polymers. In one embodiment, semiconducting polymers include phenylene vinylenes, such as poly(phenylene vinylene) and poly(*p*-phenylene vinylene) (PPV), and derivatives thereof. In other embodiments, semiconducting polymers comprise poly fluorenes, naphthalenes, and derivatives thereof. In a further embodiment, semiconducting polymers for use in a photoactive region of a photosensitive organic layer comprise poly(2-vinylpyridine) (P2VP), polyamides, poly(N-vinylcarbazole) (PVCZ), polypyrrole (PPy), and polyaniline (PAn).

A photoactive region, according to some embodiments, can comprise small molecules. In one embodiment, small molecules suitable for use in a photoactive region of a photosensitive organic layer comprise coumarin 6, coumarin 30, coumarin 102, coumarin 110, coumarin 153, and coumarin 480 D. In another embodiment, a

small molecule comprises merocyanine 540. In a further embodiment, small molecules comprise 9,10-dihydrobenzo[a]pyrene-7(8*H*)-one, 7-methylbenzo[a]pyrene, pyrene, benzo[e]pyrene, 3,4-dihydroxy-3-cyclobutene-1,2-dione, and 1,3-bis[4-(dimethylamino)phenyl]-2,4-dihydroxycyclobutenediylidium dihydroxide.

In some embodiments of the present invention, exciton dissociation is precipitated at heterojunctions in the organic layer formed between adjacent donor and acceptor materials. Organic layers, in some embodiments of the present invention, comprise at least one bulk heterojunction formed between donor and acceptor materials. In other embodiments, organic layers comprise a plurality of bulk heterojunctions formed between donor and acceptor materials.

In the context of organic materials, the terms donor and acceptor refer to the relative positions of the highest occupied molecular orbital (HOMO) and lowest unoccupied molecular orbital (LUMO) energy levels of two contacting but different organic materials. This is in contrast to the use of these terms in the inorganic context, where donor and acceptor may refer to types of dopants that may be used to create inorganic n- and p-type layers, respectively. In the organic context, if the LUMO energy level of one material in contact with another is lower, then that material is an acceptor. Otherwise it is a donor. It is energetically favorable, in the absence of an external bias, for electrons at a donor-acceptor junction to move into the acceptor material, and for holes to move into the donor material.

A photoactive region in a photosensitive organic layer, according to some embodiments of the present invention, comprises a polymeric composite material. The polymeric composite material, in an embodiment, can comprise a nanoparticle phase dispersed in a polymeric phase. Polymers suitable for producing the polymeric phase of a photoactive region can comprise conjugated polymers such as thiophenes including poly(3-hexylthiophene) (P3HT) and poly(3-octylthiophene) (P3OT). In some embodiments, polymers suitable for producing the polymeric phase of the photoactive region comprise poly[2-(3-thienyl)-ethoxy-4-butylsulphonate](PTEBS), 2-methoxy-5-(3',7'-dimethyloctyloxy)-1,4-phenylene-vinylene (MDMO-PPV), and poly[2-methoxy-5-(2'-ethylhexyloxy)-p-phenylene-vinylene] (MEH-PPV).

In some embodiments, the nanoparticle phase dispersed in the polymeric phase of a polymeric composite material comprises at least one carbon nanoparticle. Carbon nanoparticles can comprise fullerenes, carbon nanotubes, or mixtures thereof.

Fullerenes suitable for use in the nanoparticle phase, in one embodiment, can comprise 1-(3-methoxycarbonyl)propyl-1-phenyl(6,6) C_{60} (PCBM). Carbon nanotubes for use in the nanoparticle phase, according to some embodiments, can comprise single-walled nanotubes, multi-walled nanotubes, or mixtures thereof.

5 In some embodiments of the present invention, the polymer to nanoparticle ratio in polymeric composite materials ranges from about 1:4 to about 1:0.4. In other embodiments, the polymer to nanoparticle ratio in polymeric composite materials ranges from about 1:2 to about 1:0.6. In one embodiment, for example, the ratio of poly(3-hexylthiophene) to PCBM ranges from about 1:1 to about 1:0.4.

10 In a further embodiment, the nanoparticle phase dispersed in the polymeric phase comprises at least one nanowhisker. A nanowhisker, as used herein, refers to a crystalline carbon nanoparticle formed from a plurality of carbon nanoparticles. Nanowhiskers, in some embodiments, are produced by annealing a photosensitive organic layer comprising the polymeric composite material. Carbon nanoparticles operable to form nanowhiskers, according to some embodiments, can comprise
15 single-walled carbon nanotubes, multi-walled carbon nanotubes, and fullerenes. In one embodiment, nanowhiskers comprise crystalline PCBM. Annealing the photosensitive organic layer, in some embodiments, can further increase the dispersion of the nanoparticle phase in the polymeric phase.

20 In embodiments of photoactive regions comprising a polymeric phase and a nanoparticle phase, the polymeric phase serves as a donor material and the nanoparticle phase serves as the acceptor material thereby forming a heterojunction for the separation of excitons into holes and electrons. In embodiments wherein nanoparticles are dispersed throughout the polymeric phase, the photoactive region of
25 the organic layer comprises a plurality of bulk heterojunctions.

In further embodiments, donor materials in a photoactive region of a photosensitive organic layer can comprise organometallic compounds including porphyrins, phthalocyanines, and derivatives thereof. Through the use of an organometallic material in the photoactive region, photosensitive devices
30 incorporating such materials may efficiently utilize triplet excitons. It is believed that the singlet-triplet mixing may be so strong for organometallic compounds that the absorptions involve excitation from the singlet ground states directly to the triplet excited states, eliminating the losses associated with conversion from the singlet excited state to the triplet excited state. The longer lifetime and diffusion length of

triplet excitons in comparison to singlet excitons may allow for the use of a thicker photoactive region, as the triplet excitons may diffuse a greater distance to reach the donor-acceptor heterojunction, without sacrificing device efficiency.

5 In further embodiments, acceptor materials in a photoactive region of a photosensitive organic layer can comprise perylenes, naphthalenes, and mixtures thereof.

As provided herein, photosensitive organic layers, according to some embodiments of the present invention, comprise at least one upconverter material, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination
10 thereof. In some embodiments, upconverter materials, anti-Stokes materials, laser dyes, anti-counterfeiting dyes, quantum dots, or combinations thereof are blended into a photosensitive organic layer by techniques known to one of skill in the art.

As understood by one of skill in the art, an upconverter is a material operable to emit electromagnetic radiation having energy greater than that of the
15 electromagnetic radiation absorbed by the material to create the excited state. Upconverters suitable for use in the present invention, in some embodiments, can absorb infrared radiation and emit visible radiation at wavelengths operable to be absorbed by photosensitive organic layers of photovoltaic devices of the present invention.

20 Upconverters, in some embodiments, include materials comprising at least one Lanthanide series element. In some embodiments, upconverter materials can comprise nanoparticles comprising at least one Lanthanide series element. Lanthanide series elements suitable for use in upconverter materials according to some embodiments of the present invention comprise erbium, ytterbium, dysprosium,
25 holmium, or mixtures thereof. In some embodiments, upconverter materials comprise metal oxides and metal sulfides doped with ions of erbium, ytterbium, dysprosium, holmium, or mixtures thereof. In other embodiments, optical fibers, in addition to the photosensitive organic layer, may be doped directly with ions of erbium, ytterbium, dysprosium, holmium, or mixtures thereof.

30 In some embodiments, upconverter materials comprise organic chemical species. Organic upconverter materials comprise H_2C_6N and 4-dialkylamino-1,8-naphthalimides as well as 1,8-naphthalimide derivatives and compounds, such as multibranched naphthalimide derivatives TPA-NA1, TPA-NA2, and TPA-NA3. Organic upconverter materials can also comprise 4-(dimethylamino)cinnamonnitrile

(*cis* and *trans*), *trans*-4-[4-(dimethylamino)styryl]-1-methylpyridinium iodide, 4-[4-(dimethylamino)styryl]pyridine, 4-(diethylamino)benzaldehyde diphenylhydrazone, *trans*-4-[4-(dimethylamino)styryl]-1-methylpyridinium *p*-toluenesulfonate, 2-[ethyl[4-[2-(4-nitrophenyl)ethenyl]phenyl]amino]ethanol, 4-dimethylamino-4'-nitrostilbene, Disperse Orange 25, Disperse Orange 3, and Disperse Red 1.

In a further embodiment, upconverter materials can comprise quantum dots. Quantum dots, according to some embodiments, can comprise III/V and II/VI semiconductor materials, such as cadmium selenide (CdSe), cadmium telluride (CdTe), cadmium sulfide (CdS), lead sulfide (PbS), lead selenide (PbSe), and zinc selenide (ZnSe). Upconverter materials can also comprise core-shell architectures of quantum dots.

In addition to those provided herein, embodiments of the present invention contemplate additional upconverter materials comprising transition metals, such as chromium.

Anti-Stokes materials, laser dyes and anti-counterfeiting dyes suitable for incorporation into photosensitive organic layers, according to some embodiments, comprise substituted benzophenones, biphenyls, diphenyls, infrared dyes such as polymethines, and spectral sensitizers such as cyanines and merocyanines. Suitable anti-counterfeiting dyes can comprise phosphors, fluorophors, thermochromic, and/or photochromic chemical species.

Photovoltaic devices of the present invention comprise a second electrode surrounding the photosensitive organic layer. In some embodiments, the second electrode can comprise a metal. As used herein, metal refers to both materials composed of an elementally pure metal, e.g., gold, and also metal alloys comprising materials composed of two or more elementally pure materials. In some embodiments, the second electrode comprises gold, silver, aluminum, copper, or combinations thereof. The second electrode, according to some embodiments, has a thickness ranging from about 10 nm to about 10 μ m. In other embodiments, the second electrode has a thickness ranging from about 100 nm to about 1 μ m. In a further embodiment, the second electrode can have a thickness ranging from about 200 nm to about 800 nm.

A layer comprising lithium fluoride (LiF), according to some embodiments, can be disposed between a photosensitive organic layer and second electrode. The LiF layer can have a thickness ranging from about 5 angstroms to about 10 angstroms.

In some embodiments, the LiF layer can be at least partially oxidized resulting in a layer comprising lithium oxide (Li_2O) and LiF. In other embodiments, the LiF layer can be completely oxidized resulting in a lithium oxide layer deficient or substantially deficient of LiF. In some embodiments, a LiF layer is oxidized by exposing the LiF layer to oxygen, water vapor, or combinations thereof. In one embodiment, for example, a LiF layer is oxidized to a lithium oxide layer by exposure to an atmosphere comprising water vapor and/or oxygen at a partial pressures of less than about 10^{-6} Torr. In another embodiment, a LiF layer is oxidized to a lithium oxide layer by exposure to an atmosphere comprising water vapor and/or oxygen at a partial pressures less than about 10^{-7} Torr or less than about 10^{-8} Torr.

In some embodiments, a LiF layer is exposed to an atmosphere comprising water vapor and/or oxygen for a time period ranging from about 1 hour to about 15 hours. In one embodiment, a LiF layer is exposed to an atmosphere comprising water vapor and/or oxygen for a time period greater than about 15 hours. In a further embodiment, a LiF layer is exposed to an atmosphere comprising water vapor and/or oxygen for a time period less than about one hour. The time period of exposure of the LiF layer to an atmosphere comprising water vapor and/or oxygen, according to some embodiments of the present invention, is dependent upon the partial pressures of the water vapor and/or oxygen in the atmosphere. The higher the partial pressure of the water vapor or oxygen, the shorter the exposure time.

Organic photovoltaic devices, according to some embodiments of the present invention, can further comprise additional layers such as one or more exciton blocking layers. In embodiments of the present invention, an exciton blocking layer (EBL) can act to confine photogenerated excitons to the region near the dissociating interface and prevent parasitic exciton quenching at a photosensitive organic/electrode interface. In addition to limiting the path over which excitons may diffuse, an EBL can additionally act as a diffusion barrier to substances introduced during deposition of the electrodes. In some embodiments, an EBL can have a sufficient thickness to fill pin holes or shorting defects which could otherwise render an organic photovoltaic device inoperable.

An EBL, according to some embodiments of the present invention, comprises a polymeric composite material. In one embodiment, an EBL comprises carbon nanoparticles dispersed in 3,4-polyethylenedioxythiophene:polystyrenesulfonate (PEDOT:PSS). In another embodiment, an EBL comprises carbon nanoparticles dispersed in poly(vinylidene chloride) and copolymers thereof. Carbon nanoparticles dispersed in the polymeric phases including PEDOT:PSS and poly(vinylidene chloride) can comprise single-walled nanotubes, multi-walled nanotubes, fullerenes, or mixtures thereof. In further embodiments, EBLs can comprise any polymer having a work function energy operable to permit the transport of holes while impeding the passage of electrons.

In some embodiments, an EBL may be disposed between the radiation transmissive first electrode and a photosensitive organic layer of an photovoltaic device. In some embodiments wherein the photovoltaic device comprises a plurality of photosensitive organic layers, EBLs can be disposed between the photosensitive organic layers.

Photovoltaic devices of the present invention, in some embodiments, further comprise a protective layer surrounding the second electrode. The protective layer can provide photovoltaic devices provided herein with increased durability thereby permitting their use in a wide variety of applications including photovoltaic applications. In some embodiments, the protective layer comprises a polymeric composite material. In one embodiment, the protective layer comprises nanoparticles dispersed in poly(vinylidene chloride). Nanoparticles dispersed in poly(vinylidene chloride), according to some embodiments, can comprise single-walled carbon nanotubes, multi-walled carbon nanotubes, fullerenes, or mixtures thereof.

Photovoltaic devices of the present invention, in some embodiments, further comprise an external metallic contact. In one embodiment, the external metallic contact surrounds the second electrode and is in electrical communication with the second electrode. The external metallic contact, in some embodiments, can be operable to extract current over at least a portion of the circumference and length of the fiber photovoltaic device. In other embodiments, the external metal contact can be operable to extract current over the entire length and circumference of the fiber photovoltaic device. External metallic contacts, in some embodiments, can comprise metals including gold, silver, or copper. In a further embodiment, external metal

contacts can be operable to reflect non-absorbed electromagnetic radiation back into at least one photosensitive organic layer for further absorption.

Photovoltaic devices, according to some embodiments of the present invention, further comprise charge transfer layers. Charge transfer layers, as used
5 herein, refer to layers which only deliver charge carriers from one section of an photovoltaic device to another section. In one embodiment, for example, a charge transfer layer can comprise an exciton blocking layer.

A charge transfer layer, in some embodiments, can be disposed between a photosensitive organic layer and radiation transmissive first electrode and/or a
10 photosensitive organic layer and second electrode. In other embodiments, charge transfer layers may be disposed between the second electrode and protective layer of an photovoltaic device. Charge transfer layers, according to some embodiments, are not photoactive.

Figure 1 illustrates a cross-sectional view of a photovoltaic device having a
15 fiber structure according to one embodiment of the present invention. The photovoltaic device (100) shown in Figure 1 comprises an indium tin oxide fiber core (102). The indium tin oxide (102) optical fiber core is surrounded by an exciton blocking layer (104). In some embodiments, the EBL comprises carbon nanoparticles dispersed in a polymeric phase such as 3,4-polyethylenedioxythiophene (PEDOT) or
20 poly(vinylidene chloride).

The EBL (104) is surrounded by a photosensitive organic layer (106). The photosensitive organic layer (106), in some embodiments, comprises a P3HT-carbon nanoparticle polymeric composite. The photosensitive organic layer (106), in some
25 embodiments, further comprises at least one upconverter material, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof.

The photosensitive organic layer (106), in some embodiments, is in direct electrical communication with the indium tin oxide fiber core (102). In the embodiment illustrated in Figure 1, an exciton blocking layer (104) is disposed
30 between the indium tin oxide fiber core (102) and the photosensitive organic layer (106) to provide indirect electrical communication between the indium tin oxide fiber core (102) and the photosensitive organic layer (106).

The photosensitive organic layer (106) is surrounded by a second electrode (108). The photosensitive organic layer (106), in some embodiments, is in direct electrical communication with the second electrode (108). In other embodiments, an

exciton blocking layer (not shown) may be disposed between the photosensitive organic layer (106) and the second electrode (108) to provide indirect electrical communication between the photosensitive organic layer (106) and the second electrode (108). In some embodiments, the second electrode (106) can comprise a metal. Metals suitable for use as a second electrode (106) can comprise elementally pure metals or alloys. In one embodiment, the second electrode (106) can comprise metals or alloys having a work function less than 3.8 eV, such as calcium, magnesium, and MgIn.

The second electrode (108) is surrounded by a protective layer (110) comprising a polymeric composite material. In some embodiments, the polymeric composite material of the protective layer (110) comprises carbon nanoparticles dispersed in poly(vinylidene chloride) and/or copolymers thereof. The carbon nanoparticles can comprise single-walled carbon nanotubes, multi-walled carbon nanotubes, fullerenes, or mixtures thereof.

The protective layer (110) is surrounded by an external metal contact (112) operable to extract current over a length and circumference of the fiber photovoltaic device. In some embodiments, an external metallic (112) contact can comprise metals including gold, silver, or copper.

Figure 2 illustrates a cross-sectional view of a photovoltaic device comprising a fiber structure according to another embodiment of the present invention. The photovoltaic device (200) displayed in Figure 2 comprises an optical fiber core (202) and a radiation transmissive first electrode (204) surrounding the optical fiber core (202). An exciton blocking layer (206) surrounds the radiation transmissive first electrode (204), and a photosensitive organic layer (208) surrounds the exciton blocking layer (206) wherein the photosensitive organic layer (208) comprises at least one upconverter, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof. A second electrode (210) surrounds the photosensitive organic layer (208).

In the embodiment shown in Figure 2, the optical fiber core (202) and radiation transmissive first electrode (204) extend longitudinally beyond the remaining layers of the photovoltaic device (200). The longitudinal extension of the optical fiber core (202) and radiation transmissive first electrode (204), in some embodiments, can facilitate attachment of the photovoltaic device (200) to an external electrical circuit.

Figure 3 illustrates a cross-sectional view of a photovoltaic device comprising a fiber structure according to another embodiment of the present invention, wherein the photovoltaic device comprises a plurality of photosensitive organic layers, and wherein at least one of the photosensitive organic layers comprises at least one
5 upconverter material, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof. The photovoltaic device (300) comprises an optical fiber core (302). The fiber core (302) can comprise a glass optical fiber, a quartz optical fiber, or a plastic optical fiber.

The optical fiber core (302) is surrounded by a radiation transmissive first
10 electrode (304). The radiation transmissive first electrode (304) can comprise a radiation transmissive conducting oxide such as indium tin oxide, gallium indium tin oxide, antimony tin oxide, or zinc indium tin oxide. The radiation transmissive first electrode (304) is surrounded by a first exciton blocking layer (306). In some
15 embodiments, the first EBL (306) can comprise carbon nanoparticles dispersed in a polymeric phase such as 3,4-polyethylenedioxythiophene or poly(vinylidene chloride).

The first EBL (306) is surrounded by a first photosensitive organic layer (308). The first photosensitive organic layer (308), in some embodiments, can
20 comprise a P3HT-carbon nanoparticle polymeric composite. The first photosensitive organic layer (308) is surrounded by a second exciton blocking layer (310). The second EBL, in some embodiments, can also comprise carbon nanoparticles dispersed in 3,4-polyethylenedioxythiophene or poly(vinylidene chloride).

The second EBL is surrounded by a second photosensitive organic layer (312). The second photosensitive organic layer (312), in some embodiments, comprises a
25 polymeric material, including a polymeric composite, having an electromagnetic radiation absorption profile that largely overlaps that of the first organic layer (308). In other embodiments, the second photosensitive organic layer (312) can comprise a polymeric material, including a polymeric composite, having an electromagnetic radiation absorption profile that does not overlap or minimally overlaps that of the
30 first organic layer (308). The second photosensitive organic layer (312) further comprises at least one upconverter material, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof.

The second organic layer (312) is surrounded by a second electrode (314) that can reflect electromagnetic radiation not absorbed by the photosensitive organic

layers (308), (312) back into the organic layers for further absorption. The second electrode (314), in some embodiments, comprises a metal, such as aluminum, gold, silver, nickel, or copper.

5 In the embodiment shown in Figure 3, the optical fiber core (302), radiation transmissive first electrode (304), and second exciton blocking layer (310) extend longitudinally beyond the remaining layers of the photovoltaic device. The longitudinal extension of the optical fiber core (302), radiation transmissive first electrode (304), and second exciton blocking layer (310) can facilitate attachment of the photovoltaic device (300) to an external electrical circuit.

10 Although Figure 3 illustrates a photovoltaic device having two photosensitive organic layers, embodiments of the present invention contemplate photovoltaic devices comprising greater than two photosensitive organic layers, photovoltaic devices having three, four, five, and greater than five photosensitive organic layers. In some embodiments, a photovoltaic device can comprise at least 10 photosensitive organic layers.

15 A plurality of photosensitive organic layers can be buffered from one another, in some embodiments, by disposing exciton blocking layers between the photosensitive organic layers. By providing a plurality of photosensitive organic layers wherein each layer has a distinct absorption profile, photovoltaic devices of the present invention can increase or maximize exciton generation across the electromagnetic spectrum.

20 In some embodiments, a photovoltaic device can comprise a fiber core having a plurality of photosensitive regions located along its longitudinal axis, each of the plurality of photosensitive regions comprises a radiation transmissive first electrode surrounding the fiber core, at least one photosensitive organic layer surrounding the first electrode and electrically connected to the first electrode, and a second electrode surrounding the organic layer and electrically connected to the organic layer. Each of the plurality of regions may further comprise additional layers as set forth herein, including additional photosensitive organic and exciton blocking layers as provided in

25 30 Figure 3. Moreover, at least one of the photosensitive organic layers further comprises at least one upconverter material, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof.

In some embodiments, organic photovoltaic device as described herein can comprise photovoltaic cells operable for use in a variety of optoelectronic devices. In

one embodiment, the present invention provides an optoelectronic device comprising at least one pixel comprising at least one photovoltaic cell, the photovoltaic cell comprising a first electrode comprising an indium tin oxide fiber, at least one photosensitive organic layer surrounding the first electrode and electrically connected to the first electrode, and a second electrode surrounding the organic layer and electrically connected to the organic layer.

In another embodiment, an optoelectronic device comprises at least one pixel comprising at least one photovoltaic cell, the photovoltaic cell comprising an optical fiber core, a radiation transmissive first electrode surrounding the fiber core, at least one photosensitive organic layer surrounding the first electrode and electrically connected to the first electrode, and a second electrode surrounding the organic layer and electrically connected to the organic layer, wherein the photosensitive organic layer comprises at least one upconverter material, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof.

Optoelectronic devices comprising at least one pixel comprising at least one photovoltaic cell, in some embodiments, can have constructions consistent with those provided in the PCT application entitled *Organic Optoelectronic Devices and Application Thereof*, filed May 1, 2006.

Fiber photovoltaic cells for use in pixel applications, in some embodiments of the present invention, are constructed independently from one another. In such embodiments, component materials for one fiber photovoltaic cell are selected without reference to component materials selected for another fiber photovoltaic cell. In one embodiment, for example, one fiber photovoltaic cell can comprise a glass optical fiber core while another photovoltaic cell can comprise an indium tin oxide optical fiber core. As a result, in some embodiments, pixels and pixel arrays are not required to comprise fiber photovoltaic cells of identical construction. Fiber photovoltaic cell construction can be varied in any manner consistent with the materials and methods described herein to produce pixels and pixel arrays suitable for a wide range of applications.

Photovoltaic devices comprising at least one pixel comprising at least one fiber photovoltaic cell, in some embodiments, comprise solar cells. Pixels and pixel arrays can be placed on any suitable substrate, in some embodiments, to produce solar panels. Solar cells and panels comprising fiber photovoltaic cells of the present invention can have conversion efficiencies greater than 6%.

The present invention also provides methods of producing a fiber photovoltaic device comprising providing an optical fiber core, disposing a radiation transmissive first electrode on a surface of the optical fiber core, disposing at least one photosensitive organic layer in electrical communication with the first electrode, and
5 disposing a second electrode in electrical communication with the organic layer, wherein the organic layer comprises at least one upconverter material, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof.

Disposing a radiation transmissive first electrode on an optical fiber core, in some embodiments, comprises sputtering or dip coating a radiation transmissive
10 conductive oxide onto a surface of the optical fiber core. In some embodiments, disposing a photosensitive organic layer in electrical communication with the first electrode comprises depositing the organic layer on the first electrode by dip coating, spin coating, vapor phase deposition, or vacuum thermal annealing. Disposing a second electrode in electrical communication with the photosensitive organic layer,
15 according to some embodiments, comprises depositing the second electrode on the organic layer through vapor phase deposition, spin coating, or dip coating.

In another embodiment, a method of producing a fiber photovoltaic device comprises providing an indium tin oxide fiber core, disposing at least one photosensitive organic layer in electrical communication with the indium tin oxide
20 fiber core, and disposing a second electrode in electrical communication with the photosensitive organic layer. In some embodiments, disposing a photosensitive organic layer in electrical communication with the indium tin oxide fiber comprises depositing the organic layer on the indium tin oxide fiber by dip coating, spin coating, vapor phase deposition, or vacuum thermal annealing. Disposing a second electrode
25 in electrical communication with the photosensitive organic layer, according to some embodiments, comprises depositing the second electrode on the organic layer through vapor phase deposition, spin coating, or dip coating.

Methods of producing a fiber photovoltaic device, in some embodiments, further comprise annealing the photosensitive organic layer or layers. In some
30 embodiments where a photosensitive organic layer comprises a composite material comprising a polymer phase and a nanoparticle phase, annealing the organic layer can produce higher degrees of crystallinity in both the polymer and nanoparticle phases as well as result in greater dispersion of the nanoparticle phase in the polymer phase. Nanoparticle phases comprising fullerenes, single-walled carbon nanotubes, multi-

walled carbon nanotubes, or mixtures thereof can form nanowhiskers in the polymeric phase as a result of annealing. Annealing a photosensitive organic layer, according to some embodiments, can comprise heating the organic layer at a temperature ranging from about 80°C to about 155°C for a time period of ranging from about 1 minute to about 30 minutes. In some embodiments, a photosensitive organic layer can be heated for about 5 minutes.

In addition to providing organic photovoltaic devices having a fiber structure, the present invention provides methods for converting electromagnetic energy into electrical energy. In one embodiment, a method for converting electromagnetic energy into electrical energy comprises receiving radiation along the longitudinal axis of an optical fiber, transmitting the radiation into at least one photosensitive organic layer, generating excitons in the organic layer, and separating the excitons into electrons and holes, wherein the organic layer comprises at least one upconverter material, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof.

In another embodiment, a method for converting electromagnetic energy into electrical energy comprises receiving radiation along the longitudinal axis of an optical fiber at an incident angle sufficient to produce total internal reflection at an interface of a photosensitive organic layer and an adjacent layer disposed on a surface of the optical fiber. In some embodiments, receiving radiation can comprise positioning the optical fiber to receive radiation at an incident angle sufficient to produce total internal reflection at an interface of a photosensitive organic layer and an adjacent layer. A photosensitive organic layer can be consistent with those provided in embodiments hereinabove. In some embodiments, an adjacent layer can comprise a charge transfer layer, such as an exciton blocking layer. In one embodiment, for example, the adjacent layer can comprise PEDOT.

In some embodiments, electromagnetic energy received at an incident angle sufficient to produce total internal reflection can be refracted by at least one additional layer before reaching the interface of a photosensitive organic layer and an adjacent layer. In some embodiments, additional layers can comprise conducting metal oxides consistent with those provided herein or additional charge transfer layers consistent with those provided herein.

Creating total internal reflection at an interface of a photosensitive organic layer and an adjacent layer can produce evanescence fields or waves in the

photosensitive organic layer, which can lead to an increased absorption of electromagnetic radiation by the organic layer. Increasing absorption of electromagnetic radiation in the photosensitive organic layer can produce greater numbers of excitons thereby increasing the conversion efficiencies of organic photovoltaic devices of the present invention.

Figure 4 illustrates absorption intensity spectra as a function of incident angle at a fiber end face of an organic photovoltaic device according to an embodiment of the present invention. The incident angles at the fiber face varied from 2° to 20° in 2° increments. As shown in Figure 4, the absorption intensity peaked at an incident angle of 16°. The organic photovoltaic device used to generate the spectra provided in Figure 4 included a photosensitive organic layer comprising a polymeric composite of poly(3-hexylthiophene) and 1-(3-methoxycarbonyl)propyl-1-phenyl(6,6)C₆₁ (P3HT/PCBM). The P3HT/PCBM photosensitive organic layer surrounded an adjacent exciton blocking layer comprising PEDOT as illustrated in Figure 1.

While not wishing to be bound by any theory, it is believed that the radiation was absorbed by the photosensitive organic layer, and an incident angle of about 16° created the condition for total internal reflection at the PEDOT/P3HT:PCBM interface. By creating total internal reflection at the PEDOT/P3HT:PCBM interface, evanescent waves or fields were present in the P3HT:PCBM organic layer producing an increased absorption intensity.

In embodiments of the present invention, the critical angle required for total internal reflection at an interface of a photosensitive organic layer and an adjacent layer can be dependent upon the refractive index of the photosensitive organic layer. By assuming achievement of the critical angle at the interface of the photosensitive organic layer and adjacent layer, the required incident angle at the interface can be calculated. From this, Snell's law can be used at each additional interface produced by the presence of additional layers disposed on the optical fiber core, and the incident angle at the face of the optical fiber can be calculated.

Figure 5, for example, illustrates refraction of electromagnetic radiation traveling in a fiber photovoltaic device, according to an embodiment of the present invention, which produces total internal reflection at an interface of a photosensitive organic layer and an adjacent layer. In Figure 5, the photosensitive organic layer comprises a poly(3-hexylthiophene)/1-(3-methoxycarbonyl)propyl-1-phenyl(6,6)C₆₁ (P3HT/PCBM) composite, and the adjacent layer comprises PEDOT. An additional

layer of indium tin oxide is disposed between the PEDOT layer and surface of the silica optical fiber core. The indium tin oxide layer, as described herein, serves as a radiation transmissive first electrode.

Applying Snell's law at the various layer interfaces illustrated in Figure 6 yields:

$$\eta_3 \sin \theta_c = \eta_c \quad (3)$$

$$\eta_2 \sin \theta_5 = \eta_3 \sin \theta_6 \quad (4)$$

$$\eta_1 \sin \theta_3 = \eta_2 \sin \theta_4 \quad (5)$$

wherein η_1 is the refractive index of the silica optical fiber core, η_2 is the refractive index of the indium tin oxide layer, η_3 is the refractive index of the PEDOT layer, and η_c is the refractive index of the photosensitive organic layer.

Noticing that $\theta_c = \theta_6$ and $\theta_5 = \theta_4$, we can substitute (3) into (4) and then that result into (5) and rearrange to get

$$\theta_3 = \sin^{-1} \left(\frac{\eta_c}{\eta_1} \right) \quad (6).$$

Since $\eta_c = 1$ and $\theta_2 = 90^\circ - \theta_3$, at the air/fiber interface, we have

$$\sin \theta_1 = \eta_1 \sin \theta_2 = \eta_1 \cos \theta_3 \quad (7).$$

Finally, upon substitution of (6) into (7) the theoretical equation becomes

$$\sin \theta_1 = \eta_1 \cos \left[\sin^{-1} \left(\frac{\eta_c}{\eta_1} \right) \right]$$

where θ_1 is the incident angle at the fiber interface measured from the normal.

Figure 6 illustrates theoretical curves displaying incident angles at the face of the optical fiber core as a function of the refractive index of the P3HT:PCBM photosensitive organic layer which are sufficient to achieve the critical angle for total internal reflection at the PEDOT/P3HT:PCBM interface. Each theoretical curve

represents a different incident wavelength, which in turn corresponds to a different refractive index for the silica optical fiber core.

As disclosed and taught by PCT application entitled *Optoelectronic Devices and Applications Thereof*, filed May 1, 2006, subsequent to a determination of
5 incident angles sufficient for producing total internal reflection at an interface of a photosensitive organic layer and adjacent layer, an optical fiber core can be positioned to receive radiation in accordance with the incident angles. A panel, for example, constructed of pixels comprising organic photovoltaic cells having a fiber structure can be positioned such that radiation striking the panel can be received by the optical
10 fiber cores of the photovoltaic cells at angles sufficient to produce total internal reflection at an interface of a photosensitive organic layer and an adjacent layer.

In some embodiments, layers of organic photovoltaic devices can be etched to prevent or reduce frustrated total internal reflection. In one embodiment, an exciton blocking layer adjacent to a photosensitive organic layer can be etched on the side
15 forming an interface with the organic layer. An exciton blocking layer comprising PEDOT, for example, can be etched on the side forming an interface with a P3HT/PCBM photosensitive organic layer.

In some embodiments, layers of organic photovoltaic devices can be etched by lithographic methods, including photolithographic methods. In one embodiment, a
20 photolithographic resist is deposited onto the surface of the layer to be etched. Photolithographic resists, according to embodiments of the present invention, comprise positive resists or negative resists. Once the photolithographic resist is deposited, the resist is exposed to radiation and developed with appropriate solvent. A pattern remains on the layer of the photovoltaic device. Photolithographic resists
25 can be laid down in any desired pattern. One pattern, for example, comprises a series of parallel lines spaced apart by a constant distance. After developing the resist, the layer of the organic photovoltaic device is then etched by any suitable polar organic solvent, such as acetone. The photolithographic resist is subsequently stripped from the layer of the organic photovoltaic device leaving behind an etched layer.

30 In some embodiments, the indium tin oxide fiber is etched. Etching the indium tin oxide fiber, in some embodiments, can be achieved by lithographic processes, including photolithographic processes. In one embodiment, for example, a photolithographic resist is deposited onto the surface of the indium tin oxide fiber. Once the photolithographic resist is deposited, the resist is exposed to radiation and

developed with appropriate solvent to produce a pattern on the indium tin oxide fiber. The surface of the indium tin oxide fiber is subsequently etched in a suitable acid, such as chromic acid, sulfuric acid, or nitric acid. The photolithographic resist is then removed or stripped from the surface of the indium tin oxide fiber leaving behind the etched surface. In some embodiments, first electrodes comprising radiation transmissive conducting oxides, including indium tin oxide, are etched in this manner.

Various embodiments of the invention have been described in fulfillment of the various objects of the invention. It should be recognized that these embodiments are merely illustrative of the principles of the present invention. Numerous modifications and adaptations thereof will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

That which is claimed is:

1. A photovoltaic apparatus comprising:
 - a first electrode comprising an indium tin oxide fiber;
 - at least one photosensitive organic layer surrounding the first electrode and electrically connected to the first electrode; and
 - 5 a second electrode surrounding the organic layer and electrically connected to the organic layer.
2. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 1, wherein the photosensitive organic layer comprises a photoactive region.
- 10 3. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 2, wherein the photoactive region comprises at least one bulk heterojunction between a donor material and an acceptor material.
- 15 4. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 3, wherein the donor material comprises a polymeric phase and the acceptor material comprises a nanoparticle phase.
5. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 4, wherein the polymeric phase comprises a conjugated polymer.
- 20 6. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 5, wherein the conjugated polymer comprises poly(3-hexylthiophene), poly(3-octylthiophene), or mixtures thereof.
7. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 4, wherein the nanoparticle phase
- 25 comprises fullerenes, carbon nanotubes, or mixtures thereof.
8. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 7, wherein the fullerenes comprise 1-(3-methoxycarbonyl)propyl-1-phenyl(6,6)C₆₁.
- 30 9. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 3, wherein the donor material comprises organometallic compounds.
10. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 9, wherein the organometallic compounds comprise phthalocyanines, porphyrins, or derivatives thereof.

11. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 1, wherein the photosensitive organic layer comprises at least one upconverter material, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof.
- 5 12. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 1, wherein the at least one end of the indium tin oxide fiber is beveled.
13. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 1, wherein both ends of the indium tin
10 oxide fiber are beveled.
14. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 1, wherein the indium tin oxide fiber has a diameter ranging from about 10 μm to about 1 mm.
- 15 15. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 1, wherein a radiation transmissive conducting oxide is disposed on a surface of the indium tin oxide fiber.
16. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 15, wherein the radiation transmissive
conducting oxide comprises gallium indium tin oxide, indium tin oxide, antimony tin
20 oxide, or zinc indium tin oxide.
17. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 1, further comprising an exciton blocking layer adjacent to the photosensitive organic layer.
- 25 18. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 17, wherein the exciton blocking layer is etched.
19. A photovoltaic apparatus comprising:
an optical fiber core;
30 a radiation transmissive first electrode surrounding the optical fiber core;
at least one photosensitive organic layer surrounding the first electrode and electrically connected to the first electrode; and
a second electrode surrounding the organic layer and electrically connected to the organic layer,

wherein the organic layer comprises at least one upconverter material, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof.

20. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 19, wherein the radiation transmissive
5 first electrode comprises a radiation transmissive conducting oxide.

21. The photovoltaic device of claim 20, wherein the radiation transmissive
conducting oxide comprises indium tin oxide, gallium indium tin oxide, antimony tin
oxide, or zinc indium tin oxide.

10

22. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 19, wherein the photosensitive organic
layer comprises a photoactive region.

23. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 22, wherein the photoactive region
15 comprises at least one bulk heterojunction between a donor material and an acceptor
material.

24. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 23, wherein the donor material comprises
a polymeric phase and the acceptor material comprises a nanoparticle phase.

20

25. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 24, wherein the polymeric phase
comprises a conjugated polymer.

26. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 25, wherein the conjugated polymer
25 comprises poly(3-hexylthiophene), poly(3-octylthiophene), or mixtures thereof.

27. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 24, wherein the nanoparticle phase
comprises fullerenes, carbon nanotubes, or mixtures thereof.

30 28. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 27, wherein the fullerenes comprise 1-(3-
methoxycarbonyl)propyl-1-phenyl(6,6)C₆₀.

29. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 24, wherein the donor material comprises
organometallic compounds.

30. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 29, wherein the organometallic compounds comprise phthalocyanines, porphyrins, or derivatives thereof.
- 5 31. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 19, wherein the at least one upconverter material comprises a Lanthanide series element.
32. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 19, wherein the at least one upconverter material comprises erbium, ytterbium, dysprosium, holmium, or mixtures thereof.
- 10 33. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 19, wherein the at least one quantum dot comprises a III/V semiconductor material, a II/VI semiconductor material, or mixture thereof.
- 15 34. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 19, wherein the at least one counterfeiting dye comprises a phosphor, fluorophor, thermochromic chemical species, photochromic chemical species, or a mixture thereof.
- 20 35. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 19, wherein at least one end of the optical fiber core is beveled.
36. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 19, wherein both ends of the optical fiber core are beveled.
- 25 37. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 19, wherein the optical fiber core has a diameter ranging from about 10 μm to about 1 mm.
38. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 19, further comprising an exciton blocking layer adjacent to the photosensitive organic layer.
- 30 39. The photovoltaic apparatus of claim 38, wherein the exciton blocking layer is etched.
40. An optoelectronic device comprising:

at least one pixel comprising at least one photovoltaic cell, the photovoltaic cell comprising:

- a first electrode comprising an indium tin oxide fiber;
- at least one photosensitive organic layer surrounding the first electrode
- 5 and electrically connected to the first electrode; and
- a second electrode surrounding the organic layer and electrically connected to the organic layer.

41. The optoelectronic device of claim 40, wherein the at least one pixel
10 comprises a plurality of photovoltaic cells.

42. The optoelectronic device of claim 41, wherein the plurality of photovoltaic cells are bundled.

15 43. The optoelectronic device of claim 40 comprising an array of pixels.

44. The optoelectronic device of claim 43, wherein each pixel of the array comprises a plurality of photovoltaic cells.

20 45. An optoelectronic device comprising:
at least one pixel comprising at least one photovoltaic cell, the photovoltaic cell comprising:

- an optical fiber core;
- a radiation transmissive first electrode surrounding the optical fiber
- 25 core;
- at least one photosensitive organic layer surrounding the first electrode and electrically connected to the first electrode; and
- a second electrode surrounding the organic layer and electrically connected to the organic layer,
- 30 wherein the organic layer comprises at least one upconverter material, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof.

46. The optoelectronic device of claim 45, wherein the at least one pixel comprises a plurality of photovoltaic cells.

47. The optoelectronic device of claim 46, wherein the plurality of photovoltaic cells are bundled.
- 5 48. The optoelectronic device of claim 45 comprising an array of pixels.
49. The optoelectronic device of claim 48, wherein each pixel of the array comprises a plurality of photovoltaic cells.
- 10 50. A method for converting electromagnetic energy into electrical energy comprising:
receiving electromagnetic radiation along the longitudinal axis of an optical fiber;
transmitting the electromagnetic radiation into at least one photosensitive
15 organic layer through a radiation transmissive first electrode surrounding the optical fiber;
generating excitons in the at least one photosensitive organic layer; and
separating the excitons into electrons and holes,
wherein the at least one photosensitive organic layer comprises at least one
20 upconverter material, anti-Stokes material, laser dye, anti-counterfeiting dye, quantum dot, or combination thereof.
51. The method of claim 50, further comprising removing the electrons into an external circuit.
- 25 52. The method of claim 50, wherein electromagnetic radiation received has a wavelength ranging from about 400 nm to about 800 nm.
53. A method for converting electromagnetic energy into electrical energy
30 comprising:
receiving electromagnetic radiation along the longitudinal axis of an indium tin oxide fiber;
transmitting the electromagnetic radiation into at least one photosensitive organic layer surrounding the indium tin oxide fiber;

generating excitons in the organic layer; and
separating the excitons into electrons and holes.

54. The method of claim 53, further comprising removing the electrons into an
5 external circuit.

55. The method of claim 53, wherein electromagnetic radiation received has a
wavelength ranging from about 400 nm to about 800 nm.

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