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(54) **ENERGY STORAGE DEVICES INCLUDING AT LEAST ONE ELECTRODE COMPRISING A METAL DIBORIDE, AND RELATED METHODS**

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See application file for complete search history.

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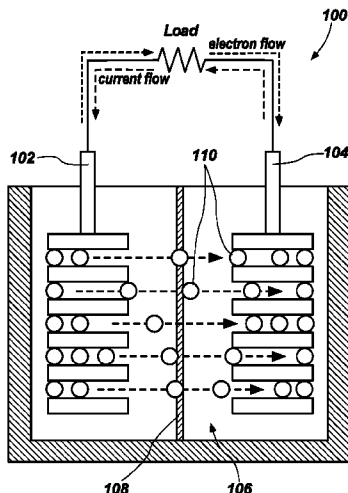
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An energy storage device including a first electrode comprising lithium, a second electrode comprising a metal diboride, an electrolyte disposed between the first electrode and the second electrode and providing a conductive pathway for lithium ions to move to and from the first electrode and the second electrode, and a separator within the electrolyte and between the first electrode and the second electrode. A method of forming an energy storage device including forming a first electrode to include lithium, forming a second electrode to include a metal diboride, disposing an electrolyte between the first electrode and the second electrode, the electrolyte providing a conductive pathway for lithium ions to move to and from the first electrode and the second electrode, and disposing a separator within the electrolyte and between the first electrode and the second electrode.

18 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets



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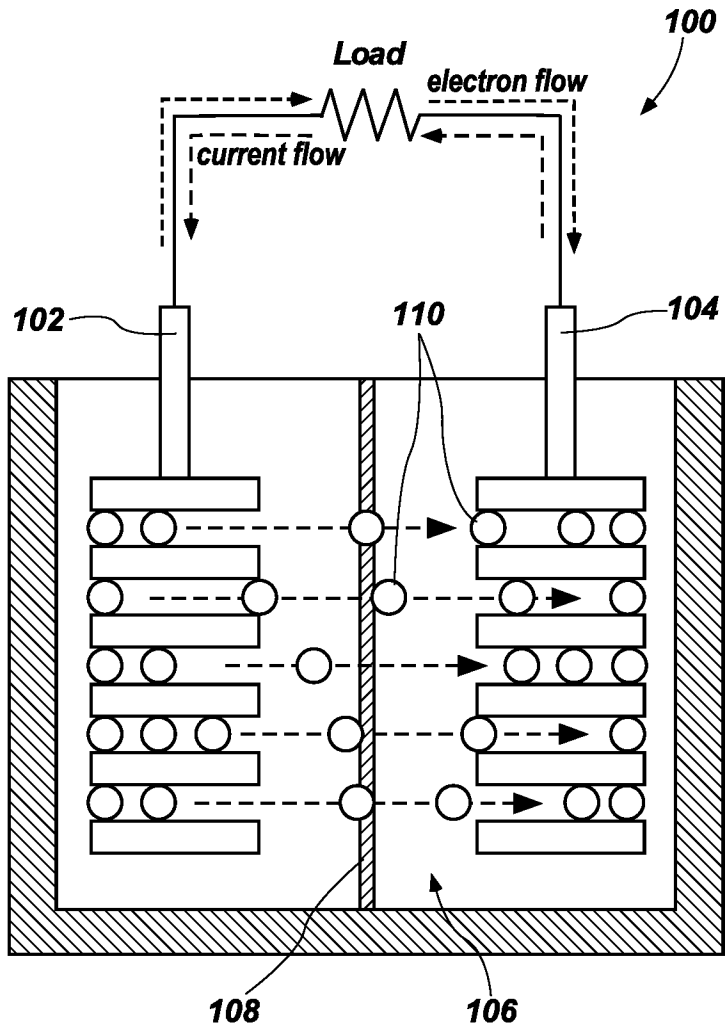


FIG. 1A

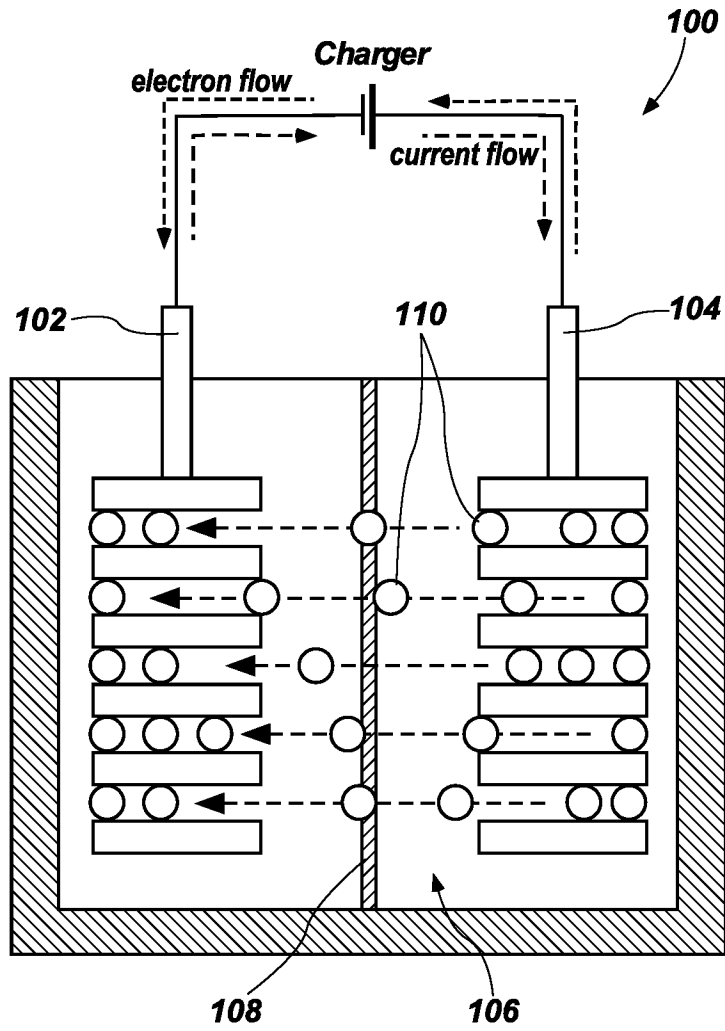


FIG. 1B

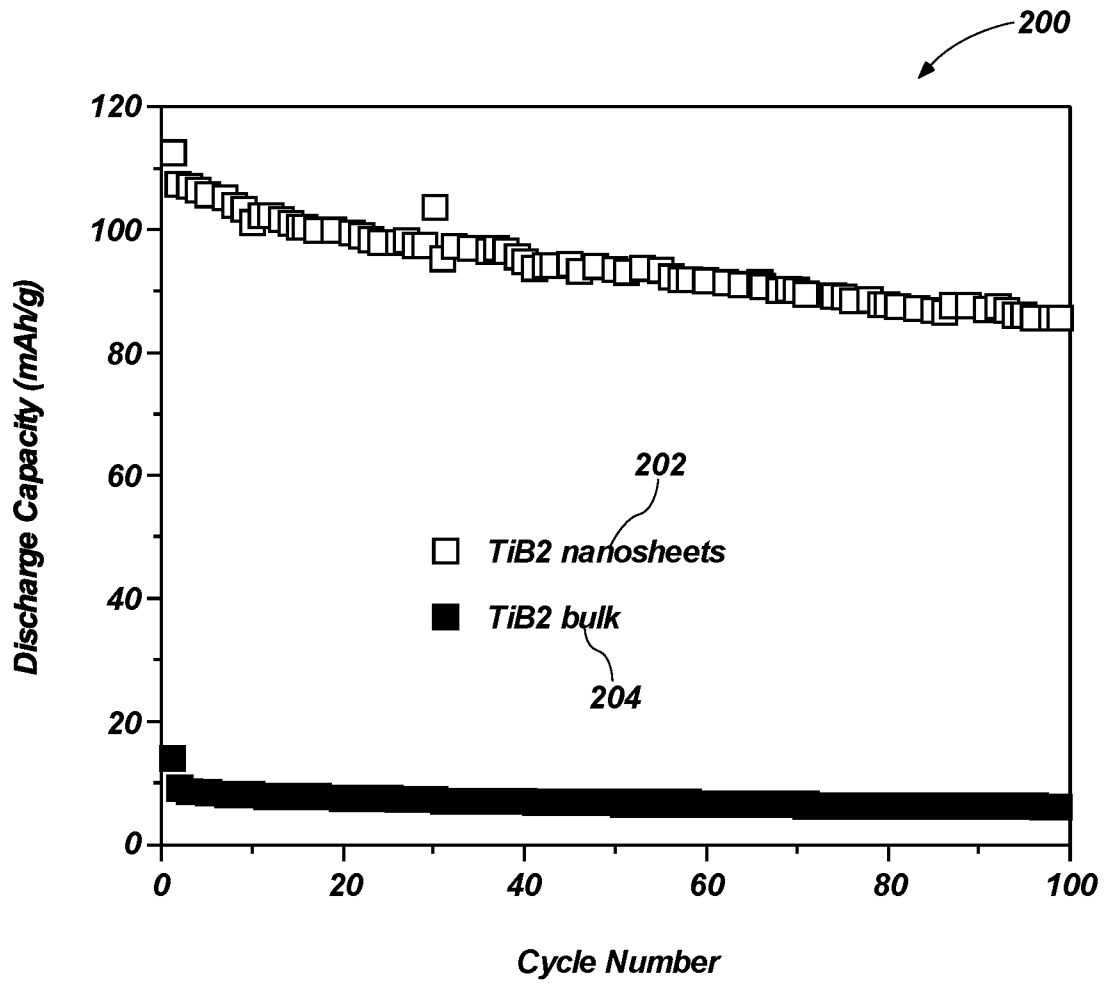


FIG. 2

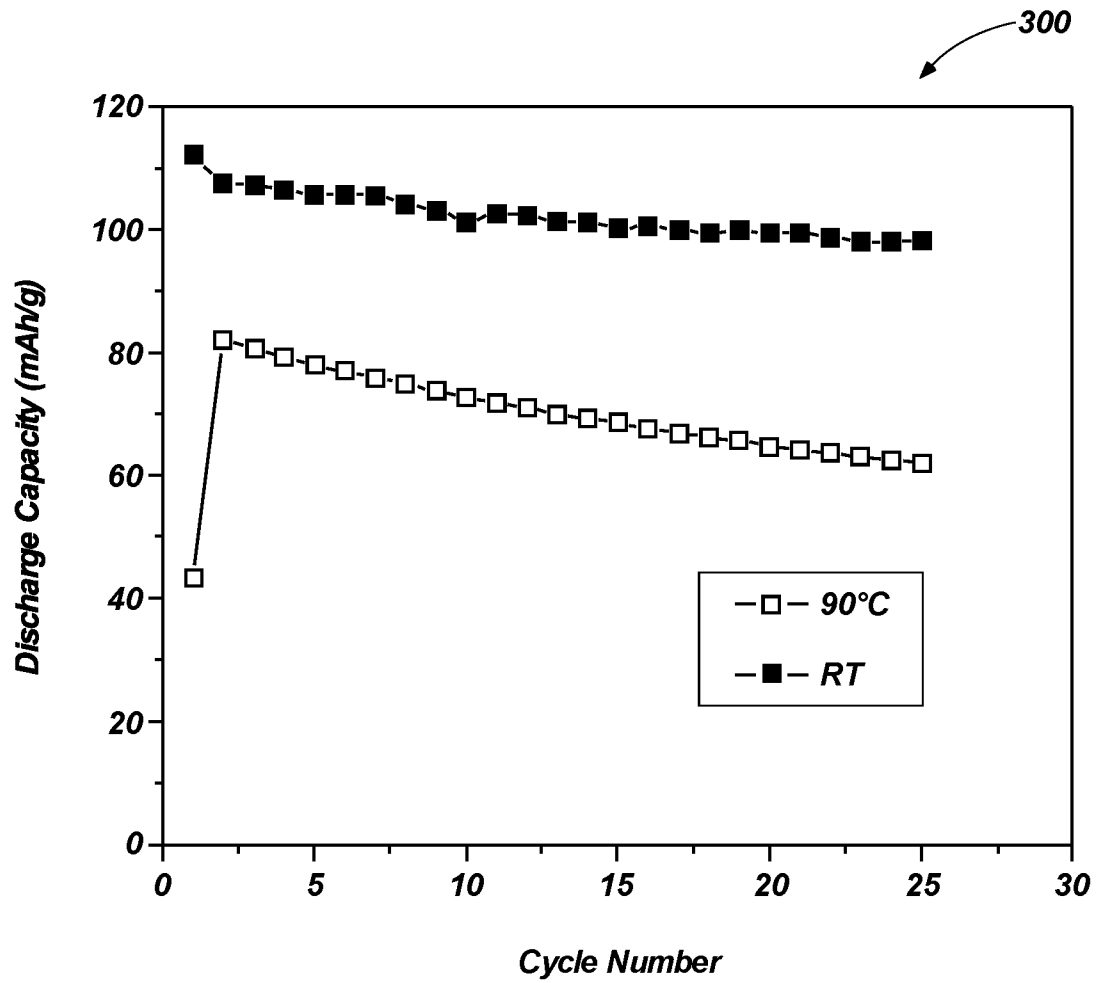


FIG. 3

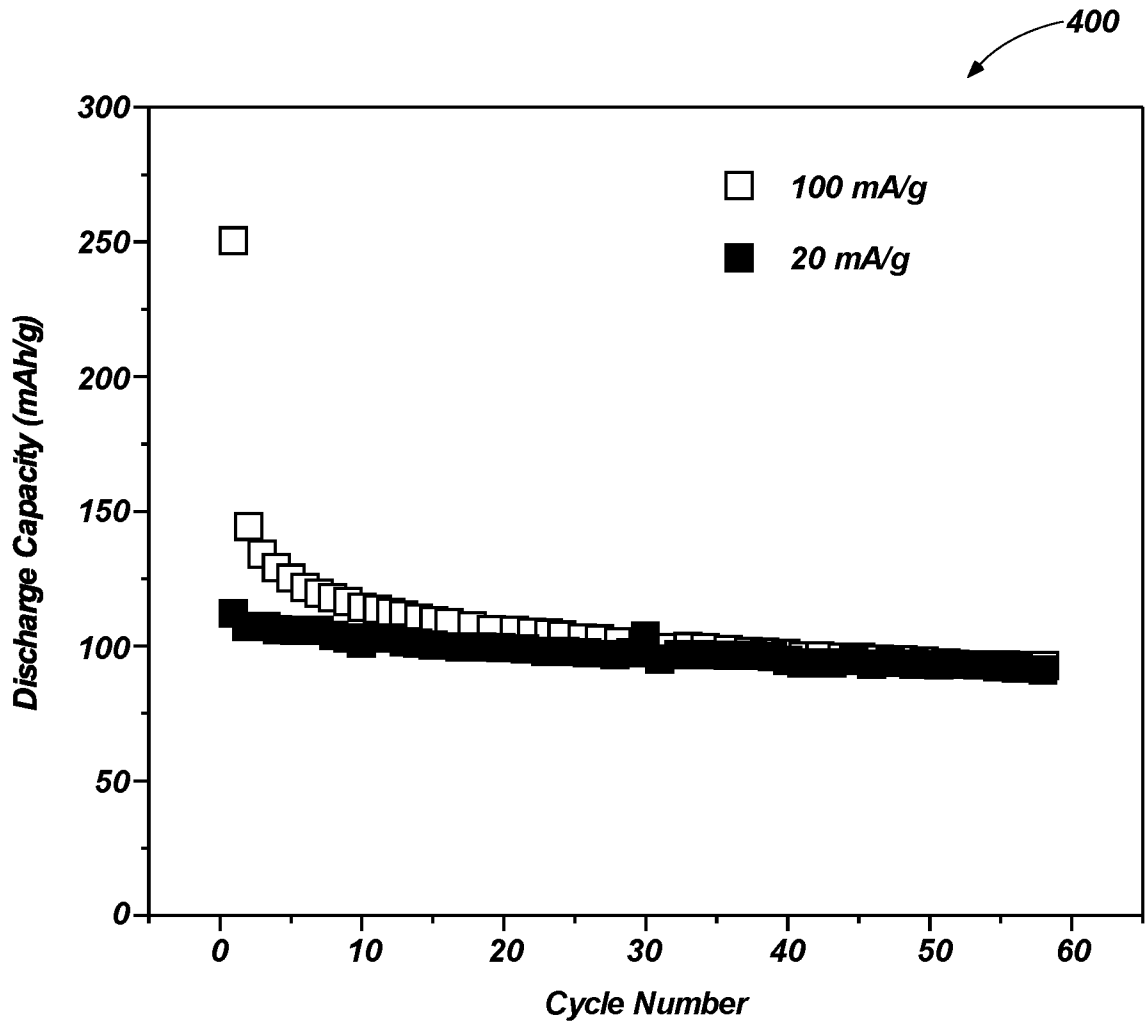


FIG. 4

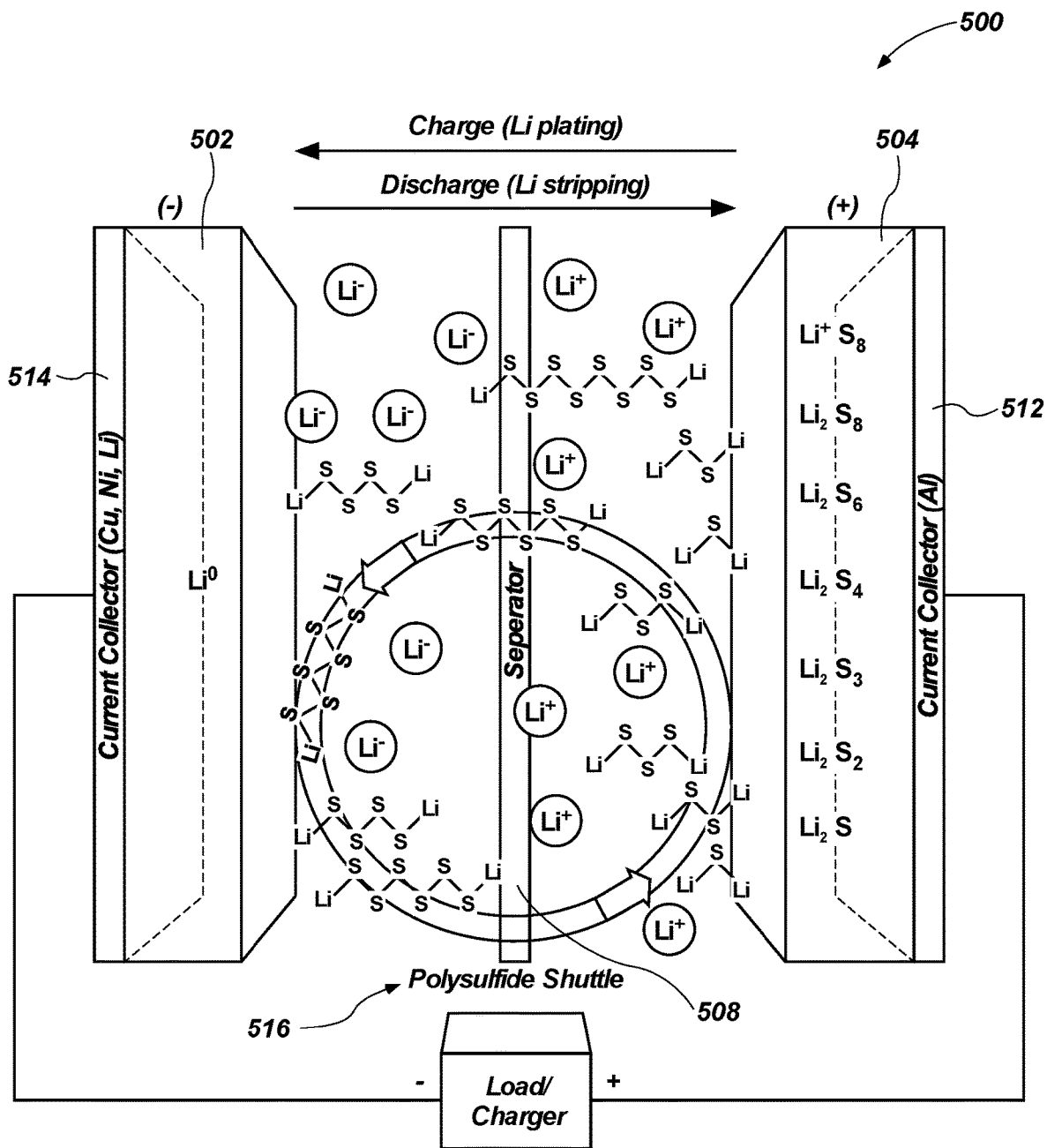


FIG. 5

**ENERGY STORAGE DEVICES INCLUDING
AT LEAST ONE ELECTRODE COMPRISING
A METAL DIBORIDE, AND RELATED
METHODS**

TECHNICAL FIELD

This disclosure relates generally to energy storage devices. In particular, this disclosure relates to lithium-ion batteries, lithium-ion capacitors, and lithium-sulfur batteries and methods of making the foregoing.

BACKGROUND

Lithium-ion batteries are utilized in an array of portable electronic devices due to lithium-ion batteries' energy densities compared to the other rechargeable batteries (i.e., lead acid batteries and nickel metal hydride batteries). However, power density of lithium-ion batteries is relatively low due to relatively slow lithium-ion intercalation processes in conventional anode materials (i.e., graphite). Due to the low lithium-ion intercalation potential (-0.05 V) of graphite, the anode typically forms a passivation layer called a solid electrolyte interphase ("SEI"). Furthermore, slow lithium-ion conduction across the SEI lowers usable capacity of the lithium-ion battery when the lithium-ion batteries are charged and/or discharged relatively quickly.

Beyond conventional lithium-ion batteries, lithium-sulfur (Li-S) batteries are promising due to Li-S batteries' high theoretical energy density, low cost, safety, and inoffensive nature with applications of electric-based transportation and other emerging applications. However, practical applications of Li-S batteries are impeded due to the short cycle life and poor coulombic efficiency. These poor performances generally result from an electrically insulating nature of sulfur and a shuttling effect of dissolved lithium polysulfide (LiPS) species, which interferes with reactive lithium metal anodes.

BRIEF SUMMARY

Some embodiments of the present disclosure include an energy storage device. The energy storage device may include a first electrode comprising lithium, a second electrode comprising a metal diboride, an electrolyte disposed between the first electrode and the second electrode and providing a conductive pathway for lithium ions to move to and from the first electrode and the second electrode, and a separator within the electrolyte and between the first electrode and the second electrode.

In additional embodiments, the present disclosure includes an energy storage device. The energy storage device may include a first electrode, a second electrode comprising a metal diboride, an electrolyte disposed between the first electrode and the second electrode and providing a conductive pathway for ions to move to and from the first electrode and the second electrode, and a separator within the electrolyte and between the first electrode and the second electrode.

Some embodiments of the present disclosure include a method of forming an energy storage device. The method may include forming a first electrode to comprise lithium; forming a second electrode to comprise a metal diboride; disposing an electrolyte between the first electrode and the second electrode, the electrolyte providing a conductive pathway for lithium ions to move to and from the first

electrode and the second electrode; and disposing a separator within the electrolyte and between the first electrode and the second electrode.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a detailed understanding of the present disclosure, reference should be made to the following detailed description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which like elements have generally been designated with like numerals, and wherein:

FIG. 1A shows a schematic representation of an energy storage device in a discharging state according to one or more embodiments of the present disclosure;

FIG. 1B shows a schematic representation of an energy storage device in a charging state according to one or more embodiments of the present disclosure;

FIG. 2 shows a graph demonstrating comparisons of discharge capacities (i.e., specific energy) as a function of cycle numbers (e.g., full discharge and full recharge numbers) of energy storage devices according to one or more embodiments of the present disclosure;

FIG. 3 shows a graph demonstrating a comparison of discharge capacities (i.e., specific energy) of energy storage devices of the present disclosure at about room temperature (i.e., 20° C.) and at about 90° C. according to one or more embodiments of the present disclosure;

FIG. 4 includes a graph showing capacity of energy storage devices at varying discharging and charging rates according to one or more embodiments of the present disclosure; and

FIG. 5 shows a schematic representation of an energy storage device according to one or more embodiments of the present disclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The illustrations presented herein are not actual views of any lithium-ion battery, lithium-ion capacitor, lithium sulfur battery, or any component thereof, but are merely idealized representations, which are employed to describe embodiments of the present invention.

As used herein, the singular forms following "a," "an," and "the" are intended to include the plural forms as well, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

As used herein, the term "may" with respect to a material, structure, feature, or method act indicates that such is contemplated for use in implementation of an embodiment of the disclosure, and such term is used in preference to the more restrictive term "is" so as to avoid any implication that other compatible materials, structures, features, and methods usable in combination therewith should or must be excluded.

As used herein, any relational term, such as "first," "second," etc., is used for clarity and convenience in understanding the disclosure and accompanying drawings, and does not connote or depend on any specific preference or order, except where the context clearly indicates otherwise. Furthermore, these terms may refer to an orientation of elements of a lithium battery when disposed as illustrated in the drawings.

As used herein, the term "substantially" in reference to a given parameter, property, or condition means and includes to a degree that one skilled in the art would understand that the given parameter, property, or condition is met with a small degree of variance, such as within acceptable manufacturing tolerances. By way of example, depending on the particular parameter, property, or condition that is substan-

tially met, the parameter, property, or condition may be at least 90.0% met, at least 95.0% met, at least 99.0% met, or even at least 99.9% met.

As used herein, the term “about” used in reference to a given parameter is inclusive of the stated value and has the meaning dictated by the context (e.g., it includes the degree of error associated with measurement of the given parameter, as well as variations resulting from manufacturing tolerances, etc.).

Some embodiments of the present disclosure include an energy storage device. In one or more embodiments, the energy storage device may include at least one electrode (e.g., anode or cathode) including a metal diboride (e.g., TiB_2) or one of its transition metal derivatives. For instance the at least one electrode may include MB_xO_y , where $M=Ti, Zr, Mg, Si, Mo, W, V, Mn$; $x=1$ to 2 and $y=0$ to 1 . For instance, in one non-limiting example, the at least one electrode may include TiB_2 .

In some embodiments, the at least one electrode including a metal diboride or one of its transition metal derivatives may exhibit a relatively high electronic conductivity in comparison to conventional electrodes (e.g., a graphite electrode). For example, in some embodiments, the at least one electrode may exhibit a conductivity within a range of about 6.667×10^6 S/m to about 1.11×10^7 S/m. Additionally, due to the at least one electrode, the energy storage device may exhibit a lithium intercalation potential above anodic electrolyte decomposite potential (~ 0.7 V). For instance, the energy storage device of the present disclosure may exhibit a lithium intercalation potential above 0.7 V.

Thus, the metal diboride anode of the energy storage device of the present disclosure avoids formation of the solid electrolyte interphase (“SEI”). As a result, the energy storage device of the present disclosure at least substantially maintains its usable capacity even when charged and/or discharged quickly. Accordingly, as will be understood by one of ordinary skill in the art, by maintaining its usable capacity even when charged and/or discharged quickly, the energy storage device of the present disclosure may provide a more reliable energy source in comparison to conventional lithium-ion batteries, which, in turn, may provide more reliable and safe operations when utilizing the energy source.

Additionally, in some embodiments, the energy storage device exhibits a capacity (e.g., specific energy, energy density) within a range of about 110 mAh/g to about 120 mAh/g at zero cycles. Furthermore, at room temperature ($\sim 20^\circ$ C.) over about 100 cycles, the energy storage device exhibits a drop in capacity of between about 15% and about 25%. For instance, at room temperature, the energy storage device may exhibit a loss in capacity of about 18%. Furthermore, at about 90° C. and over about twenty-five cycles, the energy storage device exhibits a capacity between about 85 mAh/g and about 65 mAh/g. Additionally, at about 90° C., the energy storage device may exhibit a loss in capacity of between about 18% and about 25% over about twenty-five cycles. For instance, at about 90° C., the energy storage device may exhibit a loss in capacity of about 21%. Accordingly, the energy storage device of the present disclosure may exhibit a relatively high temperature stability (in regard to capacity) and a relatively high pressure stability in comparison to conventional energy storage devices. Additionally, as will be understood in the art, the at least one electrode of the present disclosure may exhibit relatively high levels of corrosion/erosion resistance in comparison to conventional electrodes (e.g., graphite electrodes).

Furthermore, because the energy storage devices of the present disclosure include a metal diboride anode, the energy storage devices can provide a high energy density at high power densities (e.g., fast charging). Accordingly, the energy storage devices may provide more suitable energy sources for consumer electronics, medical devices, and military devices, where energy storage devices are required to operate at high current rates.

FIG. 1A shows a schematic representation of an energy storage device **100** in a discharging state according to one or more embodiments of the present disclosure. FIG. 1B shows a schematic representation of the energy storage device **100** of FIG. 1A in a charging state according to one or more embodiments of the present disclosure. Referring to FIGS. 1A and 1B together, in one or more embodiments, the energy storage device **100** may include an anode **102** (e.g., negative electrode), a cathode **104** (e.g., positive electrode), an electrolyte **106**, and a separator **108**.

In some embodiments, the energy storage device **100** may include a lithium-ion storage device. For instance, as will be understood by one of ordinary skill in the art, the energy storage device **100** may include a type of rechargeable battery in which lithium ions **110** move from the anode **102** to the cathode **104** during a discharging state and from the cathode **104** to the anode **102** during a charging state. As is described in greater detail below, the energy storage device **100** may utilize an intercalated lithium compound as at least part of the cathode **104**. The anode **102** and the cathode **104** of the energy storage device **100** allow lithium ions **110** to move into the structures of the anode **102** and cathode **104** via insertion (i.e., intercalation) and out of the structures of the anode **102** and cathode **104** with a process via extraction (deintercalation).

During discharge, the (positive) lithium ions **110** move from the anode **102** to the cathode **104** (forming a lithium compound) through the electrolyte **106**. When the energy storage device **100** is charging, the reverse occurs with the lithium ions **110** and electrons moving back into the anode **102** in a net higher energy state. The lithium ions **110** are transported to and from the cathode **104** and anode **102** by oxidizing a transition metal, as is known in the art.

In some embodiments, the anode **102** of the energy storage device **100** may include a metal diboride and/or any of its derivatives (e.g., partial oxidation phases). For example, in one or more embodiments, the anode **102** of the energy storage device **100** may include MB_xO_y , where $M=Ti, Zr, Mg, Si, Mo, W, V, Mn$; $x=1$ to 2 and $y=0$ to 1 . As a non-limiting example, the anode **102** may include TiB_2 . In order to facilitate explanation of the energy storage device **100**, the anode **102** is described herein as including a metal diboride; however, it is understood that the term “metal diboride” includes any of the foregoing described materials, metal diborides, and/or derivatives of metal diborides.

In one or more embodiments, the anode **102** may include metal diboride (e.g., TiB_2) nanoparticles. For example, in some embodiments, the anode **102** may include particles of metal diboride having one, two, or three dimensions (e.g., grain size) between 20 nm and 100 nm. For instance, the anode **102** may include particles of metal diboride having one, two, or three dimensions between 30 nm and 60 nm. In additional embodiments, the anode **102** may include particles of metal diboride having one, two, or three dimensions between 40 nm and 50 nm. In some instances, the grain size of the metal diboride nanoparticles may be optimized to optimize performance of the energy storage device **100**. In additional embodiments, the anode **102** may include one or more of nanotubes, nanosheets, and quantum dots of metal

diboride. In further embodiments, the anode **102** may include metal diboride microparticles in combination with metal diboride nanoparticles. As is described in greater detail in regard to FIG. 2, the nanoparticles of metal diboride, in comparison to bulk forms of metal diboride (i.e., forms of metal diboride not confined to a nanoscale in any dimension), significantly outperform the bulk forms in regard to capacity and charging/discharging rates of the energy storage device **100**.

Additionally, the metal diboride nanoparticles may be formed via any synthesis methods known in the art. For instance, the metal diboride nanoparticles may be derived from larger molecules, or synthesized by "bottom-up" methods that, for example, nucleate particles from fine molecular distributions in liquid or vapor phase. Additionally, the metal diboride nanoparticles may be created via one or more synthesis methods including: gas condensation, attrition, chemical precipitation, ion implantation, pyrolysis, and hydrothermal synthesis.

In some embodiments, the anode **102** may include a composite of metal diboride(s) and other materials. For instance, the anode **102** may include a composite of metal diboride and graphite. As another non-limiting example, the anode **102** may include a composite of metal diboride and any high surface area carbons, such as carbon nanotubes, carbon fiber, carbon paper, graphene, etc. In some embodiments, the composite of the anode **102** may include between about 90% and about 30% metal diboride by mass. In additional embodiments, the composite of the anode **102** may include between about 80% and about 50% metal diboride by mass. In further embodiments, the composite of the anode **102** may include between about 80% and about 60% metal diboride by mass. In alternative embodiments, the anode **102** of the energy storage device **100** may include at least substantially entirely one or more metal diborides.

Utilizing an anode **102** comprising a metal diboride in the energy storage device **100** may provide an anode **102** being a more mechanically strong in comparison to conventional anodes (e.g., graphite anodes). For instance, the anode **102** of the present disclosure may have a relatively high hardness in comparison to conventional anodes. For example, in some embodiments, the anode **102** may exhibit a hardness within a range of about a 2500 Knoop hardness to about a 2700 Knoop hardness at room temperature (20° C.). In additional embodiments, the anode **102** may exhibit a hardness within a range of about 2550 Knoop hardness to about a 2650 Knoop hardness at room temperature (20° C.). For instance, the anode **102** may exhibit a hardness of about a 2600 Knoop hardness.

Additionally, the metal diboride anode **102** may exhibit relatively high electronic conductivity in comparison to conventional anodes (e.g., a graphite anode **102**). For example, in some embodiments, the metal diboride anode **102** may exhibit a conductivity within a range of about 6.667×10^6 S/m to about 1.11×10^7 S/m while a conventional graphite anode **102** exhibits a conductivity within a range of about 3.3×10^2 S/m (l/basal plane) to about 2.0×10^5 S/m (//basal plane). In additional embodiments, the metal diboride anode **102** may exhibit a conductivity within a range of about 8.0×10^6 S/m to about 1.11×10^7 S/m. In further embodiments, the metal diboride anode **102** may exhibit a conductivity within a range of about 10.0×10^6 S/m to about 1.11×10^7 S/m.

Furthermore, as will be understood by one of ordinary skill in the art, the metal diborides described above and utilized within the anode **102** of the energy storage device **100** may be at least substantially chemically inert. Further-

more, the anode **102** may be mechanically stable under critical conditions such as high pressure and high temperature. Moreover, the anode **102** is environmentally friendly (i.e., non-hazardous). Also, the anode **102** may be scaled up in production industrially. Likewise, the anode **102** may have a relatively low cost to produce.

Moreover, as is discussed in greater detail below in regard to FIG. 3, the anode **102** of the present disclosure may enable an energy storage device **100** to have a relatively high temperature stability (in regard to specific energy density) and a relatively high pressure stability in comparison to conventional anodes. Additionally, as will be understood in the art, the anode **102** of the present disclosure may exhibit relatively high levels of corrosion/erosion resistance in comparison to conventional energy storage devices.

Referring still to FIGS. 1A and 1B together, in some embodiments, the cathode **104** of the energy storage device **100** may include one or more of a layered oxide, a polyanion, or a spinel. As non-limiting examples, the cathode **104** may include lithium cobalt oxide (LiCoO₂), lithium iron phosphate (LiFePO₄), lithium ion manganese oxide (LiMn₂O₄, Li₂MnO₃, or LMO), lithium nickel manganese cobalt oxide (LiNiMnCoO₂ or NMC), lithium nickel cobalt aluminum oxide (LiNiCoAlO₂ or NCA), and/or emerging Li-excess metal oxide materials (Li_xMO₂ where $x < 2$, M=Ni, Co, Mo, Nb, Ti, etc.). Additionally, the cathode **104** may include any lithium-based cathodes known in the art. Furthermore, although the cathode **104** is described herein as being lithium-based, the disclosure is not so limited. Rather, the cathode **104** may include any cathodes known in the art for alkaline-ion storage devices (e.g., sodium (Na), magnesium (Mg), calcium (Ca), etc., based cathodes).

The electrolyte **106** may include one or more of a liquid electrolyte **106** and a solid electrolyte **106**. In some embodiments, the electrolyte **106** may include a mixture of organic carbonates such as ethylene carbonate or diethyl carbonate containing complexes of lithium ions **110**. When the electrolyte **106** includes a liquid electrolyte **106**, the electrolyte **106** may include lithium salts, such as LiPF₆, LiBF₄ or LiClO₄ in an organic solvent, such as ethylene carbonate, dimethyl carbonate, and diethyl carbonate. These electrolytes may include non-coordinating anion salts such as lithium hexafluorophosphate (LiPF₆), lithium hexafluoroarsenate monohydrate (LiAsF₆), lithium perchlorate (LiClO₄), lithium tetrafluoroborate (LiBF₄), and lithium triflate (LiCF₃SO₃). In additional embodiments, the electrolyte **106** may include composite electrolytes based on POE (poly(oxyethylene)), PVDF, PEO-PTFE, PEO-polyimide, ceramic (LiPON, sulfide glass, phosphate ceramic materials). Additionally, the electrolytes may include ionic liquid. As is known in the art, the liquid electrolyte **106** may act as a conductive pathway for the movement of cations passing from the anode **102** to the cathode **104** during discharge.

When the electrolyte **106** comprises a solid electrolyte **106**, the electrolyte **106** may include solid ceramic electrolytes such as lithium metal oxides that allow lithium ion transport through the solid electrolyte **106** more readily due to the intrinsic lithium. As is known in the art, electrolytes that are solid reduce a risk of leaks. Solid ceramic electrolytes may include highly ordered compounds with crystal structures having ion transport channels. For instance, the ceramic electrolyte **106** may include lithium super ion conductors (LISICON) and perovskites. In additional embodiments, the solid ceramic electrolyte **106** may include amorphous atomic structures having higher conductivities overall due to higher conductivity at grain boundaries.

In one or more embodiments, the separator **108** may include a permeable membrane disposed between the anode **102** and cathode **104** of the energy storage device **100**. The separator **108** may prevent electrical short circuits while also allowing transport of ions therethrough. In some embodiments, the separator **108** includes a polymeric membrane forming a microporous layer. In some embodiments, the separator **108** may include one or more of nonwoven fibers (e.g., cotton, nylon, polyesters, glass), polymer films (e.g., polyethylene, polypropylene, poly (tetrafluoroethylene), polyvinyl chloride), ceramics, and naturally occurring substances (rubber, asbestos, wood).

As is discussed in greater detail below, due to the presence of metal diboride anode **102**, the energy storage device **100** of the present disclosure may exhibit a lithium intercalation potential above anodic electrolyte decomposite potential (~ 0.7 V). For instance, the energy storage device **100** of the present disclosure may exhibit a lithium intercalation potential above 0.7 V.

FIG. **2** is a graph **200** showing comparisons of discharge capacities (i.e., specific energy) as a function of cycle numbers (e.g., full discharge and full recharge numbers) of energy storage devices according to one or more embodiments of the present disclosure. As shown in FIG. **2**, a first energy storage device **202** includes an anode **102** comprising TiB_2 nanosheets, and a second energy storage device **204** includes an anode **102** comprising TiB_2 in bulk form, each energy storage device **202** and **204** respectively configured as described above in regard to FIGS. **1A** and **1B**. The first energy storage device **202**, which utilizes TiB_2 nanoparticles, exhibits a capacity (e.g., specific energy, energy density) within a range of about 110 mAh/g to about 120 mAh/g at zero cycles. Furthermore, over about 100 cycles, the first energy storage device **202** exhibits a drop in capacity of between about 15% and about 25%.

In contrast, the second energy storage device **204**, which utilizes TiB_2 in bulk form, exhibits a capacity (e.g., specific energy, energy density) within a range of about 16 mAh/g to about 18 mAh/g at zero cycles. Furthermore, over about 100 cycles, the second energy storage device **204** exhibits a drop in capacity of between about 35% and about 55%. As will be understood by one of ordinary skill in the art, the TiB_2 nanoparticles have a higher surface ratio due to the reduced particle size, and lithium-ion storage (e.g., capacity) in the anode **102** is surface dominant. Therefore, due to the increased surface area of the TiB_2 nanoparticles, the TiB_2 nanoparticles enable an increased faradaic reaction, which leads to an increased storage capacity. Accordingly, the higher surface ratio of the TiB_2 nanoparticles of the anode **102** of first energy storage device **202** enables a higher capacity and a higher retainment of capacity through multiple cycles. In view of the foregoing, the first energy storage device **202** of the present disclosure (e.g., TiB_2 nanoparticles) may provide between six and seven times more capacity than an anode **102** in a bulk form counterpart, as in second energy storage device **204**. Additionally, the first energy storage device **202** of the present disclosure may maintain a capacity between 1.5 and four times better than the bulk form counterpart anode **102** of second energy storage device **204**.

FIG. **3** includes a graph **300** showing a comparison of discharge capacities (i.e., specific energy) of energy storage devices of the present disclosure at about room temperature (i.e., 20° C.) and at about 90° C. As shown, at room temperature and over a cycle count of about twenty-five, such an energy storage device exhibits a capacity (i.e., specific energy) between about 115 mAh/g and about 98

mAh/g. Additionally, at room temperature, such an energy storage device may exhibit a loss in capacity of between about 15% and about 20% over a cycle count of about twenty-five. For instance, at room temperature, such an energy storage device may exhibit a loss in capacity of about 18%.

Furthermore, at about 90° C. and over a cycle count of about twenty-five, such an energy storage device having an electrode (i.e., anode) comprising a metal diboride (e.g., TiB_2) or one of its transition metal derivatives exhibits a capacity (i.e., specific energy) between about 85 mAh/g and about 65 mAh/g. Additionally, at about 90° C., such an energy storage device may exhibit a loss in capacity of between about 18% and about 25% over a cycle count of about twenty-five. For instance, at about 90° C., such an energy storage device may exhibit a loss in capacity of about 21%. In some embodiments, such an energy storage device may exhibit relatively stable storage capacities up to about 90° C., about 110° C., about 120° C., or about 150° C.

In view of the foregoing, an energy storage device of the present disclosure may at least substantially maintain storage capacities and charging/discharging capabilities at relatively high temperatures. Accordingly, an energy storage device of the present disclosure may be more suitable for high temperature and high pressure environments. As a result, an energy storage device of the present disclosure may be depended upon to operate under critical conditions, such as, for example, in downhole conditions, on aerospace vehicles, and/or in underwater conditions.

Furthermore, under typical operating conditions (e.g., battery conditions) an energy storage device of the present disclosure may exhibit an electrochemical stability window between about 0 and about 5 V. As is known in the art, in regard to energy storage devices, the electrochemical stability window of an electrode (e.g., an anode or a cathode **104**) is the voltage range between which the electrode is neither oxidized nor reduced.

Moreover, while a particular embodiment of energy storage device **100**, referring again to FIGS. **1A** and **1B** is described herein as a lithium-ion battery and having an electrode (e.g., an anode **102**) including a metal diboride, the disclosure is not so limited. Rather, the energy storage device **100** may include a lithium-ion capacitor. Furthermore, the lithium-ion capacitor may include one or more electrodes comprising any of the metal diborides described above. For instance, in some embodiments, the lithium-ion capacitor may include a cathode **104** at least partially comprising a metal diboride. In additional embodiments, the lithium-ion capacitor may include an anode **102** at least partially comprising a metal diboride and being pre-doped with lithium ions **110**. For instance, the lithium-ion capacitor may include any of the lithium-ion capacitors described in, for example, U.S. Pat. No. 7,817,403, to Tasaki et al., and U.S. Pat. No. 9,129,756, to Gadkaree et al. with at least one electrode of the lithium capacitors comprising any of the metal diborides or transition metal derivatives described above. The disclosures of the foregoing references are incorporated in their entireties by reference herein.

FIG. **4** includes a graph **400** showing capacities of energy storage devices of the present disclosure at varying discharging and charging rates. As is shown in the graph **400**, at charging/discharging rates of 100 mA/g and 20 mA/g, energy storage devices of the present disclosure at least substantially maintain a same storage capacity over sixty cycles. In view of the foregoing, an energy storage device of the present disclosure may be subjected to relatively high charging/discharging rates while still maintaining capacity.

Referring to FIGS. 1A-4 together, embodiments of the energy storage device **100** of the present disclosure may be advantageous over conventional energy storage devices and, in particular, conventional lithium-ion batteries. For example, as is known in the art, power density of conventional lithium-ion batteries is relatively low due to a relatively slow lithium-ion intercalation process in conventional anode materials (e.g., graphite). Furthermore, due to the low lithium-ion intercalation potential (~ 0.05 V) of conventional anode materials, the anode **102** forms a passivation layer referred to as a solid electrolyte interphase (“SEI”). Moreover, relatively slow lithium-ion conduction across the SEI lowers usable capacity of the lithium-ion battery when the lithium-ion battery is charged and/or discharged quickly. In contrast, as noted above, the metal diboride anode **102** of energy storage device **100** of the present disclosure exhibits a lithium-ion intercalation potential above 0.7 V, which is above the anodic electrolyte decomposite potential (~ 0.7 v). Thus, the metal diboride anode **102** of the energy storage device **100** of the present disclosure avoids formation of the SEI. As a result, the energy storage device **100** of the present disclosure at least substantially maintains its usable capacity even when charged and/or discharged quickly. Accordingly, as will be understood by one of ordinary skill in the art, by maintaining its usable capacity even when charged and/or discharged quickly, the energy storage device **100** of the present disclosure may provide a more reliable energy source in comparison to conventional lithium-ion batteries, which, in turn, may provide more reliable and safe operations when utilizing the energy source.

Furthermore, because the energy storage devices (e.g., lithium-ion battery and/or lithium-ion capacitor) of the present disclosure include a metal diboride anode **102**, the energy storage devices can provide high energy density at high power densities (e.g., fast charging). Accordingly, the energy storage devices may provide more suitable energy sources for consumer electronics, medical devices, and military devices, where energy storage devices are required to operate at high current rates.

FIG. 5 shows an energy storage device **500** according to one or more embodiments of the present disclosure. The energy storage device **500** may include a cathode **504**, an anode **502**, a first current collector **512**, a second current collector **514**, a separator **508**, and a polysulfide shuttle **516**. The first current collector **512** may be adjacent to the cathode **504**, and the second current collector **514** may be adjacent to the anode **502**. The polysulfide shuttle **516** and separator **508** may be disposed between the cathode **504** and the anode **502**. For example, the energy storage device **500** may include a lithium-sulfur battery and may be structured in any manner of lithium-sulfur batteries known in the art.

For instance, the energy storage device **500** may include any known lithium-sulfur battery known in the art. However, the cathode **504** of the energy storage device **500** may include a composite of materials that includes the highly conductive and polar-natured metal diborides discussed above in regard to FIGS. 1A-4. For example, the cathode **504** may include MB_xO_y , where $M=Ti, Zr, Mg, Si, Mo, W, V, Mn$; $x=1$ to 2 and $y=0$ to 1 . As a non-limiting example, the cathode **504** of the energy storage device **500** may include TiB_2 .

As is known in the art, applications of conventional lithium-sulfur batteries are impeded due to short life cycles and poor coulombic efficiency. The aforementioned shortcomings generally result from an insulating nature of sulfur (included in the cathode **504**) and a shuttling effect of dissolved lithium polysulfide species, which poisons reac-

tive lithium metal anodes of lithium-sulfur batteries. However, the highly conductive and polar-natured metal diborides described herein as additives to the cathode **504** of the energy storage device **500** suppresses dissolution of lithium polysulfide species. Accordingly, the highly conductive and polar-natured metal diborides described herein as additives to the cathode **504** of the energy storage device **500** increase a cycle life of the energy storage device **500** in comparison to conventional lithium-sulfur batteries. As a result, the energy storage device **500** of the present disclosure may be more appropriate for electric and hybrid electric vehicles in comparison to conventional lithium-sulfur batteries.

In additional embodiments, the energy storage device **500** may include any alkali-metal sulfur battery known in the art with the highly conductive and polar-natured metal diborides described herein as additives to the cathode **504** of the energy storage device **500**.

The disclosure further includes the following embodiments.

Embodiment 1

An energy storage device, comprising: a first electrode comprising lithium; a second electrode comprising a metal diboride; an electrolyte disposed between the first electrode and the second electrode and providing a conductive pathway for lithium ions to move to and from the first electrode and the second electrode; and a separator within the electrolyte and between the first electrode and the second electrode.

Embodiment 2

The energy storage device of Embodiment 1, wherein the metal diboride comprises titanium diboride.

Embodiment 3

The energy storage device of Embodiments 1 and 2, wherein the energy storage device exhibits a lithium intercalation potential above anodic electrolyte decomposite potential.

Embodiment 4

The energy storage device of Embodiments 1 through 3, wherein the metal diboride comprises MB_xO_y , where $M=Ti, Zr, Mg, Si, Mo, W, V, Mn$; $x=1$ to 2 and $y=0$ to 1 .

Embodiment 5

The energy storage device of Embodiments 1 through 4, wherein the first electrode comprises a cathode and wherein the second electrode comprises an anode.

Embodiment 6

The energy storage device of Embodiments 1 through 5, wherein the energy storage device comprises a lithium-ion battery.

Embodiment 7

The energy storage device of Embodiments 1 through 4, wherein the energy storage device comprises a lithium-ion capacitor.

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Embodiment 8

An energy storage device, comprising: a first electrode; a second electrode comprising a metal diboride; an electrolyte disposed between the first electrode and the second electrode and providing a conductive pathway for ions to move to and from the first electrode and the second electrode; and a separator within the electrolyte and between the first electrode and the second electrode.

Embodiment 9

The energy storage device of Embodiment 8, wherein the second electrode comprises nanoparticles of metal diboride.

Embodiment 10

The energy storage device of Embodiments 8 and 9, wherein the second electrode comprises a composite comprising graphite and the metal diboride.

Embodiment 11

The energy storage device of Embodiments 8 through 10, wherein the energy storage device exhibits a capacity within a range of about 110 mAh/g to about 120 mAh/g at zero cycles.

Embodiment 12

The energy storage device of Embodiments 8 through 11, wherein the energy storage device exhibits a drop in capacity of between about 15% and about 25% over 100 cycles.

Embodiment 13

The energy storage device of Embodiments 8 through 12, wherein the second electrode exhibits a conductivity within a range of about 6.667×10^6 S/ms to about 1.11×10^7 S/m.

Embodiment 14

The energy storage device of Embodiments 8 through 13, wherein the first electrode comprises a material selected from a group consisting of lithium, sodium, calcium, or magnesium.

Embodiment 15

The energy storage device of Embodiments 8 through 14, wherein the first electrode comprises an anode and wherein the second electrode comprises a cathode.

Embodiment 16

The energy storage device of Embodiments 8 through 15, wherein the metal diboride comprises titanium diboride.

Embodiment 17

The energy storage device of Embodiments 8 through 16, wherein the energy storage device exhibits a lithium intercalation potential above anodic electrolyte decomposite potential.

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Embodiment 18

The energy storage device of Embodiments 8 through 17, wherein the second electrode comprises MB_xO_y , where $M=Ti, Zr, Mg, Si, Mo, W, V, Mn$; $x=1$ to 2 and $y=0$ to 1 .

Embodiment 19

A method of forming an energy storage device, comprising: forming a first electrode to comprise lithium; forming a second electrode to comprise a metal diboride; disposing an electrolyte between the first electrode and the second electrode, the electrolyte providing a conductive pathway for lithium ions to move to and from the first electrode and the second electrode; and disposing a separator within the electrolyte and between the first electrode and the second electrode.

Embodiment 20

The method of Embodiment 19, wherein forming the second electrode to comprise a metal diboride comprises forming the second electrode to comprise titanium diboride.

The embodiments of the disclosure described above and illustrated in the accompanying drawings do not limit the scope of the disclosure, which is encompassed by the scope of the appended claims and their legal equivalents. Any equivalent embodiments are within the scope of this disclosure. Indeed, various modifications of the disclosure, in addition to those shown and described herein, such as alternative useful combinations of the elements described, will become apparent to those skilled in the art from the description. Such modifications and embodiments also fall within the scope of the appended claims and equivalents.

What is claimed is:

1. An energy storage device, comprising:

a first electrode comprising lithium;
a second electrode consisting essentially of nanoparticles of a metal diboride;
an electrolyte disposed between the first electrode and the second electrode and providing a conductive pathway for lithium ions to move to and from the first electrode and the second electrode; and
a separator within the electrolyte and between the first electrode and the second electrode.

2. The energy storage device of claim **1**, wherein the metal diboride consists essentially of titanium diboride.

3. The energy storage device of claim **1**, wherein the energy storage device exhibits a lithium intercalation potential above anodic electrolyte decomposite potential.

4. The energy storage device of claim **1**, wherein the metal diboride consists essentially of MB_2 where $M=Ti, Zr, Mg, Si, Mo, W, V, Mn$.

5. The energy storage device of claim **1**, wherein the first electrode comprises a cathode and wherein the second electrode comprises an anode.

6. The energy storage device of claim **1**, wherein the energy storage device comprises a lithium-ion battery.

7. The energy storage device of claim **1**, wherein the energy storage device comprises a lithium-ion capacitor.

8. An energy storage device, comprising:

a first electrode;
a second electrode consisting essentially of nanoparticles of a metal diboride;

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an electrolyte disposed between the first electrode and the second electrode and providing a conductive pathway for ions to move to and from the first electrode and the second electrode; and

a separator within the electrolyte and between the first electrode and the second electrode.

9. The energy storage device of claim 8, wherein the energy storage device exhibits a capacity within a range of about 110 mAh/g to about 120 mAh/g at zero cycles.

10. The energy storage device of claim 8, wherein the energy storage device exhibits a drop in capacity of between about 15% and about 25% over 100 cycles.

11. The energy storage device of claim 8, wherein the second electrode exhibits a conductivity within a range of about 6.667×10^6 S/m to about 1.11×10^7 S/m.

12. The energy storage device of claim 8, wherein the first electrode comprises a material selected from a group consisting of lithium, sodium, calcium, or magnesium.

13. The energy storage device of claim 8, wherein the first electrode comprises an anode and wherein the second electrode comprises a cathode.

14. The energy storage device of claim 8, wherein the metal diboride consists essentially of titanium diboride.

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15. The energy storage device of claim 8, wherein the energy storage device exhibits a lithium intercalation potential above anodic electrolyte decomposite potential.

16. The energy storage device of claim 8, wherein the metal diboride consists essentially of MB_2 where $M = Ti, Zr, Mg, Si, Mo, W, V, Mn$.

17. A method of forming an energy storage device, comprising:

forming a first electrode to comprise lithium;

forming a second electrode to consist essentially of nanoparticles of a metal diboride;

disposing an electrolyte between the first electrode and the second electrode, the electrolyte providing a conductive pathway for lithium ions to move to and from the first electrode and the second electrode; and

disposing a separator within the electrolyte and between the first electrode and the second electrode.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein forming the second electrode to consist essentially of a metal diboride comprises forming the second electrode to consist essentially of titanium diboride.

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