Sputtered Al-Doped ZnO Layers for Cu2ZnSnS4 Thin Film Solar Cells

Kee Doo Lee1,2, Lee Seul Oh1, Se-Won Seo1, Dong Hwan Kim2, Jin Young Kim1,2

1Photo-Electronic Hybrids Research Center, Korea Institute of Science and Technology (KIST),
2Green School, Korea University, Seoul 136-701, Korea

Al-doped ZnO (AZO) thin films have attracted a lot of attention as a cheap transparent conducting oxide (TCO) material that can replace the expensive Sn-doped In2O3. In particular, AZO thin films are widely used as a window layer of chalcogenide-based thin film solar cells such as Cu(In,Ga)Se2 and Cu2ZnSnS4 (CZTS). Mostly important requirements for the window layer material of the thin film solar cells are the high transparency and the low sheet resistance, because they influence the light absorption by the active layer and the electron collection from the active layer, respectively. In this study, we prepared the AZO thin films by RF magnetron sputtering using a ZnO/Al2O3 (98:2wt%) ceramic target, and the effect of the sputtering condition such as the working pressure, RF power, and the working distance on the optical, electrical, and crystallographic properties of the AZO thin films was investigated. The AZO thin films with optimized properties were used as a window layer of CZTS thin film solar cells. The CZTS active layers were prepared by the electrochemical deposition and the subsequent sulfurization process, which is also one of the cost-effective synthetic approaches. In addition, the solar cell properties of the CZTS thin film solar cells, such as the photocurrent density-voltage (J-V) characteristics and the external quantum efficiency (EQE) were investigated.

Keywords: Al-doped ZnO (AZO), Cu2ZnSnS4 (CZTS), Thin film solar cells