

ICOPA XI, 6-11 August, Glasgow, Scotland, UK, [www.icopaxi.org](http://www.icopaxi.org)

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ICOPA is a worldwide biannual meeting for parasitology. Junior and senior researchers gather and discuss state of the art research. What is very inspiring is that researchers from all over the world share their ideas and results, permitting further scientific development. The wide range of subjects allowed for a taste of different parasites, disciplines and approaches.

I attended the sessions on malaria and pregnancy on Thursday 10 August. The subject was clearly introduced by Drs Nutfall and Gasser, followed by intriguing presentations by Drs Hviid, Scherf and Duffy. The interaction between human responsiveness to var genes in pregnant women was discussed.

After lunch, transmission blocking immunity to malaria was discussed by Drs Tsuboi, Drakeley and Schneider. I also participated in this session by presenting transmission blocking and enhancing activity of human sera (see below). We had interesting discussions about transmission blocking vaccines, and about the existence of transmission enhancement. That really helped me understanding transmission blocking better.

The next session I visited was malaria epidemiology and population biology. The room was somewhat overcrowded, showing the interest that parasitologists put in this field. I learned a lot about the methodology and about the spread of clones associated with transmission intensity.

During the breaks I used the opportunity to discuss different subjects with various researchers, for instance Schistosoma control in Egypt, and scanning a large amount of posters. I really enjoyed the meeting.

The impact of the meeting for me personally was that transmission enhancement has been discussed within a group of experts. and that it has been accepted as relevant for transmission.

### **Reduction and enhancement of *Plasmodium falciparum* transmission by endemic human sera (1408)**

Mike van der Kolk, Sake J. de Vlas and Robert W. Sauerwein

Transmission of *Plasmodium falciparum* from man to mosquito can be affected by human sera. Whereas serum dependent reduction of transmission has shown to be reproducible, there is limited evidence for enhancement of transmission. We aimed to assess the prevalence and reproducibility of transmission enhancement (TE) by human sera from different geographic areas (n=642), in comparison with the capacity for transmission reduction (TR). The overall prevalence of TE (7%) was lower than that of TR (48%), and its effect generally weaker, but reproducible in repeated measurements. TR but not TE showed a significant association with the presence of serum antibodies against Pfs48/45 and a non-significant trend to the presence of anti-Pfs230 antibodies.