



The Third ASEAN Congress of Tropical Medicine and Parasitology
(ACTMP3)

**“Parasites: a hidden threat to
global health”**

22-23 May 2008

The Windsor Suites Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

Organised by

Parasitology and Tropical Medicine Association of Thailand
Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University
TROPMED Alumni Association

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With the contribution of

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The effects of global warming to athlete's performance and health in the tropics

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Global warming is changing our world dramatically and generating new risks. Hundreds of scientific studies have shown that global warming is mostly caused by increases in greenhouse gases from human activities. These activities include the burning of forests and other vegetation, the burning of fossil fuels (such as oil) for transportation, and the burning of fossil fuels (such as coal) for energy production.

Human thermal comfort depends on many factors, one of which is environmental. The four environmental factors are air-flow (wind), air temperature, air humidity, and radiation (the sun and nearby hot surfaces). In hotter conditions, where the temperature is significantly above 25°C, the body must try to shed heat to maintain thermal equilibrium. Under all temperature conditions the effect of radiation can be extremely important. Radiation always acts to increase the heat load on a person. Under hot conditions, when a person is trying to cool, radiation makes things worse. Exercise in the heat creates competitive demands on the cardiovascular system which is required to increase the blood supply to the exercising muscles. At the same time it must regulate body temperature by increasing skin blood flow in order to produce the sweat that keeps the body cool. Sweating will cause loss of body water and salt. This loss upsets the heat regulating mechanisms of the body. The efficiency of this cooling depends environmentally on the humidity. The amount of clothing will also affect this cooling efficiency due to its restriction of the air flow over the skin and increasing the air humidity near the skin especially in the tropics. The combination of extreme environmental conditions and sustained vigorous exercise is particularly hazardous for the athlete. Inability of the body to cope with the heat will decrease athlete's performance and endanger their health.

In indoor sports, room's temperature will arise especially when the building is full of spectators. Changing of the environment's temperature for more than 4 degree will reduce the athlete's performance. To manage the effect of global warming on athletes, we should redesign the sports building with more ventilation and prevent athletes from dehydration. Further more all activities that make the global warming even worse should be stopped.