

## Carbonic Anhydrase Inhibitors. Cloning, Characterization, and Inhibition Studies of a New $\beta$ -Carbonic Anhydrase from *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*

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The Rv3273 gene product of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, a  $\beta$ -carbonic anhydrase (CA, EC 4.2.1.1), mtCA 3, shows appreciable catalytic activity for CO<sub>2</sub> hydration ( $k_{\text{cat}}$  of  $4.3 \times 10^5 \text{ s}^{-1}$ , and  $k_{\text{cat}}/K_m$  of  $4.0 \times 10^7 \text{ M}^{-1} \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$ ). A series of sulfonamides/sulfamates was assayed for their interaction with mtCA 3. Sulfanilyl-sulfonamides, acetazolamide, methazolamide, ethoxzolamide, dichlorophenamide, dorzolamide, brinzolamide, benzolamide, and zonisamide, showed effective, submicromolar inhibition ( $K_i$ s of 104–611 nM), the best inhibitor being 2-amino-pyrimidin-4-yl-sulfanilamide ( $K_i$  of 91 nM).

### Introduction

The genome of the human pathogen *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* contains at least two carbonic anhydrases (CAs,<sup>a</sup> EC 4.2.1.1).<sup>1,2</sup> These enzymes, encoded by the genes Rv1284 and Rv3588c, belong to the  $\beta$ -class,<sup>3</sup> and similarly to those encoded by  $\alpha$ -,  $\gamma$ -,  $\delta$ -, and  $\zeta$ -CA families (widespread all over the phylogenetic tree),<sup>3</sup> are catalysts for the reversible interconversion between carbon dioxide and bicarbonate ( $\text{CO}_2 + \text{H}_2\text{O} \rightleftharpoons \text{HCO}_3^- + \text{H}^+$ ).  $\beta$ -CAs are widespread in various human infecting agents, such as the fungal pathogens *Candida albicans* and *Cryptococcus neoformans*,<sup>4–6</sup> as well as bacteria, such as *Helicobacter pylori*,<sup>7</sup> *Haemophilus influenzae*,<sup>8</sup> *Escherichia coli*,<sup>9</sup> etc., and it has recently been shown, mainly by this group, that they are druggable targets.<sup>3,5,7,10,11</sup> In a recent work,<sup>12</sup> we have also cloned and characterized kinetically one of the *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*  $\beta$ -CAs, more precisely Rv1284, named mtCA 1, showing that it has appreciable catalytic activity for the physiological, CO<sub>2</sub> hydration reaction, with a  $k_{\text{cat}}$  of  $3.9 \times 10^5 \text{ s}^{-1}$ , and a  $k_{\text{cat}}/K_m$  of  $3.7 \times 10^7 \text{ M}^{-1} \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$ .<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, some clinically used sulfonamides/sulfamates investigated by us as CA inhibitors (CAIs), targeting mammalian  $\alpha$ -CAs,<sup>3</sup> showed promising in vitro inhibitory activity against mtCA1, with the potential for developing antimycobacterial agents with a diverse mechanism of action compared to the clinically used drugs for which many strains exhibit multidrug resistance and extensive multidrug resistance.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, *M. tuberculosis* infection affects a large number of the world population, with an estimated 9.2 million new cases each year, of which many are lethal.<sup>13,14</sup> The therapy used to treat TB is based on agents developed 30–40 years ago, with no new drugs launched ultimately.<sup>14–16</sup> Presently, there is a huge interest for novel anti-TB drugs, with agents belonging to the fluoroquinolone, oxazolidinone, diarylquinoline, and nitroimidazo-oxazole/-oxazine classes in various stages of development.<sup>14–16</sup> The complete sequencing of the *M. tuberculosis* genome<sup>17</sup> facilitated the identification of possible new drug targets, but more than 60% of this genome encodes proteins whose functions are

unknown at this moment.<sup>1,2,17</sup> Among these genes, Rv3273 is annotated as a transmembrane protein encoding for a sulfate transporter (at the amino-terminal region) and a putative  $\beta$ -CA (at the carboxy-terminal end of the protein).<sup>1,2,17</sup> Considering our interest in  $\beta$ -CAs as possible new drug targets, we report here the cloning, characterization, and inhibition studies with a panel of sulfonamides/sulfamates of the carboxy-terminal part of Rv3273, denominated here mtCA 3 (the isoform mtCA 2, encoded by the gene Rv3588c, has been reported and characterized crystallographically by Covarrubias et al.,<sup>1,2</sup> but its inhibition has not been investigated for the moment, whereas mtCA 1 has been investigated recently by us,<sup>12</sup> as mentioned above).

### Results and Discussion

**mtCA 3 Cloning and Purification.** The Rv3273 gene was deposited from the genome analysis of *M. tuberculosis* strain H37Rv in 2002,<sup>18</sup> being suggested to encode for a transmembrane CA because of its hydrophobic N-terminal part. Its gene product was predicted to be a 764 amino acid residues long polypeptide, consisting of a bifunctional protein: a sulfate transporter domain (amino acids 121–414) and a  $\beta$ -CA domain in the C-terminal part (encoded by amino acid residues 571–741) as shown schematically in Figure 1.<sup>17,18</sup> The deduced domain organization of this protein seems to be similar to that of a number of bacterial proteins found in *Arthrobacter aurescens* (YP\_949116), *Leptospira borgpetersenii* (YP\_798800), *Legionella pneumophila* (YP\_126096), and *Leptospira interrogans* (NP\_710760), all of which are putative bifunctional such proteins, i.e., they contain a sulfate transporter and a  $\beta$ -CA (Figure 1A,B).<sup>18</sup> In this study, we report the cloning of the full  $\beta$ -CA domain encoded by amino acid residues 550–764 of Rv3273, which we denominated mtCA 3.

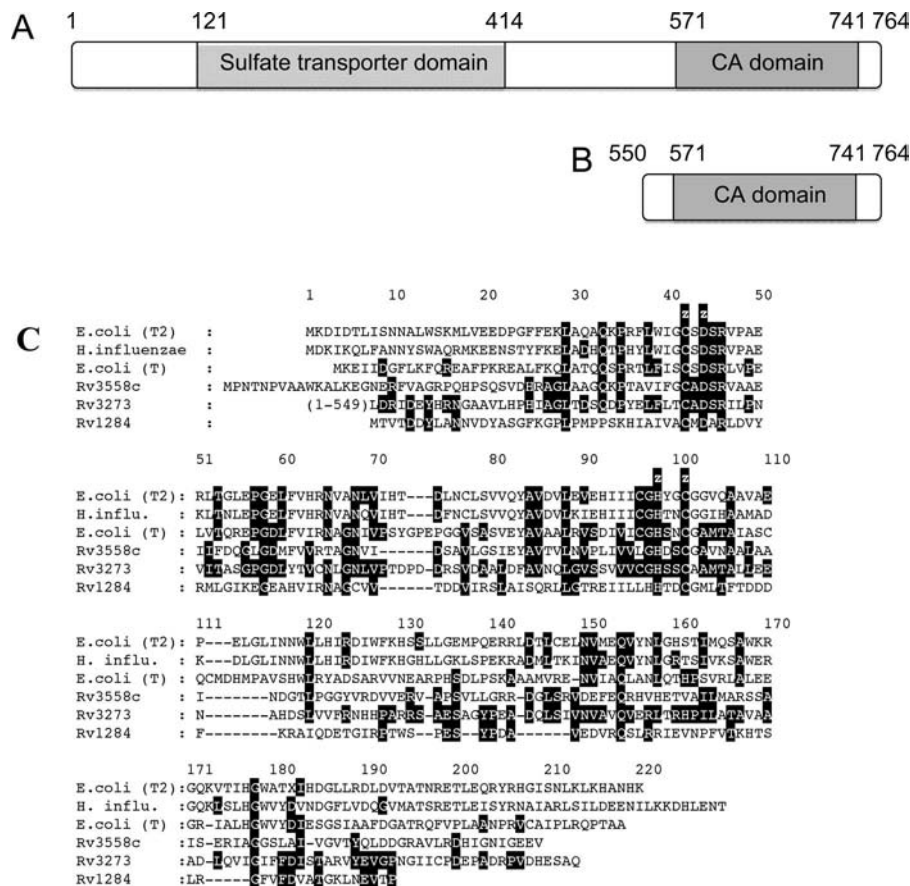
The deduced amino acid sequence of mtCA 3 was aligned with that of the other two  $\beta$ -CAs present in *M. tuberculosis* (i.e., mtCA 1, encoded by Rv1284,<sup>1,12</sup> and mtCA 2, encoded by Rv3538c)<sup>1,2</sup> and with those of several  $\beta$ -CAs from different bacteria, such as *E. coli* CynT2 (T2) and CynT (T), *H. influenzae*, etc.<sup>19</sup> (Figure 1C). The amino acid sequence of the DNA clone obtained in this study (see Experimental Protocols for details) was identical to that of Rv3273 reported in the literature,<sup>17,18</sup> except for an amino acid substitution, i.e., <sup>606</sup>Arg(CGC):Cys(TGC) (Figure 1). mtCA 3 conserved the 3 (or 4) zinc ligands present in the other two  $\beta$ -CAs of *M.*

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<sup>a</sup> Abbreviations: CA, carbonic anhydrase; CAI, CA inhibitor; hCA, human CA; GST, glutathione-S-transferase; mtCA, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* CA; TB, tuberculosis.



**Figure 1.** Schematic representation of the Rv3273 gene products (A), the recombinant mtCA 3 protein obtained in this study (B), and the amino acid sequences of some bacterial  $\beta$ -CAs, including Rv3273 (C). Conserved amino acid residues between Rv3273 and other  $\beta$ -CAs are indicated by a black box. The four zinc-binding residues,  $^{42}\text{Cys}$ ,  $^{44}\text{Asp}$ ,  $^{98}\text{His}$ , and  $^{101}\text{Cys}$ , are indicated by the "z" sign (residue numbers are based on the *E. coli* CynT2 numbering system).<sup>8</sup>

*tuberculosis*, mtCA 1 and mtCA 2,<sup>1,2,12</sup> which are Cys584, His642, Cys645, and probably Asp586 (Figure 1C, residue numbers based on the *E. coli* CynT2 numbering system).<sup>8</sup> The Zn(II) ion is coordinated by two cysteines, one histidine, and a water molecule in mtCA 1, and by these residues plus an aspartate in mtCA 2.<sup>1,2</sup> However, to function as catalysts for CO<sub>2</sub> hydration, the active site of mtCA 3 undergoes a reorganization,<sup>1,2</sup> which leads to its "opening", i.e., the aspartate residue is replaced by a water molecule. Interestingly, all these four catalytically critical residues of mtCA 3 are present at the corresponding positions in mtCA1 and mtCA 2. On the basis of the present data, we cannot deduce the Zn(II) coordination of mtCA 3: it may be of the open active site type (as mtCA 1, i.e., with two Cys, one His, and a water molecule), or of the closed active site type (as mtCA 2, i.e., with two Cys, one His, and one Asp residues bound to the metal ion).

**mtCA 3 Catalytic Activity.** We performed a kinetic investigation of purified mtCA 3 comparing its kinetic parameters ( $k_{\text{cat}}$  and  $k_{\text{cat}}/K_m$ ) with those of thoroughly investigated  $\alpha$ -CAs, such as the cytosolic, ubiquitous human isozymes hCA I and II,<sup>3,20-23</sup> (Table 1). As CAs are susceptible to be inhibited by sulfonamides,<sup>3,24,25</sup> data of Table 1 also present the inhibition constant of these enzymes with acetazolamide (AAZ), a clinically used drug.<sup>3</sup>

It may be observed that mtCA 3 shows appreciable catalytic activity for the physiologic reaction, with kinetic parameters in the same range as  $\alpha$ - or  $\beta$ -CAs investigated earlier, such as hCA I and mtCA 1.<sup>12,21-23</sup> Indeed, mtCA 3 has a  $k_{\text{cat}}$  of  $4.3 \times 10^5 \text{ s}^{-1}$ , and  $k_{\text{cat}}/K_m$  of  $4.0 \times 10^7 \text{ M}^{-1} \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$ , being slightly more active

**Table 1.** Kinetic Parameters for the CO<sub>2</sub> Hydration Reaction<sup>23</sup> Catalyzed by the  $\alpha$ -hCA Isozymes I, II at 20 °C and pH 7.5 in 10 mM HEPES Buffer and the *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* Enzymes Rv1284 (mtCA 1) and Rv3273 (mtCA 3) at 20 °C, pH 8.3, in 20 mM TRIS·HCl Buffer and 20 mM NaCl and Their Inhibition Data with Acetazolamide AAZ

isozyme	activity level (s <sup>-1</sup> )	$k_{\text{cat}}$ (M <sup>-1</sup> ·s <sup>-1</sup> )	$k_{\text{cat}}/K_m$ (nM)	$K_i$ (acetazolamide) (nM)
hCA I	moderate	$2.0 \times 10^5$	$5.0 \times 10^7$	250
hCA II	very high	$1.4 \times 10^6$	$1.5 \times 10^8$	12
mtCA 1	moderate	$3.9 \times 10^5$	$3.7 \times 10^7$	480
mtCA 3	moderate	$4.3 \times 10^5$	$4.0 \times 10^7$	104

than mtCA 1 investigated earlier.<sup>12</sup> Only hCA II was much more active a catalysts for CO<sub>2</sub> hydration as compared to mtCA 3 among the enzymes shown in Table 1. Furthermore, this catalytic activity is inhibited by the sulfonamide CAI par excellence, acetazolamide AAZ, with a  $K_i$  of 104 nM, lower than that of the related enzyme mtCA 1.

**mtCA 3 Inhibition with Sulfonamides and Sulfamates.** Table 2 shows mtCA 3 inhibition data with a panel of 36 sulfonamides and one sulfamate (obtained for the CO<sub>2</sub> hydration reaction catalyzed by CAs),<sup>23</sup> some of which are clinically used drugs,<sup>3</sup> such as acetazolamide (AAZ), methazolamide (MZA), ethoxzolamide (EZA), dichlorophenamide (DCP), dorzolamide (DZA), brinzolamide (BRZ), benzolamide (BZA), topiramate (TPM), sulpiride (SLP), indisulam (IND), zonisamide (ZNS), celecoxib (CLX0), valdecoxib (VLX), sulthiame (SLT), and saccharin (SAC). The simpler derivatives 1-22 were also included in the study, as they represent the most extensively used scaffolds for designing potent or isoform-selective CAIs.<sup>3,26</sup>

**Table 2.** hCA I, II, *M. tuberculosis* CA Rv1284 (mtCA 1), and Rv3273 (mtCA 3) Inhibition Data with Sulfonamides **1–22** and 15 Clinically Used Derivatives **AAZ–SAC**<sup>a</sup>

inhibitor	$K_i^{*b}$			
	hCA I <sup>c</sup> (nM)	hCA II <sup>c</sup> (nM)	mtCA 1 <sup>d</sup> ( $\mu$ M)	mtCA 3 <sup>e</sup> ( $\mu$ M)
<b>1</b>	45400	295	9.23	6.24
<b>2</b>	25000	240	9.84	7.11
<b>3</b>	6690	495	7.93	7.83
<b>4</b>	78500	320	4.92	7.02
<b>5</b>	25000	170	8.69	7.33
<b>6</b>	21000	160	9.56	3.42
<b>7</b>	8300	60	8.74	7.90
<b>8</b>	9800	110	7.52	1.51
<b>9</b>	6500	40	0.186	7.32
<b>10</b>	6000	70	7.71	5.81
<b>11</b>	5800	63	8.10	2.35
<b>12</b>	8400	75	1.72	21.7
<b>13</b>	8600	60	11.54	7.63
<b>14</b>	9300	19	12.65	7.92
<b>15</b>	6	2	0.905	3.10
<b>16</b>	164	46	0.612	2.21
<b>17</b>	185	50	0.853	0.170
<b>18</b>	109	33	0.750	0.091
<b>19</b>	690	12	7.48	7.60
<b>20</b>	55	80	9.56	7.82
<b>21</b>	21000	125	5.51	2.51
<b>22</b>	23000	133	8.21	7.40
<b>AAZ</b>	250	12	0.481	0.104
<b>MZA</b>	50	14	0.781	0.562
<b>EZA</b>	25	8	1.03	0.594
<b>DCP</b>	1200	38	0.872	0.611
<b>DZA</b>	50000	9	0.744	0.137
<b>BRZ</b>	45000	3	0.839	0.201
<b>BZA</b>	15	9	0.810	0.338
<b>TPM</b>	250	10	0.612	3.02
<b>SLP</b>	12000	40	2.30	7.92
<b>IND</b>	31	15	0.097	7.84
<b>ZNS</b>	56	35	28.68	0.208
<b>CLX</b>	50000	21	10.35	7.76
<b>VLX</b>	54000	43	12.97	7.81
<b>SLT</b>	374	9	5.16	6.72
<b>SAC</b>	18540	5950	7.96	7.15

<sup>a</sup> Data of isoforms I and II are from ref 22, whereas data of mtCA 1 are from ref 12. <sup>b</sup> Errors in the range of 5–10% of the shown data, from three different assays. <sup>c</sup> Human recombinant isozymes, stopped flow CO<sub>2</sub> hydrase assay method, pH 7.5, 20 mM TRIS·HCl buffer.<sup>23</sup> <sup>d</sup> Bacterial recombinant enzyme, at 20 °C, pH 8.3, in 20 mM TRIS·HCl buffer and 20 mM NaCl, from ref 12. <sup>e</sup> Bacterial recombinant enzyme, at 20 °C, pH 8.3, in 20 mM TRIS·HCl buffer and 20 mM NaCl, this work.

Data for the inhibition of the dominant human isoforms hCA I and II<sup>3</sup> as well as those of the other *M. tuberculosis* enzyme, mtCA 1,<sup>12</sup> with these compounds are also included in Table 2 for comparison reasons. The following SAR can be observed from data of Table 2:

(i) Medium-weak mtCA 3 inhibitory activity was observed for a rather large group of investigated derivatives, such as **1–5**, **7**, **9**, **10**, **12–14**, **19**, **20**, **22**, **SLP**, **IND**, **CLX**, **VLX**, **SLT**, and **SAC** (Chart 1). These sulfonamides showed inhibition constants in the range of 5.81–21.7  $\mu$ M (Table 2). They belong to heterogeneous classes of compounds, some of them (**1–6**, **7**, **9**, **10**, **20**) possessing rather simple scaffolds based on the benzenesulfonamide motif, whereas others incorporate more complicated scaffolds, such as those present in the clinically used derivatives **CLX**, **VLX**, **SLT**, **SAC**, etc. It should be noted that many of them act as efficient hCA II and less efficient hCA I inhibitors (Table 2). It may be observed that quite small structural changes in the inhibitor scaffold lead to dramatic changes of enzyme inhibitory activity. This is obvious for the halogeno-substituted sulfanilamides **7–10**, with the fluoro-, bromo-, and iodine-substituted derivatives being medium-weak

inhibitors, whereas the chloro-sulfanilamide **8** is a more potent inhibitor ( $K_i$  of 1.51  $\mu$ M).

(ii) A second group of derivatives, including **6**, **8**, **11**, **15**, **16**, **21**, and **TPM**, show much more effective inhibitory properties against mtCA 3, with inhibition constants in the range of 1.51–3.42  $\mu$ M (Table 2). Compounds **6**, **8**, **11**, and **21** are simple benzenesulfonamides, not very different structurally from many of the derivatives discussed above, whereas **15** and **16** (and the much more active **17**, which will be discussed shortly) belong to the class of sulfanylated sulfonamides,<sup>27</sup> possessing thus an elongated molecule with two benzene rings in it, which was previously shown to act as excellent inhibitors of many  $\alpha$ -CA isoforms.<sup>27</sup> Topiramate (**TPM**), on the other hand, possesses a completely different scaffold of all other derivatives investigated here, being a sugar sulfamate. Thus, many efficient inhibitors ( $K_i < 3.5 \mu$ M) were evidenced, belonging to numerous structural classes.

(iii) A significant number of derivatives, such as **17**, **18**, **AAZ**, **MZA**, **EZA**, **DCP**, **DZA**, **BRZ**, **BZA**, and **ZNS** showed submicromolar inhibition against mtCA 3, with  $K_i$ s in the range of 91–611 nM (Table 2). The least effective sulfonamides in this subgroup were **MZA**, **EZA**, **BZA**, and **DCP** ( $K_i$ s of 338–611 nM), whereas the remaining compounds showed quite effective inhibitory properties, with  $K_i$ s in the range of 91–208 nM. Again, there are many classes of compounds that may be considered as excellent leads to develop better mtCA 3 inhibitors. Among them, the sulfanylated sulfonamide **17** and the pyrimidinyl-substituted sulfanilamide **18** (the best mtCA 3 inhibitor detected so far) possess two ring systems in their molecule and a free amino group easily derivatizable. Zonisamide **ZNS** is also an interesting case, as it is the only aliphatic sulfonamide tested here, and its activity is also very promising ( $K_i$  of 208 nM).

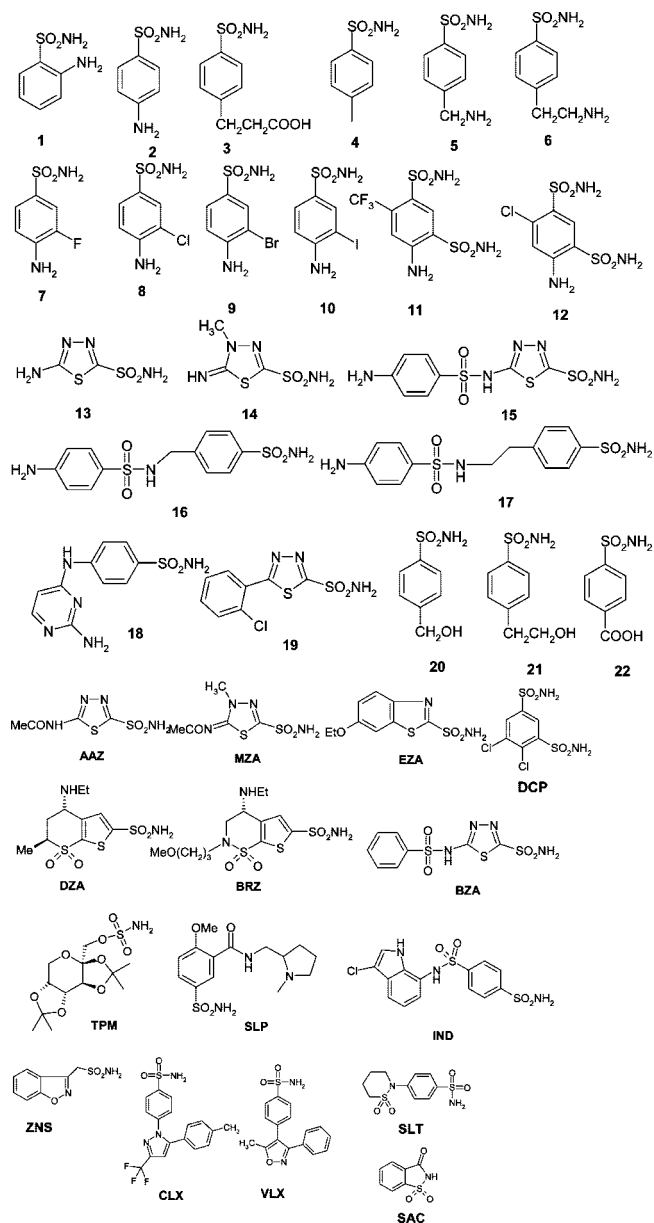
#### Putative Biological Function of the Rv3273 Gene Product.

Screening analysis for genes specifically required for the mycobacterial growth showed that Rv3588c is required but Rv3273 is not essential for the bacterial growth in vivo.<sup>28,29</sup> However, such findings cannot conclusively exclude the biological significance of Rv3273 in the survival and/or pathogenicity of *M. tuberculosis*. An elegant study by Miltner et al.<sup>30</sup> identified six invasion-related genes of these bacteria. Constitutive expression of the proteins encoded by these genes showed significantly increased ability of the bacterial invasion into HEp-2 and HT-29 intestinal epithelial cells. One of these genes is homologous to *M. tuberculosis* Rv3273, which showed 1.4–1.6 times increase of infected cell numbers by *M. avium* overexpressing its gene product. These findings indicate that Rv3273 plays a role in the bacterial infection process, which is however poorly understood at the present time. Rv3273 is predicted to code a bifunctional transmembrane protein that consists of an N-terminal sulfate transporter domain and a C-terminal CA domain, and we herein demonstrated the significant catalytic activity of this CA domain. Although it is uncertain how the CA activity of the Rv3273 gene product works in the bacterial infection process, it is not improbable that effective CAIs may prevent bacterial infection. In addition to confirm the sulfate transporter function of the amino-terminal end of Rv3273, further studies are warranted for understanding the biological role of this bifunctional transmembrane protein.

#### Conclusions

The  $\beta$ -CA encoded by the carboxy terminal part of the protein product of gene Rv3273 from *M. tuberculosis*, mtCA 3, was cloned and purified, being shown to possess an appreciable

## Chart 1



catalytic activity for the physiological reaction, CO<sub>2</sub> hydration to bicarbonate and a proton, with a  $k_{\text{cat}}$  of  $4.3 \times 10^5 \text{ s}^{-1}$  and a  $k_{\text{cat}}/K_m$  of  $4.0 \times 10^7 \text{ M}^{-1} \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$ . A panel of sulfonamides/sulfamates CAIs were assayed for their interaction with mtCA 3. Many simple sulfonamide derivatives showed  $K_I$ s in the range of 5.81–21.7  $\mu\text{M}$ , but several compounds, including sulfanilyl-sulfonamides, acetazolamide, methazolamide, ethoxzolamide, dichlorophenamide, dorzolamide, brinzolamide, benzolamide, and zonisamide, showed effective, submicromolar inhibition, with  $K_I$ s in the range of 104–611 nM. The best inhibitor was 2-amino-pyrimidin-4-yl-sulfanilamide ( $K_I$  of 91 nM), which is an interesting lead for obtaining tighter-binding compounds. This study proves mtCA 3 to be a druggable target with potential for developing antimycobacterial agents with a diverse mechanism of action.

### Experimental Protocols

**Chemistry.** Compounds 1–22 and AAZ–SAC are either commercially available (Sigma-Aldrich) or were prepared as described earlier.<sup>7,24</sup>

**Preparation of Recombinant mtCA 3 Protein.** To the full length mtCA 3 (encoded by amino acid residues 550–764 of the Rv3273 gene) we set a pair of adopter primers including *Bam*HI and *Eco*RI recognition sequences (underlined) and a start codon (bolded) as follows: 5'-CGGGATCCTCGGTTATGCTCGACCG-CATC-3' and 5'-CGGAATTCCTACTGCGCTGATTCGTGGTC-3'. Genomic DNA purified from the cultured strain of *M. tuberculosis* was subjected to PCR by using KOD DNA polymerase (Toyobo, Tokyo, Japan) with a strong 3'→5' exonuclease activity. The PCR reaction was hot-started with incubation for 2 min at 94 °C and consisted of 35 cycles of 15 s at 94 °C, 30 s at 58 °C, and 60 s at 68 °C and terminated with incubation for 5 min at 68 °C. The PCR products were cleaved with *Bam*HI and *Eco*RI and then ligated in-frame into the pGEX-4T2 vector (Amersham, Tokyo, Japan). The PCR product was sequenced using an ABI PRISM dye termination cycle sequencing kit (Perkin-Elmer, Foster City, CA) and an ABI 370A DNA sequencer (ABI, Foster City, CA). The DNA constructs was then transfected into *E. coli* strain BL21 for production of the GST-CA fusion protein and in the end the full length mtCA 3, as previously reported for various  $\alpha$ - and  $\beta$ -CAs by our group.<sup>7,10–12</sup>

**CA Catalytic Activity and Inhibition.** An Applied Photophysics stopped-flow instrument was used for assaying the CA catalyzed CO<sub>2</sub> hydration activity<sup>23</sup> as reported earlier.<sup>7,10–12</sup>

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