

# A brief LibSBGN update...

**SBGN file format:**  
where we are,  
where we are going

# How and why it all started

- Misc. informal discussions on need for
  - standard **file format** to *exchange* SBGN diagrams between SBGN tools
  - **LibSBGN** = software library to *interpret, validate, convert, import* and *export* SBGN files
- **SBGN 4.5**, April 9<sup>th</sup> 2009
  - First official LibSBGN meeting
    - cf. <http://sbgn.org/LibSbgnMeeting090409>

# Summary of 1<sup>st</sup> meeting

- Focus on **file format** first (LibSBGN later)  
Goal = exchange SBGN diagrams between SBGN tools
- Existing formats not appropriate?  
*“SVG is overkill”, “GraphML needs to be extended”, etc.*
- Create a **dedicated XML-based file format**
  - need to write corresponding **XSD** file
  - inspired from existing formats, e.g. **SBML layout extension**
- Deliverables: **demo/prototype** ready for SBGN5?  
(a bit over-optimistic here...)

# Online collaboration spaces

- **Mailing list:** [sbgn-libsbn@lists.sourceforge.net](mailto:sbgn-libsbn@lists.sourceforge.net)  
/! a few e-mail discussions off-list... to be avoided?
- **Wiki:** <http://sbgn.org/Community>  
under “*libSBGN Subgroup Meetings and Minutes*”
- Sourceforge **SVN** repository:  
<https://sbgn.svn.sourceforge.net/svnroot/sbgn/libsbn/trunk/>
- Scribtex *libsbn* group, to share and edit latex documents  
/! set up but unused so far... redundant with SVN?
- Skype video conference?  
/! time zone issue, didn't happen so far, waiting for live meeting...

# Documents produced so far

- **Minutes of first meeting** by Sarah, cf. wiki
- File format **requirements draft** by Sarah, cf. wiki and SVN to develop further
- SBGN file format **XSD draft** by Emek, cf. SVN to develop further, compare with other implementations
- Draft **description of implementations**, by various people /! cf. mailing list - to be captured more formally and in details?
- A lot of **ideas floating around** from everyone!! /! cf. mailing list - to be captured more systematically?

# An emerging consensus?

**Problem:** many different implementations VS a draft of essential and optional requirements that they all seem to satisfy...

- Need to **compare implementations** in more details in order to refine requirements
  - define test cases, benchmark?
  - provide examples + formal (XSD?) or informal descriptions
- **Layout/Rendering extension** = strong favourite, but...
  - need to be made **SBML independent** (keep conceptual layer?)
  - **too powerful?** => prune it (e.g. glyph descriptions belong to unique style-sheet file, not individual diagram files)
  - XSD on website not up-to-date???

# Obstacles and potential solutions

- Time and distance constraints, lack of direction...
  - set up **online environment** => that's done!
  - **monitor time** more tightly? e.g. regular virtual meetings??
  - identify **tasks** and assign **roles** more clearly
- Detailed technical discussions
  - needs something **tangible** to work on => put files on SVN?
  - need to address specific issues **separately** on mailing list
- Fundamental disagreements?
  - not *really*, but need to make sure we get everyone's perspective

# “de facto” core team

- Frank Bergman      [fbergman@u.washington.edu](mailto:fbergman@u.washington.edu)
  - keeps online discussions rolling
- Sarah Boyd      [sarah.boyd@infotech.monash.edu.au](mailto:sarah.boyd@infotech.monash.edu.au)
  - wrote minutes and requirements draft
- Emek Demir      [demir@cbio.mskcc.org](mailto:demir@cbio.mskcc.org)
  - author of XSD draft
- Stuart Moodie      [stuart.moodie@ed.ac.uk](mailto:stuart.moodie@ed.ac.uk)
  - set up mailing list, sub-wiki, SVN repository
- Alice Villeger      [alice.villeger@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:alice.villeger@manchester.ac.uk)
  - appointed project leader @ 1<sup>st</sup> meeting

# Other contributors so far

- Akira Funahashi (online discussions)
- Stefan Hoops (1<sup>st</sup> meeting)
- Yukiko Matsuoka (1<sup>st</sup> meeting and online)
- Huaiyu Mi (1<sup>st</sup> meeting and online)
- Falk Schreiber (online discussions)

More inputs wanted! In particular from “implementers”

=> next meeting this afternoon

~ Thank you! ~