

BioPAX Work Group
January 14, 2004 Conference Call Minutes

Participants: Gary Bader, Michael Cary, Peter Karp, Joanne Luciano, Natalia Maltsev, Elizabeth Marland

Overview:

1. Roadmap
 - a. XML Schema: not in roadmap for now
 - b. Milestones
 - i. GKB → OWL : 50% done
 - ii. First example set: 70% done
2. Integrating feedback: stick with SF for now
3. Natalia's comments
 - a. Mapping DBs to each other
 - i. We will focus on this when building converters
 - b. More user-friendly feedback mechanism
 - i. We will discuss at next meeting
4. External meetings
 - a. Peter D'Eustachio: BioPAX looks OK to him
 - b. PSB: Joanne gave a talk on BioPAX
 - c. ISMB-04: We will hold a meeting during main session
5. Upcoming meetings
 - a. Next call: Jan-28, 2 PM EST
 - b. Next face-to-face meeting: Feb-13 at SRI (tentative)

Notes:

Quick question: activation/inhibition of enzymes

Peter had a question about activators and inhibitors of enzymes. Gary explained that we could use "control of control" to represent these. I.e. a control relationship would be created between the activator (the "controller") and the enzyme catalysis instance (the "controlled"). Peter liked this representation.

Roadmap: Changes?

Joanne and Peter thought they noticed changes in the roadmap from what was developed at the Dec. 8 meeting. Mike said he would look into this.

Roadmap: XML Schema

We decided to leave the XML schema version out of the roadmap for now, as it will be handled by a subgroup, not the core group. Peter stated that OWL was gaining acceptance, and that we may not need an XML Schema version.

Roadmap: Milestones

Version 0.9 was completed and sent out. A set of examples using version 0.9 is partially completed. Randy Gobbel (from Peter's group) has been working on the GKB → OWL converter and has been making good progress. The specification document has not yet been started (Gary plans to integrate version 0.9 comments before starting the spec. document).

Integrating new comments into the ontology

Comments on the ontology are being generated in emails and during example creation. Mike asked if we wanted to continue to use SourceForge to track these issues or whether we should look into another mechanism. We decided to stick with SourceForge, but that the current issue list should be cleaned up (e.g. put many of the issues into the "Level 2" group).

Meeting at ANL

Natalia proposed a meeting at ANL in which we would focus on mapping the various formats to each other and on developing a better mechanism for integrating user feedback. She suggested that the mapping (e.g. KEGG, EcoCyc, WIT to one another) would solve several problems, and that providing a better feedback/integration mechanism would help stimulate more involvement from the community.

Gary said that so far we have found the best utilities for integrating user feedback seem to be bug-trackers (e.g. SourceForge, RT). Natalia said a simple web-form based approach might be more effective.

Peter said that he thought the idea was to map our formats to BioPAX instead of to each other. Natalia said such an approach would lack cross-links between the various databases, and that data integration would therefore be more difficult.

Peter agreed that this was an important issue, but suggested it might be best addressed with a subgroup. Gary said that he thought the ontology should be the main focus of the core group. He also suggested that the best time to tackle DB mapping would be in mid-March, when we will be writing the data converters.

We agreed to revisit these issues (resolving names/synonyms, mapping DBs to each other, better user feedback) at the next face-to-face meeting. Gary suggested we prepare for the discussion by drafting solution proposals. We agreed to submit these to the pax list by the next conference call.

Status of examples

Mike and Joanne have been working on examples: glycolysis from WIT, KEGG, BioCyc, aMAZE, and GK. The examples should be done by the next conference call (January 28).

External meetings

Peter D'Eustachio (from GK) paid a visit to MSKCC. Gary reviewed the current ontology with him; Peter D'Eustachio said that it looks like BioPAX will be totally

compatible with GK and they will be happy to support it. There will be a few quirks with the mapping (e.g. they reference the enzyme within a reaction), but these shouldn't pose any major problems.

Peter and Eric Neumann discussed Eric's ideas on reaction representation at PSB. Peter will forward his response to Eric's comments to the biopax-discuss list.

Joanne gave a BioPAX talk at PSB. She talked with Jeremy Zucker (from Dana Farber); he expressed interest in BioPAX. She said Vincent Schachter may also take a more active role in the future.

Gary discussed our plans to have a BioPAX meeting during the main ISMB-04 meeting (not during the BioPathways SIG), in order to get more community involvement and to get community feedback about which features should go into levels 2 and 3. Joanne mentioned that the BPC may play a larger role at ISMB-04 than it has in the past; she will keep us updated on this.

Upcoming Meetings

The next conference call will be held on Wednesday, January 28 at 2 PM EST. We tentatively set the date of the next meeting for February 13 at SRI in Menlo Park, CA. Natalia offered to host the next meeting after that.