In article <87ptaum3hk.fsf@lumen.indyrad.iupui.edu>,
 mmiller3@iupui.edu (Michael A. Miller) writes:

> For a summary and comparison to other formats, see
> http://hdf.ncsa.uiuc.edu/HDF5/RD100-2002/All_About_HDF5.pdf .
> That paper compares HDF 5 to the HDF 4, netCDF, PDB, TIFF, FITS
> and OpenDX formats.

This summary is a good starting point, but be aware that it contains some
errors (e.g., "FITS files are not portable between 32 bit and 64 bit
systems."). Part of the problem is that the authors sometimes confuse
inherent limitations of the physical file format with limitations of software
libraries used to manipulate the files. The authors also lapse into writing
hype now and then: "We were the first to implement a scientific data format and
library that works in parallel computing environments using MPI I/O." (This
being said, I do think that HDF5 is extremely flexible, and the library
interface is much more logical than that of, say, HDF4.)

Louis