
Subject: Re: Python reader for IDL save files.

Posted by [Michael Wallace](#) on Thu, 02 Jun 2005 20:34:05 GMT

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> 1. Has anyone worked on the problem of reading IDL save files from
> within python? This seems like a reasonable project for the usual IDL
> variable types.

I had this same question a while back and came to find out that the IDL save file format does not have a public description and that RSI reserves the right to change the format at any time they want. In short, they don't want people to know the format or to start messing around with their save files.

> 2. The only problem I have thought of is how to represent arrays of IDL
> structures in Python. The one attempt I made at this was succesful, but
> the resulting data structures (lists of lists, I think) were very slow
> to work with. Has anyone worked on this problem?

With the way that Python data structures work, it doesn't seem like there would be any good way to directly translate an array of structures in IDL to something in Python. If I may ask, why are you attempting to use IDL and Python together in this way? I ask only because there may be another way to go about solving your problem so there'll be less burden on the Python side, which seems to be the bottleneck.

I have written programs where IDL has communicated with programs in other languages (e.g. Python, Java), but each time I've written something extremely specific rather than trying to find the general solution. That may be what you need to do -- code the specific solution such that you can make the best use of Python for this particular project.

-Mike
