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Subject: Re: Q: Anyone know of an IDL generic HDF SDS reader?

Posted by [Keith Searight](#) on Wed, 13 Dec 1995 08:00:00 GMT

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Liam Gumley wrote:

> I am looking for IDL code to read general (i.e. structure not pre-defined) HDF  
> SDS datafiles. I thought I'd check before I start writing one. The module(s) I  
> need should be able to inventory the contents of a HDF file containing multiple  
> SDS entries, with each SDS being of arbitrary type and number of dimensions,  
> and having an arbitrary number of attributes. This inventory would preferably  
> be presented as a widget list, and allow the user to select a variable by name.  
> The user would then be presented with a new widget dialog box that asks the  
> user to select the dimensions of the data hyperslab to be read.  
>  
> I realize that this is a tall order, but perhaps someone has already written  
> some code to do it. I have looked at the Data and Dimensions Interface (DDI)  
> package available at  
> <http://www.nersc.gov/doc/Services/Applications/Graphics/DDI/DDI.html>  
> but I could not get it to work properly. If anyone is using DDI to import HDF  
> SDS data into IDL I would like to hear from them. Likewise, if there is another  
> similar package available I would also like to hear about it.

In case you're not familiar with it, there is a package called Envision that does much of what you're looking for. It can read generic HDF SDS files and displays a list of all the SDSs and their dimensions in a spreadsheet format. These can be selected and another dialog box permits ranges to be chosen. The package is written in C and Motif, but can also directly create a number of types of graphical displays using IDL.

Envision is no longer supported, but is in the public domain and may be useful to look at if you're writing similar code. It is available from the Department of Atmospheric Sciences at University of Illinois: <ftp://wx.atmos.uiuc.edu/envision>. There is also information on it at <http://wx3.atmos.uiuc.edu/envision/envision.html>. Enjoy!

Keith

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