
Subject: Re: How do I get IDL to place a string array into a netcdf file attribute?
Posted by [Fabzi](#) on Sat, 01 Jun 2013 13:19:17 GMT

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An array of strings is not really an attribute anymore. You should define a new variable (as a string array) for this. Why do you want to keep it as an attribute?

Cheers,

fab

Subject: Re: How do I get IDL to place a string array into a netcdf file attribute?
Posted by [Peter Thorne](#) on Sun, 02 Jun 2013 00:19:57 GMT

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On Saturday, June 1, 2013 9:19:17 AM UTC-4, Fabien wrote:

> An array of strings is not really an attribute anymore. You should
>
> define a new variable (as a string array) for this. Why do you want to
>
> keep it as an attribute?
>
>
>
> Cheers,
>
>
>
> fab

Thanks. Am trying to make some cf compliant netcdf files for which a large number of integer (short) vectors are flag values of the same dimension as the (much smaller number of) data vectors which are floats. I can write the flag values vectors themselves and the flag values attributes themselves w/o issue but am struggling with how to pass a flag meanings attribute which makes the flag arrays make sense to a user. In one case I have 50+ unique legal flag values which need to be interpretable by a user.

Peter

Subject: Re: How do I get IDL to place a string array into a netcdf file attribute?
Posted by [Fabzi](#) on Sun, 02 Jun 2013 17:40:27 GMT

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Hi again,

On 06/02/2013 02:19 AM, Peter Thorne wrote:

- > how to pass a flag meanings attribute which makes the flag
- > arrays make sense to a user

I use NetCDF extensively, and as a user I will not expect a variable attribute to be an array (I don't think that it is allowed by NetCDF but I did not check it).

I don't see the problem with giving flag information as a variable. You need to define a new dimension, nflags = 50 and then a variable flags(nflags). You can refer to this flag variable in the concerned variable's attributes.

I know that some institutions provide extensive metadata in their attributes using XML (cf HDF_EOS formats), but this is not very handy for everyone.

This is my personal opinion, but maybe someone out here has more experience on writing attributes as arrays...

Cheers,
Fab

Subject: Re: How do I get IDL to place a string array into a netcdf file attribute?
Posted by [Michael Galloy](#) on Mon, 03 Jun 2013 19:08:08 GMT
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On 6/1/13 7:19 AM, Fabien wrote:

- > An array of strings is not really an attribute anymore. You should
- > define a new variable (as a string array) for this. Why do you want to
- > keep it as an attribute?
- >
- > Cheers,
- >
- > fab

Another option is to make a scalar string from your string array by concatenating with STRJOIN (using the appropriate CR/LF delimiters).

Mike

--

Michael Galloy

www.michaelgalloy.com

Modern IDL: A Guide to IDL Programming (<http://modernidl.idldev.com>)

Research Mathematician

Tech-X Corporation

Subject: Re: How do I get IDL to place a string array into a netdcf file attribute?

Posted by [Peter Thorne](#) on Wed, 05 Jun 2013 13:26:41 GMT

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Thanks. This was also suggested by a contact I have on the CF convention board. I'm going to try this and see whether it is 'compliant'. I can't see another work around.
