

## Directory Interchange Format (DIF) Usability Survey

NASA's Earth Science Data Systems Standards Process Group (SPG) is considering the DIF (Directory Interchange Format) specification, developed by the GCMD (Global Change Master Directory), for adoption as a community standard. Your responses to this survey on the usability of the DIF and the suitability of this specification for Earth science data will be helpful.

Please answer as many of the questions below as you can..

1. Please provide your name, organization and contact information (including email address).

2. Are you answering for your entire organization, for a smaller group, or individually?

a) Entire organization

b) Smaller group (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

c) Individual response

3. Are you a data producer, data consumer, or both?

a) Producer  b) Consumer  c) Both

4. How long have you been using the DIF?

Since late 1990s

5. Please describe how the DIF is used in your organization.

We create DIFs for all of our distributable SEDAC data for submission to GCMD and World Data Center Portal System (WDC-PS).

For the following, you can answer either about the DIF alone, or relative to other, comparable specifications.

6. What are the strengths of the DIF? How has the use of the DIF helped your organization?

1) DIF fields capture important information (what, who, how, when) of the data very well.

2) The web-based DIF builder tool is user friendly. Populating fields is straight-forward. Updating information is also very easy.

3) The DIF helps us advertise the availability of our datasets externally via the GCMD.

4) The DIF is interoperable with WIST.

7. What are the weaknesses of the DIF? What would you like to change about the DIF or what would make the DIF a better specification?

There is nothing that we consider a weakness or we would change to the DIF at this time

8. How well does the DIF solve your metadata storage, discovery, and/or interchange needs? Are there specific areas it is applicable to vs. areas where it is not applicable or not used?

So far the DIF is great for all of the above functions.

9. How suitable is the DIF for representing your data holdings?

The DIF suits our needs.

10. Do you use the DIF to track your own data holdings (i.e. do you use DIF in your own data management activities)?

The DIF does a good job in representing our data holding, in addition to our in-house dataset tracking system.

11. What are the limitations of the DIF? Does the DIF prevent you from doing things you would like to do? Does its use make other things more difficult?

We see no limitations of the DIF at this time. It does not prevent us from doing things that we would like to do. We find its use is appropriate for search and discovery of datasets.

12. Do you think ESDS-RFC-012 (and thus the DIF) should be endorsed as a NASA Earth Science Data Systems Standard? Why or why not?

Yes. The DIF is easily mappable to FGDC and ISO19115. The tool for creating DIFs is already in place and is user friendly.