

**Request for Comments on Technical Note
Updates to the Directory Interchange Format Standard**

The Earth Science Data Systems Working Group (ESDSWG) Standards Process Group (SPG) is requesting comments on a Technical Note describing modifications to the Global Change Master Directory's Directory Interchange Format (DIF) for improved interoperability with the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) Content Standard for Digital Geospatial Metadata (CSDGM) and the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) 19115 metadata standards. This technical note will update the DIF metadata specification, documented in an Earth Science Data Systems Request for Comment that was endorsed as a NASA standard in 2008 (ESDS-RFC-012).

An SPG Technical Note is a document that contains important and useful information that is relevant to the domain of NASA Earth Science Data Systems, and does not necessarily describe a "standard" which has additional operational requirements. In order to assure a high level of technical quality, we conduct public reviews of Technical Notes that have been submitted to us for consideration.

You are invited to provide feedback that might make this document more useful, using the review questions below, or providing any additional comments.

1. Please provide your name, organization and contact information, including email address. *(This information will not be shared.)*

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

We use DIF for exchange of IPY metadata as well as in research projects.

5. Does this technical note contain internal inconsistencies? If so, please provide details.

NO

6. Is any part of the technical note ambiguous or poorly explained? If so, please provide details.

NO

7. How will your organization or group respond to the DIF changes documented in this technical note? In particular, do you plan to update existing DIFs to take advantage of the new sub-fields available for publications / references?

This is yet not decided, but mapping between GCMD DIF and ISO19115 is certainly an issue we have spent time on. Thus, we will probably upgrade our system to take advantage of these changes. We would also welcome a broader discussion forum (something similar to the Climate and Forecast discussion for NetCDF) concerning changes to DIF/SERF whether in the schema or in the keywords used.

8. Should the SPG endorse this RFC as a Technical Note – why or why not?

This RFC addresses an area of increasing importance to make data management systems world wide interoperable. There will never be only one way of addressing the interoperability issue and DIF has a clear advantage in that it is lightweight and easy to implement and benefit from contrary to ISO standards. The rather well developed controlled vocabularies are highly beneficial (especially with a interdisciplinary perspective), and would be even more beneficial if developed in collaboration with the scientific community. This RFC will clearly help integrating data management systems and should be endorsed.

Many thanks for the work you are doing, it is really helpful for smaller institutions like ours. Although we have to comply with ISO standards as well, our experience (e.g. through IPY) is that e.g. GCMD DIF is really a cost effective way of implementing discovery interoperability.