

Using Vitis HLS

Objectives

- After completing this module, you will be able to:
 - List various OS under which Vitis HLS is supported
 - Describe how projects are created and maintained in Vitis HLS
 - State various steps involved in using Vitis HLS project creation wizard
 - Distinguish between the role of top-level module in test bench and design to be synthesized
 - List various verifications which can be done in Vitis HLS
 - List Vitis HLS project directory structure



Outline

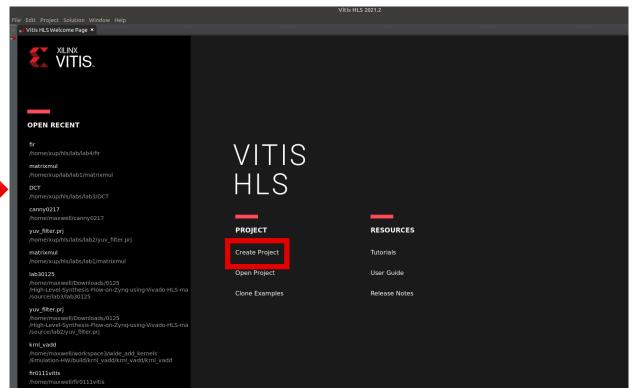
- ▶ Invoking Vitis HLS
- Project Creation using Vitis HLS
- Synthesis to with Vivado IP Flow
- Design Analysis
- Other Ways to use Vitis HLS
- Summary



Invoke Vitis HLS from the terminal



The first step is to open or create a project



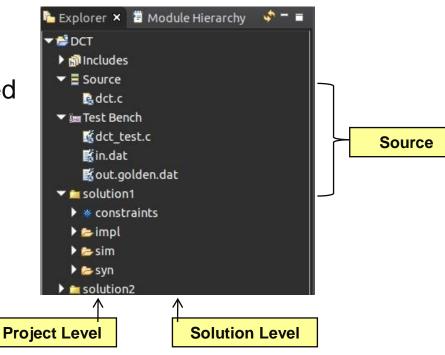


Project Creation Using Vitis HLS



Vitis HLS Projects and Solutions

- Vitis HLS is project based
 - A project specifies the source code which will be synthesized
 - Each project is based on one set of source code
 - Each project has a user specified name
- A project can contain multiple solutions
 - Solutions are different implementations of the same code
 - Auto-named solution1, solution2, etc.
 - Supports user specified names
 - Solutions can have different clock frequencies, target technologies, synthesis directives
- Projects and solutions are stored in a hierarchical directory structure
 - Top-level is the project directory
 - The disk directory structure is identical to the structure shown in the GUI project explorer (except for source code location)





Compare the Vivado IP flow with the Vitis kernel Flow

Project based and can contain multiple variations called solutions to drive synthesis and simulation

Vivado IP Flow

- Configuring Vitis HLS tool to generate RTL IP files for:
 - Use in the Vivado Design Suite
 - Inclusion in the IP catalog
 - Use in block designs of the IP integrator tool
- HLS synthesis transforms your C or C++ code into register transfer level (RTL) code
- More flexible and less structured than Vitis kernel flow
- Supports a wide variety of interface specifications and data transfer protocols
- Does not naturally support the Xilinx runtime (XRT) requirements of the Vitis system
- Provides much greater discretion in your design choices
- Leaves the integration and management of IP to user

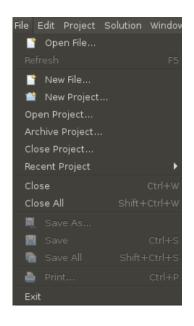
Vitis Kernel Flow

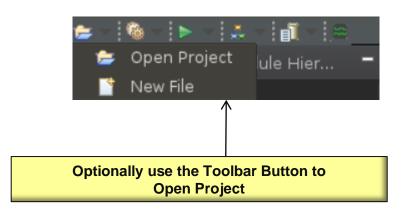
- Configuring Vitis HLS tool to generate the compiled kernel object (.xo) for the Vitis application acceleration flow
- More restrictive than the Vivado IP flow
- Kernels produced by the HLS tool must meet the specific requirements of the platforms and Xilinx runtime (XRT)
- After enabling the Vitis kernel flow in the IDE, the Vitis HLS tool implements interface ports using the AXI standard



Vitis HLS Step 1: Create or Open a project

- Start a new project
 - The GUI will start the project wizard to guide you through all the steps



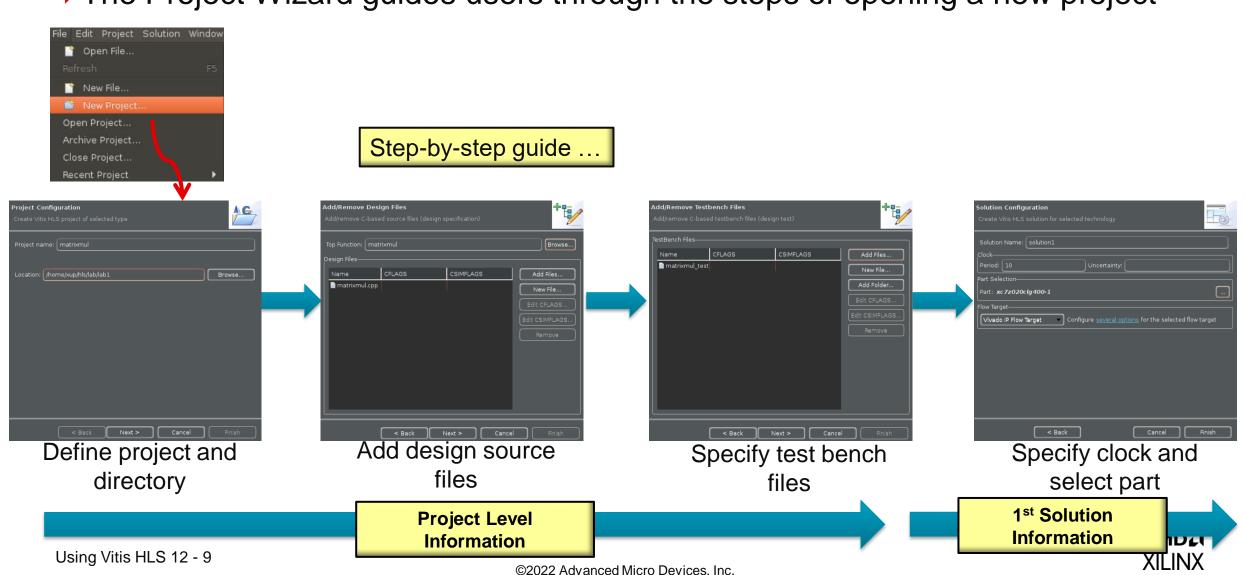


- Open an existing project
 - All results, reports and directives are automatically saved/remembered
 - Use "Recent Project" menu for quick access



Project Wizard

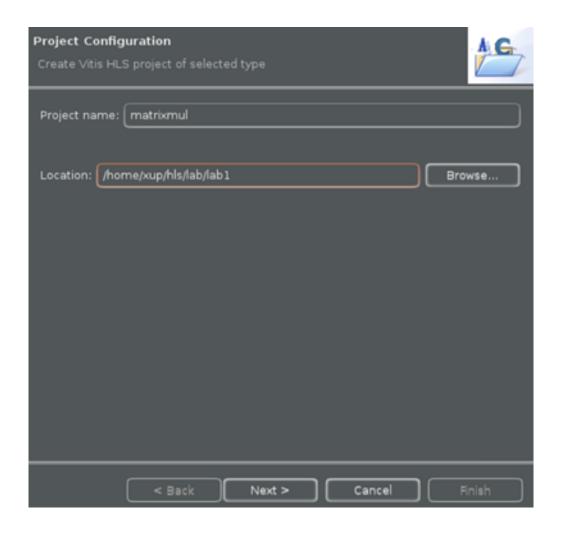
▶ The Project Wizard guides users through the steps of opening a new project



Define Project & Directory

Define the project name

- Browse to the location of the project
 - In this example, project directory "matrixmul" will be created inside directory "lab1"





Add Design Source Files

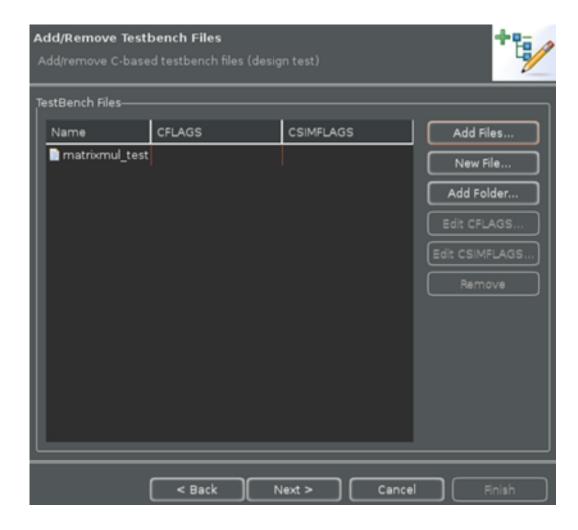
- Add Design Source Files
 - This allows Vitis HLS to determine the top-level design for synthesis, from the test bench and associated files
- Add Files...
 - Select the source code file(s)
 - The CTRL and SHIFT keys can be used to add multiple files
 - No need to include headers (.h) if they reside in the same directory
- Select File and Edit CFLAGS...
 - If required, specify C compile arguments using the "Edit CFLAGS..."
 - Define macros: -DVERSION1
 - Location of any (header) files not in the same directory as the source: -l../include





Specify Test Bench Files

- Use "Add Files" to include the test bench
 - Vitis HLS will re-use these to verify the RTL using cosimulation
- And all files referenced by the test bench
 - The RTL simulation will be executed in a different directory (Ensures the original results are not overwritten)
 - Vitis HLS needs to also copy any files accessed by the test bench
 - E.g. Input data and output results
 - Add Folders
 - If the test bench uses relative paths like "sub_directory/my_file.dat" you can add "sub_directory" as a folder/directory
 - Use "Edit CFLAGS..."
 - To add any C compile flags required for compilation





Solution Configuration

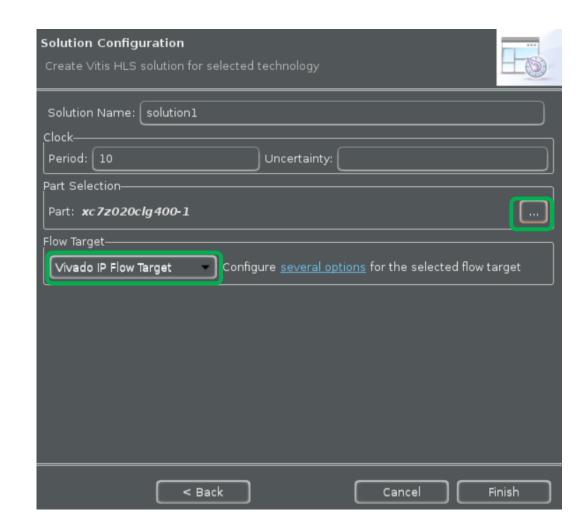
- Provide a solution name
 - Default is solution1, then solution2 etc.

Specify the clock

- The clock uncertainty is subtracted from the clock to provide an "effective clock period"
- Vitis HLS uses the "effective clock period" for Synthesis
- Provides users defined margin for downstream RTL synthesis, P&R

Select the part

- Select a device family after applying filters such as family, package and speed grade (see next slide) or a board after applying boards specify
- Select the Target flow
 - Each solution can target either the Vivado IP flow, or the Vitis Kernel flow





Selecting Part and Implementation Engine

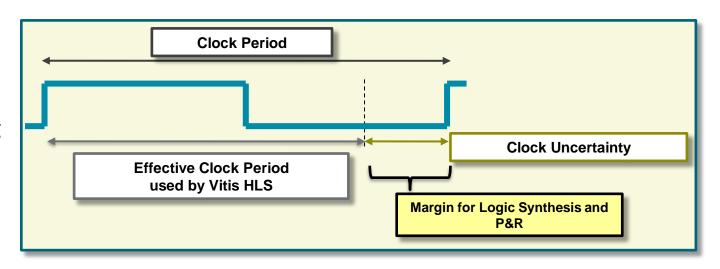
 Select the target part either through Parts or Boards specify





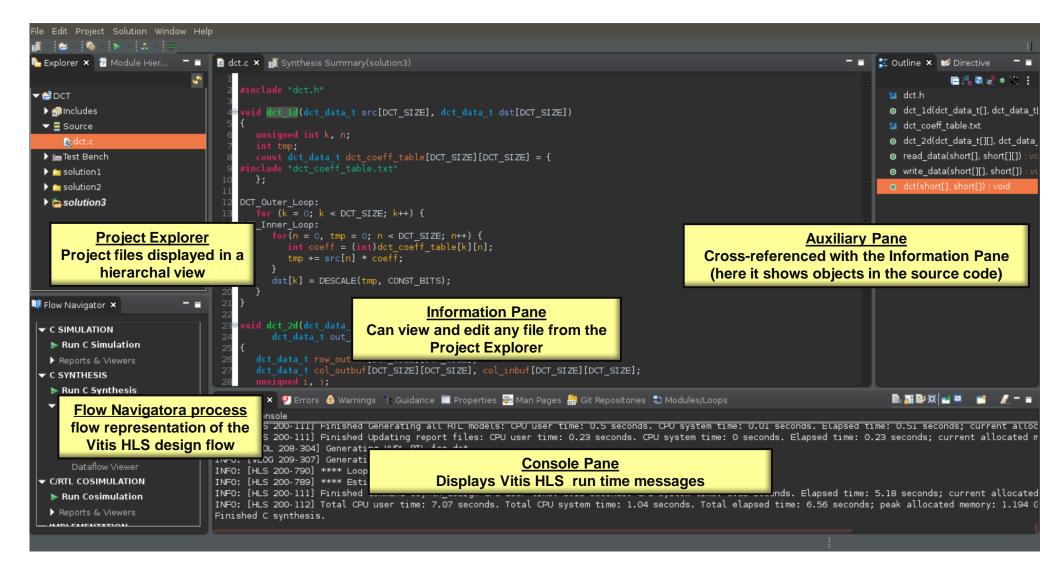
Clock Specification

- Clock frequency must be specified
 - Only 1 clock can be specified for C/C++ functions
- Clock uncertainty can be specified
 - Subtracted from the clock period to give an effective clock period
 - The effective clock period is used for synthesis
 - Should not be used as a design parameter
 - Do not vary for different results: this is your safety margin
 - A user controllable margin to account for downstream RTL synthesis and P&R



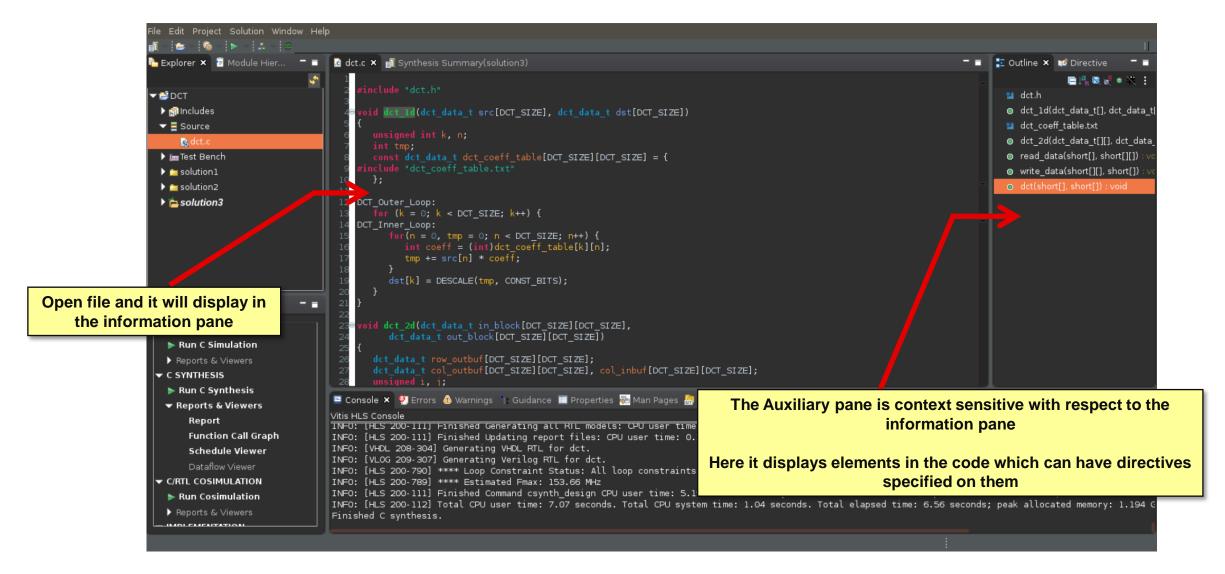


A Vitis HLS Project





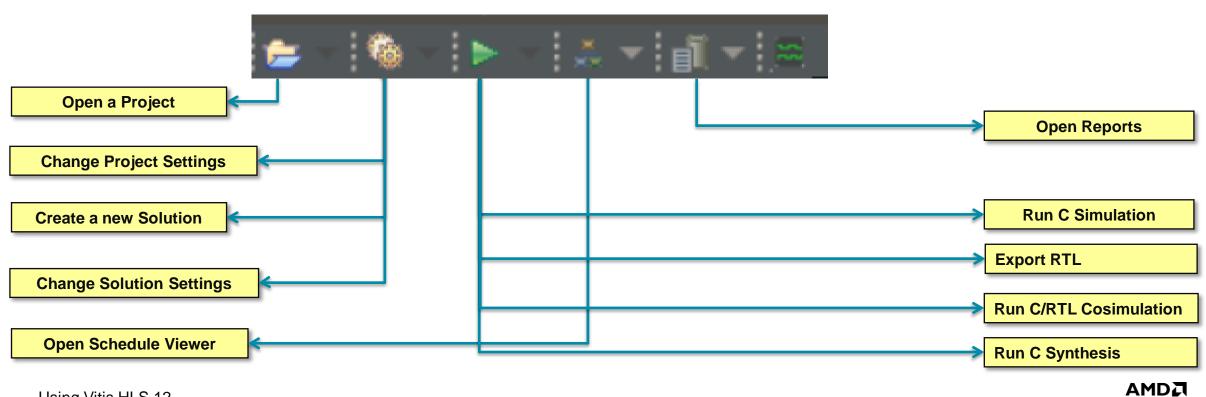
Files: Views, Edits & Information





Vitis HLS GUI Toolbar

- ▶ The primary commands have toolbar buttons
 - Easy access for standard tasks
 - Button highlights when the option is available
 - E.g. cannot perform C/RTL simulation before synthesis

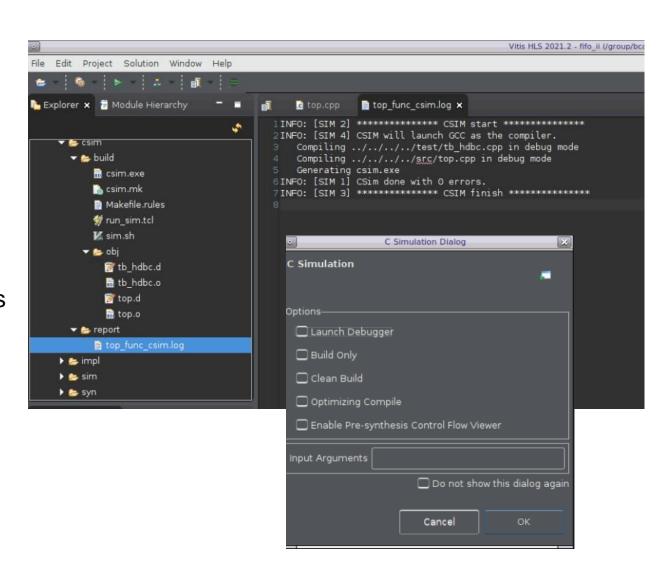


Vitis HLS Design Analysis with Vivado IP Flow



C Simulation

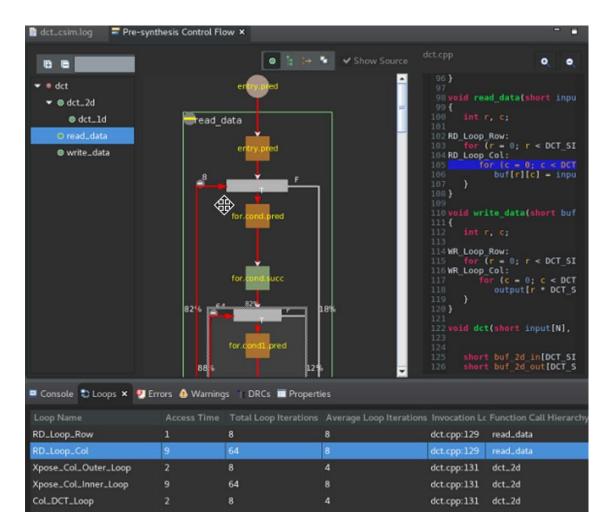
- Run C Simulation
- Console
 - Will show run time information
 - Examine for failed constraints
- A "CSIM" directory is created
 - Build folder with csim.exe and object files
 - Reports for CSIM results
- Report is outlined in the Auxiliary pane
- Pre-synthesis viewer will show outlines of the function control flow





Pre-Synthesis Control Flow Viewer

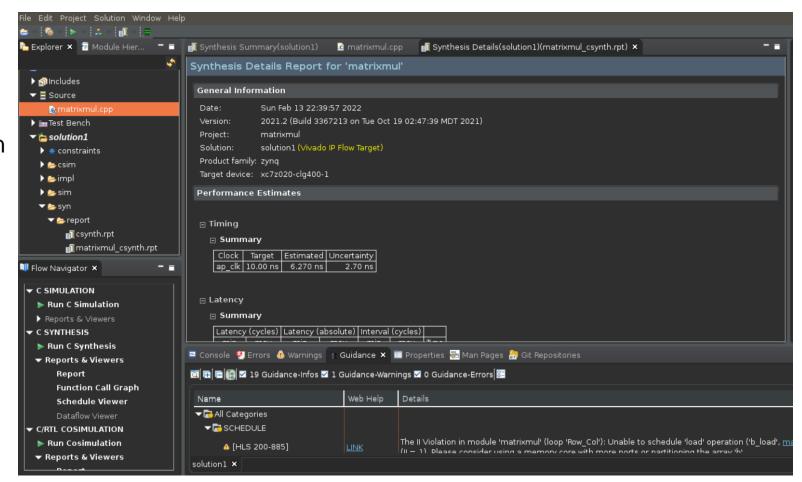
- As shown in the figure above, the Pre-Synthesis Control Flow viewer has multiple elements
 - Function Call Tree on the upper left.
 - Control Flow Graph (CFG) in the middle.
 - Source Code viewer on the upper right.
 - Loops view in the lower Console area that is associated with, provides cross-probing with the CFG viewer.
 - identify the hot spots in your function, the compute-intensive control structures
- The Pre-Synthesis Control Flow viewer helps you
 - apply pragmas or directives to improve or optimize the results.
 - shows the control flow through your C code
 - visualize the top-level function
 - provides static profiling, such as the trip-count of loops, and dynamic profiling information to analyze the design.





Synthesis

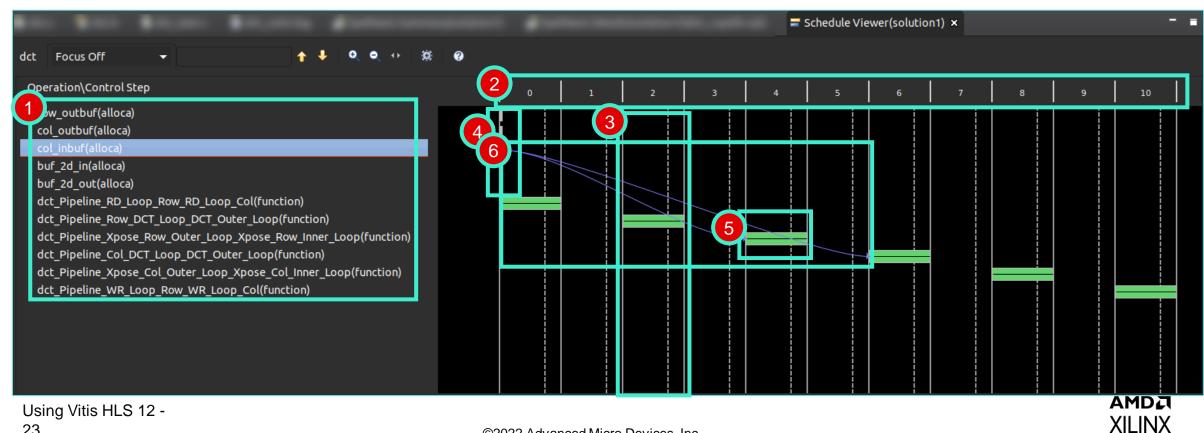
- Run C Synthesis
- Console
 - Will show run time information
 - Examine for failed constraints
- A "syn" directory is created
 - Verilog & VHDL RTL
 - Synthesis reports for all non-inlined functions
- Report opens automatically
 - When synthesis completes
- Report is outlined in the Auxiliary pane





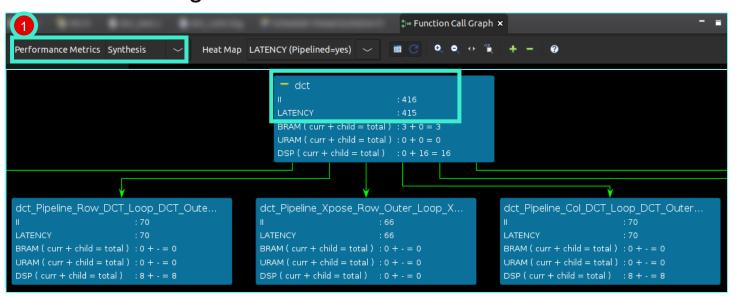
Schedule Viewer

- Provides a detailed view of the synthesized RTL and the clock cycle that it executes in
- Helps identify any loop dependencies preventing parallelism, timing violations, and data dependencies



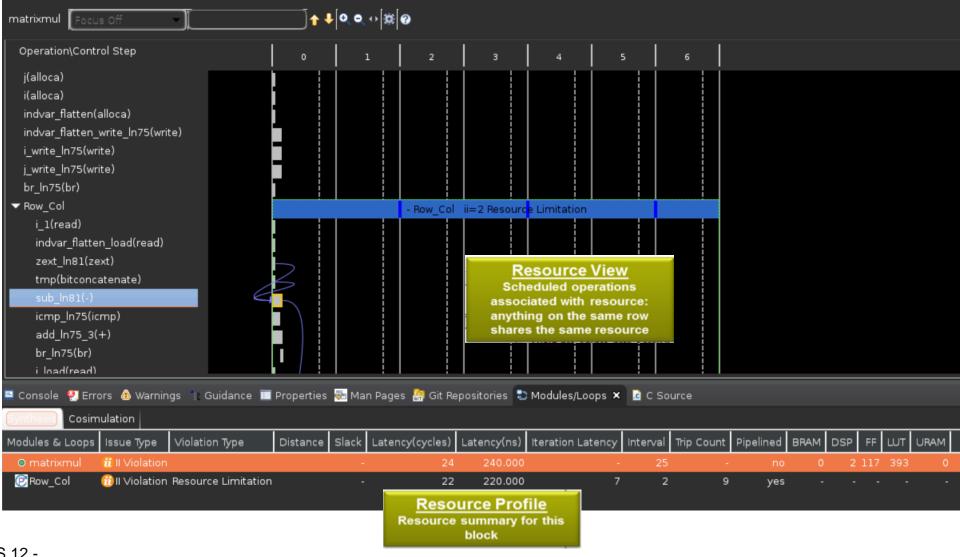
Function Call Graph Viewer

- Illustrates full design after C synthesis or C/RTL co-simulation
- Goal: Show the throughput of the design in terms of latency and II
- Helps identify the critical path and bottlenecks in the design
- Shows the paths through the design where throughput may be imbalanced—leading to FIFO stalls and/or deadlock.
- Functions in-lined will no longer be visible





Resources Analysis



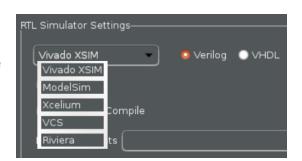


C/RTL Co-simulation

- Start Simulation
 - Opens the dialog box
- Select the RTL
 - Verilog and VHDL require the appropriate simulator
 - Select the desired simulator

Options

- Can output trace file (VCD format)
- Optimize the C compilation & specify test bench linker flags
- The "setup only" option will not execute the simulation
- Enables waveform visualization of all processes in the RTL simulation.
- OK will run the simulator
 - Output files will be created in a "sim" directory

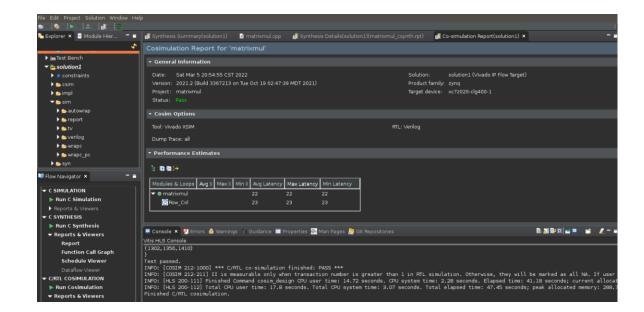






Simulation Results

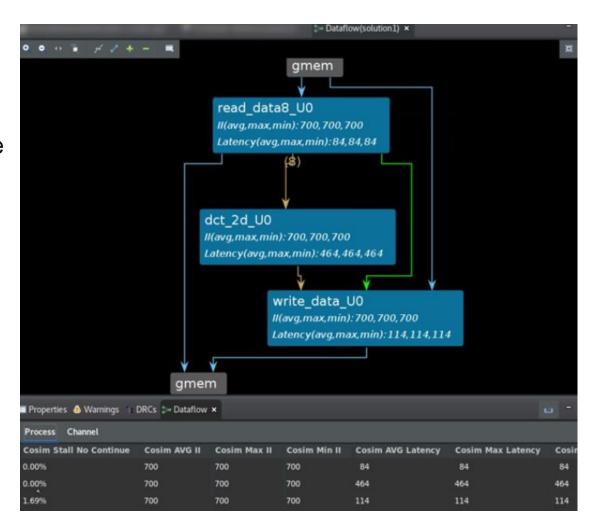
- Simulation output is shown in the console
- Expect the same test bench response
 - If the C test bench plots, it will with the RTL design (but slower)
- Sim Directory
 - Will contain a sub-directory for each RTL which is verified
- Report
 - A report is created and opened automatically





Dataflow Viewer

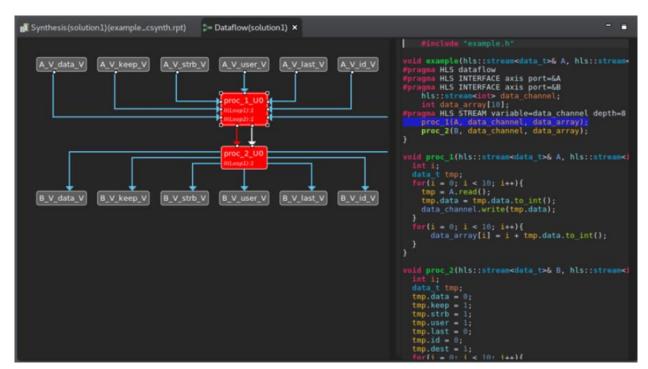
- Allows you to see the dataflow structure inferred by the tool
- Inspect the channels (FIFO/PIPO)
- Examine the effect of channel depth on performance
- Performance data is back-annotated to the dataflow viewer from the co-simulation results
- Displays a representation of the dataflow graph structure, showing different processes and underlying connections
- Helps with performance debugging of the design
- Highlights the channels and processes involved in the design deadlock during RTL co-simulation
- DATAFLOW pragma/directive must be applied to your design for the Dataflow viewer to be populated





Deadlock Viewer

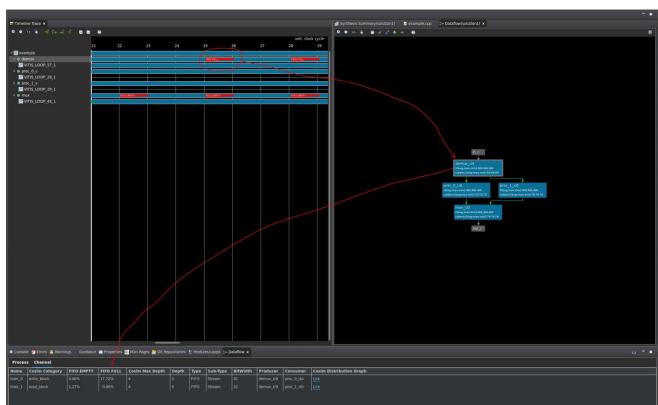
- Automatically opens only after, the co-simulation detects the deadlock situation and the co-sim run has finished
- Visualizes this deadlock scenario on the static dataflow viewer
- Highlights the problematic processes in red
- Provides a cross-probing capability to link between the problematic dataflow channels and the associated source code
- Use the information in solving the issue with less time and effort





Timeline Trace Viewer

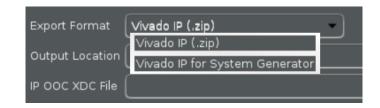
- ▶ Timeline Trace Viewer
- Shows the run time profile of the functions of the design
- Useful to see the behavior of dataflow regions after co-simulation
- Displays multiple iterations through the various sub-functions of a dataflow region
- Shows where the functions are starting and ending
- Displays the co-simulation data in tables below the timeline





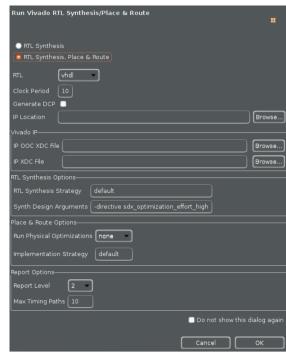
RTL Export for Implementation

- Click on Export RTL
 - Export RTL Dialog opens
- Select the desired output format



- Optionally, configure the output
- Select the desired language





 Optionally, click on implementation and choose RTL Synthesis, Place & Route options for invoking implementation tools from within Vitis HLS

Export RTL as IP/XO

IP OOC XDC File

Vivado IP (.zip)

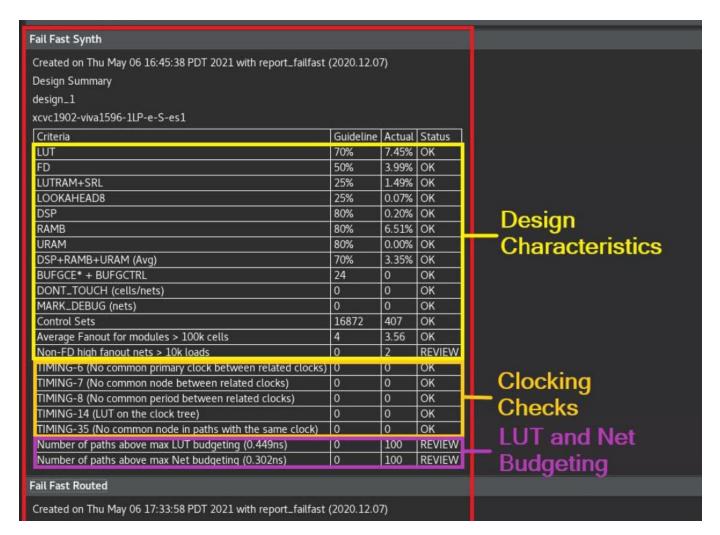
Click OK to start the implementation



RTL Export (Place and Route Option) Results

- Impl directory created
 - Will contain a sub-directory for each RTL which is synthesized
 - A report is created and opened automatically







RTL Export Results (Place and Route Option Unchecked)

- Impl directory created
 - Will contain a sub-directory for both VHDL and Verilog along with the ip directory
- No report will be created
- Observe the console
 - No packing, routing phases

```
INFO: Applying HLS Y2K22 patch v1.2 for IP revision
INFO: [HLS 200-10] Running '/tools/Xilinx/Vitis_HLS/2021.2/bin/unwrapped/lnx64.o/vitis_hls'
INFO: [HLS 200-10] For user 'maxwell' on host 'maxwell-OptiPlex-7080' (Linux_x86_64 version 5.4.0-96
INFO: [HLS 200-10] On os Ubuntu 18.04.2 LTS (beaver-osp1-ygritte X40)
INFO: [HLS 200-10] In directory '/home/xup/hls/labs/lab1
Sourcing Tcl script '/home/xup/hls/labs/lab1/matrixmul/solution1/export.tcl'
INFO: [HLS 200-1510] Running: open_project matrixmul
INFO: [HLS 200-10] Opening project '/home/xup/hls/labs/lab1/matrixmul'.
INFO: [HLS 200-1510] Running: set_top matrixmul
INFO: [HLS 200-1510] Running: add_files matrixmul.cpp
INFO: [HLS 200-10] Adding design file 'matrixmul.cpp' to the project
      [HLS 200-1510] Running: add_files -tb matrixmul_test.cpp -cflags -DHW_COSIM -Wno-unknown-pragr
      [HLS 200-10] Adding test bench file 'matrixmul test.cpp' to the project
INFO: [HLS 200-1510] Running: open_solution solution1 -flow_target vivado
INFO: [HLS 200-10] Opening solution '/home/xup/hls/labs/lab1/matrixmul/solution1'.
INFO: [SYN 201-201] Setting up clock 'default' with a period of 10ns.
INFO: [HLS 200-1611] Setting target device to 'xc7z020-clg400-1'
INFO: [HLS 200-1505] Using flow_target 'vivado'
Resolution: For help on HLS 200-1505 see www.xilinx.com/cgi-bin/docs/rdoc?v=2021.2;t=hls+guidance;d=
INFO: [HLS 200-1464] Running solution command: config export -format=ip catalog
INFO: [HLS 200-1464] Running solution command: config_export -rtl=vhdl
INFO: [HLS 200-1464] Running solution command: config_export -vivado_clock=10
INFO: [HLS 200-1510] Running: set_part xc7z020-clg400-1
INFO: [HLS 200-1510] Running: create_clock -period 10 -name default
INFO: [HLS 200-1510] Running: config_export -format ip_catalog -rtl vhdl -vivado_clock 10
INFO: [HLS 200-1510] Running: set directive top -name matrixmul matrixmul
INFO: [HLS 200-1510] Running: export design -rtl vhdl -format ip catalog
INFO: [IMPL 213-8] Exporting RTL as a Vivado IP.
******* Vivado v2021.2 (64-bit)
  **** SW Build 3367213 on Tue Oct 19 02:47:39 MDT 2021
  **** IP Build 3369179 on Thu Oct 21 08:25:16 MDT 2021
   ** Copyright 1986-2021 Xilinx, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
source run_ippack.tcl -notrace
ipx::create core: Time (s): cpu = 00:00:04 ; elapsed = 00:00:06 . Memory (MB): peak = 2577.934 ; gai
INFO: [IP_Flow 19-234] Refreshing IP repositories
```



solution1

> > csim

impl

> 🇁 sim

> 🗁 syn

> 🗁 ip

> 🗁 misc

> 🗁 vhdl

> > rerilog

constraints

Other Ways to use Vitis HLS



Using Vitis HLS CLI

- Invoke Vitis HLS in interactive mode
 - Type Tcl commands one at a time

- Execute Vitis HLS using a Tcl batch file
 - Allows multiple runs to be scripted and automated

- Open an existing project in the GUI
 - For analysis, further work or to modify it

Use the terminal to launch Vitis HLS GUI

```
> vitis_hls
```

```
open_project dct
set_top dct
add_files .../dct_src/dct.cpp
add_files -tb .../dct_src/out.golden.dat -cflags "-Wno-unknown-pragmas" -csimfl
add_files -tb .../dct_src/in.dat -cflags "-Wno-unknown-pragmas" -csimflags "-Wn
add_files -tb .../dct_src/dct_test.cpp -cflags "-Wno-unknown-pragmas" -csimflag
open_solution "solution1" -flow_target vitis
set_part {xcvullp-flga2577-1-e}
create_clock -period 10 -name default
source "../dct/solution1/directives.tcl"
csim_design
csynth_design
cosim_design
export_design -format ip_catalog
```



Using Tcl Commands

- When the project is created
 - All Tcl command to run the project are created in script.tcl
 - User specified directives are placed in directives.tcl
 - Use this as a template from creating Tcl scripts

```
File Edit <u>S</u>ource Project Solution Window Help
          - 🍪 - 🕨 - 🙇 - 📶 - 🗷
🏲 Explorer 🗶 📳 Module Hierarch 🗖 🔳 📑 Synthesis Summary(solutio...
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            Co-simulation Report(soluti...
                                                                                                                                                                                      c matrixmul.cpp
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       Synthesis Details(solution1)...
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               il Imp
                                                                                                              2 ## This file is generated automatically by Vitis HLS.
      Test Bench
                                                                                                        3 ## Please DO NOT edit it.
                                                                                                        4 ## Copyright 1986-2021 Xilinx, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

▼  solution1

▼ ※ constraints

                                                                                                       6 open project matrixmul

∰ directives.tcl

                                                                                                        7 set top matrixmul
                                                                                                       8 add files matrixmul.cpp
                                                                                                       9 add_files -tb matrixmul_test.cpp -cflags "-DHW_COSIM -Wno-unknown-pragmas" -csimflags "-Wno-unknown-pragmas
          🕨 📂 csim
                                                                                                     10 open_solution "solution1" -flow_target vivado
                                                                                                    11 set_part {xc7z020-clg400-1}

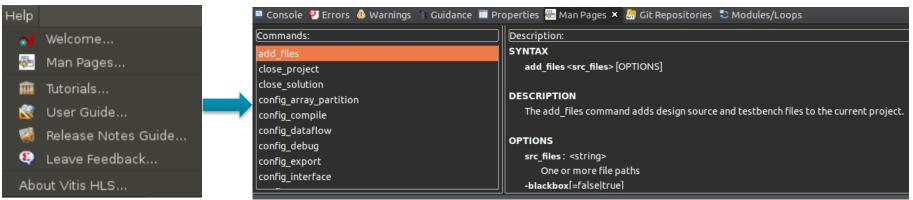
▼ 

impl

imp
                                                                                                    12 create_clock -period 10 -name default
                    all export.zip
                                                                                                     13 config_export -format ip_catalog -rtl vhdl -vivado_clock 10
                🕨 📂 ip
                                                                                                    15 csim design
                ▶ 🎏 misc
                                                                                                    16 csynth design
                report
                                                                                                    17 cosim_design -trace_level all
                Verilog
                                                                                                    18 export design -flow impl -rtl vhdl -format ip catalog
                ▶ > vhdl
```



Help



- ▶ Help is always available
 - The Help Menu
 - Opens User Guide, Reference Guide and Man Pages

- In interactive mode
 - The help command lists the man page for all commands

Auto-Complete all commands using the tab key

```
***** Vitis HLS - High-Level Synthesis from C, C++ and OpenCL v2021.2 (64-bit)
  **** SW Build 3367213 on Tue Oct 19 02:47:39 MDT 2021
  **** IP Build 3369179 on Thu Oct 21 08:25:16 MDT 2021
   ** Copyright 1986-2021 Xilinx, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
source /tools/Xilinx/Vitis HLS/2021.2/scripts/vitis hls/hls.tcl -notrace
INFO: Applying HLS Y2K22 patch v1.2 for IP revision
 vitis_hls <tclscripts> [OPTIONS]
 Vitis HLS command line
DPTIONS
 tclscripts : <string>
   TCL file
  -eval <string>
   Run TCL commands
  -f[=false|true]
   start in shell mode
  -i[=false|true]
   start in interactive mode
  -l <string:vitis hls.log>
   log file
  -n[=false|true]
   do not show splash screen
  -nosplash[=false|<u>true</u>]
   do not show splash screen
  -p <string>
   project name
   Filter stdout to only show status INFO and WARNING messages, log file will contain all messages
  -version[=false|true]
   show product version
SEE ALSO
 www.xilinx.com/cgi-bin/docs/rdoc?v=2021.2;t=vitis+doc;d=wic1584802485878.html
```

Summary



Summary

- Vitis HLS can be run under Windows 10, Red Hat Linux, Cent OS, and Ubuntu
- Vitis HLS can be invoked through GUI and command line in Windows OS, and command line in Linux
- Vitis HLS project creation wizard involves
 - Defining project name and location
 - Adding design files
 - Specifying testbench files
 - Selecting clock and technology



Summary

- Vitis HLS project directory consists of
 - *.prj project file
 - Multiple solutions directories
 - Each solution directory may contain
 - CSim, Synth, Sim and Impl directories
- Vitis HLS analysis viewer includes:
 - Pre-Synthesis Control Flow Viewer
 - Schedule Viewer
 - Function Call Graph Viewer
 - Dataflow Viewer
 - Timeline Trace Viewer



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Thank You

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