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Earth System Documentation

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Abstract

Controlled vocabularies inject semantic constraints into domain models. Generally speaking, such vocabularies decompose to scoped sets of terms. Within the context of a project, e.g. CMIP6, only a subset of vocabulary terms is considered to be in scope.

To support the construction of intuitive user and command line interfaces, it is essential that all published metadata is validated against controlled vocabularies. Such metadata pertains to datasets, files, aggregations, documentation …etc. Currently, applications that leverage controlled vocabularies (e.g. ESG-F publisher, ES-DOC questionnaire) are not built upon a canonical controlled vocabulary service but rather adopt ad-hoc approaches.

This presentation is designed to open up a discussion upon this subject by detailing the steps required to arrive at a really simple vocabulary service. Simplicity is essential if such a service is to be adopted by the community from an operational perspective. However one cannot overlook the inherent complexity of operational demands such as governance, versioning, change, encodings, api's, tooling ...etc.

Squaring the circle as it were, requires designing such a service from the perspective of the service consumer. By identifying such consumers, detailing their use cases, and exposing really simple API's, this presentation aims to point a way towards delivering a ligth-weight but robust controlled vocabulary service.