***[2020-10-22 – elaborated: section*** [***Link resolution***](#_Link_resolution)***]***

***[2020-10-18 – added: section*** [***The context element of a Greenfox schema***](#_The_context_element)***]***

***[2020-10-16 – elaborated: section*** [***Evaluation context***](#_Evaluation_context)***]***

***[2020-10-09 – added: section*** [***Dealing with non-XML mediatypes***](#_Dealing_with_non-XML)***]***

***[This article is still under construction,***

***frequent updates to be expected;***

***final version planned for 2020-11-08]***

## An introduction to Greenfox, a schema language describing file system contentss

A tutorial held at: Declarative Amsterdam, 2020-10-08, 14:00 – 15:30

## What is file system validation?

The term **file system validation** is used for an evaluation of a file system tree, defined as a selected root folder and everything directly or indirectly contained. The evaluation is controlled by a **Greenfox schema**, which is a set of **constraints**. The primary outcome of validation is a set of **validation results**, one result per validation of a single resource against a single constraint. The validation result is structured information which identifies the resource and the constraint, asserts **conformance** or violation and includes details about a possible violation. The validation results are mapped to a **validation report**, which is a list of results or some derived representation, namely statistical information.

## And why might you care?

We are used to and appreciate declarative validation of files, using well-known schema languages like XSD, RelaxNG, JSON Schema, SHACL. Our true interest, however, is broader – we want systems to be valid, and an important aspect of systems is file system trees – trees of folders and files. Such trees may, for example, accommodate …

* a set of applications in use
* a product to be shipped
* components of infrastructure
* data sources and assets
* a collection of test results
* a collection of observations, obtained by test execution, monitoring, sanity checks, etc.
* a mixture of the aforementioned

In all cases we cannot help caring about *whether everything is as expected* - quality and reliability of important processes depend on this: conformance of file system contents to expectations.

Greenfox is a proposal how to validate file system contents declaratively. It is still in an early stage, but at the end of its first year of development I believe the conceptual groundwork to have reached a certain maturity, capable of guiding future development. If the current scope of functionality addresses at least some of your requirements, you may obtain within hours what otherwise would cost you large developmental effort leading to heaps of complex code. Using Greenfox you invest in an executable description of your expectations, rather than code. This characterization may be a slightly idealizing one, as the description may involve complex expressions which can be regarded as a sort of code; but by and large I think the statement is true. And I invite you to put it to a test.

The outline for this tutorial is this:

* We start with a guided tour, to give you an impression of the scope and look and feel of using Greenfox
* This is followed by a brief “big picture” - concepts & major features
* You are given an overview of the available constraint types
* We will briefly take a closer look at a couple of interesting constraint types
* And we conclude with an outlook, especially important because important features have been postponed in the interest of a solid fundament

## Guided tour

Please see folder: $greenfox/declarative-amsterdam-2020/schema

## Big picture

A “big picture” is all important for an understanding of Greenfox. Consider this analogy – how to learn the XQuery language?

1. Learn concepts and principles; (2) Study the catalog of expressions (syntax + semantics)

Same situation here, with Greenfox:

1. Learn concepts and principles; (2) Study the catalog of constraints (syntax + semantics)

Once you have understood concepts and principles, it is easy to extend you knowledge iteratively, familiarizing yourself with the various types of constraints, one at a time.

### Seven things

The big picture which I propose is just a collection of seven things:

* Resources
* Constraints
* Shapes
* Target declarations
* Link definitions
* Results & Reports

We’ll deal with them one by one, and then we’re done.

### Resources

There are two kinds of resources – folders and files. That was easy!

### Constraints

A constraint is a function applied to a single resource and yielding a validation result. A constraint has parameters, syntax and semantics. The syntax describes the representation of the constraint and its parameters; the semantics define how the validation result is determined. We saw various examples, as a reminder here further examples:

<fileSize eq="0"/>

<value exprXP="//@iata" length="3"/>

<value exprXP="//@iata" length="3" distinct="true"/>

<valuePair expr1XP="/project/@mintDate"

expr2XP="//milestoneDate" cmp="le"/>

<valuePair expr1XP="/project/@minDate" count1="1"

expr2XP="//milestoneDate" minCount2="3"

cmp="le"/>

<docSimilar linkName="…">

<skipItem kind="attribute" localName="timestamp"/>

</docSimilar>

There are many kinds of constraints. The kind can be decomposed into a **type** and an optionals **facet**. Examples: FileSizeEq, ValueLength, ValueDistinct, ValuePairCount1, ValuePairMinCount2. Constraints are represented by the content of **constraint elements**. A constraint element has a name equal to a constraint type, and attributes and child elements representing one or more constraints of this type and with different facets. Nodes can be shared by some or all constraints. In the following example, each attribute represents a constraint parameter used by one or more constraints:

<valuePair expr1XP="/project/@minDate" count1="1"

expr2XP="//milestoneDate" minCount2="3"

cmp="le" useDatatype="date"/>

Constraint element: <valuePair>

Constraint parameters

ValuePairCount1 constraint: @expr1XP, @expr2XQ, @count1

ValuePairMinCount2 constraint: @expr1XP, @expr2XQ, @minCount

ValuePairCmp constraint: @expr1XP, @expr2XQ, @cmp, @useDatatype

Parameters are usually atomic, but there are also complex parameters. Example: skipItem parameters of a docSimilar constraint, represented by a child element with attributes:

<docSimilar linkName="referenceDoc">  
 <ignoreValue kind="attribute" localName="eq ne lt le gt ge"/>  
</docSimilar>

### Shapes

A shape is a container for two things: a set of constraints and a target declaration:

* The shape is represented by a <file> or <folder> element
* The constraints by child elements (or descendants) of the element
* The target declaration by attributes of the shape element. Example:

<file foxpath="airports.xml">

<fileDate gt="2020-01-01"/>

<links exprXP="//@href"/>

</file>

In this example, the shape is represented by the <file> element, the target declaration is given by the @foxpath attribute, and the constraints by the child elements of <file>.

### Target declaration

The target declaration may take several different forms – it is not necessarily a Foxpath expression. Here is a different example:

<file exprXP="/\*/(xs:include, xs:import)/@schemaLocation"

recursive="true">

<value exprXP="/xs:schema/xs:redefine" empty="empty"/>

</file>

This target declaration selects the documents obtained by recursively resolving URIs found at locations identified by an XPath. Independent of the kind of target declaration, the basic principle is that the declaration is evaluated repeatedly, in the context of each resource selected by the parent shape. Consider:

<domain path="\projects\abc-service">

<folder foxpath=".\\xsd-\*">

<file foxpath="\*.xsd">

<file exprXP="/\*/(xs:include, xs:import)/@schemaLocation" recursive="true">

<value exprXP="/xs:schema/xs:redefine" empty="empty"/>

</file>

</file>

</folder>

</domain>

Follow the trail of selection:

* The target declaration of the folder shape selects all folders xsd-\* under the domain folder.
* *In each of these* folders, all files \*.xsd selected.
* *For each of these* files, all directly or indirectly imported or included XSDs are selected.

The innermost <file> shape is a child of another <file> shape. There is nothing surprising about that. Keep in mind: parent - child relationships between shapes do not mean that their target resources have a parent - child relationship; it means that the target declaration of the child shape is re-evaluated in the context of each single resource in the target of the parent shape.

### Link definitions

Target declarations are essentially mappings – they map a resource from the target of the parent shape to a set of resources added to the target of the current shape. Such mappings are also required by **pair-based constraints** – constraint types designed to be applied to a pair of resources. An example is the DocSimilar constraint type. Consider:

<docSimilar linkName="reference-response">

<ignoreValue kind="attribute" localName="timestamp"/>

</docSimilar>

A DocSimilar constraint checks whether a given resource has content which is similar to the content of another resource. Namely, the target resource is validated by comparing its contents to the contents of other resources related to it and selected by a **link definition**. What is a link definition? It specifies the mapping of a given resource called the **context resource** to a set of other resources called **link target resources**. (Distinguish the terms *link target resource* and *shape target resource*, often for short just called *target resource*.)

When used by a pair-based constraint, each link target resource yielded by the link definition forms a pair, and all pairs are checked obtained by combining the resource under validation with each one of the resources obtained from the link definition. This logic is the same in both cases – target declarations and pair-based constraints. Therefore, it is the same set of possibilities available for making target declarations or for selecting constraint targets. Syntactically, it’s the same set of attributes and child elements which can be used by a target declaration and by a pair-oriented constraint.

Link definition may be local – defined by attributes and child elements on the element in need of link targets; or it can be referenced by name. The schema may contain global link defintions which can be referenced by name. Example:

<greenfox greenfoxURI="… "xmlns="http://www.greenfox.org/ns/schema">

<!-- \*\*\* Context variables -->  
 <context>…</context>  
   
 <!-- \*\*\* Named link definitions -->  
 <linkDef name="hrefElems" hrefXP="//\*:href"/>

<!-- \*\*\* Domain and its shapes -->  
 <domain path="…" name="dc2020">

<!-- Shapes omitted -->  
 </domain>  
  
</greenfox>

### Results and Reports

Now let us briefly look closer at the outcome of Greenfox validation. The validation of a file system tree against a Greenfox schema is an evaluation of the file system contents which is composed of a fundamental building block - validation of a *single resource* against a *single constraint*. The execution of such a constraint validation produces an element called a **validation result**,:

resource + constraint = validation-result

In the typical case, the validation of a single resource against a single constraint produces a single validation result. In some well-defined cases, more results can be produced. This is the case when the constraint semantics involve a second resource and the set of relevant resources has more than one member.

The validation result is an element named after a **colour** which signals conformance – red, yellow, green. In the very special case that a validation is only performed in order to assist another validation – namelye.g. for checking a condition – this subordinate role is signaled by a composite colour - whitered, whiteyellow and whitegreen results.

The primary outcome of a file system tree against a Greenfox schema is a collection of validation results, which is mapped to a validation report:

File-system-tree + Greenfox-schema = validation-result+

Validation-result+ + call-parameters = validation-report

Currently, the default report is statistical – it does not expose the validation results themselves. Example:

G r e e n f o x r e p o r t s u m m a r y

greenfox: C:/tt/greenfox/declarative-amsterdam-2020/schema/air03.gfox.xml

domain: C:/tt/greenfox/declarative-amsterdam-2020/data/air

#red: 2 (2 resources)

#green: 41 (4 resources)

--------------------------------------------

| Constraint Comp | #red | #green |

|--------------------------|------|--------

| FileSizeEq ............. | 0 | 1 |

| FolderContentClosed .... | 0 | 1 |

| FolderContentMemberFile | 0 | 1 |

| FolderContentMemberFiles | 0 | 6 |

| FolderContentMinCount .. | 0 | 1 |

| TargetCount ............ | 0 | 1 |

| TargetMinCount ......... | 0 | 2 |

| ValueDatatype .......... | 0 | 3 |

| ValueEq ................ | 0 | 3 |

| ValueItemsDistinct ..... | 1 | 2 |

| ValueLt ................ | 1 | 2 |

| ValueMatches ........... | 0 | 3 |

| ValueMinCount .......... | 0 | 15 |

--------------------------------------------

Red resources:

F C:/declarative-amsterdam-2020/data/air/airports/index/airports-denmark.xml (ValueItemsDistinct)

F C:/declarative-amsterdam-2020/data/air/airports/index/airports-ireland.xml (ValueLt)

There are two red results – in order to see these red elements, repeat the call with option –r (for “red”), a report type providing all red validation results, grouped by resource:

<gx:validationReport … reportType="red" reportMediatype="application/xml">

<gx:redResources count="2">

<!--

\*\*\* C:/tt/greenfox/declarative-amsterdam-2020/data/air/airports/index/airports-denmark.xml

-->

<gx:redResource file="C: /declarative-amsterdam-2020/data/air/airports/index/airports-denmark.xml">

<gx:red msg="IDs not distinct"

constraintComp="ValueItemsDistinct"

constraintPath="gx:values[1]/gx:value[5]/@distinct"

resourceShapePath="/gx:greenfox[1]/gx:domain[1]/gx:folder[1]/gx:file[1]"

resourceShapeID="file\_2" distinct="true" valueCount="31" exprLang="xpath"

expr="//airport/@id" quantifier="all">

<gx:value nodePath="/airportsForCountry[1]/airport[1]/@id">607</gx:value>

<gx:value nodePath="/airportsForCountry[1]/airport[2]/@id">607</gx:value>

</gx:red>

</gx:redResource>

<!--

\*\*\* C:/ declarative-amsterdam-2020/data/air/airports/index/airports-ireland.xml

-->

<gx:redResource file="C:/declarative-amsterdam-2020/data/air/airports/index/airports-ireland.xml">

<gx:red msg="Airport too high"

constraintComp="ValueLt"

constraintPath="gx:values[1]/gx:value[2]/@lt"

resourceShapePath="/gx:greenfox[1]/gx:domain[1]/gx:folder[1]/gx:file[1]"

resourceShapeID="file\_2" lt="1000"

useDatatype="integer"

valueCount="3"

exprLang="xpath"

expr="//altitude"

quantifier="all">

<gx:value nodePath="/airportsForCountry[1]/airport[6]/geo[1]/altitude[1]">1319</gx:value>

<gx:value nodePath="/airportsForCountry[1]/airport[16]/geo[1]/altitude[1]">1001</gx:value>

</gx:red>

</gx:redResource>

</gx:redResources>

</gx:validationReport>

A glance suffices to understand that validation results are very fine-grained structured information. A central goal of Greenfox is to ensure access to finest-grained information about the state of the system under investigation.

The evaluation of validation reports may be facilitated by the possibility to filter the constraint types included in the report (option –F). Selection can be very fine-grained, using inclusive and exclusive name filters.

By now you know the basic concepts of Greenfox and are ready to take a look at several important topics.

## Further important topics

If you want to achieve a basic understanding of Greenfox, you are facing two main tasks:

* Familiarize yourself with key concepts and principles
* Get a cursory overview of the available constraint types

You already got an overview of the basic building blocks of validation intput and output: resources, constraints, shapes, target declarations, link definitions, results and reports. Building on this ground, we now proceed to learn about a set of important concepts also required for having an understanding of the potential and limitation of Greenfox. To know:

* What is the role of **expression languages**, which expression languages are used?
* The determination of **evaluation context**, and the use of **focus node elements**
* The dealing with **non-XML mediatypes**
* The **context variables** of a Greenfox schema
* Usage, syntax and semantics of **link definitions**
* A few **syntax principles**

### Expression languages

These expression languages are supported:

* Foxpath
* XPath
* NodePath
* LinesPath

#### Foxpath

Foxpath is an extended version of XPath 3.0, supporting file system navigation, node tree navigation and mixing the both within an expression. This makes it a tool for solving tasks of file system navigation with the ease and elegance you are used to from XPath. As Foxpath supports both, file system and node tree navigation, it uses two step separators, the slash (separating steps of conventional path expressions) and backslash – separating steps of file system navigation. A few examples give you an impression. Note that you can try out the examples yourself when checking out the standalone Foxpath project () and adapt the path leading to declarative-amsterdam-2020. Any linefeeds in the examples below have been added for readability and must not be used on the command-line.

/tt/greenfox/declarative-amsterdam-2020/data/air/airports/index/\*

*Result: all files and folders in the index folder*

/tt/greenfox/declarative-amsterdam-2020/data/air/airports/index/\*[is-file()]

*Result: all files in the index folder*

/tt/greenfox/declarative-amsterdam-2020/data/air/airports/index/\*[is-file()][file-size() eq 0]

*Result: as before, but only files whith are empty*

/tt/greenfox/declarative-amsterdam-2020/data/air/airports/index/\*xml[not(doc-available())]

*Result: as before, but only XML files which are not well-formed*

\tt\greenfox\declarative-\*\data\\airports\index\\*.xml[/airportsForCountry]

*Result: as before, but only XML files with a root element <airportsForCountry>*

\tt\greenfox\declarative-\*\data\\airports\index\\*.xml[.//airport[not(\*)]]]

*Result: as before, but only XML files containing empty <airport> elements*

\tt\greenfox\declarative-\* \data\\airports\index\\*.xml[/airportsForCountry

[.//latitude[xs:decimal(.) lt 10]]]

*Result: as before, but only XML files containing a latitude less than 10*

Foxpath can deal with non-XML formats (JSON, CSV, HTML) as if they were XML, parsing them into node trees:

\tt\greenfox\declarative-\*\data\\airports\index\\*.json[jdoc()//latitude[xs:decimal(.) lt 10]]

*Result: JSON documents in the index folder which contain a latitude < 10*

\tt\greenfox\declarative-\*\data\\airports\index\\*.json[jdoc()//airport/count(\_) gt 35]

*Result: JSON documents in the index folder which contain more than 35 airports*

\tt\greenfox\declarative-\*\data\air\resources\airports\\*.csv

[csv-doc()/csv/record[\*[4] = 'Papua New Guinea']]

*Result: CSV documents with a record which holds in the fourth column the value Papua New Guinea*

\tt\greenfox\declarative-\*\data\air\resources\airports\\*.csv

[csv-doc()/csv/record[not(\*[7] castable as xs:decimal)]

*Result: all CSV documents with a record which holds in the seventh column a non-decimal value*

Using CSV files, parameters are available for dealing with non-comma separators and headlines. Example:

fox -b "\tt\greenfox\declarative-\*\data\resources\geo\cow.csv

\csv-doc(., 'semicolon', 'yes')/csv/record/ISOen\_name

[. ne ../ISOen\_proper]/concat(., ';', ../ISOen\_proper)"

*Result: A sorted list of pairs – ISOen\_name # ISOen\_proper – where the two are different (what is rare).*

In Greenfox, you use Foxpath for various purposes:

* As target declarations, selecting the target resources of a shape
* As link definitions, selecting the link target resources of a link definition
* As resource value to be checked against constraints, possibly in combination with other values produced by Foxpath or another expression language

SYNTAX RULE:

Foxpath expressions are contained by attributes with the name suffix FOX, or with the name foxpath.

#### XPath

XPath (version 3.1) is used for the following purposes:

* As resource value to be checked against constraint, possibly in combination with other values produced by XPath or another expression language
* As focus node, shifting the evaluation context for constraints from the document root to inner nodes
* As part of link definitions, when the link context is given by inner nodes of the starting resource, or the link target is inner nodes of the link target resource

SYNTAX RULE:

XPath expressions are contained by attributes with the name suffix XP, or with the name xpath.

#### LinePath

LinePath expressions are XPath expressions evaluated in the context of a document obtained by representing the lines of a text file by <line> elements wrapped in a <lines> element. This enables the use of XPath expressions for evaluating text content which cannot be parsed into “normal” node trees.

SYNTAX RULE:

LinePath expressions are contained by attributes with the name suffix LP.

#### NodePath

NodePath is a deliberately simplistic navigation language used for describing document tree structure. It is used by the DocTree and HyperdocTree constraints.

SYNTAX RULE:

LinePath expressions are contained by attributes with the name suffix NP.

### Evaluation context

When expressions are evaluated, it is crucial to have a clear understanding of the evaluation context. The evaluation context comprises the initial context item and variable bindings.

#### Foxpath context

In Greenfox, the **context item** of a Foxpath expression is always a *resource URI*, not a node. The resource is either a shape target resource (the resource which is currently validated), or a link target resource.

If available, relevant nodes are made available via **variable bindings:**

* Nodes of the shape target resource: $doc, $linesdoc, $item, $linkContext
* Nodes of the current link target resource: $targetDoc, $targetNode

The context also comprises further variables with atomic values: $fileName, $filePath, $domain. The choice of context resource (shape target or link target) is implied by the name of the attribute containing the expression. The evaluation context of Foxpath expressions is summarized by the following table.

**Table. Evaluation context of Foxpath expressions.** The context comprises generic parts (see row “@\*FOX”) and, optionally, specific parts which depend on the role of the expression (see the other rows).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Expression**  **attribute** | **Context resource** | **Variable name** | **Variable value** | **Conditions** |
| @\*FOX,  @foxpath | \* | $doc | Root node of the shape target resource | Shape target resource can be parsed into a node tree |
|  |  | $focusNode | Current focus node | Relevant constraint has a <focusNode> parent |
|  |  | $lines | Node representation of content lines of the target resource | - |
|  |  | $fileName | File name of the shape target resource | - |
|  |  | $filePath | URI of the shape target resource | - |
|  |  | $domain | URI of the domain folder | - |
| @exprFOX | Shape target resource | [see @\*FOX] |  |  |
| @expr1FOX | Shape target resource | [see @\*FOX] |  |  |
| linkDef/@foxpath | Shape target resource | [see @\*FOX] |  |  |
| @xsdFOX | Shape target resource | [see @\*FOX] |  |  |
| @expr2FOX | Shape or link target resource | [see @\*FOX] |  | If relevant constraint is <\*Compared>, the context resource is the link target resource, otherwise the shape target resource |
|  |  | $value | Value obtained from @expr1\* | - |
|  |  | $item | An item returned by @expr1\* (\*=FOX|XP|LP); may be a node or an atom | Relevant constraint is a <foxvaluePair> or <foxvalueCompared> constraint which also has an attribute @expr2Context = item |
|  |  | $targetDoc | Root node of link target resource | Link target resource can be parsed into a node tree |
|  |  | $targetNode | A node from the link target resource | Link definition contains @targetXP |
|  |  | $linkContext | Link context item (a content node, the root node or the URI) | Link definition contains @contextXP |

#### XPath context

In Greenfox, the **context item** of an XPath expression is usually a **document node** or a **focus node**. It is a focus node if the relevant constraint has a <focusNode> parent. A <focusNode> element selects nodes from the target documents of the containing shape. Consider this schematic example

<file foxpath=".\\geo.xml'">

<focusNode xpath=".//continent"> <!-- Visit <continent> nodes -->

<!-- … continent check … --> <!-- Context item here: <continent> -->

<focusNode xpath=".//country"> <!-- Visit <country> nodes -->

<!-- … country checks --> <!-- Context item here: <country> -->

<focusNode xpath=".//province"> <!-- Visit <province> nodes -->

<!-- … province checks --> <!-- Context item here: <province> -->

</focusNode>

</focusNode>

</focusNode>

</file>

If available, relevant nodes are made available via **variable bindings:**

* Nodes of the shape target resource: $doc, $linesdoc, $item, $linkContext
* Nodes of the current link target resource: $targetDoc, $targetNode

The context also comprises further variables with atomic values: $fileName, $filePath, $domain. The choice of context resource (shape target or link target) depends on the containing attribute; the context resource is the …

* Link target resource – if expression attribute: \*Compared/@expr2XP or @targetXP
* Shape target resource - otherwise

The evaluation context of XPath expressions is summarized by the following table.

Table. Evaluation context of XPath expressions.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Expression**  **attribute** | **Context resource** | **Variable name** | **Variable value** | **Conditions** |
| @\*XP,  @xpath | \* | $fileName | File name of the shape target resource | - |
|  |  | $filePath | URI of the shape target resource | - |
|  |  | $domain | URI of the domain folder | - |
|  |  | $doc | Root node of the shape target resource | Shape target resource can be parsed into a node tree |
|  |  | $lines | Node representation of content lines | - |
| @exprXP | Shape target resource | [see @\*XP] |  |  |
| @expr1XP | Shape target resource | [see @\*XP] |  |  |
| @contextXP | Shape target resource | [see @\*XP] |  |  |
| @expr2XP | Shape or link target resource | [see @\*XP] |  | If relevant constraint is <\*Compared>, the context resource is the link target resource, otherwise the shape target resource |
|  |  | $value | Value obtained from @expr1\* |  |
|  |  | $item | An item returned by @expr1\* (\*=FOX|XP|LP); may be a node or an atom | Attribute located in  <valuePair> or  <valueCompared> or  <foxvaluePair> or <foxvalueCompared> constraint which also has an attribute @expr2Context = item |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | $targetDoc | Root node of link target resource | Link target resource can be parsed into a node tree |
|  |  | $targetNode | A node from the link target resource | Link definition contains @targetXP |
| @targetXP | Link target resource | [see @\*XP] |  |  |
|  |  | $linkContext | Link context item (a content node, the root node or the URI) | Link definition contains @contextXP |

When the context resource is the shape target resource and the relevant constraint has a <focusNode> parent, the **context item** is a *focus node* from the shape target resource.

If the expression is contained by @expr2XP and the constraint parameter @expr2Context has the value item, the context item is an item returned by the corresponding first expression (@expr1\*).

In all other cases, the context item is the document node of the context resource.

#### Linepath context

The term **Linepath** is used for XPath expressions evaluated in the context of a “lines document”, which is a <lines> element with <line> child elements representing the lines of the file text content. The expressions are contained by attributes with a name \*LP.

The evaluation context of expressions in attributes @expr\*LP is equal to the context of the XPath expression in an attribute with a matching name (trailing “LP” replaced by “XP”):

* @exprLP – same context as @exprXP
* @expr1LP – same context as @expr1XP
* @expr2LP – same context as @expr2XP
* @contextLP – same context as @contextXP
* @targetXP – same context as @targetXP

The resource (shape target resource or link target resource) is however represented by a lines document, not by the node tree obtained by parsing the resource according to its mediatype.

Similarly, the evaluation context of expressions in attributes @filter\*LP and @map\*LP is equal to the context of the name matching XPath expression:

* @filterLP, @mapLP - same context as @exprXP
* @filter1LP, @map1LP - same context as @expr1XP
* @filter2LP, @map2P - same context as @expr2XP

In the case of the \*LP attributes, the context item is always a <line> element representing a single line of resource content text.

### Dealing with non-XML mediatypes

Greenfox supports XPath-based evaluation of non-XML resources.

#### Shape target resource

The first approach is to “annotate” a shape as targeting resources of a particular mediatype, using attribute @mediatype with one of the values xml, json, csv, html:

<file mediatype="json" …>…</file>

<file mediatype="html" …>…</file>

<file mediatype="csv" …>…</file>

Greenfox will automatically parse the target resources of the shape into a node tree representation. It is the implicit *evaluation context* for any XPath expression used in a constraint of the shape (excluding @expr2XP in binary constraints). Here comes an example where a shape targets JSON files and submits them to a value constraint based on an XPath expression:

<file foxpath="airport.json" mediatype="json">

<value exprXP="//iata" length="3"/>

</file>

In the case of mediatype CSV, further attributes are available for controlling the parsing of the CSV file into a node tree:

* @csv.separator - the separator, identified by one of the tokens comma, semicolon, colon, tab or space, or a single character
* @csv.header – a switch indicating whether the first line of the file contains columns headers (value yes or no)
* @csv.format – controls the representation of JSON names, if JSON names are represented by XML element names (value direct) or provided by XML @name attributes (value attributes)

#### Link target resource

Like shape elements, also link definition elements have an optional attribute @mediatype, which may be one of the values xml, json, csv, html. In case of a non-XML value, link resolution includes a final step of parsing the link target into a node tree representation. If the parsing fails, link resolution as a whole is considered a failure.

A link definition has additional optional attributes controlling the parsing of CSV targets. These are the same attributes as allowed on a shape element(@csv.separator, @csv.header, @csv.format).

#### Expression context

The node tree representation of the current shape target resource is bound to a variable $doc, available in any XPath or Foxpath expression used in a constraint of the shape, or in a link definition referenced by such a constraint (see [Expression context](#_Expression_context)). In the following example, the $doc variable is referenced by the second expression of a ValueCompared constraint:

<linkDef linkName="projects" foxpath="…" mediatype="csv">

<file foxpath="…" mediatype"json">

<valuesCompared linkName="projects">

<valueCompared expr1XP="//startDate"

expr2XP="//project[@id eq $doc//projectId]/startDate" …/>

</valuesCompared>

</file>

Note that @expr2XP is evaluated in the context of a *link target resource*, not the shape target resource, so that $doc is required for access to data from the shape target resource. Also note that the link target resource is a CSV document, whereas the shape target resource is a JSON document. The constraint thus uses an expression evaluating JSON contents (@expr1XP) as well as an expression evaluating CSV contents, yet also accessing JSON contents (@expr2XP).

#### Foxpath function calls

Independently of the current resource from the shape target, Foxpath expressions may contain function calls for parsing arbitrary non-XML resources into node trees:

* json-doc($uri) - parses a JSON resource into a node tree
* html-doc($uri) - parses an HTML resource into a node tree
* csv-doc($uri) - parses a CSV resource into a node tree

The function csv-doc() has further optional parameters corresponding to the shape attributes controlling CSV parsing (@csv.separator, @csv.header and @csv.format):

* csv-doc($uri, $separator)
* csv-doc($uri, $separator, $headerFlag,
* csv-doc($uri, $separator, $headerFlag, $format)

### The context element of a Greenfox schema

The <context> element can be used in order to define name/value pairs receiving their values from call parameters. Before validation, the schema is modified by replacing variable references (syntax: ${varname}) with the variable values. References may be used in any attribute value. The replacement is a purely textual operation, and context variables are *not* added to the evaluation context of expressions. As an example, when invoking the following schema

<greenfox …>

<context>

<field name="maxDate"/>

</context

<domain …>

<file …>

<fileDate lt="${maxDate}"/>

</file>

</domain>

</greenfox>

the caller controls validation by supplying a value for context variable maxDate:

gfox myschema.xml /a/b/c -v maxDate=2019-12-31

Variable names must be NCNames (in other words: names which might be used as XML names) and must not start with an underscore. A call supplying values for undefined context variables are rejected with an error message. Variable default values can be defined using a @value attribute on the <field> element:

<field name="maxDate" value="2019-06-30"/>

A call *must* provide values for all context variables without a default value. A call failing to do so is rejected with an error message. Variable references can also be used within the context: the @value attributes may reference any preceding variable. Example:

<context>

<field name="extension" value="json"/>

<field name="logFileName" value="log.msgs-${extension}.txt"

</context>

Several *built-in context variables* may be referenced as if they had been declarared by the user:

* schemaLocation – the path of the schema file, in Foxpath syntax (using backslashes)
* currentDate – the current date
* currentDatetime – the current date time

### Link resolution

Speaking generally, a link definition is a function mapping a resource to other resources. This definition conveys the basic idea, but it leaves important details unclear, in particular the possibilities of using resource fragments. Therefore we resort to a detailed model of link definitions, which should be regarded as an elaboration of the basic idea, not as a replacement.

#### Abstract link model

A link is a directed association between two resources: a context resource is mapped to a target resource. Within Greenfox, the definition of a link is modeled as follows:

* The context resource is either a complete resource or a resource fragment, which is a single node from a node tree representation of resource contents.
* The target resource is either a complete resource or a fragment, which is a set of nodes from a node tree representation of resource contents.

A link definition is a mapping of input to output:

* The input of a link definition is a context resource URI.
* The output of a link definition is a set of links, described by a set of information items:
  + Context resource URI
  + Optionally: context resource tree
    - Node tree representation of the context resource
  + Optionally: context resource fragment
    - a node from the context resource tree used as context resource fragment
  + Target resource URI
  + Optionally: target resource tree
    - Node tree representation of the target resource
  + Optionally: target resource fragment
    - Or a set of nodes from the target resource tree

Note that a context resource fragment is a single node, whereas a target resource fragment is a set of nodes, constrained to belong to the node tree representation of a single resource.

A link definition can be divided into three components:

* Context selector – selection of link context fragments (optional)
* Resource connector – identification of target resources
* Target selector – selection of link target fragment (optional)

The optional **context selector** selects nodes from the resource contents, each one of which shall be used as a resource fragment. The resource connector is evaluated repeatedly, once for each item obtained from the context selector. The item is the *initial context item* when evaluating XPath expressions used by the connector (expressions given by @uriXP, @hrefXP, @valueXP), and it can be accessed by other expressions of the link definition via a context variable ($contextItem).

In the following example, the context selector is given by an XPath expression selecting <airport> elements from the context resource, and the resource connector is an XPath expression constructing a target URI (@uriXP). The connector expression is evaluated repeatedly, once for each item returned by the context selector and using that item as a context item:

<linkDef name="somelink"

contextXP="//airport"

uriXP="concat('http://example.com/airport/', @iata)">

</linkDef>

Thus we get one link for each airport returned by the context selector, and each link identifies a different <airport> element as its context fragment. By contrast, when applying this link definition

<linkDef name= "somelink"

uriXP="//airport/@iata/concat('http://example.com/airport/', .)">

</linkDef>

the resource connector will be evaluated only once. While also here one link is created for each <airport> element, all links have the same context resource, which is the complete resource, identified by URI and complemented by a node tree. The individual links do not contain information about the individual <airport> element used in order to construct the target URI. When validating the target resources, dependencies on the triggering <airport> element can only be checked when using the first link definition, although both link definitions yield the same set of target resources.

Example: - code example –

The optional **target selector** specifies a final step of evaluation, which is applied to each resource obtained from the link connector. Currently, the target selector can only be an XPath expression (@targetXP). The initial context item for its evaluation is a node tree representation of the target resource. Use of a target selector is therefore only possible if the target resource can be parsed into a node tree. As long as this is the case, a target selector can be added, changed or removed independently of the resource connector and the context selector, as the selection of a target fragment is a final step of evaluation without impact on any preceding step.

The mandatory **resource connector** has a connector type and parameters dependent on the type.

#### Resource connectors

The resource connector is the key piece of a link defintion, as it maps the context resource to other resources. Such mappings may be defined in very different ways, e.g. locating target URIs in the content of the context resource, or evaluating a Foxpath expression. This heterogeneity of possibilities is represented by the concept of connector types: each connector type has a specific set of parameters. The current version of the Greenfox language supports six different connector types, each one with a specific set of parameters. Note that future versions may support additional connector types and also additional parameters for the types currently included.

**Table. Resource connector types and their parameters.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Connector Type** | **Parameter** | **Meaning** | **Note** |
| uri | @uri | The URI of the link target. | The URI may be relative or absolute. |
| uri-expression | @uriXP | XPath expression returning the URIs of the link targets. | The context item is a node from a node tree representation of the context resource: a node returned by the context selector, if the link definition contains a context selector, or the root node, otherwise. |
| href-expression | @hrefXP | XPath expression returning nodes containing the URIs of the link targets. | The context item selected as in the case of @uriXP |
| uri-template | @uriTemplate | A template to be resolved to the URIs of the link targets; with placeholders for template variables defined by templateVar child elements | Template variable references are replaced by single items from the template variable values; each combination of value items yields a URI. |
| templateVar/  @name | Name of a template variable | Must be an NCName. |
| templateVar/  @valueXP | XPath expression returning the variable value | The context item selected as in the case of @uriXP. |
| mirror | @reflector1URI  |  @reflector1FOX | URI of reflector 1, or a Foxpath expression returning that URI; reflector 1 is a folder containing the link context resource, which is mapped to a link target resource found at the same relative path under folder reflector 2 as the context resource is found under reflector 1. | When specified as a URI, it may be relative or absolute; when specified as a Foxpath expression, the expression value must contain at most one item; URI and FOX variants may be combined with URI and FOX variants for reflector 2. |
| @reflector2URI  |  @reflector2FOX | URI of reflector 2, or a Foxpath expression returning that URI | See parameter @reflector1URI or @reflector1FOX for more information. |
| @reflected-  -ReplaceSubstring | The URI obtained from the reflectors is modified by replacing this substring with a string supplied by @reflectedReplaceWith | Describes an optional “final” editing of the URI obtained from the reflectors |
| @reflected-  -ReplaceWith | The URI obtained from the reflectors is modified by replacing the substring supplied by @reflected-ReplaceSubstring with this string | Describes an optional “final” editing of the URI obtained from the reflectors |
| foxpath | @foxpath | A Foxpath expression returning the link target resources. | Atomic value items are interpreted as link target URIs, and node items are interpreted as nodes from the node tree representation of a target resource |

#### Resolving link definitions – pseudo code

The evaluation of a link definition can be described by pseudo-code (see listing x.x).

**Listing. Pseudo-code of the evaluation of a link definition.** The link definition is represented by a Link Definition Object ($LDO); evaluation output is a sequence of Link Resolution Objects (LROs), each one describing a single link in terms of context resource and target resource.

LROS($context-uri, $LDO):

let $context-tree = null

let $context-points :=

if (exists($LDO.context-selector)):

let $context-tree = node-tree($context-uri)

apply-expression($LDO.context-selector, $context-tree)

else:

if ($LDO.resource-connector.requires-node-tree):

node-tree($context-uri)

else:

$context-uri

for each $context-point in $context-points:

let $target-uris := apply-connector($LDO.connector, $context-point)

for each $target-uri in $target-uris:

if (exists($LDO.target-selector)):

let $target-tree := node-tree($target-uri)

let $target-fragment := apply-selector($LDO.target-selector, $target-tree)

LRO($target-uri, $target-tree, $target-fragment,

$context-uri, $context-tree, $context-point)

else if ($LDO.expects-target-tree):

let $target-tree := node-tree($target-uri)

LRO($target-uri, $target-tree, null,

$context-uri, $context-tree, $context-point)

else:

LRO($target-uri, null, null,

$context-uri, $context-tree, $context-point)

### A few syntax rules and patterns

Certain name suffixes signal the kind of expression represented by the attribute value:

* suffix XP – value is an XPath expression
* suffix FOX – value is a Foxpath expression
* suffix LP – value is a Linepath expression
* suffix NP – value is a node path expression

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Suffix | Meaning | Examples | Meaning |
| XP | Value is an XPath expression | exprXP | Expression used by a Value constraint |
|  |  | expr1XP | Expression used by a (Value|Foxvalue)(Pair|Compared) constraint |
|  |  | expr2XP | Expression used by a (Value|Foxvalue)(Pair|Compared) constraint |
|  |  | contextXP | Part of a link definition – selects the link context items |
|  |  | targetXP | Part of a link definition – selects the link target nodes |
|  |  | hrefXP | Part of a link definition – selects the nodes containing URI values |
|  |  | uriXP | Part of a link definition – constructs URI values |
|  |  | valueXP | Part of a link definition – constructs the value of a template variable |
|  |  | itemXP | Part of a DocSimilar constraint – selects items to be modified by an item modifier |
|  |  | ifXP | Part of a DocSimilar constraint – decides if a modification is applied |
| FOX | Value is a Foxpath expression | exprFOX | Expression used by a Foxvalue constraint |
|  |  | Expr1FOX | Expression used by a (Value|Foxvalue)(Pair|Compared) constraint |
|  |  | Expr2FOX | Expression used by a (Value|Foxvalue)(Pair|Compared) constraint |
|  |  | reflector1FOX | Part of a link definition – navigates from the current resource to reflector 1 resource |
|  |  | reflector2FOX | Part of a link definition – navigates from reflector 1 resource to reflector 2 resources |
| LP | Value isn XPath expression applied to a <lines> document or a <line> element from such a document |  |  |

## Constraint types

Having acquired an idea of the basic building blocks and concepts of Greenfox, the next thing to do is familiarize yourself with the major constraint types available (currently 19).

### Overview

The following table summarizes these types, including information whether the constraint can be used for folders or files only, whether it considers the resource in isolation or in the context of other resources, and whether the constraint is concerned with resource properties or resource contents.

**Table.** **The constraint types supported by Greenfox.** For each constraint type, a varying number of constraint facets is available. A binary constraint is applied to pairs of resources. An open constraint involves a link definition which serves a different purpose than identifying the second resources of pairs.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Constraint type** | **Element** | **File (F) or Folder (D)** | **Unary/Binary (U|B) /**  **Closed/Open (C|O)** | **Resource properties (P) or content (C)** |
| FileDate | <fileDate> | F, D | U/C | P |
| FileName | <fileName> | F, D | U/C | P |
| FileSize | <fileSize> | F, D | U/C | P |
| FolderContent | <folderContent> | D | U/C | C |
| Mediatype | <mediatype> | F | U/C | C |
| DocTree | <docTree> | F | U/C | C |
| HyperdocTree | <hyperdocTree> | F, D | U/**O** | C |
| XsdValid | <xsdValid> | F | U/C | C |
| Value | <value> | F | U/C | C |
| ValuePair | <valuePair> | F | **B**/C | C |
| Foxvalue | <foxvalue> | F, D | U/**O** | C |
| FoxvaluePair | <foxvaluePair> | F, D | **B**/**O** | C |
| ValueCompared | <valueCompared> | F | **B**/C | C |
| FoxvalueCompared | <foxvalueCompared> | F, D | **B**/**O** | C |
| DocSimilar | <docSimilar> | F | **B**/C | C |
| FolderSimilar | <folderSimilar> | D | **B**/C | C |
| Link | <links> | F, D | U/**O** | *(depends)* |
| TargetSize | <targetSize> | F, D | U/**O** | *(depends)* |
| Conditional | <conditional> | F, D | *(depends)* | *(depends)* |

### Constraint types - examples

The folder demo-constraints contains for each constraint type one or several example schemas. Note that the examples are not meant to give a comprehensive overview of the possibilites. Rather, they should give a feeling what can be achieved using that constraint type, and how using the constraint type looks.

## Outlook

[under construction]