

International Consortium Developing the Next Generation Earth System Grid Federation (ESGF) Distributed Data Infrastructure



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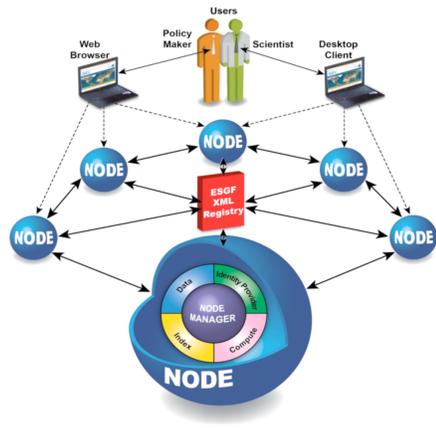
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Introduction to the Earth System Grid (ESGF)

- The Earth System Grid Federation (ESGF) is an international consortium and a globally distributed peer-to-peer network of data servers using a common set of protocols and interfaces to archive and distribute climate and Earth system model output and related input, observational, and reanalysis data to the research community.
- These Open Science data were produced by modeling centers participating in the World Climate Research Programme's (WCRP's) Coupled Model Intercomparison Projects (CMIP).
- The data are used by scientists all over the world to investigate consequences of possible climate change scenarios and the Earth system feedbacks that could occur as a result of continued or increasing anthropogenic emissions.
- Many of these studies form the basis for the Assessment Reports produced by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), including the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report from Working Group I, which as released 9 August 2021.

ESGF Conceptual Diagram



The distributed ESGF network, consisting of 26 data nodes that host over 15 million datasets from 37 data projects, has delivered more than 1.35 billion files totalling 41.57 petabytes (PBM) to 188 countries since January 2018.



Primary international contributors to the development of ESGF, represented by the logos above, include the Department of Energy (DOE), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the National Science Foundation (NSF) in the United States; the Infrastructure for the European Network for Earth System Modelling (IS-ENES) program in Europe; and the National Computational Infrastructure (NCI) in Australia.

Coupled Model Intercomparison Project (CMIP) Output

- The Coupled Model Intercomparison Project (CMIP) began in 1995 under the auspices of the Working Group on Coupled Modelling (WGCM).
- The objective of CMIP is to better understand past, present and future climate changes arising from natural, unforced variability or in response to changes in radiative forcing in a multi-model context.
- This understanding includes assessments of model performance during the historical period and quantifications of the causes of the spread in future projections.
- In addition to the major simulation experiments, CMIP has also included a series of smaller model intercomparison efforts, called the Coordinated CMIP Experiments, designed to understand specific aspects of model responses.
- Under the guidance and at the direction of the WGCM, all CMIP activities are overseen by a coordinated pair of subcommittees:
 - CMIP Panel – works with those organizing various focused model intercomparisons to integrate them with the set of standard CMIP experiments to forge a synergistic experiment design for each new phase of CMIP
 - WGCM Infrastructure Panel (WIP) – promotes coordinated development of infrastructure needed to support CMIP, most notably the archiving and serving of CMIP data
- In March 2022, the CMIP International Project Office (CMIP-IPO) opened alongside European Space Agency's Climate Office at its European Centre for Space Applications and Telecommunications (ECSAT) facility in Oxfordshire, United Kingdom. Contact the IPO team at cmip-ipo@esa.int.
- The CMIP-IPO coordinates the project under the governance of the WCRP Working Group on Coupled Modelling (WGCM) and is part of the developing Earth System Modelling and Observations (ESMO) Core Project, which coordinates all modelling, data and observations activities across WCRP and their key partners.



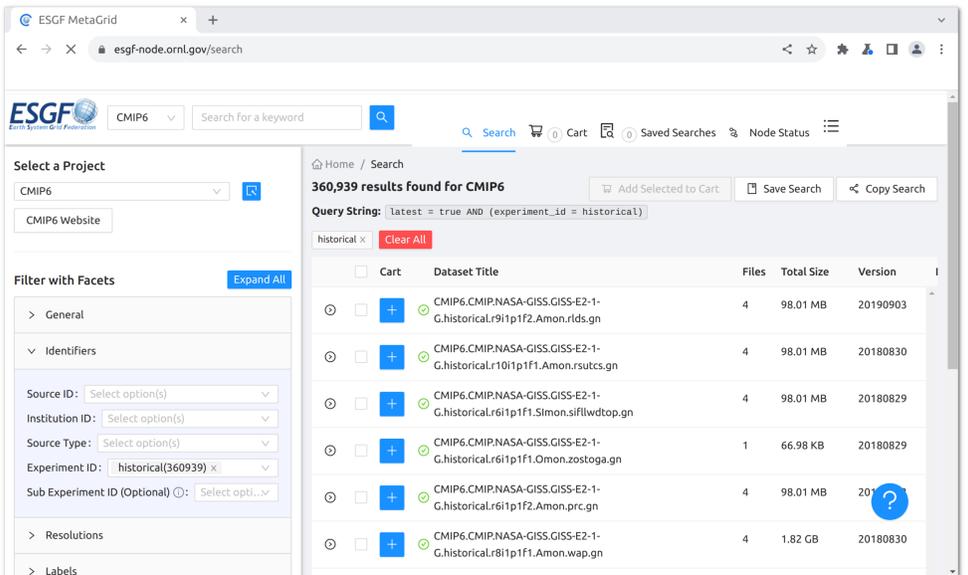
Contributions to CMIP6 came from widely distributed modeling centers located in more than 15 countries. These modeling centers published the output from their CMIP6 simulation experiments to ESGF, following a carefully designed controlled vocabulary developed by the Program for Climate Model Diagnosis & Intercomparison (PCMDI) at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory with support from the US Department of Energy.

Project	Total Datasets	Distinct Datasets	Replica Datasets
CMIP6	13,990,335	6,988,439	7,001,896
CORDEX	187,586	187,314	272
CMIP5	201,130	52,163	148,967
INPUT4MIPS	11,510	5,660	5,850
OBS4MIPS	210	210	0

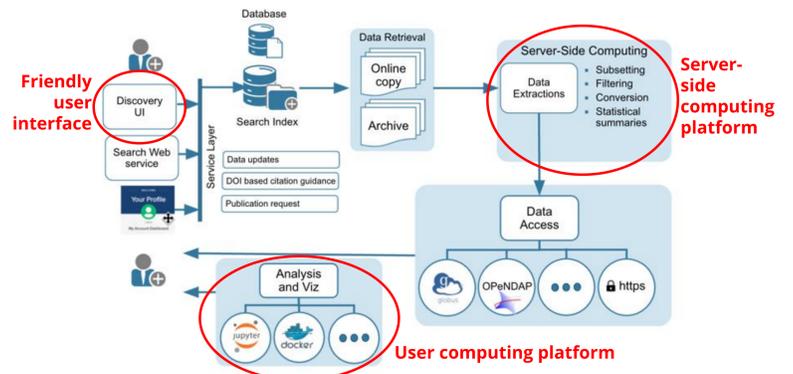
An important goal of CMIP is to make the multi-model output publicly available in a standardized format. In coordination with CMIP and the WIP, ESGF hosts and distributes model output, related forcing, reanalysis, downscaled, and observational data. CMIP6 output constitutes the largest proportion of data holdings by volume in CMIP6, exceeding 14 out of 16 PB of unique datasets. Including replica copies of datasets, total global ESGF holdings exceed 32 PB. (Updated 11 October 2023)

Modernizing ESGF Infrastructure

- The international ESGF consortium is modernizing the data system architecture and building tools and platforms for the research community in preparation for the follow-on CMIP6+ activity and for CMIP7.
- Employing newer computing technologies, we are designing, developing, and deploying new capabilities, including:
 - container-based data and index node software based on Docker and Kubernetes to simplify maintenance and operation of ESGF nodes;
 - institutional-based authentication to eliminate the need to maintain separate credentials only for ESGF;
 - index nodes operating in the cloud to reduce the total number of index nodes and improve the scalability and performance of data searches;
 - managed automation of data publishing to ease ingest of model output from modeling centers;
 - data access interfaces and data discovery tools to simplify finding and accessing desired data;
 - server-side computing capabilities to provide subsets and to compute summaries and value-added products;
 - data transfer tools and protocols, like Globus and S3-compatible interfaces, to enable high-speed, unattended data transfers and interactive on-demand streaming of data only as needed during analysis; and
 - user computing platforms based on Kubernetes and JupyterHub to offer analysis capabilities where the data are stored and avoid data transfers.
- A new, redesigned web-based data search user interface, called Metagrid, is available for testing. It:
 - Was developed on the popular React / JavaScript framework;
 - Offers new features, including a shopping cart, ability to save & share searches, and a search page tour & support dialog;
 - Provides user experience enhancements that make it faster to discover published data;
 - Will soon provide Globus integration for authentication and transfer to offer faster and reliable unattended data movement; and
 - Will be deployed across ESGF nodes by mid-2024.



The new Metagrid user interface offers a redesigned faceted search capability with a variety of new features.



Planned data system, tool, and platform enhancements for ESGF include development of new data discovery tools that simplify complex searches, server-side computing capabilities for subsetting and generation of value-added products, and user computing platforms that offer analysis where the data reside.

ESGF Outreach Activities

To better support the research community, ESGF will organize or host

- Webinars, tutorials, and bootcamps for:
 - Sharing data management lessons learned,
 - Instructing modeling centers on best practices, and
 - Fostering more efficient data discovery & access;
- Hackathons and workshops on:
 - Data standards and controlled vocabularies,
 - Data node and user computing deployment,
 - Developing machine learning tools using Earth system model data;
- ESGF Developer and User Conferences to:
 - Foster collaborative development of software tools and interface standards,
 - Provide a venue for early career researchers to learn data analysis approaches, and
 - Enhance integration with other data centers and Earth science data resources.



Ninth ESGF Developer and User Conference, held jointly between Oak Ridge National Laboratory (USA) and Toulouse (France), 18–20 January 2023

ESGF Webinar series recordings are currently available at <https://www.youtube.com/@esgf2432>

Acknowledgments

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