

Support for Writing Variable Length Strings in HDF Java Products

This document gives a rough estimation of the work for supporting variable length strings in HDF-Java products. Variable length strings are very common in many applications and partially supported in HDF-Java. There is a high demand for the capability of writing variable length strings in HDF-Java. Reading variable length strings is supported in the current HDF-Java. The following table shows a list of tasks for writing variable length strings and the estimation of the work (in hours).

Task		Design/doc	Implement	Testing	Examples
Dataset	Single vlen string	0	0	0	0
	Array datatype of vlen strings	3	7	4	3
	Vlen strings in compound field	3	9	4	3
Attribute	Single vlen string	3	13	4	3
	Array datatype of vlen strings	2	5	3	3
	Vlen strings in compound field	2	5	3	3
Total		13	39	18	15

*only for non-nested compound

**only for 1D of Array datatype

The total work is about 85 hours. Support for writing variable length strings in compound and array datatypes is limited to simple cases. Complicated cases such as nested compound and N-D array datatype are not included in this estimation.