Achieving High Performance I/O with HDF5

HDF5 Tutorial @ ECP Annual Meeting 2020

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INTRODUCTION
Tutorial Outline

• Foundations of HDF5
• Parallel I/O with HDF5
• ECP HDF5 features and applications
• Logistics
  – Live Google doc for instant questions and comments: https://tinyurl.com/uoxkwaq
Announcements

• HDF5 User Group meeting in June 2020
• The HDF Group Webinars
  https://www.hdfgroup.org/category/webinar/
  – Introduction to HDF5
  – HDF5 Advanced Features
  – HDF5 VOL connectors

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Resources

- HDF5 home page:  [http://hdfgroup.org/HDF5/](http://hdfgroup.org/HDF5/)
- Latest releases:
  - HDF5 1.10.6  [https://portal.hdfgroup.org/display/support/Downloads](https://portal.hdfgroup.org/display/support/Downloads)
  - HDF5 1.12.0  [https://gamma.hdfgroup.org/ftp/pub/outgoing/hdf5_1.12/](https://gamma.hdfgroup.org/ftp/pub/outgoing/hdf5_1.12/)
- HDF5 repo:  [https://bitbucket.hdfgroup.org/projects/HDFFV/repos/hdf5/](https://bitbucket.hdfgroup.org/projects/HDFFV/repos/hdf5/)
- HDF5 Jira  [https://jira.hdfgroup.org](https://jira.hdfgroup.org)
- Documentation  [https://portal.hdfgroup.org/display/HDF5/HDF5](https://portal.hdfgroup.org/display/HDF5/HDF5)

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FOUNDATIONS OF HDF5

Elena Pourmal
Foundations of HDF5

• Introduction to
  – HDF5 data model, software and architecture
  – HDF5 programming model

• Overview of general best practices

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Why HDF5?

• Have you ever asked yourself:
  – How do I organize and share my data?
  – How can I use visualization and other tools with my data?
  – What will happen to my data if I need to move my application to another system?
  – How will I deal with one-file-per-processor in the exascale era?
  – Do I need to be an “MPI I/O and Lustre, or Object Store, etc.” pro to do my research?

• HDF5 is an answer to the questions above and can hide all complexity so you can concentrate on Science

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WHAT IS HDF5?
What is HDF5?

• Hierarchical Data Format version 5 (HDF5)
  – An extensible data model
    • Structures for data organization and specification
  – Open source software (I/O library and tools)
    • Performs I/O on data organized according to the data model
    • Works with POSIX and other types of backing store: Object Stores (DAOS, AWS S3, AZURE, Ceph, etc.), memory hierarchies and other storage devices
  – Open file format (POSIX storage only)
HDF5 is like …

- hierarchical; collections of related information
- random access; subsetting
- standard exchange format; heterogeneous information
- high-performance; compact; scalable
- self-describing; extensible types; rich metadata

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HDF5 is designed for…

• High volume and complex data
  – HDF5 files of GBs sizes are common

• Every size and type of system (portable)
  – Works on from embedded systems, desktops and laptops to exascale systems

• Flexible, efficient storage and I/O
  – See variety of backing store

• Enabling applications to evolve in their use of HDF5 and to accommodate new models
  – Data can be added, removed and reorganized in the file

• Supporting long-term data preservation
  – Petabytes of remote sensing data including data for long term climate research is in NASA archives now

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HDF5 DATA MODEL
HDF5 File

An HDF5 file is a **container** that holds data objects.

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HDF5 Data Model

Dataset

Group

Attribute

HDF5 Objects

Link

Datatype

Dataspace

File

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HDF5 Dataset

- HDF5 datasets organize and contain data elements
  - HDF5 datatype describes individual data elements
  - HDF5 dataspace describes the logical layout of the data elements
HDF5 Dataspace

Two roles:

**Spatial information for Datasets and Attributes**
- Empty sets and scalar values
- Multidimensional arrays
  - Rank and dimensions
- Permanent part of object definition

**Partial I/O**: Dataspace and selection describe application’s data buffer and data elements participating in I/O

- **Rank = 2**
  - **Dimensions = 4 x 6**

- **Rank = 1**
  - **Dimension = 10**

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How to describe a subset in HDF5?

• Before writing and reading a subset of data one has to describe it to the HDF5 Library.

• HDF5 APIs and documentation refer to a subset as a “selection” or “hyperslab selection”.

• If specified, HDF5 performs I/O on a selection only and not on all elements of a dataset.

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Describing elements for I/O: HDF5 Hyperslab

• Everything is “measured” in number of elements; 0-based

• Example 1-dim:
  – Start - starting location of a hyperslab (5)
  – Block - block size (3)

• Example 2-dim:
  – Start - starting location of a hyperslab (1,1)
  – Stride - number of elements that separate each block (3,2)
  – Count - number of blocks (2,6)
  – Block - block size (2,1)

• All other selections are build using set operations

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HDF5 Datatypes

• Describe individual data elements in an HDF5 dataset

• Wide range of datatypes is supported
  – Atomic types: integer, floats
  – User-defined (e.g., 12-bit integer, 16-bit float)
  – Enum
  – References to HDF5 objects and selected elements of datasets
  – Variable-length types (e.g., strings, vectors)
  – Compound (similar to C structures or Fortran derived types)
  – Array (similar to matrix)
  – More complex types can be built from types above

• HDF5 library provides predefined symbols to describe atomic datatypes

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HDF5 Dataset with Compound Datatype

Dataspace:
- Rank = 2
- Dimensions = 5 x 3

Compound Datatype:
- uint16
- char
- int32
- 2x3x2 array of float32
How are data elements stored? (1/2)

Contiguous (default)

- Data elements stored physically adjacent to each other

Chunked

- Better access time for subsets; extendible

Chunked & Compressed

- Improves storage efficiency, transmission speed

Buffer in memory

Data in the file

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Compression and filters in HDF5

• GZIP and SZIP (free version is available from German Climate Computing Center)

• Other compression methods registered with The HDF Group at https://portal.hdfgroup.org/display/support/Contributions#Contributions-filters
  – BZIP2, JPEG, LZF, BLOSC, MAFISC, LZ4, Bitshuffle, and ZFP, etc.
    • Listed above are available as dynamically loaded plugins
    • See https://www.hdfgroup.org/downloads/hdf5/

• Filters:
  – Fletcher32 (checksum)
  – Shuffle
  – Scale+offset
  – n-bit
How are data elements stored? (2/2)

**Buffer in memory**

- **Compact**
  - Data elements stored directly within object’s metadata

- **External**
  - Data elements stored outside the HDF5 file, possibly in another file format

- **Virtual**
  - Data elements actually stored in “source datasets”, using selections to map

**Data in the file**

- Dataset Object Header

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HDF5 Attributes

- Attributes “decorate” HDF5 objects
- Contain *user-defined* metadata
- Similar to Key-Values:
  - Have a unique name (for that object) and a value
- Analogous to a dataset
  - “Value” is described by a datatype and a dataspace
  - Do not support partial I/O operations; nor can they be compressed or extended

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HDF5 File

An HDF5 file is a **structured container** that holds data objects.

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HDF5 Groups and Links

HDF5 groups and links **organize** data objects.
HDF5 SOFTWARE AND ARCHITECTURE
HDF5 Software

HDF5 home page:  http://hdfgroup.org/HDF5/
  – Latest release: HDF5 1.10.6 (1.12.0 February 2020)

HDF5 source code:
  – Written in C, and includes optional C++, Fortran, Java APIs, and High Level APIs
  – Contains command-line utilities (h5dump, h5repack, h5diff, ..) and compile scripts

HDF5 pre-built binaries:
  – When possible, include C, C++, Fortran, Java, and High Level libraries. Check ./lib/libhdf5.settings file.
  – Built with the SZIP and ZLIB external libraries

3rd party software:

• h5py (Python)

• http://h5cpp.org/ (Contemporary C++ including support for MPI I/O )

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HDF5 Library Architecture (1.12.0)

- HDF5 API and language bindings
- Virtual Object Layer (VOL)
- Pass-through VOL connectors (e.g., Async IO)

Native Connector

- POSIX
- MPI I/O
- SWMR
- S3
- HDFS

VOL connectors

- REST
- DAOS
- ...
- Data Elevator
- ADIOS

HDF5 Core Library

VFDs

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HDF5 PROGRAMMING MODEL AND API
The General HDF5 API

• C, FORTRAN, Java, and C++

• C routines begin with prefix: H5?
  ? corresponds to the type of object the function acts on

  Example Functions:
  
  H5D : Dataset interface    e.g., H5Dread
  H5F : File interface      e.g., H5Fopen
  H5S : dataSpace interface  e.g., H5Sclose

• Other language wrappers follow the same trend

• There are more than 300 APIs – pne can start just with

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General Programming Paradigm

- Properties of object are **optionally** defined
  - Creation properties (e.g., use chunking storage)
  - Access properties (e.g., using MPI I/O driver to access file)

- Object is opened or created
  - Creation properties applied
  - Access properties applied
  - Supporting objects are defined (datatype, dataspace)

- Object is accessed, possibly many times
  - Access property can be changed

- Object is closed
Standard HDF5 program “Skeleton”

- H5Fcreate (H5Fopen) → create (open) File
- H5Screate_simple/H5Screate → create dataSpace
- H5Dcreate (H5Dopen) → create (open) Dataset
- H5Dread, H5Dwrite → access Dataset
- H5Dclose → close Dataset
- H5Sclose → close dataSpace
- H5Fclose → close File

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GENERAL BEST PRACTICES
Memory considerations

• Open Objects
  – Open objects use up memory. The amount of memory used may be substantial when many objects are left open. Application should:
    • Delay opening of files and datasets as close to their actual use as is feasible.
    • Close files and datasets as soon as their use is completed.
    • If writing to a portion of a dataset in a loop, be sure to close the dataspace with each iteration, as this can cause a large temporary "memory leak".

• There are APIs to determine if objects are left open. 
  H5Fget_obj_count will get the number of open objects in the file, and H5Fget_obj_ids will return a list of the open object identifiers.
Memory considerations (cont’d)

• Metadata Cache
  – The metadata cache can also memory usage. Modify the metadata cache settings to minimize
    the size and growth of the cache as much as possible without decreasing performance.
  – By default the metadata cache is 2 MB in size, and it can be allowed to increase to a
    maximum of 32 MB per file. The metadata cache can be disabled or modified. Memory used
    for the cache is not released until the datasets or file are closed.
  – https://portal.hdfgroup.org/display/HDF5/Metadata+Caching+in+HDF5
  – See https://portal.hdfgroup.org/display/HDF5/H5P_GET_MDC_CONFIG to get default MD
    cache configurations and https://portal.hdfgroup.org/display/HDF5/H5P_SET_MDC_CONFIG
    to set new configuration
  – To keep MD cache from growing consider evicting objects on close
    https://portal.hdfgroup.org/display/HDF5/H5P_SET_EVICT_ON_CLOSE
HDF5 Dataset I/O

• Issue large I/O requests
  – At least as large as file system block size

• Avoid datatype conversion
  – Use the same data type in the file as in memory

• Avoid dataspace conversion
  – One dimensional buffer in memory to two dimensional array in the file

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HDF5 Dataset - Storage

• Use **contiguous storage** if no data will be added and compression is not used
  – Data will not be cached by HDF5

• Use **compact** storage when working with small data (<64K)
  – Data becomes part of HDF5 internal metadata and is cached (metadata cache)

• If you have **binary files** that you would like to convert to HDF5 consider **external storage** and use h5repack tool

• Avoid data duplication to reduce file sizes
  – Use links to point to datasets stored in the same or external HDF5 file
  – Use VDS to point to data stored in other HDF5 datasets

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HDF5 Dataset – Chunked Storage

• Chunking is required when using extendibility and/or compression and other filters
• I/O is always performed on a whole chunk
• Understand how chunking cache works
  https://portal.hdfgroup.org/display/HDF5/Chunking+in+HDF5 and consider
  – Do you access the same chunk often?
  – What is the best chunk size (especially when using compression)?
  – Do you need to adjust chunk cache size (1 MB default; can be set up per file or per dataset)?
  – H5Pset_chunk_cache sets raw data chunk cache parameters for a dataset
    – H5Pset_chunk_cache (dap1, …);
  – H5Pset_cache sets raw data chunk cache parameters for all datasets in a file
    – H5Pset_cache (fap1, …);
• Other parameters to control chunk cache
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HDF5 Dataset – Chunked Storage (cont’d)

• Cache size is important when doing partial I/O to avoid many I/O operations

• With the 1 MB cache size, a chunk will not fit into the cache
  – All writes to the dataset must be immediately written to disk
  – With compression, the entire chunk must be read and rewritten every time a part of the chunk is written to
    • Data must also be decompressed and recompressed each time
    • Non sequential writes could result in a larger file

• Without compression, the entire chunk must be written when it is first written to the file.

• To write multiple chunks at once increase the cache size to hold more chunks

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Effect of chunk cache size on read

• When compression is enabled, the library must always read entire chunk once for each call to \texttt{H5Dread} (unless it is in cache)

• When compression is disabled, the library’s behavior depends on the cache size relative to the chunk size.
  – If the chunk fits in cache, the library reads entire chunk once for each call to \texttt{H5Dread}
  – If the chunk does not fit in cache, the library reads only the data that is selected
    • More read operations, especially if the read plane does not include the fastest changing dimension
    • Less total data read

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Effect of cache size on read (cont’d)

• On read cache size does not matter when compression is enabled.
• Without compression, the cache must be large enough to hold all of the chunks to get good performance.
• The optimum cache size depends on the exact shape of the data, as well as the hardware, as well as access pattern.

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What is the best way to organize data in HDF5 file?

• It depends on your goals!
• Ask yourself
  – Do I need performance on write, read or both?
  – Do I read all data (variables) at once?
  – Do I want to use visualization tool that requires special organization of data?
  – ?

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How to organize data in HDF5 file?

Strong Scaling

Y

X

Process grid

C

R

HDF5 file

Weak Scaling

Y

X

Process grid

C

R

HDF5 file

Amount of data independent of R and C

Amount of data proportional to R * C

Where does stuff go in the file?

What's the layout in the file?
I/O Test Pseudocode (T=20, A=500, X=100, Y=200)

START the clock

ACROSS P processes arranged in a R x C process grid

    FOREACH step 1 .. T

    FOREACH count 1 .. A

        CREATE a double ARRAY of size [X,Y] | [RX,CY] (strong | weak)

        (WRITE | READ) the ARRAY (to | from) a single HDF5 file

    END

END

END

STOP the clock and REPORT the time / throughput

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Basic data organization options & variations

T - steps, A - arrays, X - rows, Y - columns (strong scaling)

1. All data goes into a single 4D dataset [T, A, X, Y] or [A, T, X, Y]
2. A separate dataset for each step, i.e., T 3D datasets [A, X, Y]
3. A separate step series for each array, i.e., A 3D datasets [T, X, Y]
4. A separate dataset for each array for each step, i.e., T*A 2D datasets [X,Y]

Variations:

- If all parameters are known in advance, you can get away w/ fixed layout
- If T is unknown, you can
  - Still use fixed layout under 2. And 4.
  - Pad (chunk size > 1 in the slowest dimension) your allocations under 3.
- Add optical sugar through the use of groups
- More than a dozen ways to implement this, depending on assumptions
PARALLEL I/O WITH HDF5

Quincey Koziol and Scot Breitenfeld
Parallel File Systems – Lustre, GPFS, etc.

- Scalable, POSIX-compliant file systems designed for large, distributed-memory systems
- Uses a client-server model with separate servers for file metadata and file content

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Types of Application I/O to Parallel File Systems

File-per-processor

Shared file (independent)

Shared file (collective buffering)

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Why Parallel HDF5?

• Take advantage of high-performance parallel I/O while reducing complexity
  – Use a well-defined high-level I/O layer instead of POSIX or MPI-IO
  – Use only a single or a few shared files
    • “Friends don’t let friends use file-per-process!” 😊

• Code, Performance and Data Portability
  – Rely on HDF5 to optimize for underlying storage system

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What We’ll Cover Here

- Parallel vs. Serial HDF5
- Implementation Layers
- HDF5 files (= composites of data & metadata) in a parallel file system
- Parallel HDF5 (PHDF5) I/O modes: collective vs. independent
- Data and Metadata I/O

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Terminology

• DATA – “problem-size” data, e.g., large arrays
• METADATA – is an overloaded term
• In this presentation:
  Metadata “=“ HDF5 metadata
  – For each piece of application metadata, there are many associated pieces of HDF5 metadata
  – There are also other sources of HDF5 metadata
    • Chunk indices, heaps to store group links and indices to look them up, object headers, etc.

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PHDF5 implementation layers

Application

HDF5 library

MPI I/O library

HDF5 file on parallel file system

Interconnect network + I/O servers

Disk architecture and layout of data on disk
(MPI-)Parallel vs. Serial HDF5

- PHDF5 allows multiple MPI processes in an MPI application to perform I/O to a single HDF5 file
- Uses a standard parallel I/O interface (MPI-IO)
- Portable to different platforms
- PHDF5 files ARE HDF5 files conforming to the HDF5 file format specification
- The PHDF5 API consists of:
  - The standard HDF5 API
  - A few extra knobs and calls
  - A parallel “etiquette”

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General Programming model

- Each process defines memory and file hyperslabs using H5Sselect_hyperslab
- Each process executes a write/read call using hyperslabs defined, which can be either collective or independent
- The hyperslab parameters define the portion of the dataset to write to
  - Contiguous hyperslab
  - Regularly spaced data (column or row)
  - Pattern
  - Blocks

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Example of a PHDF5 C Program

Starting with a simple serial HDF5 program:

```c
file_id = H5Fcreate(FNAME, ..., H5P_DEFAULT);
space_id = H5Sccreate_simple(...);
dset_id = H5Dcreate(file_id, DNAME, H5T_NATIVE_INT, space_id, ...);

status = H5Dwrite(dset_id, H5T_NATIVE_INT, ..., H5P_DEFAULT);
```

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Example of a PHDF5 C Program

A parallel HDF5 program has a few extra calls:

```c
MPI_Init(&argc, &argv);
...

fapl_id = H5Pcreate(H5P_FILE_ACCESS);
H5Pset_fapl_mpio(fapl_id, comm, info);
file_id = H5Fcreate(FNAME, ..., fapl_id);
space_id = H5Screate_simple(...);
dset_id = H5Dcreate(file_id, DNAME, H5T_NATIVE_INT, space_id, ...);
xf_id = H5Pcreate(H5P_DATASET_XFER);
H5Pset_dxpl_mpio(xf_id, H5FD_MPIO_COLLECTIVE);
status = H5Dwrite(dset_id, H5T_NATIVE_INT, ..., xf_id);
...

MPI_Finalize();
```

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PHDF5 Etiquette

• PHDF5 opens a shared file with an MPI communicator
  – Returns a file ID (as usual)
  – All future access to the file via that file ID

• Different files can be opened via different communicators

• All processes must participate in collective PHDF5 APIs

• All HDF5 APIs that modify the HDF5 namespace and structural metadata are collective!
  – File ops., group structure, dataset dimensions, object life-cycle, etc.


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Collective vs. Independent Operations

• MPI Collective Operations:
  – All processes of the communicator must participate, in the right order. E.g.,

 Process1
 call A(); call B();
 call A(); call B();

 Process2
 call A(); call B();
 call B(); call A();

• Collective operations are not necessarily synchronous, nor must they require communication
  – It could be that only internal state for the communicator changes

• Collective I/O attempts to combine multiple smaller independent I/O ops into fewer larger ops; neither mode is preferable \emph{a priori}\footnote{https://tinyurl.com/uoxkwag}
Writing and Reading Hyperslabs

- Distributed memory model: data is split among processes
- PHDF5 uses HDF5 hyperslab model
- Each process defines memory and file hyperslabs

H5Sselect_hyperslab(space_id, H5S_SELECT_SET, offset, stride, count, block)

- Each process executes partial write/read call
  - Collective calls
  - Independent calls

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Complex data patterns

HDF5 doesn’t have restrictions on data patterns and balance

Irregular hyperslabs created by union operators

\[
\text{H5Sselect_hyperslab(space_id, op, start, stride, count, block )}
\]
Complex data patterns -- Selection

H5S_SELECT_SET

H5S_SELECT_OR

H5S_SELECT_AND

H5S_SELECT_XOR

H5S_SELECT_NOTB

H5S_SELECT_NOTA

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Examples of irregular selection

Internally…

1. The HDF5 library creates an MPI datatype for each lower dimension in the selection

2. It then combines those types into one large structured MPI datatype

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Example 1: Writing dataset by rows
Example 1: Writing dataset by rows

Process P1

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{count}[0] &= \text{dimsf}[0]/\text{mpi\_size} \\
\text{count}[1] &= \text{dimsf}[1]; \\
\text{offset}[0] &= \text{mpi\_rank} \times \text{count}[0]; \quad /* = 2 */ \\
\text{offset}[1] &= 0;
\end{align*}
\]
Example 1: Writing dataset by rows

71  /*
72  * Each process defines dataset in memory and
73  * writes it to the hyperslab
74  */
75  count[0] = dimsf[0]/mpi_size;
76  count[1] = dimsf[1];
77  offset[0] = mpi_rank * count[0];
78  offset[1] = 0;
79  memspace = H5Screate_simple(RANK,count,NULL);
80  
81  /*
82  * Select hyperslab in the file.
83  */
84  filesystem = H5Dget_space(dset_id);
85  H5Sselect_hyperslab(filesystem, 
86      H5S_SELECT_SET,offset,NULL,count,NULL);
C Example: Collective write and read

/*
 * Create property list for collective dataset write.
 */

plist_id = H5Pcreate(H5P_DATASET_XFER);
H5Pset_dxpl_mpio(plist_id, H5FD_MPIO_COLLECTIVE);

status = H5Dwrite(dset_id, H5T_NATIVE_INT,
memspace, filespace, plist_id, data);

/*
 * Collective dataset read.
 */

status = H5Dread(dset_id, H5T_NATIVE_INT,
memspace, filespace, plist_id, data);
Writing by rows: Output of h5dump

HDF5 "SDS_row.h5" {
GROUP "/" {
  DATASET "IntArray" {
    DATATYPE  H5T_STD_I32BE
    DATASPACE  SIMPLE { ( 8, 5 ) / ( 8, 5 ) }
    DATA {
      10, 10, 10, 10, 10,
      10, 10, 10, 10, 10,
      11, 11, 11, 11, 11,
      11, 11, 11, 11, 11,
      12, 12, 12, 12, 12,
      12, 12, 12, 12, 12,
      13, 13, 13, 13, 13,
      13, 13, 13, 13, 13
    }
  }
}
}
In a Parallel File System

The file is striped over multiple “disks” (e.g. Lustre OSTs) depending on the stripe size and stripe count with which the file was created.

*And it gets worse before it gets better…*
Contiguous Storage

- Metadata header separate from dataset data
- Data stored in one contiguous block in HDF5 file
Chunked Storage

- Dataset data is divided into equally sized blocks (chunks).
- Each chunk is stored separately as a contiguous block in HDF5 file.

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In a Parallel File System

The file is striped over multiple OSTs depending on the stripe size and stripe count with which the file was created.

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Compact dataset

Raw data is written when object header is written

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PERFORMANCE TUNING

Scot Breitenfeld
Write Pattern Effects

Pattern 1 – General HDF5 pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Variable 2</th>
<th>Variable n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P₀ P₁ P₂</td>
<td>P₀ P₁ P₂</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P₀ P₁ P₂</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pattern 2- MPI-IO pattern

|          |          | P₀ P₁ P₂   |
|          | P₀ P₀ ... | P₀ P₁ P₁   |
|          | ...       | P₁ P₂ P₂   |
|          | ...       | ...        |

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Case Study – Data Layout Effects

Benchmark:

- 9 1-D variables with the same number of elements (~1e9).
- Total file size is about 40GB.
- Can switch between writing with MPI-IO or HDF5.
- Used independent IO for write.

https://tinyurl.com/uoxkwag
HDF5 Pattern 2 Implementation

• Use HDF5 compound datatype, then one big HDF5 write for each process

• An optional multi-dataset, access pattern specifier is in development.

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CGNS

• CGNS = Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) General Notation System

• An effort to standardize CFD input and output data including:
  – Grid (both structured and unstructured), flow solution
  – Connectivity, boundary conditions, auxiliary information.

• Two parts:
  – A standard format for recording the data
  – Software that reads, writes, and modifies data in that format.

• An American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics Recommended Practice

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Performance issue: Slow opening of an HDF5 File

- Opening an existing file
  - CGNS reads the entire HDF5 file structure, loading a lot of (HDF5) metadata
  - Reads occur independently on ALL ranks competing for the same metadata
  ➔ "Read Storm"

![Graph showing performance issue](https://tinyurl.com/uoxkwag)
Metadata Read Storm Problem (I)

• All metadata “write” operations are required to be collective:

```c
if(0 == rank)
    H5Dcreate("dataset1");
else if(1 == rank)
    H5Dcreate("dataset2");
/* All ranks have to call */
H5Dcreate("dataset1");
H5Dcreate("dataset2");
```

• Metadata read operations are not required to be collective:

```c
if(0 == rank)
    H5Dopen("dataset1");
else if(1 == rank)
    H5Dopen("dataset2");
/* All ranks have to call */
H5Dopen("dataset1");
H5Dopen("dataset2");
```

https://tinyurl.com/uoxkwag
Metadata Read Storm Problem (II)

- Metadata read operations are treated by the library as independent read operations.
- Consider a very large MPI job size where all processes want to open a dataset that already exists in the file.
- All processes
  - Call H5Dopen("/G1/G2/D1");
  - Read the same metadata to get to the dataset and the metadata of the dataset itself
    - IF metadata not in cache, THEN read it from disk.
  - Might issue read requests to the file system for the same small metadata.

➤ READ STORM

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Avoiding a Read Storm

• Hint that metadata access is done collectively
  – H5Pset_coll_metadata_write, H5Pset_all_coll_metadata_ops

• A property on an access property list

• If set on the file access property list, then all metadata read operations will be required to be collective

• Can be set on individual object property list

• If set, MPI rank 0 will issue the read for a metadata entry to the file system and broadcast to all other ranks

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Improve the performance of reading/writing H5S_all selected datasets

(1) New in HDF5 1.10.5

• If:
  – All the processes are reading/writing the same data
  – And the dataset is less than 2GB

• Then
  – The lowest process id in the communicator will read and broadcast the data or will write the data.

(2) Use of compact storage, or
  – For compact storage, this same algorithm gets used.

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SCALING OPTIMIZATIONS

Time (sec.)

- ORIGINAL
- READ-PROC0-AND-BCAST WITHIN APPLICATION
- COMPACT STORAGE
- FILE-PER-PROCESS
- MPI_Bcast

Greg Sjaardema, Sandia National Labs
Don’t Forget: It’s a Multi-layer Problem

Application
(Semantic organization, standards compliance …)

HDF5
(cache chunk size, independent/collective …)

MPI-IO
(Number of collective buffer nodes, collective buffer size, …)

Parallel File System
(Lustre – stripe factor and stripe size)

Storage Hardware

https://tinyurl.com/uoxxkwag
Tools
DIAGNOSTICS AND INSTRUMENTATION
“Poor Man’s Debugging”

• Build a version of PHDF5 with

   .configure --enable-debug --enable-parallel ...

• This allows the tracing of MPIO I/O calls in the HDF5 library such as
  MPI_File_read_xx and MPI_File_write_xx

• Don’t forget to setenv H5FD_mpio_Debug “rw”

• You’ll get something like this...

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Chunked by Column

% setenv H5FD_mpio_Debug 'rw'
% mpirun -np 4 ./a.out 1000

# Indep., Chunked by column.
in H5FD_mpio_write mpi_off=0
  size_i=96

in H5FD_mpio_write mpi_off=0
  size_i=96

in H5FD_mpio_write mpi_off=0
  size_i=96

in H5FD_mpio_write mpi_off=0
  size_i=96

in H5FD_mpio_write mpi_off=3688
  size_i=8000

in H5FD_mpio_write mpi_off=11688
  size_i=8000

in H5FD_mpio_write mpi_off=27688
  size_i=8000

in H5FD_mpio_write mpi_off=19688
  size_i=8000

in H5FD_mpio_write mpi_off=96
  size_i=40

in H5FD_mpio_write mpi_off=136
  size_i=544

in H5FD_mpio_write mpi_off=680
  size_i=120

in H5FD_mpio_write mpi_off=800
  size_i=272

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I/O monitoring and profiling tools

• Two kinds of tools:
  – I/O benchmarks for measuring a system’s I/O capabilities
  – I/O profilers for characterizing applications’ I/O behavior

• Two examples:
  – h5perf (in the HDF5 source code distro)
  – Darshan (from Argonne National Laboratory)

• Profilers have to compromise between
  – A lot of detail ➔ large trace files and overhead
  – Aggregation ➔ loss of detail, but low overhead

https://tinyurl.com/uoxkwag
h5perf(_serial)

• Measures performance of a filesystem for different I/O patterns and APIs
• Three File I/O APIs for the price of one!
  – POSIX I/O (open/write/read/close…)
  – MPI-I/O (MPI_File_{open,write,read,close})
  – HDF5 (H5Fopen/H5Dwrite/H5Dread/H5Fclose)
• An indication of I/O speed ranges and HDF5 overheads
• Expectation management…

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A Parallel Run

h5perf, 3 MPI processes, 3 iterations, 3 GB dataset (total),
1 GB per process, 1 GB transfer buffer,
HDF5 dataset contiguous storage, HDF5 SVN trunk, NCSA BW
Darshan (ECP DataLib team)

• Design goals:
  – Transparent integration with user environment
  – Negligible impact on application performance

• Provides aggregate figures for:
  – Operation counts (POSIX, MPI-IO, HDF5, PnetCDF)
  – Datatypes and hint usage
  – Access patterns: alignments, sequentiality, access size
  – Cumulative I/O time, intervals of I/O activity

• Does not provide I/O behavior over time

• Excellent starting point, maybe not your final stop

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Darshan Sample Output

Source: NERSC

https://tinyurl.com/uoxkwag
Chombo I/O (collective vs. independent)

AMRex I/O (collective vs. independent)

Lower is better

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ECP EXAIO - HDF5 PROJECT

NEW FEATURES AND APPLICATION SUPPORT

Suren Byna
ECP HDF5 project mission

- Work with ECP applications and facilities to meet their needs
- Productize HDF5 features
- Support, maintain, package, and release HDF5
- R&D toward future architectures and incoming requests from ECP teams

https://tinyurl.com/uoxkwag
Features: Virtual Object Layer (VOL)

- Abstraction Layer within HDF5 Library
  - Redirect I/O operations into VOL “connector”, immediately after an API routine is invoked
  - VOL Connectors
    - Implement “storage” for HDF5 objects, and “methods” on those objects
      - Dataset create, write / read selection, query metadata, close, …
    - Able to be transparently invoked from a dynamically loaded shared library, without modifying application source code (or even rebuilding the app binary)
    - Can be stacked, to allow many types of connector to be invoked
      - “Pass-through” and “Terminal” connector types

https://tinyurl.com/uoxkwag
VOL overview and connectors

HDF5 API

Operations on a Container

Virtual Object Layer (VOL)
- Pass-through
- Async.
- Independent Metadata
- Data Elevator
- Python Adapter
- ...

HDF5 Library Infrastructure

All Other HDF5 Operations

Terminal
- Native
- REST
- DAOS
- Hermes
- ...

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Features: Asynchronous I/O

- Allows asynchronous operations for HDF5 applications:
  - Implicit: For unmodified applications; transparently invoked by setting environment variable; conservative asynchronous behavior
  - Explicit: For applications that want more control of async operations; can extract more performance using async operations that return “request tokens” to app

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Asynchronous HDF5 Operations VOL Connector

- Implemented as a pass-through VOL connector w/background threads, using Argobots
- Transparent from the application, no major code changes
- Execute I/O operations in the background thread
- Lightweight and low overhead for all I/O operations
- No need to launch and maintain extra server processes

More details in PDSW Paper

https://bitbucket.hdfgroup.org/projects/HDF5VOL/repos/async/


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○ More details in PDSW Paper:
  ○ https://tinyurl.com/uoxkwag
Features: Data Elevator for using shared burst buffers - Write

- Data Elevator write caching using burst buffers
  - Transparent data movement in storage hierarchy
  - In situ data analysis capability using burst buffers
- Tested with a PIC code and Chombo-IO benchmark
- Applications evaluating Data Elevator
  - E3SM-MMF and Sandia ATDM project is evaluating performance
  - Other candidates: EQSim, AMReX
- Installed on NERSC’s Cori system (*module load data-elevator*)

![Graphs showing performance comparison between Lustre, DataWarp Command, and Data Elevator for different numbers of CPU cores and time in seconds.](image)
Features: Data Elevator for using shared burst buffers - Read

- ARCHIE - Array caching in hierarchical storage
- ARCHIE predicts data accesses based on a history of accesses, and prefetches them in faster storage layers for future use
- Automatic conversion of expensive non-contiguous accesses to storage devices into faster contiguous data accesses
- ARCHIE supports HDF5 I/O library and is part of the Data Elevator Virtual Object Layer (VOL) connector

https://bitbucket.hdfgroup.org/projects/HDF5VOL/repos/dataelevator

https://tinyurl.com/uoxkwag
UnifyFS for node-local storage (Project collaboration)

- A file system for node-local burst buffers
  - Developed by LLNL, ORNL, and NCSA team
- Goal: make using burst buffers on exascale systems easy and fast
- Results on Summit show scalable write performance for UnifyFS with shared files on burst buffers
- Designing Data Elevator to use UnifyFS as a single node-local burst buffer namespace for caching
- UnifyFS is designing an API for supporting HDF5, ADIOS, netCDF, etc.

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Features: Sub-filing

- Writing to single shared file is slow due to:
  - Locking contention

- A solution: Sub-filing
  - Multiple small files
  - A metadata file stitching the small files together

- Benefits
  - Better use of parallel I/O subsystem
  - Reduced locking and contention issues improve performance

- Designing production quality implementation of sub-filing in HDF5 using Virtual File Driver (VFD)
  - Will use node-local storage for caching

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Features: Querying datasets

• HDF5 *index* objects and API routines allow the creation of indexes on the contents of HDF5 containers, to improve query performance

• HDF5 *query* objects and API routines enable the construction of query requests for execution on HDF5 containers
  - H5Qcreate
  - H5Qcombine
  - H5Qapply
  - H5Qclose

• Parallel scaling of index generation and query resolution is evidenced even for small-scale experiments:

  https://tinyurl.com/uoxkwag

• HDF5 Bitbucket repo containing the “topic-parallel-indexing” source code: https://bitbucket.hdfgroup.org/projects/HDFFV/repos/hdf5
Features: System topology-aware VFD

- Taking advantage of the topology of compute and I/O nodes and network among them improves overall I/O performance
- Developing topology-aware data-movement algorithms and collective I/O optimizations within a new HDF5 virtual file driver (VFD)

Performance comparison of the new HDF5 VFD, using one-sided aggregation, with the default binding to Cray MPICH MPI-IO. Data was collected on Theta using an I/O benchmarking tool (the HDF5 Exerciser).

Features: Independent metadata updates

- Allows HDF5 metadata operations to be performed independently
  - Currently, all HDF5 metadata modification operations must be collective
    - Dataset / group creation & deletion, attribute create, write, etc.
    - Each metadata modification is “voted on” by other HDF5 processes writing to that file using non-blocking communication channels, then committed to the file
- IMM is a pass-through VOL connector
  - Allows IMM operations for any underlying HDF5 VOL connector
- Connector is extendible to multiple comm. channels: MPI, ZeroMQ, POSIX, etc.
- Async and IMM connectors demonstrate the power of pass-through VOL connectors to modify behavior of HDF5 library

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Applications: AMReX-based applications

- AMReX - SW framework for building massively parallel block-structured adaptive mesh refinement (AMR) applications
  - Combustion, accelerator physics, carbon capture, cosmology apps from ECP use this framework
- HDF5: Integrated HDF5-based I/O functions for reading and writing plot files and particle data

Liquid jet in supersonic flow

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Applications: EQSIM

- EQSIM is a high performance, multidisciplinary simulation for regional-scale earthquake hazard and risk assessments
- Integrating various I/O functionality using HDF5 file format - for portability and for performance
  - Converted reading HDF5 formatted file
  - Implemented checkpointing data to HDF5
  - Implementing SW4 image output to HDF5
Applications: WarpX and QMCPACK

- WarpX is an advanced electromagnetic Particle-In-Cell code
- Applied file system and MPI-IO level optimizations to achieve good HDF5 I/O performance (uses h5py)
- QMCPACK, is a modern high-performance open-source Quantum Monte Carlo (QMC) simulation code
- HDF5 optimizations in file close and fixing a bug improved I/O performance

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Facilities: Astrophysics and Neuroscience codes

- Supporting any I/O issue related tickets at facilities
- The following are astrophysics and neurological disorder pipelines that experienced high I/O overhead
- Used performance introspection interfaces of HDF5 to identify bottlenecks

Athena astrophysics code
40% of execution time in I/O, using HDF5 profiling tools identified a large number of concurrent writes; with collective I/O, reduced I/O portion to less than 1% of the execution time.

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Neurological Disorder I/O Pipeline
Identified that h5py interface was prefilling HDF5 dataset buffers unnecessarily and avoiding that improved performance by 20X (from 40 min to 2 min)
Facilities: HDF5 benchmarking

• Benchmarking HDF5 on Cori, Theta, and Summit each quarter
• Benchmarks:
  – VPIC-IO: a simple I/O benchmark that writes particles from a PIC code
  – BD-CATS-IO: an I/O kernel from a clustering code
Need help?

- HDF-FORUM [https://forum.hdfgroup.org/]
- HDF Helpdesk [help@hdfgroup.org]
  - Indicate that you are with ECP project
- For ECP teams:

  Contact the ExaIO POCs for existing collaborations and the PIs for new collaborations.
Thank you!

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