

The EDIT Cyberplatform for Taxonomy and the Taxonomic Workflow: Selected Components

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The EDIT Cyberplatform for Taxonomy is an EU-funded set of loosely coupled tools for the editing, management and presentation of taxonomic data in biology. This paper looks at the fundamental workflow issues the Cyberplatform is intended to address, then examines three of its main components from this workflow perspective. Using these components as an example, we will demonstrate concrete ways the Cyberplatform can improve and accelerate this workflow.

The paper starts by describing the Cyberplatform and its goals of loose coupling and interoperability, then looks at how these are built into the Common Data Model (CDM) Java library which forms the foundation for most Platform components. The first Platform component we examine in depth is the EDIT Desktop Taxonomic Editor, which presents a modern solution to the challenges of capturing the taxonomic workflow in software, by using techniques such as drag-and-drop, on-the-fly parsing, and unobtrusive feedback. The EDIT Specimen Explorer, the second component examined, helps find taxonomically relevant specimen and observation data by searching the GBIF (Global Biodiversity Information Facility) index using checklist-based thesauri to deliver more complete and targeted results, thereby improving and accelerating the workflow for exploring the taxonomic data available in the community as a whole. Finally, we look at a pilot project for print publishing software, which aims to remove the final bottleneck in the taxonomic workflow, the back-and-forth between taxonomist and publishing house.