Letter to OGC Members

June 28, 2012

On July 21, the OGC is changing the XLink schema reference (namespace) to the W3C XLink schema. This change is for all OGC standards that reference the OGC XLink schema. Therefore, developers of implementations that reference the affected schemas will need to make small code changes in order to enable an orderly transition to the use of the W3C XLink schema. This change will better align OGC standards with both current W3C Recommendations and broad community practices, thus improving application interoperability for our many members and their customers.

There is a complete set of beta schemas available:

* <http://beta.schemas.opengis.net/>
* <http://beta.schemas.opengis.net/BETA.SCHEMAS.OPENGIS.NET.zip>

And there is an email list for discussion:

<https://lists.opengeospatial.org/mailman/listinfo/beta-schemas>

Please subscribe!

The policy decision and technical fixes are explained in my April 24, 2012 OGC Blog post (<http://www.opengeospatial.org/blog/1597>). More information is available in an XLink transition FAQ. This FAQ is available here:

<https://portal.opengeospatial.org/files/?artifact_id=49563>

There have been announcements and blog postings for 6 months, yet apparently many organizations are only now beginning to look at the impacts on their software etc. Please have your developers look at the implications of this change!

The key issue is that schema parsers become confused (fail) when schemas with the same XML namespace are loaded.

OGC Member organizations that have made the necessary changes and tested their implementations against the beta schemas report that making the change was a relatively straightforward task and that no issues with the transition from the current schema-set to the new schema-set were encountered. Further, GML instance documents are not affected.

The OGC will continue to spread the word about the XLink issue:

* This letter is posted on the OGC website.
* OGC staff will issue a press release with a link to the letter and FAQ.
* OGC staff will send a notice to OSGeo, OASIS, IETF, ISO, NATO, DGIWG, WMO, JRC, CEN, etc.

We encourage you to take the necessary steps with your software and applications, and we ask that you do whatever you can to help raise awareness among those who might be affected by the XLink issue.

Carl Reed

OGC Technical Committee Chair