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Europlanet-IDIS: Towards a Planetary Virtual Observatory Prototype

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IDIS (Integrated and Distributed Information System) is part of the Europlanet project. Its purpose is to develop a prototype of a planetology Virtual Observatory (VO).

In the frame of its participation to this project, and in collaboration with VO-Paris (Virtual Observatory Paris Data Centre), the CDPP (Data Centre for Plasma Physics, based in Toulouse) has developed a data model to describe the wide variety of data products that can be found in the planetology community, which includes a wide variety of science thematics such as plasma physics, planetary surfaces, interiors, atmospheres or small bodies. This data model is making extensive use of existing standards provided by various groups (IVOA, IPDA, SPASE...) and its scope is to describe the scientific content of datasets, in order to be able to locate and retrieve data files corresponding to a given request.

Two generic protocols has been identified for data exchange: PDAP (Planetary Data Access Protocol), developed by IPDA and Obs-TAP (Observation Table Access Protocol), developed by IVOA. In this latter case, Obs-TAP has been adapted to better fit to the planetology community; this protocol is called IDIS-TAP.

The data model and the protocols are now tested in collaboration with VO-Paris and other Europlanet IDIS partners.