A Scalable Object Store for Meteorological and Climate Data

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What do we do?

Operational forecasts – **Time Critical**

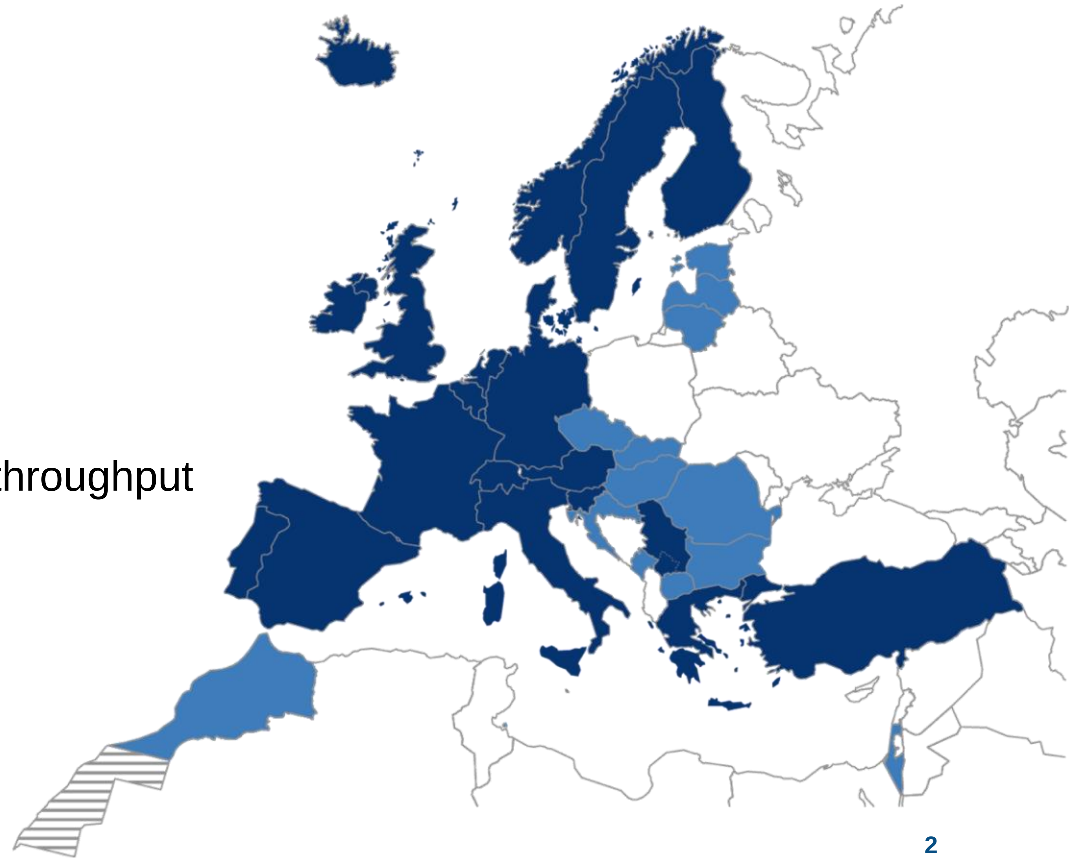
- 2 hours from satellite cut-off to deliver forecast products
- Twice per day, 00Z and 12Z

Research – **Non Time Critical**

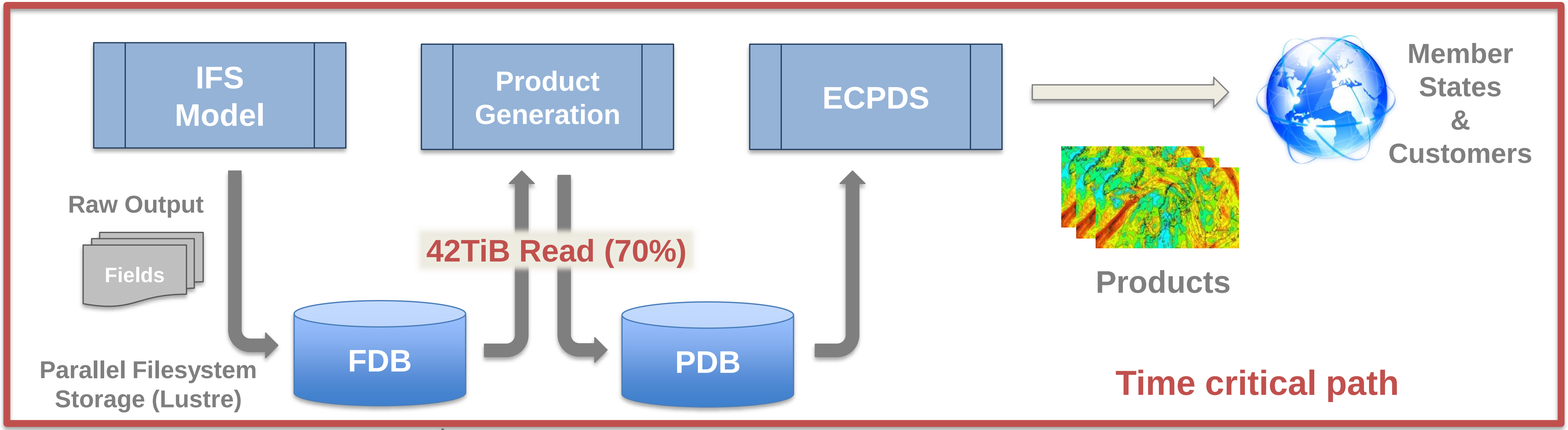
- Large part of the workload
- Re-uses current and historic analysis and forecast data

Central trade-off

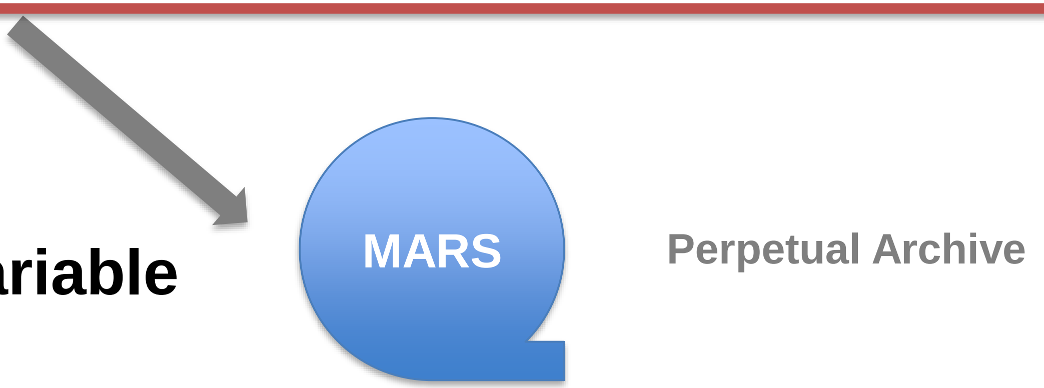
- **Performance**, minimise the time to solution, maximise throughput
- **Reliability**, minimise the worst-case runtime



ECMWF's Production Workflow



- 6.6M grid points
- 137 levels
- 904M values, **per variable**
- 18M fields



Estimated Growth in Model IO

2015

16km, 137 levels

Time critical

- 21 TB/day written
- 22 Million fields
- 85 Million products
- 11 TB/day send to customers

Non-time critical

- 100 TB/day archived
- 400 research experiments
- 400,000 jobs / day

2020

Increase: 2 horizontal, 1 upper air

Time critical

- 128 TB/day written
- 90 Million fields
- 450 Million products
- 60 TB/day send to customers

Non-time critical

- 1 PB/day archived
- 1000 research experiments

What is the FDB Today?

/rootpath/ **database-dir/**

Carefully named directories of related data

/index
{step=3, level=10, ...}
{step=3, level=11, ...}
{step=3, level=22, ...}

/data-file-1
GRIB ...
GRIB ...
GRIB ...

Each process writes to independent data files.

/data-file-2
GRIB ...
GRIB ...
GRIB ...

(MPI) Synchronisation required for writing to the index file.

- An in disk index of compressed meteorological data files
- Is a library not a service

What are the issues with todays FDB?

- **Consistency** must be explicitly managed in parallel
- Not **transactional**. Poor behavior on failure.
- Poor traceability

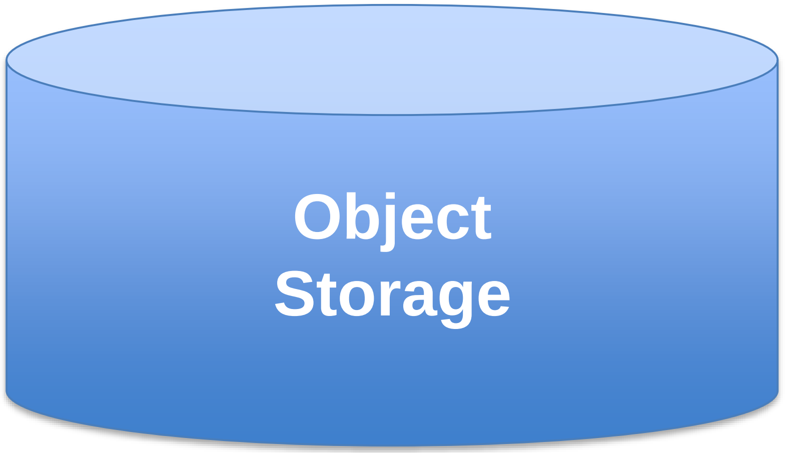
Trading consistency for performance incurs a human cost.

Object Store

- Key-Value stores offer **scalability**
  - Just add more instances to increase capacity and throughput
- **Transactional** behaviour with minimal synchronization
- Growing popularity, namely due to **Big Data Analytics**

Key: date=12012007, param=temp

Value: 101001...100101010110010



But ECMWF has been using key-value store for 30 years...

MARS

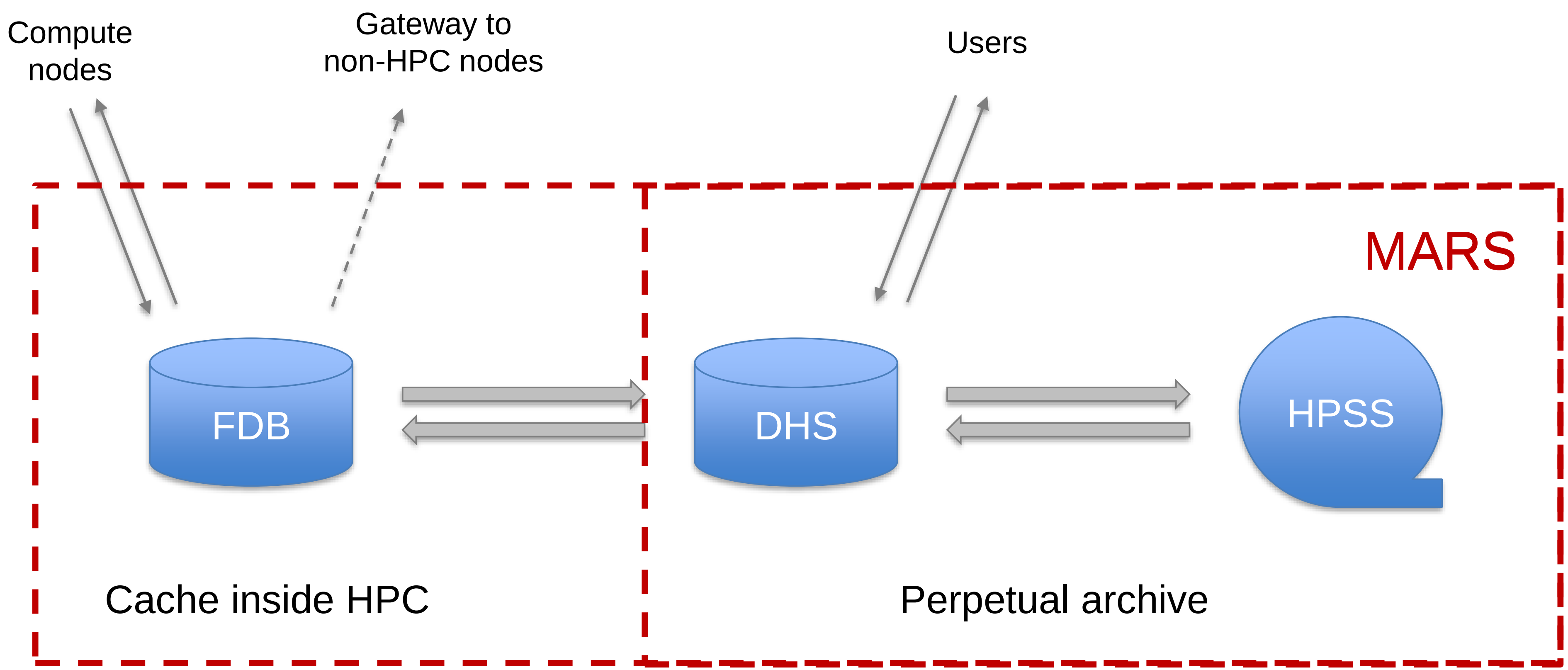
MARS Language

```
RETRIEVE,
   CLASS    = OD,
   TYPE     = FC,
   LEVTYPE  = PL,
   EXPVER   = 0001,
   STREAM   = OPER,
   PARAM    = Z/T,
   TIME     = 1200,
   LEVELIST = 1000/500,
   DATE     = 20160517,
   STEP     = 12/24/36
```

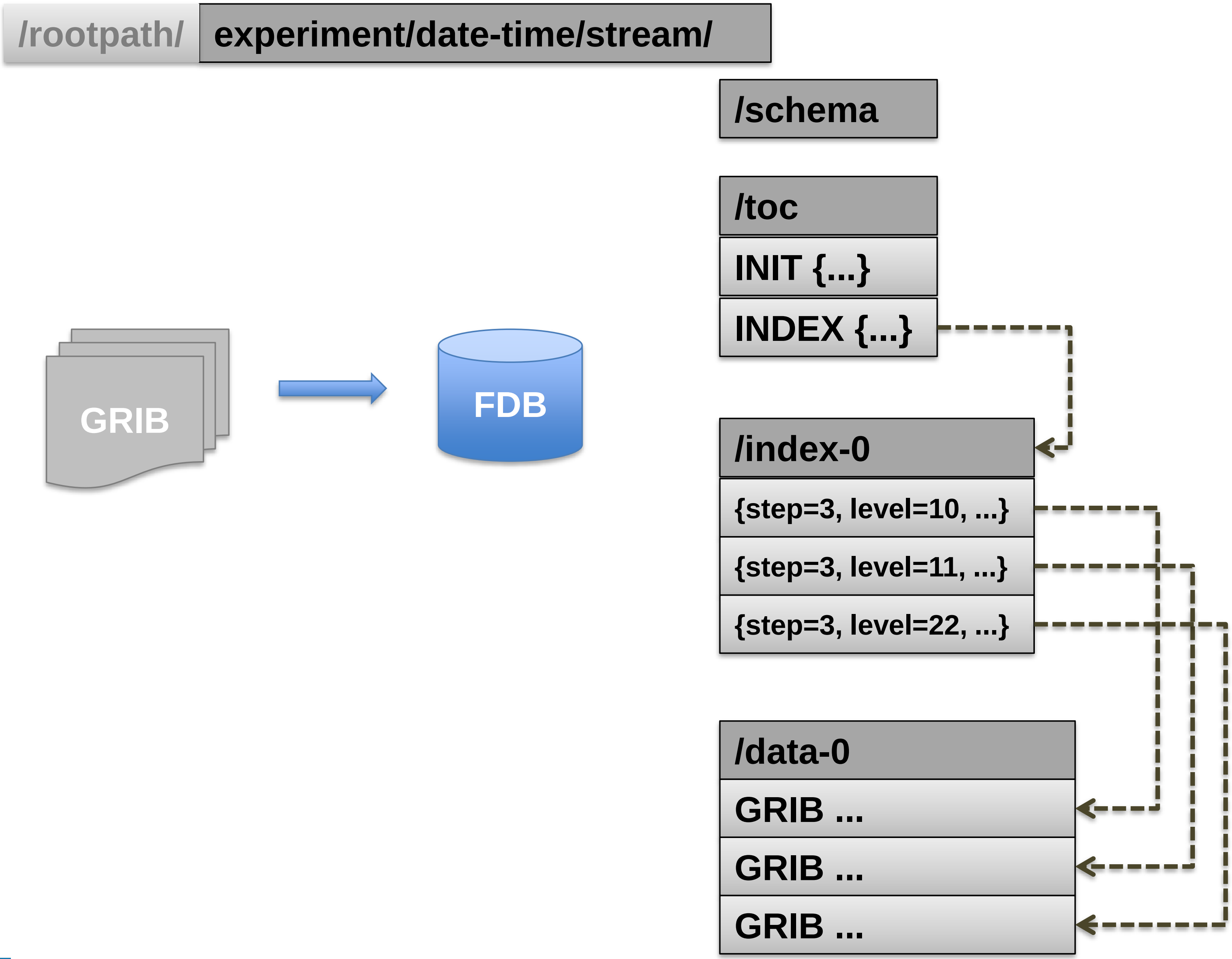
```
RETRIEVE,
   CLASS    = RD,
   TYPE     = FC,
   LEVTYPE  = PL,
   EXPVER   = ABCD,
   STREAM   = OPER,
   PARAM    = Z/T,
   TIME     = 1200,
   LEVELIST = 1000/500,
   DATE     = 20160517,
   STEP     = 12/24/36
```

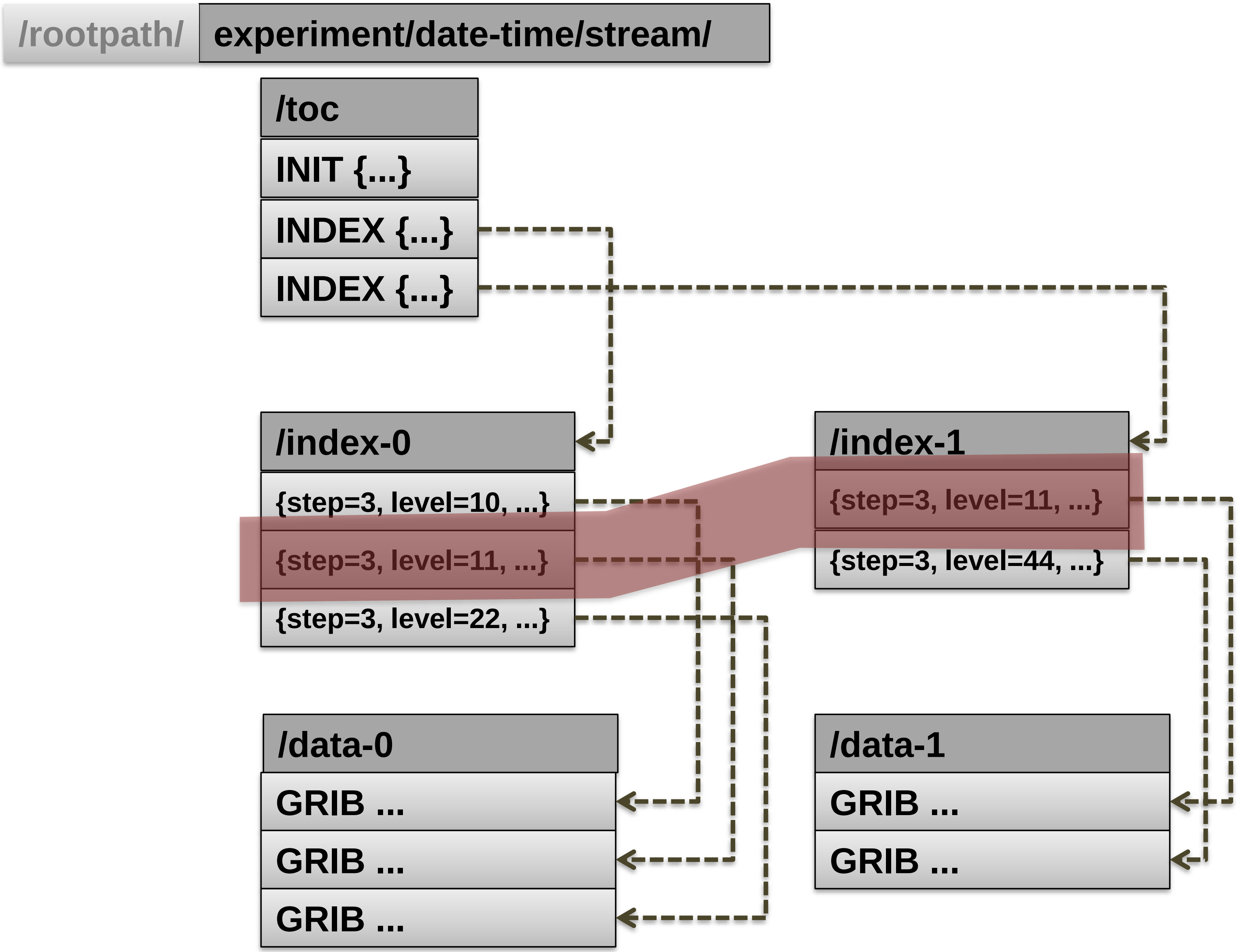
Unique and **semantic** way to describe all ECMWF data

What is the relationship between the FDB and MARS?



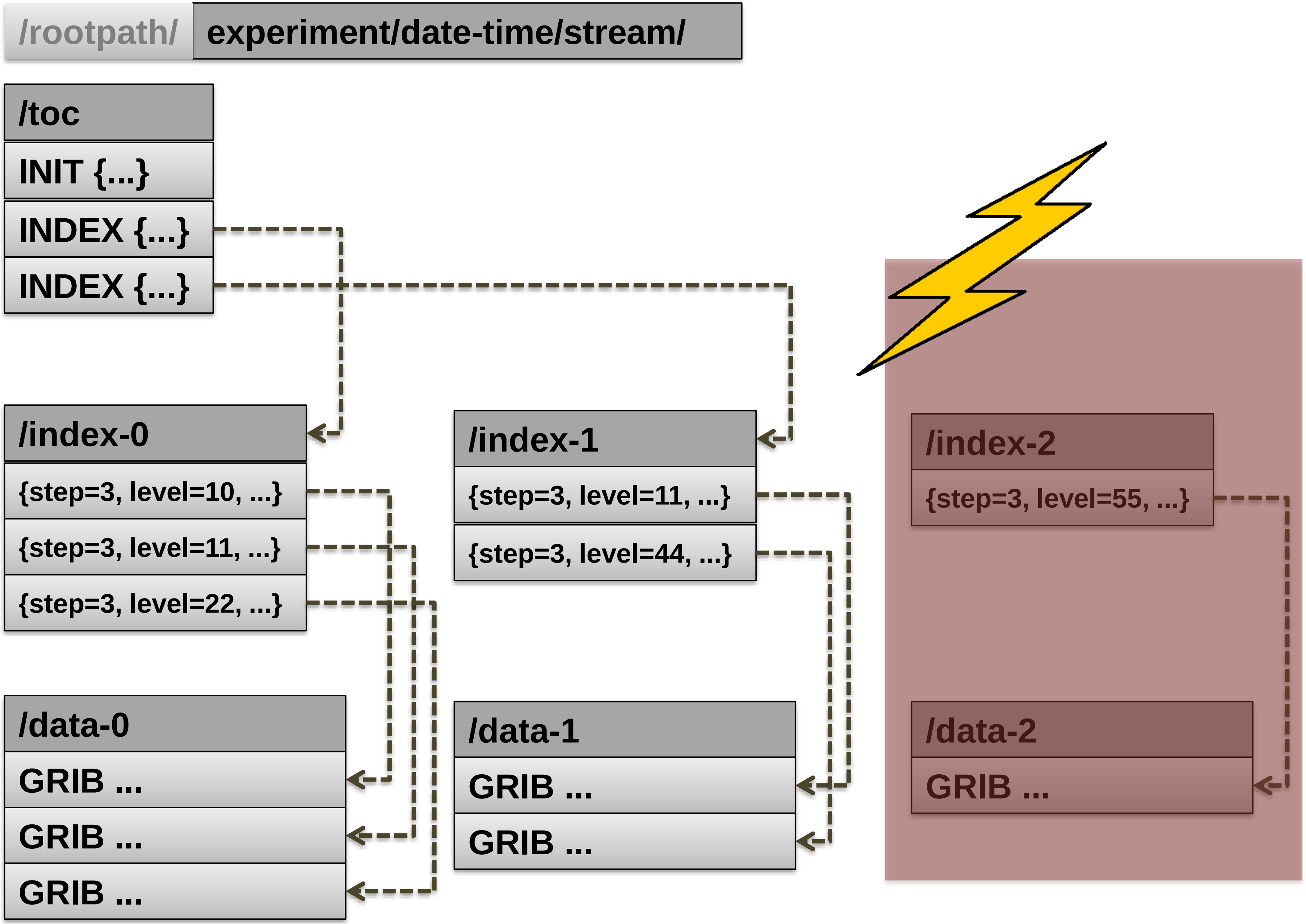
Application controlled HSM with archive


/rootpath/
experiment/date-time/stream/
/schema
/toc
INIT {...}
INDEX {...}
GRIB
FDB
/index-0
{step=3, level=10, ...}
{step=3, level=11, ...}
{step=3, level=22, ...}
/data-0
GRIB ...
GRIB ...
GRIB ...



/rootpath/
experiment/date-time/stream/
/toc
INIT {...}
INDEX {...}
INDEX {...}
/index-0
{step=3, level=10, ...}
{step=3, level=11, ...}
{step=3, level=22, ...}
/index-1
{step=3, level=11, ...}
{step=3, level=44, ...}
/data-0
GRIB ...
GRIB ...
GRIB ...
/data-1
GRIB ...
GRIB ...

ECMWF


/rootpath/
experiment/date-time/stream/
/toc
INIT {...}
INDEX {...}
INDEX {...}
/index-0
{step=3, level=10, ...}
{step=3, level=11, ...}
{step=3, level=22, ...}
/index-1
{step=3, level=11, ...}
{step=3, level=44, ...}
/index-2
{step=3, level=55, ...}
/data-0
GRIB ...
GRIB ...
GRIB ...
/data-1
GRIB ...
GRIB ...
/data-2
GRIB ...

Schemas, appending and write performance

1. Segregate data into logically independent (re-runnable) units

```
# Ensemble forecast
[ class, expver, stream=enfo/efov, date, time, domain, number?
       [ type, levtype
               [ step, quantile?, levelist?, param ]]]

# High-resolution forecast
[ class, expver, stream=oper/dcda/scda, date, time, domain
       [ type, levtype
               [ step, levelist?, param ]]]
```

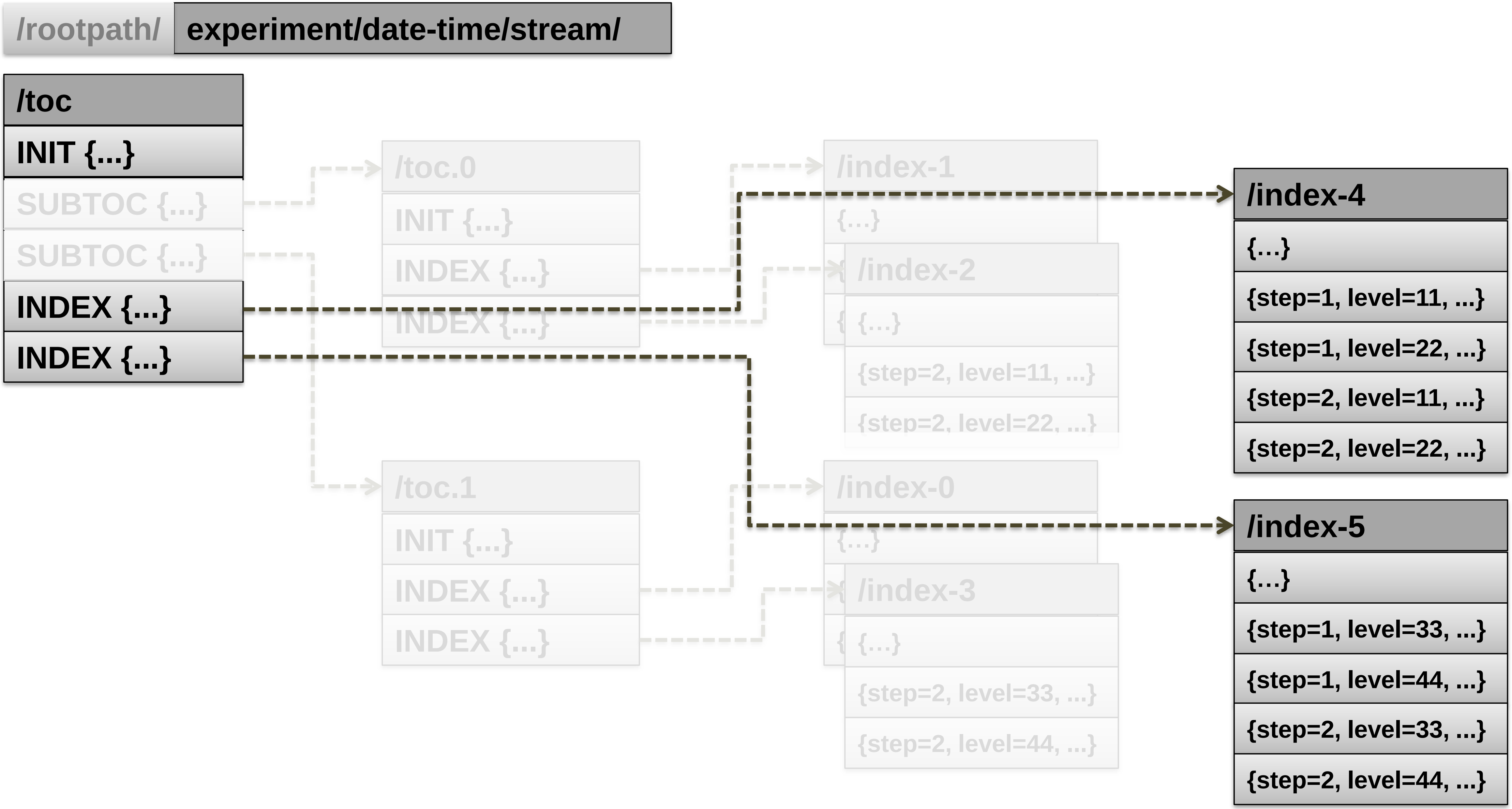
Empirically: 11 appends per second*

52 forecasts, 10 writers, 240 steps

→ *Minimum* 35 / second

2. Cheat …

* From 8 competing nodes, on operational Lustre filesystems at ECMWF


/rootpath/
experiment/date-time/stream/
/toc
INIT {...}
SUBTOC {...}
SUBTOC {...}
INDEX {...}
INDEX {...}
/toc.0
INIT {...}
INDEX {...}
INDEX {...}
/toc.1
INIT {...}
INDEX {...}
INDEX {...}
/index-1
{...}
/index-2
{...}
{step=2, level=11, ...}
{step=2, level=22, ...}
/index-0
{...}
/index-3
{...}
{step=2, level=33, ...}
{step=2, level=44, ...}
/index-4
{...}
{step=1, level=11, ...}
{step=1, level=22, ...}
{step=2, level=11, ...}
{step=2, level=22, ...}
/index-5
{...}
{step=1, level=33, ...}
{step=1, level=44, ...}
{step=2, level=33, ...}
{step=2, level=44, ...}

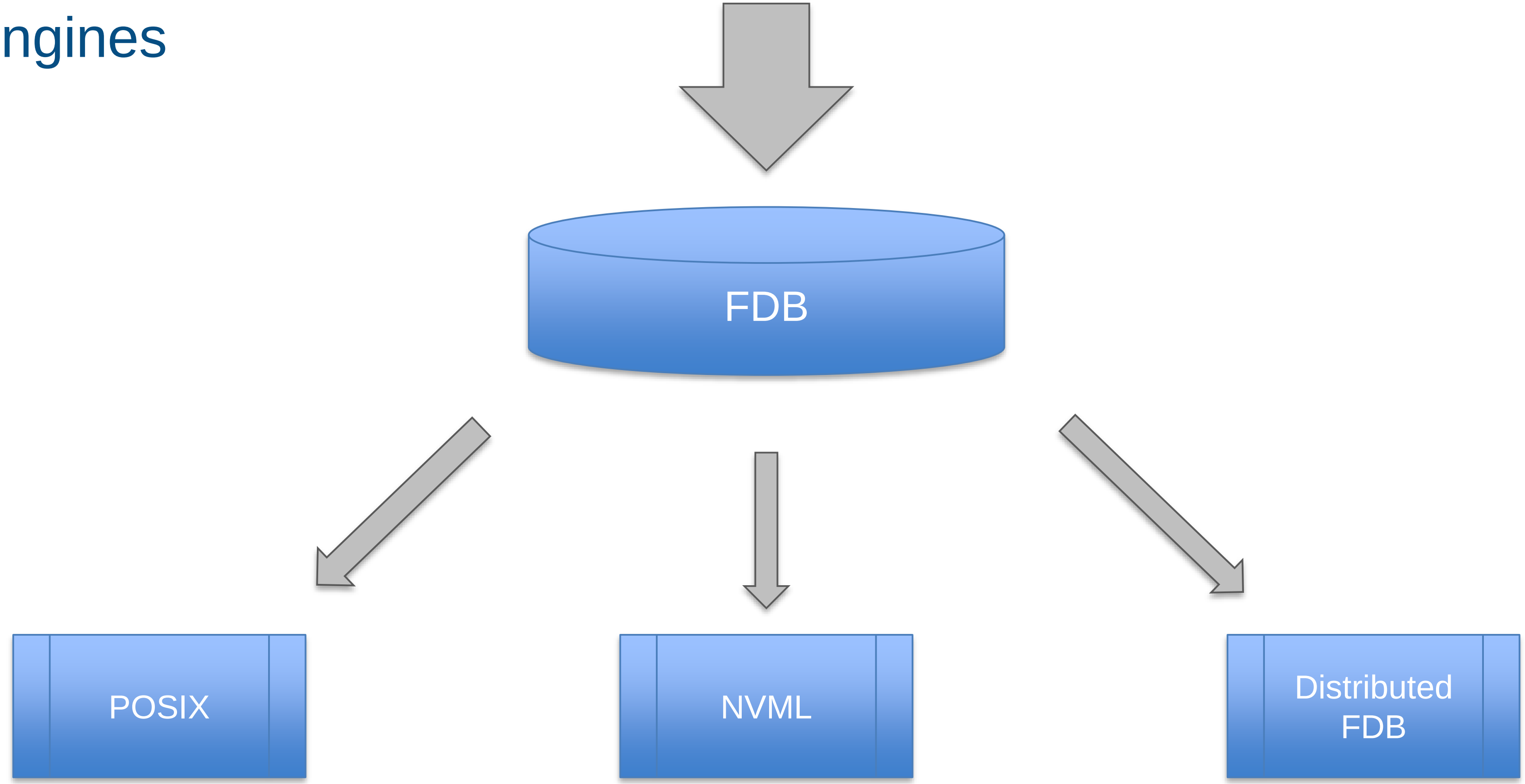
Reading from the FDB5?

- Data transfer is similar to existing FDB. **Like for like replacement**
  - Limited by bulk movement of data from disk.

No. Fields	Current FDB (fastest / slowest)		FDB5 (fastest / slowest)	
1	0.42	0.61	0.28	3.34
10	0.75	8.90	0.8	4.07
100	2.57	20.61	1.28	30.34
1000	23.53	533.97	6.95	418.59
10000	1989.38	2,053.75	2,289.28	2,469.92
100000	> 170,000 (max walltime)		33,846	51,777.49

- Performance worse until sub-TOCs are masked.
- Sensitive to filesystem caching.
- For real requests, generally hardware bound

FDB5 engines



Lustre
GPFS
…

Move away from files.
Avoid global consistency requirements.

New opportunities to adapt data workflows

New memory technologies are coming soon

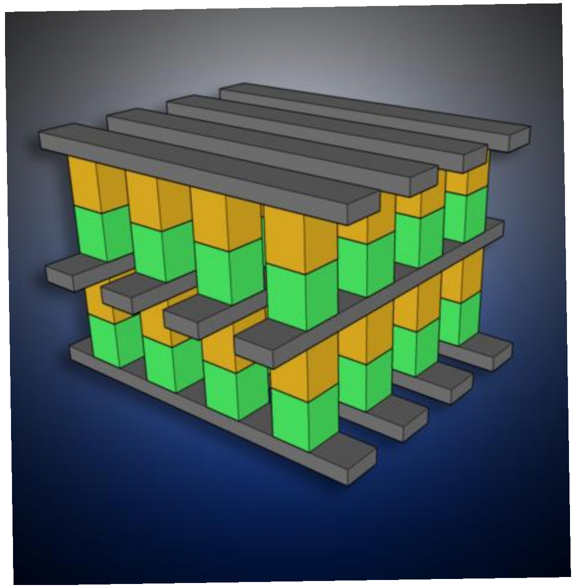
3D XPoint is coming soon

- Storage density similar to NAND flash memory
- Better durability than flash
- Speed and latency between NAND and DRAM
- Priced between NAND and DRAM

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/3D_XPoint

Many questions

- How much will be affordable
- Likely not on every node
  - How do we distribute it, and access it remotely

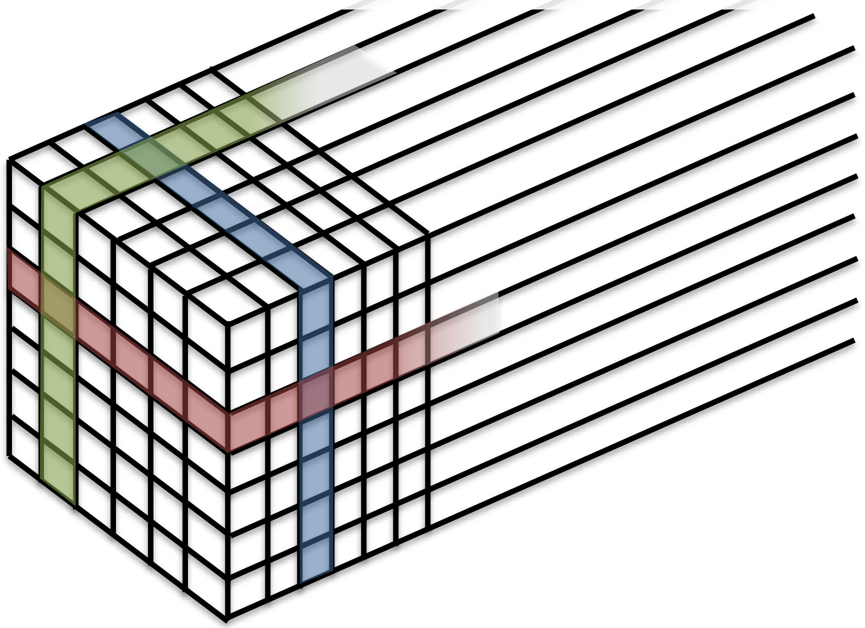


Storing and accessing dense meteorological data

Byte Addressable Hypercubes

- Longitude (3600)
- Latitude (1800)
- Atmospheric levels, Physical parameters (~200)
- Time steps (~100)
- Probabilistic perturbations (50)

Clients want to do **different** analytics across **multiple** axis



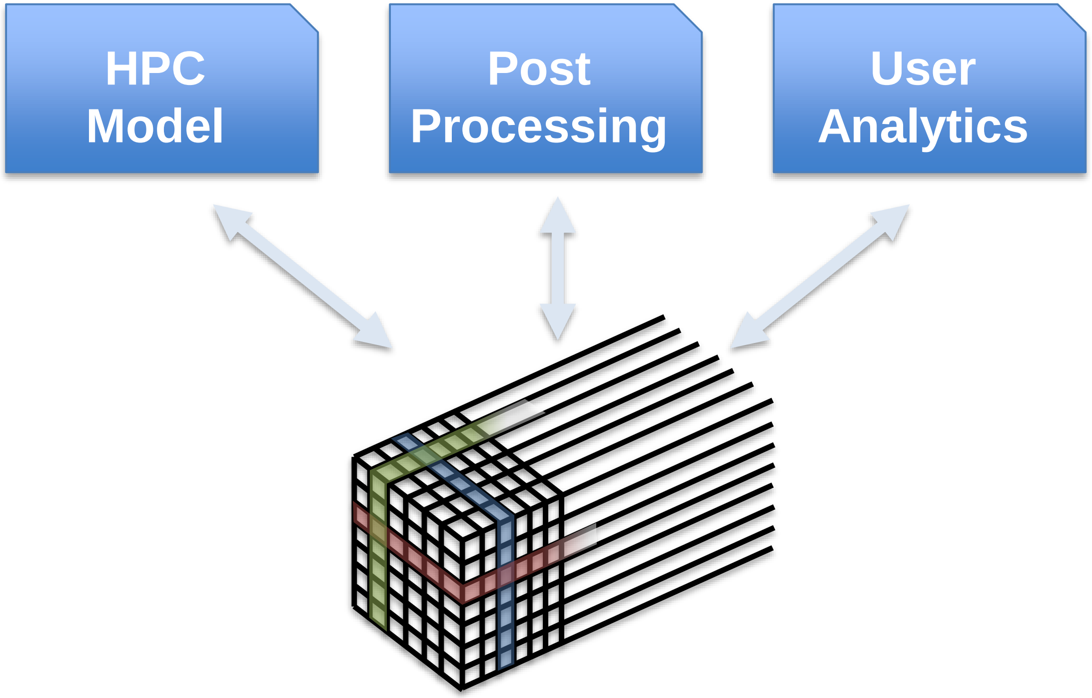
@ double precision

- 9km **48 TiB**
- 5km **192 TiB**
- 1.25km **1.82 PiB**

Not included: *historical observations, multiple models, etc...*

Data Centric Computing

- **Producer-Consumer** model, where *HPC is producer*
- Use data while is **hot**
- Bring **users** to the data, ship ***functions***
- Don't use **files,** use **science to communicate, ** use **rich metadata**
- Need to **build shared components** amongst the communities...



ECMWF

Part of *ECMWF's Scalability Programme*

- **Large buffers** for **time critical** applications
  - Can store **entire model output** in "memory"
  - Similar to *burst buffers* but in application space

- ***Persistence*** *until archival, for* ***non time critical***
  - *adding a new layer in the hierarchical storage system view*

- ***New workloads***
  - *Bring computation to the data for in-situ analytics.*

Partners

- EPCC (Proj. Leader)
- Intel
- Fujitsu
- T.U. Dresden
- Barcelona S.C.
- Allinea Software
- ARCTUR
- ECMWF

http://www.nextgenio.eu - EU funded H2020 project, runs 2015-2018

Messages to take home

FDB5 future-proofs our storage stack

- **Consistent**, **transactional** parallel access
- Hardware limited performance

Multiple engines permit new usage patterns, and new ways of working

- Data pipelines
- In-situ data processing

NVRAM is coming

- We/you need to adapt

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