

EML - Bug #5617

date time format strings need a system

06/05/2012 01:45 PM - Margaret O'Brien

Status:	New	Start date:	06/05/2012
Priority:	Normal	Due date:	
Assignee:	Matt Jones	% Done:	0%
Category:	eml - general bugs	Estimated time:	0.00 hour
Target version:	Unspecified	Spent time:	0.00 hour
Bugzilla-Id:	5617		

**Description**

EML has a formatString element that takes text strings, and the spec give several examples. Translating dates would be much easier if the system which specified the format was included.

This data: 01May2007

The spec example suggests DDWWWYYYY  
which is specified by the system [unknown]

Another representation of this date is

<formatString>DDMonYYYY</formatString>

which can be read directly by postgresql. So using something like this:  
<formatString system="sql">DDMonYYYY</formatString>

would be more informative and make interpretation easier for code like the DML.

example doc using this date format: knb-liter-sbc.61.1

History

#1 - 07/05/2012 08:14 AM - gastil gastil

Hi Matt, Well stated. I would assign higher than normal importance to this one because the temporal dimension of ecological data is so important and this limatation in translating dateTime formatStrings has held back some important features in pasta. - Gastil

#2 - 07/05/2012 09:39 AM - Matt Jones

The formatString uses the ISO8601 formatting codes. This is in keeping with EML's recommendation that people use ISO8601 compliant dates whenever possible. Supporting multiple different date formatting coding systems just complicates things for consumers, as they then have to be able to do m\*n conversions of format strings. As it stands now, we only need 1\*n conversions, because they would all get mapped to ISO8601 format strings. So, any software that consumes format strings has to translate from ISO8601 strings to their desired format, e.g., postgresql in your example. Moving to a system where EML allowed multiple types of formatting strings would certainly make it harder for application developers to fully support all of the legal values that might be found in a EML document from this modified schema. I think it is better to leave it as is with a single format string approach (ISO8601).

#3 - 03/27/2013 02:31 PM - Redmine Admin

Original Bugzilla ID was 5617