

Data management report details: File formats

IPBES data management reports

IPBES Data Management Tutorials

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File Format Basics

- Appendix II of the IPBES Data Management Policy has the official word on file formats
- When possible, data inside files should be:
 - Non-proprietary
 - Usable by non-proprietary software
 - Human readable (text files should be UTF-8)

Some Examples

Data Type	Good	Less Good
Text	Plain text (.txt) coded in UTF-8	PDF, RTF, HTML docx, pptx, LaTeX
Spreadsheets/Tables	Comma or tab delimited text (e.g. csv)	Excel or OpenDocument spreadsheets
Images	.png, uncompressed tiff	gif and jpg are proprietary, but very common
Sound	.wav	.mp3, .mp4
Geospatial data	GeoJSON, KML	Shapefiles

Drawn from Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich (ETH) Library

Further Recommendations

- [National Archives](https://www.archives.gov/preservation/formats)
(<https://www.archives.gov/preservation/formats>)
the guidelines of the National Archives. Very detailed
- [ETH Library](https://documentation.library.ethz.ch/display/DD/File+formats+for+archiving)
(<https://documentation.library.ethz.ch/display/DD/File+formats+for+archiving>) for a nice and concise summary of file formats
- [Best File Formats for Archiving](https://suchanek.name/texts/archiving/)
(<https://suchanek.name/texts/archiving/>) for a comprehensive article.

Thank You!

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