

UN Comtrade Database System

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Overview

- What is UN Comtrade ?
 - Data Processing System
 - Management System
 - Data Retrieval System (on Internet)
- Highlights
 - Key-elements
 - Personalization

What is UN Comtrade?

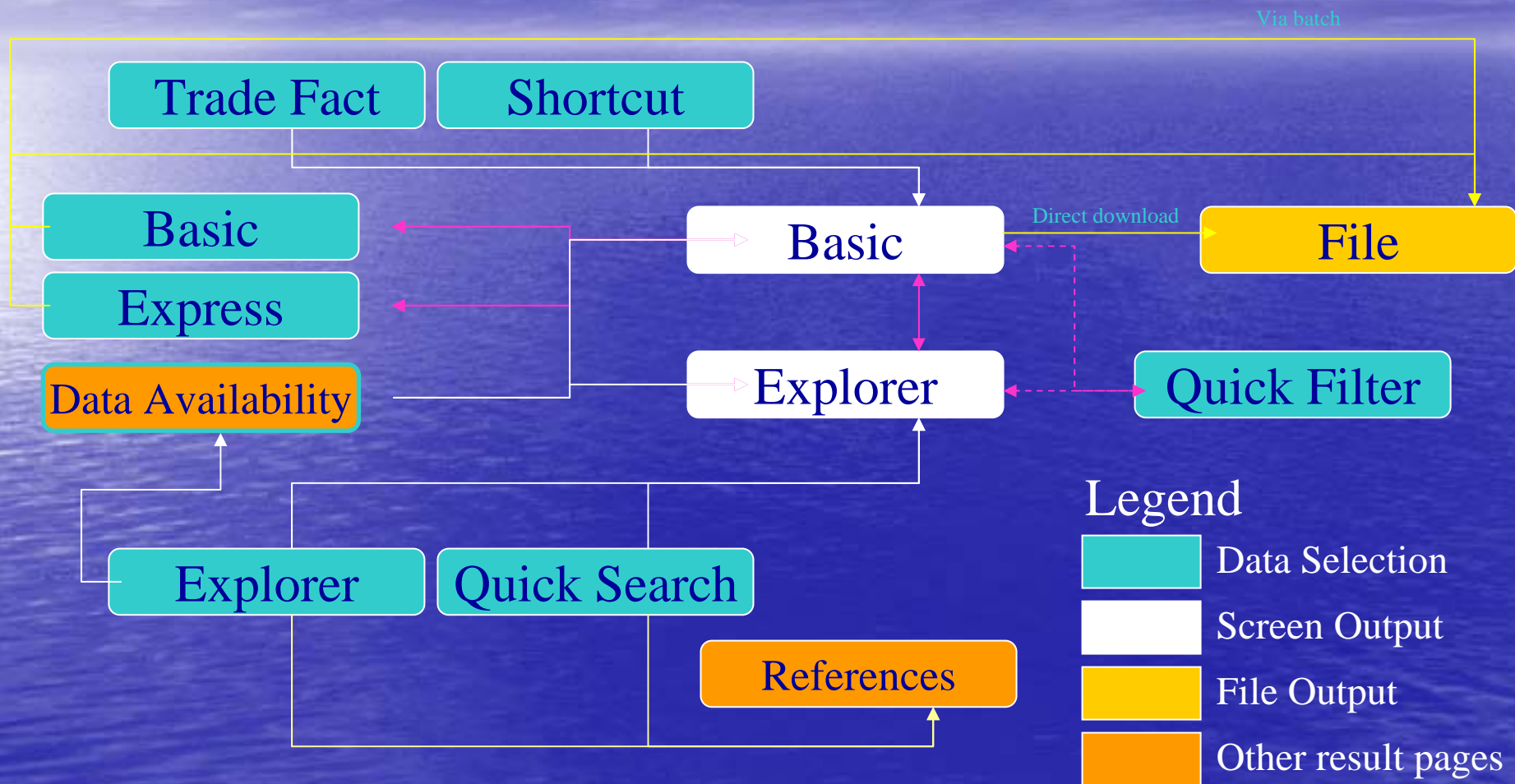
- **United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics Database**
 - Imports, Exports, Re-exports
 - Commodity by Trading Partner
 - Annual data
 - Value in US dollars
 - Net weight and secondary quantities
 - About 150 reporters per year (>93% of the World Trade)

Key elements

- Classifications and Commodity Codes
 - Harmonized System
 - SITC
- Reporter
- Partner
- Trade Flow
- Year



Data Selection & Extraction Overview



Data Selection



- Shortcut Query
- Basic Selection
- Express Selection
- Comtrade Explorer
- Quick Search
- Quick Filter
- Via Data Availability

Data Selection (cont)

- Shortcut Query
 - For casual user with specific query
 - Redirect to Data Availability when hitting empty result
- Basic Selection
 - Traditional Selection of Reporters, Commodities and Partners
 - Load/Save query
 - More options (such as filtering by value, or batch submission)

Data Selection (cont)

- Express Selection
 - Code based
 - Has more features than Basic Selection
 - For an experienced Comtrade User
- Comtrade Explorer
 - “Google like” search
 - Gives summary of data not detail (in table and graph)
 - Selection could be modified in Basic or Express Selection
 - For data mining and overviews

Data Selection (cont)

- Quick Search

- Enhanced text search
 - Return result as user types
- Context based selection
 - Go to Comtrade Explorer
 - Or Go to Help page, Glossary page, etc.

- Quick Filter

- Enhanced text search
 - Return result as user types
- Modify selection without leaving page
- Available only in results pages (Basic or Explorer)

Data Extraction

- To Screen (1000 records limit)
 - Standard – with paging
 - Printable – without paging
- To File (csv format)
 - Direct Download (150,000 records limit)
 - Instant extraction. Uncompressed file.
 - Batch (20,000,000 records limit)
 - Unattended extraction. Notified via e-mail. Compressed file.

File Data Output

- Text file in Comma Separated Value
 - With options “Excel Compatible Format”
- Column layout is customizable
 - User could customized his/her download format based on available columns
- Direct Download or via Batch
- Each user could have different download limit
- All data extractions are recoded

Personalization

- Favorites
- Saved Queries
- FrontPage Customization
- Download Format Customization
- Alert Notification
- Auto-Batch



Favorites

- User favorites:
 - Commodities
 - Reporters
 - Partners
 - Years
 - Country Groups
 - As reporter or partner
 - Commodity Groups
- Pre-defined favorites
 - Compiled by ITSB
 - Could be copied to user favorites
- Favorites appear in:
 - Basic and Express Selection, Comtrade Explorer
- Not appear in:
 - Shortcut Query, Quick Search, and Quick Filter

Grouping

- Is a powerful tool for researchers
- Combine / aggregate several records into one
- Difference between Country Group and Group of countries
- Example:
 - ASEAN group will include all countries in Southeast Asia
 - Total Export from US to ASEAN will be shown as one record instead of several records

Grouping (cont)

- Cons

- Could not be used in Comtrade Explorer
- Might take a long time to execute
- Take a lot of CPU Time
- Must be careful in interpreting the result since the underlying data might be zero or not available

- Pros

- Could be customized
- Pre-aggregate group is available:
 - TOTAL, 1 digit code, 2 digit code, etc as commodity
 - WORLD as partner
- Batch processing is available
 - However batch processing time is limited to 5 hours / query

Saved Queries

- Any queries could be saved for further use
- Advanced options will not be saved:
 - Value Filtering
 - Sorting Order
 - Aggregate Option
- Conjunction to Alert Notification, Auto-Batch could be activated
- Alert Notification could be set for monitoring particular changes in underlying data

Auto-Batch

- Same with batch but triggered by alert notification
- Two types of update:
 - Incremental
 - Full
- Incremental Update
 - Just get the changes only
 - Need to get all data before
- Full Update
 - The defined saved query will be run
- Note:
 - Incremental only works for non-group items
 - If there are any groups in saved queries, full update will be run instead
 - Use auto-batch carefully
 - Could easily reaches max download
 - In most cases, alert notification is good enough
 - Auto-Batch is designed for partner organizations

Data Availability



- Interactive
- In Graph
- Reporters
- Commodities
- Years
- By Date of Loading

Data Availability (cont)

- Interactive
 - Using Enhanced Text Search
 - User will get a specific information
 - Link to Comtrade Explorer
- In Graph
 - Show data availability in graph
 - User get a global view
 - Show # of records or # of reporters
 - Could use custom filter
 - Pre-defined country groups are accessible
 - Link to other data availability menus

Data Availability (cont)

- Reporters
 - Show list of reporters with their reported years
 - Classifications are given as column
- Years
 - Show list of years and reporters are given in a column
- Commodities
 - Show selected commodities with reporters and their years
- By Date of Loading
 - Could filter latest loaded data

Metadata & Reference

- Commodity List
 - List of commodities defined in HS and SITC
 - Link to Data Availability and Comtrade Explorer
- Country List
 - List of available countries (as reporter or partner)
 - Link to Data Availability, Comtrade Explorer, Trade Practices Report and ITC Country Profile
- Glossary
 - List of Terms used. Could be accessed via Quick Search

Summary

- Many ways to get the trade data
- Personalization makes Comtrade a client oriented product
- Flexibility in User Access Rights
- Comtrade Explorer and Comtrade Batch makes Comtrade a powerful research tool