

## Kafka Connect Operations

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## Managing connectors

Learn about deploying and managing Kafka Connect connectors using `KafkaConnector` resources. Deploying and managing connectors with `KafkaConnector` resources is the recommended method by Cloudera for managing connectors.

To deploy and manage connectors in Cloudera Streams Messaging - Kubernetes Operator, you use `KafkaConnector` resources. `KafkaConnector` resources describe instances of connectors and offer a Kubernetes-native approach to connector management. You create a `KafkaConnector` resource to deploy a connector and manage it by updating the `KafkaConnector` resource. The Strimzi Cluster Operator updates configurations and manages the lifecycle of the connectors.

### Enabling `KafkaConnector` resources

`KafkaConnector` resources are not enabled by default for Kafka Connect clusters. To use `KafkaConnector` resources, the `KafkaConnect` resource used for deploying your Kafka Connect cluster must have the `strimzi.io/use-connector-resources` annotation set to `true`.

Full resource examples provided by Cloudera in this documentation as well as on the Cloudera Archive have the `strimzi.io/use-connector-resources` annotation set to `true`.

### Rest API usage

Kafka Connect offers a REST API which is also available for use when you deploy a cluster in Cloudera Streams Messaging - Kubernetes Operator. However, usage of the API is not recommended by Cloudera, and should be limited to select use cases.

### Related Information

[Enabling `KafkaConnector` resources](#)

[Using the Kafka Connect REST API](#)

## Deploying connectors

Learn how to deploy Kafka Connect connectors using `KafkaConnector` resources.

### Before you begin

- Ensure that the Strimzi Cluster Operator is installed and running. See [Installation](#).
- Ensure that a Kafka Connect cluster is available and running. See [Deploying Kafka Connect clusters](#).
- Ensure that the connectors you plan to deploy are installed in the Kafka Connect cluster. That is, the Kafka image used by your Kafka Connect cluster includes the required plugin artifacts. See [Installing Kafka Connect connector plugins](#).
- Ensure that the `strimzi.io/use-connector-resources` annotation is set to `true` in the Kafka Connect cluster. See [Enabling `KafkaConnector` resources](#).
- Ensure that you know the namespace where the Kafka Connect cluster is deployed. Connectors must be deployed in the same namespace as the Kafka Connect cluster they are deployed in.
- The example resource in these steps demonstrates deployment of the `MirrorHeartbeatConnector`, which is installed by default in all Kafka Connect clusters.

### Procedure

1. Create a YAML configuration containing the manifest for your `KafkaConnector` resource.

```
apiVersion: kafka.strimzi.io/v1beta2
kind: KafkaConnector
```

```

metadata:
  name: my-heartbeats-connector
  labels:
    strimzi.io/cluster: my-connect-cluster
spec:
  class: org.apache.kafka.connect.mirror.MirrorHeartbeatConnector
  tasksMax: 1
  config:
    source.cluster.alias: source
    target.cluster.bootstrap.servers: my-cluster-kafka-bootstrap:9092

```

- `metadata.name` specifies the name of the connector.
- `labels.strimzi.io/cluster` specifies the name of the Kafka Connect cluster that this connector is deployed in.
- `spec.class` specifies the fully qualified name of the connector plugin implementation. The connector plugin must be installed in Kafka Connect.
- `spec.taskMax` specifies the maximum number of tasks this connector is allowed to create. This is an upper limit. The connector might not create the maximum number of allowed tasks.
- `spec.config` includes the configuration of the connector.

You can find additional information about supported properties in the Strimzi API Reference.

## 2. Deploy the resource.

```
kubectl apply --filename [***YAML CONFIG***] --namespace [***NAMESPACE***]
```

Ensure that you deploy the connector in the same namespace where the Kafka Connect cluster is running.

## 3. Validate that the KafkaConnector resource is created and ready.

```
kubectl get kafkaconnectors --namespace [***NAMESPACE***]
```

The output should list your KafkaConnector resource.

NAME	CLUSTER	CONNECTOR CLASS
	MAX TASKS	READY
#...		
my-heartbeats-connector	my-connect-cluster	org.apache.kafka.connect
.mirror.MirrorHeartbeatConnector	2	True

### Related Information

[KafkaConnectorSpec schema reference](#) | [Strimzi API Reference](#)

## Deleting connectors

You can delete a connector by deleting its corresponding KafkaConnector resource with `kubectl delete`.

```
kubectl delete kafkaconnector [***CONNECTOR NAME***] \
  --namespace [***NAMESPACE***]
```

## Stopping, pausing, and resuming connectors

You can stop, pause, and resume connectors by configuring the `spec.state` property in the KafkaConnector resource.

### Before you begin

```

#...
kind: KafkaConnector
spec:

```

```
state: stopped
```

You can set `spec.state` to `running`, `paused`, or `stopped`. You resume stopped or paused connectors by setting their state to `running`. The default value is `running`.

## Restarting connectors

You can restart a connector by annotating the `KafkaConnector` resource with `strimzi.io/restart="true"`.

```
kubectl annotate kafkaconnector [***CONNECTOR NAME***] \
  --namespace [***NAMESPACE***] \
  strimzi.io/restart="true"
```

If the annotation is added, the Strimzi Cluster Operator immediately restarts the connector. If the initial restart fails for any reason, the Strimzi Cluster Operator attempts to restart the connector once per reconciliation loop. The annotation is automatically removed if the restart is successful.

## Checking connector task IDs

You can check the task IDs of a connector by describing the `KafkaConnector` resource.

```
kubectl describe kafkaconnector [***CONNECTOR NAME***] \
  --namespace [***NAMESPACE***]
```

You can find the task IDs in `Connector Status`. `Connector` Status also includes the task state and the worker ID.

```
#...
Connector Status:
  Connector:
    State:      RUNNING
    worker_id:  my-connect-cluster-connect-0.my-connect-cluster-connect.
connect.svc:8083
    Name:      my-source-connector
    Tasks:
      Id:      0
      State:   RUNNING
      worker_id: my-connect-cluster-connect-0.my-connect-cluster-connect.svc:8083
```

## Restarting connector tasks

You can restart a connector task by annotating the `KafkaConnector` resource with `strimzi.io/restart-task="[***TASK ID***]"`.

```
kubectl annotate KafkaConnector [***CONNECTOR NAME***] \
  --namespace [***NAMESPACE***] \
  strimzi.io/restart-task="[***TASK ID***]"
```

If the annotation is added, the Strimzi Cluster Operator immediately restarts the connector task. If the initial restart fails for any reason, the Strimzi Cluster Operator attempts to restart the connector task once per reconciliation loop. The annotation is automatically removed if the restart is successful.

## Configuring connectors

Learn how you configure connectors with `KafkaConnector` resources. Configuring connectors with `Kafkaconnector` resources is the recommended method by Cloudera for configuring connectors.

Connectors that you deploy using `KafkaConnector` resources are configured with their corresponding `KafkaConnector` resource. When you make a configuration update, the Strimzi Cluster Operator, which manages the lifecycle of connectors, updates configurations.

Connector properties that you configure in your `KafkaConnector` resources largely depend on the specific connector you are using. This is because most configuration properties are connector specific. Always consult the documentation of the specific connector that you want to configure.

### Related Information

[Managing connectors](#)

[Enabling KafkaConnector resources](#)

[Using the Kafka Connect REST API](#)

## Configuring automatic restarts for connectors

You can enable the automatic restart of failed connectors and tasks with `spec.autoRestart.enabled`. Additionally, you can configure the maximum number of allowed automatic restarts with `spec.autoRestart.maxRestarts`. Both properties are configured in the `KafkaConnector` resource.

```
#...
kind: KafkaConnector
spec:
  autoRestart:
    enabled: true
    maxRestarts: 10
```



**Note:** By default the number of allowed restarts is infinite.

## Configuring connector properties

You configure a connector by specifying connector properties in `spec.config` of the `KafkaConnector` resource.

This is an example configuration for a `FileStreamSourceConnector` that reads the Apache Kafka license file and produces the contents of the file to a specified topic.

```
apiVersion: kafka.strimzi.io/v1beta2
kind: KafkaConnector
metadata:
  name: my-source-connector
  labels:
    strimzi.io/cluster: my-connect-cluster
spec:
  class: org.apache.kafka.connect.file.FileStreamSourceConnector
  tasksMax: 2
  config:
    file: "/opt/kafka/LICENSE"
    topic: my-topic
```

Connector configurations you specify in `spec.config` will largely depend on the connector itself. Consult the documentation for your specific connector to learn what properties it supports.



**Note:** You can load external configuration values from external sources by using configuration providers. This can be useful for loading credentials like passwords, access keys, or any other sensitive information.

### Related Information

[Configuration providers](#)

[Loading configuration values from external sources | Strimzi](#)

## Configuring client overrides in connectors

Learn how to configure client configuration overrides in connectors. Configuring overrides enables you to fine-tune your connector configuration.



**Important:** Connector configuration overrides must be enabled in your Kafka Connect cluster (KafkaConnector resource). Otherwise, the client overrides you specify in your connector are disregarded. See [Configuring connector configuration override policy](#).

The Kafka Connect framework manages Kafka clients (producers, consumers, and admin clients) used by connectors and tasks. By default, these clients use worker-level properties. In some use-cases, you might want to fine-tune these properties with overrides.

For example, you can use overrides to configure unique authentication credentials for your connectors. Or you can use overrides to fine-tune connector performance.

Overrides take precedence over worker-level properties. You configure overrides with the following prefixes.

- `producer.override.` – used for overriding producer properties.
- `consumer.override.` – used for overriding consumer properties.
- `admin.override.` – used for overriding admin client properties.

To configure an override, add any supported consumer, producer, or admin client property with the corresponding prefix to `spec.config` in your KafkaConnector resource.

```
#...
kind: KafkaConnector
spec:
  config:
    producer.override.batch.size: 1234
```

This example configures the producer batch size, which is a typical property you tweak when fine-tuning connectors and clients for performance.

### Related Information

[Producer Configs | Kafka](#)

[Consumer Configs | Kafka](#)

[Admin Configs | Kafka](#)

## Rolling restart Kafka Connect workers

You can initiate a rolling restart of your Kafka Connect workers by annotating the StrimziPodSet resource or the individual Kafka Connect pods with the `strimzi.io/manual-rolling-update="true"` annotation. You annotate the StrimziPodSet if you want to restart all workers in your cluster. You annotate individual pods if you want to restart specific workers.



### Annotating the StrimziPodSet resource

Each Kafka Connect cluster has their own `StrimziPodSet` resource. This resource manages all the pods related to the Kafka Connect cluster. Annotating this resource restarts all workers in your cluster.

```
kubectl annotate strimzipodset [***CONNECT CLUSTER NAME***]-connect strimzi.io/manual-rolling-update="true" --namespace [***NAMESPACE***]
```

In the next reconciliation loop, the Strimzi Cluster Operator initiates a rolling restart of all pods. After the pods are restarted, the annotation is automatically removed from the `StrimziPodSet`.

### Annotating Pod resources

If you want to restart a specific pod or a set of specific pods, you annotate each Pod resource individually.

```
kubectl annotate pod [***KAFKA CONNECT POD***] strimzi.io/manual-rolling-update="true" --namespace [***NAMESPACE***]
```

The annotated pod is rolling restarted with the next reconciliation loop. The annotation is automatically removed from the pod after the pod is restarted.

## Using the Kafka Connect REST API

Kafka Connect offers a REST API that you can use to manage and monitor connectors. Learn about the REST API, available endpoints, and recommended use. Additionally learn about `connect_shell.sh`, which is a command line tool that you can use to establish quick access to the REST API.

The Kafka Connect REST API is available as a `ClusterIP` type Kubernetes service. The service is named `[***CONNECT CLUSTER NAME***]-connect-api`. Its default port is 8083.

`[***CONNECT CLUSTER NAME***]` is the name of your Kafka Connect cluster. The name is specified in the `metadata.name` property of the `KafkaConnect` resource used to deploy the cluster. The service is created when you deploy the cluster.

The REST API offers various endpoints and operations that you can use to manage (create, update, delete) as well as to monitor the connectors running in your Kafka Connect cluster. You can find a comprehensive reference in the *Kafka Connect Rest API reference*.

### API access and security

By default the Kafka Connect API is only accessible from within the Kubernetes Cluster. Additionally, the default network policies only allow access by the Strimzi Cluster Operator and Kafka Connect pods. This is done because the REST API is insecure by default and it cannot be secured. As a result Cloudera recommends the following:

- Do not expose the REST API to applications running outside the Kubernetes cluster.
- Use `KafkaConnector` resources to manage connectors instead of the REST API.

### Recommended use

Cloudera recommends that you use the API selectively for specific use-cases. In general for any connector management operations, use `KafkaConnector` resources. However, you can use any endpoints or operations that return information about the cluster and connectors. For example, you can use the `GET /connector-plugins` endpoint with `connectorsOnly` set to `false` to list all plugins that are installed in the Kafka Connect cluster.

If you want to query the REST API, Cloudera recommends that you use the `connect_shell.sh` tool.

### Related Information

[Kafka Connect REST API](#)

## Using connect\_shell.sh

Use `connect_shell.sh` to set up a pod that allows easy access to the Kafka Connect REST API. The pod created with this tool includes preset configurations, such as the `$CONNECT_REST_URL` environment variable, which is set to the base URL of the API.

### Before you begin

- Ensure that you have access to your Cloudera credentials (username and password).
- Ensure that the environment where you run the tool has the following:
  - Bash 4 or higher.
  - GNU utilities:
    - `echo`
    - `grep`
    - `sed`
    - `head`
  - `kubectl` or `oc`
  - `kubeconfig` configured to target Kubernetes cluster

### Procedure

1. Download the tool.

```
curl --user [***USERNAME***] \
  https://archive.cloudera.com/p/csm-operator/1.2/tools/connect_shell.sh \
  --output connect_shell.sh --location \
  && chmod +x connect_shell.sh
```

Replace `[***USERNAME***]` with your Cloudera username. Enter your Cloudera password when prompted.

2. Use the tool.

You have two choices. You can either use the tool interactively. In this case, you run the tool which opens an interactive shell window where you run queries. Alternatively, you can use pipe (`|`) to run queries one at a time.

#### For Interactive

- a. Run the tool.

```
./connect_shell.sh \
  --namespace=[***CONNECT_CLUSTER_NAMESPACE***] \
  --cluster=[***CONNECT_CLUSTER_NAME***]
```

- b. Query the REST API.

For example, you can list your topics with the following command.

```
curl $CONNECT_REST_URL/connector-plugins
```

This example queries `/connector-plugins` endpoint which returns available connector plugins in the cluster.

The pod is deleted when you exit the interactive shell.

#### For Pipe

To run one-off queries, pipe them into `connect_shell.sh`.

```
echo 'curl $CONNECT_REST_URL/connector-plugins' \
| ./connect_shell.sh --namespace=[***CONNECT_CLUSTER_NAMESPACE***] \
```

```
--cluster=[***CONNECT CLUSTER NAME***]
```



**Tip:** Use the --help option to view additional options and information on tool usage.

### Related Information

[Kafka Connect REST API](#)

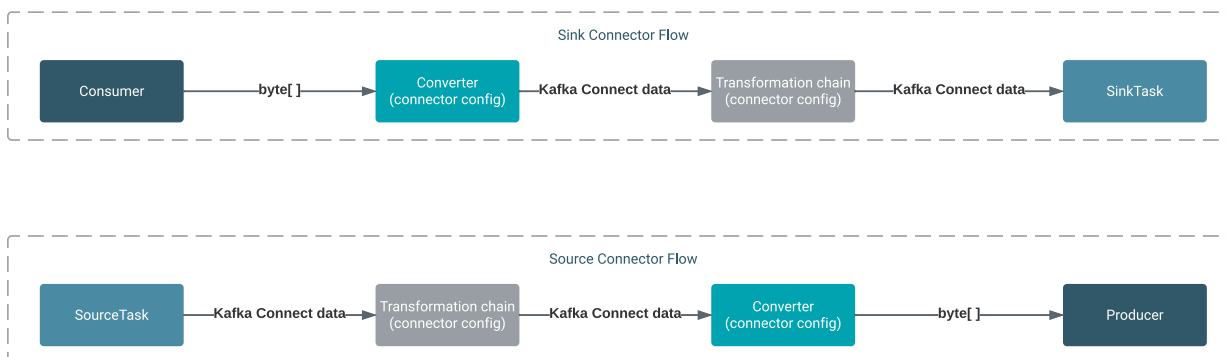
## Single Message Transforms

Single Message Transforms (SMT) is a message transformation framework that you can deploy on top of Kafka Connect connectors to apply message transformations and filtering. Learn about the SMT framework as well as the transformation plugins available in Cloudera Streams Messaging - Kubernetes Operator.

Kafka Connect connectors provide ready-to-use tools to integrate between Kafka and external data stores. Still, in many use cases, the data moved by the connectors require some sanitization and transformation. To provide extra flexibility built on top of connectors, Kafka Connect also supports an SMT framework.

The SMT framework installs a transformation chain on top of connectors that modifies and filters the data on a single message basis. An SMT chain consists of transform and predicate plugins. Transform plugins are used to modify the data. For example, you can insert, replace, mask as well as perform various other modifications on the messages moved by connectors. Predicate plugins are used to add additional logic to your chain so that the transformation chain is only applied to messages which satisfy specified conditions.

The SMT framework requires that data is converted to the Kafka Connect internal data format. This data format is specific to Kafka Connect and consists of a structure and schema descriptor (SchemaAndValue) specific to Connect.



### Supported SMT plugins

Cloudera Streams Messaging - Kubernetes Operator ships with and supports the following SMT plugins:

- All Apache Kafka plugins. For more information, see [Transformations](#) in the Apache Kafka documentation.
- The following Cloudera specific plugins:
  - [ConvertFromBytes](#) on page 13
  - [ConvertToBytes](#) on page 15



**Note:** The `ConvertFromBytes` and `ConvertToBytes` transformation plugins transform binary data to and from the Kafka Connect internal data format. These plugins are specifically developed to enable the use of the SMT framework with connectors that only support binary data.

## Configuring an SMT chain

Learn how to configure a Single Message Transformation (SMT) chain for Kafka Connect connectors.

SMT chains can be configured within the configuration of a Kafka Connect connector using SMT specific configuration properties. To set up a chain, you first define your transformation chain with the `transforms` property and optionally define your predicates using the `predicates` property. Afterward, you use `transforms.*` and `predicates.*` to configure the plugins in the chain. For example, the following configuration snippet sets up a transformation chain that filters messages based on their header and removes a specified field from messages.

```
#...
kind: KafkaConnector
spec:
  config:
    transforms: FilterAudit,MaskField
    transforms.MaskField.type: org.apache.kafka.connect.transforms.MaskField$Value
    transforms.MaskField.fields: CreditCardNumber

    transforms.FilterAudit.type: org.apache.kafka.connect.transforms.Filter
    transforms.FilterAudit.predicate: IsAudit
    transforms.FilterAudit.negate: false

    predicates: IsAudit
    predicates.IsAudit.type: org.apache.kafka.connect.transforms.predicate
    s.HasHeaderKey
    predicates.IsAudit.name: Audit
```

The following sections go through the properties in this example and give an overview on how to set up a transformation chain.

### Configuring transforms

The `transforms` property contains a comma-separated list of transformation aliases. Each alias represents one step in the transformation chain. The aliases you add to the property are arbitrary names, they are used in other properties to configure that particular transformation step. For example, the following defines a two step transformation chain.

```
transforms: FilterAudit,MaskField
```

The `transforms.[***ALIAS***].type` property specifies which transformation plugin should be used in a transformation step. `[***ALIAS***]` is one of the aliases that you specified in `transforms`. The value of the property is the fully qualified name of the transformation plugin that should be used in the step. For example, the following line specifies `org.apache.kafka.connect.transforms.MaskField$Value` as the plugin for the `MaskField` step.

```
transforms.MaskField.type: org.apache.kafka.connect.transforms.MaskField$Value
```

Many transformation plugins support changing both the key and the value of a record. For these plugins, typically, a nested value or key class can be referenced as the type.

The `transforms.[***ALIAS***].[***KEY***]` property is used to configure the transformation plugins in your chain. This property is passed to the transformation plugin itself with `transforms.[***ALIAS***]` stripped from the property key. `[***ALIAS***]` is the alias of a plugin you specified in `transforms`. `[***KEY***]` is a property key that the plugin accepts. For example, the `MaskField` plugin has a `fields` property that specifies which fields should be removed from the structure.

```
transforms.MaskField.fields: CreditCardNumber
```

## Configuring predicates

Predicates are a separate set of plugins. You use them to conditionally enable certain steps in the transformation chain. Predicates are configured in a similar way to transforms. You must specify the predicate aliases, associate the aliases with a plugin, and set plugin specific properties.

```
predicates: IsAudit
predicates.IsAudit.type: org.apache.kafka.connect.transforms.predicates.HasHeaderKey
predicates.IsAudit.name: Audit
```

In this example the IsAudit predicate is an instance of the HasHeaderKey predicate plugin. This predicate returns true for records where a specific header key is present. `predicates.IsAudit.name=Audit` configures the predicate to look for the Audit header in the records.

After a predicate is set up, you can associate the predicate with any number of transformation steps using the predicate property. If a predicate is associated with a transformation, that transformation step is only applied to the messages that match the condition specified in the predicate.

A good example for using a predicate is the Filter transformation plugin. This is because Filter filters (drops) all messages by default. Therefore, it must be used together with predicates to specify filtering logic. For example, the following configuration instructs the SMT framework that the FilterAudit step should only be invoked for messages where the IsAudit predicate returns true. That is, all messages with the Audit header will be filtered and will not be transformed by any subsequent steps in the transformation chain.

```
transforms.FilterAudit.predicate: IsAudit
transforms.FilterAudit.negate: false
```

The condition of a predicate can be inverted using negate. If negate is set to true, the SMT framework applies the transformation to any record that does **not** match the condition. For example, the following configuration instructs the SMT framework that the FilterAudit step should only be invoked for messages where the IsAudit predicate returns false.

```
transforms.FilterAudit.predicate: IsAudit
transforms.FilterAudit.negate: true
```

## ConvertFromBytes

ConvertFromBytes is a Cloudera specific transformation plugin that converts binary data to the Kafka Connect internal data format. You can use this plugin to make connectors that only support binary data compatible with the Single Message Transforms (SMT) framework.

### Fully qualified names

- `com.cloudera.dim.kafka.connect.transforms.ConvertFromBytes$Key`
- `com.cloudera.dim.kafka.connect.transforms.ConvertFromBytes$Value`

### Description



**Important:** Ensure that you have an in-depth understanding about the following aspects of the connector that you plan on using with ConvertFromBytes.

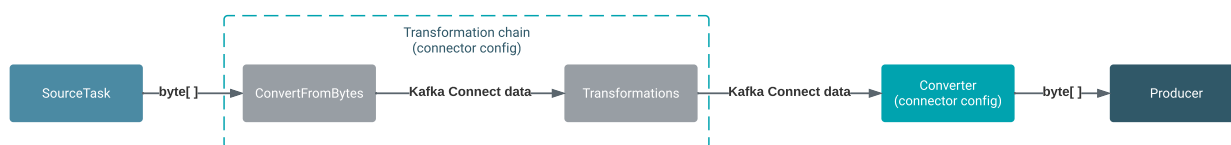
- The type of the connector
- The converter type used by the connector
- The header converter type used by the connector

These aspects of a connector heavily influence how the plugin and how the transformation chain that includes this plugin must be configured.

The `ConvertFromBytes` transformation plugin accepts binary data and converts it into the Kafka Connect internal data format with a nested converter that transforms binary data. To support header based converter logic, the plugin requires a header converter to correctly transform record headers when interacting with the converter. This plugin supports both key and value conversion.

Using this plugin with connectors that only support binary data makes the connector fully compatible with the SMT framework. On their own, connectors that only support binary data have limited compatibility with transformations even if the binary data is structured. This is because transformations are only fully supported on data that is in the Kafka Connect internal data format. Binary only connectors, for example `MirrorSourceConnector`, emit data that has the `BYTES` schema and do not provide conversion to the Kafka Connect internal data format by default. When you use a binary only connector with the `ConvertFromBytes` plugin, the binary data is parsed into a compatible structure, which can then be further processed with the transformation chain.

**Figure 1: Source connector example flow with `ConvertFromBytes`**



### Example

The following configuration example adds a `ConvertFromBytes` transformation as a first step of the transformation chain. The conversion uses a schemaless JSON transformation to parse the binary data. The transformation steps, the connector, or the converter, whichever comes directly after `FromBytes`, receives a properly structured record instead of binary data.

```
#...
kind: KafkaConnector
spec:
  config:
    transforms: FromBytes,...
    transforms.FromBytes.type: com.cloudera.dim.kafka.connect.transformation
s.convert.ConvertFromBytes$Value
    transforms.FromBytes.converter: org.apache.kafka.connect.json.JsonConve
rter
    transforms.FromBytes.converter.schemaless.enable: false
```

### Configuration properties

**Table 1: `ConvertFromBytes` properties reference**

Property	Default Value	Required	Description
converter		True	The fully qualified name of the converter implementation to use. For example: <code>org.apache.kafka.connect.json.JsonConverter</code>
header.converter	<code>org.apache.kafka.connect.storage.SimpleHeaderConverter</code>	True	The fully qualified name of the header converter implementation to use. This converter must match the header converter of the connector.

Property	Default Value	Required	Description
converter.		False	<p>A configuration prefix. Use this prefix to configure the properties of the converter specified in <code>converter</code>. Property keys and values specified with the prefix are passed directly to the converter with the prefix stripped. For example:</p> <pre>transform ms.[***TRANSFORM   ALIAS***].con vert er.[***CONVERTER   PROPERTY   KEY***]:[***CONVERTER   PROPERTY   VALUE***]</pre>
header.converter.		False	<p>A configuration prefix. Use this prefix to configure the properties of the header converter specified in <code>header.converter</code>. Property keys and values specified with the prefix are passed directly to the header converter with the prefix stripped. For example:</p> <pre>transform ms.[***TRANSFORM   ALIAS***].con vert er.[***HEADER   CONVERTER   PROPERTY   KEY***]:[***HEADER   CONVERTER   PROPERTY   VALUE***]</pre>

## ConvertToBytes

ConvertToBytes is a Cloudera specific transformation plugin that converts Kafka Connect internal data to binary data. You can use this plugin to make connectors that only support binary data compatible with the Single Message Transforms (SMT) framework.

### Fully qualified names

- `com.cloudera.dim.kafka.connect.transforms.ConvertFromBytes$Key`
- `com.cloudera.dim.kafka.connect.transforms.ConvertFromBytes$Value`

## Description



**Important:** Ensure that you have an in-depth understanding about the following aspects of the connector that you plan on using with `ConvertToBytes`.

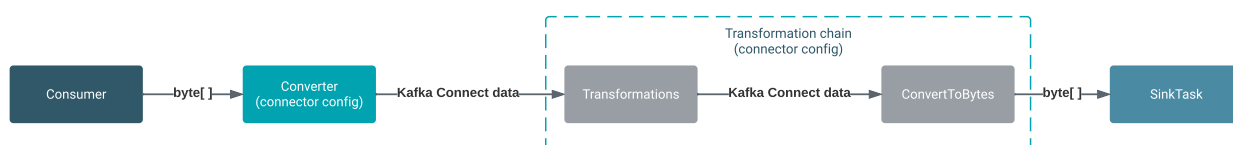
- The type of the connector
- The converter type used by the connector
- The header converter type used by the connector

These aspects of a connector heavily influence how the plugin and how the transformation chain that includes this plugin must be configured.

The `ConvertToBytes` transformation plugin accepts data in the Kafka Connect internal data format and converts it to binary data with a nested converter. To support header based converter logic, the plugin requires a header converter to correctly transform record headers when interacting with the converter. This plugin supports both key and value conversion.

Using this plugin with connectors that only support binary data makes the connector fully compatible with the SMT framework. On their own, connectors that only support binary data have limited compatibility with transformations even if the binary data is structured. This is because the format of the data after transformations are carried out is normally the Kafka Connect internal data format. Binary only connectors, however, expect data that has the BYTES schema and do not provide conversion from the Kafka Connect internal data format by default. When you use the `ConvertToBytes` plugin with a binary only connector, the structured data is converted to binary format, which can then be picked up by the connector.

**Figure 2: Sink connector example flow with `ConvertToBytes`**



## Example

The following configuration example adds a `ConvertToBytes` transformation as the last step of the transformation chain. The conversion uses a schemaless JSON transformation to serialize the structured data. The transformation steps, the connector, or the converter, whichever comes directly after `ToBytes`, receives a properly structured record instead of binary data.

```
#...
kind: KafkaConnector
spec:
  config:
    transforms: ...,ToBytes
    transforms.ToBytes.type: com.cloudera.dim.kafka.connect.transformation
s.convert.ConvertToBytes$Value
    transforms.ToBytes.converter: org.apache.kafka.connect.json.JsonConve
rter
    transforms.ToBytes.converter.schemals.enable: false
```



## Configuration properties

Table 2: ConvertToBytes properties reference

Property	Default Value	Required	Description
converter		True	The fully qualified name of the converter implementation to use. For example: org.apache.kafka.connect.json.JsonConverter
header.converter	org.apache.kafka.connect.storage.SimpleHeaderConverter	True	The fully qualified name of the header converter implementation to use. This converter must match the header converter of the connector.
converter.		False	<p>A configuration prefix. Use this prefix to configure the properties of the converter specified in converter. Property keys and values specified with the prefix are passed directly to the converter with the prefix stripped. For example:</p> <pre> transformer.[***TRANSFORM   ALIAS***].converter.[***CONVERTER   PROPERTY   KEY***]:[***CONVERTER   PROPERTY   VALUE***] </pre>
header.converter.		False	<p>A configuration prefix. Use this prefix to configure the properties of the header converter specified in header.converter. Property keys and values specified with the prefix are passed directly to the header converter with the prefix stripped. For example:</p> <pre> transformer.[***TRANSFORM   ALIAS***].header.converter.[***HEADER   CONVERTER   PROPERTY   KEY***]:[***HEADER   CONVERTER   PROPERTY   VALUE***] </pre>