

Sample Path Properties of Anisotropic Gaussian Random Fields

Yimin Xiao

Department of Statistics and Probability

Michigan State University

URL: www.stt.msu.edu/~xiaoyimi

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1 Examples of anisotropic Gaussian random fields

- Fractional Brownian sheets: An $(N, 1)$ -fractional Brownian sheet $W_0^H = \{W_0^H(t), t \in \mathbb{R}^N\}$ with Hurst index $H = (H_1, \dots, H_N) \in (0, 1)^N$ is a mean 0 Gaussian random field in \mathbb{R} with covariance function

$$\mathbb{E}\left[W_0^H(s)W_0^H(t)\right] = \prod_{j=1}^N \frac{1}{2} \left(|s_j|^{2H_j} + |t_j|^{2H_j} - |s_j - t_j|^{2H_j} \right)$$

for all $s, t \in \mathbb{R}^N$.

- Gaussian random field $X = \{X(t), t \in \mathbb{R}^N\}$ with mean 0, stationary increments can be represented by

$$X(t) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} (e^{i\langle t, \lambda \rangle} - 1) W(d\lambda),$$

where $W(\cdot)$ is a centered complex-valued Gaussian random measure with control measure Δ . The measure Δ and its density (if it exists) $f(\lambda)$ are called the spectral measure and spectral density of X , respectively. For example,

$$f(\lambda) = \frac{1}{\left(\sum_{j=1}^N |\lambda_j|^{2H_j} \right)^\beta}, \quad \forall \lambda \in \mathbb{R}^N,$$

where $H_j \in (0, 1)$ for $j = 1, \dots, N$ and β are certain constants; see Bonami and Estrade (2003).

- Funaki's model for random string in \mathbb{R}^d is specified by the following stochastic PDE:

$$\frac{\partial u(t, x)}{\partial t} = \frac{\partial^2 u(t, x)}{\partial x^2} + \dot{W},$$

where $\dot{W}(x, t)$ is an \mathbb{R}^d -valued space-time white noise. One solution is given by

$$\begin{aligned} U(t, x) = & \int_0^\infty \int_{\mathbb{R}} \left(G(t+r, x-z) - G(t+r, z) \right) \tilde{W}(dz dr) \\ & + \int_0^t \int_{\mathbb{R}} G(r, x-z) W(dz dr), \end{aligned} \tag{1.1}$$

where $G(r, x) = (4\pi r)^{-1/2} \exp(-x^2/(4r))$, \tilde{W} and W are independent; see Funaki (1983), Mueller and Tribe (2002).

Recall that a random field X is called *operator-self-similar* if there exists a linear operator A on \mathbb{R}^N such that for all $c > 0$,

$$\{c^{-1} X(c^A t), t \in \mathbb{R}^N\} \stackrel{d}{=} \{X(t), t \in \mathbb{R}^N\}.$$

All the above three Gaussian random fields are operator self-similar with exponent $A = (a_{ij})$, where $a_{ii} = H_i^{-1}$ and $a_{ij} = 0$ if $i \neq j$.

Moreover, their sample functions share many geometric properties.

2 Local nondeterminism and sectorial LND

2.1 Berman's local nondeterminism

Let $X = \{X(t), t \in \mathbb{R}_+\}$ be a Gaussian process with mean 0 and let $J \subset \mathbb{R}_+$ be an interval.

Definition 2.1 [Berman (1973)] *X is called locally nondeterministic on J if for every integer $m \geq 2$,*

$$\lim_{\varepsilon \rightarrow 0} \inf_{t_m - t_1 \leq \varepsilon} V_m > 0, \quad (2.1)$$

where V_m is the relative prediction error:

$$V_m = \frac{\text{Var}(X(t_m) - X(t_{m-1}) | X(t_1), \dots, X(t_{m-1}))}{\text{Var}(X(t_m) - X(t_{m-1}))}$$

and the infimum is taken over all ordered points $t_1 < t_2 < \dots < t_m$ in J with $t_m - t_1 \leq \varepsilon$.

Berman (1973) showed (2.1) is equivalent to: for every integer $m \geq 2$, there exist positive constants c_m and ε such that

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Var}\left(\sum_{k=1}^m u_k (X(t_k) - X(t_{k-1}))\right) \\ & \geq c_m \sum_{k=1}^m u_k^2 \text{Var}(X(t_k) - X(t_{k-1})) \end{aligned} \quad (2.2)$$

for all ordered points $t_1 < t_2 < \dots < t_m$ in J with $t_m - t_1 < \varepsilon$ and $u_k \in \mathbb{R}$ ($k = 1, \dots, m$).

2.2 Strong local ϕ -nondeterminism (SL ϕ ND)

Definition 2.2 Let $X = \{X(t), t \in \mathbb{R}^N\}$ be a real-valued, centered Gaussian random field and let $\phi : \mathbb{R}_+ \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_+$ be a function with $\phi(0) = 0$ and $\phi(r) > 0$ for $r > 0$. Then X is said to be strongly locally ϕ -nondeterministic (SL ϕ ND) on a rectangle $J \subset \mathbb{R}^N$ if there exist positive constants $c_{2,1}$ and r_0 such that for all $t \in J$ and all $0 < r \leq \min\{|t|, r_0\}$,

$$\text{Var}(X(t)|X(s) : s \in J, r \leq |s - t| \leq r_0) \geq c_{2,1} \phi(r). \quad (2.3)$$

- If $N = 1$, this definition was essentially given by Cuzick and DuPreez (1982) to prove joint continuity of local times of certain Gaussian processes.
- When $N \geq 1$, Definition 2.2 is more general than the *strong local α -nondeterminism* of Monrad and Pitt (1987).

Applications of SL ϕ ND:

- (1) sharp Hölder conditions for the local times; Xiao (1997a).
- (2) tail probability of the local times of certain fractional Brownian motion; Kasahara et al. (1999).

- (3) small ball probability estimates; Monrad and Rootzén (1995) and Shao and Wang (1995).
- (4) exact Hausdorff measure of the range and graph of X ; Talagrand (1995) and Xiao (1996, 1997a, b).

Sufficient conditions for SLND of Gaussian random fields with stationary increments have been obtained in Xiao (2005).

2.3 Sectorial local nondeterminism

Note that in (2.3) requires that X has certain isotropic property.

- The Brownian sheet $W = \{W(t), t \in \mathbb{R}_+^N\}$ does not satisfy (2.3).
- Khoshnevisan and Xiao (2004) proved that W satisfies the *sectorial local nondeterminism*: Let $a > 0$ be fixed. Then for all integers $n \geq 1$ and all $u, t^1, \dots, t^n \in [a, \infty)^N$, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Var} (W(u) \mid W(t^1), \dots, W(t^n)) \\ \geq \frac{a^{N-1}}{2} \sum_{j=1}^N \min_{0 \leq k \leq n} |u_j - t_j^k|, \end{aligned} \quad (2.4)$$

where $t_j^0 = 0$ for every $j = 1, \dots, N$.

3 Sectorial LND of fractional Brownian sheets

- **Moving average representation**

$$W_0^H(t) = \kappa_H^{-1} \int_{-\infty}^{t_1} \cdots \int_{-\infty}^{t_N} g(t, s) W(ds), \quad (3.1)$$

where $W = \{W(s), s \in \mathbb{R}^N\}$ is a standard real-valued Brownian sheet and

$$g(t, s) = \prod_{j=1}^N \left[((t_j - s_j)_+)^{H_j-1/2} - ((-s_j)_+)^{H_j-1/2} \right]$$

with $s_+ = \max\{s, 0\}$, and where $\kappa_H > 0$ is a normalization constant.

- **Harmonizable representation**

$$W_0^H(t) = K_H^{-1} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} \psi_t(\lambda) \widehat{W}(d\lambda), \quad (3.2)$$

where \widehat{W} is the Fourier transform of white noise in \mathbb{R}^N and

$$\psi_t(\lambda) = \prod_{j=1}^N \frac{e^{it_j \lambda_j} - 1}{|\lambda_j|^{H_j + \frac{1}{2}}},$$

where $K_H > 0$ is a constant.

Wu and Xiao (2005) have extended the result of Khoshnevisan and Xiao (2004) to fractional Brownian sheets by using their harmonizable representation.

Theorem 3.1 [Wu and Xiao (2005)]

For $\varepsilon > 0$, there exists a positive constant $c_{3,1}$, depending on ε, H and N only, such that for all $n \geq 1$, and all $u, t^1, \dots, t^n \in [\varepsilon, \infty)^N$, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Var} \left(W_0^H(u) \mid W_0^H(t^1), \dots, W_0^H(t^n) \right) \\ \geq c_{3,1} \sum_{j=1}^N \min_{0 \leq k \leq n} |u_j - t_j^k|^{2H_j}, \end{aligned} \quad (3.3)$$

where $t_j^0 = 0$ for every $j = 1, \dots, N$.

Proof Let $\ell \in \{1, \dots, N\}$ be fixed, denote

$$r_\ell \equiv \min_{0 \leq k \leq n} |u_\ell - t_\ell^k|.$$

First, we prove there exists a constant $c_\ell > 0$ such that

$$\text{Var} \left(W_0^H(u) \mid W_0^H(t^1), \dots, W_0^H(t^n) \right) \geq c_\ell r_\ell^{2H_\ell}. \quad (3.4)$$

This is equivalent to proving that for all $n \geq 1$ and $a_k \in \mathbb{R}$ ($1 \leq k \leq n$),

$$\mathbb{E} \left(W_0^H(u) - \sum_{k=1}^n a_k W_0^H(t^k) \right)^2 \geq c_\ell r_\ell^{2H_\ell}. \quad (3.5)$$

By the harmonizable representation of W_0^H , the left hand side

of (3.5), up to a constant, can be written as

$$\begin{aligned}
& \mathbb{E} \left(W_0^H(u) - \sum_{k=1}^n a_k W_0^H(t^k) \right)^2 \\
&= \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} \left| \prod_{j=1}^N (e^{iu_j \lambda_j} - 1) - \sum_{k=1}^n a_k \prod_{j=1}^N (e^{it_j^k \lambda_j} - 1) \right|^2 f_H(\lambda) d\lambda,
\end{aligned} \tag{3.6}$$

where

$$f_H(\lambda) = \prod_{j=1}^N |\lambda_j|^{-2H_j-1}.$$

Hence, it suffices to show

$$\begin{aligned}
& \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} \left| \prod_{j=1}^N (e^{iu_j \lambda_j} - 1) - \sum_{k=1}^n a_k \prod_{j=1}^N (e^{it_j^k \lambda_j} - 1) \right|^2 f_H(\lambda) d\lambda \\
& \geq c_\ell r_\ell^{2H_\ell}.
\end{aligned} \tag{3.7}$$

To finish the proof, we make use of Fourier analysis and the asymptotic properties of $f(\lambda)$ at infinity. \square

4 Hausdorff dimensions of the range, graph and level sets

Let W_1^H, \dots, W_d^H be d independent copies of W_0^H . The (N, d) -fractional Brownian sheet $W^H = \{W^H(t) : t \in \mathbb{R}^N\}$ is defined by

$$W^H(t) = (W_1^H(t), \dots, W_d^H(t)), \quad t \in \mathbb{R}^N. \quad (4.1)$$

We study the fractal properties of

- the range $W^H([0, 1]^N) = \{W^H(t) : t \in [0, 1]^N\}$
- the graph $\text{Gr}W^H([0, 1]^N) = \{(t, W^H(t)) : t \in [0, 1]^N\}$
- the level set $\Gamma_x = \{t \in (0, \infty)^N : W^H(t) = x\}$, $x \in \mathbb{R}^d$.

Theorem 4.1 [Ayache and Xiao (2005)]

Suppose $0 < H_1 \leq \dots \leq H_N < 1$. With probability 1,

$$\dim_{\text{H}} W^H([0, 1]^N) = \min \left\{ d; \sum_{j=1}^N \frac{1}{H_j} \right\},$$

$$\begin{aligned} & \dim_{\text{H}} \text{Gr}W^H([0, 1]^N) \\ &= \min_{1 \leq k \leq N} \left\{ \sum_{j=1}^k \frac{H_k}{H_j} + N - k + (1 - H_k)d; \sum_{j=1}^N \frac{1}{H_j} \right\}, \end{aligned}$$

where $\sum_{j=1}^0 \frac{1}{H_j} := 0$.

Theorem 4.2 [Ayache and Xiao (2005)]

(i). If $\sum_{j=1}^N \frac{1}{H_j} < d$ then for every $x \in \mathbb{R}^d$, $\Gamma_x = \emptyset$ a.s.

(ii). If $\sum_{j=1}^N \frac{1}{H_j} > d$, then for any $x \in \mathbb{R}^d$ and $0 < \varepsilon < 1$, with positive probability

$$\begin{aligned} & \dim_{\mathbb{H}}(\Gamma_x \cap [\varepsilon, 1]^N) \\ &= \sum_{j=1}^k \frac{H_k}{H_j} + N - k - H_k d, \quad \text{if } \sum_{j=1}^{k-1} \frac{1}{H_j} \leq d < \sum_{j=1}^k \frac{1}{H_j}. \end{aligned}$$

The proofs of Theorems 4.1 and 4.2 only rely on the two-point distribution of $(W^H(s), W^H(t))$.

- Conjecture: If $\sum_{j=1}^N \frac{1}{H_j} = d$ then for every $x \in \mathbb{R}^d$, $\Gamma_x = \emptyset$ a.s.
- Theorem 4.2 suggests: If $\sum_{j=1}^N \frac{1}{H_j} > d$, then W^H has a local time.
- Regularity of local times relies on joint distribution of

$$(W^H(t^1), \dots, W^H(t^n))$$

for all $n \geq 2$.

5 Hausdorff dimension of $W^H(E)$

Question: What is $\dim_{\mathbb{H}} W^H(E)$ for an arbitrary Borel set $E \subset (0, \infty)^N$ almost surely?

Partial Answer 1. If $E = (0, 1]^N$ or having positive Lebesgue measure, then

$$\dim_{\mathbb{H}} W^H(E) = \min \left\{ d; \sum_{j=1}^N \frac{1}{H_j} \right\}, \quad \text{a.s.}$$

Partial Answer 2. If $E = E_1 \times E_2$ with $\dim_{\mathbb{H}} E_1 = \dim_{\mathbb{P}} E_1$, then

$$\dim_{\mathbb{H}} W^H(E) = \min \left\{ d; \frac{\dim_{\mathbb{H}} E_1}{H_1} + \frac{\dim_{\mathbb{H}} E_2}{H_2} \right\} \quad \text{a.s.}$$

Observation: Knowing $\dim_{\mathbb{H}} E$ alone is not enough to determine $\dim_{\mathbb{H}} W^H(E)$.

A Counterexample: Let $E = E_1 \times E_2$, $F = E_2 \times E_1$ with $\dim_{\mathbb{H}} E_1 = \dim_{\mathbb{P}} E_1$, then

$$\dim_{\mathbb{H}} E = \dim_{\mathbb{H}} F$$

but in general

$$\dim_{\mathbb{H}} W^H(E) \neq \dim_{\mathbb{H}} W^H(F).$$

Hausdorff dimension contour

Let $\mathcal{M}_c^+(E)$ denote the family of finite Borel measures on E with compact support in E . For $\mu \in \mathcal{M}_c^+(E)$, we define

$$\Lambda_\mu = \left\{ \lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_N) \in \mathbb{R}_+^N : \limsup_{r \rightarrow 0^+} \frac{\mu(R(t, r))}{r^{\langle \lambda, H^{-1} \rangle}} = 0 \text{ for } \mu\text{-a.e. } t \in \mathbb{R}^N \right\},$$

where $H^{-1} = (H_1^{-1}, \dots, H_N^{-1})$ and

$$R(t, r) = \prod_{j=1}^N [t_j - r^{1/H_j}, t_j + r^{1/H_j}].$$

Key property: For any $a \in (0, \infty)^N$, $\sup_{\lambda \in \Lambda_\mu} \langle a, \lambda \rangle$ is achieved on the boundary of Λ_μ .

We call the boundary of Λ_μ , denoted by $\partial\Lambda_\mu$, the *Hausdorff dimension contour* of μ .

For a Borel set $E \subset (0, \infty)^N$, we define

$$\Lambda(E) = \bigcup_{\mu \in \mathcal{M}_c^+(E)} \partial\Lambda_\mu.$$

Theorem 5.1 [Wu and Xiao, 2005]

For an arbitrary Borel set $E \subset (0, \infty)^N$,

$$\dim_{\mathbb{H}} W^H(E) = \min \{d; s(H, E)\}, \quad \text{a.s.}$$

where $s(H, E) = \sup_{\lambda \in \Lambda(E)} \langle \lambda, H^{-1} \rangle$.

Natural Questions:

If $s(H, E) \leq d$, then $\dim_{\mathbb{H}} W^H(E) = s(H, E)$ a.s.

Q1. What more can be said about $W^H(E)$?

If $s(H, E) > d$, then $\dim_{\mathbb{H}} W^H(E) = d$ a.s.

Q2. Does $W^H(E)$ have interior points almost surely?

Some history:

Brownian motion: Kahane (1966), Kaufman (1975);

Fractional Brownian motion: Pitt (1978) and Kahane (1985a, 1985b);

Gaussian random fields with stationary increments: Shieh and Xiao (2004);

The Brownian sheet: Mountford (1989), Khoshnevisan and Xiao (2004), Khoshnevisan, Wu and Xiao (2005).

6 Salem set

◇ For $\beta > 0$, $F \subset \mathbb{R}^d$ is called an M_β -set, if $\exists \nu$ on F such that

$$\widehat{\nu}(\xi) = o(|\xi|^{-\beta}) \quad \text{as } \xi \rightarrow \infty.$$

◇ The Fourier dimension of F :

$$\dim_{\mathbb{F}} F = \sup \{ \gamma \geq 0 : F \text{ is an } M_{\gamma/2}\text{-set} \}.$$

We always have $\dim_{\mathbb{F}} F \leq \dim_{\mathbb{H}} F$.

◇ F is called a *Salem set* if

$$\dim_{\mathbb{F}} F = \dim_{\mathbb{H}} F.$$

Answer to Q1:

Theorem 6.1 [Wu and Xiao, 2005]

If $s(H, E) \leq d$, then $W^H(E)$ is almost surely a Salem set with Fourier dimension $s(H, E)$.

Proof Since $\dim_{\mathbb{F}} W^H(E) \leq \dim_{\mathbb{H}} W^H(E) = s(H, E)$ a.s., we only need to prove $\dim_{\mathbb{F}} W^H(E) \geq s(H, E)$. This is done in the next theorem. □

Define $\mu_{W^H}(\bullet) = \mu \{t : W^H(t) \in \bullet\}$, the image measure of μ under the mapping $t \mapsto W^H(t)$.

The key of proving Theorem 6.1 is to find the asymptotic behavior of $\widehat{\mu_{W^H}}(\xi)$ as $\xi \rightarrow \infty$.

Theorem 6.2 [Wu and Xiao, 2005]

Let $\tau_j : \mathbb{R}_+ \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_+$ ($j = 1, \dots, N$) be non-decreasing functions satisfying $\tau_j(0) = 0$ and

$$\tau_j(2r) \leq c_{6,1} \tau_j(r) \quad \text{for all } r \geq 0.$$

If μ is a Borel probability measure on $[\varepsilon, T]^N$ such that

$$\mu(R(t, r)) \leq c_{6,2} \prod_{j=1}^N \tau_j(r^{1/H_j}), \quad \forall t \in \mathbb{R}_+^N, \quad (6.1)$$

where $R(t, r) = \prod_{j=1}^N [t_j - r^{1/H_j}, t_j + r^{1/H_j}]$. Then there exists a constant $\varrho > 0$ such that almost surely,

$$\limsup_{|\xi| \rightarrow \infty} \frac{|\widehat{\mu_{W^H}}(\xi)|}{\sqrt{\left(\prod_{j=1}^N \tau_j(|\xi|^{-\frac{1}{H_j}}) \right) \log^\varrho |\xi|}} < \infty. \quad (6.2)$$

7 Interior points

Theorem 7.1 [Wu and Xiao, 2005] *If a Borel set $E \subset (0, \infty)^N$ carries a probability measure μ such that*

$$\sup_{t \in \mathbb{R}_+^N} \int_{\mathbb{R}_+^N} \frac{\log_+^{(N+1)\gamma} \left[\left(\sum_{j=1}^N |s_j - t_j|^{2H_j} \right)^{-1} \right]}{\left(\sum_{j=1}^N |s_j - t_j|^{2H_j} \right)^{d/2}} \mu(ds) \leq c_{7,1} \quad (7.1)$$

for some finite constants $c_{7,1} > 0$ and $\gamma > N$, where $\log_+ x = \max\{1, \log x\}$. Then $W^H(E)$ has interior points almost surely.

Proof We prove that W^H has a local time on E , denoted by $L(x, E)$, which is continuous in x . Sectorial local nondeterminism plays a useful role in the proof. \square

The following sufficient condition is given in terms of the Hausdorff dimension contour of E .

Corollary 7.2 *If $E \subset (0, \infty)^N$ is a Borel set with $s(H, E) > d$, then $W^H(E)$ a.s. has interior points.*

Applying Theorem 7.1 to the Brownian sheet, we get a sufficient condition which improves that of Khoshnevisan and Xiao (2004).

8 Local times of fBs

Let $T \subset (0, \infty)^N$ be an interval, and let μ_T be the occupation measure of W^H on T defined by

$$\mu_T(\bullet) = \lambda_N \{t \in T : W^H(t) \in \bullet\}.$$

If $\mu_T \ll \lambda_d$, then W^H is said to have a *local time* on T , defined by $L(x, T) \equiv d\mu_T/d\lambda_d(x)$.

Why Important: If a local time $L(x, \bullet)$ is jointly continuous, it can be extended to be a finite Borel measure supported on the level set

$$\Gamma_x = \{t \in T : W^H(t) = x\}.$$

The following result on the joint continuity of the local times was proved by Xiao and Zhang (2002) under the extra condition $H_j d < 1$ for every $j = 1, \dots, N$. The present form is due to Ayache, Wu and Xiao (2005). The key is to apply the sectorial local nondeterminism.

Theorem 8.1 [Ayache, Wu and Xiao (2005)]

If $d < \sum_{j=1}^N 1/H_j$, then for all closed intervals $T \subset (0, \infty)^N$, W^H has a jointly continuous local time on T .

We also prove the following sharp Hölder conditions for the local times.

Theorem 8.2 [Ayache, Wu and Xiao (2005)]

Let L be its jointly continuous local time, and for an interval $I \subset T$, write $L^*(I) = \sup_{x \in \mathbb{R}^d} L(x, I)$. If for some integer $\tau \in \{1, \dots, N\}$,

$$\sum_{\ell=1}^{\tau-1} \frac{1}{H_\ell} \leq d < \sum_{\ell=1}^{\tau} \frac{1}{H_\ell}. \quad (8.1)$$

Then, there are finite constants $c_{8,1}$ and $c_{8,2}$ such that for every $t \in T$,

$$\limsup_{r \rightarrow 0} \frac{L^*([t - \langle r \rangle, t + \langle r \rangle])}{r^{\beta_\tau} (\log \log r^{-1})^{N - \beta_\tau}} \leq c_{8,1}, \quad \text{a.s.} \quad (8.2)$$

and

$$\limsup_{r \rightarrow 0} \sup_{t \in T} \frac{L^*([t - \langle r \rangle, t + \langle r \rangle])}{r^{\beta_\tau} (\log r^{-1})^{N - \beta_\tau}} \leq c_{8,2}, \quad \text{a.s.}, \quad (8.3)$$

where

$$\beta_\tau = N - \tau - H_\tau d + \sum_{\ell=1}^{\tau} H_\tau / H_\ell$$

is the Hausdorff dimension of the level set $\Gamma_x = \{t \in (0, \infty)^N : W^H(t) = x\}$.