Two new approaches to smoothing over complex regions

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useR! 2009, Rennes

Outline

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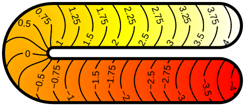
Smoothing in 2 dimensions

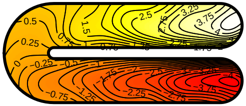
- Have some geographical region and wish to find out something about the biological population in it.
- Response is eg. animal distribution, wish to predict based on (x, y) and other covariates eg. habitat, size, sex, etc.
- This problem is relatively easy if the domain is simple.

Smoothing over complex domains

- Smoothing of complex domains makes this a lot more difficult.
- Problem of leakage.
- Euclidean distance doesn’t always make sense.
- Models need to incorporate information about the intrinsic structure of the domain.



(modified) Ramsay test function



Thin plate spline fit

Smoothing with penalties

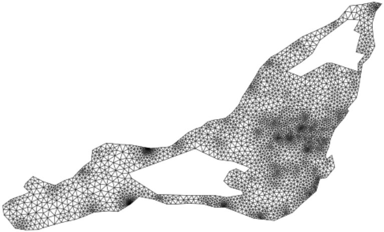
- Objective function takes the form:

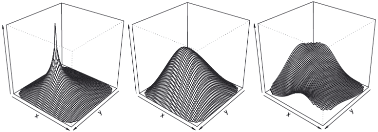
$$\sum_{i=1}^{n}(z_i - f(x_i, y_i; \theta))^2 + \lambda \int_{\Omega} Pf(x, y; \theta) d\Omega$$

- f is the function you want to estimate, made up of some combination of basis functions.
- P is some squared derivative penalty operator, usually $P = (\frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} + \frac{\partial^2}{\partial y^2})^2$.
- This can be generalized to an additive model or GAM.

Possible solutions to leakage problems

- FELSPLINE (Ramsay, (2002).)
- Domain morphing (Eilers, (2006).)
- Within-area distance (Wang and Ranalli, (2007).)
- Soap film smoothers (Wood *et al*, (2008).)



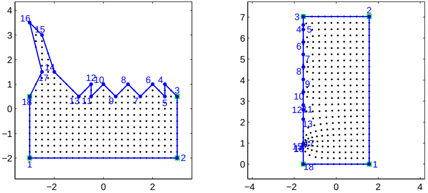


Why morph the domain?

- Takes into account within-area distance.
- Gives a known domain that is easier to smooth over.
- Potentially less computationally intensive.

However:

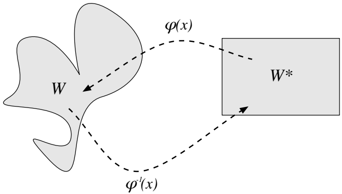
- Don't maintain isotropy - distribution of points odd.
- Not clear what this does to the smoothness penalty.



Outline

The Schwarz-Christoffel transform

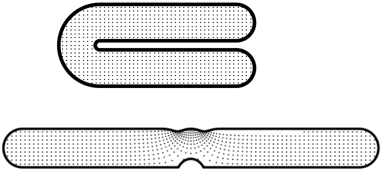
- Take a polygon in some domain W and morph it to a new domain W^*.
- We then have a function for the mapping, $\varphi(x, y)$.
- $\varphi(x, y)$ is a conformal mapping.
- Do this by starting at the new domain and working back to the polygon.
- Can draw a polygonal bounding box around some arbitrary shape.



The mapping

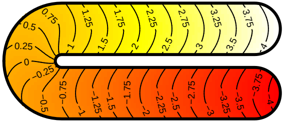
- Use a bounding box around the horseshoe.

- Morphing the horseshoe shape still gives a slightly odd domain however, we are still doing better than before.

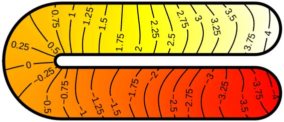


Horseshoe plots

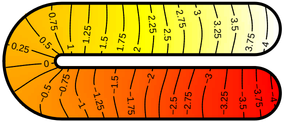
Truth



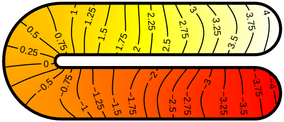
SC+PS



SC+TPRS



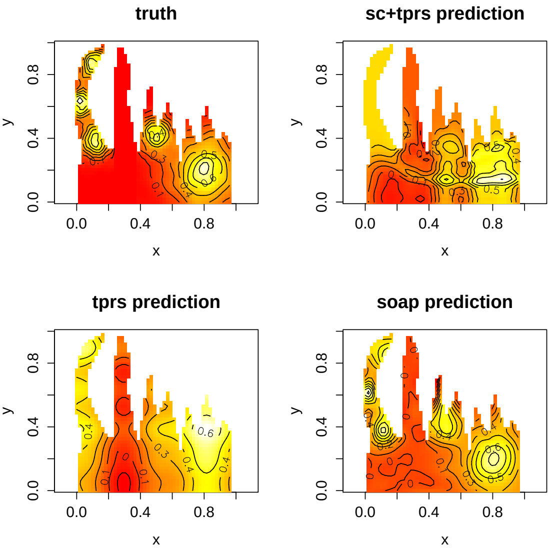
Soap film



Problems

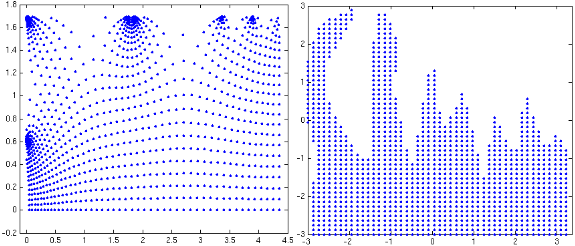
- Small:
  - Implementation is Matlab+R. (YUCK!)
- **BIG**:
  - Weird artifacts.
  - Morphing of domain appears to cause features to be smoothed over.
  - Arbitrary selection of vertices.

A more realistic domain



A more realistic domain - what's happening?

- Weird "crowding" effect.
- Different with each vertex choice. All bad.



Outline

Multidimensional scaling and within-area distances

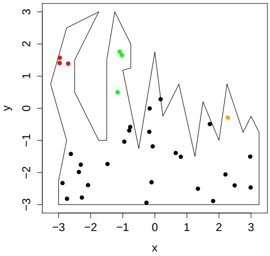
- Idea: use MDS to to arrange points in the domain according to their "within-domain distance."

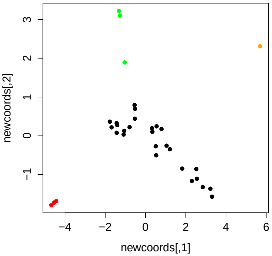
Scheme:

- First need to find the within-area distances.
- Perform MDS on the matrix of within-area distances.
- Smooth over the new points.

Multidimensional scaling refresher

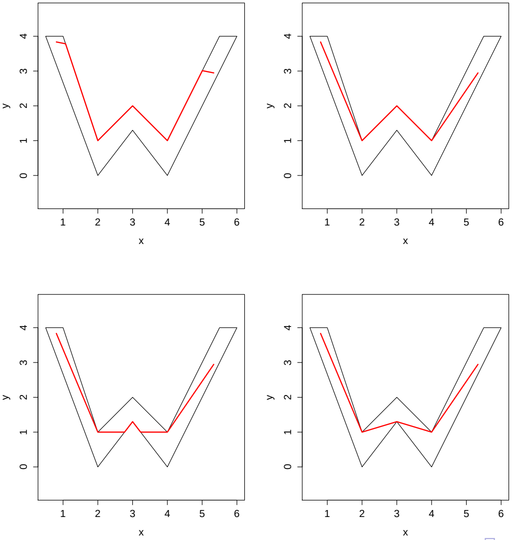
- Double centre matrix of between point distances, D, (subtract row and column means) then find DD^T.
- Finds a configuration of points such that Euclidean distance between points in new arrangement is approximately the same as distance in the domain.
- Already implemented in R by `cmdscale`.



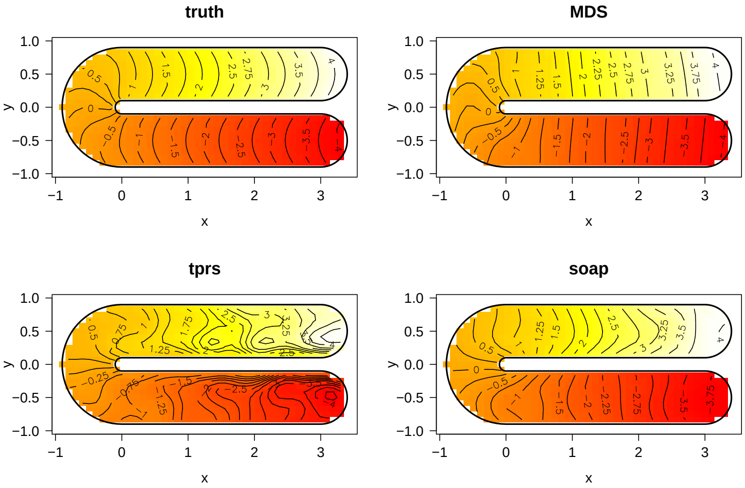


Finding within-area distances

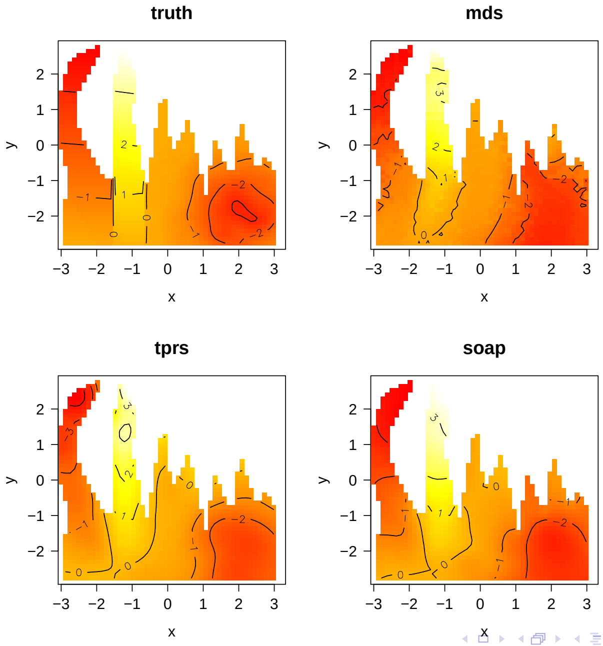
- Use a new algorithm to find the within area distances.



Ramsay simulations



A different domain



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Conclusions

- Seems that the S-C transform does not have much utility.
- MDS shows more promise, easier to transfer to higher dimensions.
- MDS does not impose strict boundary conditions so leakage still possible.
- Pushing the data into more dimensions might be useful to separate points.
- After initial “transform” calculation, both methods only use the same computational time as a thin plate regression spline. (Soap is expensive.)

References

- S.N. Wood, M.V. Bravington, and S.L. Hedley. *Soap film smoothing. JRSSB, 2008*
- H. Wang and M.G. Ranalli. *Low-rank smoothing splines on complicated domains. Biometrics, 2007*
- T.A. Driscoll and L.N. Trefethen. *Schwarz-Christoffel Mapping. Cambridge, 2002*
- T. Ramsay. *Spline smoothing over difficult regions. JRSSB, 2001*
- P.H.C. Eilers. *P-spline smoothing on difficult domains. University of Munich seminar, 2006*
- J.C. Gower. *Adding a point to vector diagrams in multivariate analysis. Biometrika, 1968.*

Slides available at `http://people.bath.ac.uk/dlm27`