

Uniqueness of the Fisher–Rao metric on the space of smooth densities on a closed manifold

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Based on:

- [M.Bauer, M.Bruveris, P.Michor: Uniqueness of the Fisher–Rao metric on the space of smooth densities, Bull. London Math. Soc. 48, 3 (2016), 499-506, arXiv:1411.5577]
- [M.Bruveris, P.Michor: Geometry of the Fisher-Rao metric on the space of smooth densities, Mathematische Nachrichten 292 (2019), 511-523, arxiv:1607.04550]
- [M.Bruveris, P. Michor, A.Parusinski, A. Rainer: Moser's Theorem for manifolds with corners, Proc. AMS 146 (2018), pp. 4889-4897, arxiv:1604.07787]

The infinite dimensional geometry used here is based on:

- [Andreas Kriegel, Peter W. Michor: The Convenient Setting of Global Analysis. Mathematical Surveys and Monographs, Volume: 53, Amer. Math. Soc., 1997]
- Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Convenient_vector_space]
- I will use also [Peter W. Michor: Topics in Differential Geometry, Grad. Studies in Math. 93, 2008]

Abstract

For a smooth compact manifold M without boundary, any weak Riemannian metric on the space of smooth positive densities which is invariant under the right action of the diffeomorphism group $\text{Diff}(M)$ is of the form

$$G_\mu(\alpha, \beta) = C_1(\mu(M)) \int_M \frac{\alpha \beta}{\mu} + C_2(\mu(M)) \int_M \alpha \cdot \int_M \beta$$

for smooth functions C_1, C_2 of the total volume $\mu(M) = \int_M \mu$. This implies uniqueness up to a constant for the Fisher-Rao metric G^{FR} on the space of smooth positive probability densities.

In this talk I prove this, and investigate the geometry. If time permits, I conjecturally extend the result to compact smooth manifolds with corners (for example, a simplex).

The Fisher–Rao metric on the space $\text{Prob}(M)$ of probability densities is of importance in the field of information geometry. Restricted to finite-dimensional submanifolds of $\text{Prob}(M)$, so-called statistical manifolds, it is called Fisher's information metric [Amari: Differential-geometrical methods in statistics, 1985]. The Fisher–Rao metric is invariant under the action of the diffeomorphism group. A uniqueness result was established [Čencov: Statistical decision rules and optimal inference, 1982, p. 156] for Fisher's information metric on finite sample spaces and [Ay, Jost, Le, Schwachhöfer, 2014] extended it to infinite sample spaces.

See also [Ay, Jost, Le, Schwachhöfer: Information Geometry, 2017].

The Fisher–Rao metric on the infinite-dimensional manifold of all positive smooth probability densities was studied in [Friedrich: Die Fisher-Information und symplektische Strukturen, 1991], including the computation of its curvature.

The space of densities

Let M^m be a smooth manifold. Let $(M \supseteq U_\alpha \xrightarrow{u_\alpha} u_\alpha(U_\alpha) \subseteq \mathbb{R}^m)$ be a smooth atlas for it. The *volume bundle* $(\text{Vol}(M), \pi_M, M)$ of M is the 1-dimensional vector bundle (line bundle) which is given by the following cocycle of transition functions:

$$\psi_{\alpha\beta} : U_{\alpha\beta} = U_\alpha \cap U_\beta \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \setminus \{0\} = GL(1, \mathbb{R}),$$

$$\psi_{\alpha\beta}(x) = |\det d(u_\beta \circ u_\alpha^{-1})(u_\alpha(x))| = \frac{1}{|\det d(u_\alpha \circ u_\beta^{-1})(u_\beta(x))|}.$$

$\text{Vol}(M)$ is a trivial line bundle over M . But there is no natural trivialization. There is a natural order on each fiber. Since $\text{Vol}(M)$ is a natural bundle of order 1 on M , there is a natural action of the group $\text{Diff}(M)$ on $\text{Vol}(M)$, given by

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \text{Vol}(M) & \xrightarrow{|\det(T\varphi^{-1})| \circ \varphi} & \text{Vol}(M) \\ \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ M & \xrightarrow{\varphi} & M \end{array}$$

If M is orientable, then $\text{Vol}(M) = \Lambda^m T^*M$. If M is not orientable, let \tilde{M} be the orientable double cover of M with its deck-transformation $\tau : \tilde{M} \rightarrow \tilde{M}$. Then $\Gamma(\text{Vol}(M))$ is isomorphic to the space $\{\omega \in \Omega^m(\tilde{M}) : \tau^*\omega = -\omega\}$. These are the ‘formes impaires’ of de Rham. See [M 2008, 13.1] for this.

Sections of the line bundle $\text{Vol}(M)$ are called densities. The space $\Gamma(\text{Vol}(M))$ of all smooth sections is a Fréchet space in its natural topology; see [Kriegel-M, 1997]. For each section α of $\text{Vol}(M)$ of compact support the integral $\int_M \alpha$ is invariantly defined as follows: Let (U_α, u_α) be an atlas on M with associated trivialization $\psi_\alpha : \text{Vol}(M)|_{U_\alpha} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$, and let f_α be a partition of unity with $\text{supp}(f_\alpha) \subset U_\alpha$. Then we put

$$\int_M \mu = \sum_\alpha \int_{U_\alpha} f_\alpha \mu := \sum_\alpha \int_{u_\alpha(U_\alpha)} f_\alpha(u_\alpha^{-1}(y)) \cdot \psi_\alpha(\mu(u_\alpha^{-1}(y))) dy.$$

The integral is independent of the choice of the atlas and the partition of unity.

The Fisher–Rao metric

Let M^m be a smooth compact manifold without boundary. Let $\text{Dens}_+(M)$ be the space of smooth positive densities on M , i.e., $\text{Dens}_+(M) = \{\mu \in \Gamma(\text{Vol}(M)) : \mu(x) > 0 \forall x \in M\}$.

Let $\text{Prob}(M)$ be the subspace of positive densities with integral 1.

For $\mu \in \text{Dens}_+(M)$ we have $T_\mu \text{Dens}_+(M) = \Gamma(\text{Vol}(M))$ and for $\mu \in \text{Prob}(M)$ we have

$T_\mu \text{Prob}(M) = \{\alpha \in \Gamma(\text{Vol}(M)) : \int_M \alpha = 0\}$.

The Fisher–Rao metric on $\text{Prob}(M)$ is defined as:

$$G_\mu^{\text{FR}}(\alpha, \beta) = \int_M \frac{\alpha}{\mu} \frac{\beta}{\mu} \mu.$$

It is invariant for the action of $\text{Diff}(M)$ on $\text{Prob}(M)$:

$$\begin{aligned} \left((\varphi^*)^* G_\mu^{\text{FR}} \right)_\mu (\alpha, \beta) &= G_{\varphi^* \mu}^{\text{FR}}(\varphi^* \alpha, \varphi^* \beta) = \\ &= \int_M \left(\frac{\alpha}{\mu} \circ \varphi \right) \left(\frac{\beta}{\mu} \circ \varphi \right) \varphi^* \mu = \int_M \frac{\alpha}{\mu} \frac{\beta}{\mu} \mu. \end{aligned}$$

Theorem [BBM, 2016]

Let M be a compact manifold without boundary of dimension ≥ 2 . Let G be a smooth (equivalently, bounded) bilinear form on $\text{Dens}_+(M)$ which is invariant under the action of $\text{Diff}(M)$. Then

$$G_\mu(\alpha, \beta) = C_1(\mu(M)) \int_M \frac{\alpha \beta}{\mu \mu} \mu + C_2(\mu(M)) \int_M \alpha \cdot \int_M \beta$$

for smooth functions C_1, C_2 of the total volume $\mu(M)$.

To see that this theorem implies the uniqueness of the Fisher–Rao metric, note that if G is a $\text{Diff}(M)$ -invariant Riemannian metric on $\text{Prob}(M)$, then we can equivariantly extend it to $\text{Dens}_+(M)$ via

$$G_\mu(\alpha, \beta) = G_{\frac{\mu}{\mu(M)}} \left(\alpha - \left(\int_M \alpha \right) \frac{\mu}{\mu(M)}, \beta - \left(\int_M \beta \right) \frac{\mu}{\mu(M)} \right).$$

Relations to right-invariant metrics on diffeom. groups

Let $\mu_0 \in \text{Prob}(M)$ be a fixed smooth probability density. In [Khesin, Lenells, Misiolek, Preston, 2013] it has been shown, that the degenerate, \dot{H}^1 -metric $\frac{1}{2} \int_M \text{div}^{\mu_0}(X) \cdot \text{div}^{\mu_0}(X) \cdot \mu_0$ on $\mathfrak{X}(M)$ is invariant under the adjoint action of $\text{Diff}(M, \mu_0)$. Thus the induced degenerate right invariant metric on $\text{Diff}(M)$ descends to a metric on $\text{Prob}(M) \cong \text{Diff}(M, \mu_0) \backslash \text{Diff}(M)$ via

$$\text{Diff}(M) \ni \varphi \mapsto \varphi^* \mu_0 \in \text{Prob}(M)$$

which is invariant under the right action of $\text{Diff}(M)$. This is the Fisher–Rao metric on $\text{Prob}(M)$. In [Modin, 2014], the \dot{H}^1 -metric was extended to a non-degenerate metric on $\text{Diff}(M)$, also descending to the Fisher–Rao metric.

Corollary. *Let $\dim(M) \geq 2$. If a weak right-invariant (possibly degenerate) Riemannian metric \tilde{G} on $\text{Diff}(M)$ descends to a metric G on $\text{Prob}(M)$ via the right action, i.e., the mapping $\varphi \mapsto \varphi^* \mu_0$ from $(\text{Diff}(M), \tilde{G})$ to $(\text{Prob}(M), G)$ is a Riemannian submersion, then G has to be a multiple of the Fisher–Rao metric.*

Note that any right invariant metric \tilde{G} on $\text{Diff}(M)$ descends to a metric on $\text{Prob}(M)$ via $\varphi \mapsto \varphi_* \mu_0$; but this is not $\text{Diff}(M)$ -invariant in general.

Invariant metrics on $\text{Dens}_+(S^1)$.

$\text{Dens}_+(S^1) = \Omega_+^1(S^1)$, and $\text{Dens}_+(S^1)$ is $\text{Diff}(S^1)$ -equivariantly isomorphic to the space of all Riemannian metrics on S^1 via $\Phi = (\)^2 : \text{Dens}_+(S^1) \rightarrow \text{Met}(S^1)$, $\Phi(fd\theta) = f^2 d\theta^2$.

On $\text{Met}(S^1)$ there are many $\text{Diff}(S^1)$ -invariant metrics; see [Bauer, Harms, M, 2013]. For example Sobolev-type metrics. Write $g \in \text{Met}(S^1)$ in the form $g = \tilde{g} d\theta^2$ and $h = \tilde{h} d\theta^2$, $k = \tilde{k} d\theta^2$ with $\tilde{g}, \tilde{h}, \tilde{k} \in C^\infty(S^1)$. The following metrics are $\text{Diff}(S^1)$ -invariant:

$$G_g^l(h, k) = \int_{S^1} \frac{\tilde{h}}{\tilde{g}} \cdot (1 + \Delta^g)^n \left(\frac{\tilde{k}}{\tilde{g}} \right) \sqrt{\tilde{g}} d\theta;$$

here Δ^g is the Laplacian on S^1 with respect to the metric g . The pullback by Φ yields a $\text{Diff}(S^1)$ -invariant metric on $\text{Dens}_+(M)$:

$$G_\mu(\alpha, \beta) = 4 \int_{S^1} \frac{\alpha}{\mu} \cdot \left(1 + \Delta^{\Phi(\mu)} \right)^n \left(\frac{\beta}{\mu} \right) \mu.$$

For $n = 0$ this is 4 times the Fisher–Rao metric. For $n \geq 1$ we get many $\text{Diff}(S^1)$ -invariant metrics on $\text{Dens}_+(S^1)$ and on $\text{Prob}(S^1)$.

Geometry of the Fisher-Rao metric on $\text{Dens}_+(M)$

$$G_\mu(\alpha, \beta) = C_1(\mu(M)) \int_M \frac{\alpha \beta}{\mu} + C_2(\mu(M)) \int_M \alpha \cdot \int_M \beta$$

This metric will be studied in different representations.

$$\text{Dens}_+(M) \xrightarrow{R} C^\infty(M, \mathbb{R}_{>0}) \xrightarrow{\Phi} \mathbb{R}_{>0} \times S \cap C^\infty_{>0} \xrightarrow{W \times \text{Id}} (W_-, W_+) \times S \cap C^\infty_{>0}.$$

We fix $\mu_0 \in \text{Prob}(M)$ and consider the mapping

$$R : \text{Dens}_+(M) \rightarrow C^\infty(M, \mathbb{R}_{>0}), \quad R(\mu) = f = \sqrt{\frac{\mu}{\mu_0}}.$$

The map R is a diffeomorphism and we will denote the induced metric by $\tilde{G} = (R^{-1})^* G$; it is given by the formula

$$\tilde{G}_f(h, k) = 4C_1(\|f\|_{L^2(\mu_0)}^2) \langle h, k \rangle_{L^2(\mu_0)} + 4C_2(\|f\|_{L^2(\mu_0)}^2) \langle f, h \rangle_{L^2(\mu_0)} \langle f, k \rangle_{L^2(\mu_0)},$$

and this formula makes sense for $f \in C^\infty(M, \mathbb{R}) \setminus \{0\}$.

Consequently, for $(\text{Prob}(M), G^{\text{FR}})$ is isometric to the

$2\sqrt{C_1(1)}$ -sphere in $L^2(\mu_0)$ intersected with $C^\infty(M, \mathbb{R}_{>0})$.

Remark on R^{-1}

The map R is inspired by [B. Khesin, J. Lenells, G. Misiolek, S. C. Preston: Geometry of diffeomorphism groups, complete integrability and geometric statistics. *Geom. Funct. Anal.*, 23(1):334-366, 2013.]

$$R^{-1} : C^\infty(M, \mathbb{R}) \rightarrow \Gamma_{\geq 0}(\text{Vol}(M)), \quad f \mapsto f^2 \mu_0$$

makes sense on the whole space $C^\infty(M, \mathbb{R})$ and its image is stratified (loosely speaking) according to the rank of TR^{-1} . The image looks somewhat like the orbit space of a discrete reflection group. Geodesics are mapped to curves which are geodesics in the interior $\Gamma_{>0}(\text{Vol}(M))$, and they are reflected following Snell's law at some hyperplanes in the boundary.

Polar coordinates

on the pre-Hilbert space $(C^\infty(M, \mathbb{R}), \langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle_{L^2(\mu_0)})$. Let $S = \{\varphi \in L^2(M, \mathbb{R}) : \int_M \varphi^2 \mu_0 = 1\}$ denote the L^2 -sphere. Then

$$\Phi : C^\infty(M, \mathbb{R}) \setminus \{0\} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{>0} \times (S \cap C^\infty), \quad \Phi(f) = (r, \varphi) = \left(\|f\|, \frac{f}{\|f\|} \right)$$

is a diffeomorphism. We set $\bar{G} = (\Phi^{-1})^* \tilde{G}$; the metric has the expression

$$\bar{G}_{r,\varphi} = g_1(r) \langle d\varphi, d\varphi \rangle + g_2(r) dr^2,$$

with $g_1(r) = 4C_1(r^2)r^2$ and $g_2(r) = 4(C_1(r^2) + C_2(r^2)r^2)$. Finally we change the coordinate r diffeomorphically to

$$s = W(r) = 2 \int_1^r \sqrt{g_2(\rho)} d\rho.$$

Then, defining $a(s) = 4C_1(r(s)^2)r(s)^2$, we have

$$\bar{G}_{s,\varphi} = a(s) \langle d\varphi, d\varphi \rangle + ds^2.$$

Since \bar{G} induces the canonical metric on (W_-, W_+) , a necessary condition for \bar{G} to be complete is $(W_-, W_+) = (-\infty, +\infty)$.

Rewritten in terms of the functions C_1, C_2 this becomes

$$W_+ = \infty \Leftrightarrow \left(\int_1^\infty r^{-1/2} \sqrt{C_1(r)} dr = \infty \text{ or } \int_1^\infty \sqrt{C_2(r)} dr = \infty \right),$$

and similarly for $W_- = -\infty$, with the limits of the integration being 0 and 1.

Relation to hypersurfaces of revolution in the (pre-) Hilbert space

We consider the metric on $(W_-, W_+) \times S \cap C^\infty$ in the form $\tilde{G}_{r,\varphi} = a(s)\langle d\varphi, d\varphi \rangle + ds^2$ where $a(s) = 4C_1(r(s)^2)r(s)^2$. Then we consider the isometric embedding (remember $\langle \varphi, d\varphi \rangle = 0$ on $S \cap C^\infty$)

$\Psi : ((W_-, W_+) \times S \cap C^\infty, \tilde{G}) \rightarrow (\mathbb{R} \times C^\infty(M, \mathbb{R}), du^2 + \langle df, df \rangle),$

$$\Psi(s, \varphi) = \left(\int_0^s \sqrt{1 - \frac{a'(\sigma)^2}{4a(\sigma)}} d\sigma, \sqrt{a(s)}\varphi \right),$$

which is defined and smooth only on the open subset

$$R := \{(s, \varphi) \in (W_-, W_+) \times S \cap C^\infty : a'(s)^2 < 4a(s)\}.$$

Fix some $\varphi_0 \in S \cap C^\infty$ and consider the generating curve

$$s \mapsto \left(\int_0^s \sqrt{1 - \frac{a'(\sigma)^2}{4a(\sigma)}} d\sigma, \sqrt{a(s)} \right) \in \mathbb{R}^2.$$

Then s is an arc-length parameterization of this curve!

Given any arc-length parameterized curve $I \ni s \mapsto (c_1(s), c_2(s))$ in \mathbb{R}^2 and its generated hypersurface of rotation

$$\{(c_1(s), c_2(s)\varphi) : s \in I, \varphi \in S \cap C^\infty\} \subset \mathbb{R} \times C^\infty(M, \mathbb{R}),$$

the induced metric in the (s, φ) -parameterization is $ds^2 + c_2(s)^2 \langle d\varphi, d\varphi \rangle$.

This suggests that the moduli space of hypersurfaces of revolution is naturally embedded in the moduli space of all metrics of the form $\tilde{G}_{r,\varphi} = a(s) \langle d\varphi, d\varphi \rangle + ds^2$.

Example: In the case of $S = S^1$ and the tractrix (c_1, c_2) , the surface of revolution is the pseudosphere (curvature -1) whose universal cover is only part of the hyperbolic plane. But in polar coordinates we get a space whose universal cover is the hyperbolic plane. In detail:

$$c_1(s) = \int_0^s \sqrt{1 - e^{-2\sigma}} d\sigma = \operatorname{Arcosh}(e^s) - \sqrt{1 - e^{-2s}}$$

$$c_2(s) = e^{-s}, \quad s > 0$$

$$a(s) d\varphi^2 + ds^2 = e^{-2s} d\varphi^2 + ds^2, \quad s \in \mathbb{R}.$$

Theorem

If $(W_-, W_+) = (-\infty, +\infty)$, then any two points (s_0, φ_0) and (s_1, φ_1) in $\mathbb{R} \times S$ can be joined by a minimal geodesic. If φ_0 and φ_1 lie in $S \cap C^\infty$, then the minimal geodesic lies in $\mathbb{R} \times S \cap C^\infty$.

Proof. If φ_0 and φ_1 are linearly independent, we consider the 2-space $V = V(\varphi_0, \varphi_1)$ spanned by φ_0 and φ_1 in L^2 . Then $\mathbb{R} \times V \cap S$ is totally geodesic since it is the fixed point set of the isometry $(s, \varphi) \mapsto (s, \mathfrak{s}_V(\varphi))$ where \mathfrak{s}_V is the orthogonal reflection at V . Thus there exists a minimizing geodesic between (s_0, φ_0) and (s_1, φ_1) in the complete 3-dimensional Riemannian submanifold $\mathbb{R} \times V \cap S$. This geodesic is also length-minimizing in the strong Hilbert manifold $\mathbb{R} \times S$ by the following arguments:

Given any smooth curve $c = (s, \varphi) : [0, 1] \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \times S$ between these two points, there is a subdivision $0 = t_0 < t_1 < \dots < t_N = 1$ such that the piecewise geodesic c_1 which first runs along a geodesic from $c(t_0)$ to $c(t_1)$, then to $c(t_2)$, \dots , and finally to $c(t_N)$, has length $\text{Len}(c_1) \leq \text{Len}(c)$. This piecewise geodesic now lies in the totally geodesic $(N + 2)$ -dimensional submanifold $\mathbb{R} \times V(\varphi(t_0), \dots, \varphi(t_N)) \cap S$. Thus there exists a geodesic c_2 between the two points (s_0, φ_0) and (s_1, φ_1) which is length minimizing in this $(N + 2)$ -dimensional submanifold. Therefore $\text{Len}(c_2) \leq \text{Len}(c_1) \leq \text{Len}(c)$. Moreover, $c_2 = (s \circ c_2, \varphi \circ c_2)$ lies in $\mathbb{R} \times V(\varphi_0, (\varphi \circ c_2)'(0)) \cap S$ which also contains φ_1 , thus c_2 lies in $\mathbb{R} \times V(\varphi_0, \varphi_1) \cap S$.

If $\varphi_0 = \varphi_1$, then $\mathbb{R} \times \{\varphi_0\}$ is a minimal geodesic. If $\varphi_0 = -\varphi_0$ we choose a great circle between them which lies in a 2-space V and proceed as above. □

Covariant derivative

On $\mathbb{R} \times S$ (we assume that $(W_-, W_+) = \mathbb{R}$) with metric $\bar{G} = ds^2 + a(s)\langle d\varphi, d\varphi \rangle$ we consider smooth vector fields $f(s, \varphi)\partial_s + X(s, \varphi)$ where $X(s, \varphi) \in \mathfrak{X}(S)$ is a smooth vector field on the Hilbert sphere S . We denote by ∇^S the covariant derivative on S and get

$$\begin{aligned} \nabla_{f\partial_s + X}(g\partial_s + Y) &= (f \cdot g_s + dg(X) - \frac{a_s}{2}\langle X, Y \rangle)\partial_s \\ &\quad + \frac{a_s}{2a}(fY + gX) + fY_s + \nabla_X^S Y \end{aligned}$$

Curvature:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{R}(f\partial_s + X, g\partial_s + Y)(h\partial_s + Z) &= \\ &= \left(\frac{a_{ss}}{2} - \frac{a_s^2}{4a}\right)\langle gX - fY, Z \rangle\partial_s + \mathcal{R}^S(X, Y)Z \\ &\quad - \left(\left(\frac{a_s}{2a}\right)_s + \frac{a_s^2}{4a^2}\right)h(gX - fY) + \frac{a_s^2}{4a}(\langle X, Z \rangle Y - \langle Y, Z \rangle X). \end{aligned}$$

Sectional Curvature

Let us take $X, Y \in T_\varphi S$ with $\langle X, Y \rangle = 0$ and $\langle X, X \rangle = \langle Y, Y \rangle = 1/a(s)$, then

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Sec}_{(s,\varphi)}(\text{span}(X, Y)) &= \frac{1}{a} - \frac{a_s^2}{4a^2}, \\ \text{Sec}_{(s,\varphi)}(\text{span}(\partial_s, Y)) &= -\frac{a_{ss}}{2a} + \frac{a_s^2}{4a^2}\end{aligned}$$

are all the possible sectional curvatures.

Proof of the Main Theorem

First, the main theorem again:

Theorem [BBM, 2016] *Let M be a compact manifold without boundary of dimension ≥ 2 . Let G be a smooth (equivalently, bounded) bilinear form on $\text{Dens}_+(M)$ which is invariant under the action of $\text{Diff}(M)$. Then*

$$G_\mu(\alpha, \beta) = C_1(\mu(M)) \int_M \frac{\alpha \beta}{\mu} \mu + C_2(\mu(M)) \int_M \alpha \cdot \int_M \beta$$

for smooth functions C_1, C_2 of the total volume $\mu(M)$.

Proof of the Main Theorem

Here M is a compact smooth manifold without boundary, possibly non-orientable.

Let us fix a basic probability density μ_0 . By Moser's theorem [Moser, 1965], see [M, 2008, 31.13] or the proof of [Kriegel, M, 1997, 43.7] for proofs in the notation used here, there exists for each $\mu \in \text{Dens}_+(M)$ a diffeomorphism $\varphi_\mu \in \text{Diff}(M)$ with $\varphi_\mu^* \mu = \mu(M) \mu_0 =: c \cdot \mu_0$ where $c = \mu(M) = \int_M \mu > 0$. Then

$$((\varphi_\mu^*)^* G)_\mu(\alpha, \beta) = G_{\varphi_\mu^* \mu}(\varphi_\mu^* \alpha, \varphi_\mu^* \beta) = G_{c \cdot \mu_0}(\varphi_\mu^* \alpha, \varphi_\mu^* \beta).$$

Thus it suffices to show that for any $c > 0$ we have

$$G_{c\mu_0}(\alpha, \beta) = C_1(c) \cdot \int_M \frac{\alpha}{\mu_0} \frac{\beta}{\mu_0} \mu_0 + C_2(c) \int_M \alpha \cdot \int_M \beta$$

for some functions C_1, C_2 of the total volume $c = \mu(M)$. Both bilinear forms are still invariant under the action of the group $\text{Diff}(M, c\mu_0) = \text{Diff}(M, \mu_0) = \{\psi \in \text{Diff}(M) : \psi^* \mu_0 = \mu_0\}$. The bilinear form

$$T_{\mu_0} \text{Dens}_+(M) \times T_{\mu_0} \text{Dens}_+(M) \ni (\alpha, \beta) \mapsto G_{c\mu_0} \left(\frac{\alpha}{\mu_0} \mu_0, \frac{\beta}{\mu_0} \mu_0 \right)$$

can be viewed as a bilinear form

$$C^\infty(M) \times C^\infty(M) \ni (f, g) \mapsto G_c(f, g).$$

We will consider now the associated bounded linear mapping

$$\check{G}_c : C^\infty(M) \rightarrow C^\infty(M)' = \mathcal{D}'(M).$$

(1) The Lie algebra $\mathfrak{X}(M, \mu_0)$ of $\text{Diff}(M, \mu_0)$ consists of vector fields X with

$$0 = \text{div}^{\mu_0}(X) := \frac{\mathcal{L}_X \mu_0}{\mu_0}.$$

On an oriented open subset $U \subset M$, each density is an m -form, $m = \dim(M)$, and $\text{div}^{\mu_0}(X) = di_X \mu_0$.

The mapping $\hat{i}_{\mu_0} : \mathfrak{X}(U) \rightarrow \Omega^{m-1}(U)$ given by $X \mapsto i_X \mu_0$ is an isomorphism. The Lie subalgebra $\mathfrak{X}(U, \mu_0)$ of divergence free vector fields corresponds to the space of closed $(m-1)$ -forms.

Denote by $\mathfrak{X}_{\text{exact}}(M, \mu_0)$ the set (not a vector space) of 'exact' divergence free vector fields $X = \hat{i}_{\mu_0}^{-1}(d\omega)$, where $\omega \in \Omega_c^{m-2}(U)$ for an oriented open subset $U \subset M$.

(2) If for $f \in C^\infty(M)$ and a connected open set $U \subseteq M$ we have $(\mathcal{L}_X f)|_U = 0$ for all $X \in \mathfrak{X}_{\text{exact}}(M, \mu_0)$, then $f|_U$ is constant.

Since we shall need some details later on, we prove this well-known fact.

Let $x \in U$. For every tangent vector $X_x \in T_x M$ we can find a vector field $X \in \mathfrak{X}_{\text{exact}}(M, \mu_0)$ such that $X(x) = X_x$; to see this, choose a chart (U_x, u) near x such that $\mu_0|_{U_x} = du^1 \wedge \cdots \wedge du^m$, and choose $g \in C_c^\infty(U_x)$, such that $g = 1$ near x .

Then $X := \hat{t}_{\mu_0}^{-1} d(g \cdot u^2 \cdot du^3 \wedge \cdots \wedge du^m) \in \mathfrak{X}_{\text{exact}}(M, \mu_0)$ and $X = \partial_{u^1}$ near x . So we can produce a basis for $T_x M$ and even a local frame near x .

Thus $\mathcal{L}_X f|_U = 0$ for all $X \in \mathfrak{X}_{\text{exact}}(M, \mu_0)$ implies $df = 0$ and hence f is constant.

(3) If for a distribution (generalized function) $A \in \mathcal{D}'(M)$ and a connected open set $U \subseteq M$ we have $\mathcal{L}_X A|_U = 0$ for all $X \in \mathfrak{X}_{\text{exact}}(M, \mu_0)$, then $A|_U = C\mu_0|_U$ for some constant C , meaning $\langle A, f \rangle = C \int_M f \mu_0$ for all $f \in C_c^\infty(U)$.

Because $\langle \mathcal{L}_X A, f \rangle = -\langle A, \mathcal{L}_X f \rangle$, the invariance property $\mathcal{L}_X A|_U = 0$ implies $\langle A, \mathcal{L}_X f \rangle = 0$ for all $f \in C_c^\infty(U)$. Clearly, $\int_M (\mathcal{L}_X f) \mu_0 = 0$. For each $x \in U$ let $U_x \subset U$ be an open oriented chart which is diffeomorphic to \mathbb{R}^m . Let $g \in C_c^\infty(U_x)$ satisfy $\int_M g \mu_0 = 0$; we will show that $\langle A, g \rangle = 0$. Because the integral over $g \mu_0$ is zero, the compact cohomology class $[g \mu_0] \in H_c^m(U_x) \cong \mathbb{R}$ vanishes; thus there exists $\alpha \in \Omega_c^{m-1}(U_x) \subset \Omega^{m-1}(M)$ with $d\alpha = g \mu_0$. Since U_x is diffeomorphic to \mathbb{R}^m , we can write $\alpha = \sum_j f_j d\beta_j$ with $\beta_j \in \Omega^{m-2}(U_x)$ and $f_j \in C_c^\infty(U_x)$. Choose $h \in C_c^\infty(U_x)$ with $h = 1$ on $\bigcup_j \text{supp}(f_j)$, so that $\alpha = \sum_j f_j d(h\beta_j)$ and $h\beta_j \in \Omega_c^{m-2}(M) \subset \Omega^{m-2}(M)$. Thus the fields $X_j = \hat{i}_{\mu_0}^{-1} d(h\beta_j)$ lie in $\mathfrak{X}_{\text{exact}}(M, \mu_0)$ and we have the identity $\sum_j f_j \cdot i_{X_j} \mu_0 = \alpha$.

This means $\sum_j (\mathcal{L}_{X_j} f_j) \mu_0 = \sum_j \mathcal{L}_{X_j} (f_j \mu_0) = \sum_j d i_{X_j} (f_j \mu_0) = d \left(\sum_j f_j \cdot i_{X_j} \mu_0 \right) = d\alpha = g \mu_0$ or $\sum_j \mathcal{L}_{X_j} f_j = g$, leading to

$$\langle A, g \rangle = \sum_j \langle A, \mathcal{L}_{X_j} f_j \rangle = - \sum_j \langle \mathcal{L}_{X_j} A, f_j \rangle = 0.$$

So $\langle A, g \rangle = 0$ for all $g \in C_c^\infty(U_x)$ with $\int_M g \mu_0 = 0$. Finally, choose a function φ with support in U_x and $\int_M \varphi \mu_0 = 1$. Then for any $f \in C_c^\infty(U_x)$, the function defined by $g = f - \left(\int_M f \mu_0\right) \cdot \varphi$ in $C^\infty(M)$ satisfies $\int_M g \mu_0 = 0$ and so

$$\langle A, f \rangle = \langle A, g \rangle + \langle A, \varphi \rangle \int_M f \mu_0 = C \int_M f \mu_0,$$

with $C_x = \langle A, \varphi \rangle$. Thus $A|_{U_x} = C_x \mu_0|_{U_x}$. Since U is connected, the constants C_x are all equal: Choose $\varphi \in C_c^\infty(U_x \cap U_y)$ with $\int \varphi \mu_0 = 1$. Thus (3) is proved.

(4) The operator $\check{G}_c : C^\infty(M) \rightarrow \mathcal{D}'(M)$ has the following property: If for $f \in C^\infty(M)$ and a connected open $U \subseteq M$ the restriction $f|_U$ is constant, then we have $\check{G}_c(f)|_U = C_U(f)\mu_0|_U$ for some constant $C_U(f)$.

For $x \in U$ choose $g \in C^\infty(M)$ with $g = 1$ near $M \setminus U$ and $g = 0$ on a neighborhood V of x . Then for any $X \in \mathfrak{X}_{\text{exact}}(M, \mu_0)$, that is $X = \hat{\iota}_{\mu_0}^{-1}(d\omega)$ for some $\omega \in \Omega_c^{m-2}(W)$ where $W \subset M$ is an oriented open set, let $Y = \hat{\iota}_{\mu_0}^{-1}(d(g\omega))$. The vector field $Y \in \mathfrak{X}_{\text{exact}}(M, \mu_0)$ equals X near $M \setminus U$ and vanishes on V . Since f is constant on U , $\mathcal{L}_X f = \mathcal{L}_Y f$. For all $h \in C^\infty(M)$ we have $\langle \mathcal{L}_X \check{G}_c(f), h \rangle = \langle \check{G}_c(f), -\mathcal{L}_X h \rangle = -G_c(f, \mathcal{L}_X h) = G_c(\mathcal{L}_X f, h) = \langle \check{G}_c(\mathcal{L}_X f), h \rangle$, since G_c is invariant. Thus also

$$\mathcal{L}_X \check{G}_c(f) = \check{G}_c(\mathcal{L}_X f) = \check{G}_c(\mathcal{L}_Y f) = \mathcal{L}_Y \check{G}_c(f).$$

Now Y vanishes on V and therefore so does $\mathcal{L}_X \check{G}_c(f)$. By (3) we have $\check{G}_c(f)|_V = C_V(f)\mu_0|_V$ for some $C_V(f) \in \mathbb{R}$. Since U is connected, all the constants $C_V(f)$ have to agree, giving a constant $C_U(f)$, depending only on U and f . Thus (4) follows.

By the Schwartz kernel theorem, \check{G}_c has a kernel \hat{G}_c , which is a distribution (generalized function) in

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{D}'(M \times M) &\cong \mathcal{D}'(M) \bar{\otimes} \mathcal{D}'(M) = \\ &= (C^\infty(M) \bar{\otimes} C^\infty(M))' \cong L(C^\infty(M), \mathcal{D}'(M)). \end{aligned}$$

Note the defining relations

$$G_c(f, g) = \langle \check{G}_c(f), g \rangle = \langle \hat{G}_c, f \otimes g \rangle.$$

Moreover, \hat{G}_c is invariant under the diagonal action of $\text{Diff}(M, \mu_0)$ on $M \times M$. In view of the tensor product in the defining relations, the infinitesimal version of this invariance is: $\mathcal{L}_{X \times 0 + 0 \times X} \hat{G}_c = 0$ for all $X \in \mathfrak{X}(M, \mu_0)$.

(5) *There exists a constant $C_2 = C_2(c)$ such that the distribution $\hat{G}_c - C_2\mu_0 \otimes \mu_0$ is supported on the diagonal of $M \times M$.*

Namely, if $(x, y) \in M \times M$ is not on the diagonal, then there exist open neighborhoods U_x of x and U_y of y in M such that $\overline{U_x} \times \overline{U_y}$ is disjoint to the diagonal, or $\overline{U_x} \cap \overline{U_y} = \emptyset$. Choose any functions $f, g \in C^\infty(M)$ with $\text{supp}(f) \subset U_x$ and $\text{supp}(g) \subset U_y$. Then $f|_{(M \setminus \overline{U_x})} = 0$, so by (4), $\check{G}_c(f)|_{(M \setminus \overline{U_x})} = C_{M \setminus \overline{U_x}}(f) \cdot \mu_0$. Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned} G_c(f, g) &= \langle \hat{G}_c, f \otimes g \rangle = \langle \check{G}_c(f), g \rangle \\ &= \langle \check{G}_c(f)|_{(M \setminus \overline{U_x})}, g|_{(M \setminus \overline{U_x})} \rangle, \quad \text{since } \text{supp}(g) \subset U_y \subset M \setminus \overline{U_x}, \\ &= C_{M \setminus \overline{U_x}}(f) \cdot \int_M g \mu_0 \end{aligned}$$

By applying the argument for the transposed bilinear form $G_c^T(g, f) = G_c(f, g)$, which is also $\text{Diff}(M, \mu_0)$ -invariant, we arrive at

$$G_c(f, g) = G_c^T(g, f) = C'_{M \setminus \overline{U_y}}(g) \cdot \int_M f \mu_0.$$

Fix two functions f_0, g_0 with the same properties as f, g and additionally $\int_M f_0 \mu_0 = 1$ and $\int_M g_0 \mu_0 = 1$. Then we get $C_{M \setminus \overline{U_x}}(f) = C'_{M \setminus \overline{U_y}}(g_0) \int_M f \mu_0$, and so

$$\begin{aligned} G_c(f, g) &= C'_{M \setminus \overline{U_y}}(g_0) \int_M f \mu_0 \cdot \int_M g \mu_0 \\ &= C_{M \setminus \overline{U_x}}(f_0) \int_M f \mu_0 \cdot \int_M g \mu_0. \end{aligned}$$

Since $\dim(M) \geq 2$ and M is connected, the complement of the diagonal in $M \times M$ is also connected, and thus the constants $C_{M \setminus \overline{U_x}}(f_0)$ and $C'_{M \setminus \overline{U_y}}(g_0)$ cannot depend on the functions f_0, g_0 or the open sets U_x and U_y as long as the latter are disjoint. Thus there exists a constant $C_2(c)$ such that for all $f, g \in C^\infty(M)$ with disjoint supports we have

$$G_c(f, g) = C_2(c) \int_M f \mu_0 \cdot \int_M g \mu_0$$

Since $C_c^\infty(U_x \times U_y) = C_c^\infty(U_x) \otimes C_c^\infty(U_y)$, this implies claim (5).

Now we can finish the proof. We may replace $\hat{G}_c \in \mathcal{D}'(M \times M)$ by $\hat{G}_c - C_2 \mu_0 \otimes \mu_0$ and thus assume without loss that the constant C_2 in (5) is 0. Let (U, u) be an oriented chart on M such that $\mu_0|_U = du^1 \wedge \cdots \wedge du^m$. The distribution $\hat{G}_c|_{U \times U} \in \mathcal{D}'(U \times U)$ has support contained in the diagonal and is of finite order k . By [Hörmander I, 1983, Theorem 5.2.3], the corresponding operator $\check{G}_c : C_c^\infty(U) \rightarrow \mathcal{D}'(U)$ is of the form $\hat{G}_c(f) = \sum_{|\alpha| \leq k} A_\alpha \cdot \partial^\alpha f$ for $A_\alpha \in \mathcal{D}'(U)$, so that $G(f, g) = \langle \check{G}_c(f), g \rangle = \sum_\alpha \langle A_\alpha, (\partial^\alpha f) \cdot g \rangle$. Moreover, the A_α in this representation are uniquely given, as is seen by a look at [Hörmander I, 1983, Theorem 2.3.5].

For $x \in U$ choose an open set U_x with $x \in U_x \subset \overline{U_x} \subset U$, and choose $X \in \mathfrak{X}_{\text{exact}}(M, \mu_0)$ with $X|_{U_x} = \partial_{u^i}$, as in the proof of (2). For functions $f, g \in C_c^\infty(U_x)$ we then have, by the invariance of G_c ,

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &= G_c(\mathcal{L}_X f, g) + G_c(f, \mathcal{L}_X g) = \langle \hat{G}_c|_{U \times U}, \mathcal{L}_X f \otimes g + f \otimes \mathcal{L}_X g \rangle \\ &= \sum_{\alpha} \langle A_{\alpha}, (\partial^{\alpha} \partial_{u^i} f) \cdot g + (\partial^{\alpha} f)(\partial_{u^i} g) \rangle \\ &= \sum_{\alpha} \langle A_{\alpha}, \partial_{u^i} ((\partial^{\alpha} f) \cdot g) \rangle = \sum_{\alpha} \langle -\partial_{u^i} A_{\alpha}, (\partial^{\alpha} f) \cdot g \rangle. \end{aligned}$$

Since the corresponding operator has again a kernel distribution which is supported on the diagonal, and since the distributions in the representation are unique, we can conclude that $\partial_{u^i} A_{\alpha}|_{U_x} = 0$ for each α , and each i .

To see that this implies that $A_\alpha|_{U_x} = C_\alpha\mu_0|_{U_x}$, let $f \in C_c^\infty(U_x)$ with $\int_M f\mu_0 = 0$. Then, as in (3), there exists $\omega \in \Omega_c^{m-1}(U_x)$ with $d\omega = f\mu_0$. In coordinates we have

$\omega = \sum_i \omega_i \cdot du^1 \wedge \cdots \wedge \widehat{du^i} \wedge du^m$, and so $f = \sum_i (-1)^{i+1} \partial_{u^i} \omega_i$ with $\omega_i \in C_c^\infty(U_x)$. Thus

$$\langle A_\alpha, f \rangle = \sum_i (-1)^{i+1} \langle A_\alpha, \partial_{u^i} \omega_i \rangle = \sum_i (-1)^i \langle \partial_{u^i} A_\alpha, \omega_i \rangle = 0.$$

Hence $\langle A_\alpha, f \rangle = 0$ for all $f \in C_c^\infty(U_x)$ with zero integral and as in the proof of (3) we can conclude that $A_\alpha|_{U_x} = C_\alpha\mu_0|_{U_x}$.

But then $G_c(f, g) = \int_{U_x} (Lf) \cdot g \mu_0$ for the differential operator $L = \sum_{|\alpha| \leq k} C_\alpha \partial^\alpha$ with constant coefficients on U_x . Now we choose $g \in C_c^\infty(U_x)$ such that $g = 1$ on the support of f . By the invariance of G_c we have again

$$\begin{aligned} 0 = G_c(\mathcal{L}_X f, g) + G_c(f, \mathcal{L}_X g) &= \int_{U_x} L(\mathcal{L}_X f) \cdot g \mu_0 + \int_{U_x} L(f) \cdot \mathcal{L}_X g \cdot \mu_0 \\ &= \int_{U_x} L(\mathcal{L}_X f) \mu_0 + 0 \end{aligned}$$

for each $X \in \mathfrak{X}(M, \mu_0)$. Thus the distribution $f \mapsto \int_{U_x} L(f) \mu_0$ vanishes on all functions of the form $\mathcal{L}_X f$, and by (3) we conclude that $L(\cdot) \cdot \mu_0 = C_x \cdot \mu_0$ in $\mathcal{D}'(U_x)$, or $L = C_x \text{Id}$. By covering M with open sets U_x , we see that all the constants C_x are the same. This concludes the proof of the Main Theorem. \square

Thank you for listening up to now.

If you are willing to listen more, there is a little more.

Manifolds with corners

A manifold with corners (recently also called a quadratic manifold) M is a smooth manifold modelled on open subsets of $\mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}^m$. Assume it is connected and second countable; then it is paracompact and it admits smooth partitions of unity. Any manifold with corners M is a submanifold with corners of an open manifold \tilde{M} of the same dim. Restriction $C^\infty(\tilde{M}) \rightarrow C^\infty(M)$ is a surjective continuous linear map which admits a continuous linear section. Thus $C^\infty(M)$ is a topological direct summand in $C^\infty(\tilde{M})$ and the same holds for the dual spaces: The space of distributions $\mathcal{D}'(M)$, which we identify with $C^\infty(M)'$, is a direct summand in $\mathcal{D}'(\tilde{M})$. It consists of all distributions with support in M .

We do not assume that M is oriented, but eventually, that M is compact. Diffeomorphisms of M map the boundary ∂M to itself and map the boundary $\partial^q M$ of corners of codimension q to itself; $\partial^q M$ is a submanifold of codimension q in M ; in general $\partial^q M$ has finitely many connected components. We shall consider ∂M as stratified into the connected components of all $\partial^q M$ for $q > 0$.

Moser's theorem for manifolds with corners

[BMPR18]

Let M be a compact connected smooth manifold with corners, possibly non-orientable. Let μ_0 and μ_1 be two smooth positive densities in $\text{Dens}_+(M)$ with $\int_M \mu_0 = \int_M \mu_1$. Then there exists a diffeomorphism $\varphi : M \rightarrow M$ such that $\mu_1 = \varphi^ \mu_0$. If and only if $\mu_0(x) = \mu_1(x)$ for each corner $x \in \partial^{\geq 2} M$ of codimension ≥ 2 , then φ can be chosen to be the identity on ∂M .*

This result is highly desirable even for M a simplex. The proof is essentially contained in [Banyaga1974], who proved it for manifolds with boundary.

Conjecture

Let M be an oriented compact connected manifold with corners, of dimension $m \geq 2$, and let

$$\partial^p M = (\partial^p M)_1 \sqcup (\partial^p M)_2 \sqcup \cdots \sqcup (\partial^p M)_{n_p}$$

be the decomposition of the set of corners of codimension p into its connected components which are manifolds of dimension $m - p$. Then the the associative algebra of bounded $\text{Diff}_0(M)$ -invariant tensor fields on $\text{Dens}_+(M)$ is has the following set of generators, where $\mu \in \text{Dens}_+(M)$ is the footpoint and $\alpha_i \in \Gamma(\text{Vol}(M)) = T_\mu \text{Dens}_+(M)$:

$$f(\mu(M)) \quad \text{where } f \in C^\infty(\mathbb{R}_{>0}, \mathbb{R}), \quad \int_M \frac{\alpha_1}{\mu} \cdots \frac{\alpha_n}{\mu} \mu \quad n \geq 1,$$
$$\int_{(\partial^p M)_j} \frac{\alpha_1}{\mu} \cdots \frac{\alpha_n}{\mu} d\left(\frac{\alpha_{i_{n+1}}}{\mu}\right) \wedge \cdots \wedge d\left(\frac{\alpha_{i_{n+m-p}}}{\mu}\right), \quad p = 0, \dots, m-1, \\ j = 0, \dots, n_p$$
$$\frac{\alpha}{\mu}((\partial^m M)_j), \quad \text{for } j = 1, \dots, n_m; \quad \text{note that } (\partial^m M)_j \text{ is a point.}$$

For a non-orientable compact manifold \overline{M} with corners, let $\pi : M \rightarrow \overline{M}$ be its orientable double cover with its deck transformation $\tau : M \rightarrow M$. We consider the bounded linear isomorphism

$$\frac{1}{2}\pi^* : \text{Dens}_+(\overline{M}) \rightarrow \{\alpha \in \text{Dens}_+(M) : \tau^*\alpha = \alpha\} \subset \text{Dens}_+(M).$$

Then the set of generators for the algebra of bounded $\text{Diff}(M)$ -invariant tensor fields on $\text{Dens}_+(M)$, applied to $\frac{1}{2}\pi^\alpha_i$ and $\frac{1}{2}\pi^*\mu$ for $\mu \in \text{Dens}_+(\overline{M})$ and $\alpha_i \in T_\mu \text{Dens}_+(\overline{M})$, is a set of generators for the algebra of $\text{Diff}(\overline{M})$ -invariant bounded tensor fields on $\text{Dens}_+(\overline{M})$.*

Really thank you for listening.