Generative modelling of multivariate geometric extremes using normalising flows

Jordan Richards¹

Joint work with Lambert De Monte¹, Raphaël Huser², Ioannis Papastathopoulos¹



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CASE 2025



Directions along which MEVT frameworks allow extrapolation to tail regions: (a) MRV, (b) and (c) conditional extremes, (d) geometric extremes.



Directions along which MEVT frameworks allow extrapolation to tail regions: (a) MRV, (b) and (c) conditional extremes, (d) geometric extremes.

- Aim to extend probability estimation via a semi-parametric, geometric approach to multivariate extremes to higher-dimensional settings.
- Leverage theoretical links between the geometry of (starshaped set) parameters to define a range of parsimonious to flexible models.
- Use the generative framework of normalising flows to enable fast sampling and probability estimation.

1 Geometric extreme value theory

Statistical inference

③ Simulation study

4 An application to low and high wind speeds





Let $X_1, X_2, \ldots \in \mathbb{R}^d$ be iid draws from \mathbb{P}_X with standard Laplace marginal distributions, and



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Let $X_1, X_2, \ldots \in \mathbb{R}^d$ be iid draws from \mathbb{P}_X with standard Laplace marginal distributions, and

$$N_n := \left\{ \frac{X_1}{\log(n)}, \dots, \frac{X_n}{\log(n)} \right\}$$

$$n = 100$$

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$$N_{n} := \left\{ \begin{array}{c} X_{1} \\ \log(n), \dots, \begin{array}{c} X_{n} \\ \log(n) \end{array} \right\} \xrightarrow{\mathbb{P}} \mathcal{G} \subseteq [-1, 1]^{d}$$

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Starshaped sets \bigstar – A basis for our model construction

• A set $\mathcal{B} \in \mathbb{R}^d$ is starshaped if there exists a set $\ker(\mathcal{B}) \subseteq \mathcal{B}$ such that for $x \in \ker(\mathcal{B})$ and for all $y \in \mathcal{B}$, the segment $[x : y] \in \mathcal{B}$.

• A set $\mathcal{B} \in \bigstar$ is in one-to-one correspondence with a radial function

$$r_{\mathcal{B}}(w) = \sup\{\lambda \in \mathbb{R} : \lambda w \in \mathcal{B}\}, w \in \mathbb{S}^{d-1}.$$

• Starshaped sets admit algebraic operations via their radial functions:



Operations on starshaped sets¹

Example

Let \mathcal{B}_1 and \mathcal{B}_2 be starshaped sets, then

- i) $\mathcal{B} = \mathcal{B}_1 + \mathcal{B}_2$ has radial function $r_{\mathcal{B}} = r_{\mathcal{B}_1} + r_{\mathcal{B}_2}$.
- ii) $\mathcal{B} = \mathcal{B}_1 \cdot \mathcal{B}_2$ has radial function $r_{\mathcal{B}} = r_{\mathcal{B}_1} r_{\mathcal{B}_2}$.
- iii) $\mathcal{B} = \mathcal{B}_1^d$ has radial function $r_{\mathcal{B}} = r_{\mathcal{B}_1}^d$.



¹ Hansen et al.	(2020)
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A sufficient condition on f_X for N_n to converge onto G is that

$$-\frac{\log f_X(tx_t)}{t} \to g_{\mathcal{G}}(x), \quad x_t \to x, \text{ as } t \to \infty, \quad x \in \mathbb{R}^d,$$
(1)

for a continuous gauge function $g_{\mathcal{G}} : \mathbb{R}^d \to \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}$. Then, $\mathcal{G} \in \bigstar$ and it has radial function $r_{\mathcal{G}} : \mathbb{S}^{d-1} \to \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}$ given by $r_{\mathcal{G}} = 1/g_{\mathcal{G}}$.

Our limit set \mathcal{G} can be defined by

 $\mathcal{G} = \{ x \in \mathbb{R} : r_{\mathcal{G}}(x) \ge 1 \}.$

Nolde & Wadsworth (2022)

The quantile set Q_q

• We let Q_q via the *q*-th quantile of $R \mid W = w$, that is, it satisfies

$$\mathbb{P}[R \le r_{\mathcal{Q}_q}(w) \mid W = w] = q, \text{ for all } w \in \mathbb{S}^{d-1}.$$

 $\mathbb{P}[X \notin Q_q] = 1 - q$, and $W \mid \{X \notin Q_q\} \stackrel{d}{=} W$.

• Q_q then satisfies that

Left: Independent samples ($n = 2 \times 10^4$) from a bivariate distribution having true quantile set $Q_{0.95}$, boundary $\partial Q_{0.95}$ (solid black line) and complement $Q'_{0.95}$. Centre: Empirical proportion of exceedances binned by angular regions with true exceedance probability (0.05) in red. Right: Circular histogram of the density of all sampled angles (light grey) and of exceedance angles (dark grey) with concentric circles denoting density level sets.

- Note that the event $\{X = RW \notin Q_q\}$ corresponds to $\{R > r_{Q_q}(W)\}$.
- $\bullet\,$ Papastathopoulos et al. (2023) show conditions under which there exist a starshaped set ${\cal G}$ such that

$$\left(\frac{R - r_{\mathcal{Q}_q}(W)}{r_{\mathcal{G}}(W)}, W\right) \mid \{R > r_{\mathcal{Q}_q}(W)\} \xrightarrow{d} (Z, V), \quad \text{as } q \to 1,$$
(2)

where $Z \sim \text{Exp}(1)$ and $V \sim \mathbb{P}_W$.

Exceedances of Q_q

- Note that the event $\{X = RW \notin Q_q\}$ corresponds to $\{R > r_{Q_q}(W)\}$.
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$$\left(\frac{R - r_{\mathcal{Q}_q}(W)}{r_{\mathcal{G}}(W)}, W\right) \mid \{R > r_{\mathcal{Q}_q}(W)\} \stackrel{d}{\longrightarrow} (Z, V), \quad \text{as } q \to 1,$$
(3)

where $Z \sim \text{Exp}(1)$ and $V \sim \mathbb{P}_W$.



PROPOSED MODELS

Imposing structure on Q_q , G, and W

Under appropriate convergence conditions¹, it can be shown that the quantile set Q_q is asymptotically a scale multiple of the scaling/limit set G, that is,

 $\mathcal{Q}_q pprox lpha_q \mathcal{G}, \ \ lpha_q > 0, \ \ \ \mathrm{as} \ q o 1$

¹Wadsworth & Campbell (2024)

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¹Wadsworth & Campbell (2024)

J Richards (UoE)

Links between parameters and models

If the density of X is homothetic with respect to $r_{\mathcal{G}}^{-1}$, that is,

$$f_{\mathbf{X}}(\mathbf{x}) = h_0(r_{\mathcal{G}}^{-1}(\mathbf{x})), \quad \mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^d$$

for a positive, decreasing, and continuous function h_0 , then \mathcal{G} and \mathcal{W} can be linked¹ through

$$r_{\mathcal{W}}(w) = f_{W}(w) = rac{r_{\mathcal{G}}(w)^{d}}{d|\mathcal{G}|}, \quad w \in \mathbb{S}^{d-1}.$$

¹Papastathopoulos et al. (2023)

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¹Papastathopoulos et al. (2023)

J Richards (UoE)

Imposing structure on Q_q , G, and W

• Any positive function $r_{\mathcal{B}}$ defined on \mathbb{S}^{d-1} can be written as

$$r_{\mathcal{B}}(w) = \beta_{\mathcal{B}} f_{\mathcal{B}}(w), \quad w \in \mathbb{S}^{d-1},$$

for a constant $\beta_{\mathcal{B}} = \int_{\mathbb{S}^{d-1}} r_{\mathcal{B}}(w) dw$ and density $f_{\mathcal{B}}$ integrating to 1 on \mathbb{S}^{d-1} .

• Using the links $\mathcal{G}-\mathcal{Q}_q$ and $\mathcal{G}-\mathcal{W}$, we can formulate a statistical model

$$r_{\mathcal{Q}_q}(w) = \beta_{\mathcal{Q}_q} f_W(w)^d$$
 and $r_{\mathcal{G}}(w) = \beta_{\mathcal{G}} f_W(w)^d$, $w \in \mathbb{S}^{d-1}$.
Imposing structure on Q_q , G, and W

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• Using the links \mathcal{G} - \mathcal{Q}_q and \mathcal{G} - \mathcal{W} , we can formulate a statistical model

 $r_{\mathcal{Q}_q}(w) = \beta_{\mathcal{Q}_q} f_W(w)^d$ and $r_{\mathcal{G}}(w) = \beta_{\mathcal{G}} f_W(w)^d$, $w \in \mathbb{S}^{d-1}$.



STATISTICAL INFERENCE

Normalising flows¹ and density estimation²

• A normalising flow (NF) learns a transformation mapping a random variable $Y \in \mathcal{Y}$ with unknown distribution to that of a known, base variable $Z \in \mathcal{Z}$.



Figure 1 of Kobyzev et al. (2021)

¹Tabak & Vanden-Eijnden (2010), ²Dinh et al. (2015)

Normalising flows¹ and density estimation²

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Figure 1 of Kobyzev et al. (2021)

 Assuming Y admits a density on Y, this problem can be phrased as aiming to infer a (bijective and differentiable) transformation function h such that

$$f_Y(y) = f_Z\{h^{-1}(y)\} \left| \frac{\partial h^{-1}(y)}{\partial y} \right|, \quad y \in \mathcal{Y}.$$

In practice, *h* is modelled as a composition of many simple bijective transformations h_1, \ldots, h_k , *i.e.* $h = h_1 \circ h_2 \circ \ldots \circ h_k$.

¹Tabak & Vanden-Eijnden (2010), ²Dinh et al. (2017)

A map from the hypersphere to the hypercylinder

• Transform the observations and models from \mathbb{S}^{d-1} to a cylindrical space \mathbb{C}^{d-1} (by abuse of notation) via a map *T*



Figure 6 of Rezende et al. (2020)

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A map from the hypersphere \mathbb{S}^2 to the hypercylinder \mathbb{C}^2



A model for PDFs and positive functions on \mathbb{S}^{d-1}

• It follows from the map *T* that a target $\mathsf{PDF} f_{\mathcal{B}} : \mathbb{S}^{d-1} \setminus \mathcal{S}_d \to [0, \infty)$, describing the shape of a starshaped set $\mathcal{B} \in \mathbb{R}^d$ *a.e.*, can be written as

$$f_{\mathcal{B}}(w) = f_{\mathbf{Y}}(T(w))|\partial T(w)/\partial w|, \quad w \in \mathbb{S}^{d-1} \setminus \mathcal{S}_d,$$

for a target PDF f_Y defined on \mathbb{C}^{d-1} .

• Using the NFs formulation, f_B can in turn be modelled in terms of a known base PDF $f_Z : \mathbb{C}^{d-1} \to [0, \infty)$ and a normalising flow h_B as

$$f_{\mathcal{B}}(w) = f_{\mathbf{Z}} \{ h_{\mathcal{B}}^{-1}(T(w)) \} \left| \frac{\partial h_{\mathcal{B}}^{-1}(T(w))}{\partial T(w)} \right| \left| \frac{\partial T(w)}{\partial w} \right|, \quad w \in \mathbb{S}^{d-1} \backslash \mathcal{S}_d,$$

where $|\partial T(w)/w|$ is the Jacobian of the recursive transformation *T*.

• Further, a model for any positive/radial function $r_{\mathcal{B}}$ of a starshaped set \mathcal{B} – such as the quantile set \mathcal{Q}_q or the scaling set \mathcal{G} – can be obtained via

$$r_{\mathcal{B}} = \beta_{\mathcal{B}} f_{\mathcal{B}}$$

where $f_{\mathcal{B}}$ is as above, and $\beta_{\mathcal{B}} > 0$ is a coefficient to be learned alongside the NF $h_{\mathcal{B}}$.

Recall models M0 to M3:



Model M0 is fitted by sequentially minimising the losses
for Q_q:

$$\mathcal{L}_{\mathcal{Q}_{q}}(\beta_{\mathcal{Q}_{q}}, f_{\mathcal{Q}_{q}}; \underline{\mathbf{x}}) = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \max\left\{ (1-q) \left[\|\mathbf{x}_{i}\| - \beta_{\mathcal{Q}_{q}} f_{\mathcal{Q}_{q}}\left(\frac{\mathbf{x}_{i}}{\|\mathbf{x}_{i}\|}\right) \right], q \left[\|\mathbf{x}_{i}\| - \beta_{\mathcal{Q}_{q}} f_{\mathcal{Q}_{q}}\left(\frac{\mathbf{x}_{i}}{\|\mathbf{x}_{i}\|}\right) \right] \right\}.$$

● for G:

$$\mathcal{L}_{\mathcal{G}}(\beta_{\mathcal{G}}, f_{\mathcal{G}}; r_{\hat{\mathcal{Q}}_{q}}, \underline{\mathbf{x}}) = -\frac{1}{\#\mathcal{E}} \sum_{i \in \mathcal{E}} \log \left[\left\{ \beta_{\mathcal{G}} f_{\mathcal{G}}(\mathbf{x}_{i}/\|\mathbf{x}_{i}\|) \right\}^{-1} \exp \left\{ -\frac{\|\mathbf{x}_{i}\| - r_{\hat{\mathcal{Q}}_{q}}(\mathbf{x}_{i}/\|\mathbf{x}_{i}\|)}{\beta_{\mathcal{G}} f_{\mathcal{G}}(\mathbf{x}_{i}/\|\mathbf{x}_{i}\|)} \right\} \right].$$

 ${\scriptstyle \bullet} \,$ for ${\cal W}:$

$$\mathcal{L}_{\mathcal{W}}(f_W; r_{\hat{\mathcal{Q}}_q}, \underline{x}) = -\frac{1}{\#\mathcal{E}} \sum_{i \in \mathcal{E}} \log f_W(x_i / ||x_i||).$$

Recall models M0 to M3:



• Model M1 is fitted by sequentially minimising the loss $\mathcal{L}_{\mathcal{Q}_q,\mathcal{G},\mathcal{W}}(\beta_{\mathcal{Q}_q},\beta_{\mathcal{G}},f_W;\underline{x}) =$

$$= \mathcal{L}_{\mathcal{Q}_{q}}(\beta_{\mathcal{Q}_{q}}, f_{W}^{1/d}; \underline{x}) + \lambda \big[\mathcal{L}_{\mathcal{G}}(\beta_{\mathcal{G}}, f_{W}^{1/d}; \beta_{\mathcal{Q}_{q}} f_{W}^{1/d}, \underline{x}) + \mathcal{L}_{\mathcal{W}}(f_{W}; \beta_{\mathcal{Q}_{q}} f_{W}^{1/d}, \underline{x}) \big].$$

- The model is wholly defined in terms of only one density f_W and two scalars β_{Q_a} and β_{G} .
- λ is a weighting hyperparameter accounting for the different scales of the values of the losses.
- Comments on M2 and M3.

A GRADIENT DESCENT APPROACH

A PyTorch¹ implementation² of NFs and composite loss minimisation via the Adam optimiser³

Data are mollified⁴ during training. At the *j*th of *J* gradient descent epoch, we use the mollified dataset

$$\underline{x}_{\mathrm{T},j} = \left\{ \|x_i\| w_{i,\varepsilon} : w_{i,\varepsilon} \sim \mathrm{vonMises}(x_i/\|x_i\|, \sigma_j), \, x_i \in \underline{x}_{\mathrm{T}} \right\},\tag{4}$$

where vonMises(μ,σ) denotes the von Mises distribution with location $\mu \in \mathbb{S}^{d-1}$ and dispersion $\sigma \in \mathbb{R}_{>0}$.

¹Paszke et al. (2019), ²Stimper et al. (2023), ³Kingma & Ba (2017), ⁴Tran et al. (2023)

PROBABILITY ESTIMATION

Probability estimation

• For any Borel set $\mathcal{B} \in \mathbb{R}^d \setminus \mathcal{Q}_q$,

$$\mathbb{P}[X \in \mathcal{B} \mid X \notin \mathcal{Q}_q] = \int_{\mathbb{S}^{d-1}} \int_{\mathcal{B} \cap]\mathbf{0}(w)} \frac{1}{r_{\mathcal{G}}(w)} \exp\left\{-\frac{r - r_{\mathcal{Q}_q}(w)}{r_{\mathcal{G}}(w)}\right\} f_W(w) dr dw.$$

Probability estimation

• For any Borel set $\mathcal{B} \in \mathbb{R}^d \setminus \mathcal{Q}_q$, we use the Monte Carlo integration

$$\mathbb{P}[\mathbf{X} \in \mathcal{B} \mid \mathbf{X} \notin \mathcal{Q}_q] \stackrel{\mathbb{P}}{\leftarrow} \frac{1}{m} \sum_{i=1}^m \int_{\mathcal{B} \cap]\mathbf{0}: w_i} \frac{1}{r_{\mathcal{G}}(w_i)} \exp\left\{-\frac{r - r_{\mathcal{Q}_q}(w_i)}{r_{\mathcal{G}}(w_i)}\right\} \mathrm{d}r, \quad n \to \infty.$$

where $w_1, \ldots, w_m \sim f_W$.



- The integral is exact provided one knows all radial entry and exit points of *B*.
- The collection $w_1, \ldots, w_m \sim f_W$ is sampled fast using the generative direction of the NF.

J Richards (UoE)

Simulation study results - 3 dimensions



Boxplots of 100 estimated log-probabilities and associated lower- and upper-bounds of 95% bootstrap confidence intervals for the sets $\mathcal{R}_1, \mathcal{R}_2, \mathcal{R}_3 \in \mathbb{R}^3$. $(n = 10^4)$.



Boxplots of 100 estimated log-probabilities and associated lower- and upper-bounds of 95% bootstrap confidence intervals for the sets $\mathcal{R}_1, \mathcal{R}_2, \mathcal{R}_3 \in \mathbb{R}^5$. $(n = 10^4)$.



Boxplots of 100 estimated log-probabilities and associated lower- and upper-bounds of 95% bootstrap confidence intervals for the sets $\mathcal{R}_1, \mathcal{R}_2, \mathcal{R}_3 \in \mathbb{R}^7$. $(n = 10^4)$.



Boxplots of 100 estimated log-probabilities and associated lower- and upper-bounds of 95% bootstrap confidence intervals for the sets $\mathcal{R}_1, \mathcal{R}_2, \mathcal{R}_3 \in \mathbb{R}^{10}$. ($n = 5 \times 10^4, 10^5, 2 \times 10^5$).

LOW AND HIGH WIND SPEEDS

In relation to electricity production in the Pacific Northwest, United States



Hourly windspeeds, Jan 1, 2012–Jan 1, 2015.

¹Huser et al. (2017), ²Castro-Camilo et al. (2019)



GE 1.5 MW Power Curve

¹Hering & Genton (2010)

Define the windspeed

 $X_{j,m,h}^{o}$

at station *j* in month *m* of the year and hour *h*.

Define the windspeed

at station j in month m of the year and hour h.

• We assume¹

$$X_{j,m,h}^{0} \sim \text{Weibull}(\lambda_{j,m,h} = s_{j,1}(m) + s_{j,2}(h), \kappa_{j,m,h} = s_{j,3}(m) + s_{j,4}(h)),$$
 (5)

 $X_{i,m,h}^{o}$

where *s* denotes a cubic cyclic spline on $m \in \{1, ..., 12\}$ or $h \in \{0, ..., 23\}$.

¹Elliott et al. (2004)

Define the windspeed

at station j in month m of the year and hour h.

We assume¹

$$X_{j,m,h}^{o} \sim \text{Weibull}(\lambda_{j,m,h} = s_{j,1}(m) + s_{j,2}(h), \kappa_{j,m,h} = s_{j,3}(m) + s_{j,4}(h)),$$
 (6)

where *s* denotes a cubic cyclic spline on $m \in \{1, ..., 12\}$ or $h \in \{0, ..., 23\}$.

• We fit the model using $evgam^2$ and apply $X^{\mathrm{H}}_{j,m,h} := (X^{\mathrm{o}}_{j,m,h}/\hat{\lambda}_{j,m,h})^{\hat{\kappa}_{j,m,h}}$



 $X_{i,m,h}^{o}$

¹Elliott et al. (2004), ²Youngman (2022)

Richards (Uo



(a) Minimises probability of no production



(a) Minimises probability of no production (b) Maximises probability of no production





(a) Minimises probability of no production (b) Maximises probability of no production



(c) Maximises probability of full production

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Analysis of seasonality of power production – configuration (a)



Configuration (a): Minimises probability of no production

The proposed methodology provides

- flexible statistical inference for "high" dimensional random vectors;
- models bridging parsimony and flexibility by exploiting the geometry of 3 structural parameters to improve statistical inference.

The proposed methodology provides

- flexible statistical inference for "high" dimensional random vectors;
- models bridging parsimony and flexibility by exploiting the geometry of 3 structural parameters to improve statistical inference.

The framework enables

• fast inference and relatively fast bootstrapping (with possibility of pre-training);

 fast probability estimation enabled by very fast sampling from normalising flows.
See De Monte, L., Huser, R., Papastathopoulos, I., Richards, J. (2025). Generative modelling of multivariate geometric extremes using normalising flows. arXiv:2505.02957.

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Uniform-on- \mathbb{S}^{d-1} penalisation

• To devise the uniform density on \mathbb{S}^{d-1} , we consider $A_{d-1}(r)$ the hypervolume (or surface area) of the (d-1)-sphere of radius r given by

$$A_{d-1}(r) = \frac{2\pi^{d/2}}{\Gamma(d/2)} r^{d-1}, \quad r \in (0,\infty),$$

where Γ denotes the gamma function.

• It follows that a PDF with uniform density on \mathbb{S}^{d-1} is given by

$$f_U(w) = 1/A_{d-1}(1)$$

for all $w \in \mathbb{S}^{d-1}$.

- Penalisation of $f_{\mathcal{D}}$ away from f_U can then be performed via the Kullback–Leibler divergence $D_{\mathrm{KL}}[f_U||f_{\mathcal{D}}] = \int_{\mathbb{S}^{d-1}} \log[f_U(w)/f_{\mathcal{D}}(w)]f_U(w) dw$.
- In practice, this integral is approximated via Monte Carlo integration by sampling a large number m of directions u_1, \ldots, u_m uniformly on \mathbb{S}^{d-1} and calculating

$$\overline{D}_{\mathrm{KL}}[f_{U}||f_{\mathcal{D}}] := \frac{1}{m} \sum_{i=1}^{m} \log[f_{U}(\boldsymbol{u}_{i})/f_{\mathcal{D}}(\boldsymbol{u}_{i})] = -\log[A_{d-1}(1)] - \frac{1}{m} \sum_{i=1}^{m} \log[f_{\mathcal{D}}(\boldsymbol{u}_{i})], \quad (7)$$

with $\overline{\mathrm{D}}_{\mathrm{KL}}[f_U||f_{\mathcal{D}}] \xrightarrow{\mathbb{P}} \mathrm{D}_{\mathrm{KL}}[f_U||f_{\mathcal{D}}]$ as $m \to \infty$.

Model assessment

• Under assumptions of uniform convergence on \mathbb{S}^{d-1} ,

$$F_{R|W}\left(\frac{R-r_{\mathcal{Q}_{q}}\star(\mathbf{W})}{r_{\mathcal{G}}\star(\mathbf{W})}\right)^{1/d}W\Big|\left\{R>r_{\mathcal{Q}_{q}}\star(\mathbf{W})\right\}\overset{d}{\longrightarrow}\boldsymbol{U}_{B_{1}(\mathbf{0})},\quad\text{ as }q\rightarrow1,$$

where $r_{Q_q^*}$ and $r_{\mathcal{G}^*}$ are deterministic functions of r_{Q_q} , $r_{\mathcal{G}}$, and f_W .

• We consider the stationary random point measure

$$P^{\star} := \sum_{i=1}^{n} \delta \left[H_{W_i} \left(\frac{R_i - r_{\mathcal{Q}_q^{\star}}(W_i)}{r_{\mathcal{G}^{\star}}(W_i)} \right)^{1/d} W_i \right] \mathbb{1}_{R_i > r_{\mathcal{Q}_q^{\star}}(W_i)}.$$

• We use an adapted version of the standard *K*-functions to assess if P^* is statistically distinguishable from a random point measure with constant intensity on $B_1(\mathbf{0})$.

Model assessment – A random point measure approach



Figure from Papastathopoulos et al. (2023)

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CASE 202



Figure from Papastathopoulos et al. (2023)




