

A DIMENSIONAL RESULT FOR RANDOM SELF-SIMILAR SETS

YAN-YAN LIU AND JUN WU

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ABSTRACT. A very important property of a deterministic self-similar set is that its Hausdorff dimension and upper box-counting dimension coincide. This paper considers the random case. We show that for a random self-similar set, its Hausdorff dimension and upper box-counting dimension are equal *a.s.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The notation of self-similarity is of increasing interest in many theoretical and applied settings, such as random processes, turbulence, and dynamical systems. Self-similar sets are usually fractal sets, i.e. sets of non-integer Hausdorff dimension. If a compact set K is the union of sets K_1, K_2, \dots, K_N , which are similar to K in the ratio $r_i \leq 1, i = 1, 2, \dots, N$, and $K_i \cap K_j$ is “almost empty” (precisely open set condition), then $\dim_H K = \overline{\dim}_B K = \alpha$, where α is determined by the following equation:

$$\sum_{i=1}^N r_i^\alpha = 1.$$

This was made precise by Hutchinson in [6]. It is much more difficult to determine the dimension for self-similar sets with overlap. Falconer [3] (see also [4], Chapter 3) proved that a self-similar set (overlap or not) has a very nice property, that is $\dim_H K = \overline{\dim}_B K$.

The above-mentioned notion of deterministic self-similarity is very restrictive and does not apply to many phenomena. Recently there have been some models of random sets possessing the self-similar property. In particular, Falconer [2], Graf [5] and Mauldin and Williams [8] independently investigated random fractal sets by randomizing each step in Hutchinson’s construction. Much more recently, Hutchinson and Ruschendorf [7] extended the contraction mapping method to prove various existence and uniqueness properties of random self-similar sets. For other references on this topic, see [1, 9] and the references therein.

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In this paper, we prove the analogous result to one of [3], that is, there exists a constant a such that *a.s.*

$$\dim_H K(\omega) = \overline{\dim}_B K(\omega) = a,$$

where $K(\omega)$ is the random self-similar set. The proofs in [3] cannot extend to the random case directly. In the deterministic case, each ball centered in K with radius at most the diameter of K , contains a subset of K which is the image of K under a map with Lipschitz constant comparable to the radius of the ball. This is an important point that underlies the argument in [3]. In the random setting although this is not true for individual realization of K , it is true in a certain probabilistic sense.

2. NOTATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

In this section, we recall the definitions of various dimensions and random self-similar sets and give some properties. A more detailed introduction and the proofs of the properties may be found in [1], [4] and [7].

Let $K \subset \mathbf{R}^d$. For any $s \geq 0$, the s -dimensional Hausdorff measure of K is given in the usual way by

$$\mathbf{H}^s(K) = \liminf_{\delta \rightarrow 0} \left\{ \sum_i |U_i|^s : K \subset \bigcup_i U_i, 0 < |U_i| < \delta \right\},$$

where $|\cdot|$ denotes the diameter of a set. This leads to the definition of the Hausdorff dimension of K :

$$(1) \quad \dim_H K = \inf\{s : \mathbf{H}^s(K) < \infty\} = \sup\{s : \mathbf{H}^s(K) > 0\}.$$

Many other definitions of dimensions are encountered in the literature. Let $M_\epsilon(K)$ be the smallest number of closed balls of radius ϵ that cover K , and let $N_\epsilon(K)$ be the maximum number of disjoint closed balls of radius ϵ with centers in K . We define the lower and upper box-counting dimensions by

$$(2) \quad \underline{\dim}_B K = \liminf_{\epsilon \rightarrow 0} \frac{\log M_\epsilon(K)}{-\log \epsilon},$$

$$(3) \quad \overline{\dim}_B K = \limsup_{\epsilon \rightarrow 0} \frac{\log M_\epsilon(K)}{-\log \epsilon}.$$

In [4], it was shown that

$$(4) \quad \underline{\dim}_B K = \liminf_{\epsilon \rightarrow 0} \frac{\log N_\epsilon(K)}{-\log \epsilon} = \liminf_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\log N_{2^{-n}}(K)}{n \log 2} = \liminf_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\log M_{2^{-n}}(K)}{n \log 2},$$

$$(5) \quad \overline{\dim}_B K = \limsup_{\epsilon \rightarrow 0} \frac{\log N_\epsilon(K)}{-\log \epsilon} = \limsup_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\log N_{2^{-n}}(K)}{n \log 2} = \limsup_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\log M_{2^{-n}}(K)}{n \log 2}.$$

Finally, we can define packing dimension of K by

$$(6) \quad \dim_P K = \inf\left\{ \sup \overline{\dim}_B A_i, K \subset \bigcup_i A_i \right\}.$$

It is well known (see [4]) that

$$(7) \quad \dim_H K \leq \underline{\dim}_B K \leq \overline{\dim}_B K,$$

$$(8) \quad \dim_H K \leq \dim_P K \leq \overline{\dim}_B K.$$

Let $J \subset \mathbf{R}^d$ be a fixed compact set with $J = \overline{\text{int}(J)}$. We are given a positive integer $N \geq 2$ and a probability measure μ on Sim^N , where Sim is the space of all similarities of \mathbf{R}^d equipped with the usual topology of uniform convergence on compact sets. In this paper, we assume the following:

Assumptions.

- (I) $S_i(J) \subset J$ for all $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$ and μ -a.s. (S_1, S_2, \dots, S_N) .
- (II) There exist $0 < \hat{r}_1 \leq \hat{r}_2 < 1$ such that $\hat{r}_1 \leq \text{Lip}(S_i) \leq \hat{r}_2$ for all $i = 1, 2, \dots, N$ and μ -a.s. (S_1, S_2, \dots, S_N) .

In the sequel we often make use of symbolic dynamics. Let $\Sigma = \{1, 2, \dots, N\}^{\mathbf{N}}$ be the code space over the indices $1, 2, \dots, N$, $\Sigma_n = \{1, 2, \dots, N\}^n$ the space of all sequence of length n , $n \geq 0$, $\Sigma_0 = \emptyset$, and $\Sigma_* = \bigcup_n \Sigma_n$. For $\tau \in \Sigma_n$, denote by $|\tau| = n$ the length of τ , and by $\tau|k$ the truncation of τ to the first k entries, $k \leq n$. For any $\tau \in \Sigma_*$, $\sigma \in \Sigma_* \cup \Sigma$, define $\tau * \sigma = (\tau_1, \tau_2, \dots, \tau_{|\tau|}, \sigma_1, \sigma_2, \dots)$. We write $\tau \prec \sigma$ if there exists a $\eta \in \Sigma_* \cup \Sigma$ with $\sigma = \tau * \eta$.

Define the space $\Omega = (\text{Sim}^N)^{\Sigma_*}$. Let \mathfrak{S} be the product σ -algebra on Ω . Taking \mathbf{P} the product measure with μ on each component, we get our primary probability space $(\Omega, \mathfrak{S}, \mathbf{P})$.

For $\omega \in \Omega$ and $\tau \in \Sigma_*$ write

$$\omega(\tau) = (S_{\tau*1}(\omega), S_{\tau*2}(\omega), \dots, S_{\tau*N}(\omega))$$

and $S_\emptyset(\omega) = id$. By \mathfrak{S}_k we denote the σ -algebra generated by all S_τ with $|\tau| \leq k$. For brevity, for any $\tau \in \Sigma_*$, write

$$\begin{aligned} \overline{S}_\tau &= S_{\tau|1} \circ S_{\tau|2} \circ \dots \circ S_{\tau||\tau|}, \\ r_\tau &= \text{Lip}(S_\tau), \\ \overline{r}_\tau &= \text{Lip}\overline{S}_\tau = r_{\tau|1}r_{\tau|2} \dots r_{\tau||\tau|}, \\ J_\tau &= \overline{S}_\tau(J). \end{aligned}$$

Further, let us introduce shift operators $\Delta_\tau : \Sigma_* \cup \Sigma \rightarrow \Sigma_* \cup \Sigma$ by

$$\Delta_\tau(\sigma) = \tau * \sigma,$$

and write

$$T_\tau\omega = \omega(\Delta_\tau).$$

Then we have $S_\sigma(T_\tau\omega) = S_{\tau*\sigma}(\omega)$.

Let us define a random mapping $\pi_\omega : \Sigma \rightarrow J$ by

$$(9) \quad \pi_\omega(\sigma) = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \overline{S}_{\sigma|n}(\omega)(x_0).$$

This limit exists for \mathbf{P} -a.s. $\omega \in \Omega$ and does not depend on the choice of x_0 . We call a random compact set $K(\omega) = \pi_\omega(\Sigma)$ the random self-similar set.

We call a random subset $\Gamma \subset \Sigma_*$ a Markov stopping, if:

- (1) For each $\sigma \in \Sigma$ and $\omega \in \Omega$, there exists a unique $\tau \in \Gamma(\omega)$ with $\tau \prec \sigma$, and
- (2) $\{\omega \in \Omega : \tau \in \Gamma(\omega)\} \in \mathfrak{S}_{|\tau|}$ for all $\tau \in \Sigma_*$.

If Γ is a Markov stopping, let \mathfrak{S}_Γ be the sub- σ -algebra of \mathfrak{S} generated by $\{S_\eta : \text{there is a } \tau \in \Gamma \text{ with } \eta \prec \tau\}$.

The set $K(\omega)$ fulfills the following invariance (see [1, 7]).

Theorem 1. For \mathbf{P} -a.s. $\omega \in \Omega$, we have:

- (1) $K(\omega) = \bigcap_{n=0}^{\infty} \bigcup_{\sigma \in \Sigma_n} \overline{S}_\sigma(J)$,
- (2) $K(\omega) = \bigcup_{\tau \in \Gamma} S_\tau(\omega)K(T_\tau\omega)$, where the $K(T_\tau\omega)$ are i.i.d. copies of $K(\omega)$ and independent of \mathfrak{S}_Γ .

3. MAIN RESULT AND ITS PROOF

In this section, we state and prove the main theorem of this paper.

Lemma 1. Suppose the Assumptions are satisfied and let $K(\omega)$ be the random self-similar set. Then there exists a constant a such that \mathbf{P} -a.s.

$$\dim_H K(\omega) = a.$$

Proof. Suppose there exists b such that

$$0 < \mathbf{P}\{\omega : \dim_H K(\omega) < b\} < 1.$$

By (2) of Theorem 1, $K(\omega) = \bigcup_{i=1}^N S_i(\omega)K(T_i\omega)$, thus

$$\dim_H K(\omega) = \max_{1 \leq i \leq N} \dim_H S_i(\omega)K(T_i\omega) = \max_{1 \leq i \leq N} \dim_H K(T_i\omega).$$

We have

$$\begin{aligned} & \mathbf{P}\{\omega : \dim_H K(\omega) < b\} \\ &= \mathbf{P}\{\omega : \max_{1 \leq i \leq N} \dim K(T_i\omega) < b\} \\ &= \prod_{i=1}^N \mathbf{P}\{\omega : \dim_H K(T_i\omega) < b\} \\ &= (\mathbf{P}\{\omega : \dim_H K(\omega) < b\})^N, \end{aligned}$$

and this leads to a contradiction.

For any $\sigma \in \Sigma_*$ and $\epsilon > 0$, let

$$I_\epsilon^\sigma(\omega) = \{\tau \in \Sigma_* : |\overline{S}_\tau(T_\sigma\omega)(J)| \leq \epsilon, |\overline{S}_{(\tau||\tau|-1)}(T_\sigma\omega)(J)| > \epsilon\}.$$

Define

$$\begin{aligned} D_\epsilon^\sigma(\omega) &= \{A \subset I_\epsilon^\sigma(\omega) : \forall \zeta, \eta \in A, \overline{S}_\zeta(T_\sigma\omega)(J) \cap \overline{S}_\eta(T_\sigma\omega)(J) = \emptyset\}, \\ \overline{N}_\epsilon^{(\sigma)}(\omega) &= \max_{A \in D_\epsilon^\sigma(\omega)} \#A. \end{aligned}$$

Let $A_\epsilon^\sigma(\omega)$ be a member of $D_\epsilon^\sigma(\omega)$ which realizes $\overline{N}_\epsilon^{(\sigma)}(\omega)$ and write

$$A_\epsilon^\sigma(\omega) = \{\tau_{\sigma,1}(\omega), \tau_{\sigma,2}(\omega), \dots, \tau_{\sigma, \overline{N}_\epsilon^{(\sigma)}(\omega)}(\omega)\}.$$

For simplicity, write $I_\epsilon(\omega) = I_\epsilon^\emptyset(\omega), D_\epsilon(\omega) = D_\epsilon^\emptyset(\omega), \overline{N}_\epsilon(\omega) = \overline{N}_\epsilon^{(\emptyset)}(\omega), A_\epsilon(\omega) = A_\epsilon^\emptyset(\omega)$.

Lemma 2. Let the Assumptions be satisfied. There exists a constant $c > 0$ such that \mathbf{P} -a.s. for any $\epsilon > 0$,

$$\overline{N}_\epsilon(\omega) \geq N_\epsilon(K(\omega)), \quad \overline{N}_\epsilon(\omega) \leq cM_\epsilon(K(\omega)).$$

Proof. Let $B(x_1, \epsilon), B(x_2, \epsilon), \dots, B(x_{N_\epsilon(K(\omega))}, \epsilon)$ be $N_\epsilon(K(\omega))$ disjoint closed balls of radius ϵ and center in $K(\omega)$. For any $1 \leq i \leq N_\epsilon(K(\omega))$, by Theorem 1 (1), there exists $\mathbf{i} \in \Sigma$ such that

$$\bigcap_{n=1}^{\infty} \overline{S}_{(\mathbf{i}|n)}(\omega)(J) = x_i.$$

Choose n_0 such that

$$\overline{S}_{(\mathbf{i}|n_0)}(\omega)(J) \subset B(x_i, \epsilon), \quad \overline{S}_{(\mathbf{i}|n_0-1)}(\omega)(J) \setminus B(x_i, \epsilon) \neq \emptyset.$$

Then we have $|\overline{S}_{(\mathbf{i}|n_0-1)}(\omega)(J)| > \epsilon$.

Now we consider two cases:

- (i) If $|\overline{S}_{(\mathbf{i}|n_0)}(\omega)(J)| \leq \epsilon$, choose $\tau^{(i)} = (\mathbf{i}|n_0)$.
- (ii) If $|\overline{S}_{(\mathbf{i}|n_0)}(\omega)(J)| > \epsilon$, then there exists $l \geq 1$ such that

$$|\overline{S}_{(\mathbf{i}|n_0+l)}(\omega)(J)| \leq \epsilon, \quad |\overline{S}_{(\mathbf{i}|n_0+l-1)}(\omega)(J)| > \epsilon,$$

choose $\tau^{(i)} = (\mathbf{i}|n_0 + l)$. Therefore we have

$$(10) \quad \overline{N}_\epsilon(\omega) \geq N_\epsilon(K(\omega)).$$

Now we prove the second inequality.

Let $\overline{S}_{\tau^{(i)}}(\omega)(J), i = 1, 2, \dots, \overline{N}_\epsilon(\omega)$, be $\overline{N}_\epsilon(\omega)$ disjoint sets satisfying for any $1 \leq i \leq \overline{N}_\epsilon(\omega)$,

$$|\overline{S}_{\tau^{(i)}}(\omega)(J)| \leq \epsilon, \quad |\overline{S}_{(\tau^{(i)}|\tau^{(i)}|-1)}(\omega)(J)| > \epsilon.$$

Since $\text{int}(J) \neq \emptyset$, there exist $x \in J$ and $c_1 > 0$ such that $B(x, c_1) \subset J$; then $\overline{S}_{\tau^{(i)}}(\omega)(J)$ contains a closed ball with radius $c_1 \cdot \overline{r}_{\tau^{(i)}}$.

By Assumption (II),

$$c_1 \cdot \overline{r}_{\tau^{(i)}} \geq \frac{\hat{r}_1}{|J|} \cdot c_1 \cdot \overline{r}_{\tau^{(i)}|\tau^{(i)}|-1} |J| \geq \frac{\hat{r}_1}{|J|} \cdot c_1 \cdot \epsilon.$$

Let $B(x_1, \epsilon), B(x_2, \epsilon), \dots, B(x_{M_\epsilon(K(\omega))}, \epsilon)$ be $M_\epsilon(K(\omega))$ closed balls of radius ϵ such that $\bigcup_{i=1}^{M_\epsilon(K(\omega))} B(x_i, \epsilon) \supset K(\omega)$. For any $1 \leq i \leq M_\epsilon(K(\omega))$, define

$$B_i(\omega) = \{j : 1 \leq j \leq \overline{N}_\epsilon(\omega), \overline{S}_{\tau^{(j)}}(\omega)(J) \cap B(x_i, \epsilon) \neq \emptyset\}.$$

Then for any $j \in B_i(\omega)$, $\overline{S}_{\tau^{(j)}}(\omega)(J) \subset B(x_i, 2\epsilon)$. By volume estimating, we have

$$\lambda_d(B(x_i, 2\epsilon)) \geq \#B_i(\omega) \cdot \lambda_d(B(0, \frac{\hat{r}_1}{|J|} \cdot c_1 \cdot \epsilon)),$$

where λ_d is the d -dimensional Lebesgue measure. That is,

$$\#B_i(\omega) \leq \frac{(2\epsilon)^d}{(\frac{\hat{r}_1}{|J|})^d \cdot c_1^d \cdot (\epsilon)^d} = \frac{2^d \cdot |J|^d}{\hat{r}_1^d \cdot c_1^d} := c.$$

Thus,

$$(11) \quad M_\epsilon(K(\omega)) \geq \frac{1}{c} \overline{N}_\epsilon(\omega).$$

From Lemma 2 and (5), we immediately get the following corollary.

Corollary 1. *Let the Assumptions be satisfied. Then \mathbf{P} -a.s.*

$$\overline{\dim}_B K(\omega) = \limsup_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\log \overline{N}_{2^{-n}}(\omega)}{n \log 2}.$$

Now let us prove the main result of this paper.

Theorem 2. *Let the Assumptions be satisfied. Then there exists a constant a such that \mathbf{P} -a.s.,*

$$\dim_H K(\omega) = \overline{\dim}_B K(\omega) = a.$$

Proof. By Lemma 1, we have that there exists a constant a such that $\dim_H K(\omega) = a$, \mathbf{P} -a.s.

For any $n \geq 1$, choose $\epsilon = 2^{-n}$, and define a random set $K_n(\omega) \subset K(\omega)$ as follows. Let

$$\begin{aligned} F_{n,0}(\omega) &= J, \\ F_{n,1}(\omega) &= \bigcup_{\sigma \in A_\epsilon(\omega)} \overline{S}_\sigma(\omega)(J), \\ F_{n,2}(\omega) &= \bigcup_{\sigma \in A_\epsilon(\omega)} \bigcup_{\tau \in A_\epsilon^\sigma(\omega)} \overline{S}_{\sigma*\tau}(\omega)(J), \\ &\dots \\ F_{n,k}(\omega) &= \bigcup_{\sigma_1 \in A_\epsilon(\omega)} \bigcup_{\sigma_2 \in A_\epsilon^{\sigma_1}(\omega)} \dots \bigcup_{\sigma_k \in A_\epsilon^{\sigma_1*\sigma_2*\dots*\sigma_{k-1}}(\omega)} \overline{S}_{\sigma_1*\sigma_2*\dots*\sigma_k}(\omega)(J). \end{aligned}$$

Let

$$K_n(\omega) = \bigcap_{k=0}^\infty F_{n,k}(\omega).$$

By the construction of $K(\omega)$, we have that $\{F_{n,k}(\omega), k \geq 0\}$ is a random recursive construction. This was studied by Mauldin and Williams [8] (see also [2]). On the other hand, by (9) and Theorem 1, it is clear that $K_n(\omega) \subset K(\omega)$, \mathbf{P} -a.s. By Theorem 1.3 and Theorem 3.6 of [8], we have for \mathbf{P} -a.s. ω ,

$$\dim_H K_n(\omega) = b,$$

where b satisfies the following equation:

$$\mathbf{E} \left[\sum_{i=1}^{\overline{N}_{2^{-n}}(\omega)} (\text{Lip}(\overline{S}_{\tau_{\theta,i}(\omega)}(\omega)))^b \right] = 1.$$

Therefore

$$\mathbf{E} \left[\sum_{i=1}^{\overline{N}_{2^{-n}}(\omega)} (\text{Lip}(\overline{S}_{\tau_{\theta,i}(\omega)}(\omega)))^a \right] \leq 1,$$

that is,

$$\mathbf{E} \overline{N}_{2^{-n}}(\omega) \leq \frac{|J|^a \cdot 2^{na}}{\hat{r}_1^a}.$$

For any $\delta > 0$,

$$\sum_{n=1}^\infty \mathbf{P} \{ \omega : \overline{N}_{2^{-n}}(\omega) \geq |J|^a \cdot 2^{n(a+\delta)} \} \leq \sum_{n=1}^\infty \frac{\mathbf{E} \overline{N}_{2^{-n}}(\omega)}{|J|^a \cdot 2^{n(a+\delta)}} \leq \frac{1}{\hat{r}_1^a} \cdot \sum_{n=1}^\infty 2^{-n\delta} < \infty.$$

By the Borel-Cantelli Lemma, we have

$$(12) \quad \mathbf{P}\{\omega : \overline{N}_{2^{-n}}(\omega) \geq |J|^a \cdot 2^{n(a+\delta)} \text{ i.o.}\} = 0.$$

By Corollary 1 and (12), we have for \mathbf{P} -a.s. ω ,

$$\overline{\dim}_B K(\omega) \leq \limsup_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\log |J|^a \cdot 2^{n(a+\delta)}}{n \log 2} = a + \delta.$$

Since δ is arbitrary, we have for \mathbf{P} -a.s. ω

$$\dim_H K(\omega) = \overline{\dim}_B K(\omega) = a,$$

and we finish the proof of Theorem 2.

By (7), (8) and Theorem 2, we immediately have the following corollary.

Corollary 2. *Let the Assumptions be satisfied. Then there exists a constant a , such that for \mathbf{P} -a.s. ω ,*

$$\dim_H K(\omega) = \dim_P K(\omega) = \underline{\dim}_B K(\omega) = \overline{\dim}_B K(\omega) = a.$$

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DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS AND NONLINEAR SCIENCE CENTER, WUHAN UNIVERSITY,
WUHAN, HUBEI, 430072, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
E-mail address: lisa-yy@263.net

DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS AND NONLINEAR SCIENCE CENTER, WUHAN UNIVERSITY,
WUHAN, HUBEI, 430072, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
E-mail address: wujunyu@public.wh.hb.cn