

COHOMOLOGY OF FINITE COVERS

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ABSTRACT. For a finite dimensional CW-complex, X , and $q > 1$, it is shown that the q th Čech cohomology group based on finite open covers of X , $H_f^q(X)$, is naturally isomorphic to $H^q(X)$, the q th Čech cohomology of X (i.e. based on locally finite covers), and for reasonable X , $H^1(X)$ can be obtained algebraically from $H_f^1(X)$.

The Čech cohomology functor H_f^* based on finite open covers [2], [5] is not a cohomology theory. Dowker showed that H_f^1 of the real line is nontrivial and so H_f^1 does not satisfy the homotopy axiom [3].

In this paper I show that for finite dimensional CW-complexes, H_f^q is naturally isomorphic to the usual Čech cohomology functor H^q , i.e. based on locally finite covers, when $q > 1$ and for a nice space X , $H^1(X)$ can be obtained algebraically from $H_f^1(X)$. This greatly extends previous results [1].

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Let β be the Stone-Čech functor from the category of normal spaces and maps (continuous functions) to the category of compact (\Rightarrow Hausdorff) spaces and maps. In other words, βX is the Stone-Čech compactification of X and $\beta(f: X \rightarrow Y): \beta X \rightarrow \beta Y$ is the unique "extension" of f . We shall also use β to denote the embedding of X into βX .

For a space X and a topological group Y , $[X, Y]$ denotes the set of homotopy classes of maps from X to Y together with the group structure induced by Y .

A precise definition of Čech cohomology based on finite open covers can be found in [5, Chapter 9]. It is sufficient here to know that for a normal space X , the embedding $\beta: X \rightarrow \beta X$ induces a natural isomorphism from $H_f^*(X)$ to $H^*(\beta X)$, [5, p. 282].

For paracompact spaces, $H^q(-; \pi)$ is naturally isomorphic to $[-, K(\pi, q)]$, where π is the coefficient group and $K(\pi, q)$ is an Eilenberg-Mac Lane space of type (π, q) , [7, p. 423]. So for normal spaces, $H_f^q(X; \pi)$ is naturally isomorphic to $[\beta X, K(\pi, q)]$.

LEMMA 1. *For X a finite dimensional CW-complex, π a finitely generated*

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abelian group and $q > 0$, the embedding $\beta: X \rightarrow \beta X$ induces an epimorphism $\beta^*: [\beta X, K(\pi, q)] \rightarrow [X, K(\pi, q)]$.

PROOF. Let $\langle \cdot \rangle$ denote "equivalence class of", then $\beta^*\langle f \rangle = \langle f\beta \rangle$.

Since π is finitely generated and $q > 0$, we can choose $K(\pi, q)$ to be a CW-complex of finite type, i.e. with compact skeleta. Let $\langle f \rangle \in [X, K(\pi, q)]$. By the cellular approximation theorem we can assume that f is cellular. Since X is finite dimensional $f(X)$ is contained in a compact subspace of $K(\pi, q)$ and so f can be extended to a map $F: \beta X \rightarrow K(\pi, q)$. Now $\beta^*\langle F \rangle = \langle f \rangle$.

To prove the main theorem we must show that for finite dimensional CW-complexes and $q > 1$, the kernel of β^* is trivial. The key to establishing that is the following

LEMMA 2. *Let $p: E \rightarrow B$ be a principal G -bundle with G a CW-complex of finite type and B compact. If X is a finite dimensional CW-complex and $f: X \rightarrow E$ is a map then there is a map $g: X \rightarrow E$ such that $pf = pg$ and $\overline{g(X)}$ is compact.*

PROOF. Let $\{V_i\}$ be a finite atlas for the bundle, with coordinate functions $\varphi_i: G \times V_i \rightarrow p^{-1}V_i$. Let $\{U_i\}$ be a shrinking of $\{V_i\}$, i.e. $\{U_i\}$ covers B and $\overline{U_i} \subset V_i$.

Let $t_{ij}: V_i \cap V_j \rightarrow G$ be the coordinate transformations and let G^k denote the k -skeleton of G . Since $t_{ij}(\overline{U_i} \cap \overline{U_j})$ is compact it is contained in $G^{m(i,j)}$ for some $m(i, j)$. Put $m = \max_{i,j}\{m(i, j)\}$ and for each k , choose $m(k)$ such that

$$G^m G^k = \{gg': g \in G^m \text{ and } g' \in G^k\} \subset G^{m(k)}$$

and $m(k) > k$.

Let $E^k = \bigcup_i \varphi_i(G^k \times \overline{U_i})$. Then E^k is compact and

$$E^k \cap p^{-1}U_i \subset \varphi_i(G^{m(k)} \times U_i).$$

[For if $y \in E^k \cap p^{-1}U_i$ then $y \in \varphi_j(G^k \times \overline{U_j})$ for some j and $py \in U_i \cap \overline{U_j}$. So if $\varphi_j^{-1}y = (g, py) \in G^k \times \overline{U_j}$ then $\varphi_i^{-1}y = (t_{ij}(py)g, py) \in G^m G^k \times U_i \subset G^{m(k)} \times U_i$.]

Subdivide X so that for each cell u in X there is an i such that $pf\overline{u} \subset U_i$. Let X^n denote the n -skeleton of X in this subdivision and let $M^n = (X \times \{0\}) \cup (X^n \times I)$, where $I = [0, 1]$. Let $q_i = \theta\varphi_i^{-1}: p^{-1}V_i \rightarrow G$, where $\theta: G \times V_i \rightarrow G$ is the projection. For $v \in X^0$, let $\lambda_v: I \rightarrow G$ be a path from $q_i f v$ to a 0-cell of G , where $pfv \in U_i$.

Define a map $F^0: M^0 \rightarrow E$ by

$$F^0(x, 0) = fx, \quad x \in X,$$

$$F^0(v, t) = \varphi_{i_v}(\lambda_v t, pfv), \quad v \in X^0, \quad t \in I \text{ and } pfv \subset U_{i_v}.$$

Then $pF^0(x, t) = pfx$ and $F^0(X^0 \times \{1\}) \subset E^0$.

Assume that there exists a map $F^{n-1}: M^{n-1} \rightarrow E$ such that $pF^{n-1}(x, t) = pfx$ and $F^{n-1}(X^{n-1} \times \{1\}) \subset E^k$ for some $k \geq n$. For each n -cell u in X , choose i_u such that $pf\bar{u} \subset U_{i_u}$. Then

$$F^{n-1}(ux\{0\}) \subset p^{-1}U_{i_u}$$

and

$$F^{n-1}(\dot{u}x\{1\}) \subset E^k \cap p^{-1}U_{i_u} \subset \varphi_{i_u}(G^{m(k)} \times U_{i_u}).$$

[\dot{u} denotes the boundary of u in X .] Let

$$h_u = \varphi_{i_u} F^{n-1}|_{(ux\{0\}) \cup (\dot{u} \times I)}.$$

Then $h_u(\dot{u} \times \{1\}) \subset G^{m(k)}$. Since $m(k) \geq n$, $\pi_n(G, G^{m(k)}) = 0$ and therefore h_u can be extended to a map $H_u: u \times I \rightarrow G$ such that $H_u(u \times \{1\}) \subset G^{m(k)}$. Define $F^n: M^n \rightarrow E$ by $F^n|M^{n-1} = F^{n-1}$ and $F^n(x, t) = \varphi_{i_u}(H_u(x, t), pfx)$, for $x \in u$. Then F^n is a map such that $pF^n(x, t) = pfx$, $F^n|M^{n-1} = F^{n-1}$ and $F^n(X^n \times \{1\})$ is contained in $E^{m(k)}$. So by induction such a map exists for all n .

Define $g: X \rightarrow E$ by $gx = F^n(x, 1)$ for all $x \in X^n$. Then $pf = pg$ and $\overline{g(X^n)}$ is compact for each n . Thus if X is finite dimensional $\overline{g(X)}$ is compact.

THEOREM 1. For X a finite dimensional CW-complex, π a finitely generated abelian group and $q > 1$,

$$\beta^*: H^q(X; \pi) \rightarrow H^q(X; \pi)$$

is an isomorphism.

PROOF. Assume $K(\pi, q)$ is of finite type and let $p: E \rightarrow K(\pi, q)$ be the universal bundle. Let $\langle f \rangle \in \ker \beta^*$. Then $f\beta$ can be lifted to a map $f': X \rightarrow E$. Now $f\beta(X) \subset f(\beta X)$ which is compact and so contained in the k -skeleton K^k of $K(\pi, q)$, for some k . Let $E' \rightarrow K^k$ be the $K(\pi, q-1)$ -bundle over K^k obtained by restricting $p: E \rightarrow K(\pi, q)$. We can now apply Lemma 2 to f' restricted to E' to obtain a map $g: X \rightarrow E$ such that $\overline{g(X)}$ is compact and $pg = f\beta$. Now g can be extended to a map $g': \beta X \rightarrow E$ and $pg' = f$. So f is null homotopic and hence $\ker \beta^* = 0$. The result now follows by Lemma 1.

We now consider the case $q = 1$, and X a normal space.

Let $j: X \rightarrow CX$ be the embedding of X as the base of the cone CX on X . Then $\alpha = \beta j: \beta X \rightarrow \beta CX$ is also an embedding. Consider the sequence

$$[\beta CX, S^1] \xrightarrow{\alpha^*} [\beta X, S^1] \xrightarrow{\beta^*} [X, S^1],$$

where α^* is induced by α and S^1 is the circle. If $\langle f \rangle \in \text{im } \beta^* \alpha^*$, then f can be extended to βCX and thus to CX and so is null homotopic. So $\text{im } \alpha^* \subset \ker \beta^*$.

If $\langle g \rangle \in \ker \beta^*$, then $g\beta$ is null homotopic, so can be extended to CX and hence to βCX . Thus $\ker \beta^* = \text{im } \alpha^*$.

Because CX is contractible it follows from [4], or see [8, p. 225], that $[\beta CX, S^1]$ is isomorphic to the quotient of the additive group of real valued maps on CX by the subgroup of bounded maps. That is a divisible group [6, p. 163] and so $\text{im } \alpha^*$ is a divisible group. Hence the short exact sequence

$$0 \rightarrow \ker \beta^* \rightarrow [\beta X, S^1] \xrightarrow{\beta^*} [X, S^1] \rightarrow 0$$

splits. (β^* is onto since S^1 is compact.)

Thus if $H^1(X) \cong [X, S^1]$ is reduced, i.e. has no divisible subgroups, $\ker \beta^*$ is the unique maximal divisible subgroup, [6, p. 164], of $H_f^1(X) \cong [\beta X, S^1]$. In particular this will be the case if X has the homotopy type of a CW-complex with a finite 1-skeleton. Hence we have proved the following result.

THEOREM 2. *If X is a normal space and $H^1(X)$ is a reduced group then $H^1(X) \cong H_f^1(X)/G$, where G is the maximal divisible subgroup of $H_f^1(X)$.*

Theorems 1 and 2 can easily be extended to a relative CW-complex (X, A) since $\beta(X/A)$ is homeomorphic to $\beta X/\beta A$.

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