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COMBINATORIAL PRESENTATION OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL PERSISTENT HOMOLOGY

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ABSTRACT. A multifiltration is a functor indexed by \mathbb{N}^r that maps any morphism to a monomorphism. The goal of this paper is to describe in an explicit and combinatorial way the natural \mathbb{N}^r -graded $R[x_1, \ldots, x_r]$ -module structure on the homology of a multifiltration of simplicial complexes. To do that we study multifiltrations of sets and R-modules. We prove in particular that the \mathbb{N}^r -graded $R[x_1, \ldots, x_r]$ -modules that can occur as R-spans of multifiltrations of sets are the direct sums of monomial ideals.

1. INTRODUCTION

Let \mathbb{N}^r be the poset of *r*-tuples of natural numbers with partial order given by $(v_1,\ldots,v_r) \leq (w_1,\ldots,w_r)$ if and only if $v_i \leq w_i$ for all $1 \leq i \leq r$. Given a small category \mathcal{C} , a functor $F: \mathbb{N}^r \to \mathcal{C}$ is called a **multifiltration** if, for any v < w in \mathbb{N}^r , the map $F(v < w) \colon F(v) \to F(w)$ is a monomorphism. Multifiltrations with values in the category of simplicial complexes, are the main objects we are studying in this article. By applying homology with coefficients in a ring Rto a multifiltration of simplicial complexes $F \colon \mathbb{N}^r \to \text{Spaces}$ we obtain a functor $H_n(F,R)\colon \mathbb{N}^r\to R$ -Mod with values in the category of R-modules. The category of functors indexed by \mathbb{N}^r with values in *R*-Mod is equivalent to the category of \mathbb{N}^r graded modules over the polynomial ring $R[x_1,\ldots,x_r]$. One aim of this paper is to describe this $R[x_1, \ldots, x_r]$ -module structure on $H_n(F, R)$ in a way that is suitable for calculations. One efficient way of doing it would be to give the minimal free presentation of $H_n(F, R)$ in terms of the multifiltration $F \colon \mathbb{N}^r \to \text{Spaces}$. This however we are unable to do directly. Instead we are going to describe two homomorphisms of finitely generated and free \mathbb{N}^r -graded $R[x_1,\ldots,x_r]$ -modules $A \to B \to C$ whose composition is the zero homomorphism (this sequence is a chain complex), and $H_n(F,R)$ is isomorphic to the homology of this complex. Since the modules involved are finitely generated and free and the homomorphisms preserve grading, these homomorphisms are simply given by matrices of elements in R. In our case the coefficients of the matrices are either 1, -1 or 0 and they can be explicitly expressed in terms of the multifiltration (we give a polynomial time procedure of how to do that in Section 5). One can then use standard computer algebra packages to study algebraic invariants of the module $H_n(F, R)$, in particular one can get its minimal free presentation as well as a minimal resolution, the set of Betti numbers and the Hilbert function [4, 5]. These invariants can be used then for topological

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