

Finite analysis of Nonstationary multi armed bandits

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Non-Stationary Distribution?

Definition (What exactly is non stationary?)

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Where does it really occur?

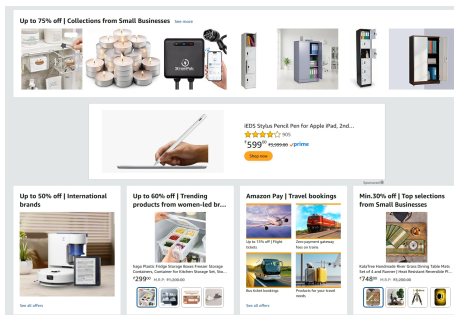


Figure: Recommendations from Amazon

Non-Stationary Distribution?

More Formally?

Definition (Non stationary distribution)

Let X_1, X_2, \dots be a sequence of observations. The distribution is said to be non stationary if,

$$X_i \sim \mathcal{D}_i, \quad \text{for some } i \neq j, \mathcal{D}_i \neq \mathcal{D}_j \quad (1)$$

Data Stream

Let (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_T) be the sequence of observations with $x_t \in [0, 1]$ with mean $\mu_t \in [0, 1]$. We consider following kinds of stream of data:

- **Static:** A stream of data is said to be static if $\mu_t = \mu$ for all $t \in [T]$ and some $\mu \in [0, 1]$.

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- **Abruptly-Changing:** A stream is said to be abruptly changing if $\mu_t = \mu_{t+1}$ for some changepoints $\mathcal{T}_c \subset [T]$.

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- **Abruptly-Changing:** A stream is said to be abruptly changing if $\mu_t = \mu_{t+1}$ for some changepoints $\mathcal{T}_c \subset [T]$.
- **Globally-Changing:** A stream is said to be globally changing if $|\mu_t - \mu_{t+1}| \leq b$ for all $t \in [T]$ and for some $b \in (0, 1)$.

kinds of Non Stationary

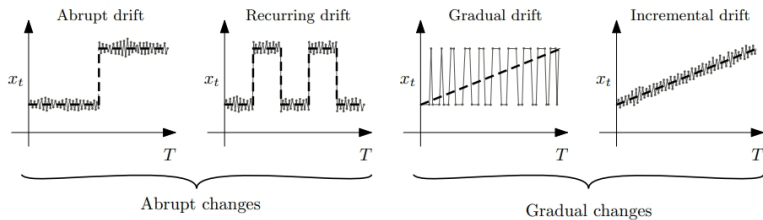
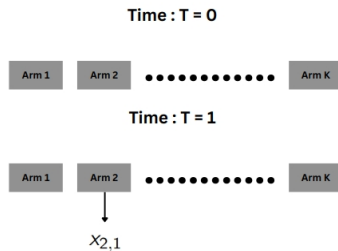
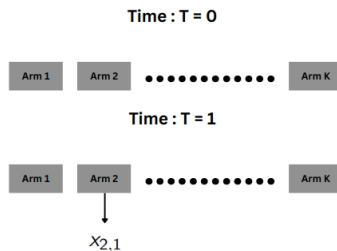


Figure: Kinds of Concept Drift.

Back to Bandits



Back to Bandits



Essentially, $\exists K$ arms, at each time $t \in [T]$, we observe a reward $x_{I(t),t}$ where mean of the rewards are $\mu_{I(t),t}$ and regret can be defined as,

$$\text{reg}(t) = \max_i \mu_{i,t} - \mathbb{E}[X_{I(t),t}] \quad (2)$$

$$\text{Reg}(T) = \sum_{t=1}^T \text{reg}(t) \quad (3)$$

How do we solve it?

Let's try same algorithms we already know?

We will experiment with 100 Arms with bernolli rewards as follows:

- Stationary: $\mu_i = \frac{100-(i-1)}{100}$ for $i \in [100]$
- Gradual: $\mu_{i,1} = \frac{100-(i-1)}{100}$ and $\mu_{i,t} = \frac{T-t+1}{T}\mu_{i,1} + \frac{t-1}{T}\mu_{i,T}$
- Abrupt: change points at $T/3$ and $2T/3$ where

$$\mu_{i,1} = \frac{100-(i-1)}{100}$$

$$\mu_{i,T/3} = 1 - \mu_{i,1}$$

$$\mu_{i,2T/3} = \mu_{i,1}$$

Static Environment

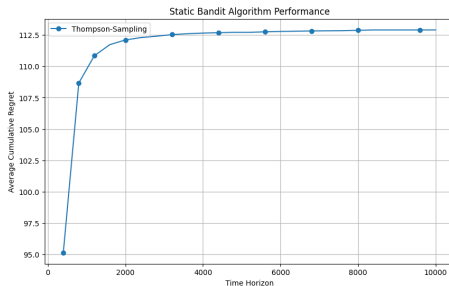
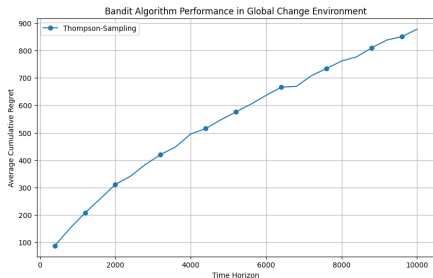
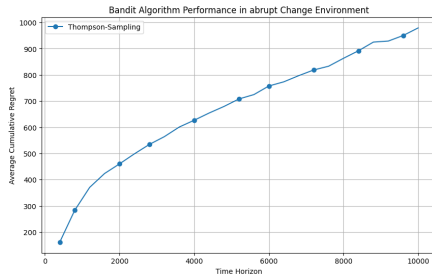


Figure: Thompson Sampling in static environment

Non Static Environment



(a) Gradual



(b) Abrupt

Figure: Thompson Sampling in Non-static environment

Ways to solve it?

- **Passive Methods:** You **do not** seek changes in the data stream while your algorithm runs.
- **Active Methods:** You **seek changes** in the data stream.

An Example

Algorithm Discounted_UCB

- 1: **Input:** Discount factor $\gamma \in (0, 1)$, exploration parameter ξ
 - 2: **Initialize:** For $t = 1, \dots, K$, play arm $I_t = t$.
 - 3: **for** $t = K + 1, \dots, T$ **do**
 - 4: For each arm $i \in \{1, \dots, K\}$, compute:
 - 5: $N_t(\gamma, i) = \sum_{s=1}^t \gamma^{t-s} \mathbb{I}_{\{I_s=i\}}$
 - 6: $\bar{X}_t(\gamma, i) = \frac{1}{N_t(\gamma, i)} \sum_{s=1}^t \gamma^{t-s} X_s(i) \mathbb{I}_{\{I_s=i\}}$
 - 7: $n_t(\gamma) = \sum_{k=1}^K N_t(\gamma, k)$
 - 8: $c_t(\gamma, i) = 2\sqrt{\frac{\xi \log n_t(\gamma)}{N_t(\gamma, i)}}$
 - 9: Play arm $I_t = \arg \max_{i \in \{1, \dots, K\}} (\bar{X}_t(\gamma, i) + c_t(\gamma, i))$.
 - 10: **end for**
-

Proposal

Passive Methods fails to perform as good as its vanilla variant. Thus, a good idea would be to detect **change points**.

ADWIN

- Maintain an adaptive window $W(t)$ of recent observations.
- When some split $W = W_1 \cup W_2$ shows significantly different means, discard the older part W_1 (shrink to W_2).

Algorithm ADWIN

Require: A univariate stream $S : (x_1, x_2, \dots) \in [0, 1]$, confidence level $\delta \in (0, 1)$.

```

1:  $W(1) = \{\}$ 
2: for  $t = 1, 2, \dots$  do
3:    $W(t+1) = W(t) \cup \{t\}$ 
4:   while  $|\hat{\mu}_{W_1} - \hat{\mu}_{W_2}| > \epsilon_{cut}^\delta$  holds for some split  $W(t+1) = W_1 \cup W_2$ 
     do
5:      $W(t+1) = W_2$ 
6:   end while
7: end for

```

ADWIN

The cut-off value ϵ_{cut}^δ is defined as:

$$\epsilon_{cut}^\delta = \sqrt{\frac{1}{2|W_1|} \log\left(\frac{1}{\delta}\right)} + \sqrt{\frac{1}{2|W_2|} \log\left(\frac{1}{\delta}\right)}$$

Theorem (Uniform Hoeffding bound for the window set)

Let $p > 0$ be arbitrary.

$$\mathbb{P}\left(\forall W \in \mathcal{W}, |\mu_w - \hat{\mu}_w| \leq \sqrt{\frac{\log(T^{2+p})}{2|W|}}\right) \geq 1 - \frac{2}{T^p}$$

where \mathcal{W} is the set of all possible window segment in time T and $\mu_W = \frac{1}{|W|} \sum_{t \in W} \mu_t$

ADWIN

In theorem 3, if we take $p = 1$ and $\delta = \frac{1}{T^3}$ then we have with probability at least $1 - 2/T$,

$$\forall W \in \mathcal{W}, |\mu_w - \hat{\mu}_w| \leq \sqrt{\frac{\log(T^3)}{2|W|}}$$

Let this be the good event \mathcal{G} .

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Let this be the good event \mathcal{G} .

Under Stationary environment

$$\mu_W = \mu \quad \forall W \in \mathcal{W}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \implies |\hat{\mu}_{W_1} - \hat{\mu}_{W_2}| &= |\hat{\mu}_{W_1} - \mu - (\hat{\mu}_{W_2} - \mu)| \\ &\implies \leq |\hat{\mu}_{W_1} - \mu| + |\hat{\mu}_{W_2} - \mu| \end{aligned}$$

So under good event \mathcal{G} , no cuts will be made.

Results

Run ADWIN algorithm with a confidence parameter $\delta = 1/T^3$. The expected total error, $\mathbb{E}[\text{Err}(T)] = \mathbb{E}[\sum_{t=1}^T |\hat{\mu}_{W(t)} - \mu_t|]$, is bounded accordingly.

Environment	Assumptions	Error Bound
Static	Stationary stream	$\tilde{O}(\sqrt{T})$
Abrupt	M changepoints	$\tilde{O}(\sqrt{MT})$
Gradual	Change parameter $b = O(T^{-d})$ for $d \in (0, 3/2)$	$\tilde{O}(T^{1-d/3})$

Table: Summary of ADWIN Expected Total Error Bounds ($\delta = 1/T^3$).

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This is the idea of ADS (Adaptive Shrinking Bandits) algorithm.

ADS

Algorithm ADS

Require: Set of arms $[K]$, confidence level δ , base bandit algorithm.

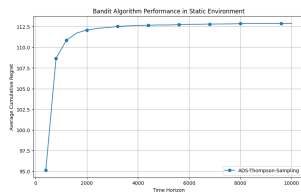
- 1: Initialize the base bandit algorithm.
 - 2: Initialize K instances of ADWIN, one for each arm.
 - 3: **for** $t = 1, 2, \dots, T$ **do**
 - 4: $(I(t), X(t)) \leftarrow \text{BASE-BANDIT}(t)$
 - 5: **if** \exists a split $W = W_1 \cup W_2 : |\hat{\mu}_{W_1} - \hat{\mu}_{W_2}| \geq \epsilon_{cut}^\delta$ **then**
 - 6: Update the Window $W(t+1)$ to W_2 for base bandit algorithm.
 - 7: **end if**
 - 8: **end for**
-

ADS

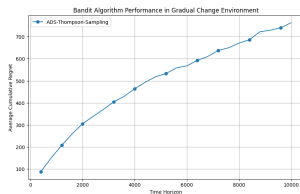
How good is ADS ?

ADS

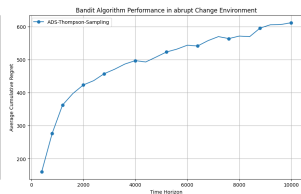
How good is ADS ?



(a) Static



(b) Gradual



(c) Abrupt

Figure: ADS-Thompson Sampling in various environment

Empirically, it works well!

ADS

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- Good Set $\mathcal{G} \leftarrow$ no cuts will be made by ADWIN.
- Base bandit algorithm will run on the whole data.
- Thus, $\text{Regret}(\text{ADS}) = \text{Regret}(\text{Base Bandit})$
- Since good event \mathcal{G} holds with high probability, we can say that ADS performs almost as well as the base bandit algorithm in stationary environments.

What about non-stationary environments?

ADS

What about non-stationary environments?
This is **hard to analyse**.

Contact Us

But, if you think solving it is easy, **contact us** at
sahilc@iisc.ac.in, prathamgupta@iisc.ac.in

ADR

Adaptive Resetting (ADR) algorithm add following on top of ADS:

- When **ADWIN detects change** for any arm then the whole bandit algorithm is **reset** and starts afresh with new adjusted time horizon.

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- The **monitoring arm of last block** is pulled deterministically **every K time steps** in the **current block**.

ADR

Algorithm 5 ADR-bandit

Require: Set of arms $[K]$, confidence level δ , monitoring parameter $N \in \mathbb{N}$, base-bandit algorithm

```

1: Initialize base-bandit algorithm.
2: for  $l = 1, 2, \dots, \lceil \log_2(T/(KN) + 1) \rceil$  do
3:   for  $t = (2^{l-1} - 1)KN + 1, \dots, \min\{(2^l - 1)KN, T\}$  do
4:     if  $l \geq 2$  and  $t = 0 \pmod{K}$  then
5:       Pull  $i^{(l-1)}$ . ▷ Monitoring arm of the previous block.
6:     else if  $l \geq 2$  and  $t = 1 \pmod{K}$  and  $t \geq (2^{l-1} - 2)KN + 1$  then
7:       Pull  $i^{(l)}$ . ▷ Monitoring arm of the current block.
8:     else
9:        $(I(t), X(t)) = \text{BASE-BANDIT}(W(t))$  ▷ Do one step of the base-bandit
10:    end if
11:    if there exists  $W(t+1) = W_1 \cup W_2$  such that  $|\hat{\mu}_{i,W_1} - \hat{\mu}_{i,W_2}| \geq \epsilon_{\text{cut}}^\delta$  then
12:      Reset the entire algorithm with  $T := T - t$ .
13:    end if
14:    if  $t = KN$  then ▷ The end of the first block  $l = 1$ .
15:      Set  $i^{(1)} = \arg \max_{i \in [K]} N_i^{(1)}$  ▷ See Eq. (20) for  $N_i^{(1)}$ .
16:    else if  $l \geq 2$  and  $t = (2^{l-1} - 2)KN$  then ▷ Before the beginning of the last
17:      subblock of the block  $l$ .
18:      Set  $i^{(l)} = \arg \max_{i \in [K]} N_i^{(l)}$ . ▷ See Eq. (20) for  $N_i^{(l)}$ 
19:    end if
20:  end for

```

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- Line 14-17 : Evaluation of monitoring arms for the blocks.

ADR

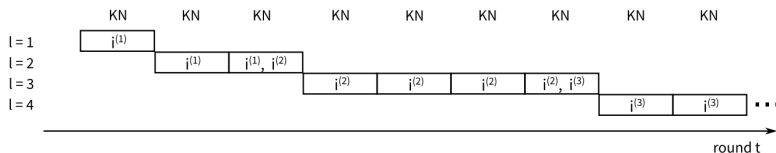


Figure: Illustration of sub blocks and monitoring arms in ADR

Here $i^{(l)}$ is monitoring arm of block l .

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Static Case:

- We have already seen that under good event \mathcal{G} , no cuts will be made by ADWIN.
- So now we need to analyse the regret incurred due to monitoring arms.
- Basic Idea as T grows the most frequently pulled arm will be the optimal arm so optimal arm will be monitoring arm in last block with high probability.

ADR Analysis : Static

So we know that under good event \mathcal{G} no cuts will be made by ADWIN.

- $i^{(l)} \leftarrow$ monitoring arm of block l .
- $\mathcal{T}_l^{\text{monitor}} \leftarrow \{t : i^{(l)} \text{ is pulled at time } t \text{ as } l\text{-th monitoring arm}\}$.

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We want to bound the regret during T time steps.

$$\sum_t \text{reg}(t) = \sum_{t \in \mathcal{T}^{\text{base}}} \text{reg}(t) + \sum_l \sum_{t \in \mathcal{T}_l^{\text{monitor}}} \text{reg}(t)$$

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Can we **bound** $\left(\sum_{t \in \mathcal{T}_l^{\text{monitor}}} \text{reg}(t) \right)$ in terms of $\sum_{t \in \mathcal{T}^{\text{base}} \cap \mathcal{T}_l} \text{reg}(t)$?

ADR Analysis : Static

Suppose

$$\frac{\sum_t 1[t \in \mathcal{T}_I^{\text{monitor}}]}{\sum_t 1[t \in \mathcal{T}^{\text{base}} \cap \mathcal{T}_I]} 1[I(t) = i^{(I)}] \leq \mathbf{C}$$

ADR Analysis : Static

Suppose

$$\frac{\sum_t 1[t \in \mathcal{T}_I^{\text{monitor}}]}{\sum_t 1[t \in \mathcal{T}^{\text{base}} \cap \mathcal{T}_I]} 1[l(t) = i^{(I)}] \leq \mathbf{C}$$

Then,

$$\sum_{t \leq S} \text{reg}(t) = \sum_I \left(\sum_{t \in \mathcal{T}^{\text{base}} \cap \mathcal{T}_I} \text{reg}(t) + \sum_{t \in \mathcal{T}_I^{\text{monitor}}} \text{reg}(t) \right)$$

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ADR Analysis : Static

$$\sum_{t \leq S} \text{reg}(t) \leq (\mathbf{c} + 1) \sum_I \sum_{t \in \mathcal{T}^{\text{base}} \cap \mathcal{T}_I} \Delta_{I(t)}$$

ADR Analysis : Static

$$\begin{aligned}\sum_{t \leq S} \text{reg}(t) &\leq (\mathbf{c} + 1) \sum_I \sum_{t \in \mathcal{T}^{\text{base}} \cap \mathcal{T}_I} \Delta_{I(t)} \\ &\leq (\mathbf{c}') \sum_{t \in \mathcal{T}^{\text{base}}} \Delta_{I(t)}\end{aligned}$$

Since base bandit algorithm has logarithmic Regret,

$$\mathbb{E}[\text{Reg}(T)] \leq \mathbf{c}^{st} \sum_{i \neq 1} \frac{\log T}{\Delta_i} + O(1)$$

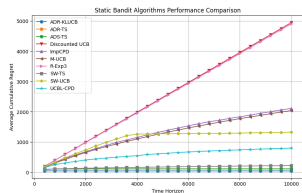
ADR Analysis: Abrupt

May be after class?

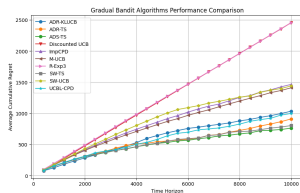
Environment	Regret Bound
Abrupt	$\mathbb{E}[\text{Reg}(T)] = \tilde{O}(\sqrt{MKT})$
Gradual	$\mathbb{E}[\text{Reg}(T)] = \tilde{O}(\sqrt{K} T^{1-d/3})$

Table: Summary of ADR-bandit Regret Bounds

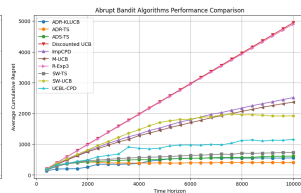
Experiments



(a) Static



(b) Gradual



(c) Abrupt

Figure: Regret using various bandit algorithms in non stationary environments

Please feel free to experiment using our code at
[PrathamGupta423/Nonstationary-Multi-Armed-Bandits](https://github.com/PrathamGupta423/Nonstationary-Multi-Armed-Bandits)

References I

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- [2] Junpei Komiyama, Edouard Fouché, and Junya Honda. “Finite-time Analysis of Globally Nonstationary Multi-Armed Bandits”. In: *Journal of Machine Learning Research* 25.112 (2024), pp. 1–56. URL: <http://jmlr.org/papers/v25/21-0916.html>.

Thank You!