

SUPERVISED CLASSIFICATION IN R: RANDOM FOREST

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this exercise is to practice with machine learning supervised classification methods. The algorithm that we will use in this practice will be Random Forest.

MATERIAL

We will use Sentinel Sentinel-2 MSI images for the Natural Park of "Sierra de las Nieves", which is in Malaga province (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Location of the study area.

Three images of different seasons will be used: spring, summer, and autumn for 2016. Specific dates are shown in table 1.

Table 1. Names and dates for the Sentinel-2 images

Name	Season	Date
S2A_L1C_20160329_T30SUFtif	Spring	25/03/2016
S2A_L1C_20160904_T30SUFtif	Summer	04/09/2016
S2A_L1C_20161220_T30SUFtif	Autumn	20/12/2016

The Sentinel 2-MSI images are made up of thirteen bands, with spatial resolutions between 10 and 60 meters, as shown in table 2. The bands at 60 meters of resolution have been excluded and the rest have been resampled to 20 meters. As a result, for each date we have an image of 10 bands that correspond to the original bands 2, 3, 4, 5,6, 7, 8, 8A, 11 and 12, at 20 meters of spatial resolution (table 2). Specifically, they correspond to the product at level 1C (geometric but not atmospheric correction) and being the values given in reflectivity at the top of the atmosphere.

Table2. Spectral bands and spatial resolution of the Sentinel-2A MSI system. In bold and shaded, the bands available for the exercise, resampled to 20 meters. Source: ESA (2015) https://sentinel.esa.int/web/sentinel/technical-guides/sentinel-2-msi/msi-instrument.

Band	Central wavelength	Spectral region	Original spatial resolution		
1	443	Blue	60		



2	490	Blue-green	10
3	560	Green	10
4	665	Red	10
5	705	Red edge	20
6	740	Red edge	20
7	783	Near Infrared	20
8	842	Near Infrared	10
8A	865	Near Infrared	20
9	945	Near Infrared	60
10	1380	Medium infrared	60
11	1610	Short Wave Infrared	20
12	2190	Short Wave Infrared	20

The three images are in tif format. Additionally, the following data are given:

- Random sampling with polygons for every category of the study area
- csv containing the spectral signatures of every polygon

INSTRUCTIONS

1. The first step is to load the libraries that we are going to use in the exercise.

```
#load libraries
library(raster)
library(dplyr)
library(mlr)
library(randomForest)
library(ggplot2)
library(clue)
```

2. It is important to fix the "seed" to allow replicability.

```
#defining the seed
set.seed(123, "L'Ecuyer")
```

3. We will also define the working directories.

```
#defining working directories
HDFpath<- "C:/COLOUR/MAPPING" # directory with data
setwd(HDFpath) # fixing the directory</pre>
```

4. Once all this is done, we have our RStudio session ready to start working with the data. Open the shapefile with the training areas.

```
#opening vector file
ROIS<-shapefile("C:/COLOUR/MAPPING/ROIS.shp")
plot(ROIS)</pre>
```

If you type the name of the object where we have saved the information of the shapefile "ROIS" you will see the following information:



```
> ROIS
class : SpatialPolygonsDataFrame
features : 407
extent : 302000, 341880, 4042200, 4082940 (xmin, xmax, ymin, ymax)
crs : +proj=utm +zone=30 +ellps=WGS84 +units=m +no_defs
variables : 5
names : Class_Name, Class_Id, Parts, Length, Area
min values : caducifolio, 1, 1, 160, 1600
max values : urbano, 8, 1, 160, 1600
```

As you can see there is information about the class of the object, the extent, coordinate system, etc ... Note that the notation used by this library is different from the one we use. In this case we find two terms that for us are synonymous with different meanings: "features" and "variables". This library calls features to what are really observations (rows) and variables to features (columns).

Also, we see the names of the columns and the minimum and maximum value.

This shapefile contains the information about the class of each ROI in two different data types "string" or "int", or what is the same text or integers, respectively.

5. Open the file training.csv which contains the spectral signatures.

```
#reading the csv file with the spectral
training <- read.table("training.csv", header = TRUE, sep = ",")</pre>
```

6. Print the "training" object on the screen to check its content and that everything is OK. Show up to a maximum of 32 rows, omitting 375. To see only the header you can do the following:

```
> <mark>ls(training)</mark>
[1] "BlueO" "BlueP" "BlueV" "GreenO" "GreenP" "GreenP" "NIR2O" "NIR2P" "NIR2V" "NIRO" "NIRP" "NIRV"
[13] "RedEdge1O" "RedEdge1P" "RedEdge2V" "RedEdge2P" "RedEdge2V" "RedEdge3O" "RedEdge3P" "RedEdge3V" "RedO" "RedP" "RedV"
[25] "SWIRIO" "SWIRIP" "SWIRIV" "SWIR2O" "SWIR2P" "SWIR2V" "X"
```

"Ls" lists the features of the dataframe. There are all the bands of the multi-seasonal image and there is one more "X" feature. This characteristic contains the Id of each row. We must remove it as it does not contain information about satellite images and can confuse the classifier. To do this, run the following command:

```
#removing the column with rows IdS
training<-dplyr::select(training, -X)</pre>
```

7. So far we have all the information about class labels on the one hand (object: ROIS) and spectral signatures on the other (object: training). Incorporates the column with the class label into the training object and saves the result in a .csv file

```
#incoporating the class labels from the vectorial file into the training data frame
training<-cbind(training, Class_Id=ROIS$Class_Id)
#writing the new data fram with labels
write.csv(training, file="C:/COLOUR/MAPPING/Results/training_RF.csv")</pre>
```

8. Now print the "training" object to check that everything is OK.

```
> ls(training)
[1] "BlueO" "BlueP" "Class_Id" "GreenO" "GreenP" "GreenV" "NIR2O" "NIR2P" "NIR2V" "NIRO" "NIRP"
[13] "NIRV" "RedEdge1O" "RedEdge1P" "RedEdge1V" "RedEdge2O" "RedEdge2V" "RedEdge3O" "RedEdge3P" "RedEdge3V" "RedO" "RedP"
[25] "RedV" "SWIR1O" "SWIR1P" "SWIR1P" "SWIR2O" "SWIR2P" "SWIR2V"
```

9. It seems we have all the features included, but are they in the correct data format? To see the format of each feature we will do the following:



#checking the data type and basic stats of every feature summary(training)

The feature "Class_Id" contains integers. Therefore, R considers it to be of type numeric, when in fact it contains the class labels and should be categorical.

Convert the Class_Id characteristic into a categorical type so that we can do the classification.

```
#converting the class labels in categorical
training$Class_Id<-as.factor(training$Class_Id)</pre>
```

Make a "summary" again and check if Class_Id has changed

> summary(training	ng)								
BlueV	GreenV	RedV	RedEdge1V	RedEdge2V	RedEdge3V	NIRV	NIR2V	SWIR1V	
Min. : 795.5	Min. : 677.0	Min. : 495.0	Min. : 667.8	Min. :1185	Min. :1360	Min. :1308	Min. :1499	Min. : 686.2	
1st Qu.: 906.1	1st Qu.: 856.5	1st Qu.: 724.4	1st Qu.:1026.2	1st Qu.:1774	1st Qu.:2060	1st Qu.:1966	1st Qu.:2246	1st Qu.:1476.6	
Median :1121.2	Median :1129.2	Median :1212.5	Median :1444.2	Median :2055	Median :2346	Median :2252	Median :2600	Median :2297.2	
Mean :1186.8	Mean :1218.7	Mean :1376.5	Mean :1571.4	Mean :2120	Mean :2426	Mean :2345	Mean :2688	Mean :2427.2	
3rd Qu.:1445.1	3rd Qu.:1518.8	3rd Qu.:1908.9	3rd Qu.:2036.9	3rd Qu.:2368	3rd Qu.:2738	3rd Qu.:2655	3rd Qu.:3054	3rd Qu.:3250.6	
Max. :2013.8	Max. :2421.8	Max. :3425.8	Max. :3603.0	Max. :3963	Max. :4410	Max. :4278	Max. :4920	Max. :5129.2	
SWIR2V	BlueP	GreenP	RedP	RedEdge1P	RedEdae2P	RedEdae3P	NIRP	NIR2P	
Min. : 316.8	Min. : 740.0	Min. : 555.0	Min. : 366.5	Min. : 519.2					
1st Qu.: 755.1	1st Qu.: 858.9	1st Qu.: 755.1	1st Qu.: 497.8	1st Qu.: 859.1			1st Qu.:1891		
Median :1519.2	Median : 991.8	Median : 938.2	Median : 844.5	Median :1165.8			Median :2261		
Mean :1549.0	Mean :1109.5	Mean :1058.7	Mean :1015.1	Mean :1325.4					
3rd Qu.:2245.4	3rd Qu.:1305.2	3rd Qu.:1306.1	3rd Qu.:1407.2	3rd Qu.:1722.8					
Max. :3821.2	Max. :2203.0	Max. :2298.2	Max. :2565.0	Max. :2794.8			Max. :4699		
SWIR1P	SWIR2P	BlueO	Green0	Red0	RedEdge10	RedEdge2	O RedEdo	je30 NII	RO
Min. : 602.5	Min. : 296.2	Min. : 768.0	Min. : 456.8	Min. : 253.2	Min. : 251	.2 Min. :3	05.2 мin. :	276.8 Min.	: 244.5
1st Qu.:1379.1	1st Qu.: 669.2	1st Qu.: 952.5	1st Qu.: 734.8	1st Qu.: 519.5					
Median :1982.0	Median :1304.0	Median :1108.0	Median : 953.5	Median : 918.5					
Mean :2100.3	Mean :1415.4	Mean :1203.4	Mean :1051.1	Mean :1028.5				1983.0 Mean	
3rd Qu.:2714.6	3rd Qu.:1952.8	3rd Qu.:1344.8	3rd Qu.:1258.5	3rd Qu.:1337.2					
Max. :5157.5	Max. :4006.2	Max. :4082.8	Max. :3981.5	Max. :4464.2	Max. :4811	.5 Max. :51	65.0 Max. :	5213.5 Max.	:5346.5
NIR2O	SWIR10	SWIR20	class_Id						
Min. : 231.2	Min. : 80.25	Min. : 39.75	7 :57						
1st Qu.:1520.2	1st Qu.:1071.75	1st Qu.: 551.00	5 :51						
Median :2071.0	Median :1846.25	Median :1181.00	1 :50						
Mean :2141.2	Mean :1891.30	Mean :1284.42	2 :50						
3rd Qu.:2685.2	3rd Qu.:2426.75	3rd Qu.:1735.50	3 :50						
Max. :5389.8	Max. :6122.25	Max. :4732.50	4 :50						
			(Other):99						

10. Once you have the file ready for training, you can start training the classifiers. The steps to follow depend on the specific library to be used. In our case we will use the "mlr" library as it is currently the most complete library with machie learning algorithms https://mlr.mlr-org.com/.

The first thing this library requires is to set up a task, where we must specify the type of task (classification, regression, clustering ...), the training data, and the feature that contains the class label.

```
#creating the task
classificacion.task <- makeClassifTask(id = "nieves", data = training, target = "Class_Id")</pre>
```

11. The next step would be to tune the hyperparameter range of the model. In the case of Random Forest, we only need two hyperparameters to optimise it: the number of random features (mtry) and the number of trees in the forest (ntree). If we tried to apply another



classifier we could have a look to the help and see the parameters that need to be optimised for that specific algorithm. You can see the information regarding the algorithms included in the mlr library at: https://mlr.mlr-org.com/articles/tutorial/integrated learners.html

Set up the range of variation of hyperparameters, and the way to evaluate the best combination of them. It is proposed to use an evaluation based on a cross validation of 10 folders, using the classification error (mmce) as a metric.

```
[Tune] Started tuning learner classif.randomForest for parameter set:
                                Constr Req Tunable Trafo
          Type len Def
     discrete
                               3,4,5,6
                                               TRUE
                    - 1000,5000,10000
ntree discrete
                                               TRUE
With control class: TuneControlGrid
Imputation value: 1
[Tune-x] 1: mtry=3; ntree=1000
        1: mmce.test.mean=0.1645732; time: 0.1 min
        2: mtry=4; ntree=1000
        2: mmce.test.mean=0.1621341; time: 0.1 min
         3: mtry=5; ntree=1000
        3: mmce.test.mean=0.1596341; time: 0.1 min
        4: mtry=6; ntree=1000
         4: mmce.test.mean=0.1645732; time: 0.1 min
        5: mtry=3; ntree=5000
        5: mmce.test.mean=0.1670732; time: 0.4 min
        6: mtry=4; ntree=5000
         6: mmce.test.mean=0.1621341; time: 0.4 min
         7: mtry=5; ntree=5000
         7: mmce.test.mean=0.1620732; time: 0.4 min
        8: mtry=6; ntree=5000
        8: mmce.test.mean=0.1645732; time: 0.4 min
        9: mtry=3; ntree=10000
        9: mmce.test.mean=0.1670732; time: 0.7 min
     x] 10: mtry=4; ntree=10000
     v] 10: mmce.test.mean=0.1670122; time: 0.7 min
     -x] 11: mtry=5; ntree=10000
 rune-y] 11: mmce.test.mean=0.1670122; time: 0.7 min
 Tune-x] 12: mtry=6; ntree=10000
[Tune-y] 12: mmce.test.mean=0.1646341; time: 0.8 min
[Tune] Result: mtry=5; ntree=1000 : mmce.test.mean=0.1596341
> res
Tune result:
Op. pars: mtry=5; ntree=1000
mmce.test.mean=0.1596341
```

In this case we have tested 12 different Random Forest models. The best model is the one that considers 5 random variables in each tree and 1000 classification trees, with a classification error of 15.96%. This means that the overall accuracy is 84.04%.

12. We would have already decided the optimal configuration of the algorithm. Now you have to set the parameters and create an object with the trained model.



```
#setting hyperparameters and training the model
lrn <- setHyperPars(makeLearner("classif.randomForest", predict.type = "prob"), par.vals = res$x, importance=TRUE)
modelo.rf <- train(lrn, clasificacion.task)</pre>
```

Note that the name given by mlr to the Random Forest algorithm for classification is "classif.randomForest". We have specified that the prediction type will be the probability of class membership (prob).

Check the information about the model "model.rf" by directly printing its name on the screen and using the "summary" command.

```
Model for learner.id=classif.randomForest; learner.class=classif.randomForest
Trained on: task.id = nieves; obs = 407; features = 30
Hyperparameters: mtry=6,ntree=1e+03,importance=TRUE
                    Length Class
                              classif.randomForest
learner
                                                             list
learner.model
                              randomForest.formula
                                                             list
                                                             list
task.desc
                              ClassifTaskDesc
subset
                    407
                              -none-
                                                             numeric
                      30
features
                                                             character
                              -none-
factor.levels
                              -none-
                                                             list
                                                             numeric
time
                               -none-
```

Inside model.rf there is an object which is where the model and almost all the information about it are actually stored. Take a look at what it contains by listing model.rf \$ learner.model:

```
#checking model information
ls(model.rf$learner.model)
```

There is a lot of valuable information inside model.rf \$ learner.model such as: the confusion matrix, the importance of each feature in the model training (importance), the predicted class for each training area (predicted), and the observed class of each training area (y). Have a look to it:

```
#printing on screen model information
model.rf$learner.model$confusion
model.rf$learner.model$importance
```

```
#printing on screen model information
  model.rf$learner.model$confusion
                        7
   1
      2
          3
             4
                 5
                    6
                           8 class.error
  46
      0
          1
              1
                 0
                    0
                        0
                           2
                               0.08000000
2
3
4
   0 45
          0
                 0
                        5
                           0
             0
                    0
                               0.10000000
   0
      0
         40
             0
                 0
                    0
                        4
                           6
                               0.20000000
   0
      0
          1
            40
                 8
                    0
                        0
                           1
                               0.20000000
5
   0
      0
          0
              5
                44
                    0
                        0
                           2
                               0.13725490
6
   0
      0
          2
             0
                 0 47
                        0
                           0
                               0.04081633
                               0.26315789
       7
          3
             0
                 0
                    1 42
   0
                           4
                               0.18000000
       0
              0
                 2
                          41
   1
          4
                    0
                        2
```



What are the best and worst ranked classes? What classes are confused with each other? What are the most important variables in the general model? Which are the most important for each category? Are there differences between the importance derived from "mean decrease in accuracy" and "mean decrease in Gini"?

13. Get ready the satellite image to apply the model. Open the multiband tiff image "multiestacional.tif" and rename the bands:

14. The last step of the automatic classification would be to apply the trained model to the "multi-seasonal" satellite image. To do this, we must convert the image into a dataframe first, since the models obtained by the mlr library can only be applied to dataframe. Then we will have to convert the prediction into a raster image.

```
#applying the model to predict the map
new_data=as.data.frame(as.matrix(multiseasonal))
pred.rf<-predict(model.rf, newdata=new_data)
mapa.rf = multiseasonal[[1]]
mapa.rf[] = pred.rf$data$response
mapa.rf</pre>
```

15. Don't forget to save the model and the map.

Try to perform a classification with the classification algorithms: classification trees (rpart package), artificial neural networks and Support vector machines consulting the web about the different classifiers of the mlr package. Compare the accuracy of the models and maps obtained.

For the optimization of the hyperparameters you can follow the following reference:



Rodriguez-Galiano, V.F. and M. Chica-Rivas, Evaluation of different machine learning methods for land cover mapping of a Mediterranean area using multi-seasonal Landsat images and Digital Terrain Models. International Journal of Digital Earth, 2014. 7(6): p. 492-509