lago Mosqueira

Introduction to R (and computing)

May 27, 2013

Why programming?

"Can one be a good data analyst without being a half-good programmer? The short an- swer to that is, 'No'. The long answer to that is, 'No!'."

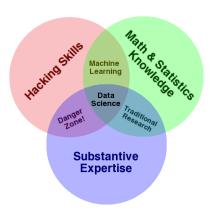
- Frank Harrell, 1999 S-PLUS User Conference, New Orleans (October 1999)

But this should be easy

"Managing fisheries is hard: it's like managing a forest, in which the trees are invisible and keep moving around"

Professor John Shepherd

Data analyst

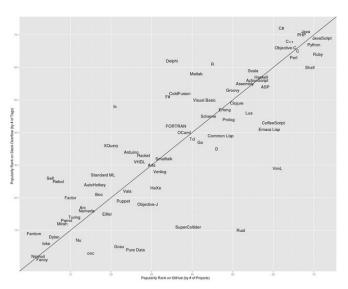


What is R



- Data analysis and statistics environment
- Interpreted computer language
- Open-source software project
- Active community of developers and practicioners
- Current version: 2.15.1, 2012-06-22, Roasted Marshmallows

Why R?



POLICYFORUM

COMPUTATIONAL SCIENCE

Troubling Trends in Scientific Software Use

Lucas N. Joppa, 1* Greg McInerny, 12 Richard Harper, 1 Lara Salido, 3 Kenji Takeda, 1 Kenton O'Hara, 1 David Gavaghan, 2 Stephen Emmott1

oftware pervades every domain of science (1-3), perhaps nowhere more decisively than in modeling. In key scientific areas of great societal importance, models and the software that implement them define both how science is done and what science is done (4, 5). Across all science. this dependence has led to concerns around the need for open access to software (6, 7), centered on the reproducibility of research (1, 8-10). From fields such as high-performance computing, we learn key insights and best practices for how to develop, standardize, and implement software (11). Open and systematic approaches to the development of software are essential for all sciences. But for many scientists this is not sufficient We across all disciplines that are dependent upon a computational approach.

Surveying Species Distribution Modelers

We surveyed scientists across a single domain. species distribution modeling (SDM) (15) [see supplementary materials for details]. This strategic targeting separates our analysis from previous efforts in important ways, allowing an analysis spanning computational skill sets, while addressing the interplay between models and computation. Our ~400 respondents ranged from those who "find it difficult to use software" to those "very experienced and very technical." Asking people to first identify with a scientific domain and addressing models and software through that "Blind trust" is dangerous when choosing software to support research.

used "click-and-run" software with easyto-manipulate user interfaces and dropped to 11% for those who used "syntax-driven" platforms. Further, 7, 9, and 18% of scientists cited "the developer is well-respected," "personal recommendation," and "recommendation from a close colleague," respectively, as reasons for using software. Only 8% claimed they had validated software against other methods as a primary reason for choice; 79% expressed a desire to learn additional software and programming skills.

Many of these scientists rely on the fact that the software has appeared in a peerreviewed article, recommendations, and personal opinion, as their reason for adopting software. This is scientifically misplaced, as the software code used to conduct the science

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"GPL" redirects here. For other uses, see GPL (disambiguation).

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The GPL is the first copyleft license for general use, which means that derived works can only be distributed under the same license terms. Under this philosophy, the GPL grants the recipients of a computer program the rights of the free software definition and uses copyleft to ensure the freedoms are preserved, even when the work is changed or added to. This is in distinction to permissive free software licenses, of which the BSD licenses are the standard examples.

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GNU General Public License



Author Free Software Foundation

Version 3

Publisher Free Software

Publisher F

Foundation, Inc.

Published 29 June 2007

DFSG compatible

Yes^[1]

FSF approved
OSI approved
Copyleft

ved Yes^[2]
ved Yes^[3]
Yes^{[2][4]}

Linking from code with a different

h a GNU AGPLv3 with GNU GPLv3 - see section)

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CRAN - Packa.

Available Packages

Currently, the CRAN package repository features 4555 available packages.

Table of available packages, sorted by date of publication

Table of available packages, sorted by name

Installation of Packages

Please type help("INSTALL") or help("install.packages") in R for information on how to install packages from this repository. The manual R Installation and Administration [PDF] (also contained in the R base sources) explains the process in detail.

<u>CRAN Task Views</u> allow you to browse packages by topic and provide tools to automatically install all packages for special areas of interest. Currently, 31 views are available.

Package Check Results

All packages are tested regularly on machines running <u>Debian GNU/Linux</u>, <u>Fedora</u> and Solaris. Packages are also checked under Mac OS X and Windows, but typically only on the day the package appears on CRAN.

The results are summarized in the <u>check summary</u> (some <u>timings</u> are also available). Additional details for Windows checking and building can be found in the <u>Windows check summary</u>.

Writing Your Own Packages

The manual Writing R Extensions [PDF] (also contained in the R base sources) explains how to write new packages and how to contribute them to CRAN.

Repository Policies

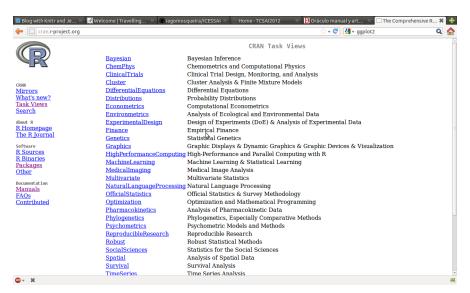
The manual CRAN Repository Policy [PDF] describes the policies in place for the CRAN package repository.

Related Directories
cran.r-project.org/bin/windows/contrib/checkSummaryWin.html

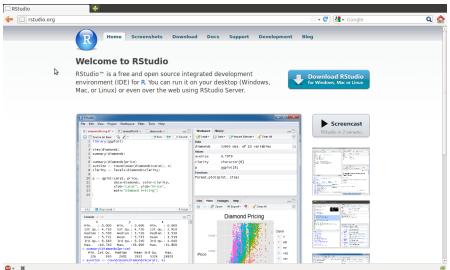
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Task views



RStudio



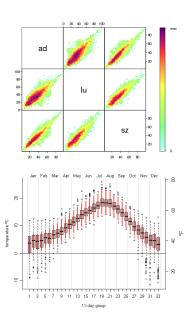
Basic features

- Numerous procedures (algebra, matrix, stats)
- Named storage (everything is an object)
- Functions
- Classes and methods (S3, S4)
- Special values (NA, NaN, Inf, NULL)
- Logical objects and boolean algebra
- basic_features .R

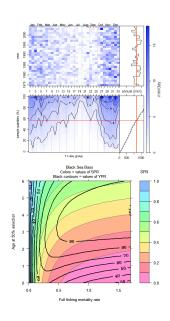
What else can it do?

- Data handling and storage
- Matrix algebra
- Regular expressions
- Statistics!
- OOP
- Programming
- Graphics

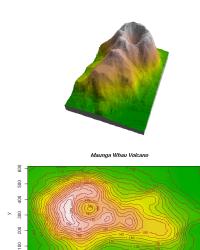
Eye candy



Eye candy



Eye candy



x col=terrain.colors(100) 700 800

200

What doesn't it do

- No DB, but connections (SQL, NoSQL, Spreadsheets)
- No GUI, but IDE & GUI toolsets CLI
- Slow, but C/C++, HPC
- No commerciasl support, but community
- Think for you

Help!



- Help for each function and data type
- ?mean
- ??mean
- ?help
- http://rseek.org
- stackoverflow, http://stackoverflow.com/questions/tagged/r
- Mailing lists

FLR

- Stock assessment and provision of management advice
 - Well tested, robust methods
 - Open to detailed inspection
- Data and model validation through simulation
- Risk analysis
- Capacity development & education
- Promote collaboration and openness in quantitative fisheries science
 - Open source
 - Community involvement
 - R as lingua franca
- Support the development of new models and methods
 - Extensible toolset
 - Links to other tools (ADMB, BUGS, ...)

flr-project.org



Tools of the trade

- Version Control Systems
 - CVS
 - SVN
 - git
- Editors & IDEs
- Literate Programming
 - Sweave
 - knitr
- Validation, Verification and Testing (VV&T)

Sexy data analysis



Setting up R & RStudio

- http://cran.r-project.org
- http://rstudio.org