

Green's Theorem for complex variables

We can state Green's Theorem for complex variables as

$$\oint f(z) dz = i \iint \frac{\partial f}{\partial x} + i \frac{\partial f}{\partial y} dx dy$$

As an example, consider the curve going around the square $[-1, -i] \times [1, i]$ and the function $f(z) = |z|^2$. So

$$\begin{aligned} f(z) &= |z|^2 = zz^* \\ &= (x + iy)(x - iy) \\ &= x^2 + y^2 \end{aligned}$$

Then

$$f_x = 2x, \quad f_y = 2y$$

and

$$I = \iint 2x + i2y dx dy$$

The inner integral is

$$\int_{-1}^1 2x + i2y dx = 2x^2 + i2xy \Big|_{-1}^1 = 4iy$$

The outer integral is

$$I = \int_{-1}^1 4iy dy = 2iy^2 \Big|_{-1}^1 = 0$$

$C_1 + C_3$

$$I = \int u \, dx - \int v \, dy + i \left[\int u \, dy + \int v \, dx \right]$$

Along C_1 , $dy = 0$ and so the line integral is

$$I = \int u \, dx + i \int v \, dx$$

The function is $u(x, y) = x^2 + y^2$, $v(x, y) = 0$ so

$$I = \int x^2 + y^2 \, dx$$

With $y = 1$ this is

$$\begin{aligned} I &= \int_1^{-1} x^2 + 1 \, dx = \frac{x^3}{3} + x \Big|_1^{-1} \\ &= \left(-\frac{1}{3} - 1\right) - \left(\frac{1}{3} + 1\right) = -\frac{8}{3} \end{aligned}$$

Along C_3 , with $y = -1$ (and $y^2 = 1$) this is

$$\begin{aligned} I &= \int_{-1}^1 x^2 + 1 \, dx = \frac{x^3}{3} + x \Big|_{-1}^1 \\ &= \left(\frac{1}{3} + 1\right) - \left(-\frac{1}{3} - 1\right) = \frac{8}{3} \end{aligned}$$

so these two line integrals cancel.

$C_2 + C_4$

$$I = \int u \, dx - \int v \, dy + i \left[\int u \, dy + \int v \, dx \right]$$

Along C_2 and C_4 , $dx = 0$ and so the line integral is

$$I = - \int v \, dy + i \int u \, dy$$

The function is $u(x, y) = x^2 + y^2$, $v(x, y) = 0$ so

$$I = i \int x^2 + y^2 \, dy$$

With $x = -1$ or on C_4 , $x = 1$, in either case $x^2 = 1$ so we have the same integral along opposite paths, (multiplied by i), so we have the same answer for the two together: 0.