Optimal Power Allocation for GSVD-Based Beamforming in the MIMO Gaussian Wiretap Channel

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Abstract—This paper considers a multiple-input multiple-output (MIMO) Gaussian wiretap channel model, where there exists a transmitter, a legitimate receiver and an eavesdropper, each equipped with multiple antennas. Perfect secrecy is achieved when the transmitter and the legitimate receiver can communicate at some positive rate, while ensuring that the eavesdropper gets zero bits of information. In this paper, the perfect secrecy rate of the multiple antenna MIMO wiretap channel is maximized for arbitrary numbers of antennas under the assumption that the transmitter performs beamforming based on the generalized singular value decomposition (GSVD). More precisely, the optimal allocation of power for the GSVD-based precoder that maximizes the achievable secrecy rate is derived. Numerical results are presented to illustrate that the achievable secrecy rate of the GSVD-based precoding approach is nearly identical to that of the optimal scheme.

Index Terms—MIMO Wiretap Channel, Secrecy Capacity, Physical Layer Security, Generalized Singular Value Decomposition

I. INTRODUCTION

The broadcast nature of a wireless medium makes it very susceptible to eavesdropping, where the transmitted message is decoded by unintended receiver(s). Recent information-theoretic research on secure communication has focused on enhancing security at the physical layer. The wiretap channel, first introduced and studied by Wyner [1], is the most basic physical layer model that captures the problem of communication security. Wyner showed that when an eavesdropper's channel is a degraded version of the main channel, the source and destination can achieve a positive secrecy rate, while ensuring that the eavesdropper gets zero bits of information. The maximum secrecy rate from the source to the destination is defined as the secrecy capacity. The Gaussian wiretap channel, in which the outputs at the legitimate receiver and at the eavesdropper are corrupted by additive white Gaussian noise (AWGN), was studied in [2].

Determining the secrecy capacity of a Gaussian wiretap channel is in general a difficult non-convex optimization problem, and has been addressed independently in [3]–[9]. Oggier and Hassibi [3] and Khisti and Wornell [4] followed an indirect approach using a Sato-like argument and matrix analysis tools. They considered the problem of finding the secrecy capacity of the Gaussian MIMO wiretap channel under the average total power constraint, and a closed-form expression for the secrecy

capacity in the high signal-to-noise-ratio (SNR) regime was obtained in [4]. In [5], the rank property of the optimal input covariance matrix for the secrecy rate maximization problem is discussed but the authors cannot characterize the solution for the general case. For some special cases of the MIMO wiretap channel, where the solution has rank one, the optimal input covariance matrix that achieves the secrecy capacity under the average total power constraint was obtained in [5]–[7].

In [8], Liu and Shamai propose a more information-theoretic approach using the enhancement concept, originally presented by Weingarten et al. [10], as a tool for the characterization of the MIMO Gaussian broadcast channel capacity. Liu and Shamai have shown that an enhanced degraded version of the channel attains the same secrecy capacity as does a Gaussian input distribution. From the mathematical solution in [8] it was evident that such an enhanced channel exists; however it was not clear how to construct such a channel until the work of [9], which provided a closed-form expression for the secrecy capacity under a *covariance matrix* power constraint. While this result is interesting since the expression for the secrecy capacity is valid for all SNR scenarios, there still exists no computable secrecy capacity expression for the MIMO Gaussian wiretap channel under an average total power constraint.

In this paper, we investigate the non-convex optimization of the secrecy rate for the general Gaussian multiple-input multiple-output (MIMO) wiretap channel under the average total power constraint, where the number of antennas is arbitrary for both the transmitter and the two receivers. We focus on the case where the transmitter uses beamforming (linear precoding) based on the generalized singular value decomposition (GSVD). In particular, we obtain the optimal power allocation that maximizes the achievable secrecy rate for the GSVD scheme. The resulting power allocation is significantly different in nature than the standard water-filling solution for achieving capacity in MIMO links without secrecy considerations. Compared with [4], our beamforming matrix is much simpler to compute, and the input covariance matrix that maximizes the achievable secrecy rate is completely characterized in terms of the beamforming and power allocation matrices. We note that the analysis in this paper characterizes the maximum achievable secrecy rate of the Gaussian MIMO wiretap channel with GSVD-based precoding for *any* SNR conditions, while [4] gives the *high* SNR secrecy capacity of a Gaussian MIMO wiretap channel.

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The rest of this paper is organized as follows. In the next section, we describe the assumed mathematical model. We then present the GSVD method and derive the optimal power allocation that maximizes the achievable secrecy rate in Section III. Finally, we demonstrate our results by means of several numerical examples in Section IV.

II. SYSTEM MODEL

Consider a multiple-antenna wiretap channel with n_t transmit antennas and n_r and n_e receive antennas at the legitimate recipient and the eavesdropper, respectively:

$$\mathbf{y}_r = \mathbf{H}_r \mathbf{x} + \mathbf{z}_r \quad (1)$$

$$\mathbf{y}_e = \mathbf{H}_e \mathbf{x} + \mathbf{z}_e \quad (2)$$

where $\mathbf{x}$ is a zero-mean $n_t \times 1$ transmitted signal vector, $\mathbf{z}_r \in \mathbb{C}^{n_r \times 1}$ and $\mathbf{z}_e \in \mathbb{C}^{n_e \times 1}$ are the additive white Gaussian noise (AWGN) vectors at the receiver and eavesdropper, respectively, with i.i.d. entries distributed as $\mathcal{CN}(0, 1)$. The matrices $\mathbf{H}_r \in \mathbb{C}^{n_r \times n_t}$ and $\mathbf{H}_e \in \mathbb{C}^{n_e \times n_t}$ represent the channels associated with the receiver and the eavesdropper, respectively. Similar to other papers considering the perfect secrecy rate of the wiretap channel, we assume that the transmitter has perfect channel state information (CSI) for both the legitimate receiver and the eavesdropper.

We assume that the channel input $\mathbf{x}$ satisfies the average power constraint P_t , i.e.,

$$\text{Tr}(E\{\mathbf{x}\mathbf{x}^H\}) \leq P_t \quad (3)$$

where $(\cdot)^H$ denotes the Hermitian (i.e., conjugate) transpose, E is the expectation operator, and $\text{Tr}(\cdot)$ is the matrix trace.

A matrix characterization of the secrecy capacity is given by [3]

$$C_{\text{sec}} = \max_{\mathbf{Q}_x \succeq 0, \text{Tr}(\mathbf{Q}_x) = P_t} [I(X; Y_r) - I(X; Y_e)] \quad (4)$$

where $\mathbf{Q}_x = E\{\mathbf{x}\mathbf{x}^H\}$ is the input covariance matrix.

III. OPTIMAL POWER ALLOCATION FOR THE GSVD-BASED MIMO GAUSSIAN WIRETAP CHANNEL

We consider the non-convex maximization problem in (4) for the case that the transmitter performs beamforming by applying the generalized singular value decomposition (GSVD) to the channel matrices $\mathbf{H}_r$ and $\mathbf{H}_e$. Application of the GSVD technique was first used by Khisti and Wornell (see e.g. [4]) who obtained a closed-form expression for the secrecy capacity in the high SNR regime. In this section, we first describe the GSVD beamforming method and next we derive the optimal power allocation matrix that maximizes the achievable secrecy rate for the GSVD-based beamforming under any SNR regime. We also describe some important advantages of this scheme over what is proposed in [4].

Definition 1 (GSVD Transform): Given two matrices $\mathbf{H}_r \in \mathbb{C}^{n_r \times n_t}$ and $\mathbf{H}_e \in \mathbb{C}^{n_e \times n_t}$, $\text{gsvd}(\mathbf{H}_r, \mathbf{H}_e)$ returns unitary matrices $\mathbf{\Psi}_r \in \mathbb{C}^{n_r \times n_r}$ and $\mathbf{\Psi}_e \in \mathbb{C}^{n_e \times n_e}$, non-negative

diagonal matrices $\mathbf{C}$ and $\mathbf{D}$, and a matrix $\mathbf{A} \in \mathbb{C}^{n_t \times q}$ with $q = \min(n_t, n_e + n_r)$, such that

$$\mathbf{H}_r \mathbf{A} = \mathbf{\Psi}_r \mathbf{C} \quad (5)$$

$$\mathbf{H}_e \mathbf{A} = \mathbf{\Psi}_e \mathbf{D} \quad (6)$$

The nonzero elements of $\mathbf{C}$ are in ascending order while the nonzero elements of $\mathbf{D}$ are in descending order. Moreover, $\mathbf{C}^T \mathbf{C} + \mathbf{D}^T \mathbf{D} = \mathbf{I}$.

Now, let the transmitted signal vector $\mathbf{x}$ be constructed as

$$\mathbf{x} = \mathbf{A} X_S, \quad X_S \sim \mathcal{CN}(\mathbf{0}, \mathbf{P}) \quad (7)$$

where $\mathbf{A}$ is obtained from $\text{gsvd}(\mathbf{H}_r, \mathbf{H}_e)$ as above, and each element of the vector X_S represents an independently encoded Gaussian codebook symbol that is beamformed with the corresponding column of the $\mathbf{A}$ matrix. $\mathbf{P}$ is a positive semi-definite diagonal matrix representing the power allocated by the transmitter to the data symbols. In the following, we derive an optimal source power allocation which achieves the maximum secrecy rate of the GSVD-based MIMO Gaussian wiretap channel. Substituting (7) into the channel model (1)-(2) and using (5)-(6) yields

$$\mathbf{y}_r = \mathbf{\Psi}_r \mathbf{C} X_S + \mathbf{z}_r \quad (8)$$

$$\mathbf{y}_e = \mathbf{\Psi}_e \mathbf{D} X_S + \mathbf{z}_e \quad (9)$$

Considering the above equations, the maximization problem in (4) for the GSVD-based beamforming is represented by

$$\begin{aligned} R_{\text{sec}} &= \max_{\mathbf{Q}_x} [I(X; Y_r) - I(X; Y_e)] = \\ &= \max_{\mathbf{P} \succeq \mathbf{0}, \text{diagonal}} \log |\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{\Psi}_r \mathbf{C} \mathbf{P} \mathbf{C}^T \mathbf{\Psi}_r^H| - \log |\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{\Psi}_e \mathbf{D} \mathbf{P} \mathbf{D}^T \mathbf{\Psi}_e^H| \\ &\text{subject to } \text{Tr}(\mathbf{A}^H \mathbf{A} \mathbf{P}) = P_t \end{aligned} \quad (10)$$

Theorem 1: Assuming that the transmitter applies the proposed beamforming matrix $\mathbf{A}$, the optimal power allocation matrix $\mathbf{P}^*$ that achieves the maximum secrecy rate in problem (10) is given by

$$p_i^* = \begin{cases} \max(0, \frac{-1 + \sqrt{1 - 4c_i d_i + 4(c_i - d_i)c_i d_i / (\mu a_i)}}{2c_i d_i}), & \text{if } c_i > d_i \\ 0, & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \quad (11)$$

where p_i^* , c_i , d_i and a_i are the i th diagonal elements of the matrices $\mathbf{P}^*$, $\mathbf{C}^T \mathbf{C}$, $\mathbf{D}^T \mathbf{D}$ and $\text{diag}(\mathbf{A}^H \mathbf{A})$, respectively. The Lagrange parameter $\mu > 0$ is chosen to satisfy the power constraint (3).

Proof: The optimization problem is non-convex. Our proof technique involves applying the Karush-Kuhn-Tucker (KKT) conditions (as necessary conditions), which help express the Lagrangian in the form of an integral. This specific structure of the problem is then exploited to obtain a closed-form solution for the optimal power allocation strategy. Details can be found in the Appendix.

Eqs. (5) and (6) show that applying the GSVD transform to $\mathbf{H}_r$ and $\mathbf{H}_e$ simultaneously diagonalizes them. Thus, the

GSVD transform creates a set of parallel independent subchannels between the sender and the receivers, and it suffices to use independent Gaussian codebooks across these subchannels. More precisely, as (11) indicates, it is optimal to use only those subchannels for which the output at the eavesdropper is a degraded version of the output at the destination node. These subchannels correspond to the condition $c_i > d_i$, or as shown in [4], generalized singular values of $gsvd(\mathbf{H}_r, \mathbf{H}_e)$ which are larger than 1. Clearly, if there are no such subchannels, the achievable secrecy rate using this transmission scheme would be zero [11].

It is interesting to note that the optimal power allocation (11) is different from the water-filling allocation that achieves capacity for fading channels without the secrecy constraint. Moreover, as we will observe in Section IV, (11) has an important role in achieving the secrecy capacity for the high SNRs regime. We have the following result.

Corollary 1: The maximum secrecy rate for the GSVD-based MIMO Gaussian wiretap channel is

$$R_{sec} = \log |\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{P}^* \mathbf{C}^T \mathbf{C}| - \log |\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{P}^* \mathbf{D}^T \mathbf{D}| \quad (12)$$

Proof: Follows directly from substituting (11) in to (10) and by considering the fact that Ψ_r and Ψ_e are unitary matrices.

It was shown in [4] that GSVD beamforming with uniform power allocation is sufficient to attain the secrecy capacity of a MIMO Gaussian wiretap channel in the high SNR regime. However, for the case where there is a non-trivial nullspace in the channel between the transmitter and eavesdropper, the optimal input covariance matrix that achieves the secrecy capacity is not fully characterized in [4]. When there is such a nullspace, [4] uses a complicated beamforming matrix to transmit two groups of information bearing symbols into two different subspaces. The associated beamforming matrices are obtained by performing an LQ decomposition on $\mathbf{A}$ as well as additional calculations which lead to Eq. (114) in [4]. The aforementioned subspaces are identified as follows [4, Eq. (2)]:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{S}_1 &= \text{Null}(\mathbf{H}_e) \cap \text{Null}(\mathbf{H}_r)^\perp \\ \mathcal{S}_2 &= \text{Null}(\mathbf{H}_e)^\perp \cap \text{Null}(\mathbf{H}_r)^\perp \end{aligned} \quad (13)$$

where $\text{Null}(\cdot)$ denotes the nullspace of its matrix argument, while $\perp$ denotes the orthogonal complement.

As indicated in [4], most of the transmission power is assumed to be allocated to the subspace $\mathcal{S}_1$ and only a small fraction for $\mathcal{S}_2$, and the available power is distributed uniformly over the dimensions of each of these two subspaces. The exact allocation of power between these two subspaces is not specified in [4], nor is the sensitivity of the secrecy capacity to the power allocation studied. In the next section, we show that the secrecy capacity of a MIMO Gaussian wiretap channel is in fact quite sensitive to how power is allocated between these two subspaces, which illustrates that using the proposed optimal power allocation is essential. We also compare via simulation the achievable secrecy rate of the proposed GSVD-based beamforming with the secrecy capacity, by considering some examples for which the secrecy capacity is known.

Fig. 1. Comparison of the achievable secrecy rate of GSVD-based beamforming and the secrecy capacity for $n_t = n_e = 2$, $n_r = 1$.

Fig. 2. Comparison of the achievable secrecy rate of GSVD-based beamforming and the secrecy capacity for $n_t = n_e = 3$, $n_r = 2$.

IV. NUMERICAL RESULTS

In this section, we present numerical results to illustrate our theoretical findings. In all of the following figures, the channel matrices $\mathbf{H}_r$ and $\mathbf{H}_e$ are assumed to be quasi-static flat Rayleigh fading and independent of each other, with i.i.d. entries distributed as $\mathcal{CN}(0, \sigma_r^2)$ and $\mathcal{CN}(0, \sigma_e^2)$, respectively. The background noise is modeled in the same way that we described in Section II. In each figure, the values of n_t , n_r and n_e , as well as σ_r^2 , σ_e^2 and P_t , will be depicted. All displayed results are calculated based on an average of at least 1000 independent channel realizations.

In the first two examples (Fig.1-2), we compare the maxi-

Fig. 3. Comparison of secrecy capacity for optimal power allocation with secrecy rate for uniform power allocation at high SNR, $\sigma_e^2 = \sigma_r^2$

Fig. 4. Comparison of secrecy capacity for optimal power allocation with secrecy rate for uniform power allocation at high SNR, $\sigma_e^2 > \sigma_r^2$

imum achievable secrecy rate for the GSVD-based beamforming, which is obtained by the optimal power allocation, with the secrecy capacity. This comparison is performed for various transmit powers, channel conditions and also different numbers of antennas for the transmitter and receivers. In each trial, the secrecy rate achieved by the GSVD solution is obtained by evaluating Eq. (12), while the secrecy capacity for the first example (Fig. 1), which is a MISOME wiretap channel, is obtained using [6, Eq. (11)], and the secrecy capacity for the second example (Fig. 2), which considers a general MIMO wiretap channel, is obtained using an exhaustive search [10, Lemma 1].

As Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 show, the performance of the proposed GSVD-based beamforming approach is essentially identical to that of the optimal solution (secrecy capacity), while not requiring an exhaustive search.

In the following two examples, we consider the case where the nullspace of the eavesdropper's channel is non-trivial. Figs. 3 and 4 investigate the allocation of power between subspaces $\mathcal{S}_1$ and $\mathcal{S}_2$ as defined in (13), for a case where $n_t = n_r = 5, n_e = 4$ and the transmit power is $P_t = 100$, or SNR=20 dB. The solid horizontal line illustrates the achievable secrecy rate of a Gaussian MIMO wiretap channel with GSVD-based beamforming and optimal power allocation (Eq. 12), while the dashed curve represents the secrecy rate achieved by uniform power allocation versus the fraction of power used in subspace $\mathcal{S}_2$. The latter secrecy rate is achieved by using analytical results presented in [4]. Note that, for this high SNR scenario, the peak of this curve is the secrecy capacity of the MIMO Gaussian wiretap channel [4]. Note also that, contrary to claims made in [4], the secrecy rate is quite sensitive to the fraction of power allocated to the two subspaces, and optimal performance requires a non-trivial allocation of power to $\mathcal{S}_2$

(over 20%). The advantage of the optimal GSVD-based power allocation approach is that this imprecise distribution of power to the two subspaces is eliminated.

V. CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, we have considered the problem of linear beamforming for a MIMO Gaussian wiretap channel. We proposed an optimal power allocation for GSVD-based beamforming that maximized the achievable secrecy rate. Our numerical results demonstrate that the optimal power allocation is necessary even for relatively high SNRs.

APPENDIX

We are interested in obtaining the power distribution that maximizes the achievable secrecy rate of the Gaussian MIMO wiretap channel in problem (10) for the GSVD-based beamforming scheme presented in Section III. This non-convex optimization problem is to be solved with the average power constraint

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Tr}(E\{\mathbf{x}\mathbf{x}^H\}) &= \text{Tr}(\mathbf{A}\mathbf{E}\{X_S X_S^H\}\mathbf{A}^H) \\ &= \text{Tr}(\mathbf{A}\mathbf{P}\mathbf{A}^H) = \text{Tr}(\mathbf{A}^H \mathbf{A}\mathbf{P}) \leq P_t \end{aligned} \quad (14)$$

By considering the fact that $\mathbf{\Psi}_r$ and $\mathbf{\Psi}_e$ are unitary matrices and $\det(\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{E}\mathbf{F}) = \det(\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{F}\mathbf{E})$, the Lagrangian function $\mathcal{L}$ associated with this problem is given by

$$\mathcal{L} = \log |\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{P}\mathbf{C}^T \mathbf{C}| - \log |\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{P}\mathbf{D}^T \mathbf{D}| - \mu \text{Tr}(\mathbf{A}^H \mathbf{A}\mathbf{P}) \quad (15)$$

where $\mu > 0$ is the Lagrange multiplier. Since $\mathbf{P}$, $\mathbf{C}^T \mathbf{C}$ and $\mathbf{D}^T \mathbf{D}$ are diagonal matrices, $\mathcal{L}$ can be written as

$$\mathcal{L} = \sum_i [\log(1 + p_i c_i) - \log(1 + p_i d_i)] - \mu \sum_i a_i p_i \quad (16)$$

where p_i , c_i , d_i and a_i are the i th diagonal elements of the matrices $\mathbf{P}$, $\mathbf{C}^T\mathbf{C}$, $\mathbf{D}^T\mathbf{D}$ and $\text{diag}(\mathbf{A}^H\mathbf{A})$, respectively. Clearly, p_i , c_i , d_i and a_i all are real non-negative numbers. Using a technique similar to that proposed in [11], the optimal p_i^* must maximize

$$\mathcal{L}_i = \log(1 + p_i c_i) - \log(1 + p_i d_i) - \mu a_i p_i = \int_0^{p_i} f_i(x) dx \quad (17)$$

where $f_i(x)$ is defined as

$$f_i(x) = \frac{1}{\ln 2} \left(\frac{c_i}{1 + x c_i} - \frac{d_i}{1 + x d_i} \right) - \mu a_i \quad (18)$$

To obtain the optimal p_i^* that maximizes $\mathcal{L}_i$ in (17), we consider two cases based on the relationship between c_i and d_i .

- 1) $c_i \leq d_i$: In this case, (18) is always non-positive, i.e., $f_i(x) \leq 0$. Hence, the maximum of $\mathcal{L}_i$ is achieved by $p_i^* = 0$.
- 2) $c_i > d_i$: In this case, since $f_i(x)$ is a decreasing function for $x \geq 0$, the optimal p_i^* that maximizes $\mathcal{L}_i$ depends on the value of the largest root of $f_i(x) = 0$. Let x_{Li} denote the largest root of $f_i(x) = 0$, i.e.,

$$x_{Li} = \frac{-1 + \sqrt{1 - 4c_i d_i + 4(c_i - d_i)c_i d_i / (\mu a_i)}}{2c_i d_i}$$

where we have used the fact that $\mathbf{C}^T\mathbf{C} + \mathbf{D}^T\mathbf{D} = \mathbf{I}$, or equivalently $c_i + d_i = 1$.¹ If x_{Li} is positive then the maximum of $\mathcal{L}_i$ is achieved by $p_i^* = x_{Li}$, otherwise $p_i^* = 0$.

Combining cases 1 and 2, we obtain the desired result as

$$p_i^* = \begin{cases} \max(0, \frac{-1 + \sqrt{1 - 4c_i d_i + 4(c_i - d_i)c_i d_i / (\mu a_i)}}{2c_i d_i}), & \text{if } c_i > d_i \\ 0, & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \quad (19)$$

Finally, the Lagrange parameter $\mu > 0$ is chosen to satisfy the power constraint (14).

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¹It is easy to verify that $\mu > 0$ guarantees $1 - 4c_i d_i + 4(c_i - d_i)c_i d_i / (\mu a_i) \geq 0$ for the case $c_i > d_i$. To do so, it is sufficient to prove that $1 - 4c_i d_i \geq 0$. We have:

$$c_i + d_i = 1 \rightarrow 1 - 4c_i d_i = 1 - 4(1 - d_i)d_i = 1 - 4d_i + 4d_i^2 = (1 - 2d_i)^2 \geq 0$$

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