

## THE $BP$ -COACTION FOR PROJECTIVE SPACES

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**1. Introduction.** The Brown-Peterson spectrum  $BP$  has been used recently to establish some new information about the stable homotopy groups of spheres [9; 11]. The best results have been achieved by using the associated homology theory  $BP_*(\ )$ , the Hopf algebra  $BP_*(BP)$ , and the Adams-Novikov spectral sequence

$$\text{Ext}_{BP_*BP}(BP_*, BP_*(X)) \Rightarrow \pi_*^s(X)_{(p)}.$$

A knowledge of the stable homotopy groups of stunted real projective spaces  $P_n = RP^\infty/RP^{n-1}$  is useful in studying the problem of immersing manifolds in Euclidean space [7]. One might hope that computing these groups via the  $BP$ -Adams-Novikov spectral sequence would provide insight which the classical Adams spectral sequence has missed (e.g. some elements have lower filtration).

As a first step in this program, we compute  $BP_*(P_n)$  and the coaction  $BP_*(P_n) \rightarrow BP_*(BP) \otimes_{BP_*} BP_*(P_n)$ . In order to state our main result, we recall [3; 8] that  $BP_* = BP_*(pt) = \pi_*(BP) = \mathbf{Z}_{(2)}[v_1, v_2, \dots]$  and  $BP_*(BP) \simeq BP_*[t_1, t_2, \dots]$ , where  $v_i$  and  $t_i$  both have degree  $2(2^i - 1)$ . We use only the Brown-Peterson spectrum associated to the prime 2 [3; 6].

**1.1 THEOREM.** i) For  $i \geq n$  there are elements  $\gamma_i \in BP_{2^{i+1}}(P_{2n+1})$  such that there is an isomorphism of  $\mathbf{Z}_{(2)}[v_2, v_3, \dots]$ -modules

$$BP_*(P_{2n+1}) \approx \mathbf{Z}_{(2)}[v_2, v_3, \dots](\gamma_n, \gamma_{n+1}, \dots) / (2^{i+1-n}\gamma_i).$$

ii) The coaction

$$\Psi : BP_*(P_{2n+1}) \rightarrow BP_*(BP) \otimes_{BP_*} BP_*(P_{2n+1})$$

is given by

$$\Psi(\gamma_i) = \sum_{j=1}^i (S^j)_{(i-j)} \otimes \gamma_j,$$

where

- a) if  $T$  is a graded expression (such as  $S^j$ ),  $T_{(k)}$  denotes the component of  $T$  of degree  $2k$ ,
- b)  $S^j$  is the  $j$ th power of  $S = 1 + S_1 + S_2 + \dots$ , where

$$S_k = \frac{1}{k+1} \left( \left( \sum_{\nu=0}^{\infty} N_\nu \right)_{(k)}^{-k-1} \right),$$

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c)  $N_\nu \in BP_{2\nu}(BP)$  is defined inductively by

$$\sum_{a,b} m_{ab} t^a x^{2a+b} = \sum_{f \geq 0} m_f \left( \sum_{\nu \geq 0} N_\nu x^{\nu+1} \right)^{2^f}$$

where  $x$  is an indeterminate, and

d)  $m_n \in \pi_{2(2^n-1)}(BP) \otimes Q$  is related to  $v_n$  by

$$v_n = 2m_n - \sum_{i=1}^{n-1} v_{n-i} 2^i m_i$$

Thus the first few nonzero groups of  $BP_*(P_{2n+1})$  are  $BP_{2n+1}(P_{2n+1}) = \mathbf{Z}_2$ ,  $BP_{2n+3}(P_{2n+1}) = \mathbf{Z}_4$ ,  $BP_{2n+5}(P_{2n+1}) = \mathbf{Z}_8$ , and  $BP_{2n+7}(P_{2n+1}) = \mathbf{Z}_{16} \oplus \mathbf{Z}_2$ , with  $v_2 \gamma_n$  generating the latter  $\mathbf{Z}_2$ -summand. The formula for the coaction is extremely complicated. The first few terms are

$$\begin{aligned} \Psi(\gamma_i) = & 1 \otimes \gamma_i - (i-1)t_1 \otimes \gamma_{i-1} + \left( (2(i-2) + \binom{i-2}{2}) t_1^2 \right. \\ & + (i-2)v_1 t_1 \left. \right) \otimes \gamma_{i-2} - \left( \binom{i-3}{3} t_1^3 \right. \\ & \left. + (i-3)((2i-3)t_1^3 + (i+1)v_1 t_1^2 + v_1^2 t_1 + t_2) \right) \otimes \gamma_{i-3} + \dots \end{aligned}$$

In Section 3 we use this coaction (in  $P_{n-4}^n$ ) to prove that if  $S^n$  has 4 independent vector fields, then  $n \equiv 7(8)$ . This is of course a very elementary result which was known long before Adams' solution of the vector field problem [2]. However it illustrates with a minimum of computation the application of coalgebraic methods (and particularly  $BP_*$ ) to geometric questions. The author has proved by similar methods the known result that if  $S^n$  has 10 independent vector fields, then  $n \equiv 31(32)$ , but the calculations involved are extraordinarily tedious.

Theorem 1.1 is not quite complete in that it does not give the action of  $v_1 \in BP_*$  on our generators of  $BP_*(P_{2n+1})$ . (In order to use the coaction formula we must know the structure of  $BP_*(P_{2n+1})$  as a  $BP_*$ -module.) Some partial information, sufficient for our application to vector fields, is given in Theorem 2.5. We conjecture that

$$v_1 \gamma_i = -2\gamma_{i+1} - \sum_{j=2}^{\lfloor \log_2(i-n+2) \rfloor} v_j \gamma_{i+2-2^j} \gamma_{i+2-2^j}.$$

Theorem 1.1 (i) is a straightforward Adams spectral sequence computation, while Theorem 1.1 (ii) follows from Adams' formula [3] for the  $MU$ -coaction in  $CP^\infty$  using the Spanier-Whitehead dual of the canonical map  $RP^\infty \rightarrow CP^\infty$ . Thus the methods are not new, and indeed the result may be known to a few specialists. The thrust of the paper is to stimulate applications of  $BP$  in new directions. The author wishes to thank Haynes Miller and Steve Wilson for introducing him to  $BP$  and answering a few questions. After this paper had

been written, the author was told that  $BP_*(P_1)$  was computed in Ming's thesis [10].

**2. Proof of Theorem 1.1.** In this section we prove the analogues of Theorem 1.1 for  $P_{2n+1}^{2m} = RP^{2m}/RP^{2n}$  and  $P_{2n+1}^{2m+1}$ . Theorem 1.1 is obtained by letting  $m = \infty$  in  $P_{2n+1}^{2m}$ .

Brown and Peterson [6] showed that

$$H^*(BP; \mathbf{Z}_2) \approx \mathcal{A}/(\text{Sq}^1) = \mathcal{A}/I = \mathcal{A}/E.$$

Here  $(\text{Sq}^1)$  denotes the 2-sided ideal generated by  $\text{Sq}^1$ ,  $I$  denotes the left ideal generated by Milnor basis elements  $\mathcal{P}_1^0, \mathcal{P}_2^0, \dots$ , and  $E$  the primitively generated exterior subHopf algebra of  $\mathcal{A}$  generated by  $\mathcal{P}_1^0, \mathcal{P}_2^0, \dots$ . Thus by the change-of-rings theorem, for any space  $X$ ,  $\text{Ext}_{\mathcal{A}}(X \wedge BP) \approx \text{Ext}_E(X)$ . Here and throughout the paper we abbreviate  $\text{Ext}_A(H^*(X; \mathbf{Z}_2), \mathbf{Z}_2)$  to  $\text{Ext}_A(X)$ , where  $A = E$  or  $\mathcal{A}$ . In particular

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Ext}_{\mathcal{A}}(BP) \approx \text{Ext}_E(\mathbf{Z}_2, \mathbf{Z}_2) \approx \mathbf{Z}_2[x_0, x_1, x_2, \dots], \\ \text{where } x_i \in \text{Ext}_{E^{1,2^{i+1}-1}}(\mathbf{Z}_2, \mathbf{Z}_2). \end{aligned}$$

**2.1 PROPOSITION.** *In  $H^*(RP^\infty; \mathbf{Z}_2) \approx \mathbf{Z}_2[\alpha]$ ,  $\mathcal{P}_i^0(\alpha^j) = j \alpha^{j+2^i-1}$ .*

*Proof.* Write  $\mathcal{P}_i^0 = \sum_I a_I \text{Sq}^I$ , where  $\text{Sq}^I$  are admissible (Adem) monomials of degree  $2^i - 1$  and  $a_I \in \mathbf{Z}_2$ . Applying  $\xi_i$  shows  $a_{(2^{i-1}, 2^{i-2}, \dots, 2, 1)} = 1$ . But  $\text{Sq}^{2^{i-1}} \dots \text{Sq}^2 \text{Sq}^1$  is the only admissible monomial of degree  $2^i - 1$  which can be nonzero on a 1-dimensional class. Therefore,  $\mathcal{P}_i^0 \alpha = \alpha^{2^i}$ .

Assume the Proposition proved for  $j - 1$ . Since  $\mathcal{P}_i^0$  is primitive

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{P}_i^0(\alpha^j) &= \mathcal{P}_i^0(\alpha^{j-1}) \cup \alpha + \alpha^{j-1} \cup \mathcal{P}_i^0(\alpha) \\ &= (j - 1)\alpha^{j+2^i-1} + \alpha^{j+2^i-1} = j \alpha^{j+2^i-1}. \end{aligned}$$

**2.2 LEMMA.** *Suppose  $B$  is a subalgebra of  $A$  such that  $A$  is a free  $B$ -module on generators of degree 0 and  $d$ . Suppose  $M$  is a bounded-below  $A$ -module such that  $\text{Ext}_B^{s,t}(M, \mathbf{Z}_2) = 0$  whenever  $t - s$  is odd. Then there is an isomorphism of  $\mathbf{Z}_2[x]$ -modules*

$$\text{Ext}_A^{*,*}(M, \mathbf{Z}_2) \approx \mathbf{Z}_2[x] \otimes \text{Ext}_B^{*,*}(M, \mathbf{Z}_2), \text{ where } x \in \text{Ext}_A^{1,d}(\mathbf{Z}_2, \mathbf{Z}_2).$$

*Proof.* We use the exact sequence of [4, 3.2]:

$$\begin{aligned} \rightarrow \text{Ext}_A^{s-1, t-d}(M, \mathbf{Z}_2) \xrightarrow{x} \text{Ext}_A^{s,t}(M, \mathbf{Z}_2) \rightarrow \text{Ext}_B^{s,t}(M, \mathbf{Z}_2) \\ \rightarrow \text{Ext}_A^{s, t-d}(M, \mathbf{Z}_2). \end{aligned}$$

We first note that  $\text{Ext}_A^{s,t}(M, \mathbf{Z}_2) = 0$  when  $t - s$  is odd, for the first such nonzero element would have to induce an element in  $\text{Ext}_B^{s,t}(M, \mathbf{Z}_2)$ , where none exists. Thus the exact sequence above is in fact short exact. This implies that  $\text{Ext}_A^{s,t}(M, \mathbf{Z}_2)$  contains a subset  $S$  which maps isomorphically onto

$\text{Ext}_B^{s,t}(M, \mathbf{Z}_2)$ , and

$$S \oplus xS \oplus x^2S \oplus \dots \subset \text{Ext}_A^{s,t}(M, \mathbf{Z}_2).$$

To show the inclusion is actually equality, consider the smallest degree element not in the sum and use the exact sequence to find one of smaller degree.

2.3 COROLLARY.  $\text{Ext}_E^{*,*}(P_{2n+1}^{2m})$  is a free  $\mathbf{Z}_2[x_1, x_2, \dots]$ -module on generators  $g_n, g_{n+1}, \dots, g_{m-1}$ , where  $g_i \in \text{Ext}_E^{0,2^i+1}(P_{2n+1}^{2m})$ .

*Proof.*  $E$  may be constructed by adding one generator  $\mathcal{P}_i^0$  at a time, and Lemma 2.2 may be applied. The induction is begun by noting that if  $\mathcal{A}_0$  is the subalgebra of  $\mathcal{A}$  generated by  $\mathcal{P}_1^0$ , then

$$\text{Ext}_{\mathcal{A}_0}^{s,t}(P_{2n+1}^{2m}) = \begin{cases} \mathbf{Z}_2 & s = 0, t = 2i + 1, n \leq i < m \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

2.4 THEOREM. As a module over  $\text{Ext}_E^{*,*}(\mathbf{Z}_2, \mathbf{Z}_2)$ ,  $\text{Ext}_E^{*,*}(P_{2n+1}^{2m})$  is generated by the elements  $g_i$  of 2.3 with the only relations being consequences of

$$R_i : 0 = \sum_{\nu=0}^{\lfloor \log_2(t-n+1) \rfloor} x_\nu g_{t-2^\nu+1}, \quad n \leq i < m.$$

*Proof.* That  $R_i$  is a relation follows readily from the cobar resolution [1]. To see this, let  $H_* = H_*(P_{2n+1}^{2m})$  and let  $E_*$  denote the dual of  $E$ .  $E_*$  is a primitively generated exterior algebra on classes  $\xi_i$  of degree  $2^i - 1$ . Let  $\bar{E}_* = E_*/E_0$ .  $\text{Ext}_E^{1,*}(P_{2n+1}^{2m})$  is  $\ker d_2/\text{im } d_1$  in

$$H_* \xrightarrow{d_1} \bar{E}_* \otimes H_* \xrightarrow{d_2} \bar{E}_* \otimes \bar{E}_* \otimes H_*$$

where

$$d_1(\hat{\alpha}_{2^i-1}) = 0, \quad d_1(\hat{\alpha}_{2^i}) = \sum_{\nu=1}^{\lfloor \log_2(2i-2n) \rfloor} \xi_\nu \otimes \hat{\alpha}_{2^i-2^\nu+1},$$

$$\text{and } d_2(\xi_i \otimes \hat{\alpha}_j) = \xi_i \otimes d_1 \hat{\alpha}_j.$$

Then  $x_{\nu-1} g_{i-2^{\nu-1}+1}$  corresponds to  $\xi_\nu \otimes \hat{\alpha}_{2^i-2^\nu+3}$ , so that the relation  $R_i$  is due to  $d_1(\hat{\alpha}_{2^i+2})$ .

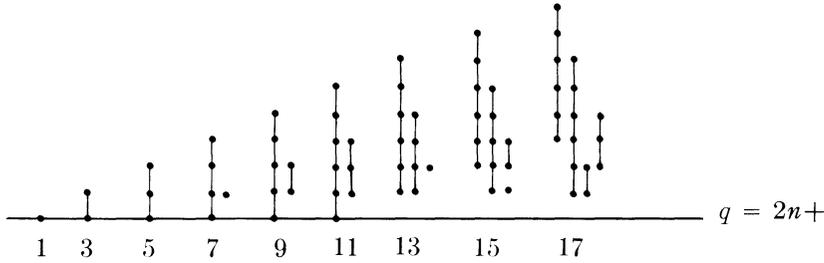
That these are the only relations follows by induction from the exact sequence

$$\begin{aligned} \longrightarrow \text{Ext}_{E_i}^{s-1, t-2^i+1}(P_{2n+1}^{2m}) &\xrightarrow{X_{i-1}} \text{Ext}_{E_i}^{s,t}(P_{2n+1}^{2m}) \\ &\longrightarrow \text{Ext}_{E_{i-1}}^{s,t}(P_{2n+1}^{2m}) \longrightarrow \end{aligned}$$

where  $E_i$  is the exterior algebra generated by  $\mathcal{P}_1^0, \dots, \mathcal{P}_i^0$ .

Since  $\text{Ext}_{\mathcal{A}}^{s,t}(P_{2n+1}^{2m} \wedge BP) = 0$  for  $t - s$  odd, there can be no nonzero differentials in the Adams spectral sequence converging to  $\pi_*^s(P_{2n+1}^{2m} \wedge BP) \simeq BP_*(P_{2n+1}^{2m})$ . For example, the Adams spectral sequence chart, (see e.g. [7])

for  $\pi_q(P_{2n+1}^{2n+12} \wedge BP)$  begins



Here vertical lines indicate multiplication by  $x_0$  in  $\text{Ext}(\ )$  which corresponds (up to elements of higher filtration) to multiplication by 2 in  $\pi_*(\ )$ .

**2.5 THEOREM.** *Suppose  $\{\gamma_i \in BP_{2i+1}(P_{2n+1}^{2m}) : n \leq i < m\}$  is any collection of filtration zero generators. Then as a graded abelian group  $BP_*(P_{2n+1}^{2m})$  has generators  $v_2^{i_2} \dots v_r^{i_r} \gamma_i$  and  $v_1^{i_1} v_2^{i_2} \dots v_r^{i_r} \gamma_{m-1}$  of degree  $2i + 1 + \sum_{v=1}^r 2i_v(2^v - 1)$  and filtration  $\sum_{v=1}^r i_v$ , truncated by  $2^{i+1-n} v_1^{i_1} \dots v_r^{i_r} \gamma_i = 0$ , for all  $n \leq i < m$ ,  $i_v \geq 0$ ,  $r \geq 0$ . Moreover, for  $n \leq i < m$ ,  $\sum_{v=0}^{\lfloor \log_2(i-n+1) \rfloor} v_r \gamma_{i-2^v+1}$  has filtration  $\geq 2$ .*

*Remark.* We shall soon give a specific set of generators  $\gamma_i$ . The last part of the theorem gives a partial description of the action of  $v_1$  on the  $\gamma_i$ . Theorem 1.1 (i) follows from this theorem by letting  $m$  become infinite.

*Proof.* The generators  $v_i \in \pi_{2(2^i-1)}(BP)$  must have filtration 1 and must be represented in  $\text{Ext}_E(\mathbf{Z}_2, \mathbf{Z}_2)$  by  $x_i$ . Similarly  $\gamma_i$  must be represented in  $\text{Ext}(P_{2n+1}^{2m} \wedge BP)$  by  $g_i$ . The relation  $x_0^{i+1-n} g_i = 0$  in  $\text{Ext}_E(P_{2n+1}^{2m})$  is established by induction on  $i$  using the relation  $R_i$ . Since there are no elements of filtration greater than that of  $x_0^{i+1-n} g_i$ , this implies  $2^{i+1-n} \gamma_i = 0$ . The final statement of the theorem follows from the Ext relation  $R_i$ .

**2.6 PROPOSITION.**  $BP_*(P_{2n+1}^{2m+1}) \approx BP_*(P_{2n+1}^{2m}) \oplus BP_*(S^{2m+1})$   
 $BP_*(P_{2n}^{2m}) \approx BP_*(P_{2n+1}^{2m}) \oplus BP_*(S^{2n})$ .

*Proof.* This follows easily from the exact  $BP$ -homology sequences of the relevant cofibrations.

In fact, the splitting of homotopy groups comes from a splitting of spaces.

**2.7 PROPOSITION.**  $P_{2n+1}^{2m+1} \wedge BP \simeq P_{2n+1}^{2m} \wedge BP \vee S^{2m+1} \wedge BP$   
 $P_{2n}^{2m} \wedge BP \simeq P_{2n+1}^{2m} \wedge BP \vee S^1 \wedge BP$ .

*Proof.* To prove the first we let

$$S^{2m+1} \xrightarrow{f} P_{2n+1}^{2m+1} \wedge BP$$

be a map such that the homotopy class of

$$S^{2m+1} \xrightarrow{f} P_{2n+1}^{2m+1} \wedge BP \xrightarrow{k} S^{2m+1} \wedge BP$$

is a generator. Then

$$S^{2m+1} \wedge BP \xrightarrow{f \wedge BP} P_{2n+1}^{2m+1} \wedge BP \wedge BP \xrightarrow{P \wedge \mu} P_{2n+1}^{2m+1} \wedge BP \xrightarrow{k} S^{2m+1} \wedge B$$

induces an isomorphism of  $\mathbf{Z}_2$ -cohomology groups and hence of homotopy groups. Thus so does

$$P_{2n+1}^{2m} \wedge BP \vee S^{2m+1} \wedge BP \xrightarrow{(i \wedge BP) \vee ((P \wedge \mu)(f \wedge BP))} P_{2n+1}^{2m+1} \wedge BP$$

Thus it is a homotopy equivalence by J. H. C. Whitehead's theorem.

For the second, we note that by G. W. Whitehead's duality theorem [13]

$$[P_{2n+1}^{2m}, S^{2n+1} \wedge BP] \approx \pi_{2L-2n-2}(P_{2L-2m-1}^{2L-2n-2} \wedge BP) = 0.$$

Thus the cofibration sequence

$$P_{2n}^{2m} \wedge BP \xrightarrow{i} P_{2n+1}^{2m} \wedge BP \rightarrow S^{2n+1} \wedge BP$$

implies that there is a map

$$P_{2n+1}^{2m} \xrightarrow{f} P_{2n}^{2m} \wedge BP$$

such that  $if = 1 \wedge \iota$ . As before,

$$P_{2n+1}^{2m} \wedge BP \vee S^{2n} \wedge BP \xrightarrow{(1 \wedge \mu)(f \wedge BP) \vee (i \wedge BP)} P_{2n}^{2m} \wedge BP$$

is a homotopy equivalence. This completes the proof.

Adams [3, Lemma 2.14] has defined generators  $\beta_i \in BP_{2i}(CP^\infty)$ . We use these to define  $\gamma_i \in BP_{2i+1}(RP)$ . There are canonical maps

$$RP_m^n \xrightarrow{h_m^n} CP_{[(m+1)/2]}^{[n/2]}$$

which are compatible with respect to inclusions and collapsings. The Spanier-Whitehead  $(2^L - 1)$ -dual [12; 5] is a map

$$\Sigma CP_{2^L-1-1-[n/2]}^{2^L-1-1-[(m+1)/2]} \xrightarrow{D(h_m^n)} RP_{2^L-1-n}^{2^L-1-m}$$

which induces an epimorphism in  $\mathbf{Z}_2$ -cohomology. Reindexing, we have maps

$$g_{2n-1}^{2m+\epsilon} : \Sigma CP_{n-1}^m \rightarrow RP_{2n-1}^{2m+\epsilon}, \quad \epsilon = 0 \text{ or } 1,$$

compatible with respect to inclusions and collapsings, and inducing epimorphisms in  $\mathbf{Z}_2$ -cohomology. Consideration of the induced homomorphism in  $\text{Ext}_E(\ )$  shows that

$$BP_*(\Sigma CP_{n-1}^m) \xrightarrow{g_{2n-1}^{2m+\epsilon}} BP_*(P_{2n-1}^{2m+\epsilon})$$

is surjective.

2.8 Definition.  $\gamma_i = g_{2n-1}^{2m+\epsilon} (s\beta_i) \in BP_{2i+1}(P_{2n-1}^{2m+\epsilon})$ .

Theorems 2.5 and 2.6 describe the structure of  $BP_*(P_{2n-1}^{2m+\epsilon})$  as a  $BP_*$ -module with respect to these generators. The coaction formula of Theorem 1.1(ii), valid either in finite- or infinite-dimensional real projective space, follows now from the analogous formula for the  $\beta_i$ .

Proof of Theorem 1.1(ii). The following diagram is commutative

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 MU_*(CP^\infty) & \xrightarrow{\Psi_1} & MU_*(MU) \otimes_{MU_*} MU_*(CP^\infty) \\
 \downarrow \pi' & & \downarrow \pi \otimes \pi' \\
 BP_*(CP^\infty) & \xrightarrow{\Psi} & BP_*(BP) \otimes_{BP_*} BP_*(CP^\infty)
 \end{array}$$

and  $\pi'(\beta_i^{MU}) = \beta_i$ . Thus

$$\gamma(\beta_i) = (\pi \otimes \pi')\Psi_1\beta_i^{MU} = \sum_{j=1}^i \pi \left( \sum_{k \geq 0} b_k \right)_{(i-j)}^j \otimes \beta_j$$

by [3; 11.4]. Thus  $S_k$  of Theorem 1.1(ii) is Adams'  $\pi b_k$ . Adams does not give an expression for the  $\pi b_k$ ; however, he does give an expression for  $\pi M_k$ , where

$$b_k = \frac{1}{k+1} \left( \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} M_i \right)_{(k)}^{-k-1} \quad [3, 7.5].$$

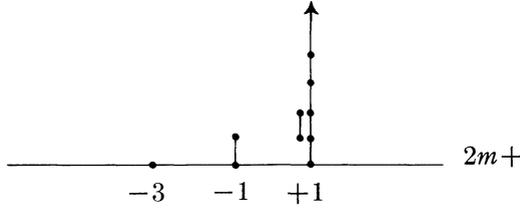
Letting  $N_k = \pi M_k$ , our 1.1(ii)(c) is Adams' 16.3. The relation 1.1(ii)(d) between  $v_i$  and  $m_i$  was proved in [8].

**3. Application to vector fields on spheres.** It is well-known [2] that if  $S^n$  has  $k$  independent vector fields, there is a map

$$S^n \xrightarrow{f} P_{n-k}^n$$

such that following it by the collapsing map yields (up to homotopy)  $1_{S^n}$ . Consideration of the induced map in  $H_*( ; Z)$  or  $BP_*( )$  shows  $n$  must be odd, say  $n = 2m + 1$ . Let  $X$  denote a generator of  $BP_n(S^n)$ . Then  $\Psi(X) = 1 \otimes X$ , for there are no elements in  $BP_*(S^n)$  of smaller degree. Thus  $\Psi(f_*X) = 1 \otimes f_*X$  and  $f_*X = \gamma_m +$  terms involving lower  $\gamma_i$ . This enables us to obtain restrictions on  $n$ , although the computations become extremely tedious for  $k \geq 10$ .

We illustrate by showing if  $S^n$  has 4 vector fields, then  $n \equiv 7(8)$ , by showing if there exists a degree 1 map  $S^{2m+1} \rightarrow P_{2m-3}^{2m+1}$ , then  $m \equiv 3(4)$ . Of course, this is easily established using the Steenrod operations  $Sq^2$  and  $Sq^4$ , but this proof illustrates our method with a minimum of computation.  $BP_*(P_{2m-3}^{2m+1})$  begins



(i.e. its first generators are  $\gamma_{m-2}, \gamma_{m-1}, v_1\gamma_{m-1}$ , and  $\gamma_m$ , of order 2, 4, 4, and  $\infty$ ). We show that if

$$(3.1) \quad \Psi(\gamma_m + Nv_1\gamma_{m-1}) = 1 \otimes (\gamma_m + Nv_1\gamma_{m-1})$$

then  $m \equiv 3(4)$ .

The left-hand-side of (3.1) is evaluated by 1.1(ii). In evaluating the right-hand-side, we note that there is a homomorphism  $\eta_R : BP_* \rightarrow BP_*(BP)$  such that in  $BP_*(BP) \otimes_{BP_*} BP_*(X)$ ,  $t \otimes v \cdot \gamma = \eta_R(v) \cdot t \otimes \gamma$  (see [3, Proof of 16.1 (v)]).  $\eta_R$  is defined by

$$\eta_R(m_k) = \sum_{i=0}^k m_i t_{k-i}^{2^i} \quad [3, 16.1(i)].$$

The behavior of  $\eta_R$  on the  $v_i$  is then determined using 1.1(ii)(d). In particular

$$\eta_R(v_1) = v_1 + 2t_1, \quad \eta_R(v_2) = v_2 + 2t_2 - 5v_1t_1^2 - 3v_1^2t_1 - 4t_1^3.$$

Ignoring cancelling terms, (3.1) becomes

$$\begin{aligned} -(m-1)t_1 \otimes \gamma_{m-1} + \left( \binom{m-2}{2} t_1^2 + mv_1t_1 \right) \otimes \gamma_{m-2} \\ + Nv_1(- (m-2)t_1 \otimes \gamma_{m-2}) = N2t_1 \otimes \gamma_{m-1}. \end{aligned}$$

By Theorem 2.5  $2\gamma_{m-1} = -v_1\gamma_{m-2}$ , for there are no terms of higher filtration. Thus the right-hand-side becomes

$$-Nt_1 \otimes v_1\gamma_{m-2} = -N(v_1 + 2t_1)t_1 \otimes \gamma_{m-2} = -Nv_1t_1 \otimes \gamma_{m-2},$$

and the equation becomes

$$-(m-1)t_1 \otimes \gamma_{m-1} + \left( \binom{m-2}{2} t_1^2 + (m - N(m-3))v_1t_1 \right) \otimes \gamma_{m-2} = 0.$$

The only possible way to eliminate the first term is to have  $m = 2l + 1$ , so that the first term becomes

$$-lt_1 \otimes 2\gamma_{m-1} = lt_1 \otimes v_1\gamma_{m-2} = lv_1t_1 \otimes \gamma_{m-2},$$

and the equation becomes

$$\left( \binom{2l-1}{2} t_1^2 + (3l + 1 - N(2l - 2))v_1t_1 \right) \otimes \gamma_{m-2} = 0.$$

This implies that both coefficients must be even, i.e.  $l$  is odd, and hence  $m \equiv 3(4)$ .

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