

MultiObjectiveAlgorithms.jl: a Julia package for solving multi-objective optimization problems

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We present `MultiObjectiveAlgorithms.jl`, an open-source Julia library for solving multi-objective optimization problems written in JuMP. `MultiObjectiveAlgorithms.jl` implements a number of different solution algorithms, which all rely on an iterative scalarization of the problem from a multi-objective optimization problem to a sequence of single-objective subproblems. As part of this work, we extended JuMP to support vector-valued objective functions. Because it is based on JuMP, `MultiObjectiveAlgorithms.jl` can use a wide variety of commercial and open-source solvers to solve the single-objective subproblems, and it supports problem classes ranging from linear, to conic, semi-definite, and general nonlinear. `MultiObjectiveAlgorithms.jl` is available at <https://github.com/jump-dev/MultiObjectiveAlgorithms.jl> under a MPL-2 license.

Key words: optimization; multi-objective; Julia; JuMP

1. Introduction

This paper presents `MultiObjectiveAlgorithms.jl` (MOA.jl), an open-source Julia (Bezanson et al. 2017) library for solving multiple objective optimization models written in JuMP (Lubin et al. 2023). Multi-objective optimization programs are well-studied in the literature; see, for example, Ehrgott and Gandibleux (2000), Ehrgott (2005), Emmerich and Deutz (2018), Ehrgott et al. (2025) and the references therein. We formulate a multi-objective optimization problem as:

$$\begin{aligned} \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} \quad & f_0(\mathbf{x}) \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & f_i(\mathbf{x}) \in S_i, \quad i = 1, \dots, m, \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

where $f_0 : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^o$ where $o \geq 2$, $f_i : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^{p_i}$ where $p_i \geq 1$, and $S_i \subset \mathbb{R}^{p_i}$. The functions f and sets S abstract over the various classes of mathematical optimization problems, from mixed-integer linear to semi-definite programs. For more details on this standard form, see Legat et al. (2021).

1.1. Solutions

Let \mathcal{X} denote the set of all feasible solutions of Problem (1). Unlike a single-objective program, where an optimal solution is reported via a single vector for \mathbf{x} , for a multi-objective program the notion of *optimality* is replaced by the notion of *efficiency*. According to Ehrgott (2005), a feasible solution $\hat{\mathbf{x}} \in \mathcal{X}$ is an *efficient solution* if there is no other $\mathbf{x} \in \mathcal{X}$ such that $f_0(\mathbf{x}) \leq f_0(\hat{\mathbf{x}})$, where \leq is defined by $\mathbf{a}, \mathbf{b} \in \mathbb{R}^o$ such that $\mathbf{a} \leq \mathbf{b} \iff \mathbf{b} - \mathbf{a} \in \mathbb{R}_+^o$. If $\hat{\mathbf{x}}$ is efficient, $\mathbf{y} = f_0(\hat{\mathbf{x}})$ is called a *nondominated point*. A non-dominated point \mathbf{y} is *supported* if it corresponds to an optimal solution for a weighted sum of objectives where weights are strictly positive, otherwise it is *non-supported*. If $\mathbf{x}_1, \mathbf{x}_2 \in \mathcal{X}$ and $f_0(\mathbf{x}_1) \leq f_0(\mathbf{x}_2)$ we say \mathbf{x}_1 dominates \mathbf{x}_2 and $f_0(\mathbf{x}_1)$ dominates $f_0(\mathbf{x}_2)$.

The set of all efficient solutions $\hat{\mathbf{x}} \in \mathcal{X}$ is denoted \mathcal{X}_E and called *the efficient set*. The set of all nondominated points $\hat{\mathbf{y}} = f_0(\hat{\mathbf{x}})$, where $\hat{\mathbf{x}} \in \mathcal{X}_E$, is denoted \mathcal{Y}_N and called *the nondominated set*. Due to the existence of equivalent solutions, that is, solutions $\mathbf{x}_1, \mathbf{x}_2 \in \mathcal{X}_E$ such that $f_0(\mathbf{x}_1) = f_0(\mathbf{x}_2)$, the definition of \mathcal{X}_E is refined accordingly: the *maximum complete set* $\mathcal{X}_{\overline{E}}$ contains all solutions \mathbf{x} corresponding to all non-dominated points $\mathbf{y} = f_0(\mathbf{x})$ and may contain multiple \mathbf{x} for the same \mathbf{y} ; a *complete set* \mathcal{X}_E contains at least one \mathbf{x} for each non-dominated \mathbf{y} ; and a *minimum complete set* $\mathcal{X}_{\underline{E}}$ contains exactly one solution for each \mathbf{y} . Each of these sets may be infinite, for example, in the case of a multi-objective linear program in which the non-dominated set is piecewise linear. For this paper, we are concerned only with the *minimum complete set* $\mathcal{X}_{\underline{E}}$.

Some algorithms for solving Problem (1) may be further restricted to finding only a *representative set* of efficient solutions $\mathcal{X}_R \subseteq \mathcal{X}_{\underline{E}}$. An important particular case concerns algorithms returning only a *minimum supported set* of efficient solutions $\mathcal{X}_{SE} \subseteq \mathcal{X}_{\underline{E}}$, which is the subset of a *minimum complete set* such that all corresponding nondominated points are supported. The set of solutions returned by an algorithm also depends on the problem type. For example, some algorithms may return a minimum supported set of efficient solutions for continuous linear programs, but a representative set of efficient solutions for integer or nonlinear programs.

1.2. Solution algorithms

A large number of solution algorithms have been proposed for Problem (1). These algorithms can be divided into four groups along two axes according to the nature of solutions returned: algorithms computing *exact* or *approximated* solutions, and algorithms *with* or

without exploitation of preference information from the decision maker. `MOA.jl` implements *exact* algorithms *without* preference exploitation based on mathematical programming.

At a high level, the algorithms in `MOA.jl` solve a sequence of subproblems that are variations of the following scalar-objective problem:

$$\begin{aligned} \min_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} \quad & \mathbf{w}^\top f_0(\mathbf{x}) \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & f_i(\mathbf{x}) \in S_i, \quad i = 1, \dots, m \\ & f_0(\mathbf{x}) \leq \mathbf{u}, \end{aligned}$$

where $\mathbf{w} \in \mathbb{R}^o$ is a *weighted-sum* vector that combines the vector-valued objective into a scalar objective, and the vector $\mathbf{u} \in \mathbb{R}^o$ places an upper bound constraint on the objective values. By iteratively changing \mathbf{w} and \mathbf{u} , algorithms can find a minimum complete set. Some algorithms may add additional variables and constraints on \mathbf{x} .

`MOA.jl` is a meta-solver. In high-level Julia code it modifies the vectors \mathbf{w} and \mathbf{u} , and it uses third-party solvers to solve the resulting single-objective subproblems. Because `MOA.jl` is built on JuMP, it can use a wide variety of commercial and open-source solvers to solve the single-objective subproblems, and it supports problem classes ranging from linear, to conic, semi-definite, and general nonlinear. The solutions that `MOA.jl` returns, while subject to various theoretical guarantees, depend on the chosen algorithm and problem structure.

1.3. Contribution and outline

The main contribution of this paper is the Julia library `MultiObjectiveAlgorithms.jl`, which we abbreviate to `MOA.jl`. A novel feature of `MOA.jl` is its modular ability to add new solution algorithms. This makes it easy for researchers to develop new solution algorithms and compare them against the existing state of the art. To enable `MOA.jl`, we extended JuMP to support vector-valued objective functions. The ease to which users can now model, solve, and analyze multi-objective optimization problems is a significant contribution of our work.

The purpose of this paper is not to provide a mathematical description of the various algorithms that are implemented in `MOA.jl` because we have not developed any novel solution algorithms. Instead, our contribution is to make a variety of algorithms available in a high quality open-source library. We refer readers to the existing literature

(see Table 1) and, more practically, to our open-source code at <https://github.com/jump-dev/MultiObjectiveAlgorithms.jl>.

As a secondary contribution, we explain our design goals and provide a comparison to alternative software. Our hope is that our positive experiences developing MOA.jl provides motivation and inspiration for developers to add similar features in other algebraic modeling languages.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. In Section 2 we briefly introduce MOA.jl by way of a code example. In Section 3 we provide a comparison of MOA.jl to related work. Section 4 presents our design principles, before we conclude in Section 5.

2. Code example

As a didactic example of the usage of MOA.jl, we consider a knapsack problem with two linear objectives:

$$\begin{aligned} \max_{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n} \quad & C\mathbf{x} \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & \mathbf{w}^\top \mathbf{x} \leq b \\ & x_i \in \{0, 1\}, \quad i = 1, \dots, n, \end{aligned}$$

where C is a 2-by- n matrix of costs, \mathbf{w} is a vector of length n for the weight of each item, and b is the capacity of the knapsack. The code to implement this problem in JuMP is:

```

1  using JuMP, HiGHS
2  import MultiObjectiveAlgorithms as MOA
3  function solve_knapsack(C::Matrix, w::Vector, b::Float64, alg::MOA.AbstractAlgorithm)
4      @assert size(C) == (2, length(w))
5      model = Model(() -> MOA.Optimizer(HiGHS.Optimizer))
6      set_silent(model)
7      set_attribute(model, MOA.Algorithm(), alg)
8      @variable(model, x[1:length(w)], Bin)
9      @objective(model, Max, C * x)
10     @constraint(model, w' * x <= b)
11     optimize!(model)
12     assert_is_solved_and_feasible(model)
13     return [value.(x; result = i) => objective_value(model; result = i)
14             for i in 1:result_count(model)]
15 end

```

Lines 1 and 2 import the required Julia packages. Line 3 defines a Julia function with the relevant arguments (the corresponding `end` is at line 15). Line 4 performs a sanity check of the input data. Line 5 creates a new JuMP model, with `MOA.jl` as the optimizer. Because `MOA.Optimizer` is a meta-solver, it requires a mathematical programming solver as input. Here we use the HiGHS solver (Huangfu and Hall 2018), which is available as `HiGHS.Optimizer` in the `HiGHS.jl` Julia package. Line 6 turns off printing. Line 7 controls which algorithm `MOA.jl` uses to solve the problem. Section 2.1 provides a complete list, but examples are `MOA.EpsilonConstraint()` and `MOA.Dichotomy()`. Lines 8–12 define and solve the JuMP model using typical syntax. Note how the objective function on Line 9, `C * x`, is a vector. Lines 13–14 use JuMP’s support for returning multiple solutions to iterate over the number of results and return a vector of (\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y}) pairs corresponding to an efficient solution and its non-dominated point.

The `solve_knapsack` function can be called as follows:

```
julia> C, w, b = rand(1:20, 2, 10), rand(1:20, 10), 50.0

julia> solve_knapsack(C, w, b, MOA.EpsilonConstraint())
4-element Vector{Pair{Vector{Float64}, Vector{Float64}}}:
 [1.0, 0.0, 1.0, 1.0, 0.0, 0.0, 1.0, 1.0, 1.0, 0.0] => [58.0, 64.0]
 [1.0, 0.0, 0.0, 1.0, 1.0, 0.0, 1.0, 1.0, 1.0, 0.0] => [65.0, 59.0]
 [1.0, 0.0, 1.0, 1.0, 1.0, 0.0, 1.0, 0.0, 1.0, 0.0] => [69.0, 56.0]
 [1.0, 0.0, 0.0, 0.0, 1.0, 1.0, 1.0, 0.0, 1.0, 0.0] => [71.0, 42.0]

julia> solve_knapsack(C, w, b, MOA.Lexicographic())
2-element Vector{Pair{Vector{Float64}, Vector{Float64}}}:
 [1.0, 0.0, 1.0, 1.0, 0.0, 0.0, 1.0, 1.0, 1.0, 0.0] => [58.0, 64.0]
 [1.0, 0.0, 0.0, 0.0, 1.0, 1.0, 1.0, 0.0, 1.0, 0.0] => [71.0, 42.0]
```

Note how the size of the solution set is algorithm-dependent. Moreover, for all algorithms, the solution returned by `MOA.jl` is a finite set of points. Thus, no algorithm can return a complete set of efficient solutions if variables are continuous. The decision to return only a finite set of points is a significant trade-off that we make for practical reasons. For more detail on this decision, see Section 4.2.

2.1. Supported algorithms

Table 1 summarizes the algorithms supported by `MOA.jl`. There are currently ten algorithms implemented. Some algorithms, such as `Chalmet`, are specialized for a class of bi-objective problems. Others, such as `DominguezRios` support higher-dimensional MIP problems. The `Hierarchical` algorithm is identical to the algorithms implemented in solvers such as HiGHS (Huangfu and Hall 2018). We based our implementation on the description in Gurobi Optimization, LLC (2025). The `RandomWeighting` algorithm is a iterative sampling algorithm for finding a representative set. We include it in `MOA.jl` because it appears in GAMS (GAMS Software GmbH 2025).

Algorithm	Citation	Dimension	Lines	Solution
<code>Chalmet</code>	Chalmet et al. (1986)	$= 2$	108	Minimum complete set
<code>Dichotomy</code>	Aneja and Nair (1979)	$= 2$	101	Minimum supported set
<code>DominguezRios</code>	Dominguez-Rios et al. (2021)	≥ 2	198	Minimum complete set
<code>EpsilonConstraint</code>	Haimes et al. (1971)	$= 2$	107	Minimum complete set
<code>Hierarchical</code>	Gurobi Optimization, LLC (2025)	≥ 2	98	Singleton representative set
<code>KirlikSayin</code>	Kirlik and Sayin (2014)	≥ 2	149	Minimum complete set
<code>Lexicographic</code>		≥ 2	111	Representative set
<code>RandomWeighting</code>	GAMS Software GmbH (2025)	≥ 2	60	Representative set
<code>Sandwiching</code>	Koenen et al. (2023)	≥ 2	126	Minimum supported set
<code>TambyVanderpooten</code>	Tamby and Vanderpooten (2021)	≥ 2	195	Minimum complete set

Table 1 Summary of the algorithms supported by `MOA.jl`. Lines is the number of lines of Julia code required to implement each algorithm. The Solution columns assumes the problem is pure linear or pure integer; for other problem classes the set of solutions may be different.

Each algorithm is relatively simple to implement, requiring 100–200 lines of Julia code. One reason so few lines are required is that we rely heavily on JuMP to manage the complexity of interacting with the single-objective subproblems.

Aside from the supported problem dimension, the biggest differences between the algorithms is the type of solutions that they return. Some algorithms, such as `TambyVanderpooten` can return points from a *minimum complete set* for discrete problems. Other algorithms, such as `Hierarchical` return only a single point, and `Lexicographic` returns a representative set of points corresponding to all lexicographic permutations of the objective vector (this can be disabled to return only a singleton representative set for high-dimensional problems).

3. Comparison to related works

Table 2 compares `MOA.jl` to related mathematical programming software for modeling and solving multi-objective optimization problems. We compare four modeling language approaches, `MOA.jl`, AMPL (AMPL Optimization Inc. 2025), CVXPY (Diamond and Boyd 2016), and GAMS (GAMS Software GmbH 2025), and five open-source solver approaches, BenSOLVE (Löhne and Weißing 2017), HiGHS (Huangfu and Hall 2018), inner (Csirmaz 2021), PaMILO (Bökler et al. 2023), and PolySCIP (Borndörfer et al. 2016).

Many commercial solvers (for example, COPT, CPLEX, Gurobi, Hexaly and Xpress) have support for multiple objectives. We choose HiGHS as a single representative example of this type of solver because they all implement similar variations of the `Lexicographic` and `Hierarchical` algorithms. None support returning a set of multiple efficient solutions. To the best of our knowledge, no other popular algebraic modeling languages (for example, Pyomo (Bynum et al. 2021)) support multi-objective problems. MATLAB has a variety of support for multiobjective optimization, including the `paretosearch` function for returning a representative set of linear and nonlinear optimization problems (MATLAB 2025). We omit it from Table 2 because we could not confirm what algorithms it implements or what solvers it uses.

Considering the large and well-developed body of literature that exists around multi-objective problems, mathematical programming based software packages for solving such problems are sparse and relatively feature poor. Where support does exist, most packages focus on returning a single representative solution that is some mix of a lexicographic and hierarchical blending. Of the other modeling language approaches, only GAMS supports returning more than one solution.

The lack of general purpose libraries means that practitioners who want to solve a multi-objective problem and return multiple solutions typically code their own implementation. In our opinion, the lack of a general purpose library for solving multi-objective optimization problems has limited the applicability of multi-objective optimization because it requires practitioners to have a reasonable level of software development proficiency. As a secondary effect, practitioners may implement only a single (and simple) solution algorithm, instead of experimenting with a range of more sophisticated solution algorithms.

The lack of general purpose libraries also hurts *developers* of novel solution algorithms. In most cases, papers that develop new general purpose algorithms publish reproducible

	<i>Modeling-language-based</i>				<i>Open-Source Solver-based</i>				
	MOA.jl	AMPL	CVXPY	GAMS	BenSOLVE	HiGHS	inner	PaMILO	PolySCIP
Programming Language	Julia	Custom	Python	Custom	C	Many	C	C	C
License	BSD-3	Commercial	Apache	Commercial	GPL-2	MIT	GPL-3	Custom	Custom
Modeling Language	JuMP	AMPL	CVXPY	GAMS		Many			Zimpl
Solvers	Many	Many	Many	Many	GLPK	HiGHS	GLPK	CPLEX/Gurobi	SCIP
Multiple Solutions	Yes			Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Problem class</i>									
Linear	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Integer	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes	Yes
Nonlinear	Yes	Yes	Convex	Yes				Quadratic	
<i>Algorithms</i>									
Benson					Yes		Yes		Yes
Böckler								Yes	
Chalmet	Yes								
Dichotomy	Yes								
DominguezRios	Yes								
EpsilonConstraint	Yes			Yes					
Hierarchical	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes			
KirlikSayin	Yes								
Lexicographic	Yes	Yes		Yes		Yes			
RandomWeighting	Yes			Yes					
Sandwiching	Yes			Yes					
TambyVanderpooten	Yes								

Table 2 General comparison of mathematical programming software packages for multi-objective optimization. The Algorithms are based on the naming scheme in Table 1. The exceptions are Benson (Benson 1998), Böckler (Böckler and Mutzel 2015), and Sandwiching (Koenen et al. 2023). The algorithms that BenSOLVE, inner, and PolySCIP implement are different, but they are all variants of Benson’s. PaMILO and PolySCIP have custom open-source licenses that prevent commercial use.

source code, but the code is often problem-specific and not intended for general purpose use. If future authors implement their algorithm in MOA.jl, they immediately gain the ability to model and solve problems using JuMP, and their work is also available to the wider community. We see this point as a positive, if minor, contribution of our work.

4. Design principles

We based the design of MOA.jl on the following design principles.

4.1. Modular algorithms

The last decade has led to proliferation of novel solution algorithms for multi-objective optimization problems. We point to the work of Dominguez-Rios et al. (2021) and Tamby and Vanderpooten (2021) as examples. Because algorithm design and comparison is an

on-going research challenge, we wanted a design that makes writing new algorithms easy. As a secondary consideration, we wanted to make switching between algorithms simple to enable speed and solution quality comparisons between algorithms.

We achieve these goals by leveraging Julia’s strength for multiple dispatch. Each algorithm subtypes the `MOA.AbstractAlgorithm` type and implements a single function, `MOA.minimize_multiobjective`. The return value is a termination status and a list of solution points (if they exist). For example, a new algorithm could be implemented as:

```
import MultiObjectiveAlgorithms as MOA
struct NewAlgorithm <: MOA.AbstractAlgorithm end
function MOA.minimize_multiobjective(model::MOA.Optimizer, ::NewAlgorithm)
    solutions = MOA.SolutionPoint[]
    # Implement the algorithm using ‘model.f::MOI.AbstractVectorFunction’
    if error
        return MOI.OTHER_ERROR, nothing
    end
    return MOI.OPTIMAL, solutions
end
```

This algorithm can then be immediately used from JuMP with:

```
set_attribute(model, MOA.Algorithm(), NewAlgorithm())
```

Behind the scenes, `MOA.jl` will build the problem, convert from maximization to minimization (if necessary), and convert the returned vector of solutions into the form required by JuMP. The separation of algorithm and modeling interface simplifies writing an algorithm; each of the algorithms implemented in `MOA.jl` is less than 200 lines of code.

4.2. A solution is a finite set of points

Unlike the single-objective optimization literature, the multi-objective algorithm literature has not converged on a single definition of what constitutes a “solution.” As described in Section 1.1, there are at least three common definitions: the *maximum complete set*, a *complete set*, and a *minimum complete set*. These sets may be finite and discrete or continuous and infinite.

In `MOA.jl`, we choose to ignore this complexity. We do not require that an algorithm returns a minimum complete set. We define a solution as a finite set of vectors \mathbf{x} with corresponding objective vectors $\mathbf{y} = f_0(\mathbf{x})$. We make no quality assertions about the returned

list, other than that each objective vector is non-dominated. We make this decision for pragmatic reasons: it makes the library simpler to implement, and it provides most users with most of what they want in practice, which is the ability to find a representative set of diverse solutions to their problem. The trade-off is that it requires users to have some theoretical knowledge to choose an appropriate solution algorithm for their problem type, and to understand whether the returned solution is a representative set or a minimum complete set.

4.3. A single objective sense and a vector-valued objective

When designing `MOA.jl`, we had robust discussions about two alternate approaches: is a multi-objective optimization problem defined by a set of independent scalar objectives, each of which may have a different objective sense, or is it a vector-valued function with a single objective sense? Many users would prefer the former, since it allows them to, for example, minimize one objective and maximize another. The latter requires them to normalize all scalar objectives into the same objective sense, for example, by multiplying maximization objectives by -1 .

Because `MOA.jl` is based on JuMP, which itself relies on the MathOptInterface standard form (Legat et al. 2021), we chose to implement the library as a single objective sense and a vector-valued objective function. Although more restrictive from a user-perspective, this significantly simplified the implementation of `MOA.jl`, and we have not found this decision to be a burden in practice. Note that our decision is purely an artifact of our decision to build on JuMP; GAMS, for example, allows multiple different objective senses.

5. Conclusions

This paper has presented `MultiObjectiveAlgorithms.jl` (`MOA.jl`), an open-source Julia package for solving multi-objective optimization problems written in JuMP. `MOA.jl` implements ten different solution algorithms, which all rely on an iterative scalarization of the problem from a multi-objective optimization problem to a sequence of single-objective subproblems. Each algorithm is relatively simple to implement, requiring on average 100–200 lines, and the modular design of the library makes it easy to add new algorithms. Because it is based on JuMP, `MOA.jl` can use a wide variety of commercial and open-source solvers to solve the single-objective subproblems, and it supports problem classes ranging from linear, to conic, semi-definite, and general nonlinear.

The only gap between recent advances in algorithms for multi-objective optimization and the current design of the library is our decision to return a finite set of points as the solution. As future work, we would like to extend `MOA.jl` to support solutions such as nondominated facets and the associated open and closed points. The correct implementation of this is an open question, particularly with how to represent these solutions in JuMP.

To conclude, we hope that our positive experience developing `MOA.jl` serves as motivation and design inspiration for others to add similar features to algebraic modeling languages that do not currently support multi-objective optimization problems.

Acknowledgments

`MOA.jl` is the successor to the `vOptSolver` project (Gandibleux et al. 2017). The development of `vOptSolver` started in the ANR/DFG-14-CE35-0034-01 research project `vOpt` (2015–2019).

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