

# CONFORMAL VECTOR FIELDS ON LCP MANIFOLDS

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ABSTRACT. We show that conformal vector fields on compact locally conformally product manifolds are orthogonal to the flat distribution and Killing with respect to the Gauduchon metric.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Locally conformally product (LCP) structures arise naturally in the theory of Weyl connections. They consist in a closed non-exact Weyl connection  $D$  on a compact conformal manifold  $(M, c)$  with (non-zero) reducible holonomy. LCP structures are closely related to LCK structures, which can be defined in a similar way, just by replacing the reducibility condition for the holonomy of  $D$  with the existence of a  $D$ -parallel complex structure.

The study of LCP structures started with the Belgun-Moroianu conjecture [3], which stated that they should not exist. However, the works of Matveev-Nikolayevsky [10, 11] and Kourganoff [9] after them exhibited examples of such manifolds, and also showed that their structure was very special. Indeed, when lifted to the universal cover  $\tilde{M}$  of  $M$ ,  $D$  becomes the Levi-Civita connection of a Riemannian metric  $h$  and  $(\tilde{M}, h)$  is isometric to  $(\mathbb{R}^q, h_0) \times (N, h_N)$ , where  $(N, h_N)$  is an irreducible Riemannian manifold.

After the discovery of this result, LCP manifolds have been analyzed from various points of view by several authors. LCP structures on solvmanifolds [1] and more generally on compact quotients of Lie groups [5] have been studied by Andrada, del Barco and the second author, and their description under some additional assumptions concerning their characteristic group has been given by the first author in [7]. Obstructions to the existence of LCP structures on conformal manifolds are also discussed in [2], where it is shown that the conformal class of an LCP manifold cannot contain Einstein or Kähler metrics for example.

An important tool in conformal geometry is the Gauduchon metric [8], which on a compact conformal manifold  $(M, c)$  endowed with a Weyl connection  $D$  is

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the unique (up to a multiplicative constant) Riemannian metric  $g \in c$  with the property that the Lee form of  $D$  with respect to  $g$  is coclosed.

Recently, the second author together with Pilca Pilca [13] studied the behavior of the Gauduchon metric of Weyl connections defining an LCP structure, and proved that it is adapted. Recall that if  $(M, c, D)$  is an LCP manifold, a Riemannian metric  $g$  in the conformal class  $c$  is called adapted if the lift to the universal cover of the Lee form of  $D$  with respect to  $g$  vanishes on the flat distribution  $T\mathbb{R}^q$ .

In another recent work [12], the same authors generalized to the LCK setting the well-known fact that all conformal vector fields on a compact Kähler manifold are Killing, by proving that every conformal vector field on a compact LCK manifold is Killing with respect to the Gauduchon metric.

It is thus natural to investigate the corresponding question in the LCP setting, all the more that a classical result of Tashiro and Miyashita [14] states that on complete non-flat Riemannian products, all complete conformal vector fields are Killing.

This is precisely what we achieve in this paper, by proving the following:

**Theorem 1.1.** *Let  $(M, c, D)$  be an LCP manifold. Then the conformal vector fields of  $(M, c)$  are exactly the Killing vector fields of the Gauduchon metric of the Weyl structure  $D$ .*

The strategy of the proof is roughly as follows. Every conformal vector field  $\bar{\xi}$  on  $(M, c)$  can be lifted to a (complete) conformal vector field  $\xi$  of the Riemannian product structure  $(\mathbb{R}^q, h_0) \times (N, h_N)$  on the universal cover of  $M$ . However, the Tashiro-Miyashita result does not apply, since this product metric is not complete. Nonetheless, we can show that the covariant derivative of  $\xi$  with respect to tangent vectors to  $N$ , restricted to each flat leaf  $\mathbb{R}^q \times \{y\}$ , is a gradient conformal vector field. Then using the explicit description of these vector fields and the fact the  $\xi$  has bounded geometry, we obtain that  $\xi$  has to be the pull-back of a Killing vector field on  $(N, h_N)$ . This implies in particular that  $\bar{\xi}$  is affine with respect to the Weyl connection  $D$ , and we conclude by the uniqueness property of the Gauduchon metric.

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## 2. PRELIMINARIES ON LCP STRUCTURES

We start by introducing the basic concepts of conformal geometry.

**Definition 2.1.** *A conformal structure on a smooth manifold  $M$  is an equivalence class of the equivalence relation defined on the space of Riemannian metrics on  $M$  by  $g \sim g'$  if and only if there exists a smooth function  $\varphi$  such that  $g' = e^{2\varphi}g$ .*

Conformal structures are usually denoted by  $c$ . There is no natural connection on a conformal manifold as for the Riemannian case. However, one can consider a class of connections, called Weyl connections, which extends in a certain way the concept of Levi-Civita connection to the conformal case.

**Definition 2.2.** *Let  $(M, c)$  be a conformal manifold. A Weyl connection on  $(M, c)$  is a torsion-free connection  $D$  on  $TM$  which preserves the conformal structure, in the sense that for any metric  $g \in c$ , there is a 1-form  $\theta_g$ , called the Lee form of  $D$  with respect to  $g$ , such that  $Dg = -2\theta_g \otimes g$ .*

Clearly if  $g' = e^{2\varphi}g$  then  $\theta_{g'} = \theta_g - d\varphi$ , so the cohomological nature of the Lee form is independent of the metric. This motivates the following definition:

**Definition 2.3.** *A Weyl connection  $D$  on a conformal manifold  $(M, c)$  is called closed if the Lee form of  $D$  with respect to one metric - and then to all metrics - in  $c$  is closed. Similarly,  $D$  is called exact if the Lee form of  $D$  with respect to one metric - and then to all metrics - in  $c$  is exact.*

Note that every closed Weyl connection on a simply connected conformal manifold is exact.

Let now  $D$  be a closed Weyl connection on a conformal manifold  $(M, c)$ . Its pull-back  $\tilde{D}$  to the universal covering  $\tilde{M}$  of  $M$  is a Weyl connection for the conformal structure  $\tilde{c}$  obtained by pulling-back  $c$ . This Weyl connection is exact since  $\tilde{M}$  is simply connected, thus there exists a metric  $h \in \tilde{c}$ , unique up to a multiplication by a constant, such that  $\nabla^h = \tilde{D}$ , where  $\nabla^h$  is the Levi-Civita connection of  $h$ .

More precisely, if  $g$  is any Riemannian metric on  $M$  in the conformal class  $c$ , and  $\theta_g$  is the Lee form of  $D$  with respect to  $g$ , then its pull-back  $\tilde{\theta}_g$  to the universal cover  $\tilde{M}$  is exact, so there exists a function  $\varphi \in C^\infty(\tilde{M})$  such that  $d\varphi = \tilde{\theta}_g$ . Moreover,  $\tilde{\theta}_g$  is also the Lee form of the pull-back Weyl connection  $\tilde{D}$  on  $\tilde{M}$ , so by the above formula, the Lee form of  $\tilde{D}$  with respect to the metric  $h := e^{2\varphi}\tilde{g}$  vanishes, i.e.  $\tilde{D}$  is the Levi-Civita connection of  $h$ . Note that the fundamental group  $\pi_1(M)$  acts on  $\tilde{M}$  by  $h$ -homotheties, and this action preserves  $h$  if and only if  $D$  is exact.

LCP structures arise when one considers closed, non-exact Weyl connections on a compact conformal manifold. In this situation, one has a remarkable result proved by Kourganoff [9]:

**Theorem 2.4.** [9, Thm. 1.5] *Let  $(M, c)$  be a conformal manifold endowed with a closed, non-exact Weyl connection  $D$ . Let  $h$  be a metric on  $\tilde{M}$ , the universal cover of  $M$ , such that  $\nabla^h = \tilde{D}$  where  $\tilde{D}$  is the pull-back of  $D$  to  $\tilde{M}$ . Then, one of the three following cases occurs:*

- $(\tilde{M}, h)$  is flat;
- $(\tilde{M}, h)$  is irreducible;

- $(\tilde{M}, h)$  is a Riemannian product  $(\mathbb{R}^q, h_0) \times (N, h_N)$  where  $q \geq 1$ ,  $(\mathbb{R}^q, h_0)$  is the usual Euclidean space and  $(N, h_N)$  is a non-flat, incomplete Riemannian manifold.

The third case in Theorem 2.4 corresponds to LCP structures. More precisely, we have the following:

**Definition 2.5.** *An LCP manifold is a triple  $(M, c, D)$  where  $M$  is a compact manifold,  $c$  is a conformal structure on  $M$  and  $D$  is a closed, non-exact Weyl connection, which is non-flat and reducible (i.e. the representation of its restricted holonomy group  $\text{Hol}_0(D)$  is reducible).*

With the notations above,  $(\mathbb{R}^q, h_0)$  is called the *flat part* of the LCP manifold, while  $(N, h_N)$  is called the *non-flat part*. The distributions  $T\mathbb{R}^q$  and  $TN$  descend to  $D$ -parallel distributions on  $M$ , respectively called the *flat distribution* and the *non-flat distribution* of the LCP manifold.

**Definition 2.6.** *Let  $(M, c, D)$  be an LCP manifold. A Riemannian metric  $g \in c$  is called adapted if the Lee form  $\theta_g$  vanishes on the flat distribution (or equivalently, if the primitive  $\varphi$  of the pull-back to the universal cover of  $\theta_g$  is the pull-back of a function defined on the non-flat factor  $N$ ).*

**Remark 2.7.** Adapted metrics always exist (see [6, 13]). The above considerations show that their lift to  $\tilde{M}$  can be written  $\tilde{g} = e^{-2\alpha}h$ , where  $\alpha \in C^\infty(N)$ .

### 3. CONFORMAL VECTOR FIELDS ON LCP MANIFOLDS

Let  $(M, c, D)$  be an  $n$ -dimensional LCP manifold. Let  $h$  be the Riemannian metric on its universal cover whose Levi-Civita connection is the lift of  $D$ , so that  $(\tilde{M}, h) = (\mathbb{R}^q, h_0) \times (N, h_N)$ , where  $(\mathbb{R}^q, h_0)$  is the flat part and  $(N, h_N)$  is the non-flat part. We will denote the Levi-Civita connection of  $h$  by  $\nabla$ .

Denoting by  $p_1, p_2$  the projections from  $\tilde{M}$  onto  $\mathbb{R}^q$  and  $N$  respectively, the tangent bundle of  $\mathbb{R}^q \times N$  can be identified with the direct sum  $\pi_1^*T\mathbb{R}^q \oplus \pi_2^*TN$ . Correspondingly, one can write every vector field  $\xi \in \Gamma(T\tilde{M})$  as a sum

$$(1) \quad \xi = \xi_1 + \xi_2,$$

where  $\xi_1(\cdot, y) \in \Gamma(T\mathbb{R}^q)$  for every  $y \in N$ , and  $\xi_2(x, \cdot) \in \Gamma(TN)$  for every  $x \in \mathbb{R}^q$ .

Let  $\bar{\xi} \in \Gamma(TM)$  be a conformal vector field, and let  $\xi \in \Gamma(T\tilde{M})$  be its lift to  $\tilde{M}$ . In particular  $\gamma^*\xi = \bar{\xi}$  for any  $\gamma \in \pi_1(M)$ . We decompose  $\xi = \xi_1 + \xi_2$  as in (1). The fact that  $\xi$  is a conformal vector field on  $\tilde{M}$  is equivalent to the identity

$$(2) \quad h(\nabla_X \xi, Y) + h(X, \nabla_Y \xi) = fh(X, Y), \quad (\forall) X, Y \in T\tilde{M},$$

where  $f$  is a real-valued smooth function on  $\tilde{M}$ . Applying (2) with  $X, Y \in T\mathbb{R}^q$  shows that for any  $y \in N$ ,  $\xi_1(\cdot, y)$  is a conformal vector field on  $\mathbb{R}^q$ . In the same way, we show that for any  $x \in \mathbb{R}^q$ ,  $\xi_2(x, \cdot)$  is a conformal vector field on  $N$ .

Let  $(e_1, \dots, e_q)$  be the canonical basis of  $\mathbb{R}^q$  and denote by the same letters the induced vector fields on  $\tilde{M}$  constant along  $N$ . We also fix an arbitrary vector field  $Z$  on  $N$ , identified with the induced vector field on  $\tilde{M}$  constant along  $\mathbb{R}^q$ . Then  $\nabla_{e_i} Z = \nabla_Z e_i = 0$  for every  $1 \leq i \leq q$ .

Using (2) for  $X = e_i$  and  $Y = Z$  we obtain

$$(3) \quad h(e_i, \nabla_Z \xi_1) = -h(\nabla_{e_i} \xi_2, Z) = -\partial_{e_i}(h(\xi_2, Z)),$$

which implies that for every fixed  $y \in N$ , the vector field  $\nabla_Z \xi_1(\cdot, y)$  on  $\mathbb{R}^q$  is the gradient in  $\mathbb{R}^q$  of the function  $-h_{(\cdot, y)}(\xi_2, Z)$ .

Moreover, taking  $X = e_i$ ,  $Y = e_j$  in (2), differentiating with respect to  $Z$ , and using the commutation of  $\nabla_Z$  with  $\nabla_{e_i}$  for  $1 \leq i \leq q$ , shows that  $\nabla_Z \xi_1(\cdot, y)$  is a conformal vector field on  $(\mathbb{R}^q, h_0)$  for every  $y \in N$ .

Synthesizing the previous analysis, for any  $y \in N$  and  $Z \in T_y N$ ,  $\nabla_Z \xi_1(\cdot, y)$  is a gradient conformal vector field on  $(\mathbb{R}^q, h_0)$ . These vector fields are well understood:

**Lemma 3.1.** *Let  $X$  be a gradient conformal vector field on  $(\mathbb{R}^q, h_0)$ . Then, there exist real numbers  $b, b_1, \dots, b_q$  such that  $X = b \sum_{i=1}^q x_i e_i + \sum_{i=1}^q b_i e_i$ , where  $(e_1, \dots, e_q)$  is the canonical basis of  $\mathbb{R}$  and  $x_i$  is the  $i$ -th coordinate function.*

**Proof.** In this proof,  $\nabla$  stands for the gradient in  $\mathbb{R}^q$  and the usual scalar product on  $\mathbb{R}^q$  is denoted by  $\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle$ .

By assumption, there is a function  $\psi : \mathbb{R}^q \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  such that  $X = \nabla \psi = \sum_{i=1}^q (\partial_{e_i} \psi) e_i$ . Since  $X$  is a conformal vector field one has

$$\langle \partial_{e_i} X, e_j \rangle + \langle e_i, \partial_{e_j} X \rangle = \chi \langle e_i, e_j \rangle, \quad (\forall) 1 \leq i, j \leq q,$$

for some smooth function  $\chi : \mathbb{R}^q \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ . This is equivalent to

$$\partial_{e_i} \partial_{e_j} \psi = \delta_i^j \chi, \quad (\forall) 1 \leq i, j \leq q.$$

In particular, for any  $1 \leq i \leq q$ ,  $\partial_{e_i} \psi$  is a function depending only on the  $i$ -th coordinate, and thus  $\chi$  has the same property. Consequently,  $\chi$  is constant and  $\psi$  belongs to the vector space

$$(4) \quad E := \{\phi \in C^\infty(\mathbb{R}^q) \mid \exists \mu \in \mathbb{R}, \forall i, j, \partial_{e_i} \partial_{e_j} \phi = \delta_i^j \mu\}.$$

Now, we remark that

$$(5) \quad E_0 := \{\phi \in C^\infty(\mathbb{R}^q) \mid \forall i, j, \partial_{e_i} \partial_{e_j} \phi = 0\}$$

is a hyperplane of  $E$  since it is the kernel of the linear form  $E \ni \phi \mapsto \partial_{e_1}^2 \phi$ . Moreover, denoting by  $x_i$  the  $i$ -th coordinate function,  $\text{Span}(\sum_{i=1}^q (x_i)^2)$  is a supplementary of  $E_0$  in  $E$ , whence

$$E = \text{Span}\left(\sum_{i=1}^q (x_i)^2\right) \oplus E_0.$$

Since  $E_0 = \text{Span}(x_1, \dots, x_q)$ , we obtain  $\psi = \frac{b}{2} \sum_{i=1}^q (x_i)^2 + \sum_{i=1}^q b_i x_i$  for some  $(b, b_1, \dots, b_q) \in \mathbb{R}^{q+1}$ , and  $X = \nabla\psi = b \sum_{i=1}^q x_i e_i + \sum_{i=1}^q b_i e_i$ .

Conversely, any vector field of this form is a conformal gradient vector field.  $\square$

From Lemma 3.1 we conclude that there are functions  $\tilde{b}, \tilde{b}_1, \dots, \tilde{b}_q$  from  $TN$  to  $\mathbb{R}$  such that

$$(6) \quad \nabla_Z \xi_1(x, y) = \tilde{b}(y, Z) \sum_{i=1}^q x_i e_i + \sum_{i=1}^q \tilde{b}_i(y, Z) e_i,$$

for all  $(x, y) \in \mathbb{R}^q \times N$ , and  $Z \in T_y N$ . Applying (6) to  $x = 0$  and  $x = e_1$  shows that

$$(7) \quad \tilde{b}_i(y, Z) = h_{(0,y)}(\nabla_Z \xi_1, e_i), \quad \tilde{b}(y, Z) = h_{(e_1,y)}(\nabla_Z \xi_1, e_1) - \tilde{b}_1(y, Z)$$

for any  $y \in N$ ,  $Z \in T_y N$  and  $1 \leq i \leq q$ , which implies that the functions  $\tilde{b}, \tilde{b}_1, \dots, \tilde{b}_q$  are smooth, and linear in the variable  $Z$ .

We fix  $y_0 \in N$ . Let  $y \in N$  and  $c : [0, 1] \rightarrow N$  be a smooth path from  $y_0$  to  $y$ , which exists by connectedness. One has, for any  $x \in \mathbb{R}^q$ ,

$$\begin{aligned} \xi_1(x, y) - \xi_1(x, y_0) &= \int_0^1 \nabla_{\dot{c}(t)} \xi_1(x, c(t)) dt \\ &= \int_0^1 \tilde{b}(c(t), \dot{c}(t)) \sum_{i=1}^q x_i e_i + \sum_{i=1}^q \tilde{b}_i(c(t), \dot{c}(t)) e_i dt \\ &= \left( \int_0^1 \tilde{b}(c(t), \dot{c}(t)) dt \right) \sum_{i=1}^q x_i e_i + \sum_{i=1}^q \left( \int_0^1 \tilde{b}_i(c(t), \dot{c}(t)) dt \right) e_i. \end{aligned}$$

We define the smooth functions

$$(8) \quad b(y) := \int_0^1 \tilde{b}(c(t), \dot{c}(t)) dt, \quad b_i(y) := \int_0^1 \tilde{b}_i(c(t), \dot{c}(t)) dt,$$

which by the above computation do not depend on the chosen path. Then, writing  $\xi_1(\cdot, y_0) =: \sum_{i=1}^q \beta_i e_i$  with  $\beta_i \in C^\infty(\mathbb{R}^q)$ , we have

$$(9) \quad \xi_1(x, y) = \sum_{i=1}^q (\beta_i(x) e_i + b(y) x_i e_i + b_i(y) e_i), \quad (\forall) (x, y) \in \mathbb{R}^q \times N.$$

Using (3), one obtains for every  $Z \in \Gamma(TN)$  and  $1 \leq i \leq q$ :

$$\partial_{e_i}(h(\xi_2, Z)) = -(Z(b)x_i + Z(b_i)),$$

which implies that there exists some vector field  $V \in \Gamma(TN)$  such that

$$(10) \quad \xi_2(x, y) = V(y) - \sum_{i=1}^q \left( \frac{(x_i)^2}{2} \nabla^N b(y) + x_i \nabla^N b_i(y) \right)$$

for all  $(x, y) \in \mathbb{R}^q \times N$ , where  $\nabla^N$  denotes the gradient defined by the Levi-Civita connection of  $h_N$ .

Let  $g$  be an adapted metric on  $N$  (Remark 2.7) whose pull-back to  $\tilde{M}$  can be written as  $\tilde{g} = e^{-2\alpha}h$  for some  $\alpha \in C^\infty(N)$ . Note that the function  $\alpha$  is not bounded from above or from below. Indeed, there exists an element  $\gamma \in \pi_1(M)$  which is a contraction with respect to  $h$  (i.e.  $\rho^*h = \lambda h$  with  $\lambda \in (0, 1)$ ), and since  $\pi_1(M)$  acts isometrically with respect to  $\tilde{g}$ , we get  $\gamma^*\alpha = \alpha + \frac{1}{2} \ln \lambda$ .

Since  $M$  is compact, there exists a constant  $C > 0$  such that

$$\sup_{\tilde{M}} \|\xi\|_{\tilde{g}} = \sup_M \|\bar{\xi}\|_g \leq C.$$

Consequently,

$$\|e^{-\alpha}\xi_2\|_h^2 = \|\xi_2\|_{\tilde{g}}^2 \leq \|\xi\|_{\tilde{g}}^2 \leq C^2,$$

whence for any  $y \in N$ , the estimate

$$(11) \quad \|\xi_2(x, y)\|_h \leq e^{\alpha(y)}C$$

(independent on  $x$ ) holds. Now, Equation (10) shows that for every fixed  $y_0 \in N$ , the square norm  $\|\xi_2(x, y_0)\|_h$  is polynomial in  $(x_1, \dots, x_q)$ . Clearly this norm is bounded on  $\mathbb{R}^q$  if and only if  $\nabla^N b(y_0) = \nabla^N b_i(y_0) = 0$  for every  $1 \leq i \leq q$  and for every  $y_0 \in N$ , showing that the functions  $b, b_1, \dots, b_q$  are constant on  $N$ . Consequently,  $\xi_2(x, y) = V(y)$  is induced on  $\tilde{M}$  by a conformal vector field of  $(N, g_N)$ .

On the other hand, one also has  $\|e^{-\alpha}\xi_1\|_h^2 = \|\xi_1\|_{\tilde{g}}^2 = \|\xi_1\|_{\tilde{g}}^2 \leq \|\xi\|_{\tilde{g}}^2 \leq C^2$ . Since  $b, b_1, \dots, b_q$  are constant, (9) shows that  $\xi_1$  depends only on the variable  $x$  of  $\mathbb{R}^q$ . Therefore, for every  $x \in \mathbb{R}^q$  and  $y \in N$  one has  $\|\xi_1(x)\|_h \leq e^{-\alpha(y)}C$ . However, we have seen that the function  $\alpha$  is unbounded from above. We conclude that  $\|\xi_1(x)\|_h = 0$ , so finally  $\xi_1 = 0$ .

The conformal vector field  $\xi = \xi_2 = V$  is thus tangent to  $N$  and constant in the direction of  $\mathbb{R}^q$ . Taking non-zero vectors  $X = Y \in T\mathbb{R}^q$  in Equation (3), one gets

$$fh(X, X) = 0,$$

which in turn implies  $f = 0$ , so  $\xi$  is a Killing vector field for  $h$ .

Altogether, we have proved the following result:

**Theorem 3.2.** *Let  $(M, c, D)$  be an LCP manifold. Then the lift of any conformal vector field of  $(M, c)$  to the universal cover of  $M$  endowed with its canonical Riemannian decomposition  $(\mathbb{R}^q, h_0) \times (N, h_N)$  is a Killing vector field of  $(N, h_N)$ .*

The last step in our analysis of conformal vector fields on LCP manifolds is to link them to the Killing fields of the Gauduchon metric [8] of the Weyl structure  $(M, c, D)$ . We first recall the definition of this particular metric:

**Definition 3.3.** *If  $(M, c)$  is a compact conformal manifold of dimension larger than 2, then for any Weyl connection  $D$  on  $(M, c)$  there exists a unique (up to a positive multiplicative constant) Riemannian metric  $g_G$  such that the Lee form of  $D$  with respect to  $g_G$  is coclosed. This metric is called the Gauduchon metric of the Weyl structure.*

We now return to our particular setting, with  $\bar{\xi} \in TM$  a conformal vector field of  $(M, c)$ . By Theorem 3.2, the lift  $\xi$  of  $\bar{\xi}$  to  $\tilde{M}$  is a Killing vector field on  $N$ . In particular, it is a Killing vector field for  $(\tilde{M}, h)$ , so it preserves the Levi-Civita connection  $\nabla$  of  $h$ . But  $\nabla$  is the lift of the Weyl connection  $D$ , and we deduce that  $\bar{\xi}$  is an affine vector field for  $D$ , i.e.  $\mathcal{L}_{\bar{\xi}}(D) = 0$ .

Let  $g_G$  be the Gauduchon metric of the Weyl structure  $(M, c, D)$ . We denote by  $\theta_G$  the Lee form of  $D$  with respect to  $g_G$ , by  $\nabla^{g_G}$  the Levi-Civita connection of  $g_G$ , and by  $(\varphi_t)_{t \in \mathbb{R}}$  the flow of  $\bar{\xi}$ . Since  $\bar{\xi}$  is affine, we obtain for any  $t \in \mathbb{R}$ :

$$(12) \quad D(\varphi_t^* g_G) = \varphi_t^*(Dg_G) = -2\varphi_t^*(\theta_G \otimes g_G) = -2(\varphi_t^* \theta_G) \otimes (\varphi_t^* g_G),$$

and we get that  $\varphi_t^* \theta_G$  is the Lee form of  $D$  with respect to  $\varphi_t^* g_G$ . The Levi-Civita connection of  $g_G$  is  $\varphi_t^* \nabla^{g_G}$ , hence  $\delta^{\varphi_t^* g_G} = \varphi_t^* \delta^{g_G}$ . We thus have:

$$(13) \quad \delta^{\varphi_t^* g_G} \theta_{\varphi_t^* g_G} = (\varphi_t^* \delta^{g_G})(\varphi_t^* \theta_{g_G}) = \varphi_t^*(\delta^{g_G} \theta_{g_G}) = 0.$$

Consequently,  $\varphi_t^* g_G$  still is a Gauduchon metric of  $(M, c, D)$ , so by the uniqueness property there exists a constant  $\lambda_t > 0$  such that  $(\varphi_t)^* g_G = \lambda_t g_G$ . It follows that there exists  $\lambda > 0$  such that

$$(14) \quad \mathcal{L}_{\bar{\xi}} g_G = \lambda g_G.$$

Taking the trace in (14) yields  $2\delta \bar{\xi} = -n\lambda$ . Integrating this equality over  $M$  and using the divergence theorem, one obtains  $\lambda = 0$ , i.e.

$$(15) \quad \mathcal{L}_{\bar{\xi}} g_G = 0,$$

thus showing that  $\bar{\xi}$  is a Killing vector field for  $g_G$ .

Conversely, it is obvious that a Killing vector field for  $g_G$  is a conformal vector field of  $(M, c)$ . This concludes the proof of Theorem 1.1.

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