

Problem 11967

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Let F_n be the n -th Fermat number $2^{2^n} + 1$. Find

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \sqrt{6F_1 + \sqrt{6F_2 + \sqrt{6F_3 + \sqrt{\cdots + \sqrt{6F_n}}}}}$$

Solution proposed by Roberto Tauraso, Dipartimento di Matematica, Università di Roma "Tor Vergata", via della Ricerca Scientifica, 00133 Roma, Italy.

Solution. For $x \geq 0$, we consider the sequence of functions defined by the recurrence

$$f_0(x) = 0, \quad f_{n+1}(x) = \sqrt{6(1+x) + f_n(x^2)} \quad \text{for } n \geq 0.$$

We show by induction that for $n \geq 2$, and for $x \in [0, 1/2]$,

$$a_n + \frac{3x}{a_n} \leq f_n(x) \leq 3 + x$$

where $a_n = f_n(0)$. Note that the recurrence $a_{n+1} = \sqrt{6 + a_n}$ implies that the sequence $(a_n)_{n \geq 2}$ is positive, increasing and it tends to 3. Therefore, by the double inequality, for any $x \in [0, 1/2]$,

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} f_n(x) = 3 + x.$$

The base case $n = 2$ can be easily verified. Inductive step: let $n \geq 2$, then

$$f_{n+1}(x) = \sqrt{6(1+x) + f_n(x^2)} \leq \sqrt{6(1+x) + (3+x^2)} = 3 + x.$$

Moreover

$$f_{n+1}(x) = \sqrt{6(1+x) + f_n(x^2)} \geq \sqrt{6(1+x) + \left(a_n + \frac{3x^2}{a_n}\right)} \geq a_{n+1} + \frac{3x}{a_{n+1}}$$

where the last inequality is equivalent to

$$6 + 6x + a_n + \frac{3x^2}{a_n} \geq a_{n+1}^2 + 6x + \frac{9x^2}{a_{n+1}^2} = 6 + a_n + 6x + \frac{9x^2}{6 + a_n}$$

which holds because $a_n \leq 3$, and the proof of the double inequality is complete.

Finally, we are able to evaluate the required limit. Since

$$\sqrt{6F_1 + \sqrt{6F_2 + \sqrt{6F_3 + \sqrt{\cdots + \sqrt{6F_n}}}}} = 2f_n(1/4),$$

it follows that, as n goes to infinity, the limit of the left-hand side is $2(3 + 1/4) = 13/2$. □