

Julio Morell
Caribbean Coastal Ocean Observing System (CARICOOS)



Professor Julio Morell is the Executive Director of the Caribbean Coastal Ocean Observing System (CARICOOS), a regional component of the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System. Trained in Chemical Oceanography at the University of Puerto Rico, in 1999 he became a research professor at the Department of Marine Sciences. Fields pursued in his career include planktonic metabolism, pollution by oil, debris and anthropogenic nutrients and the study of biogeochemical processes of tropical marine ecosystems including their role as sinks or sources of atmospherically

active (greenhouse) gases. Professor Morell was also a leading participant in interdisciplinary research efforts towards identifying the influence of mesoscale processes such as major river plumes (Orinoco and Amazon), eddies and internal waves on the optical, physical and biogeochemical character of Eastern Caribbean waters. More recent research targets include the diverse expressions of climate and ocean acidification in our oceanic and coastal surroundings.

Prof. Morell has also looked at the ocean as his principal recreational and residential ground; that has also made him aware of high priority coastal information needs faced by diverse societal sectors in the Caribbean. For more than a decade, Prof. Morell has focused in the development of and CARICOOS with the goal of providing for said needs. This has required continuous engagement of stakeholder sectors and building strategic partnerships with pertinent research, educational, federal, state and private entities that have made the observing system a reality for the US Caribbean region. Among other activities, he serves as an advisor to the Puerto Rico Climate Change Council, the UPR Sea Grant program and the Jobos Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.