

ACS and KIOST Host Inaugural Joint Workshop and Seminar, Celebrating the Establishment of the Joint Ocean Research Center



Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago - 6 November 2025

The Association of Caribbean States (ACS) and the Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST) hosted their inaugural joint workshop and seminar on November 5th, 2025, at the ACS Secretariat in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, marking a historic milestone in Korea-Caribbean cooperation.

Following the signing of an Implementation Agreement in July 2025 between ACS, Korea, and Colombia, this collaborative event celebrated the establishment of the Joint Ocean Research Center (JORC), which will be located at INVEMAR in Santa Marta, Colombia.

ACS Secretary-General, Ambassador Noemí Espinoza Madrid, highlighted that “the creation of the Joint Ocean Research Center, with the support of the Government of Colombia and the Institute of Marine and Coastal Research (INVEMAR), constitutes a milestone in South-South and Triangular cooperation, and a unique opportunity to continue advancing towards more inclusive, resilient, and science-based ocean governance.”

She also stated that “through the Caribbean Sea Commission, the ACS has advocated for the recognition of the Caribbean Sea as a Common Good of Sustainable Development, and this cooperation, the Research Center, and this workshop reflect that commitment.”

His Excellency William Sidney Bush Howard, Ambassador of Colombia, stated that “this initiative strengthens the relationship between the Greater Caribbean and the Republic of Korea, and underscores the need to preserve the Caribbean as a source of life and development for our communities.”

He expressed that “the benefits of the Research Center will reach not only our region but also the international sphere, and that through scientific research and capacity building, we will be able to confront the environmental challenges we share.”

During the event, His Excellency Seijoong Kwon, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Trinidad

and Tobago, reaffirmed Korea's commitment to promoting the sustainable use of marine resources and building technical and research capacity across the Greater Caribbean, particularly through enhanced scientific cooperation and support for a sustainable blue economy.

Regarding the Joint Ocean Research Center, he pointed out that Colombia's strategic location enables broader regional connectivity, offering a promising environment for collaboration among ACS Member States.

The day-long program brought together leaders, scientists, and researchers to discuss critical ocean and climate challenges facing the Greater Caribbean region, including sargassum management, marine pollution, coastal erosion, and sustainable development. Presentations covered cutting-edge topics from marine bio-industry research to molecular genetic methods for ecosystem monitoring, while highlighting the Caribbean Sea Commission's roadmap and strategic priorities.

This partnership represents a significant South-South collaboration that will transform scientific research into actionable policy, benefiting coastal communities throughout the Greater Caribbean region and beyond.