



COCONet Press Release, 5 May 2016

An international organization of scientists, engineers, and educators met at the Barceló Bávaro Beach Resort in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic to discuss an earth observation network in the Circum-Caribbean. The network is called the Continuously Operating Caribbean GPS Observational Network or COCONet. COCONet consists of more than 100 sites throughout the Circum-Caribbean. These sites provide geodetic (precise positions of the earth surface and changes in the earth surface), meteorological and sea level measurements. These measurements are utilized for research, risk resiliency, communication, navigation, natural resource management and security.

COCONet is critical for earthquake early warning, tsunami early warning, hurricane tracking, monitoring volcanic unrest and many other hazards. It was noted that there have been 75 tsunamis in the Caribbean over the past 500 years and COCONet can help with preparedness, warning and response to earthquake- or volcano- generated tsunamis.

Research using COCONet data helps to define plate motions throughout the Caribbean region and determine earthquake hazards. For example, data and models of the fault that caused the 2010 Haiti earthquake, defines the potential for future earthquakes in Hispaniola and Jamaica.

COCONet is valuable for other stakeholders beyond research. For example, surveyors, farmers, engineers, emergency responders and many others use the data from COCONet for their daily work. Alexander Holsteinson from UNPHU in the DR and a COCONet partner works with many members of the private sector in the DR to share the data from the network. Alex said, "It was a very successful conference thanks to the generous support of the United States National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Dominican Republic was honored and delighted to host this COCONet Workshop".

79 people from 28 countries and 40 institutions participated in the three-day conference from 3-5 May 2016. The conference was a great success for international collaboration, advancing research, and advancing resiliency, security and economic development. The participants enjoyed the wonderful hospitality of the Barceló Bávaro Beach Resort and the beautiful environment of the Dominican Republic.

