

Hopes high for the future of the C'bean Sea Commission

THERE is a lot of optimism among regional stakeholders as it relates to getting the Caribbean Sea Commission fully operational.

That is according to Dr. Robin Mahon, director of the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES).

Speaking with the *Barbados Advocate* recently, Mahon said that was evident at the recently held Ocean Governance Conference on the Caribbean Sea Commission. He added that, as expected, there are also some stakeholders who are offered points of caution that should be considered as they press ahead with plans to operationalise the Caribbean Sea Commission, to manage the living marine resources in the region and thereby ensure the sustainability for the Caribbean Sea.

"We are dealing with a lot of regional organisations that already have their mandates, ... their turf and activities, and we are talking about a relatively new organisation that will overarch and draw together all of these organisations to address problems at a full regional level," he said.

Dr. Mahon noted that those on the ground are working quite diligently to get the process going, and there is only need



Dr. Robin Mahon, Director of the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies.

now to ensure that the information makes its way to the policymakers.

"The Caribbean Sea issues are all transboundary in nature and we are moving towards a regional level ... of co-operation in addressing those issues and a form of co-operation for reaching the highest level of policymakers. So I would say that we are definitely moving in the right direc-

tion, after years of somewhat fragmented and uncoordinated approaches," he added.

The CERMES director said that while Caribbean governments have obviously agreed that there is a need to protect the Caribbean Sea and the resources it holds, there is also a definite need to get the wider Caribbean public to get on board, which he

contended is necessary for the success of the Commission.

"That is a big challenge and we have a number of organisations that specialise in that ... but I think that we recognise that that would require effort from every organisation and at the national level, but it is certainly seen as an important component of the work of the Commission." (JRT)