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Journal of Coastal Research, an International Forum for the Littoral Sciences, is dedicated to all aspects of coastal research. These include geology, biology, geomorphology (physical geography), climate, littoral oceanography, hydrography, coastal hydraulics, environmental (resource) management, engineering, and remote sensing. Although each field functions effectively within its own purview, the cross-disciplinary nature of coastal studies requires familiarity with other fields as well. Hence, the scope of topics is necessarily broad in order to address the complexity of coastal biophysical and socio-economic interactions. Because of the wide range of interrelated topics, the journal invites original contributions and manuscripts dealing with theory, methodology, techniques, and field or applied topic studies on interdisciplinary coastal issues.

The journal encourages the dissemination of knowledge and understanding of the coastal zone by promoting cooperation and communication between specialists in different disciplines. Natural scientists, for example, are encouraged to collaborate with professionals in other fields to prepare contributions relating to the coastal zone that foster increased appreciation of coastal environments and processes. By means of this journal, with its scholarly and professional papers, systematic review articles, book and symposia reviews, communications and news, and special topical issues, an international forum for the development of integrated coastal research is provided.

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Christ of the Abyss Statue, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, Key Largo, Florida, U.S.A. Resting at approximately 8 m below the water's surface, the *Christ of the Abyss* statue is one of the most iconic dive sites in the world. With arms outstretching towards the rising sun, the 1800 kg submerged bronze sculpture was placed on the ocean floor in August of 1965. Created by Italian sculptor, Guido Galletti, it was originally made for Egidio Cressi, the famous scuba diving equipment manufacturer, and was later donated by the Cressi family to the Underwater Society of America. The statue's final resting place lies along the Florida Reef Tract, offshore of Key Largo, within John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

The Florida Reef Tract (FRT) is a pronounced shelf-edge barrier coral reef system extending offshore of Miami-Dade County southwards to the Florida Keys. Exposures to the Miami Limestone in this region, which formed during the Sangamonian high sea-level stand (OIS 5e substage), affected the morphology of the underlying bedrock along the southeast Florida continental shelf. This phenomenon contributed to the formation of submerged lithified paleoshorelines, interreefal sand channels, paleomarine abrasion surfaces, and ultimately aided in the formation of the FRT, which is currently known as the third-largest barrier reef chain in the world at approximately 270 km long. This complex barrier reef system includes geomorphological features such as patch reefs, inter-reefal sand flats, and hardground rock reef areas, and serves as essential colonization substrate for a multitude of hard and soft coral species. (Photograph taken July 2017 by Chris Makowski, Coastal Education and Research Foundation (CERF), Coconut Creek, Florida, U.S.A.)

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Dr. Charles W. Finkl is President and Executive Director of the Coastal Education and Research Foundation [CERF], publisher of the JCR. Charlie, a founding editor of the *Journal of Coastal Research*, has served as Editor-in-Chief for the past 34 years. He is a Research Professor in the Department of Geosciences at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida. He received his Bachelor and Master of Science degrees from Oregon State University and the Ph.D. from the University of Western Australia. He is a member of more than 20 professional societies and has published more than 200 professional papers, books, and reports. He is a Chartered Marine Scientist (CMarSci) [Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology], Certified Professional Geological Scientist (CPGS) [American Institute of Professional Geologists (AIPG)], Certified Professional Soil Scientist (CPSSc) [American Registry of Certified Professionals in Agronomy, Crops, and Soils], and a Professional Wetland Scientist (PWS) [Society of Wetland Scientists]. Charlie has field experience in parts of the USA, Caribbean area, Brazil, Honduras, Russia, South Africa, Western Europe, Australasia, and South Pacific islands. He is also the Series Editor of the Encyclopedia of Earth Sciences Series that is published by Springer (Germany). There are more than twenty-eight volumes in the Series and about twenty-five are available online. Charlie also serves on the Editorial Board of the *International Journal of Environmental Studies* (Routledge) and is an occasional peer reviewer for many other professional journals.

Charlie has interests and expertise in the general areas of surficial geology, coastal and marine geomorphology (including coastal classification), coastal/marine biophysical environments, exploration geochemistry, soils and weathering (regolith geology), coastal zone management and engineering applications or impacts on natural systems (including erosion control and shore protection), coastal hydrology including submarine freshwater and mineralized seeps, subaerial and marine structural geology, natural hazard mitigation in coastal zones, marine environments and coastal wetland protection and restoration, and remote sensing (e.g., land cover classification in coastal wetlands, advection-diffusion turbidity plumes in coastal waters, delineation of bottom types and sand resources), effluent disposal and pollution of wetlands and estuaries, water resources mapping and conservation, time series studies of wetland hydroperiod and soil moisture.

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The International Coastal Symposium (ICS) was originally set up by Per Bruun (deceased) and Charlie Finkl as the official meeting of the Coastal Education and Research Foundation (CERF), with one of the first meetings being held in Hilton Head, South Carolina, in 1993. After the repeated success of these meetings, CERF moved the ICS to the international scene holding these conferences in conjunction with local sponsors in Australia, Brazil, Iceland, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Poland, and Portugal. The ICS brings together delegates from all over the world to collaborate and discuss the most current coastal research studies and projects. During the ICS 2014, which was held in Durban, South Africa, a grand celebration took place to mark the 30th Anniversary of CERF and the JCR. Our next ICS meeting is scheduled for May of 2018 in Busan, South Korea. For more information, please visit www.cerf-jcr.org.

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Because CERF is concerned with broad environmental issues, our efforts concentrate on significant problems such as maintenance of good quality (potable) water with adequate supply, and hazards associated with potential beach erosion, flooding, and susceptibility of developed shorelines to storm surge and wave attack. By focusing attention on these potential man-made and natural hazards, it is hoped that our research efforts will help others improve the quality of life in diverse coastal areas. CERF thus aims to stimulate awareness of coastal (marine and freshwater shorelines) land and water problems; initiate and foster research and innovation to promote long-term coastal productivity; establish an educational forum for the debate of contentious coastal issues; and develop new principles and approaches for enlightened coastal management, and encourage their adoption and use.

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