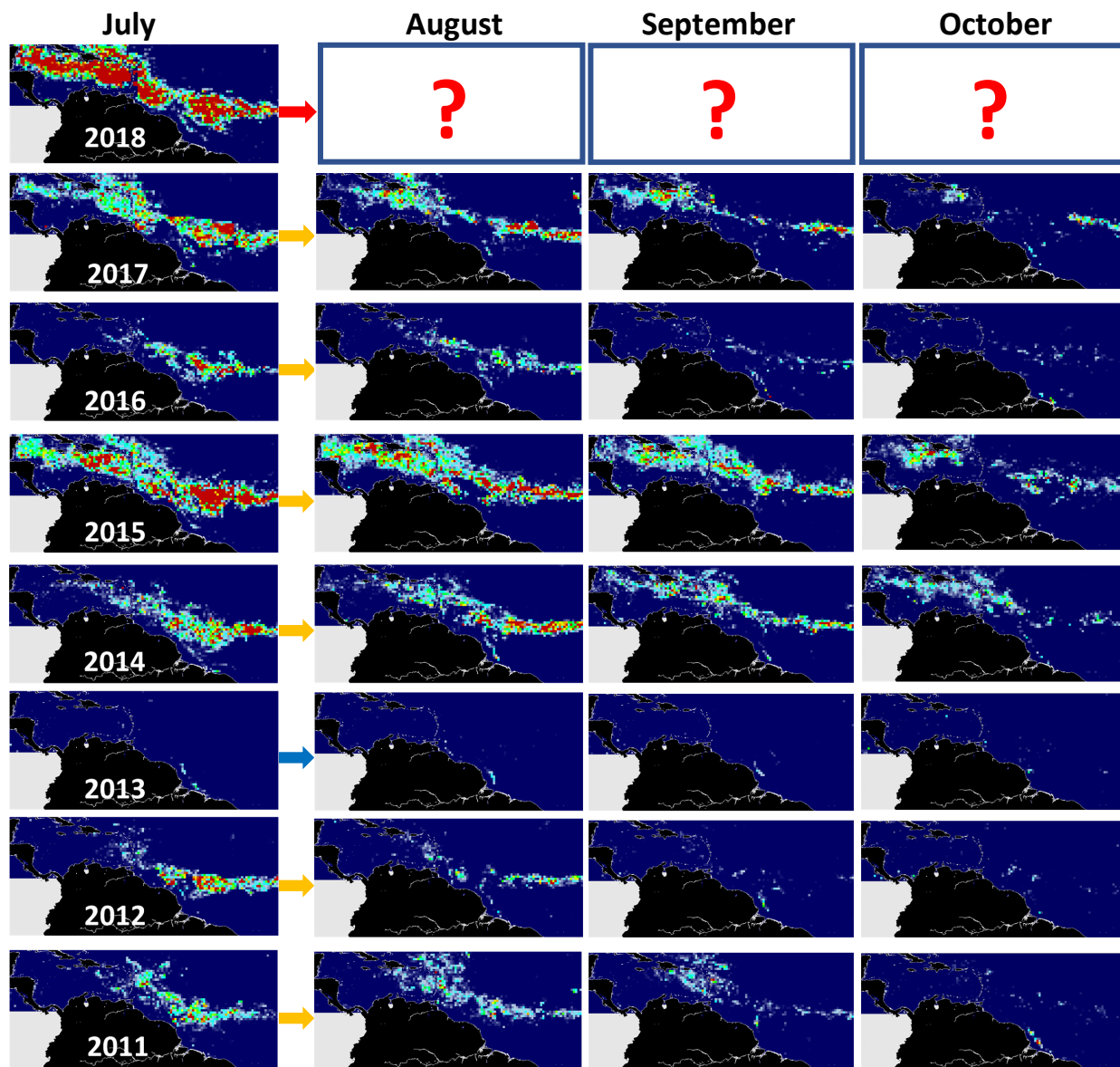


Back in early February 2018, we predicted that 2018 would be another *Sargassum* year for the Caribbean. Satellite observations in February - July confirmed this prediction, when the largest bloom (as compared to the same months in history) in both the central West Atlantic and the Caribbean was observed. The maps below show *Sargassum* abundance, with warm colors representing high abundance. Satellite observations also showed *Sargassum* transport to the Gulf of Mexico, Florida Straits, and the east coast of Florida. All these observations are confirmed by the numerous reports of beaching events in these regions. In the coming months, there is a high chance that the bloom and *Sargassum* beaching in the Caribbean will continue to at least October 2018, and possibly exceed the historical record in 2015.

Wang, M., and C. Hu (2017), Predicting *Sargassum* blooms in the Caribbean Sea from MODIS observations, *Geophys. Res. Lett.*, 44, 3265–3273, doi:10.1002/2017GL072932.



Disclaimer: The information bulletin is meant to provide a general outlook of current bloom condition and future bloom probability for the Caribbean Sea. By no means should it be used for commercial purpose, or used for predicting bloom conditions for a specific location or beach. The authors of this bulletin, as well as USF and NASA, take no responsibility for improper use or interpretation of the bulletin.