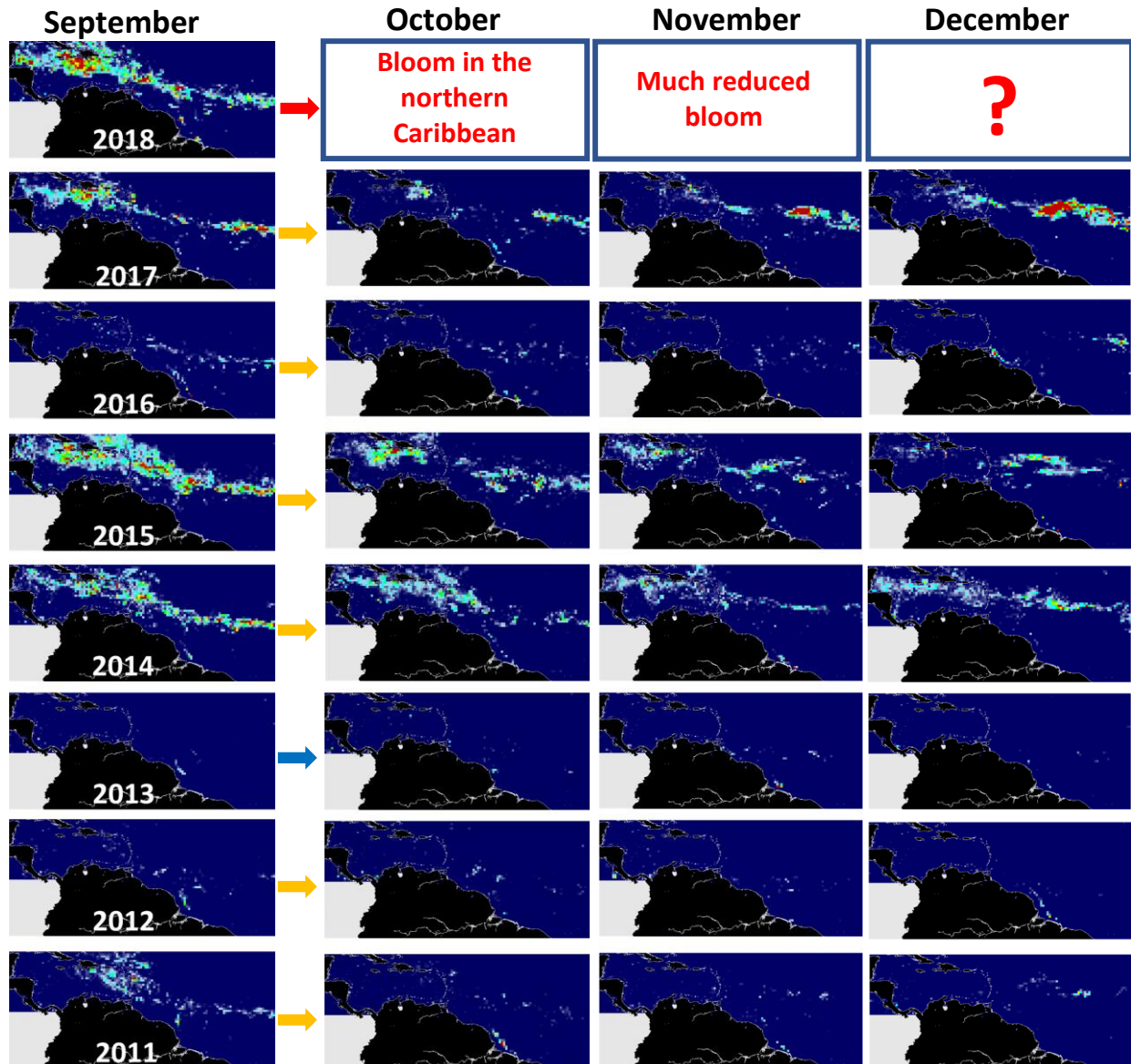


So far the Caribbean Sea has experienced a record-high *Sargassum* bloom ever since January 2018. The maps below show *Sargassum* abundance, with warm colors representing high abundance. Satellite observations also showed *Sargassum* transport to the Gulf of Mexico, Florida Straits, and the east coast of Florida. All these observations have been confirmed by the numerous reports of beaching events in these regions. In September 2018, the overall bloom intensity decreased from August, but still comparable to previous record in September 2015. Based on the current observations in the central West Atlantic and Caribbean Sea, we predict that the bloom intensity in the Caribbean Sea will continue to decrease in the coming months, and by November – December the bloom may dissipate significantly. Large *Sargassum* mats will be mostly confined in the northern Caribbean, while the southern Caribbean will be nearly free of such large mats.

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.