

The maps below show *Sargassum* abundance, with warm colors representing high abundance. **In September 2021, the total *Sargassum* amount continued to decrease from August 2021 by 35%**, with most decreases in the Central West Atlantic (CWA, i.e., the region east of the Lesser Antilles in the maps below) (40%), the Caribbean Sea (CS) (40%) and the Gulf of Mexico (GoM) (44%). In particular, the GoM is nearly *Sargassum* free. Despite the decreases, the total *Sargassum* amount **still sets a historical record (about 7 metric tons) for the month of September**, with large amounts still observed in most of the CS and in waters between the Bahama Banks and Puerto Rico. Beaching events continued around many Caribbean nations and islands.

Looking ahead, the reduction in the *Sargassum* amount is expected to continue in the fall months but the amount may still be higher than in the same months of previous years. While the Florida Keys and east coast of Florida may be free of beaching events, beaching events may continue along some Caribbean nations and islands. We will keep a close eye on how *Sargassum* in the CS and the tropical Atlantic may evolve in the next two months. More updates will be provided by the end of October 2021, and more information and near real-time imagery can be found under the *Sargassum* Watch System (SaWS, <https://optics.marine.usf.edu/projects/saws.html>).

