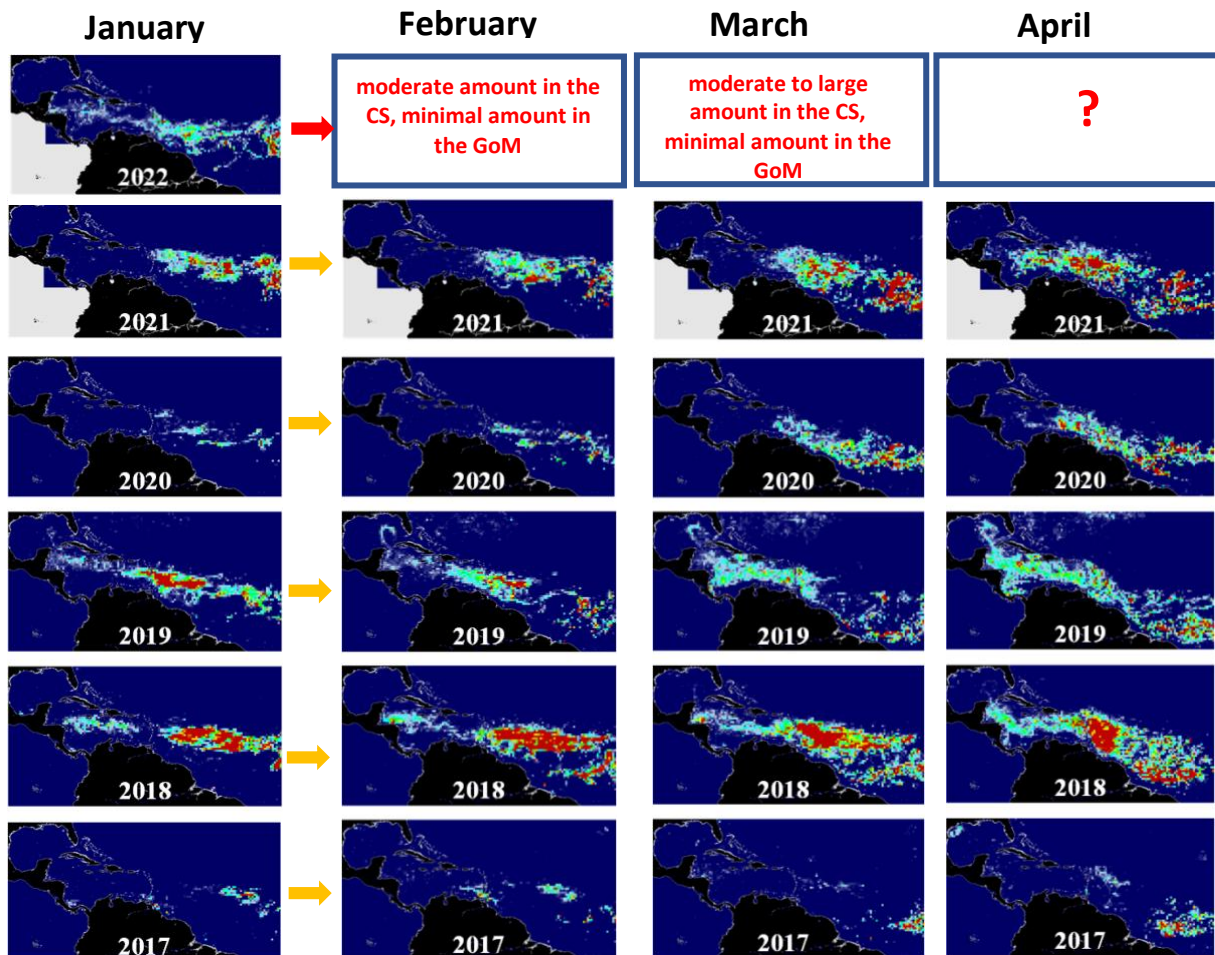




The maps below show *Sargassum* abundance, with warm colors representing high abundance. **In January 2022, the overall *Sargassum* amount increased significantly from December 2021 across the Central Atlantic and the Caribbean Sea (CS).** As predicted, small amount was observed in the CS and minimal amount was observed in the Gulf of Mexico (GoM), but moderate to large amounts of *Sargassum* were observed in the Central West Atlantic (CWA, i.e., the region east of the Lesser Antilles in the maps below) and around the Lesser Antilles. In all regions combined, the total *Sargassum* amount increased from ~1.7 million tons in December 2021 to ~4.0 million metric tons in January 2022, ranking the 4th since the first “*Sargassum* year” of 2011 for the month of January. Compared to all previous *Sargassum* years, what is unusual is the large increasing rate from December to January, suggesting that 2022 is possibly another major *Sargassum* year.

Looking ahead, *Sargassum* will likely continue to increase in the CWA and CS as well as in the Central Atlantic. As *Sargassum* is transported from the CWA to the CS, the latter is likely to have moderate amount of *Sargassum* in February 2022 while the GoM may still be largely free of *Sargassum*. 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 February 2022, 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>).



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.