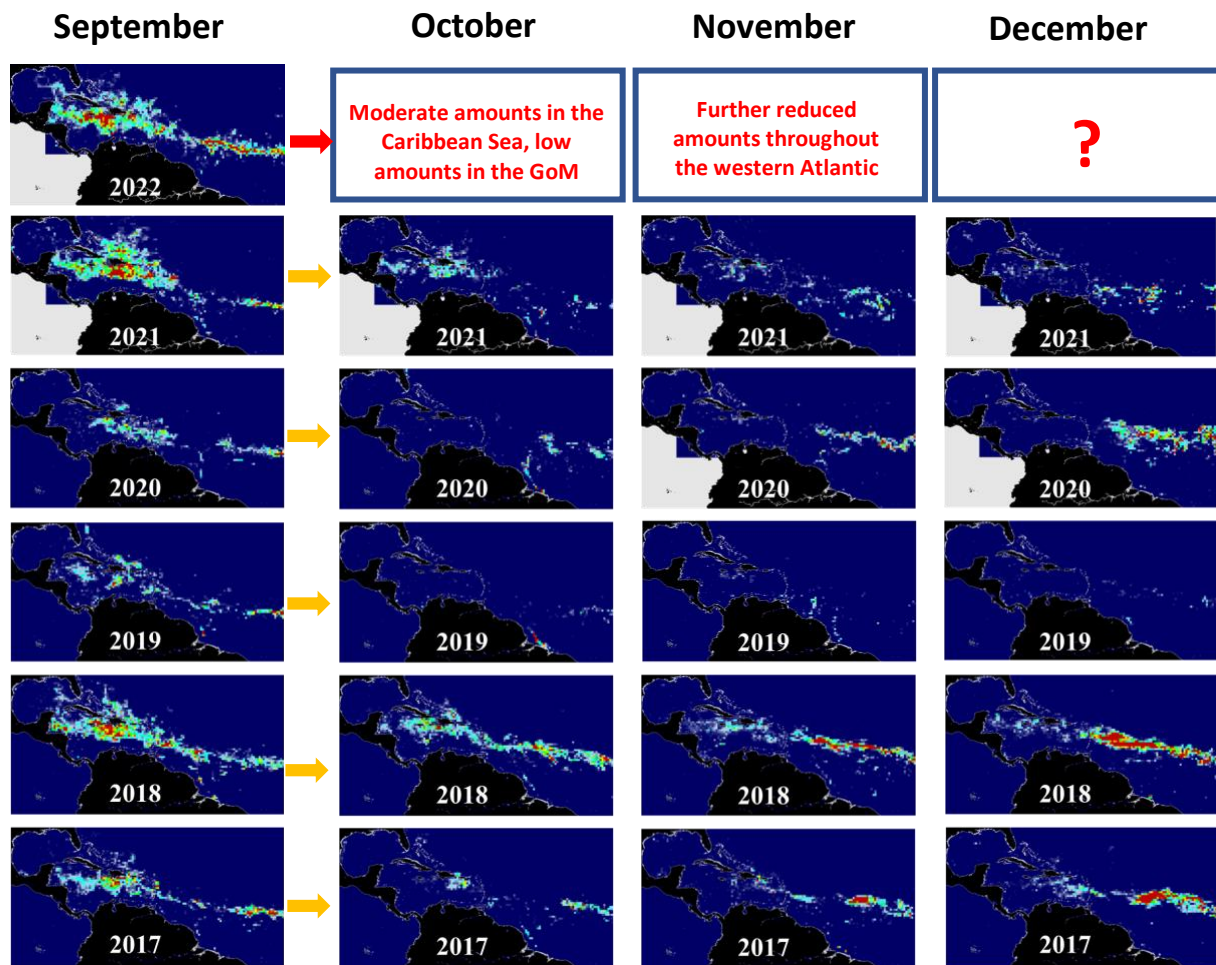




The maps below show *Sargassum* abundance, with warm colors representing higher values. In September 2022, the overall *Sargassum* amount in the central Atlantic Ocean continued to decline from previous months, **but remained at record levels (totaling ~8.5 million tons) compared to previous years** - roughly 20% higher than the previous September record (in 2021). *Sargassum* abundance in both the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico decreased roughly 40% from August levels, which was especially apparent near the end of the month. While this decrease was expected, it coincided with substantial hurricane activity (Fiona, Ian), which may have also played a role.

Looking ahead, following previous major bloom years (2018, 2021), the overall *Sargassum* abundance in the western Atlantic, Caribbean Sea, and Gulf of Mexico will likely continue to decrease through November. Of note, however, *Sargassum* is amassing in the east-central Atlantic (especially just offshore the west coast of Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia) – up 40% from August. Such a buildup has been observed in the year prior to all previous major blooms. More updates will be provided by the end of October 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.