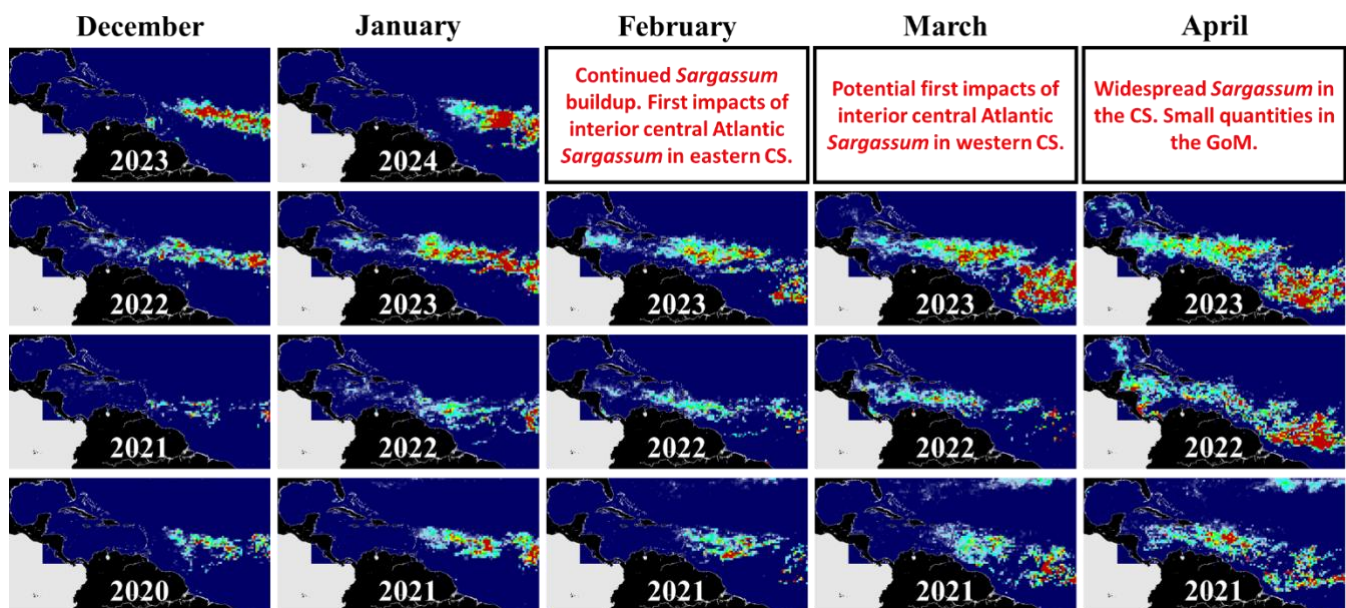




The maps below show *Sargassum* abundance, with warm colors representing higher values. Roughly 5.5 million metric tons of *Sargassum* was detected in the central Atlantic during January 2024, which represents a slight increase from that observed in December 2023. Even though this increase is less robust than the change from November to December, the current *Sargassum* abundance remains quite high for the month of January – only surpassed by the quantities in January 2018 and January 2023. Geographically, the largest aggregations remain in the interior central Atlantic basin, which have been advecting westward over the last several months. Small portions of this biomass have already begun to approach the Lesser Antilles, while the larger aggregations are still a few hundred kilometers to the East. Clusters of short-lived *Sargassum* patches were also observed offshore northeastern portions of South America (particularly near Guyana and Suriname).

As with the previous three months, essentially no *Sargassum* was observed in the Gulf of Mexico (GoM) and the Caribbean Sea (CS).

Looking ahead: We expect continued *Sargassum* growth over the next few months as the primary *Sargassum* bloom in the interior Central Atlantic continues to expand. This bloom will also continue to migrate westward, with some *Sargassum* beachings likely in the eastern CS starting in late February or early March. Different from the last year, the southeast coast of Florida (including the Florida Keys) will be largely free of *Sargassum* until at least late April or May. We will closely monitor and track *Sargassum* throughout the central Atlantic, and will provide more summary updates at the end of each month. Meanwhile, all previous monthly bulletins as well as daily updates through 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.