

## Outlook of 2024 *Sargassum* blooms

A perspective for the Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico\*

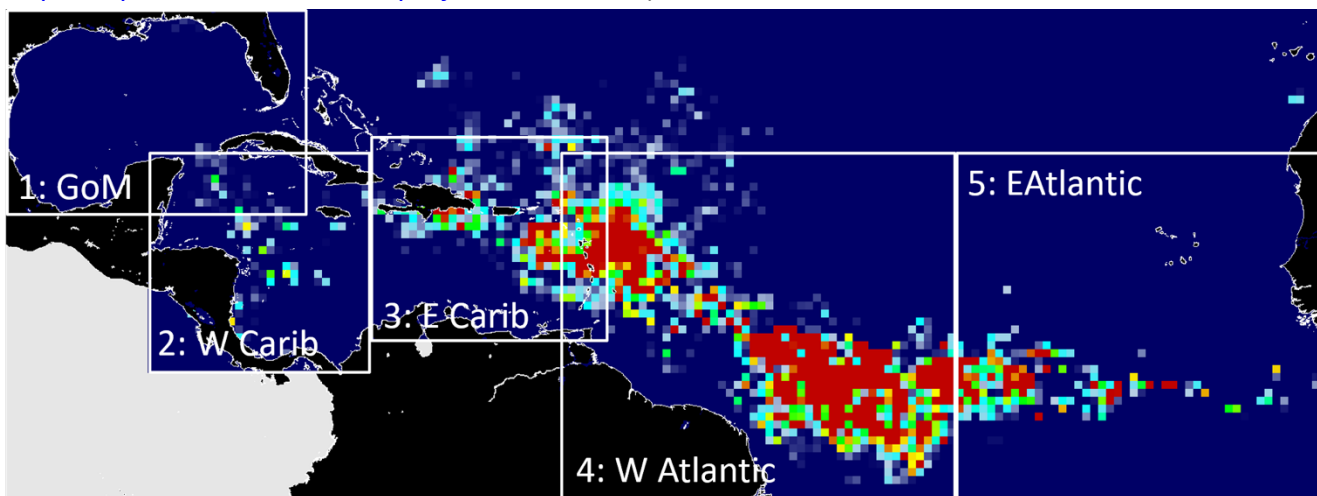
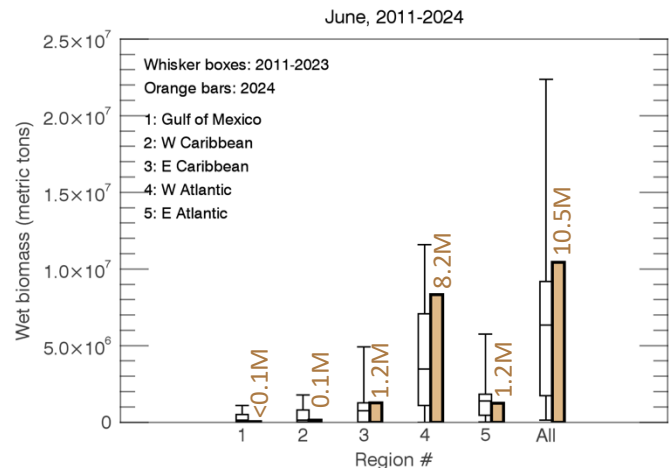
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The map below shows average *Sargassum* abundance for the month of June 2024, with warm colors representing higher abundance. The *Sargassum* abundance for each region is compared with historical values in the same month of 2011 – 2023 in the whisker box plot below, where horizontal bars in each vertical box indicate minimum, 25%, 50%, 75%, and maximal historical values, respectively.

As predicted last month, *Sargassum* amount increased in June in the central west Atlantic (Region #4) and the Caribbean Sea (CS), with the latter increase restricted to the eastern CS (Region #3). Elsewhere, *Sargassum* amount decreased in June, with the most relative reduction in the western CS (Region #2) and eastern Atlantic (Region #5). Total *Sargassum* amount in all regions combined increased slightly to 10.5 million metric tons, making it above the 75 percentile of historical levels for the month of June. Meanwhile, *Sargassum* abundance in the Gulf of Mexico (GoM, Region #1) remained low, but small amounts were found in the Florida Keys.

**Looking ahead:** The findings in May and June 2024 indicate the lack of momentum of *Sargassum* growth. Thus, total *Sargassum* amount in July is likely to remain stable or decline slightly. The western CS and the GoM are likely to remain free of severe *Sargassum* inundations. *Sargassum* inundation in the eastern CS will continue but to a lesser degree. Florida Keys and the SE coast of Florida may experience some small amounts of *Sargassum*, but not to an alarming level by any means. The southern portions of the Bahamas may see some drifting mats of *Sargassum* transported from the eastern CS. 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 and Gulf of Mexico. 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 the Federal funding agencies, take no responsibility for improper use or interpretation of the bulletin.