UNIVERSITY of SOUTH FLORIDA
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Outlook of 2026 *Sargassum* blooms

A perspective for the Caribbean Sea and Gulf of America*

June 30, 2026, by the University of South Florida Optical Oceanography Lab
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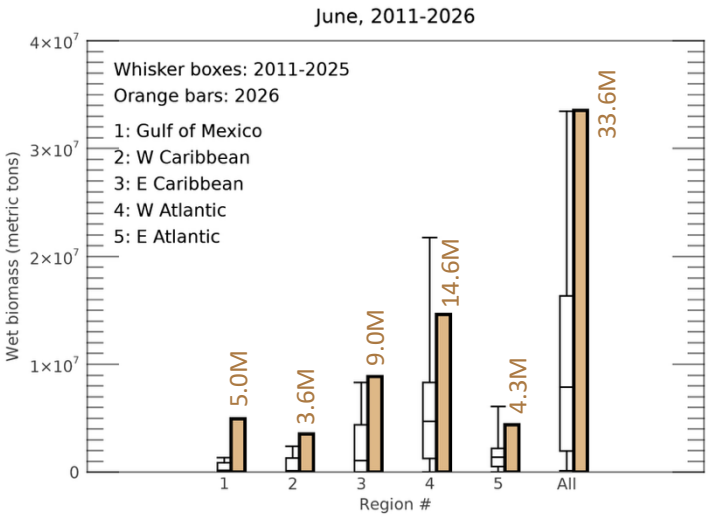
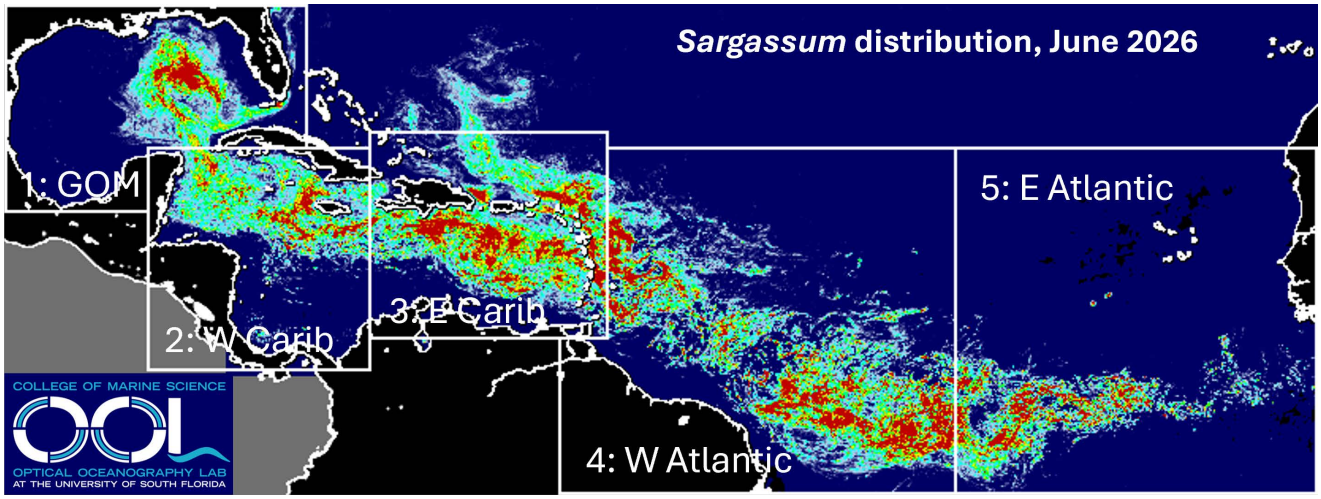
The map below shows the average *Sargassum* abundance for the month of June 2026, with warm colors representing higher abundance. The top color (red) indicates that 0.4% of the ocean surface is covered by *Sargassum*, meaning that *Sargassum* clumps and mats are scattered here and there in the location. The *Sargassum* abundance for each region is compared with historical values in the same month of 2011 – 2025 in the whisker box plot below, where horizontal bars in each vertical box indicate minimal, 25%, 50%, 75%, and maximal historical values, respectively, for the month of June.

As predicted last month, total *Sargassum* amount in all but the East Atlantic region continued to increase in June, while the distribution patterns remained stable. The Caribbean Sea continued to show record-high *Sargassum* amount for the month of June, and the total *Sargassum* amount in the Gulf reached 5 million metric tons, which nearly doubled the historical record in 2025. As a result, severe beaching events have been reported along the southeast coast of Florida. Likewise, beaching events have also continued around the Caribbean and Lesser Antilles islands.



Looking ahead: *Sargassum* amount in most regions is likely to change slightly (either increase or decrease) in July. Beaching events around the Caribbean and southeast coast of Florida will continue and likely increase. Some beaching events may also occur around Florida's Panhandle region. The year of 2026 is set to be at least the second largest *Sargassum* year, as the total amount in June is only 10% lower than the historical record in 2025.

All previous monthly bulletins as well as daily imagery can be found under the *Sargassum* Watch System (SaWS). Meanwhile, high-resolution *Sargassum* maps for selected coastal regions are also available in near real-time under "Satellite Data Products => High Resolution" of the OOL Website.



Disclaimer: The bulletin is meant to provide general outlooks of current and future bloom conditions 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. Credit for the images and information should be given to the Optical Oceanography Lab at the USF College of Marine Science.