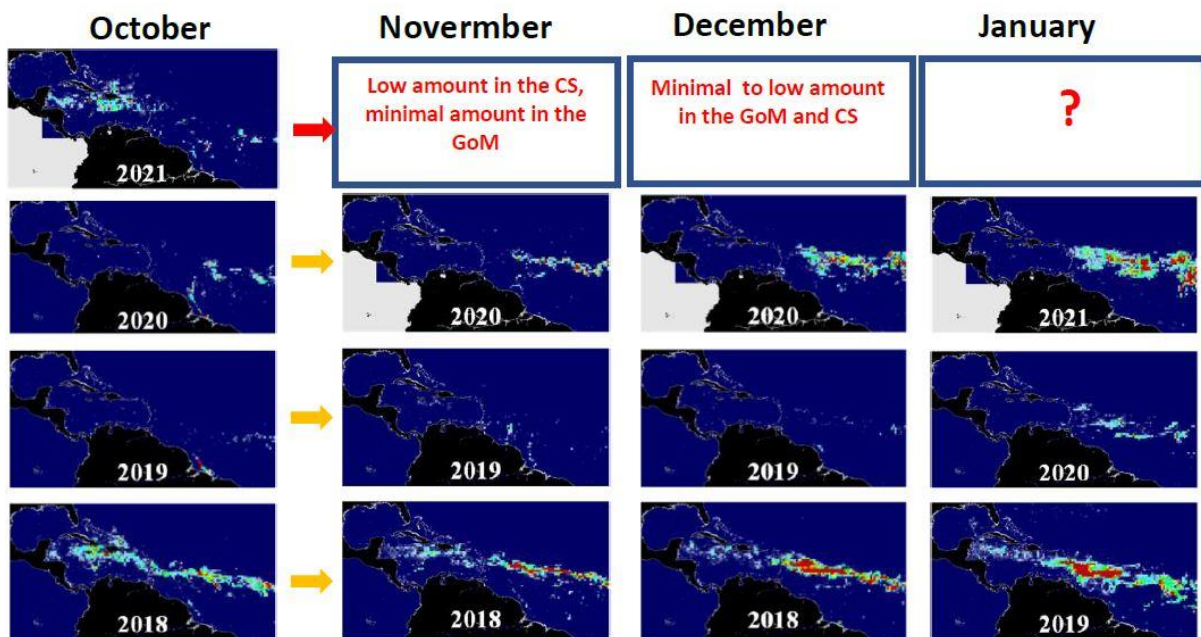


November 2021: Finally, some relief

Sargassum quantities have continued to decrease with over a 60% drop seen between September and October 2021. The University of South Florida [Optical Oceanography Lab](#) has been examining satellite images to track the sargassum blooms over the years, and states: “In October 2021, the total *Sargassum* amount continued to decrease from September 2021 (a drop of 61%). Moderate amounts continue to be observed in the Caribbean, with the southern portion completely free, but the northern portions showing some Sargassum. However, compared with other years, the amount in October 2021 is only second to October 2018.” The maps below, with warm colours representing high abundance, displays the years 2018 to 2021.



Map 1: Comparison of Sargassum blooms between 2018 and 2021. [Sargassum Watch System](#), University of South Florida

October



Map 2: October 2021

For the first time since February 2021, we are looking at minimal sargassum amounts in the waters around Antigua & Barbuda. While the maps indicate that there remains some sargassum to the East of the Caribbean island chain, this is way less than we have seen in previous months. This year continues to look like it will be the second worst year on record

The impacts of sargassum will continue to be felt throughout the island, but on a largely reduced rate.

Realistically, we are now looking at the end of the “Sargassum season”, as historic records show that November, December and January are low quantity months. However, Sargassum is versatile, and stakeholders are advised to continue to be vigilant and take all efforts to reduce the impact of a the Sargassum where possible. We will continue to monitor the satellite reports and track *Sargassum* movement across the Atlantic to the best of our abilities.



The Islands of the Caribbean, inclusive of Antigua, Barbuda and Redonda, have been affected by Sargassum Seaweed (*Sargassum sp.*) since 2011. Sargassum blooms appear to originate off the coast of South America and have been affecting the Caribbean island chain with varying ecological and anthropogenic/economic effects. Sargassum seaweed grow on the ocean surface and provide ecosystem services such as habitat for juvenile marine organisms (e.g. fish, turtles) and foraging areas while on the sea, but biologically degrade upon contact with the shoreline, leading to negative impacts.

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**Maps and Data Source: <https://optics.marine.usf.edu/projects/saws.html>*