

The maps below show *Sargassum* abundance, with warm colors representing high abundance. **In May 2021, the *Sargassum* amount continued to increase across the central west Atlantic (CWA) and the Caribbean Sea (CS), which also sets a new historical record for the month of May.** Large amount of *Sargassum* was observed in CWA, i.e., the region east of the Lesser Antilles in the maps below, and in the entire CS. Moderate amount has been transported from the CS to the Gulf of Mexico (GoM), the Straits of Florida, and along the east coast of Florida following the Loop Current, Florida Current, and the Gulf Stream, respectively. Correspondingly, small amount of *Sargassum* was observed in the Straits of Florida and along the east coast of Florida with possible beaching events. On the other hand, significant beaching events may have occurred around most of the Caribbean nations and islands.

Looking ahead, 2021 will be another major *Sargassum* year, and the *Sargassum* amount in the CS will likely increase continuously into the summer, accompanied with more beaching events. Meanwhile, *Sargassum* transport to the GoM will also continue, indicating more beaching events in the Florida Keys and along the east coast of Florida. We will keep a close eye on how *Sargassum* in the CS and GoM as well as in the tropical Atlantic may evolve in the next two months. More updates will be provided by the end of June 2021, 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>).

