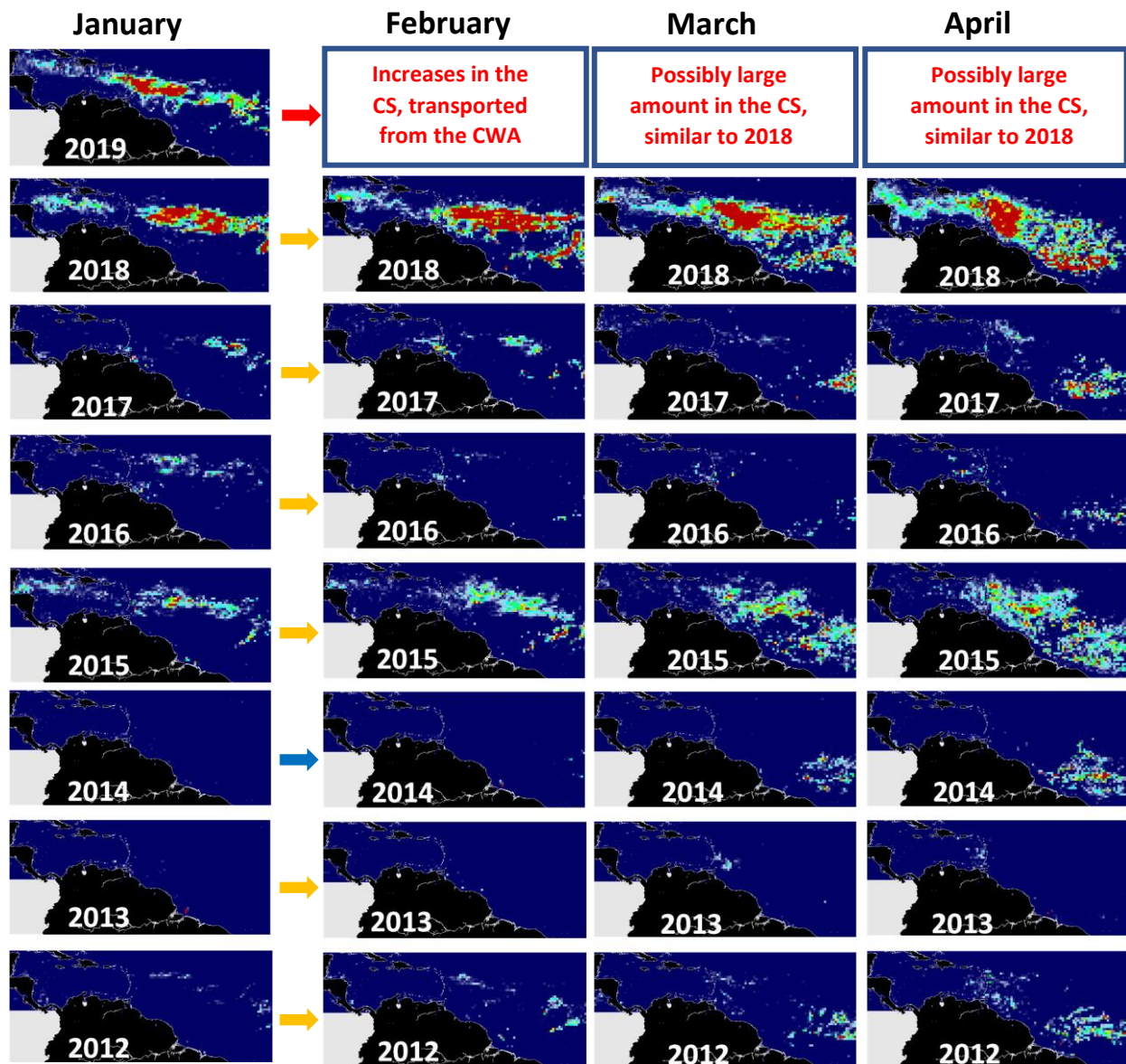


In 2018, the Caribbean Sea (CS) has experienced a record-high and prolonged *Sargassum* bloom. The maps below show *Sargassum* abundance, with warm colors representing high abundance. In Jan 2019, similar blooms as in Jan 2018 appeared in the CS and the Central West Atlantic (CWA). In the following months, it is likely that the CWA *Sargassum* will continue to be transported to the CS through the entire Lesser Antilles islands, especially from Guadeloupe to Trinidad. Indeed, significant *Sargassum* beaching has been reported in Guadeloupe, Martinique, and Barbados. *Sargassum* beaching along the SE coast of Florida has also been reported, apparently originated from the Caribbean. While it is too early to predict the bloom situation in summer 2019, if the growth conditions in the Atlantic are favorable in the next months, it is likely that 2019 may be another major bloom year (similar to 2018) for the CS.

Wang, M., and C. Hu (2017), Predicting *Sargassum* blooms in the Caribbean Sea from MODIS observations, *Geophys. Res. Lett.*, 44, 3265–3273, doi:10.1002/2017GL072932.



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.