


# The Sargasso Sea Commission Working to Protect the “Golden Rain Forest of the Atlantic”

*Dr. David Freestone*  
Executive Secretary,  
Sargasso Sea Commission

2nd Range State Meeting on the European Eel  
Malmo, Sweden  
15-16 May, 2018







Why is the Sargasso Sea  
important?





- Unique open-ocean sargassum-based ecosystem. Mostly High Seas
- Important for life history of many species (eels, turtles, tuna, billfish, sharks, etc.)





Sargassum fish - JP Rouja



**Sargassum Swimming Crab**  
**NOAA**





Sea horse JP Rouja



# Iconic species



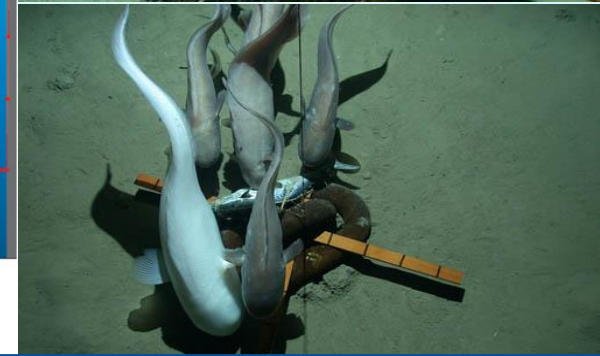
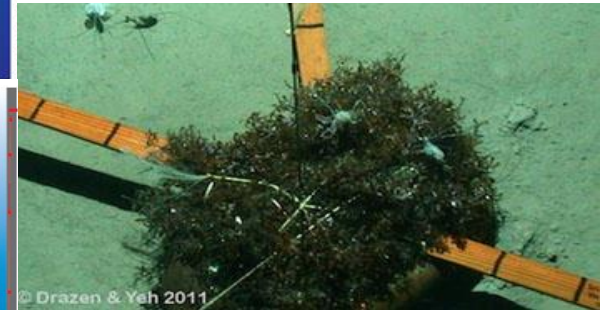
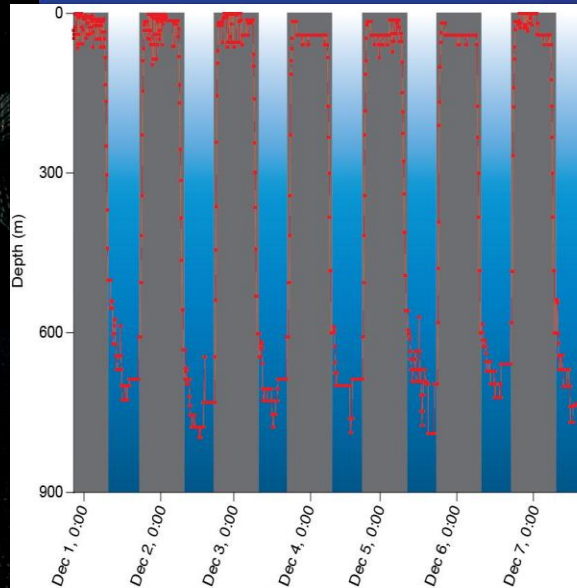




**Humpback in Sargassum**  
**Andrew Stephenson**



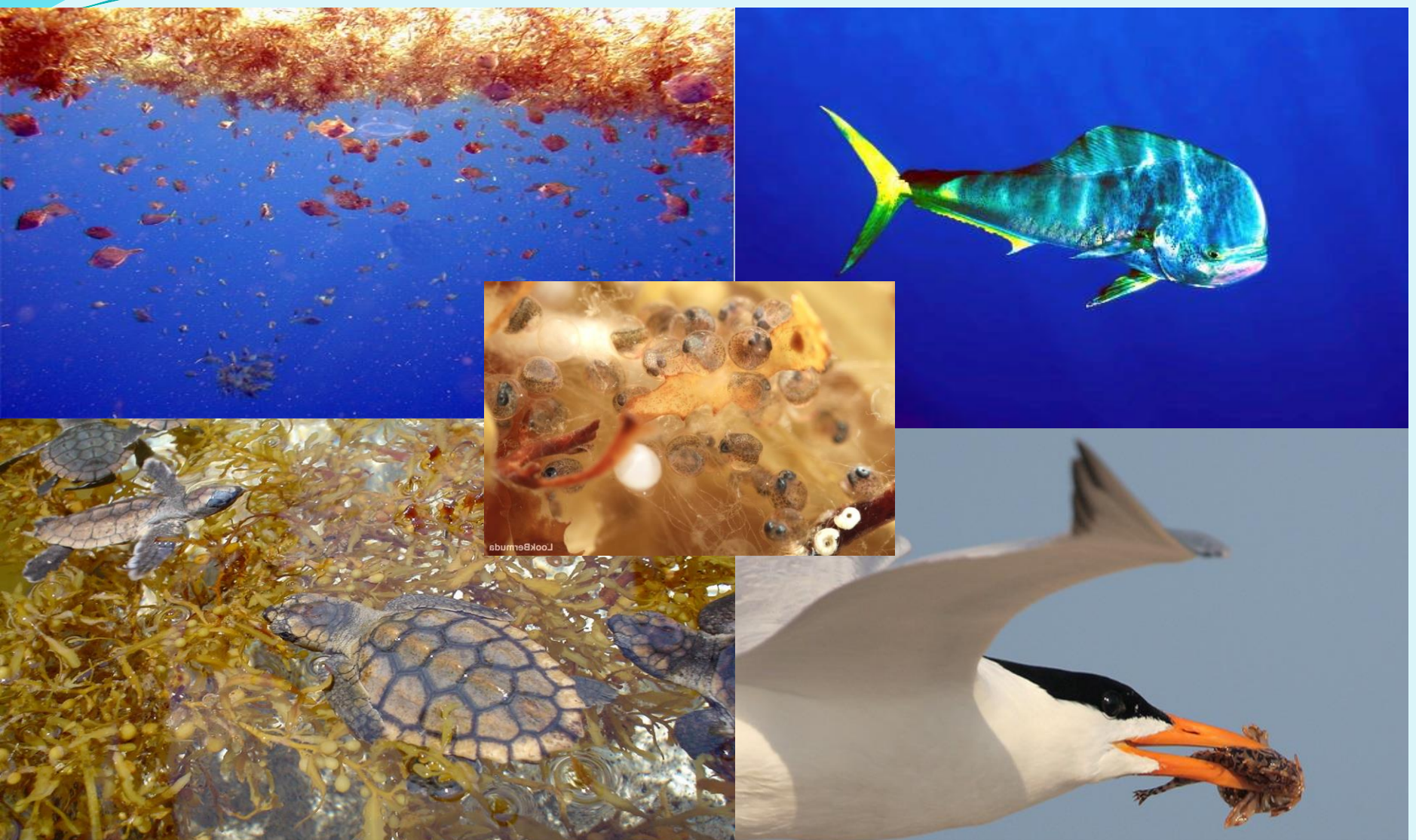
# Midwater and Benthic Fauna





# Nursery/Feeding area:

eggs/juveniles of >80 fish species occur in Sargassum





Flying fish eggs JP Rouja





Flying fish JP Rouja

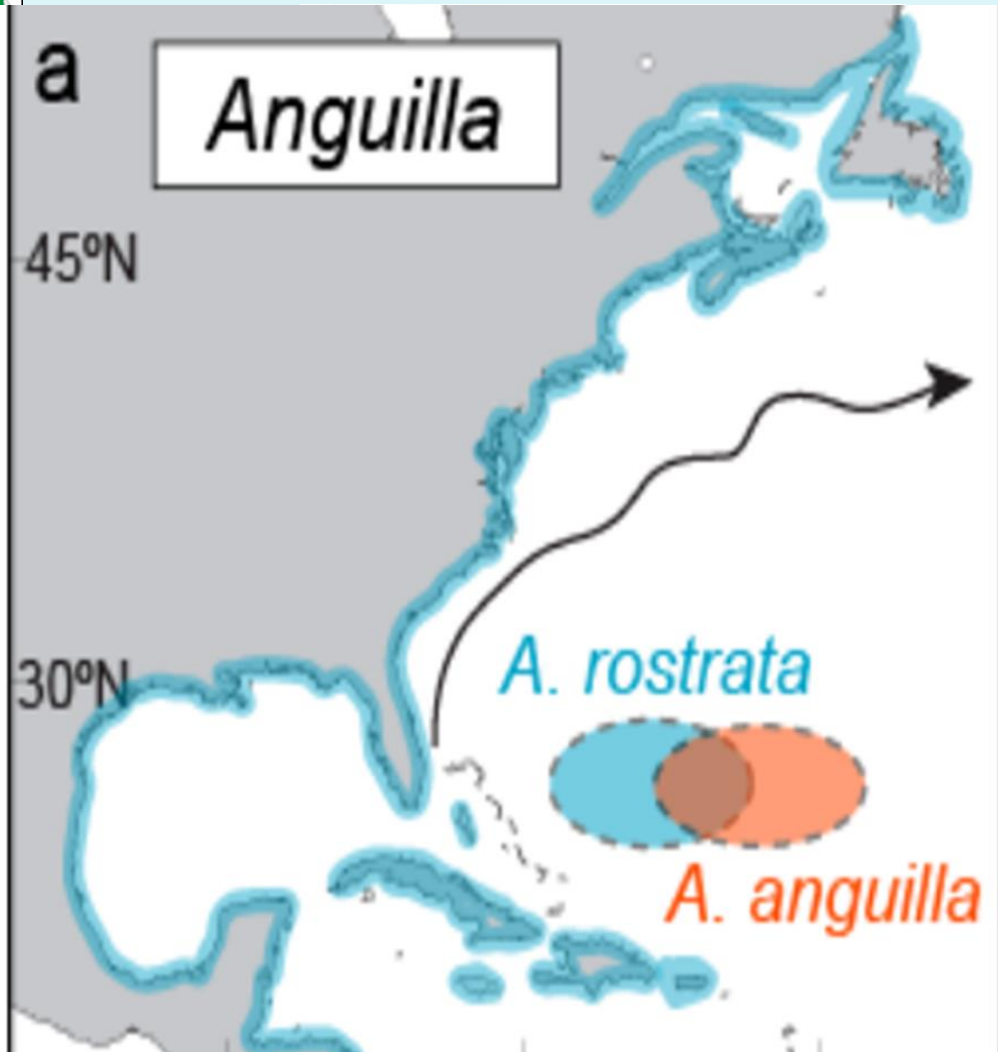
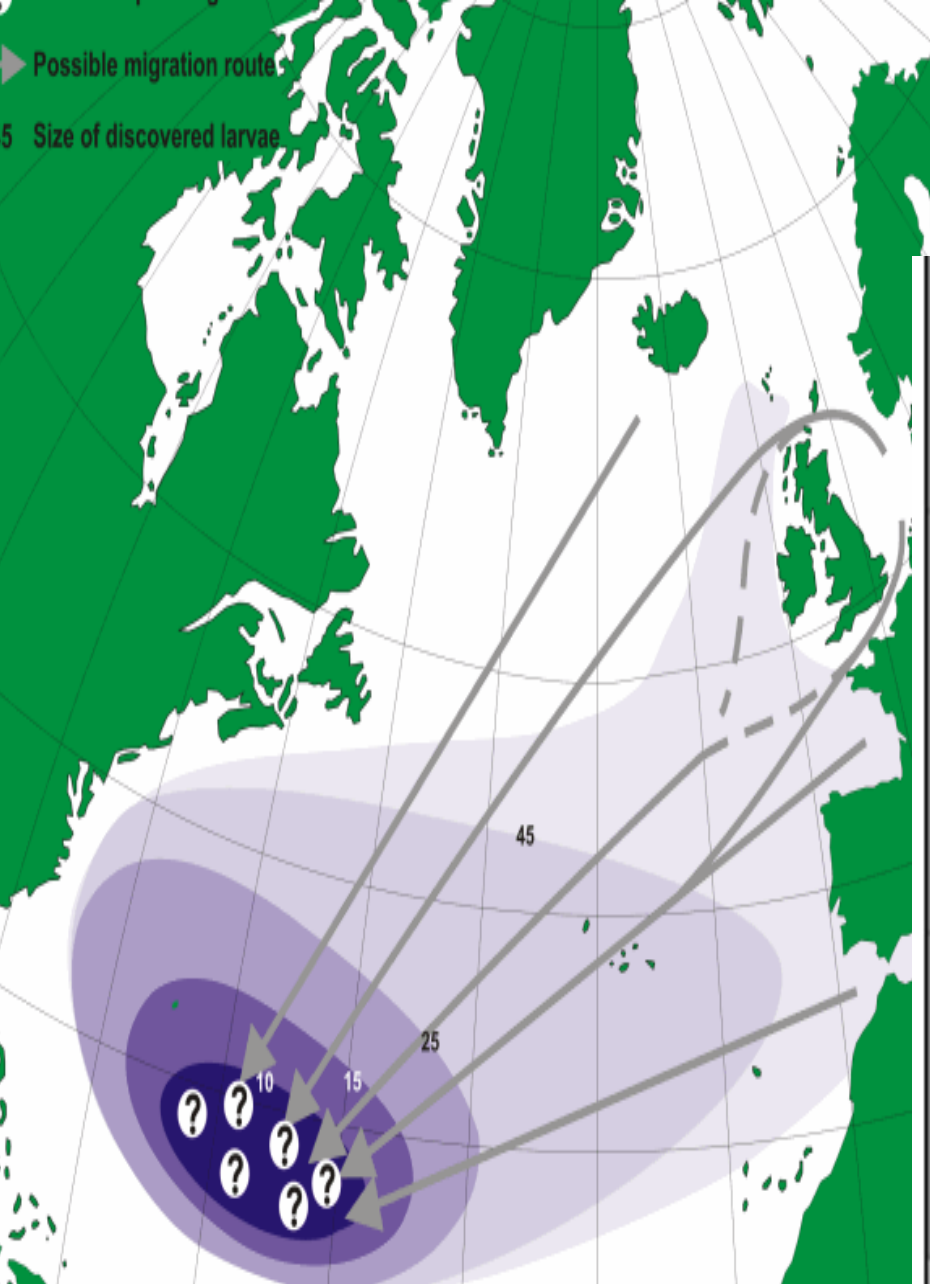


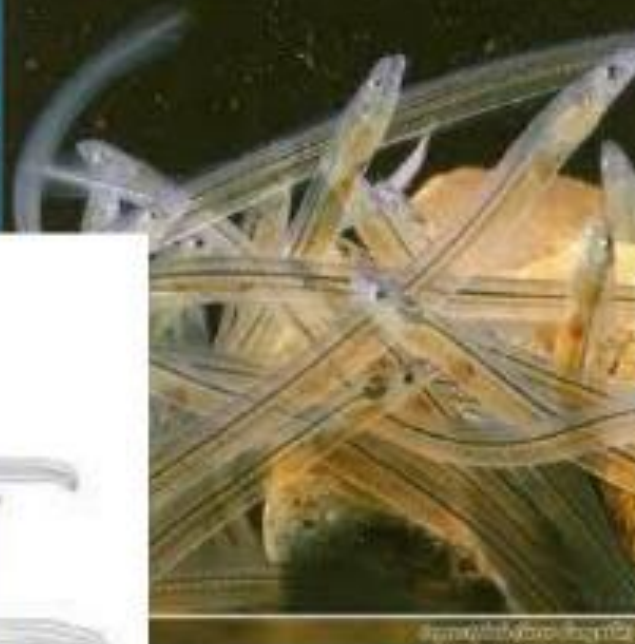


Baby Leatherbacks

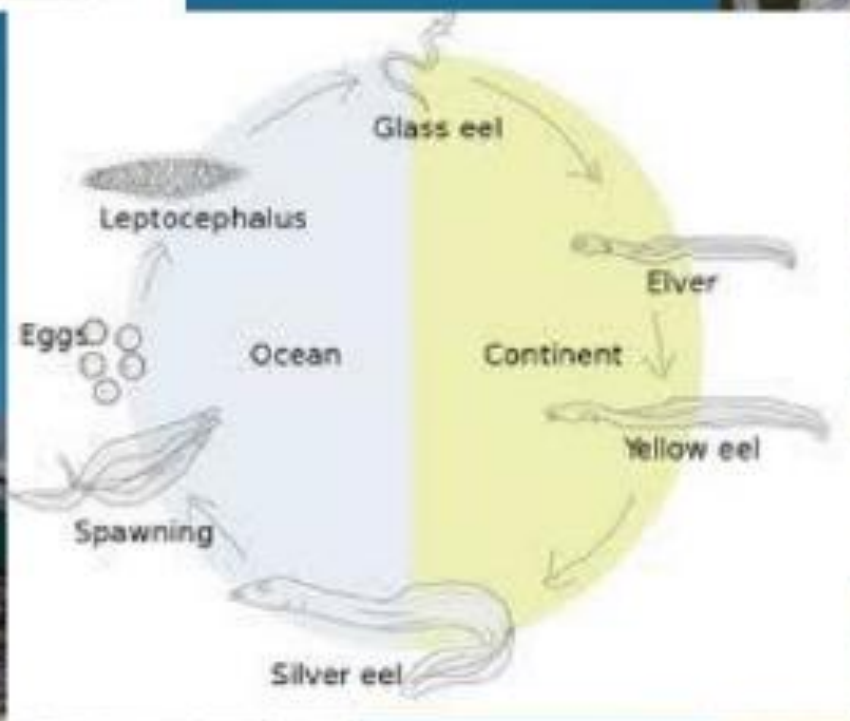


# Global Connections





## European Eel Life Cycle





# The Hamilton Declaration on Collaboration for the Conservation of the Sargasso Sea

(March 2014)

# Hamilton Declaration Signatories

## Governments

- Azores
- Bahamas 2016
- Bermuda
- British Virgin Islands 2016
- Canada 2016
- Cayman Islands 2017
- Dominican Republic 2018
- Monaco
- United Kingdom
- United States
- Netherlands, Sweden, South Africa,
- Turks and Caicos\*

## Observer Organizations

- ISA~ International Seabed Authority Secretariat
- OSPAR (former Executive Secretary)
- Convention on Migratory Species Secretariat
- IUCN
- Inter-American Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Sea Turtles

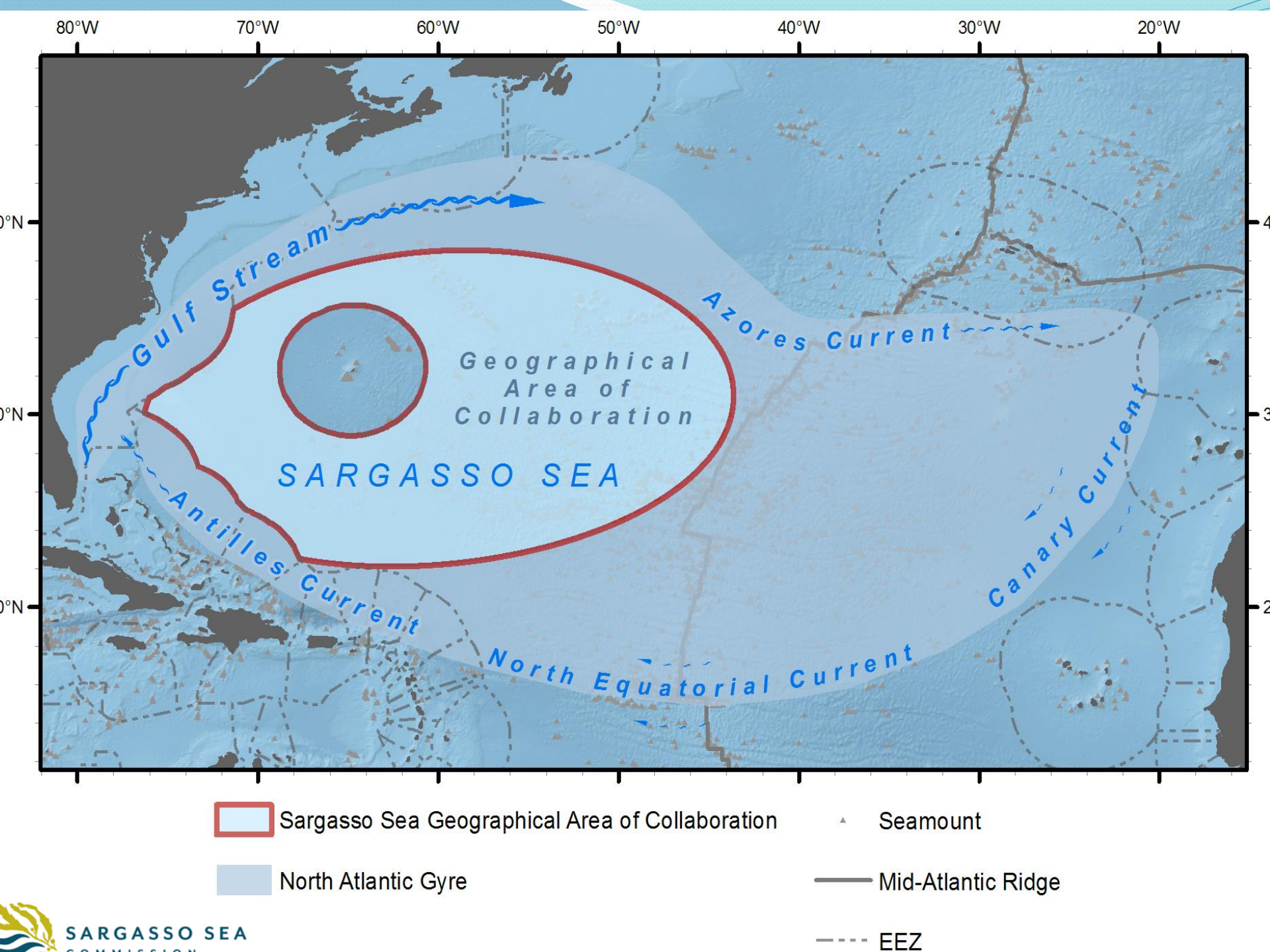
\* *Trinidad and Tobago  
unable to attend but  
supportive*



# Hamilton Meeting Participants 2014









# The Sargasso Sea Commission

# Role of the Sargasso Sea Commission

- Exercise a **stewardship role** for the Sargasso Sea and keep its health, productivity and resilience under continual review; and
- Develop a **work programme** and action plans for the conservation of the Sargasso Sea ecosystem





Prof Stephen de Mora  
Mark Spalding

Prof Howard Roe (Chair)  
Senator Wilfred Moore

Dr Tammy Warren  
Frederico Cardicos

Dr Billy Causey

# 5. Conservation of Migratory Species





# Convention on Migratory Species

- Monaco submitted Submission for listing of *Anguilla anguilla*
- July 2014 CMS Science Council supported
- Approved at Quito CoP Nov 2014~
- 2015 Oct Workshop on American Eels ~ Maine
- 2016 Range State Meeting



# American Eel Symposium

## Portland, Maine 23-25 October 2015







# Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

*Secretariat provided by the United Nations Environment Programme*



## First Range States Workshop on the European Eel

*Galway, Ireland, 13 – 14 October 2016*





# American Eel Range State Workshop

## Santo Domingo, 4-6 April, 2018







**CMS**

# Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

*Secretariat provided by the United Nations Environment Programme*



**UNEP**



**Second Range State Workshop on the European Eel  
Global Ocean Institute, World Maritime University,**

**Malmö, Sweden, 15-16 May 2018**

# THANK YOU



For more information

[www.sargassoseacommission.org](http://www.sargassoseacommission.org)