



Florida Keys BleachWatch Program

Current Conditions Report #20070601



June 1, 2007

Summary: Based on climate predictions, current conditions, and field observations, the threat for mass coral bleaching within the FKNMS is currently **LOW**.

Weather and Sea Temperatures

Weather and sea surface temperature (SST) predictions for the 2007 season by NOAA's Climate Prediction Center indicate that while SST's for the southern Caribbean are anticipated to be slightly above average over the next month, it is likely that SST's in the Florida Keys will remain average to below average for this time of year over the next few weeks (Figure 1).

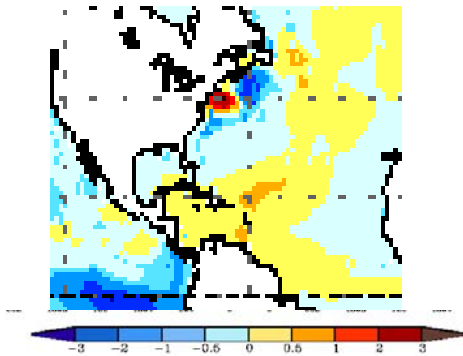


Figure 1. NOAA's Climate Prediction Center's sea surface temperature forecast for June,

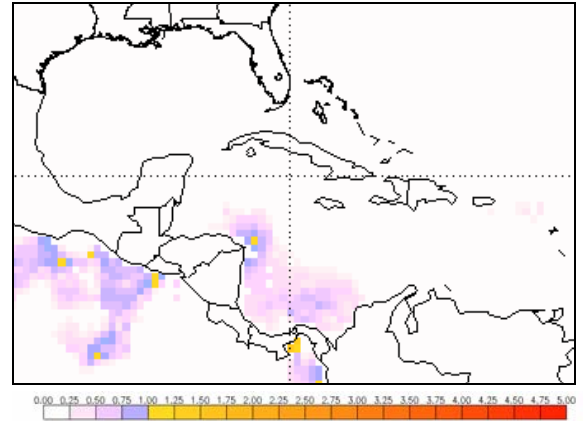


Figure 2. NOAA's Coral Bleaching HotSpot Map for May 31, 2007.
www.osdpd.noaa.gov/PSB/EPS/SST/climohot.html

Current remote sensing analysis by NOAA's Coral Reef Watch program shows that current conditions in the Florida Keys do not indicate similar signs of building thermal stress. NOAA's recent Coral Bleaching HotSpot Map (Figure 2), current SST's compared to the historically expected SST's for the region, shows no current elevated temperature anomalies for the Florida Keys. Similarly, NOAA's latest Degree Heating Weeks (DHW) map, which indicates the accumulation of elevated temperature in an area based on the previous 12 weeks (Figure 3), shows no accumulating temperature stress in the Florida Keys region. Although sea temperature readings at NOAA's *in-situ* monitoring station at Sombrero Tower did show signs of increasing temperatures earlier in the month (Figure 4), all operational SeaKeys monitoring stations in the Middle and Upper Keys are still currently well below 30°C (86°F). *In-situ* sea temperature data is still not available for the Dry Tortugas and Sand Key region as a result of hurricane damage in 2005.

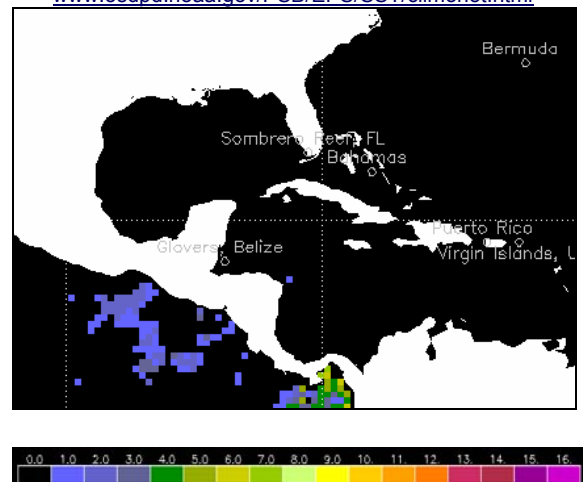


Figure 3. NOAA's Degree Heating Weeks Map for May 31, 2006.
www.osdpd.noaa.gov/PSB/EPS/SST/dhw_retro.html

Mote Marine Laboratory will continue to routinely review the NOAA HotSpot maps, DHW maps, and *in-situ* sea temperature data from NOAA monitoring stations on a daily basis for the remainder of the bleaching season.

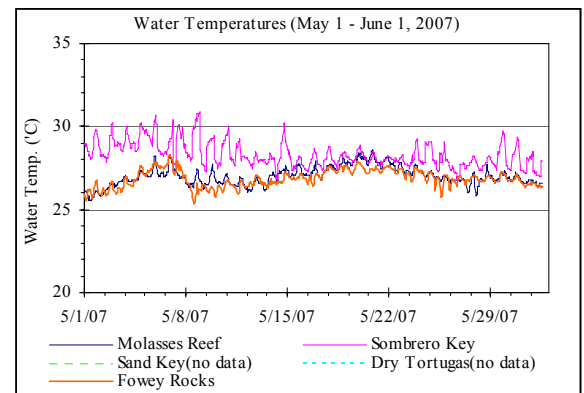


Figure 4. Summary of *in-situ* sea temperature data from NOAA/FIO monitoring stations from May 1-June 1, 2007.



Mote Marine Laboratory / Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

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Conditions of Corals

There are 4 training sessions planned for the beginning of June, 2007 for anyone interested in participating as an observer with the BleachWatch Program.

Marathon Library

3251 Overseas Highway (Oceanside)

Wednesday, June 6th, 2007

6:30 p.m.

Nancy Foster Eco-Discovery Center, Key West

33 East Quay Road

Wednesday, June 13th, 2007

6:30 p.m.

Islamorada Library

Mile Marker 81.5 (Bayside)

Tuesday, June 19th, 2007

6:30 p.m.

Key Largo Library

Mile Marker 101.4

Tradewinds Shopping Center (Oceanside)

Wednesday, June 20th, 2007

6:30 p.m.

Additional training sessions will be scheduled to accommodate other interested groups or organizations. For information on joining the BleachWatch program, or to organize a training session for your group or organization, please contact the number below.

Frequent coral condition observations from throughout the Florida Keys are needed for the remainder of the summer season. Please be sure to submit your observations after every visit to the reef, even if no bleaching was observed. To submit an observation on coral condition, or for more information on the Florida Keys BleachWatch program, please go to <http://www.mote.org/Keys/bleaching.phtml>, or contact:

Cory Walter
Mote Marine Laboratory
(305) 745-2729 x301
cwalter@mote.org

<http://www.mote.org/Keys/bleaching.phtml>

