



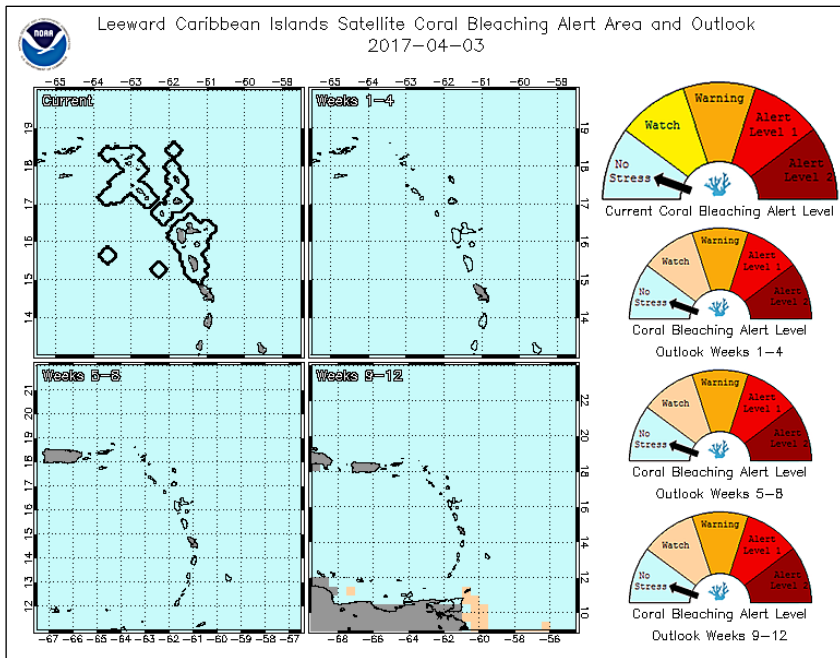
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA CORAL REEF WATCH



...Nil thermal stress on corals continues...

Situation and forecast

Preliminary data indicate that sea surface temperature (SST) around Antigua and Barbuda is above normal for March. This would make the 19th consecutive month of higher than normal SST for the area. The mean SST is around **26.7 °C (80.1 °F)**. Nevertheless, this is well below the **bleaching threshold of 29.6 °C (85.3 °F)**, which is expected for this time of year. This means that the thermal stress on corals remains at nil. The SST is about 0.6 °C (1.1 °F) higher than usual for March. The sea surface has cooled by around 0.1 °C (0.2 °F) since last month. The record high SST for March is 27.5 °C (81.5 °F), observed in 2010, based on NOAA's ERSTv4.



No thermal stress is anticipated through **July** (see above) and certainly not before late summer (see update).

The rest of the region

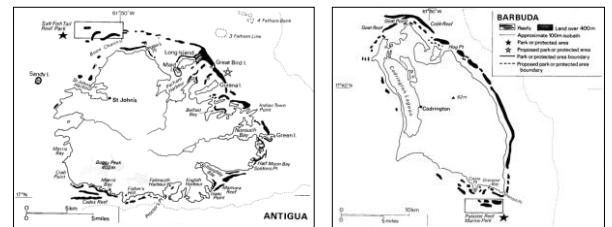
The thermal stress levels across the Caribbean, as of **March 30, 2017**, like Antigua and Barbuda, is at nil. Minimal thermal stress is anticipated over the next four months: **April to July 2017** (See also [Caribbean Coral Reef Watch](#)).

Over 90% of coral reefs will die by 2050

The news keeps getting worse for coral reefs. In a recently published [article](#), it is estimated that over 90% of all the world's coral reefs will die by 2050, due primarily to climate change bleaching. Already, half have died in the last 30 years. If the other half were to die, it would literally result in dire consequences, especially for small island developing states like Antigua and Barbuda, which are highly dependent on the vast **eco-services of coral reefs** for their existence. Recall that corals are worth over **6 trillion pounds (£)** to the world annually – only water and trees are deemed more valuable. Figures are not available for Antigua and Barbuda but a study estimates that coral reefs could worth **US\$10-14 million dollars** yearly by 2025 to the Jamaica economy.

Why should we care?

Coral reefs are especially important given their immeasurable contribution to tourism, fisheries, leisure and disaster risk reduction. Click on the maps below to see the location of our coral reefs:



Related resources:

- [Recent 30-day SST anomaly animation](#)
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For more information, contact:
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