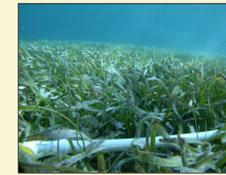


**Map Legend:**



**Dense Seagrass**

This habitat is dominated by the seagrass *Thalassia*, also called Turtle Grass, but may contain the tube-like seagrass *Syringodium*. Dense Seagrass habitats have high biomass (tall plants, high density) and a low amount of visible sand and silt. This habitat is found in lagoonal environments where sediment is deep enough for the seagrasses to take root.



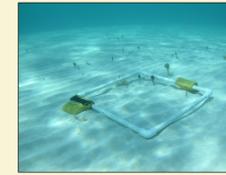
**Medium Density Seagrass**

This habitat is dominated by the seagrass *Thalassia*, also called Turtle Grass, but may contain the tube-like seagrass *Syringodium* and the thin-bladed seagrass *Halodule*. Occasionally one also finds small coral colonies within the seagrass. Medium Density Seagrass habitats have medium biomass (medium plant height, medium density) and a medium amount of substratum is visible, when compared to Dense and Sparse Seagrass. This habitat is found in lagoonal environments.



**Sparse Seagrass**

This habitat is dominated by the seagrass *Thalassia*, also called Turtle Grass, but may contain the tube-like seagrass *Syringodium* and the thin-bladed seagrass *Halodule*. Occasionally one also finds small coral colonies within the seagrass. Sparse Seagrass habitats have relatively low biomass (short plants, low density) and a high amount of substratum is visible. This habitat is found in lagoonal environments where sediment is deep enough for the seagrasses to take root.



**Sand and Sparse Algae**

This habitat includes both clean sand and sand with a sparse algal community. It is found near seagrass beds and patch reefs in Eastern Abaco.



**Sargassum on Hardbottom**

This habitat contains numerous *Sargassum* plants, typically on a hardbottom with a limited covering of sediment. *Sargassum* plants can reach more than 1 meter tall. Other algae often occur between the *Sargassum* plants. This habitat occurs in medium energy lagoonal environments and in large areas of the forereef which are exposed to the strong prevailing winds.



**Patch Reef**

Patch reefs are reef formations often found in lagoons and surrounded by seagrass beds. They commonly have a small 'halo' around them of relatively clear sand cleaned by grazing fish and invertebrates. They support much more diverse invertebrate and fish communities than surrounding habitats. Patch reefs are the dominant coral reef formations in this region of Abaco.



**Mangrove**

Mangrove trees grow in shallow, brackish waters along coasts and up creeks of Bahamian islands. Their roots provide nursery habitat for many important fish species. Mangroves in and around estuaries also trap sediments that might otherwise flow onto reefs and smother corals to death.



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**Images of the east coast of Abaco, The Bahamas.**  
The depicted area ranges from approximately 3.5 km north to 10.5 km south of Hope Town (Elbow Cay).



The photo-like image on the left was created from spectral data collected by the IKONOS satellite sensor in July 2000. The habitat map on the right, including the 7 common, shallow bottom habitat types represented, was constructed from this spectral data as well. The habitat classification process used habitat-type data from ground-truthing spot surveys to assist with and verify classifications. This poster was designed for research and educational purposes only and is not intended for either navigation or quantitative assessments of all habitat types.