Prewave

Natural Hazard Outlook

9 November 2026

Southern Hemisphere Cyclone Season: 2026–27 Outlook

Status: Season underway

Scope. This outlook covers the November 2026 to April 2027 cyclone season in the South-West Indian Ocean, the Australian region and the South Pacific. Forecasts are those published by Météo-France La Réunion, Earth Sciences New Zealand and the Fiji Meteorological Service, and ECMWF modelling for the Australian region, as reported up to 5 November 2026. Past events are selected for their impact on ports and logistics.

Sources are cited throughout and listed at the end of the report. Cover image: Tropical Cyclone Zelia off Western Australia, 13 February 2025, NASA Worldview (MODIS Terra).

Summary

Horizon	November 2026 to April 2027
Risk level	**Moderate**: fewer cyclones forecast overall, but the risk has moved rather than disappeared
Basins covered	South-West Indian Ocean, Australian region, South Pacific
Audience	Supply chain and procurement teams at manufacturing, automotive, and aerospace and defence companies

The 2026–27 Southern Hemisphere cyclone season has started early in two of its three basins. Tropical Cyclone Wati was named on 17 October and struck the southern Cook Islands two weeks before the official start of the South Pacific season [9; 10]. Severe Tropical Storm Agueda formed near the Seychelles on 19 October, almost a month before the South-West Indian Ocean season officially opens on 15 November [4].

The very strong El Niño now under way is the single largest influence on what follows. Forecasters in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and La Réunion agree on the direction: fewer cyclones near the Pilbara iron ore coast, the Coral Sea, Madagascar and Mozambique, and more risk in the central and eastern South Pacific [1; 2; 5]. Fewer storms is not the same as no storms. The Gulf of Carpentaria and the Queensland coast are forecast near normal, and the last El Niño season produced Cyclone Megan, which halted a major share of global manganese ore exports for over a year [2; 18; 19; 20].

1 The Cyclone Season, Explained

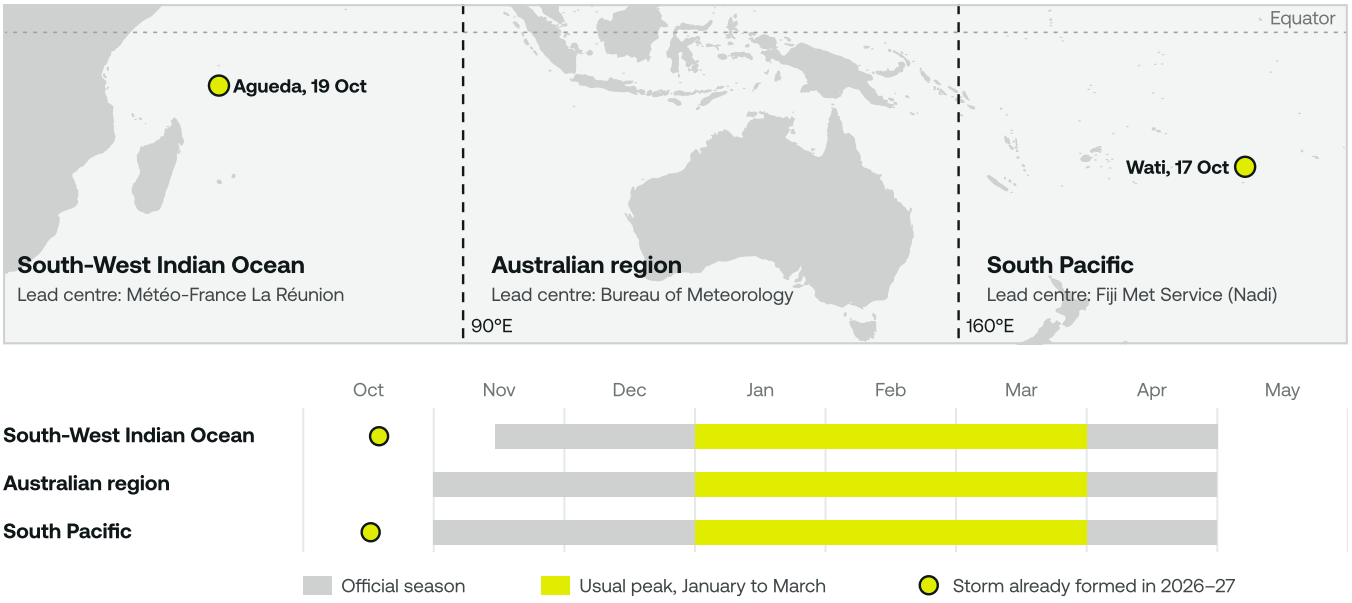
A tropical cyclone is a low-pressure system that draws its energy from warm ocean water. The Australian Bureau of Meteorology names one when winds of at least 63 km/h circle the centre in at least three of four quadrants [2]. In the Southern Hemisphere these systems rotate clockwise, and they are called cyclones rather than hurricanes or typhoons.

1.1 Where it happens

The season runs across three basins, each with its own lead forecasting centre.

Basin	Area	Lead centre	Main exposed coastlines
South-West Indian Ocean	Africa's east coast to 90°E	Météo-France La Réunion	Madagascar, Mozambique, Mauritius, Réunion, Mayotte, Seychelles
Australian region	90°E to 160°E [2]	Bureau of Meteorology	Western Australia (Pilbara, Kimberley), Northern Territory, Gulf of Carpentaria, Queensland, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, Indonesia
South Pacific	East of 160°E	Fiji Meteorological Service (Nadi)	Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Cook Islands, French Polynesia, northern New Zealand

Exhibit 1. The three Southern Hemisphere cyclone basins and their season dates



Sources: [1; 2; 4; 9]. Storm positions are approximate. Basemap: Natural Earth.

1.2 When it happens

The official season runs from 1 November to 30 April in the Australian region and the South Pacific [2; 1], and from 15 November in the South-West Indian Ocean [4]. Activity usually peaks between January and March. Storms can form outside these dates, as Wati and Agueda have already shown. On average, the first cyclone to cross the Australian coast does so in late December [2].

A single cyclone typically lives for days to two weeks. Its supply chain effects can last far longer. Port closures are counted in hours or days; damage to wharves, rail and processing plants can take months to repair.

1.3 How cyclones disrupt supply chains

Cyclones disrupt supply chains through four separate hazards, and only one of them requires a direct hit.

- **Pre-emptive closure.** Port authorities order vessels out to sea before a storm arrives. Australia's Pilbara iron ore ports have closed this way even when the storm stayed offshore [12].
- **Wind.** Severe cyclones, category 3 and above, carry mean winds of at least 119 km/h [1]. Category 5 gusts exceed 280 km/h on the Australian scale [2].
- **Storm surge and swell.** Surge floods coastal infrastructure; swell can drive moored ships into wharves.
- **Rainfall and flooding.** Flooding cuts rail and road links inland, often for longer than the storm itself.

1.4 How El Niño shapes the season

El Niño moves warm water and storm activity east across the Pacific. For the Southern Hemisphere cyclone season, that has three consistent effects.

- **Australian region: fewer cyclones.** Since 1970, El Niño seasons have averaged seven or eight cyclones, against twelve in La Niña seasons [2]. Waters off northern Australia run relatively cool, and monsoon strength and convection weaken [2].
- **South Pacific: risk shifts east.** Cyclones form further east, closer to and beyond the International Date Line, exposing islands that see fewer storms in normal years [1].
- **South-West Indian Ocean: fewer, with tracks pushed south.** Météo-France expects warm ocean water, but stronger upper-level westerly winds and weaker convergence in the Intertropical Convergence Zone, which together suppress development [5].

A longer-term trend sits underneath all three. Since reliable observations began in the early 1970s, cyclones in the region have become fewer but stronger [1; 2].

2 What Happened in Previous Seasons

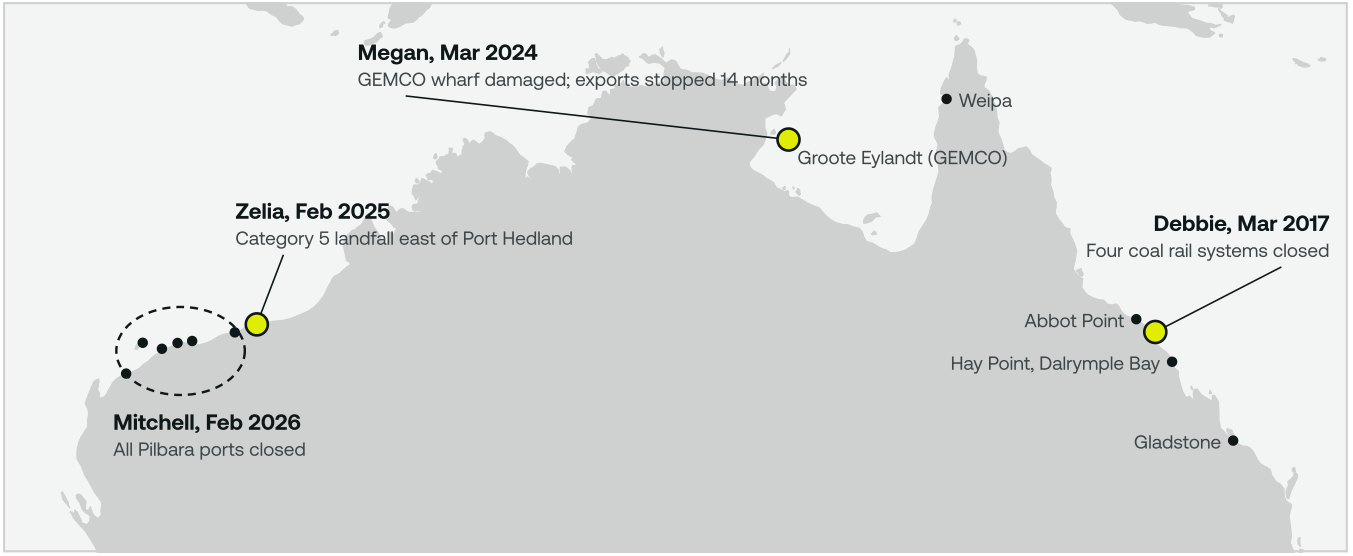
Recent seasons show that cyclones rarely hurt supply chains through wind damage at the mine. They hurt through ports that close, wharves that break and rail lines that flood. The events below are grouped by basin and chosen for their logistics impact.

2.1 The 2025–26 season in brief

Last season was above average in two of the three basins. The Australian region recorded 11 tropical cyclones, seven of them category 3 or stronger, and five crossed the coast [2]. The South-West Indian Ocean recorded 11 systems, one above average, including six cyclones of which four reached intense cyclone strength [7]. Réunion escaped without serious consequences; Madagascar did not [7].

2.2 Australian region

Exhibit 2. Recent cyclones and the Australian export ports they disrupted



Sources: [12; 18; 19; 22; 27]. Storm positions are approximate. Basemap: Natural Earth.

Mitchell, February 2026. Mitchell's approach closed every major port on the Pilbara coast: Ashburton, Cape Preston West, Dampier, Port Hedland and Varanus Island, with Rio Tinto reporting Cape Lambert also affected [12]. Under Pilbara Ports procedure, bulk carriers are ordered out of port by a set deadline and only essential personnel remain on site [26]. Closures of this kind are precautionary and usually short. Port Hedland still extended a run of record monthly volumes in February 2026, handling 40.6 million tonnes [36].

Zelia, February 2025. Zelia crossed the coast east of Port Hedland at category 5, with gusts up to 290 km/h, the first category 5 storm near the port since 2007 [22]. Ports across the north-west halted loading and cleared their berths. Weekly iron ore shipments fell by 5.9 million deadweight tonnes, a 42% drop on the previous week, although the miners' port and rail infrastructure was largely unharmed [23]. The cost came from lost loading days and the backlog that followed, not from damage.

Megan, March 2024. Megan shows what happens when the asset itself fails. Record rainfall and the second-strongest gusts in 20 years flooded GEMCO's pits on Groote Eylandt and damaged its wharf and a haul road bridge [18]. High winds and swell drove the bulk carrier *Anikitos* into the wharf [35]. GEMCO has a single export wharf, so manganese ore exports stopped entirely; South32 evaluated alternative shipping options while the wharf was rebuilt [18]. The first shipment left the reconstructed wharf in May 2025, more than a year later [19].

Debbie, March 2017. Debbie is the reference case for the Queensland coal chain. Flooding closed all four of Aurizon's coal rail systems, Newlands, Goonyella, Blackwater and Moura, which connect Bowen Basin mines to Abbot Point, Hay Point, Dalrymple Bay and Gladstone [27]. Goonyella carries more than half of Queensland's coal, and Queensland supplies more than half of the world's seaborne coking coal [28]. Landslips at Black Mountain kept Goonyella shut until 26 April, when it reopened with speed restrictions and reduced capacity [27; 37]. The ports were ready before the railway was, and coking coal prices doubled within two weeks of landfall [29].

2.3 South-West Indian Ocean

Gezani, February 2026. Gezani made landfall at Toamasina on 10 February with winds near 250 km/h, killing 59 people; Malagasy authorities reported 75% of the city's infrastructure destroyed or severely damaged [16]. At the port, upper-tier containers were overturned, Ambatovy's port operations centre was destroyed, warehouse roofs were torn off and tugs and barges ran aground [15]. Toamasina handles over 90% of Madagascar's container traffic [30] and around 77% of all its maritime traffic [31], so the country had no alternative gateway. Ambatovy's nickel and cobalt plant was damaged and shut, with no restart date a week after the storm [13; 14]. As Gezani moved towards Mozambique, Beira suspended all navigation, cutting a key route for fertiliser imports and Copperbelt traffic [17].

Jude, March 2025. Jude made landfall south of Nacala, Mozambique's main coal export terminal [24]. Nacala Logistics stopped trains on the coal railway from Tete on 10 March, and flood damage cut the N1 highway used by hauliers to reach the port [24]. Jude was the third storm in four months to strike northern Mozambique [24].

Belal, January 2024. Belal severely disrupted operations at Port Louis, the transhipment hub for much of the region's container trade [32]. The disruption backed up South African export containers bound for Asia and exposed the risk of depending on a transhipment terminal in a third country [32]. That dependence has since grown: MSC designated Port Louis a transhipment hub for the Southern Africa west coast in early 2025 [33].

2.4 South Pacific

Winston, February 2016. Winston was the first category 5 cyclone to strike Fiji directly. Damage and losses reached US$1.42 billion, equivalent to 31% of Fiji's GDP [21]. The storm crossed the sugar belt of northern Viti Levu, and Fiji's opposition estimated that around 80% of the cane crop was damaged [38]. Suva and Lautoka handle about 95% of Fiji's trade, and Suva is the main transhipment hub for the South Pacific [34], so a direct hit on Viti Levu disrupts cargo for neighbouring island states as well.

2.5 What the last El Niño season tells us

The 2023–24 season ran under El Niño, and the Australian region was quieter overall. Yet it produced two of the most significant logistics disruptions in this list: Belal at Port Louis and Megan at Groote Eylandt [32; 18]. Both locations sit in zones forecast near normal again this season [2; 5]. A lower count reduces the number of disruptions; it does not remove the risk of one severe landfall on a single-point asset.

3 What Is Likely to Happen This Season

All three basins point to a season that is quieter in the west and more active in the east. Forecast centres expect below-average counts in the Australian region and the South-West Indian Ocean, and normal to above-normal activity in the South Pacific [1; 2; 5].

3.1 At a glance

Basin	Forecast named storms	Long-term average	Where risk is higher	Where risk is lower
South-West Indian Ocean	6 to 10, including Agueda; 3 to 5 reaching cyclone strength [5]	10 storms, 5 cyclones [5]	Mascarene Islands, including Réunion and Mauritius, near normal [5]	Madagascar and Mozambique [6]
Australian region	5 to 8 [2]	11 [2]	Waters off the Northern Territory, Gulf of Carpentaria and near the Queensland coast, near normal [2]	Indian Ocean off Western Australia; central and southern Coral Sea [2]
Southwest Pacific	7 to 11, with at least four reaching category 3 or higher [1]	Around 9 [1]	North, northeast and central Southwest Pacific, elevated [1]	East of the Coral Sea, normal or reduced [1]

3.2 The climate backdrop

The season is opening under a very strong El Niño. As of early October, sea surface temperatures across the central and eastern equatorial Pacific were well above El Niño thresholds, and atmospheric patterns over French Polynesia and northern Australia confirmed the event [1]. Forecasts favour very strong conditions persisting at least through early summer [1]. In the Indian Ocean, Météo-France's models show the atmospheric signature of El Niño combined with a positive Indian Ocean Dipole [40]. Both drivers push in the same direction: warmth and convection shift east, away from Australia and Madagascar.

3.3 South-West Indian Ocean

Météo-France's seasonal forecast of 28 October puts a 70% probability on below-average activity: six to ten named storms, including Agueda, of which three to five would reach tropical cyclone strength [5]. The basin normally sees ten storms and five cyclones [5]. Météo-France climatologist Laurent Labbé put the contrast plainly: around ten systems is typical, and far fewer are expected this year [6].

The reason is not a lack of ocean heat. The basin is warmer than normal, which provides plenty of fuel, but the atmosphere is hostile to development. Météo-France expects weak wind convergence in the Intertropical Convergence Zone and stronger westerly winds aloft, which shear developing storms apart [5]. It describes this as plenty of fuel but a shortage of spark [5].

Where storms do form, tracks are expected to run more north to south [7]. That lowers the risk of direct impact for Madagascar and Mozambique, but keeps impact risk near normal for the Mascarene Islands, including Mauritius and Réunion [5; 6]. The second half of the season, after February, is the least certain part of the forecast [6].

The season has already started. Agueda formed on 19 October well east of Tanzania and Kenya, bringing heavy rain, flooding and landslides to parts of the Seychelles [4]. It was named more than three weeks before the basin's median date for its first storm [11].

3.4 Australian region

The Bureau of Meteorology no longer issues an official seasonal cyclone outlook, citing reduced accuracy of statistical models under climate change [2]. The best available guide is ECMWF's seasonal model, run 51 times from slightly different starting conditions. About two thirds of those runs produce five to eight cyclones, against a long-term average of 11 [2]. That is consistent with history: since 1970, El Niño seasons have averaged seven or eight cyclones, La Niña seasons twelve [2].

The reduction is not spread evenly. The strongest signal for fewer cyclones lies over the Indian Ocean off Western Australia and over the central and southern Coral Sea [2]. Waters off the Northern Territory, the Gulf of Carpentaria and near the Queensland coast are forecast near normal [2]. Waters off Australia's north coast are relatively cool this year, even as global oceans run at record warmth [2].

Landfall is a smaller subset of the count. More than half of the cyclones in the region never reach the coast at cyclone strength; since 1970, three to four have crossed the coast in an average season [2]. At least one has crossed the coast in every season on record [3]. The first crossing typically comes in late December [2].

3.5 Southwest Pacific

Earth Sciences New Zealand, working with MetService, the University of Newcastle and Pacific Island meteorological services, expects normal to above-normal activity: seven to eleven named cyclones from November to April, against an average of around nine [1]. At least four may reach severe strength, category 3 or above, and analogue seasons with similar conditions include category 5 storms [1].

The risk is split sharply between east and west. Activity is forecast elevated in the north, northeast and central parts of the basin, normal to elevated in the southeast, near normal north of the Coral Sea, in the west-central basin and for northern New Zealand, and normal or reduced east of the Coral Sea [1]. The Fiji Meteorological Service, which also expects above-normal activity, forecasts two to three cyclones passing through Fiji's Exclusive Economic Zone [8].

Wati confirmed the early start. It was named on 17 October from Tropical Depression 01F near Samoa, strengthened to category 2 and tracked south-east through the southern Cook Islands [9]. Aitutaki took the full force of the storm, two weeks before the official season began [10]. For New Zealand, the risk of an ex-tropical cyclone passing within 550 km is rated normal, more likely in late summer and autumn than before the new year [1].

3.6 What could change the picture

- **El Niño's decline.** A faster decline after the summer peak would weaken the eastward shift in the Pacific. Earth Sciences New Zealand will update its outlook in January 2027 if required [1].
- **Intensity rather than count.** Cyclones in the region have become fewer but stronger since reliable observations began [1; 2]. A below-average count can still include a category 5 landfall.
- **Model range.** The Australian figure comes from one model, and the final count could fall outside the five to eight range [2].

4 Industries Exposed

The Southern Hemisphere cyclone belt overlaps with some of the world's most concentrated raw material export points. The exposure for European manufacturers sits several tiers upstream, in steelmaking inputs, battery metals, aluminium and titanium feedstock, and LNG.

Commodity	Exposed assets and ports	Downstream industries	2026–27 exposure
Iron ore	Port Hedland, Dampier, Cape Lambert, Ashburton and Cape Preston West, Western Australia [12]	Steel for automotive, machinery, construction	Lower: strongest forecast reduction is off Western Australia [2]
Metallurgical coal	Hay Point, Dalrymple Bay, Abbot Point and Gladstone, Queensland; Tete to Nacala and Beira rail corridors, Mozambique [24]	Steel	Near normal for the Queensland coast [2]; lower for Mozambique [6]
Manganese ore	GEMCO, Groote Eylandt, Gulf of Carpentaria [18]	Steel alloying; battery cathodes	Near normal: the Gulf of Carpentaria is not part of the forecast reduction [2]
Bauxite	Weipa, western Cape York, Gulf of Carpentaria	Aluminium for automotive and aerospace	Near normal [2]
Nickel and cobalt	Ambatovy, Toamasina, Madagascar [13]; New Caledonia	EV batteries; superalloys for aerospace	Lower for Madagascar [6]; normal to reduced for New Caledonia, in the western Southwest Pacific [1]
Titanium minerals and graphite	Heavy mineral sands and graphite operations in Mozambique and Madagascar	Titanium for aerospace and defence; graphite for battery anodes	Lower [6]
LNG and offshore gas	Karratha and the North West Shelf, Varanus Island, Western Australia [12]; Darwin	Energy and petrochemicals, chiefly for Asian buyers	Lower off Western Australia; near normal off the Northern Territory [2]
Agriculture	Fiji sugar; Madagascar vanilla	Food and beverage	Higher for Fiji and the central Pacific [1; 8]; lower for Madagascar [6]

4.1 Steel inputs: automotive and manufacturing

Western Australia's iron ore coast is in the area of strongest forecast reduction this season [2]. That is a meaningful change from the last two seasons, when Zelia and Mitchell each forced all major Pilbara ports to close [12; 22]. The risk to steel inputs moves to manganese and metallurgical coal, whose export points on the Gulf of Carpentaria and the Queensland coast face a near-normal season [2].

Manganese is the clearest case. GEMCO alone supplies around 10% of the global manganese market [20], and its 2024 outage showed how long recovery takes when a wharf is lost [19]. Seaborne and port-side manganese ore prices in China rose after the scale of that outage became clear [18].

4.2 Battery metals: EV and energy storage supply chains

Madagascar's east coast was the costliest cyclone target of last season. Ambatovy produced around 28,000 tonnes of nickel and 2,500 tonnes of cobalt in 2024, and traders warned that a prolonged outage could lift cobalt prices [14]. This season's forecast is more favourable: Météo-France expects lower impact risk for Madagascar and Mozambique [6]. Toamasina, however, enters the season still rebuilding infrastructure that Gezani destroyed [15; 16].

4.3 Aluminium and titanium: aerospace and defence

Bauxite from Cape York and titanium feedstock from the Mozambique and Madagascar coasts feed aerospace-grade aluminium and titanium supply chains. The Cape York and Gulf of Carpentaria coast faces a near-normal season [2], while the African side should see reduced impact risk [6].

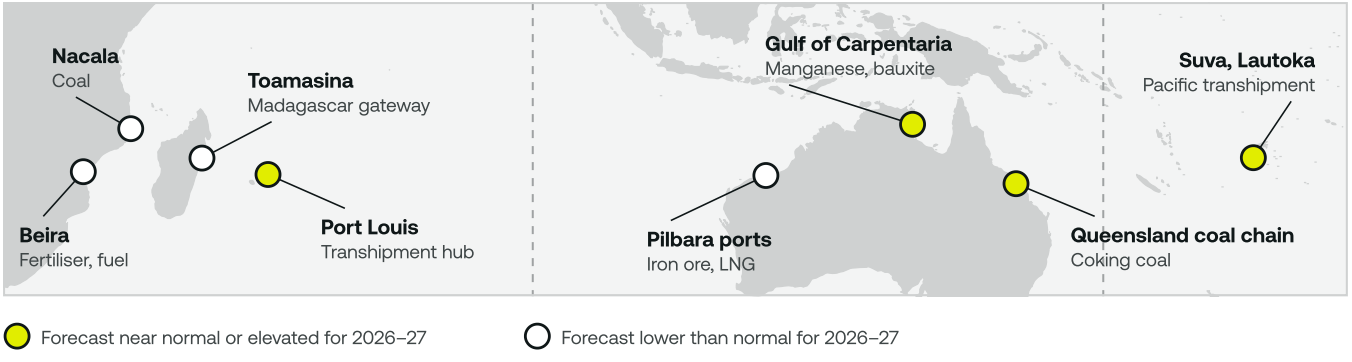
4.4 Pacific islands and shipping

The central and eastern South Pacific carries the highest risk this season [1], but limited direct industrial exposure. The impact on European supply chains runs through Pacific shipping routes, island transhipment and agricultural exports. Winston in 2016 showed the scale of a direct hit: damage and losses equivalent to 31% of Fiji's GDP [21].

5 Ports and Logistics to Monitor

The locations that matter most this season are the ones where a near-normal forecast meets a logistics chain with no spare route. Three of the seven nodes below fall in that category: the Queensland coal chain, the Gulf of Carpentaria and Port Louis.

Exhibit 3. Ports and corridors to monitor, by this season's forecast



Sources: [1; 2; 5; 6; 8]. Dashed lines mark the basin boundaries at 90°E and 160°E. Basemap: Natural Earth.

Port or corridor	Role	Forecast for 2026–27	Typical failure mode
Queensland coal chain: Hay Point, Dalrymple Bay, Abbot Point, Gladstone and their rail systems	Coking coal exports	Near normal [2]	Rail flooding and landslips, ports idle for lack of trains [27]
Gulf of Carpentaria: Groote Eylandt, Weipa	Manganese ore and bauxite exports	Near normal [2]	Single export wharf damaged [18]
Port Louis, Mauritius	Indian Ocean container transhipment	Near normal impact risk [5]	Terminal shutdown backs up connecting services [32]
Suva and Lautoka, Fiji	Fiji's trade gateway; South Pacific transhipment	Elevated [1; 8]	Port and inter-island shipping disruption [34]
Toamasina, Madagascar	Over 90% of Madagascar's containers [30]	Lower [6]	Port damage with no alternative gateway [15]
Beira and Nacala, Mozambique	Fertiliser, fuel, coal and Copperbelt traffic	Lower [6]	Navigation suspended; rail corridors flooded [17; 24]
Pilbara ports: Port Hedland, Dampier, Ashburton, Cape Lambert, Varanus Island	Iron ore, LNG	Strongest forecast reduction [2]	Precautionary coast-wide closure [12]

5.1 Queensland coal chain

Queensland's coal moves on four Aurizon rail systems to four export ports: Newlands to Abbot Point, Goonyella to Hay Point and Dalrymple Bay, and Blackwater and Moura to Gladstone [27]. The weak link is the railway, not the berth. In 2017 the terminals could load from stockpiles while Goonyella, which carries more than half of the state's coal, stayed shut for four weeks [28; 37]. With the Queensland coast forecast near normal this season [2], the chain carries the same exposure as in an average year, in a region that supplies more than half of the world's seaborne coking coal [28].

5.2 Gulf of Carpentaria

The Gulf is the clearest gap in this season's forecast reduction: activity there is expected near normal [2]. Its export infrastructure is thin. GEMCO ships through one wharf, and when Megan damaged it in 2024, there was no second berth to turn to [18]. A repeat would remove around 10% of the global manganese market from the seaborne trade for months [20].

5.3 Port Louis, Mauritius

Port Louis is the logistics node most exposed this season relative to its importance. Météo-France expects cyclone tracks to favour the Mascarenes and keeps their impact risk near normal [5; 7]. The port is a transhipment hub for container services linking Southern and East Africa with Asia, and MSC added a Southern Africa west coast hub role in early 2025 [33]. When Belal closed the terminal in January 2024, the disruption reached South African exporters whose cargo was waiting to be transhipped [32]. A closure at Port Louis therefore disrupts cargo that never originates in Mauritius.

5.4 Suva and Lautoka, Fiji

Fiji sits in the part of the Pacific where risk rises this season, and its forecasters expect two to three cyclones through its waters [1; 8]. Suva and Lautoka handle about 95% of Fiji's imports and exports, and Suva is the main transhipment hub for the South Pacific [34]. A severe cyclone over Viti Levu would interrupt both Fiji's own trade, including sugar exports through Lautoka, and onward cargo to smaller island states.

5.5 Toamasina, Madagascar

Toamasina faces a lower forecast risk this season [6], but enters it with reduced resilience. Gezani overturned container stacks, destroyed operations buildings and grounded harbour craft in February [15], and the city lost three quarters of its infrastructure [16]. The port handles over 90% of Madagascar's container traffic [30], so any further disruption has no workaround. Ambatovy's nickel and cobalt exports depend on it [13].

5.6 Beira and Nacala, Mozambique

Mozambique's two northern and central gateways serve far more than Mozambique. Beira handles fertiliser imports and Copperbelt traffic [17], and neighbouring Zimbabwe relies on it for fuel imports [39]. Nacala is the country's main coal export terminal, fed by rail from Tete [24]. Last season Beira suspended navigation for Gezani [17]; the season before, Jude halted the Nacala coal railway [24]. Météo-France's expected north to south tracks lower the risk for both this season [6].

5.7 Pilbara ports

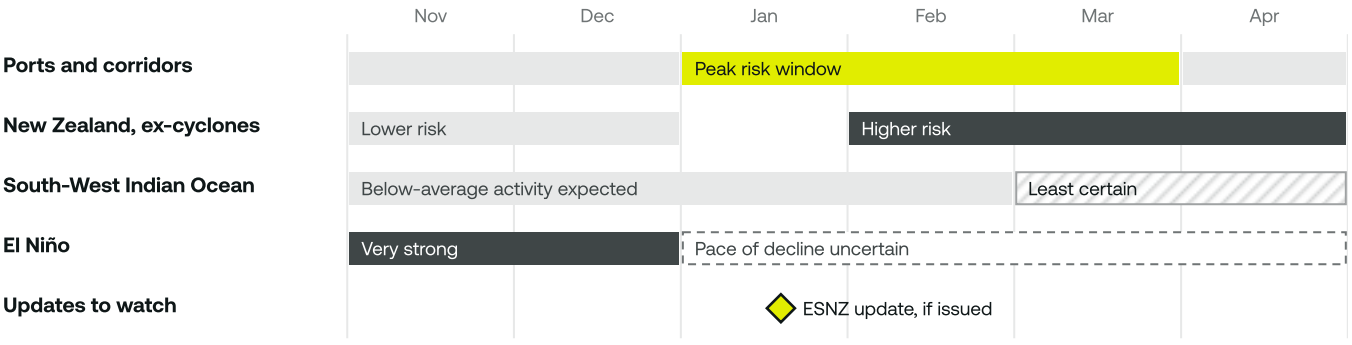
The Pilbara ports handled a record 804.1 million tonnes in the 2025–26 financial year, including 759.4 million tonnes of iron ore and 26 million tonnes of LNG, with an average of 26 vessel visits a day [25]. That is roughly 2.2 million tonnes a day across the network, so each day of closure defers a large volume of cargo. This coast sits in the area of strongest forecast reduction this season [2]. The residual risk is a single storm closing every port at once, as Mitchell did in February [12].

5.8 Timing and indicators

The highest-risk window for most of these nodes runs from January to March. Two exceptions sit outside it: ex-cyclone risk to New Zealand rises in late summer and autumn [1], and the period after February is the least certain in the Indian Ocean [6]. Indicators to track through the season:

- Earth Sciences New Zealand's January 2027 outlook update, if issued [1]
- Météo-France La Réunion's seasonal updates for the South-West Indian Ocean
- Port authority closure notices for Pilbara, Queensland and Port Louis
- The speed of El Niño's decline after its summer peak

Exhibit 4. When the risks peak through the 2026–27 season



Sources: [1; 2; 6]. Bars show the timing described in this chapter; they are not probabilities.

6 Outlook: Best, Base and Worst Case

The base case is a below-average season for industrial supply chains, with risk concentrated in a few near-normal coastlines rather than spread across the basin.

Exhibit 5. The three scenarios at a glance

	Best case	Base case	Worst case
Storm count	Low end of every range: around 5 in the Australian region, 6 in the Indian Ocean	5 to 8 in the Australian region, 6 to 10 in the Indian Ocean, 7 to 11 in the Southwest Pacific	Counts matter less than where one severe storm lands
Landfall	No severe cyclone crosses an industrial coast	At least one Australian crossing, most likely Northern Territory, Gulf of Carpentaria or Queensland	A severe cyclone hits a single-point export asset, as Megan did in 2024
Ports and logistics	Precautionary closures measured in hours	One or two short closures at Queensland coal terminals or Gulf ports	Wharf or plant offline for months; price effects in markets such as manganese
Islands	Damage limited to island communities and tourism	At least one severe cyclone hits a Pacific island state	Category 4 or 5 hit on Fiji or the central Pacific; late-season hit on the Mascarenes or Toamasina

Sources: as cited in 6.1 to 6.3 below.

6.1 Best case

Counts land at the low end of every forecast range: around five cyclones in the Australian region and six named storms in the South-West Indian Ocean [2; 5]. No severe cyclone crosses an industrial coast. Port closures stay precautionary and short, measured in hours, as at Port Hedland during most recent events. Activity concentrates in the open central Pacific, with damage limited to island communities and tourism.

6.2 Base case

The season follows the forecasts: five to eight cyclones in the Australian region, six to ten storms in the South-West Indian Ocean and seven to eleven in the Southwest Pacific [1; 2; 5]. At least one cyclone crosses the Australian coast, as one has every season on record [3], most likely in the Northern Territory, Gulf of Carpentaria or Queensland, where activity is forecast near normal [2]. Expect one or two short closures at Queensland coal terminals or Gulf of Carpentaria ports, and at least one severe cyclone affecting a Pacific island state [1]. Madagascar and Mozambique see fewer direct impacts than last season [6].

6.3 Worst case

A severe cyclone strikes a single-point export asset in a near-normal zone, repeating the pattern of Megan in 2024 [18]. Damage to a wharf or processing plant takes the asset offline for months, with knock-on price effects in a concentrated market such as manganese [18; 20]. In parallel, a category 4 or 5 cyclone hits Fiji or another central Pacific state, consistent with the analogue years in this season's outlook [1]. Late in the season, after February, a cyclone tracks over the Mascarenes or a weakened Toamasina, where infrastructure is still under repair [6; 15].

Sources

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