

Situation Report
14 October 2026

Hurricane Simon closes Mexico's Pacific gateways

Status: ACTIVE

Manzanillo and Lázaro Cárdenas closed to navigation since 11 October · next trigger: Semar reopening notice, then Sinaloa landfall expected 15 to 16 October · track confidence: low (NHC) · data as of NHC Advisory 22A, 00:00 UTC 13 October 2026

[C] confirmed by named source · [M] Prewave estimate from published figures · [A] assumption

● Executive summary

4 PACIFIC PORTS CLOSED TO ALL NAVIGATION (OCT 12)	SAN BLAS, PUERTO VALLARTA, MANZANILLO, LÁZARO CÁRDENAS [C]
~18,800 TEU/day	Combined average container throughput of Manzanillo and Lázaro Cárdenas held up for each full day of closure [M]
34%	Lázaro Cárdenas share of Mexico's port vehicle traffic [C]
3 storms in 3 weeks	Polo, Rachel and Simon have each forced restrictions at the same two gateways since 22 September [C]

Hurricane Simon has shut Mexico's two largest Pacific cargo gateways, and the storm is not finished.

The Secretaría de Marina (Semar) closed Manzanillo and Lázaro Cárdenas to all navigation and kept them closed on 12 October, even after Simon weakened to Category 2 [Semar via Agencia Reforma, 12 October 2026].

Manzanillo's container terminals had already stopped vessel work on the afternoon of 9 October [DataPortuaria, 9 October 2026]. At 00:00 UTC on 13 October the US National Hurricane Center (NHC) placed Simon 125 km west of Cabo Corrientes with 155 km/h winds, forecast to turn back toward the coast of Sinaloa and Nayarit on 14 to 15 October [NHC, Intermediate Advisory 22A, 13 October 2026].

Two features make Simon more than a weekend closure.

- First, it is the third storm in three weeks to force restrictions at the same two ports: Hurricane Polo closed Lázaro Cárdenas to all vessels in late September, and Hurricane Rachel triggered fresh closures at both ports on 30 September [Semar via Tiempo, 25 September 2026; ADN40, 30 September 2026]. Each closure lands on a port running above last year: Manzanillo handled 2.82 million TEU from January to August 2026, 11.0% more than a year earlier [DataPortuaria, 9 October 2026].
- Second, the NHC calls its own track forecast low confidence, with some models showing Simon stalling offshore before a second landfall [NHC, Forecast Discussion 22, 12 October 2026].

The exposure is concentrated in automotive and electronics. Lázaro Cárdenas is Mexico's leading vehicle port, with 34% of national port vehicle traffic, most of it imports [ASIPONA Lázaro Cárdenas via Cluster Industrial, 27 June 2025]. Manzanillo handles about 45% of Mexico's containerised imports, much of it bound for the industrial clusters of central and western Mexico [ASIPONA Manzanillo via Cluster Industrial, 21 April 2025].

No structural damage to either port has been reported, and the Comisión Federal de Electricidad (CFE) reports its generating plants in the affected states operating without incident [CFE via Cuspide, 12 October 2026]. The disruption so far is time, not infrastructure [A: absence of reported damage is not confirmed absence of damage].

● 1 What happened

Simon spent four days crawling parallel to the coast of Colima and Jalisco, which kept the ports shut longer than a direct strike would have. The NHC began advisories on 7 October [NHC, Hurricane Simon Advisory Archive, 2026].

By midday on 11 October Simon was a Category 4 hurricane with sustained winds near 220 km/h, its eye 140 km west-northwest of Manzanillo, moving north-northwest at 11 km/h [NHC, Intermediate Advisory 17A, via The Rio Times, 11 October 2026]. The core never crossed the coast; easterly wind shear then weakened it to 155 km/h by 13 October [NHC, Intermediate Advisory 22A, 13 October 2026].

● Ports

Semar, as national maritime authority, closed San Blas, Puerto Vallarta, Manzanillo and Lázaro Cárdenas to all navigation and activated the Plan Marina in its relief phase in Colima [Semar via Crónica Regional, 11 October 2026]. Lázaro Cárdenas had been closed to large vessels since 9 October [Latinus, 9 October 2026].

Semar confirmed the four closures were still in force on the morning of 12 October [Semar via Agencia Reforma, 12 October 2026]. A later report on 12 October listed only San Blas and Puerto Vallarta as closed to large vessels, with Lázaro Cárdenas restricted to small craft.

● Terminals

Manzanillo's operators stopped before the Navy did. SSA Marine México ended vessel operations at its TEC I and OCUPA terminals at 15:59 on 9 October and suspended all work on 10 October. Contecon Manzanillo and Hutchison Ports TIMSA also suspended operations for 10 October, and Granelera Manzanillo halted rail loading until 08:00 on 12 October [DataPortuaria, 9 October 2026].

The Manzanillo Port Community (Copoma) asked hauliers to hold full and empty containers bound for the southern zone to avoid saturating port access points [DataPortuaria, 9 October 2026]. All rescheduled appointments were moved to Monday 12 October, concentrating two days of truck traffic into one [Gomsa, 9 October 2026].

● Airports, power and people

Grupo Aeroportuario del Pacífico (GAP) reopened Manzanillo airport at 08:00 on 12 October and reported no major damage; Puerto Vallarta stayed closed until 08:00 on 13 October [GAP via El Informador, 12 October 2026]. The CFE restored power to 99.54% of the 31,469 customers cut off in Michoacán, Colima and Jalisco by 21:00 on 11 October [CFE via El Heraldo de México, 11 October 2026].

The Security Ministry (SSPC) deployed 22,589 personnel across four states; 579 people were evacuated or sheltered, and officials reported no deaths as of 11 October [SSPC via La Jornada, 11 October 2026]. Non-essential activity was suspended in 24 priority municipalities [La Jornada via The Rio Times, 11 October 2026].

● **The sequence**

Simon is the third Pacific storm since 22 September to restrict the same two ports.

STORM	PEAK	EFFECT ON MANZANILLO AND LÁZARO CÁRDENAS	SOURCE
Simon, 7 Oct to present	Category 4, 11 Oct	Terminals suspended 10 Oct; both ports closed to all navigation 11 to 12 Oct; status on 13 Oct unconfirmed	Semar via Agencia Reforma, 12 Oct; DataPortuaria, 9 Oct
Rachel, 27 Sep to 11 Oct	Category 3, 1 Oct	Both ports listed closed 30 Sep; Manzanillo reopened to large vessels 30 Sep; remnant low later closed Ensenada and Baja California ports	ADN40, 30 Sep; Crónica, 30 Sep; Semar via Crónica Regional, 11 Oct
Polo, 21 to 29 Sep	Category 5, 22 Sep	Lázaro Cárdenas closed to all vessels 25 Sep; Manzanillo restricted to large vessels 24 Sep, reopened 25 Sep; landfall Baja California Sur as Category 2 on 29 Sep	Semar via Tiempo, 25 Sep; Buckland, 24 Sep; N+, 30 Sep

The pattern matters more than any single closure. Each storm cost the ports one to three days, and each restart concentrated backlogged appointments into the following days [M].

● 2 Affected industries

Simon's industrial impact runs through two ports, not through damaged plants. No manufacturing site in Colima, Jalisco, Michoacán or Nayarit has disclosed storm damage or a production stop as of 13 October [A: absence of reporting]. The exposure is inbound: Asian components, vehicles and bulk inputs that reach central and western Mexico through Manzanillo and Lázaro Cárdenas.

Manzanillo averaged about 11,600 TEU a day from January to August 2026, and Lázaro Cárdenas about 7,200 TEU and 2,200 vehicles a day across 2025 [M, derived from DataPortuaria, 9 October 2026, and ASIPONA Lázaro Cárdenas via Mexico Industry, 19 January 2026].

● Automotive

Lázaro Cárdenas is the sector's main Pacific port, handling 804,955 vehicles in 2025, up 19% on 2024 [ASIPONA Lázaro Cárdenas via Mexico Industry, 19 January 2026]. In early 2025, 72% of the vehicles it handled were imports arriving on roll-on/roll-off ships, giving it 34% of Mexico's port vehicle traffic [ASIPONA Lázaro Cárdenas via Cluster Industrial, 27 June 2025]. Roughly a quarter of its container moves by rail toward the interior [ASIPONA Lázaro Cárdenas via Mexico Industry, 24 July 2025].

Container-borne parts for assembly plants in the Bajío and central Mexico arrive largely through Manzanillo, whose cargo is destined mainly for the country's central and western industrial nodes [ASIPONA Manzanillo via Cluster Industrial, 18 March 2025]. Vehicle carriers that missed their Lázaro Cárdenas window will compete for berths with container ships once the port reopens [M].

● Electronics and electrical manufacturing

Jalisco's electronics cluster depends on Asian inputs that arrive through Manzanillo. Electronics accounted for 53% of Jalisco's exports in 2023, worth USD 14.5bn, and printed circuit boards and electronic components top the cluster's list of sourced inputs [Index Occidente via Milenio, 2024].

Contecon Manzanillo's chief executive has named electronics among the port's main volume drivers [Expansión, 1 October 2025]. The cluster has absorbed a Manzanillo shock before: when customs operations halted in May 2025, Index Occidente warned of a potential USD 150m loss if operations did not normalise within the week [Mexico Business News, 20 May 2025].

● Steel, minerals and bulk

Mineral bulk made up 30% of Lázaro Cárdenas' 27.3 million tonnes in 2025 [ASIPONA Lázaro Cárdenas via Mexico Industry, 19 January 2026], and 15% of Manzanillo's commercial tonnage from January to October 2025 [ASIPONA Manzanillo via Cluster Industrial, 19 November 2025]. Granelera Manzanillo halted rail loading from 10 to 12 October [DataPortuaria, 9 October 2026]. Steel producers and mining exporters in Michoacán and Colima rely on the same berths and rail links [A].

● Agriculture and food

Simon's next target is Mexico's main winter vegetable state. The NHC forecasts up to 380 mm of rain in Sinaloa by 15 October [NHC, Intermediate Advisory 22A, 13 October 2026]. Sinaloa's 2025 to 2026 autumn-winter plan covered 659,138 hectares, and greenhouse vegetable planting begins as the hurricane season ends [Tus Buenas Noticias, citing the Sinaloa state council, 30 October 2025].

● 3 Outlook

The deciding variable is how long Simon lingers offshore, not how strong it gets. The NHC's official forecast takes Simon to a landfall near Mazatlán around 15 October, but the agency says steering currents may collapse near the storm and that some models show a slow loop between mainland Mexico and Baja California [NHC, Forecast Discussion 22, 12 October 2026].

Mexico's civil protection coordinator, Laura Velázquez, said the national forecast points to a Category 1 impact on Mazatlán around midnight on Thursday [CNPC via Noroeste, 12 October 2026]. The scenarios below follow those published forecasts; the port and industry effects are estimates.

● Best case

Easterly wind shear keeps Simon weak. It moves north without restrengthening and comes ashore in Sinaloa as a minimal hurricane or tropical storm. The NHC notes that the shear affecting Simon was not anticipated by the models [NHC, Forecast Discussion 22, 12 October 2026].

Semar lifts the closures at Manzanillo and Lázaro Cárdenas on 13 to 14 October, and the terminals clear their rescheduled appointments within about a week [M]. Industry sees delays of several days on Asian inbound parts and vehicles, with no plant stoppage attributable to the storm [M].

● Base case

Simon follows the NHC track. It weakens to about 120 km/h on 13 October, then restrengthenes to about 155 km/h over 31 to 32 °C water. It makes landfall near Mazatlán on 15 to 16 October and weakens rapidly inland [NHC, Forecast Discussion 22, 12 October 2026].

Manzanillo and Lázaro Cárdenas reopen once the swell subsides. Mazatlán, San Blas and Topolobampo close as Simon approaches Sinaloa. Berth and yard congestion carries into late October, which was the busiest stretch of Manzanillo's year in 2024 [M; ASIPONA Manzanillo via Cluster Industrial, 15 January 2025]. Vehicle carriers and container ships queue for the same reopening window, and newly planted fields in southern Sinaloa see localised flood damage [M].

● Worse case

Simon stalls and loops offshore, as the HAFS models showed on 12 October, prolonging swell and rain on the Jalisco and Nayarit coast. The NHC warns that small storms like Simon are prone to rapid changes in intensity [NHC, Forecast Discussion 22, 12 October 2026].

The closures extend through the week. That would make this a fourth disruption in under four weeks, arriving before Manzanillo's backlog from Polo and Rachel has fully cleared [M]. Rail and road links from both ports to the interior face landslide risk on steep terrain, which the NHC flags [NHC, Forecast Discussion 22, 12 October 2026]. Inbound shortages could reach assembly lines that run on short buffers [A]. The eastern Pacific hurricane season runs to 30 November, so Simon may not be the last test of these ports this year [NHC, hurricane season definition].

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● Dates and indicators to watch

The live unknown is the reopening sequence at Manzanillo and Lázaro Cárdenas, and whether Simon's turn toward Sinaloa holds. The signals below are ordered by when they are expected; the first three decide which outlook scenario applies.

WHEN	INDICATOR	WHY IT MATTERS
13 to 14 Oct	Semar notice reopening Manzanillo and Lázaro Cárdenas to large vessels	Ends the closure clock; separates the best case from the base case
Every 6 hours (03, 09, 15, 21 UTC)	NHC track and intensity: a northeast turn versus a stall or loop offshore	A stall is the main route to the worse case [NHC, Discussion 22]
14 to 15 Oct	Restrengthening over 31 to 32 °C water as shear eases	Determines landfall strength in Sinaloa
15 to 16 Oct	Landfall near Mazatlán; Semar closures at Mazatlán, Topolobampo and San Blas	Shifts the disruption north, onto Sinaloa's ports and farmland
Week of 12 Oct	Terminal appointment backlogs at SSA Marine, Contecon and Hutchison Ports TIMSA; Copoma truck restrictions	First measure of how long the restart congestion lasts
Week of 12 Oct	Rail loading at Granelera Manzanillo and rail departures from Lázaro Cárdenas	Inland reach of the delay to plants in the Bajío and central Mexico
After landfall	SICT reports of landslides or closures on highways linking both ports to the interior	Converts a port delay into an inland transport disruption
Mid-November	ASIPONA October statistics for Manzanillo and Lázaro Cárdenas	First hard figure on what three storms cost the two ports in throughput

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