

2026

CIP MARITIME AWARD OF THE AMERICAS WINNING ENTRIES

RECOGNIZING OUTSTANDING PORT MANAGEMENT

12TH EDITION



OEA | OAS



CIP

Inter-American
Committee on Ports



IPCSA

International Port
Community Systems
Association



North American Marine Environment Protection Association

NAMEPA



SLOM

Sociedad Latinoamericana de
Operadores de Terminales
Marítimo Petroleros y Monoboyas

2026 MARITIME AWARD OF THE AMERICAS

12TH EDITION

RECOGNIZING OUTSTANDING PORT MANAGEMENT

The 2026 Maritime Award of the Americas – “Recognizing Outstanding Port Management,” is organized by the Secretariat of the Inter-American Committee on Ports (CIP) of the Organization of American States (OAS), in partnership with the International Port Community Association (IPCSEA), the Latin American Society of Marine Oil Terminal Operators and Single-Buoy Mooring (SLOM), the North American Marine Environment Protection Association (NAMEPA), and other strategic OAS entities.

The Award honors outstanding practices within the maritime and port sectors across the Hemisphere that exemplify excellence, innovation, leadership, sustainability, and replicability. This edition highlights initiatives that have contributed to the modernization of the port sector in the Americas across three categories: Green Initiatives in Ports/Terminals, Digital Transformation and Port Security and Risk Management.

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT



Jorge Durán
Chief of the Secretariat

Organized by the Secretariat of the CIP-OAS, the 12th Maritime Award of the Americas honors distinguished practices carried out by public and private institutions that drive the comprehensive development of the maritime and port sector in the Americas. Through this recognition, the Award highlights leadership, innovation, and excellence as key pillars for the future of the industry. It is therefore a privilege to extend our sincere congratulations to the 2026 award recipients for their remarkable contributions and impact on the sector across the region.



Mona Swoboda
Program Manager

Strategic initiatives that strengthen comprehensive port management, encompassing risk management, environmental sustainability, and digital transformation, are fundamental to advancing a more modern and competitive maritime and port sector. In this context, it is a privilege to recognize and congratulate the winners of the 12th Maritime Award of the Americas for their valuable contributions to the development of the sector across the region.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01

GREEN INITIATIVES IN PORTS/TERMINALS

PORT OF SÃO FRANCISCO DO SUL OF BRAZIL



05

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

BARBADOS PORT INC.



09

PORT SECURITY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

NATIONAL PORT COMMISSION OF GUATEMALA

An aerial photograph of a coastal landscape. On the left, a wide river flows through a lush green mangrove forest. A narrow strip of land, also covered in green vegetation, runs parallel to the river and the ocean. To the right, a sandy beach meets the turquoise ocean with white waves breaking. In the background, a city skyline is visible under a blue sky with light clouds.

GREEN INITIATIVES IN PORTS/TERMINALS

PORT OF SÃO FRANCISCO DO SUL OF BRAZIL



DREDGING OPERATIONS IN BABITONGA BAY

Prior to implementation, the access channel to the Babitonga Bay Port Complex faced operational constraints due to its 14-meter depth and operational draft limited to 12.80 meters. These parameters became insufficient given the growing demand of the global shipping fleet, which increasingly operates larger vessels requiring minimum depths of 16 meters and operational drafts of up to 14 meters.

This limitation reduced port competitiveness, restricted logistics scale gains, and decreased the complex's attractiveness for international shipping routes.

At the same time, the municipality of Itapoá, located along the Babitonga Bay coastline, was experiencing chronic coastal erosion along approximately 8 km of shoreline. This phenomenon was associated with natural changes in sediment transport, coastal dynamics, and local anthropogenic pressures. Shoreline retreat led to beach narrowing, risks to urban infrastructure, and negative impacts on tourism.



Historically, sediments dredged from maritime infrastructure at the Porto de São Francisco do Sul were classified as waste and disposed of in licensed offshore areas. This model generated additional environmental costs and represented a lost opportunity, as the material could have contributed to coastal restoration.

The main challenges identified were:

- deepening the channel to keep pace with maritime growth;
- urgently mitigating coastal erosion;
- implementing a sustainable model integrating port expansion, environmental protection, and socio-economic development, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The adopted solution consisted of the beneficial reuse of sediments dredged during the deepening of the Babitonga Bay access channel for artificial beach nourishment in Itapoá.

Of the approximately 12.8 million cubic meters of dredged sediments, around 6.42 million cubic meters are being strategically used for shoreline restoration.

This project is led by the Port of São Francisco do Sul in

partnership with Port Itapoá and the Governo do Estado de Santa Catarina, integrating port expansion with environmental sustainability.

The latter is ensured through continuous environmental monitoring, technical efficiency, and institutional cooperation. Periodic bathymetric surveys, sedimentological analyses, shoreline evolution monitoring, and water quality control are conducted.

In addition, temporary containment structures minimize unwanted dispersion. Granulometric studies ensure compatibility between dredged material and native beach sand. Advanced trailing suction hopper dredgers and hydraulic pumping systems are used to transport sediments through pipelines to the beach area.

Implementation of this project is tied to 25 environmental programs and subprograms established as licensing conditions by the Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos Recursos Naturais Renováveis. The model significantly reduces offshore disposal volumes, generating environmental gains and cost optimization. The multidisciplinary team — including engineers, oceanographers, geologists, and environmental specialists — strengthens technical governance and ensures compliance with environmental legislation.



“A proactive climate adaptation strategy that promotes resilience ...”

This initiative applies circular economy principles and nature-based coastal engineering, transforming an environmental liability into a strategic asset for coastal recovery and climate adaptation.

The unprecedented nature of this project establishes it as the first dredging project in Brazil with these characteristics. This model can be replicated by other port complexes in the country, generating environmental, economic, and social gains for communities directly or indirectly impacted by the works.

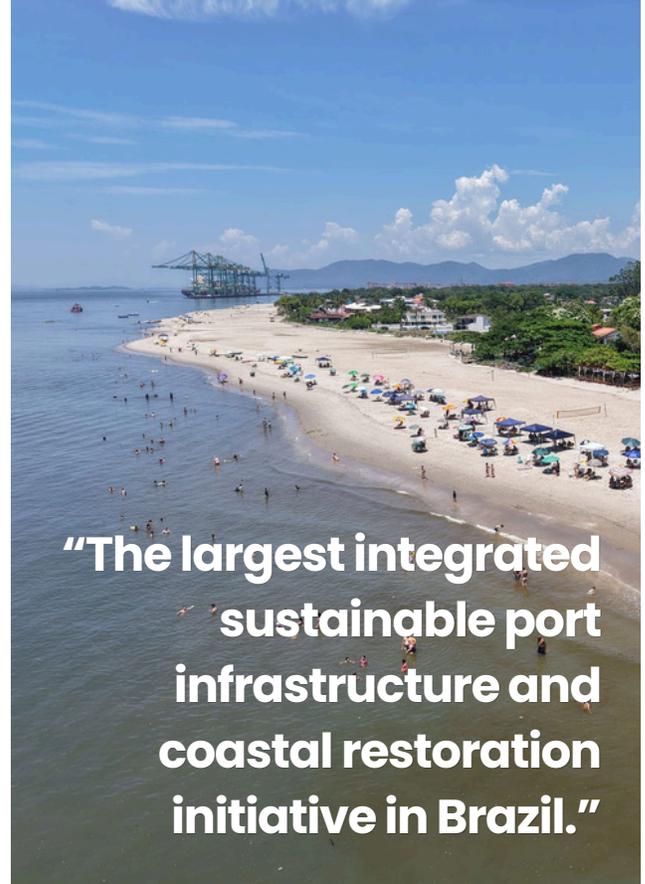
The restoration and protection of the Itapoá shoreline, through the reconstruction of the beach profile and the rehabilitation of the dune ecosystem, enables the mitigation of storm surge impacts, protection of urban infrastructure, and environmental

enhancement of the coastal zone.

The reconstitution of the embryonic dune system involves the use of approximately 64,500 m³ of sediments for topographic shaping suitable for dune formation along 7,750 meters of coastline, combined with the planting of about 44,000 native restinga species seedlings. The installation of elevated walkways, educational signage, and protective fencing to support natural regeneration helps restore ecological functions such as sand retention, wildlife habitat, and adaptation to sea level rise.

The project is currently in an advanced stage of implementation, with positive environmental and operational impacts already identified.

The initiative is consolidating itself as a benchmark in sustainable dredging in Brazil, demonstrating that port expansion can be effectively aligned with environmental restoration, climate adaptation, and sustainable socio-economic development.



“The largest integrated sustainable port infrastructure and coastal restoration initiative in Brazil.”



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

BARBADOS PORT INC.

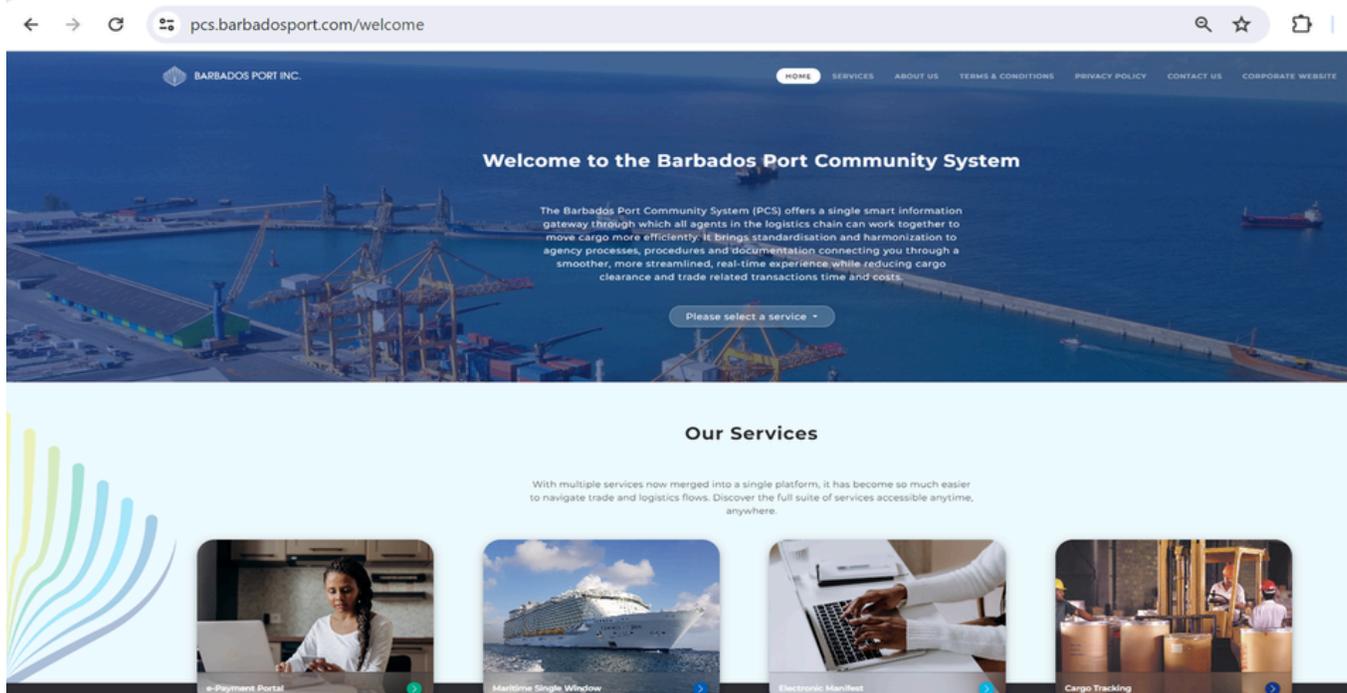


BPI'S DIGITAL INNOVATION & DEVELOPMENT TEAM

The Barbados Port Community System represents a transformative digital initiative that modernizes port operations by creating a unified platform for information exchange, process automation, and stakeholder collaboration. The system improves trade facilitation, operational efficiency, and supply chain transparency while enhancing the port's competitiveness within the Caribbean maritime sector.

Before implementation, documentation processing was fragmented across multiple channels, resulting in delays in cargo clearance, extended truck waiting times, and limited visibility into shipment status. Stakeholders faced uncertainty due to inconsistent data access, while port management lacked real-time performance monitoring tools.

Following implementation, the PCS introduced standardized digital workflows that streamlined vessel clearance, cargo documentation, and container deliveries. Stakeholders now interact through a single interface, enabling faster approvals, reduced administrative overhead and improved coordination across the logistics chain. Real-time status updates and automated alerts enhance predictability and allow stakeholders to plan more efficiently.



The system has delivered measurable operational improvements, including:

- Vessel manifests are 100% electronic. Paper-based manifests, which were prevalent prior to the PCS, have become obsolete.
- Online payments account for 88% to 90% of all financial transactions. Prior to the PCS, this process was not standardized and there were no online payments.
- Documentation required for vessel clearance is fully electronic. Prior to the PCS, a total of 52 paper documents were collectively required by Customs (20), Immigration (12), Port Health (15), BPI (1) and the vessel agent (4).
- Certificates of Clearance are fully electronic. Prior to the PCS, official certificates were paper-based and carbon copied.
- Container Verified Gross Mass certificates are fully electronic. Prior to the PCS, one physical copy per exported container was issued. Between 300 to 500 containers are exported per month.
- Delivery Orders are fully electronic. Prior to the PCS, three copies were issued to each customer who had a shipment on the vessel. During peak periods, upwards of 3000 individual shipments per month can be handled.

The PCS has also generated broader strategic benefits. The locally developed platform strengthened internal technical expertise, reduced reliance on external systems, and provided a scalable foundation for future digital initiatives such as advanced analytics, regional integration and smart port capabilities.

“The pre-PCS environment made clear the need for a secure, integrated digital platform to modernize trade facilitation, augment border protection and enhance national resilience.”

The system includes the following innovation components:

- Blockchain
- Advanced Analytics
- Artificial Intelligence
- Real-time communication architecture
- Deep integration with Law Enforcement and Border Agencies
- Cybersecurity by design
- Cyber Maturity Assessment
- Integrated environmental compliance monitoring
- Whole-of-government digital harmonization



Capacity building was treated as a core pillar of implementation. Internally, all staff were formally informed of the PCS rollout and engaged through structured sensitization sessions. These sessions provided practical guidance on what the PCS is, how it integrates with existing systems, how workflows would change and how individual job functions would evolve. The objective was to reduce resistance, manage expectations and ensure that employees understood both the operational benefits and the impact on their daily responsibilities. Training was extended to key stakeholder agencies to ensure coordinated adoption across Customs, Immigration, law enforcement and other members.

A PCS Project Steering Committee, comprising representatives from across the port community, provides an ongoing platform for dialogue, issue resolution and shared learning. Webinars and stakeholder briefings supported external users, while continuous engagement helped refine processes based on real world feedback.

The development of the Barbados PCS intentionally incorporated inclusive strategic actions across workforce development, operational accessibility, stakeholder participation and institutional collaboration.

In preparation for implementation, the software development team was expanded from six to eleven professionals to ensure sustainable delivery and long-term system ownership. The expanded team included three female professionals, increasing female representation within a traditionally male-dominated technical environment. This deliberate expansion created meaningful opportunities for women to contribute directly to the design, development and governance of critical national digital infrastructure.

From a national perspective, the initiative supports Barbados’ digital transformation agenda by improving ease of doing business, bolstering supply chain resilience, and facilitating more efficient trade flows. The system contributes to improved stakeholder satisfaction and positions the port to accommodate increasing cargo volumes while maintaining operational stability.

Overall, the Barbados Port Community System demonstrates how targeted digital innovation delivers measurable efficiency gains, improves stakeholder collaboration, and enhances the competitiveness of maritime infrastructure within a Caribbean context.

“Beyond immediate efficiency gains, the PCS now serves as scalable national digital infrastructure.”



PORT SECURITY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

NATIONAL PORT COMMISSION OF GUATEMALA

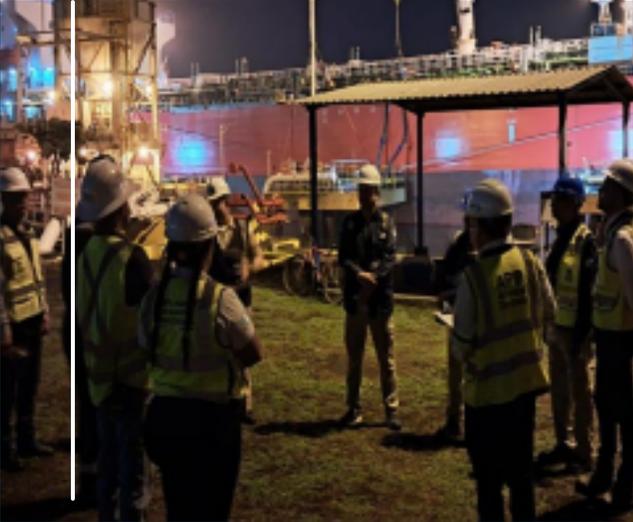


INTERAGENCY COOPERATION WITH THE POLICE AND THE MILITARY

In Guatemala, the implementation of port security measures is the responsibility of the Designated Authority of the National Port System, which, in accordance with the provisions of the law, coordinates an Institutional Audit Team composed of the Maritime Authority, the Customs Authority, the Immigration Authority, the National Civil Police, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. This is because each of these agencies is linked to specific measures under the ISPS Code.

In 2018, a breakdown in interinstitutional coordination occurred as a result of a jurisdictional dispute between the Maritime Authority and the Designated Authority, caused by the absence of a regulatory framework clearly defining responsibilities in maritime and port security. This situation created governance gaps, weakened oversight mechanisms, and affected the effective implementation of security measures at the country’s port facilities.

Additionally, significant institutional gaps were identified for the effective verification of the implementation of port security measures, including:



- An insufficient number of auditors specialized in port security within the Designated Authority.
- Lack of technological and tactical equipment for inspections.
- Absence of a systematized historical record of non-compliance.
- Lack of a digital platform to manage audits and evaluations or to apply risk management.
- Limited strategic communication with senior management of port facilities.
- Absence of a robust sanctioning regime to deter non-compliance.

The solution to the identified problem was designed under a comprehensive approach to regulatory and institutional strengthening, structured around two complementary and interrelated strategic pillars:

1. Strengthening of the Regulatory and Governance Framework - The approval of a specific legal framework by Congress was promoted, establishing several key aspects such as:

- Clearly defining the competencies of the Designated Authority and the Maritime Authority.
- Establishing a sanctioning mechanism for non-compliance with port security measures.
- Strengthening interinstitutional coordination mechanisms within the Interinstitutional Audit Team.
- Enhancing governance and accountability in port security by mandating interinstitutional coordination.

This closed regulatory gaps that had weakened the system since 2018.

2. Strengthening Operational Capacity and Institutionalization - Institutionalization was achieved through the creation of a new entity with its own operational model, which enabled:

- An increase in the number of specialized auditors.
- The establishment of its own governance model enshrined in law.
- Provision of technological equipment for inspections.
- Establishment of formal communication channels with senior management of port facilities.
- Development of continuous technical training aligned with international standards in port security.
- Innovation of the annual verification plan for port security measures.

This also paved the way for larger-scale projects, which were even included among the Government's presidential goals.

This includes the development of a platform containing the National Port Security Registry (RENAPPORT), which already includes the formal registry of all port security officers nationwide, the interinstitutional audit team that conducts security audits, and information related to port facilities subject to compliance with port security measures.

Likewise, it includes the functionality of a historical registry of non-compliance events, incidents, threats, and security failures, enabling the generation of reports and statistics



that support the implementation of a risk management methodology and the execution of preventive actions aimed at ensuring secure ports. This has made it possible to adopt a risk management approach for port security.

Additionally, for the year 2026, a workflow component has been added to document the steps taken within an electronic case file, allowing for the tracking and closure of findings derived from audits and inspections. Its strengthening and modernization have been incorporated as strategic actions within the Institutional Strategic Planning.

This set of actions enabled the transition from a reactive and fragmented approach to a preventive port security system based on risk management.

The main value of this transformation lies in the tangible benefits of interinstitutional coordination: greater clarity in the definition of responsibilities, joint decision-making, timely information sharing, reduction of duplication, and strengthened field oversight. The coordinated actions of the Interinstitutional Audit Team have increased the State's capacity to anticipate risks, respond uniformly to non-compliance, and build trust between authorities and port operators.

In this way, Guatemala not only restored governance in port security matters but also consolidated a collaborative working model that strengthens institutional capacity, optimizes public resources, and ensures more coherent, effective, and sustainable port security over time.



“The central focus of this initiative is interagency coordination to strengthen port security...”

“...Guatemala has transitioned to a modern, preventive port security system based on risk management.”



2026 MARITIME AWARD OF THE AMERICAS

This publication has been prepared by the Secretariat of the Inter-American Committee on Ports of the OAS based on the information received in the call for applications for the Award.

CIP Secretariat

Jorge Duran, Chief of the Secretariat
Mona Swoboda, Program Manager
Montserrat Ambriz, Program Manager
Sabina Malnis, Program Manager
Mónica Blanco, Projects Manager
Commander María de los Ángeles Salinas Pérez,
Advisor on Port Protection and Security

Editor

Secretariat of the Inter-American Committee on Ports

Design

Mónica Blanco, Projects Manager

Please note that the rights to the images belong to the winning institutions.

Contact Us:



www.portalcip.org



cip@oas.org

