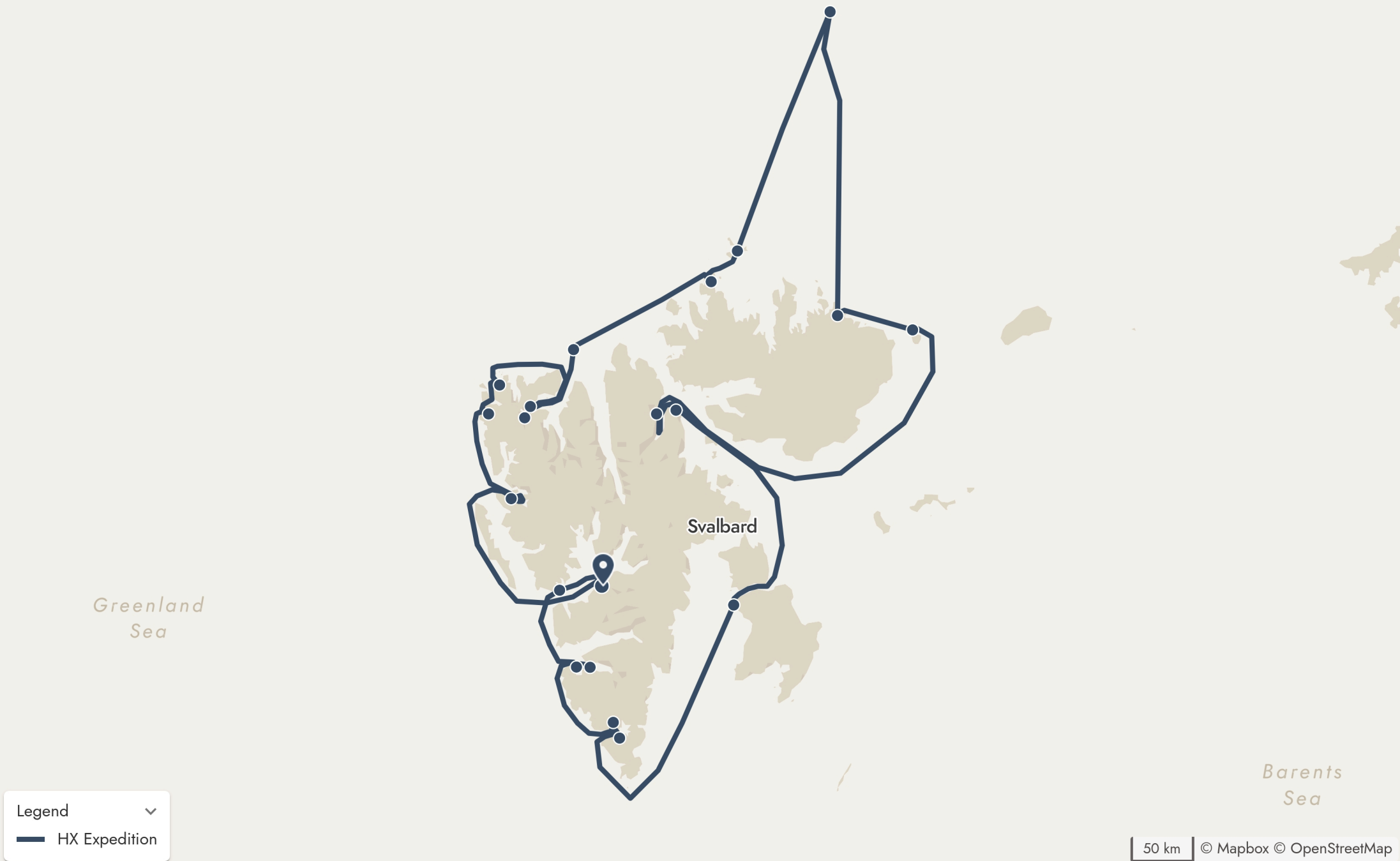


MS Fram

2025.08.05 - 2025.08.17



Embarkation Day

Embarkation day in Longyearbyen began with us variously exploring the town and even going on some excursions. On board MS Fram, the afternoon program included collecting expedition jackets in the Science Center and our 'muck' boots in the Lecture Hall. Later we all attended a mandatory safety drill in the Explorer Lounge, a

requirement of maritime law to ensure the safety of all on board. Later after dinner we listened to our Expedition Leader and Hotel Manager talk about our plans for the voyage and for those with the energy after our busy day, we had conversations around the ship with members of the expedition team or just relaxed with a drink in the bar.



Ny-Ålesund

Our day began with briefings on AECO guidelines and polar bear safety, which were required for our landings in Svalbard. We also had options to join a wildlife watch on deck, learn about the onboard citizen science programs while in Art Corner, some of us painted postcards to send later in Ny Ålesund. Once there, many of us participated in guided walks to learn about the history of this

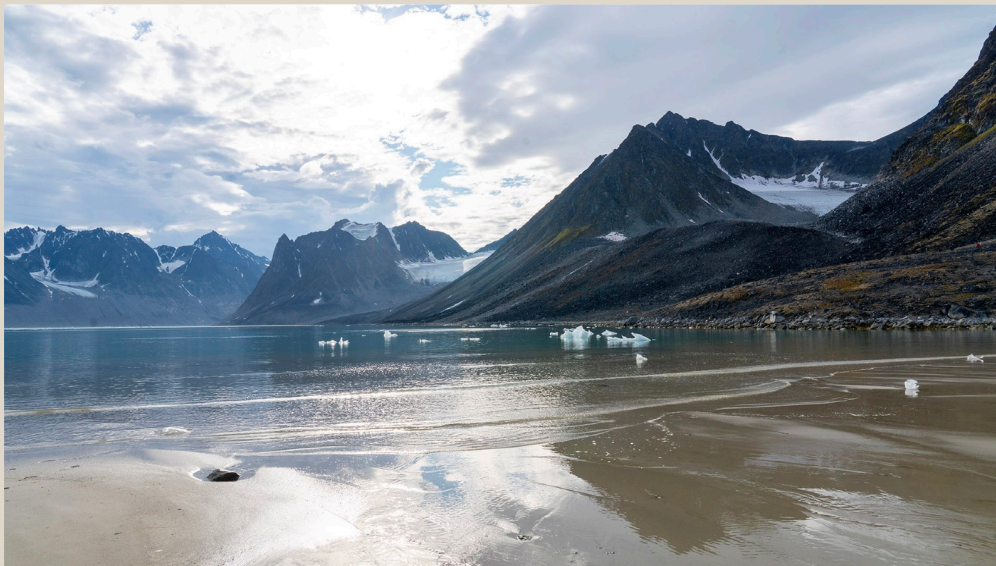
fascinating ex-coal mine, now a multinational research settlement. And of course, posted our postcards! In the evening we enjoyed beautifully scenic sailing in nearby Kongsfjorden. We concluded the evening with the Captain's welcome, where we met the officers and crew.

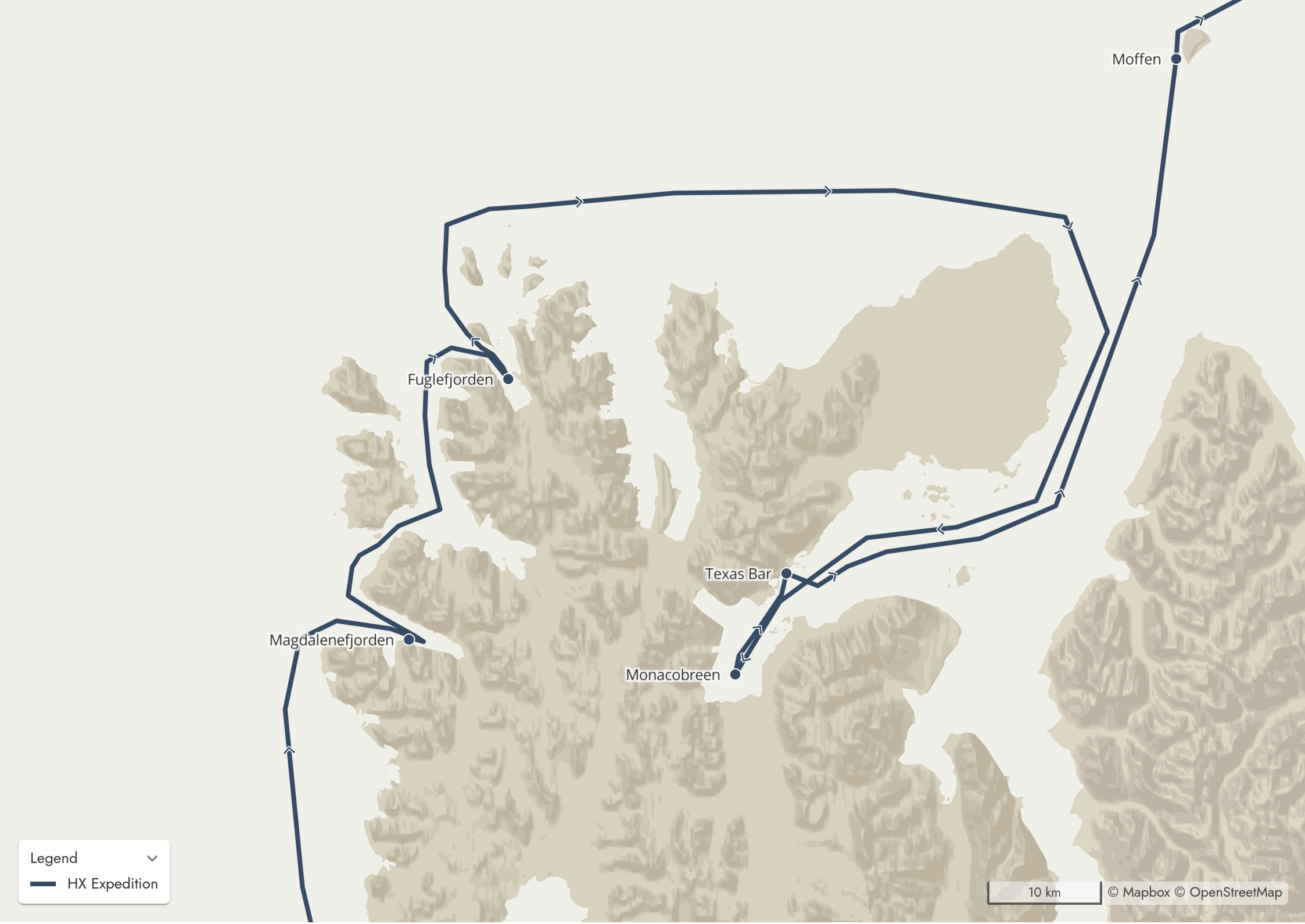


Magdalenefjorden & Fuglefjorden

Today was very special. Not only did we have a fascinating visit to a 17th century whaling site and some of participated in kayaking or the science boat, but some also braved the cold water and joined the Fram (polar plunge) Beach Club. However the peak of excitement was our sighting of polar bears! There were three of them on a beach some distance across the fjord, resting after feeding on what was probably the carcass of a reindeer. We watched quietly at over 500m

away, after approximately half an hour, we sailed away. We later had a very scenic sailing into Smeerenburgfjorden (Blubber Town Fjord) named after an old whaling station nearby, and experienced our first small boat cruising. We were near the beautiful Svitjodbreen glacier and the impressive mountain views in the Fuglefjorden (Bird Fjord). Between our activities we also had a talk on the history of Svalbard.





Moffen

Fuglefjorden

Texas Bar

Monacobreen

Magdalenefjorden

Legend



— HX Expedition

10 km

© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap



Monacobreen, Texas Bar & Moffen

We spent the morning cruising or kayaking in front of the incredible Monacobreen (glacier) named after Prince Albert of Monaco who sponsored a number of famous Arctic expeditions in the early 20th century. Our science boat was also launched again. After lunch we sailed to a different area of the bay known as Leifdefjorden (Love Fjord) for our landing at the trappers' hut, affectionately known as Texas Bar where hot chocolate was served. Although the hut was

stocked with an interesting collection of alcoholic drinks from around the world, we weren't tempted and left them for posterity, as part of the story of the place. Stunning wild flowers were abundant whether taking a stroll to viewpoints or going further with the hike. By late evening we reached the island of Moffen where we stopped for half an hour to enjoy watching our first sighting of the charismatic walrus hauled out on the sand.







Chermsideøya & Phippsøya

This morning, when we looked out our windows, the scenery of Chermsideøya was beautiful. We were excited to go ashore because here have been conserved the geoglyphs (writings in stones) of several expeditions over the years, including one involving a swastika. This item is of unknown origin but is believed to have been placed there just before WW2 by a well known Arctic tourism company of the day. In the ideal conditions this morning, the brave undertook

another visit to the Fram Beach club and did another polar plunge. The science boat was launched again today as well. In the afternoon we faced a swelly landing in Isflakbukta (Phippsøya) but the boats were expertly handled by Fram's drivers. Once ashore in this vast moon-like landscape we were able to walk to a stunning view point, stroll along a huge open beach, collect a lot of marine plastic and visit a refuge hut built in 1936 for the benefit of stranded sailors.





Foggy pack ice!

FOG! The first of our voyage. We had sailed 117 nm north from Phippsøya but now feared that our attempt for the ice edge and to achieve an HX 'farthest north with guests' would be foiled. However this was not the case because Captain made the decision that visibility was sufficiently good for us to slowly proceed on our way to the ice. And we made it! Despite the condition, we arrived at the edge of the

north polar sea ice and in doing so, achieved our farthest north record! We had to turn back at a mighty 82 degrees, 24 minutes 6 seconds North. After this excitement because the fog continued, we spent the rest of the afternoon with an interesting and relaxing programme of talks and activities.

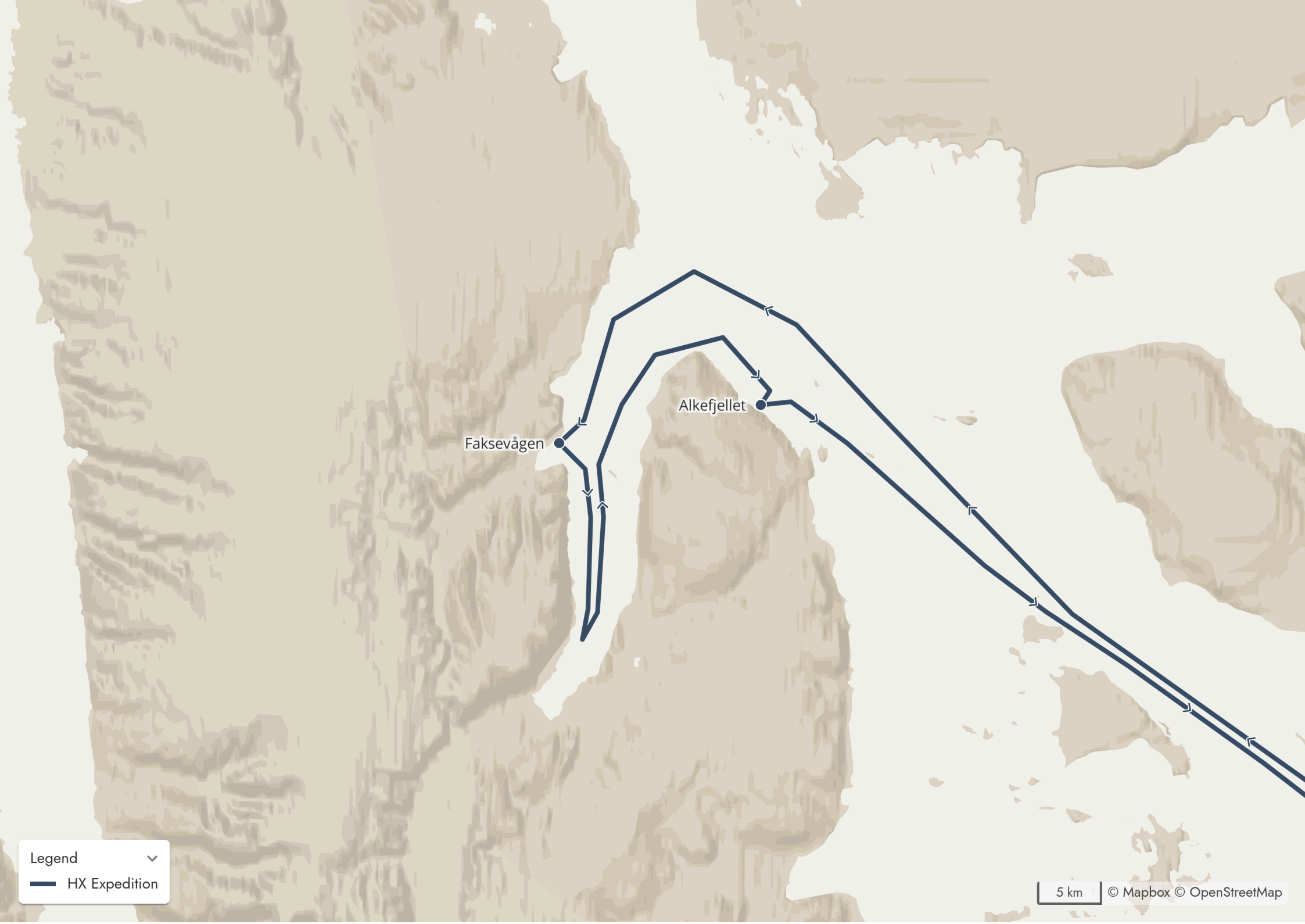


Albertinibukta & Storøya

Extensive fog arrived over the north east of the archipelago so Captain and our Expedition leader Tessa examined all the possible options and found a window of good morning conditions for small boat cruising in Albertinibukta. It was a beautiful opportunity with another chance for kayaking for those keen to paddle in these pristine waters. On arrival, the ice cruising was a wonderful experience we

will all never forget. However the wind and the swell increased and kayaking was not possible. Nature continued to throw tricky weather our way and our afternoon ship's cruise of Storøya only provided a glimpse of the island through dense fog. To make up for the vagaries of the weather, instead we enjoyed another interesting on board programme from the Expedition Team.





Faksevågen

Alkefjellet

Legend



— HX Expedition

5 km

© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

Storøya, Norway - Aug 11, 2025

Faksevågen, Norway - Aug 12, 2025

Faksevågen & Alkerfelljet

The thick fog continued on our night time voyage around the far eastern island of Nordaustlandet and into the early morning. However it cleared quickly and we were able to land at Faksevågen, named after the mythological horses of the Norse gods of Day and Night. After lunch we cruised around the fjord in the most gloriously sunny, calm conditions before heading to our late afternoon

destination, Alkerfelljet. The Brunnich's guillemots after whom the cliffs are named were a delight. Many males were on the water educating their newly fledged chicks in matters of flight and feeding. A lovely touch from the Hotel Manager and Head Chef was to provide us with a 'Bar Boat'. Hot chocolate with a good dash of rum added to the fun of the afternoon.



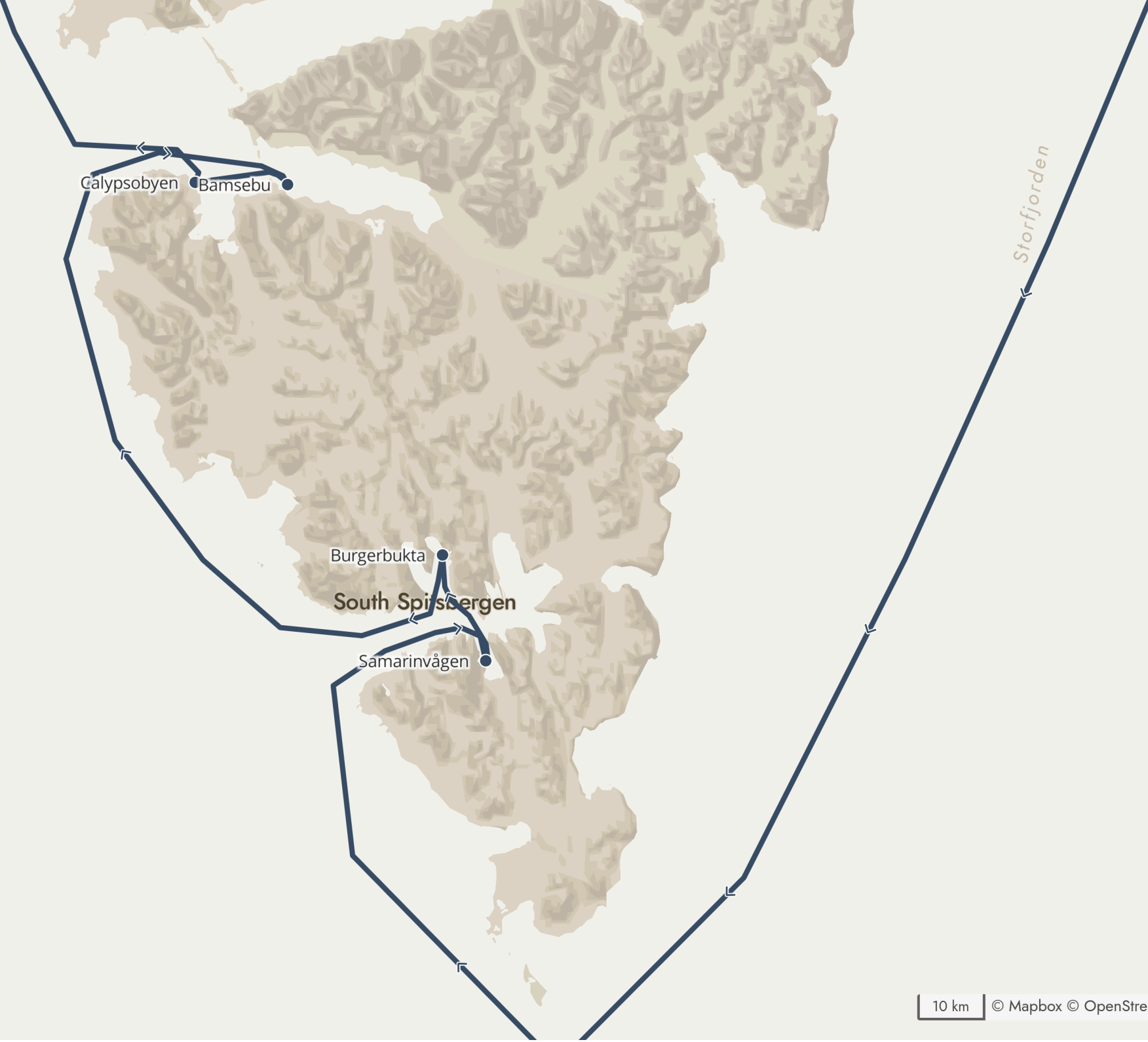


Kapp Lee

We spent the night sailing in and out of the fog as we headed for Kapp Lee. However we were in luck and another window of fair weather opened up which enabled us to land. The best part of this landing, for most of us were the walruses hauled out on the beach

next to the old trappers huts. An additional treat for those of us whose visit was lucky to be timed just right, were the pair of young and fluffy arctic foxes which played around in the sand very close to these magnificent pinnipeds.





Galypsobyen Bamsebu

Burgerbukta
South Spitsbergen
Samarinvågen

Storfjorden

Legend

HX Expedition

Samarinvågen & Burgerbukta

Persistent fog appeared again and the sharp peaks of Hornsund eluded us as we sailed in. This caused our morning expedition to Samarinvågen to be cancelled. However the Expedition Team put on a great show in keeping us occupied. We had various activities and lectures including one on rocks, another on how to count birds and a hilarious paper aero plane game - The Great Fram Air Race. In the afternoon we cruised gently to Burgerbukta. There the clouds and the

light played with us, changing the mood of the landscape as we stood on the ancient rock moraine and faced the splendid blue, black and white Kvalfangerbreen. That evening we enjoyed a great HX Foundation Charity Auction for a Svalbard chart, the ship's flag, the Captain's hat and the last 3 nights of the voyage in the ship's top suite. It really was a great day to recognize the 100th Anniversary of the finalizing of the Svalbard Treaty.



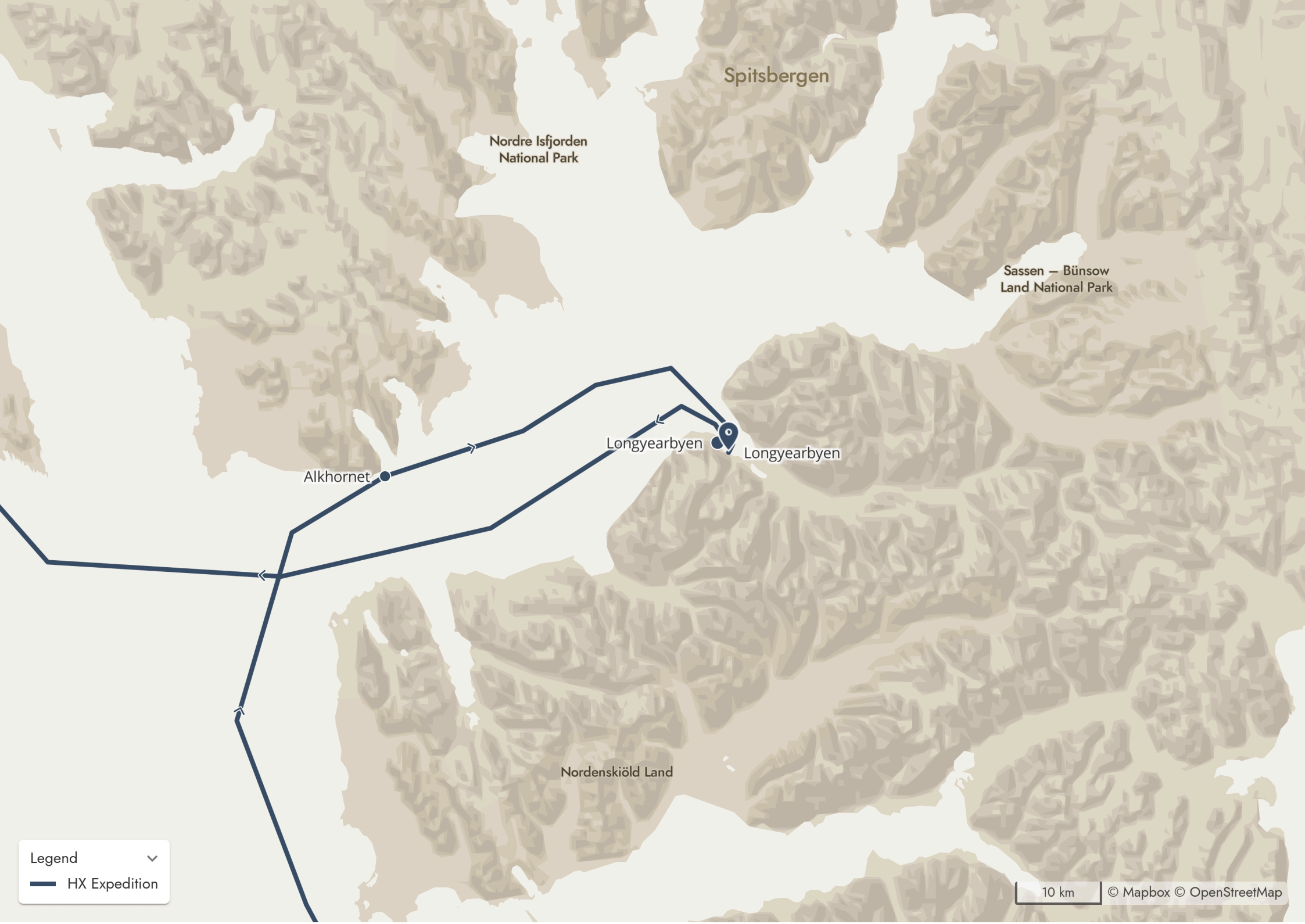
Bamsebu & Calypsobyen

This morning we entered Bellsund then Van Keulenfjorden and our landing was at the privately owned hut named Bamsebu. Initially a built for beluga whale hunters, multiple heaps of whale bones lie as testimony along the beach. Some of us went on a hike to the other side of the peninsula and saw arctic fox and reindeer. In the afternoon we went to the intriguing Calypsobyen. A place casually named for a British Naval training vessel of the 1890s which sailed in the area

transpired, to be a source of great interest. It was a former British owned coal mine (The Northern Exploration Company) from the early 1900's. They invested a fortune over the few years of their exploration but the return was negligible and the venture collapsed. Cared for today by the Svalbard authorities, there was a lot to see and learn about.







Spitsbergen

Nordre Isfjorden
National Park

Sassen — Bünsow
Land National Park

Alkhornet

Longyearbyen

Longyearbyen

Nordenskiöld Land

Legend
HX Expedition

10 km © Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

Alkhorner & Barentsburg

This morning was glorious and the rich green of the slopes of the mighty Alkhorner were almost luminous in their intensity of colour. A short climb took us closer to the thousands of kittiwakes, glaucous gulls, guillemots, fulmars and other birds who breed there. We were even treated to reindeer - adults and calves. The afternoon was foggy but our voyage took us past the Russian mining community of Barentsburg. The town stood out against the background of dark rock

and the blackness of the coal which was part of the land, the roads and the dust of which even covered the buildings themselves. Most of us felt a moment of shock to see the pollution pouring from the power plant of this place. Our day was nearly over but for the lively Captain's Farewell on deck 7 and then after dinner, sitting down together in the D4 Lounge to watch the wonderful voyage slide show.





Longyearbyen, Norway - Aug 17, 2025

Disembarkation Day

Alongside in Longyearbyen, our time together on MS Fram drew to a close. Our early morning disembarkation ended a journey shaped by exploration, learning, and shared experiences in the unique wild Arctic environment of Svalbard. As we step ashore, we take with us

memories of spectacular and diverse landscapes, extraordinary wildlife encounters and friendships made with fellow travelers and crew. Whether our first or for some, a repeat voyage, every one of us left with a sense of inner joy and warmth.





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