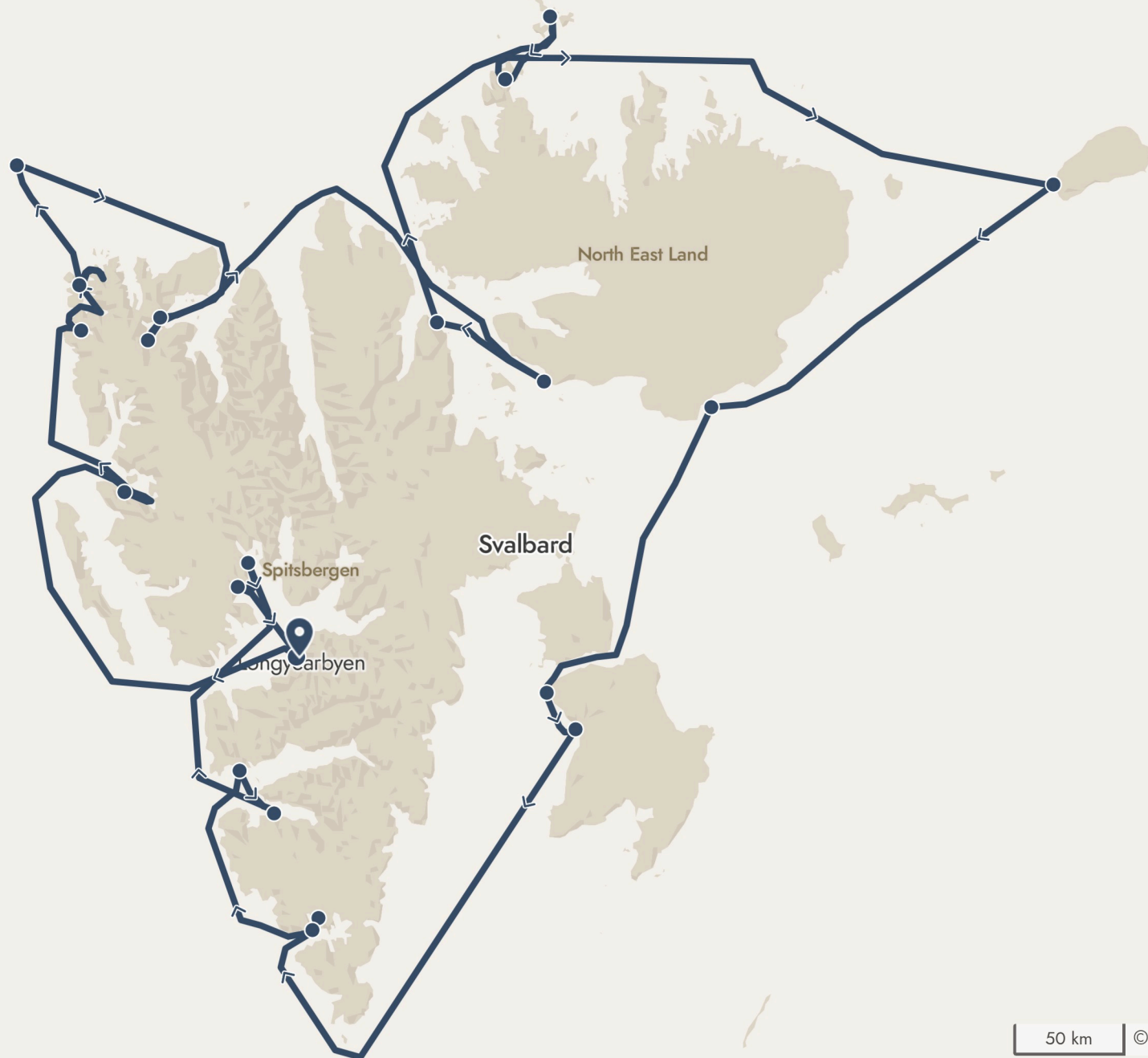




Circumnavigating Svalbard – The Ultimate Expedition

MS Spitsbergen, 23 June – 5 July 2026



Legend 

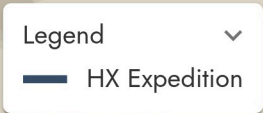
 HX Expedition

Day 1 - Embarkation in Longyearbyen

Guests arrived in Longyearbyen, the northernmost town in the world, where colourful houses sit beneath rugged mountains and the Arctic wilderness stretches in every direction. Under a blanket of soft cloud cover, conditions felt remarkably welcoming for these high latitudes. The day before, guests had time to explore the town and its surroundings, gathering their first impressions of Svalbard. In the afternoon, guests made their way aboard MS Spitsbergen —

their home for the days ahead. Once they had settled into their cabins and familiarised themselves with the ship, we ran the mandatory safety drill, an essential step before setting sail. The Expedition Leader and Hotel Manager then gathered everyone together to introduce the voyage and share key practical information. With the ship preparing to depart, the expedition stood on the threshold of what lay ahead.





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Day 2 - Ny-Ålesund & Kongsfjorden

We spent the morning sailing quietly into Kongsfjorden, surrounded by sweeping glaciers and stark mountain ridges softened by a calm, overcast sky. The Expedition Team led a series of briefings, introducing guests to key safety procedures and the AECO guidelines — useful context for exploring this remarkable environment with care and respect.

In the afternoon, we arrived in Ny-Ålesund, one of the northernmost settlements in the world. Walking through this small yet historically

rich community, we followed in the footsteps of early polar explorers and learned about its evolution into an international scientific hub. We paused by the famous mooring mast from the early airship expeditions, taking in the quiet that defines life in this remote outpost. Later, as we continued deeper into the fjord, a polar bear appeared on the ice — and everyone was on deck in moments. A remarkable way to mark the first full day at sea.





Smeerenburg

Danskøya

Gravneset

Legend

HX Expedition

3 km

© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

Day 3 - Gravneset (AM)

The morning brought us to Gravneset in Magdalenafjorden, where low clouds hung over the mountains and a stillness settled across the water. Conditions were calm as we prepared the landing site and guests stepped ashore, eager to explore this historic place shaped by centuries of Arctic whaling.

Shortly after everyone had reached the beach, our plans changed. A polar bear had been spotted nearby — a reminder, swift and unambiguous, of how dynamic this environment can be. We guided

guests calmly back to the ship, where the encounter took on a different quality altogether. From on board, we continued to observe the bear as it moved through the area and eventually swam across the fjord. Using the ship's camera, we followed its progress closely — unhurried, purposeful, entirely at home.

We resumed our course through Bjørnfjorden and into Fuglefjorden, the afternoon unfolding around the onboard programme and an ever-changing Arctic seascape.



Day 3 - Smeerenburg (PM)

As evening approached, we made for Smeerenburg, where a walrus colony was known to haul out along these historically charged shores. The light had softened, the landscape was still, and the conditions felt right for another close encounter with Arctic wildlife.

Just as we were preparing to begin the landing operation, a polar bear was spotted nearby. Plans shifted once more — calmly and

without hesitation. We remained on board, holding the same spirit of curiosity and respect that had guided us throughout the day.

From the ship, with the help of the onboard camera system, we watched a third bear move through its Arctic home. Three polar bear sightings in a single day. The day closed on that.



Ice Edge

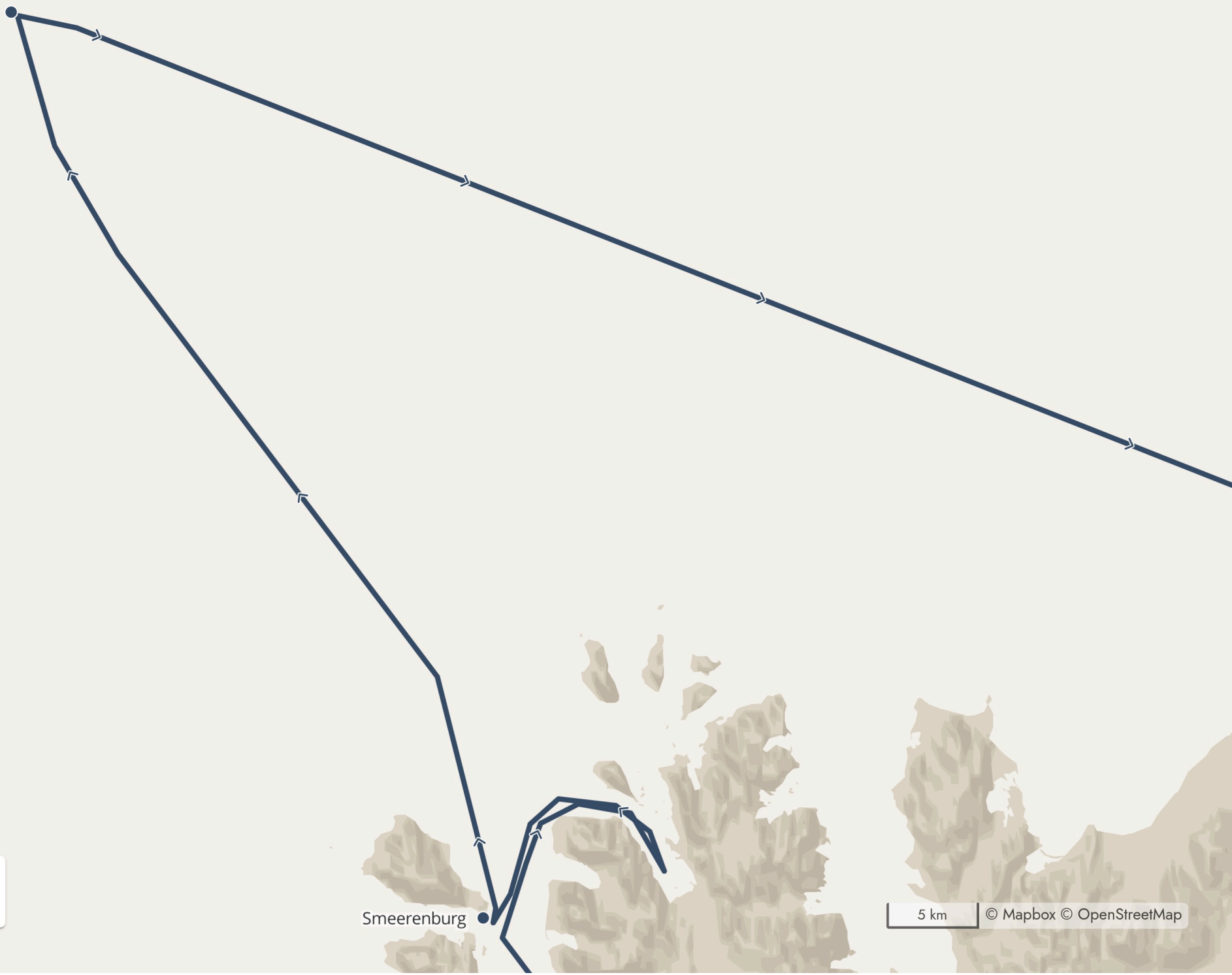
Smeerenburg

Legend

— HX Expedition

5 km

© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap



Day 4 - Ice Edge

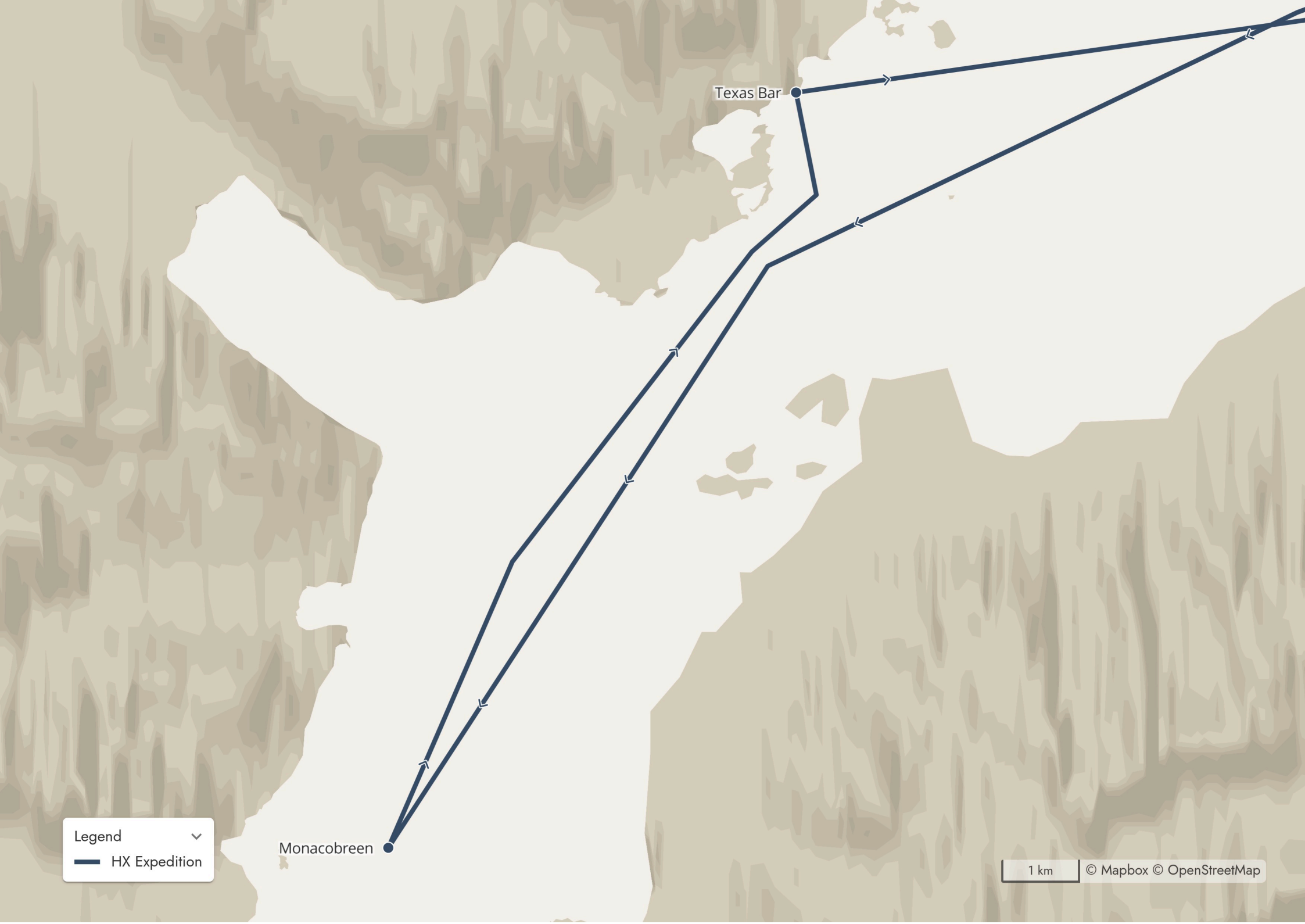
We spent the morning sailing northward in search of the ice edge, anticipation building as the landscape gradually shifted. By around 9am, we reached it—an expansive, ever-changing boundary of sea ice stretching into the distance. The ship eased gently into the edge, allowing us to fully appreciate this unique environment. From the decks, we scanned the ice for signs of life, taking in the silence and scale of this remote Arctic world. At one point, we gathered outside to enjoy hot dogs on deck, a simple pleasure made special by our

extraordinary surroundings.

In the afternoon, we launched our small expedition boats to explore the ice more closely. Drifting among floes of different shapes and sizes, we found ourselves enveloped in a dense Arctic fog that seemed to blur the line between sea and sky. The quiet was profound, broken only by the occasional sound of ice shifting in the water. It was a moment that captured the true feeling of being far to the north, immersed in a wild and fragile environment.







Day 5 - Monacobreen (AM)

We awoke to excellent conditions as we entered Liefdefjorden, the calm waters reflecting the surrounding peaks and creating a serene Arctic atmosphere. With the ship in position, we prepared for a morning of exploration and soon set out in our small expedition boats toward the impressive face of Monacobreen.

Approaching the glacier, its vast front wall revealed itself in striking detail—towering ice formations streaked with shades of blue and white, constantly shifting and alive. From water level, we could fully

appreciate the scale and texture of this majestic glacier. The quiet was occasionally broken by the distant crack of calving ice, a powerful reminder of the dynamic forces at work.

All around us, birdlife thrived in this nutrient-rich environment.

Seabirds wheeled overhead and gathered along the glacier front, adding movement and sound to an already captivating scene.

Surrounded by such raw beauty, we spent a morning that held its own weight — vast, still, and alive in equal measure.



Day 5 - Texas Bar

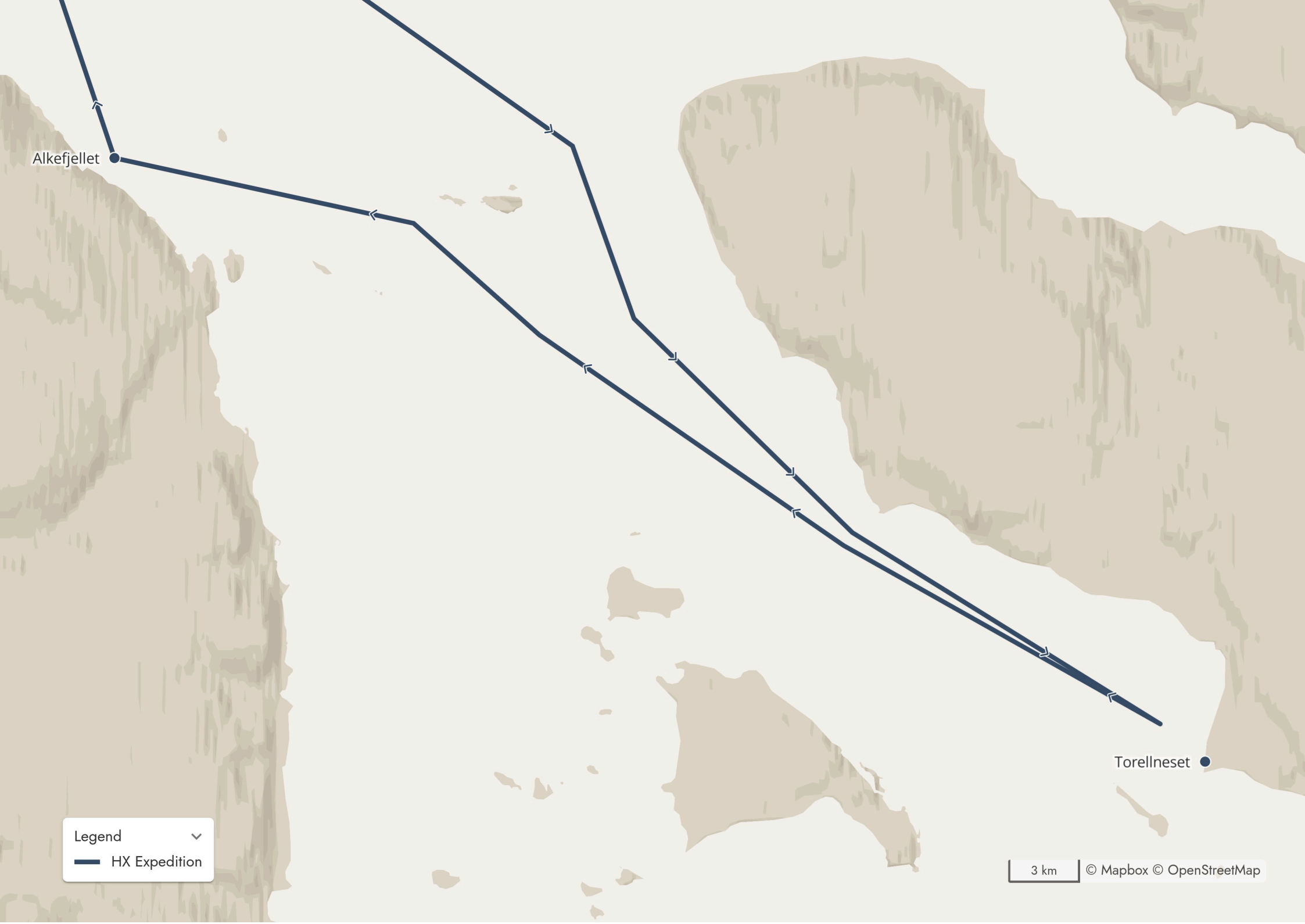
In the afternoon, we moved a short distance further north within Liefdefjorden to the historic site of Texas Bar. With the fine weather holding steady, we were able to enjoy a perimeter landing, spreading out to fully explore the area at our own pace. The small trapper's cabin, weathered yet welcoming, offered a glimpse into the lives of those who once spent long, isolated seasons here.

Gathered just outside, we shared a relaxed moment together, enjoying a drink in the spirit of this remote "bar," surrounded by the

stillness of the Arctic landscape. For those seeking a refreshing challenge, the opportunity for a polar plunge from the shore proved irresistible, adding a burst of laughter and exhilaration to the afternoon.

Meanwhile, a smaller group set off on an extended hike, venturing further into the terrain to take in wider views of the fjord and its surroundings. It was a perfect complement to the morning's glacier experience, rounding out a day rich in both activity and atmosphere.





Alkefjellet

Torellneset

Legend

HX Expedition

3 km

© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

Day 6 - Torellneset (AM)

We arrived early at Torellneset, in the southern reaches of the Hinlopen Strait, under the kind of soft, diffuse Arctic light that makes everything feel both vast and intimate. Our destination was the walrus colony known to haul out along these broad, gravel shores — and it did not disappoint.

We went ashore and organised guests into groups, each led by a member of the Expedition Team. Walking options ranged from shorter strolls along the shoreline to extended hikes across the tundra,

allowing everyone to take in the site at their own pace. The walrus themselves were magnificent — massive, unhurried, piled together in a scene both humbling and oddly peaceful.

At one point, a dense Arctic fog rolled in without warning, briefly swallowing the landscape and softening everything into muted grey. As it lifted, it left behind a scene that felt even more remote and raw than before — a fitting quality for this corner of Svalbard.



Day 6 - Alkefjellet (PM)

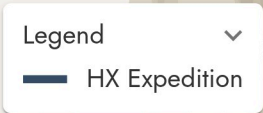
Long before we drew close, Alkefjellet announced itself. The calls of thousands of Brünnich's guillemots carried across the water, filling the air with a noise that was less sound than presence — something felt as much as heard.

With MS Spitsbergen positioned at a respectful distance, we set out in the expedition boats toward the cliffs. From water level, the scale became real. Towering basalt columns rose steeply above us, every

ledge alive with nesting birds — flying, diving, calling, jostling. The sound was relentless: a full, living wall of noise that carried across the water and did not let up.

The combination of ancient geology and extraordinary wildlife density made for an encounter difficult to do justice in words. It is one of Svalbard's great spectacles, and we were grateful to be in the middle of it.





Day 7 - Isflakbukta (AM)

We woke to a quiet, atmospheric morning in Isflakbukta, off the island of Phippsøya, with a light fog threading across the landscape. As we began preparing the landing site, a polar bear was spotted resting on the beach — and plans shifted immediately.

We remained on board. Through the ship's camera system, we observed the bear as it lay along the shore, perfectly settled, in no hurry to be anywhere else. There was something deeply still about it — an animal entirely at home in a place most would find barely

habitable. It was a privilege to watch from a distance.

Once the bear began to move away, we launched the expedition boats for a cruise along the coastline. Among the stops was the emergency cabin on shore — a small but significant landmark in this isolated stretch of the Arctic. The visit also quietly marked something else: at this point, we were at the northernmost position of the entire voyage — 80.41° North.



Day 7 - Chermsideøya (PM)

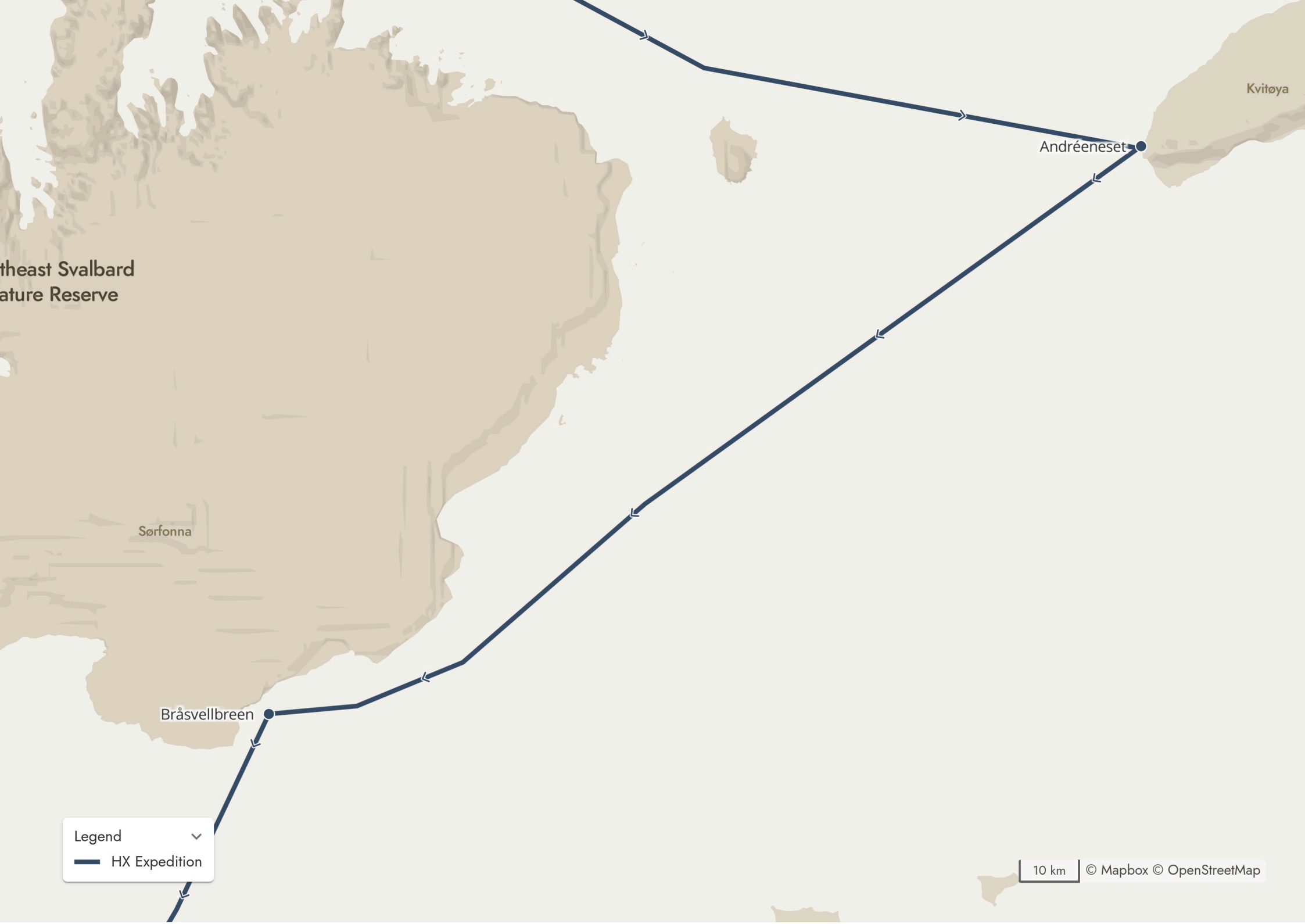
In the afternoon, we sailed slightly south while remaining above 80° North, arriving at the remote island of Chermsideøya. In the narrow waters of Beverlysundet, we prepared for a landing at a site known for its remarkable cultural traces—historic inscriptions left behind by expeditions that once ventured into these high Arctic latitudes.

Together with guests, we walked toward this remarkable site, where the “graffiti” carved into the rocks offered a fascinating glimpse into the human stories connected to this remote place. Each marking told a silent tale of presence, endurance, and exploration in an otherwise

wild and remote environment.

After visiting the site, we spread out within the designated perimeter, taking time to explore the surroundings and reflect on the contrast between human history and Arctic nature. As part of our visit, we also carried out a beach clean-up, contributing to the protection of this fragile ecosystem. Working together, we collected an impressive 43 kilograms of debris—a powerful reminder of both the reach of ocean currents and the importance of our shared responsibility to care for these remote shores.





theast Svalbard
ature Reserve

Sørfonna

Bråsvellbreen

Andréeneset

Kvitøya

Legend

HX Expedition

Day 8 - Andréeneset (Kvitøya, AM)

We awoke to a foggy and atmospheric morning off the coast of Kvitøya, the easternmost island of the Svalbard archipelago. This remote and rarely visited place, often surrounded by sea ice, carries a deep sense of isolation and history. With landings not permitted here, we set out instead on a small boat cruise to explore the shoreline from the water.

As we moved quietly along the coast, the mist added a layer of mystery to the landscape, softening the shapes of ice, sea, and land.

Kvitøya is closely linked to the ill-fated Andrée balloon expedition, and knowing this history gave a special weight to the experience.

During our cruise, we spotted two polar bears moving along the shoreline. We paused to observe them from a respectful distance, watching their slow, deliberate movements through the fog. The stillness, the history, and the wildlife combined to make for a morning that was, by any measure, extraordinary.

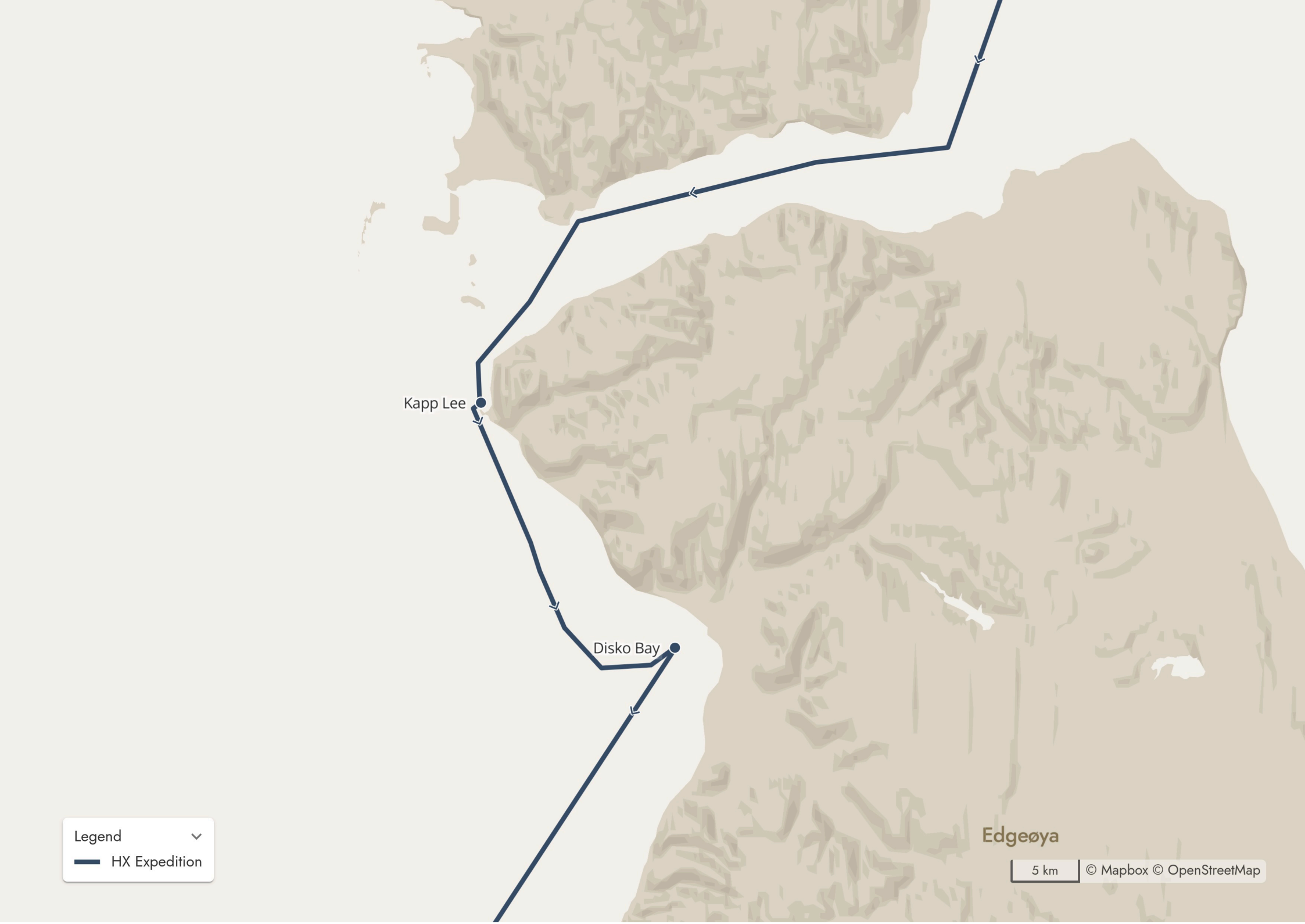


Day 8 - Bråsvellbreen (PM)

After our exploration at the far eastern edge of Svalbard, we turned our course to the southwest, settling into a day of steady sailing. Throughout the journey, we led a series of lectures and activities for guests, deepening our understanding of the Arctic environment and its many stories. At the same time, there was always space to simply enjoy the voyage itself—standing on deck, watching the ever-changing seascape, and reflecting on the remarkable places we had already experienced.

Towards the end of the day, we approached one of the great spectacles of the archipelago: Bråsvellbreen. As the ship drew nearer, this immense glacier revealed itself as a towering wall of ice stretching across the horizon. Waterfalls cascaded from its frozen face, adding movement and sound to the vast stillness. We spent time in quiet admiration, taking in the scale and beauty of this extraordinary natural formation—one of the great set-pieces of our Arctic passage.





Kapp Lee

Disko Bay

Edgeøya

Legend

HX Expedition

5 km

© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

Day 9 - Kapp Lee (AM)

We set out through Freemansundet toward Sundneset, but a dense fog closed in steadily as we approached, and visibility dropped far enough to require a change of course. We turned south toward Kapp Lee — and the Arctic, as it often does, rewarded the adjustment. A small boat cruise along the shoreline brought us to the walrus haul-out sites the area is known for: large groups resting on the shore,

their bulk and slow social rhythms as compelling up close as they are from a distance. Between the wildlife, several historic trapper's cabins lined the coast — quiet evidence of the hunters and explorers who once worked these remote shores.

A different day to the one planned. A good one, nonetheless.



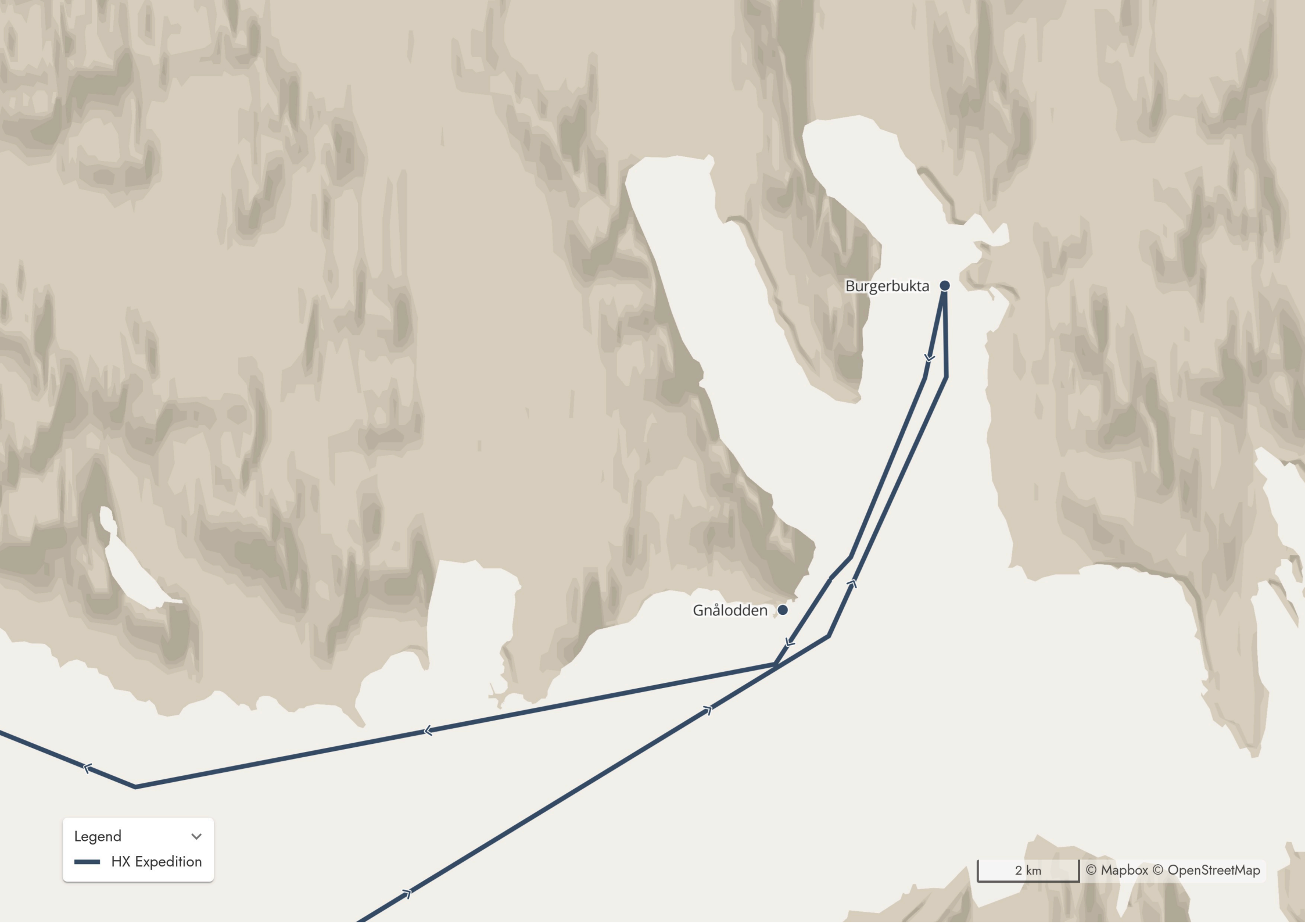
Day 9 - Diskobukta (PM)

In the afternoon, we arrived at Diskobukta with plans to land and explore the wild landscapes of Edgeøya. Two polar bears appeared in the area as we assessed the shore, and that was that — a landing was not possible.

Two bears at once, though, is not nothing. We remained on board and watched, the disappointment giving way quickly to something

more straightforward: appreciation. MS Spitsbergen set a course back toward Spitsbergen as the afternoon shifted to presentations, deck time, and a chance to take stock of the voyage so far. Hornsund lay ahead — mountains, glaciers, and deep fjords — and anticipation was already building.





Burgerbukta

Gnålodden

Legend

HX Expedition

Day 10 - Burgerbukta (AM)

We awoke already surrounded by the spectacular scenery of Hornsund, one of Svalbard's most dramatic fjord systems. A blanket of fog lingered over the water early on, and for a while it seemed our plans might once again require adjustment. Rising temperatures gradually dissolved the mist, revealing the rugged mountains and glaciers that make this region so remarkable.

With conditions improving, we proceeded to Burgerbukta, landed, and divided into activity groups. Many joined guided walks across the tundra and glacial terrain, making their way toward a moraine with

wide views of Kvalfangbreen. Standing before this vast river of ice, the scale and beauty of Hornsund's glacial landscape — shaped by powerful natural forces over thousands of years — made itself felt. At the same time, a group set out by kayak, experiencing the fjord from water level. Gliding quietly through calm Arctic waters beneath towering mountains and glacier fronts, they gained a perspective the shore simply cannot offer. Improving weather, stunning scenery, and varied activities made for a memorable morning in southern Spitsbergen.



Day 10 - Gnålodden (PM)

In the afternoon, we sailed further out of Hornsund toward Gnålodden, one of the most scenic landing sites in southern Spitsbergen. Beneath the towering cliffs of Gnålberget, we came ashore to explore an area rich in both natural beauty and human history. Our destination was the small cabin once home to Wanny Woldstad, the remarkable trapper and hunter who became one of the first female trappers to spend multiple seasons in Svalbard.

The walk offered spectacular views in every direction. Above us, the steep bird cliffs of Gnålberget rose dramatically from the shore, alive

with nesting seabirds. Across the fjord, glaciers and rugged mountain peaks completed a landscape that felt quintessentially Arctic.

As if the scenery were not enough, we were treated to a delightful wildlife encounter. Near the landing site, three Arctic fox cubs emerged and began playing among the rocks and tundra. Their curiosity and energy kept us captivated as they chased one another and explored their surroundings. It was a wonderful moment and a fitting conclusion to another memorable day in Hornsund.





Vårsolbukta

Bamsebu

Legend

— HX Expedition

3 km

© Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

Day 11 - Vårsolbukta (AM)

We spent the morning at Vårsolbukta, a beautiful corner of western Spitsbergen where history and wildlife came together against a backdrop of striking Arctic scenery. After landing, we set out to explore the area at a leisurely pace, surrounded by mountains and coastal cliffs bustling with life. High above us, colonies of little auks, Brünnich's guillemots, and kittiwakes filled the air with their calls as they nested on the steep rock faces during the brief Arctic summer. One of the highlights of the visit was the presence of several Svalbard reindeer grazing close to the landing site. Unconcerned by our

presence, they continued feeding peacefully, allowing us to observe them at close range and appreciate their importance in this fragile ecosystem.

Our walk also revealed traces of the area's industrial past. Among the tundra and rocky slopes, we visited the remains of an old gold mining operation, a reminder of the many attempts to make a living in these remote and challenging landscapes. The combination of abundant wildlife, fascinating history, and spectacular views made for a memorable morning ashore.



Day 11 - Bamsebu (PM)

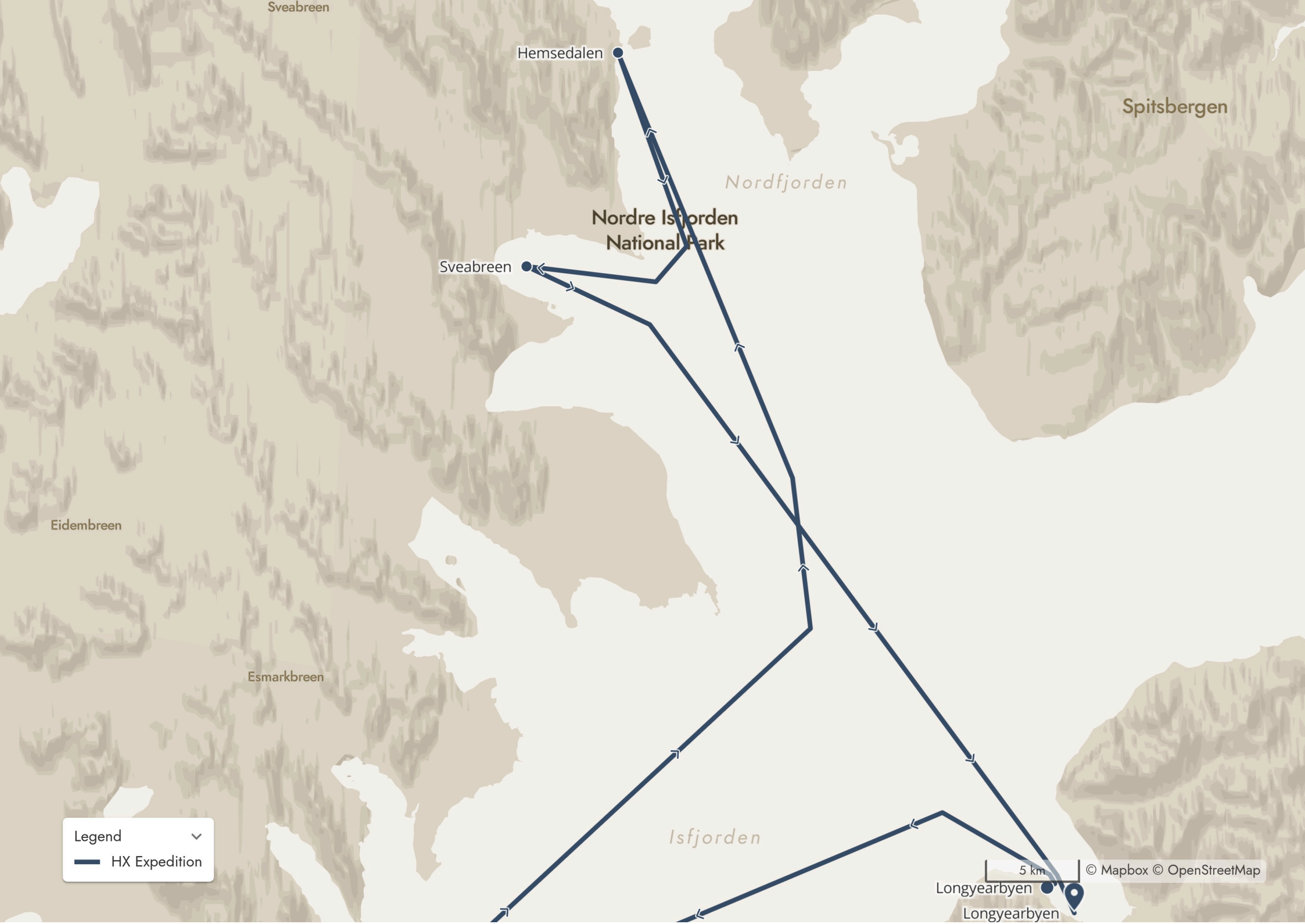
In the afternoon, we continued south into Van Keulenfjorden and arrived at Kapp Toscana, home to the historic trapping station known as Bamsebu. Set against an impressive Arctic backdrop, this site offered another opportunity to connect with the human history of Svalbard and the people who once lived and worked in these remote regions.

A group of hikers set off on an extended walk toward Richardodden, following the coastline through a landscape of broad vistas, Arctic tundra, and ever-changing views across the fjord — a chance to

immerse themselves more deeply in the wilderness and take in the scale of the surrounding mountains and glaciers.

Meanwhile, we led guided walks around the Bamsebu area, bringing the station's history to life. We explored the cultural remains scattered across the site and shared what we knew of the trappers who spent long winters here. Walking among these traces of Svalbard's past added a compelling human dimension to the wild landscapes that had accompanied us throughout the voyage.





Day 12 - Hemsedalen (AM)

We awoke to a beautiful sunny morning in Isfjorden, arriving at Hemsedalen surrounded by steep mountains and striking geological formations. With clear skies and calm conditions, it was an ideal setting for our final full day of exploration in Svalbard.

Some of us chose to join an extended hike, venturing further into the landscape to enjoy the wide views and immerse ourselves in the Arctic wilderness. Others remained closer to the landing site, joining our guided walks through the gorge that cuts into the valley. Along the way, we admired the picturesque waterfall cascading from the

cliffs and discovered numerous fossils embedded in the rocks, reminders of the ancient environments that once existed here millions of years ago.

As if the scenery were not spectacular enough, we were treated to a special wildlife encounter when a small group of beluga whales passed peacefully in front of the landing site. Their bright white bodies stood out against the dark waters of the fjord, adding another memorable moment to a morning filled with sunshine, wildlife, and remarkable landscapes.



Day 12 - Sveabreen (PM)

In the afternoon, we set out for our final field activity of the voyage, a small boat cruise at Sveabreen in Yoldiabukta. With calm conditions and beautiful light, we approached the glacier from the water, allowing us to appreciate its impressive scale and intricate details. As we cruised along the ice front, we admired the countless shades of blue and white that defined the glacial ice before us, each crevasse and formation telling a story of snow compressed over centuries. The still waters reflected the surrounding mountains and ice, creating a fittingly serene atmosphere for our last Arctic adventure.

Returning to the ship, we gathered for the Captain's Farewell before dinner, taking a moment to celebrate the experiences and friendships that had shaped our journey. In the evening, our competitive spirit emerged during the voyage quiz, where we tested how much we had learned throughout our time in Svalbard. The day concluded with the much-anticipated slideshow created by our photographer, bringing back memories of glaciers, wildlife, landscapes, and shared moments. It was a fitting way to close the final full day — a reminder of everything the High Arctic had shown us.





Day 13 - Disembarkation in Longyearbyen

Our expedition drew to a close in the early hours as MS Spitsbergen returned to Longyearbyen. As guests disembarked and farewells were exchanged on deck, the full weight of the voyage made itself felt — a journey that had taken us to the edge of the sea ice, beyond 80° North, and into some of the most remote corners of the Arctic. Together, we had explored deep fjords and historic trapping stations, stood before towering glaciers, and encountered walruses, reindeer, Arctic foxes, belugas, and an impressive number of polar bears. Along the way, we adapted to shifting weather and wildlife

encounters, finding — as expedition travel so often teaches — that the unplanned moments leave the deepest mark.

From fog-shrouded coastlines to sunlit mountain landscapes, each day across the Svalbard archipelago brought something new. What we witnessed and shared across these thirteen days does not fade easily. We carried away a deeper appreciation for Svalbard's wildlife, history, and fragile beauty — and the knowledge that this part of the world is unlike any other.



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