



One Ocean Expedition by the Norwegian tall ship Statsraad Lehmkuhl

One Ocean Expedition is a global project, and a recognized part of the UN's Ocean Decade. The main goal of the expedition is to create attention and share knowledge about the crucial role of the ocean for sustainable development in a global perspective. It encourages cooperation across borders for a more sustainable ocean and serves as a reminder that the ocean itself knows no borders.

We share the visions and desired outcomes of the Ocean Decade and use our ship to inspire and engage. Where the Ocean Decade focuses on "the science we need for the ocean we want", we also focus on the "people we need for the ocean we want". One Ocean Expedition aims to reduce the gap between science and the public, and to create hope for future generations.

Background

In April 2023, the Norwegian tall ship, Statsraad Lehmkuhl, returned home to Bergen, Norway after the first One Ocean Expedition - a 20-month long circumnavigation of the world. The expedition created a lot of attention and spread knowledge about the crucial role of the ocean for sustainable development in a global perspective.

The expedition was a brilliant showcase of the UN's sustainable development goals, involving 40 international partners from public sector, education, research, innovation, and commerce. The 110-year-old sailing ship, now equipped with state-of-the-art research instruments, served as a floating university, bringing on board students and scientists from all over the world to discuss and study ocean matters. In the many ports along the way, the ship hosted conferences, receptions, high-level meetings and diplomacy events.

One Ocean Expedition 2025 – 2026: Northwest Passage

The next One Ocean Expedition begins in April 2025, when Statsraad Lehmkuhl departs from Bergen, Norway, on the last day of the One Ocean Week conference. The 12-month expedition will take the

ship to various ports in Europe, including Nice, France, where it will be a part of both the One Ocean Science Conference and the UN Ocean Conference (UNOC2025), before setting sail for its Arctic adventure, going from Greenland through the Northwest Passage to the west coast of North America. In Inuit Nunangat, the expedition will have stopovers in Gjoa Haven, Cambridge Bay and Vancouver. This Arctic portion of the expedition will be a significant contribution towards the UN's Ocean Decade, providing the younger generation of students and researchers first-hand knowledge about Arctic regions. The University of Tromsø (UiT) The Arctic University of Norway, will develop and lead the educational and scientific program for this portion of the expedition, in close cooperation with Canadian and international partners.

Educational and scientific program: Future Arctic Pathfinders - A journey through the Northwest Passage

As part of the One Ocean Expedition, UiT The Arctic University of Norway has chartered the vessel to sail through the Northwest Passage in the autumn of 2025. The backbone of this expedition will be a 10 ECTS interdisciplinary course open for bachelor's and master's students and doctoral fellows, with the preliminary title "Future Arctic Pathfinders - A journey through the Northwest Passage".

The course will be in English, and it will be open to both Norwegian and international participants. In addition, UiT and partners will develop a dedicated research program specially designed for the expedition through the Northwest Passage. The course will be designed to be project-based and with a high focus on developing inter- and transdisciplinary collaboration skills, personal reflections, and practice in dealing with complex issues related to the consequences of human-induced climate change, focusing on the overarching vision and purpose of the expedition: to raise awareness and share knowledge about the role of the ocean in sustainable development from a global perspective. Traditional and indigenous knowledge and perspectives, conventional science, and societal challenges at large will inform the course content. The target audience will be students and fellows who are socially engaged, adventurous, and wish to be part of the solution to major societal challenges related to climate change and sustainable use of the ocean (in a broad sense).

The course will run twice, first from Nuuk to Cambridge Bay in August 2025 and then from Cambridge Bay to Anchorage in September 2025, with 60 participants being enrolled for each run. Our ambition is to ensure enrolment of participants from Indigenous nations and communities both from Inuit Nunangat and Norway, as their contribution to the learning environment on board the ship will be invaluable. Their participation in the course is essential for fostering unique insight about the Arctic, augmenting the learning experience and promoting authentic inclusivity and cultural exchange. As such, the course becomes a platform for sharing diverse perspectives, experiences, and ways of knowing, enriching the educational journey for all the participants.

In addition, we plan three high-level events with prominent stakeholders at the ports in Nuuk, Cambridge Bay, and Anchorage. We will focus on Arctic Council related themes in Nuuk, given that Denmark has the Chairship of the Arctic Council at the time of our visit (recently handed over from Norway). In Cambridge Bay, we see it natural to concentrate on the unique traditional knowledge, wisdom, and culture of the Indigenous nations and communities. At last, in Anchorage, we will focus on climate and security. The Norwegian Embassies in Denmark, Canada, and USA are supporting these events. At these events, our ambition is to gather representatives of indigenous nations and communities, highly ranked politicians, representatives from local, regional, and national authorities, private sector, and academia.



The planned route for the One Ocean Expedition 2025-2026. UiT is responsible for the leg through the Northwest Passage, starting in Nuuk on August 5th and ending up in Anchorage on October 4th, 2025.

The voyage represents an excellent platform for research. Most likely, the Statsraad Lehmkuhl will be escorted by other ships from Nuuk to Anchorage. Thus, at any given time there will be two ships from where research can be conducted. The research plan is still to be developed, but we foresee a wide range of study areas including biodiversity, microplastic, physical oceanography, human health, marine studies, atmospheric studies, governance, socio-economic aspects, imaginaries and much more.

Finally, the expedition will be linked with the Norwegian national research initiative Future Arctic Ocean (<https://uit.no/project/framtidenspolhav>) and the forthcoming International Polar Year in 2032/33. Some of the students and young academics that we will bring with us today, will in 2032 be Arctic researchers that we rely on to provide the insight and knowledge we need for a sustainable management of a rapidly changing Arctic. These future academics will greatly benefit from the inter- and transdisciplinary skills that we will help develop as part of the voyage through the Northwest Passage. This will be the true legacy of the voyage.

Expedition itinerary: The One Ocean Expedition starts in Bergen 7th of April 2025 and will visit Tromsø 11 - 16th of April. The UiT part of the expedition through the Northwest Passage starts in Nuuk 5th of August and ends in Anchorage on the 4th of October, with planned stops in Gjøa Haven (22-26th of August) and Cambridge Bay (29th of August to 2nd of September). The ship is expected to return to its home harbour Bergen on the 17th of April 2026.

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