

Nanok Expedition: an ice triathlon in Greenland partnering with scientists for climate research

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A 450 km crossing of the Greenland ice sheet on skis, over 400 km sea kayak descent along Greenland's south and west coast and a 600 m vertical climb to open a new climbing route: this is the atypical triathlon led by the two Belgian explorers of Nanok Expedition, Gilles Denis and Nathan Goffart, between April and September 2022. Beyond their sportive objective, their goal was to serve climate research and engage with and communicate to a non-scientific audience about climate research. In partnership with five scientific institutions, they collected unique data and observations of the elevation changes of the ice sheet, as well as rare in situ samples of snow and fjords water to investigate the influence of ice sheet melting on dust input to the ecosystem. The data and samples collected will be analyzed by the universities and research centers. The expedition was documented with a movie "La Traversée" now shared to a general audience on national television and on different university campus. The two explorers are bridging different scientific disciplines (geophysics, geochemistry, glaciology) and bring the science at the table of a non-scientific audience by sharing their passion. Beyond the science, this is a source of inspiration to communicate about the importance of polar regions in the climate system.

