



## End of Greenland swim 7<sup>th</sup> September

### UN Patron of the Oceans Lewis Pugh completes Greenland swim to highlight melting planet

- Lewis Pugh has become the first person to complete a multi day swim in the Polar Regions
- Pugh has completed a 7.8-kilometre swim in the Ilulissat Icefjord in Greenland
- The Ilulissat Icefjord is fed by the world's fastest moving glacier – moving at an average of 40 metres per day in summer
- The Ilulissat Glacier carves icebergs over 1 km tall – including, legend has it, the one that sunk the Titanic
- Pugh's pioneering swim was in water temperatures between 0 and 3 degrees C. (32 -37.4 F)
- The swim was undertaken to highlight the speed of the Climate Crisis ahead of the UN Climate Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, where Pugh will address world leaders and call for urgent action
- Pugh is also calling for 30% of the world's oceans to be protected to help slow the effects of climate change

The UN Patron of the Oceans Lewis Pugh has completed a 7.8km swim in Greenland's Ilulissat Icefjord. The distance was covered in 14 sessions over 12 days. The swim has been the most challenging of his career.

The swim commenced on Wednesday 25 August. Its focus was to highlight the rapid melting of the Greenland Ice Sheet as a result of the Climate Crisis. Pugh also called for 30% of the world's oceans to be protected by 2030.

The mouth of the Ilulissat Icefjord measures 7.8 km, and is fed by the world's fastest-moving glacier.

Pugh's attempt was hampered by icebergs and brash ice, when the mouth of the fjord became clogged with ice.

#### The Ilulissat Glacier

The Ilulissat Glacier, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, moves at an average of 40 metres per day in summer. The glacier calves an average of 30 cubic kilometres of ice into the sea every year. It produces 10% of all Greenland's icebergs, some over 1 km tall and including, legend has it, the one that sank the Titanic.

If the entire Greenland Ice Sheet were to melt, it would lead to a global sea level rise of over seven metres. Any sea-level rise will be devastating; **one billion people live less than 10 metres above sea level**. Just a one-metre rise would drown major cities like London, Tokyo and New York.

The Polar Regions are indicative of the speed and severity of global warming. They are experiencing the changes faster than any other region on Earth, which is why Pugh felt that this was the best place in the world to demonstrate the dramatic impact of the Climate Crisis.

Commenting at the end of the swim Lewis Pugh said: “The reason why I did this swim is clear: we rely on ice for our survival. Ice keeps our planet cool enough for us to live. But we are losing it fast. No ice, no life.”

“We have seen so many natural disasters this year – from wildfires in Greece, to floods in Germany, extreme snowstorms in Texas. But I want also everyone to be aware of what is happening here in the Arctic.”

“I am deeply alarmed by what I have seen. Last month was the first time in recorded history that it rained at the highest point on the Greenland ice sheet. The melt is accelerating. I watched water gushing off the ice sheet at a location that, only a few years ago, was covered in hundreds of meters of ice. I also witnessed shocking quantities of ice being pushed through my swim route and far out to sea.”

### **Pioneering Swim**

Pugh became the first person to complete a multi-day swim in the Polar Regions. The effects of such a swim have never been measured. During each swim Pugh's body temperature was monitored live because of the risk of hypothermia.

**About the swim, Pugh said:** “This was an extremely challenging swim. Not only because of the cold, and not just because I had to swim in freezing water day after day, without a chance to let my body recover. But because the conditions were also very treacherous.”

The water and weather conditions during the swim were challenging. A number of large, grounded icebergs that were stemming the flow of ice into the mouth came apart during the swim, causing kilometres of ice to rush through the mouth of the fjord and far out to sea. This event was so severe that ice blocked the Ilulissat harbour for several days.

**Said Pugh:** “Everything became harsher. The water was colder, air temperatures plummeted, and I had to deal with the sharp edges of brash ice.”

Over 12 days, Pugh swam 7.8 km, which is the distance across the mouth of the Ilulissat Icefjord.

**Pugh added:** “What happens in the Arctic will determine the future of our planet and everything that lives on it. The Polar Regions are feeling the effects of the Climate Crisis more dramatically than anywhere else on Earth. If temperatures continue to increase, the polar ice caps will melt and sea levels will rise. Unless we take urgent action to decrease global temperatures by seriously lowering our global CO2 emissions, low-lying islands and coastal cities will, quite literally, drown. The devastation of the natural world will affect every single person, every future generation and every creature, great and small, on this planet.”

### **Marine Protected Areas and COP26**

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) make the oceans more resilient to climate change. As the UN Patron of the Oceans, Pugh is calling for 30% of the world's oceans to be protected by 2030 at the UN Climate Conference (COP26) in Glasgow this November. There, he will stress to world leaders the role healthy oceans play in mitigating climate change. He will urge them to move beyond long-term commitments toward immediate action.

Pugh will travel to London for media interviews and discussions with key leaders before attending COP26 in Glasgow in November.

This swim has been made possible with the support of the lead sponsors Legal and General Investment Management (LGIM), one of Europe's largest asset managers and a major global investor who has consistently received A+ rankings for responsible investment strategy and active ownership by the UN-backed Principles for Responsible Investment (UN PRI).

### **Michelle Scrimgeour, CEO, Legal & General Investment Management, and Co-Chair of the COP26**

**Business Leaders Group, commented:** “Huge congratulations to Lewis for completing what has been an extraordinary challenge, navigating icebergs and brash ice in near-freezing waters. He has shown incredible resilience and determination throughout the challenge – truly inspirational. In undertaking this endurance swim and through his campaigning, Lewis shares a common purpose with LGIM: our goal is to create a better future through responsible investing. Lewis has witnessed first-hand the damaging effects of climate change and in

Greenland he has highlighted once again the precarious state of our natural world. Climate change is one of the biggest systemic issues facing us today. Like Lewis, we understand the crucial role of international leadership and collaboration to the decarbonisation initiative and I look forward to seeing Lewis at COP26 in November as we continue these conversations... Inaction is not an option.”

**- ENDS -**

**Notes to editors:**

More information on Lewis Pugh's 30x30 campaign can be found here: <https://lewispuhfoundation.org/30x30>

For more details on the Greenland 2021 expedition please go to [www.lewispuhfoundation.org](http://www.lewispuhfoundation.org)

**Key Dates:**

Lewis will be available in London for media interviews between the 8th and 13th of September.

**About Lewis Pugh**

Lewis Pugh is an endurance swimmer and UN Patron of the Oceans. He pioneers swims in the most vulnerable ecosystems on Earth to campaign for their protection. He is also the first person to complete a long-distance swim in every ocean of the world. He was also the first person to swim across the North Pole, and the first person to swim the 528 km length of the English Channel.

Pugh has been instrumental in protecting over 2 million km<sup>2</sup> of vulnerable ocean – an area the size of Western Europe. In 2015 Pugh helped negotiate the largest Marine Protected Area in the world in the Ross Sea off Antarctica. He is now working to fully protect 30% of the world's oceans by 2030.

**About the 30 x 30 Campaign:**

In 2018, Pugh swam the length of the English Channel from Land's End to Dover calling for the UK to protect 30% of oceans by 2030. After the swim the UK become the first major economy to commit to this target, and urged other nations to do the same. To date 86 nations have joined this call, making it the largest conservation drive in history.

**About the Ilulissat Glacier:**

Every year the Ilulissat Glacier calves an average of 30 cubic kilometres of ice into the sea. Due to global warming, the glacier is now melting at an accelerating scale and pace. It drains 6.5% of the Greenland Ice Sheet, which is the second largest body of ice in the world, into the Ilulissat Icefjord. If the entire Greenland Ice Sheet were to melt, it would lead to a global sea level rise of over seven metres. With more than a third of the world's population, including major cities like London, Tokyo and New York, living within 100 kilometres of the seashore, any rise in sea level will be devastating.

**About Legal & General Investment Management**

Legal & General Investment Management is one of Europe's largest asset managers and a major global investor, with total assets under management of £1.33 trillion<sup>[1]</sup>. We work with a wide range of global clients, including pension schemes, sovereign wealth funds, fund distributors and retail investors. Throughout the past 40 years we have built our business through understanding what matters most to our clients and transforming this insight into valuable, accessible investment products and solutions. We provide investment expertise across the full spectrum of asset classes including fixed income, equities, commercial property and cash. Our capabilities range from index-tracking and active strategies to liquidity management and liability-based risk management solutions.

<sup>1</sup>LGIM internal data as at 30 June 2021. The AUM disclosed aggregates the assets managed by LGIM in the UK, LGIMA in the US and LGIM Asia in Hong Kong. The AUM includes the value of securities and derivatives positions.

## Key Risk Warning

The value of an investment and any income taken from it is not guaranteed and can go down as well as up; you may not get back the amount you originally invested.

## Further information

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