

# Frenchman Attempting Longest Route in the World

October 18, 2022 Andrew McLemore

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Yann Busnel set out from South Africa in January on a 50,000km journey. Photo: Yann Busnel

Just a few days ago, Yann Busnel found himself slightly worried about pirates.

As he and a companion sailed past Yemen and Eritrea, they chased good winds to pass quickly through an infamous area of the Red Sea.

"We open our eyes in case of a pirate attack because here, it is not the nice Jack Sparrow chasing The Flying Hollander," Busnel wrote on [Instagram](#). "If they catch us, it's another story!"

Ultimately, Busnel passed through without incident, but it won't be the last time he faces the dangers of the world's **wildest places**. This 35-year-old Frenchman set out from South Africa back in January on a nearly unthinkable journey.

He plans to travel – without motorized transport – from Cape Agulhas, the southernmost point of Africa, to Cape Horn at the bottom of South America. He's already traveled the length of Africa and parts of the Middle East.

But with a planned itinerary of 50,000km – likely the longest route in the world – Busnel's destination remains years away. He must travel through the Middle East and Europe, then cut a diagonal line across all of Asia. Busnel plans to reach the Americas via the Bering Strait, then travel all the way back down the globe.

The whole journey will likely take three to four years, given Busnel's commitment to zero emissions for the trip. He calls the project **Beyond The Capes** – an expedition on foot, bicycle, camel, boat, kayak, canoe, and maybe even some longboarding.

Just don't ask him to hurry – Busnel is intent on enjoying the journey.

"I didn't go into a time trial," he told the French newspaper [Le Telegramme](#). "I take time."



## Years in the making

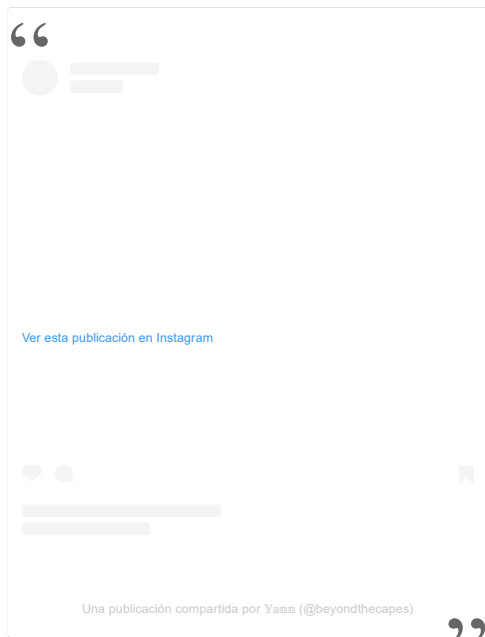
Busnel spent 10 years reflecting on this goal. Back in 2010, he and his brother began brainstorming something unprecedented.

In 2014, he had the "revelation" of attempting the longest land route in the world. Fast-forward another few years to 2019, and Busnel pulled the trigger, quitting his job and putting plans into action.

To fund the expedition, he created an organization of the same name, Beyond The Capes, along with multiple social media accounts.

Thus far, his "hard-won skills" from time spent in the French army have helped him deal with the trials and dangers of traveling in sketchy places without motorized transport. Ethiopia presented the toughest challenge so far, where Busnel survived repeated attacks by locals, he told The Telegraph.

"The most complicated was Ethiopia," Busnel said. "I have been assaulted several times. They stoned me and tried to take me away. I had to defend myself to save my skin."



Busnel's poetic and self-reflective posts about the trip show his intention to learn as much as possible. As he travels, he hopes to gain knowledge of how native peoples around the world survive, often in hostile environments, and compile it in a "scientific volume".

"It is important for me to understand these techniques by finding myself in the same position as the people who need them," Busnel wrote on his website.

But there's more here than improving our understanding of human survival and migration.

Busnel also acknowledges the trip's most basic purpose: "showing the world that man still has a lot to explore."

"Our planet is full of unknown places, heights not crossed, abandoned chasms, abandoned seas, in which everyone can probe his soul. I want to show that it is not so difficult to take a bag and go exploring," he writes. "Everyone has something to discover, even if it's raining and a bit cold or too hot...Our Earth needs us to understand it, our Earth needs you."



Busnel in Zambia. Photo: Yann Busnel





### Andrew McLemore

An award-winning journalist and photographer, Andrew McLemore brings more than 14 years of experience to his position as Associate News Editor for Lola Digital Media. Andrew is also a musician, climber and traveler who currently lives in Medellin, Colombia. When he's not writing, playing gigs or exploring the outdoors, he's hanging out with his dog Campana.

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