



# Climate Experience Walks: Initiating climate-adapted actions

## The Concept

The 'Climate Experience Walk' Norderney is a tool to illustrate and make alive current and future impacts of climate change in a tangible way within islanders' everyday environment. It is designed as a guided, place-based group experience with 6 thematic stops, to systematically link scientific facts on climate change impacts to an emotional connection with one's own 'home'. It transfers knowledge on large-scale climate change mechanisms scientifically grounded and comprehensive to the context of the island. Participants explore impacts of coastal erosion, the role of the offshore sandy reef arch, storm surge risks, the vulnerability of ecosystems and their lifeworld through a shared-experience and interactive elements, whilst every stop is highlighting ideas for possible adaptive actions.

## Norderney & Climate Change

- 85 % of the island is Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park (UNESCO World Heritage)
- Increasing risks through storm surge series & compound events
- Norderney gauge: 25 cm sea level rise in the last 100 years

The effects of climate change are already visible on the island and more places are potentially at risk in the future. A population survey conducted in 2022 disclosed a strong feeling of safety and a low perception of risk among residents. These subjective perceptions influence the level of behavior changes and several (psychological) barriers, e.g. a lack in perceived self-efficiency, prevent appropriate adaptation. Therefore, the linkage to the very local, home' context of Norderney, plays a crucial role in the experience walk as an awareness-raising tool for climate change impacts.

Erosion edge along the protective dune chain and former tourist platform (approx. 2 metres of sand loss following a series of storm surges in 2022)



Source: [www.hereon.de/wakos.en](http://www.hereon.de/wakos.en)

## The Travelling Idea

Climate-themed experience walks can travel across regions. It must be place-specific and adapted to local climate change impacts, ecosystems and communities. Its strength lies in combining the emotional context of home with a platform for exchange and motivational options for individual adaptation measures.

## A Face to the Idea:



Lisann Frahm

As part of the WAKOS project (Water on the Coasts of East Frisia), Lisann Frahm wrote her bachelor's thesis in Geography at the University of Hamburg. In her thesis, she designed the experience walk for the East Frisian island of Norderney, one of the East Frisian barrier islands along the German North Sea Coast. Based on literature research, expert interviews and, most importantly, selected specific locations on the island climate change and its impacts can be seen, felt and discussed. The idea is to address the islanders' climate awareness and raise self-efficacy through common experiences. The experience walk is designed for the islanders and serves as a blueprint for other places. It offers great potential as a novel approach that hopefully enhances climate change knowledge into climate change adapted actions.

## Takeaway



Dealing with the impacts of climate change, both today and in the future, mean that more than only information is needed. A societal behavior change must be triggered – through shared experiences.

