



# Connecting explorers — even from the uncharted Amazon

Viasat's reliable L-band network connected extreme athlete and explorer Ash Dykes and his team during their record-breaking expedition in Suriname, South America.







**Ash Dykes is an explorer, extreme athlete, motivational speaker, and five-time World Record holder.**

In 2014, Ash solo hiked across Mongolia, covering over 1,500 miles in 78 days, including challenging terrain in the Altai Mountains and Gobi Desert. In 2016, he walked the entire length of Madagascar's interior, summiting its eight highest mountains during a 1,600-mile, 155-day expedition. Then, in 2020 he became the first person to complete a 4,000-mile hike along China's Yangtze River, in a challenging journey that lasted 352 days.

Ash's latest mission, Uncharted: Suriname, saw him and his team — including wildlife experts Dick Lock, Matthew Wallace, and photographer Jacob Hudson — dropped by helicopter into the most remote part of the country. They scaled through the depths of the Suriname jungle, to the peak of its highest mountain, and to the source of a river largely unexplored by humankind. They then kayaked and hiked the entire length of this treacherous river, battling nature at its most raw and relentless.



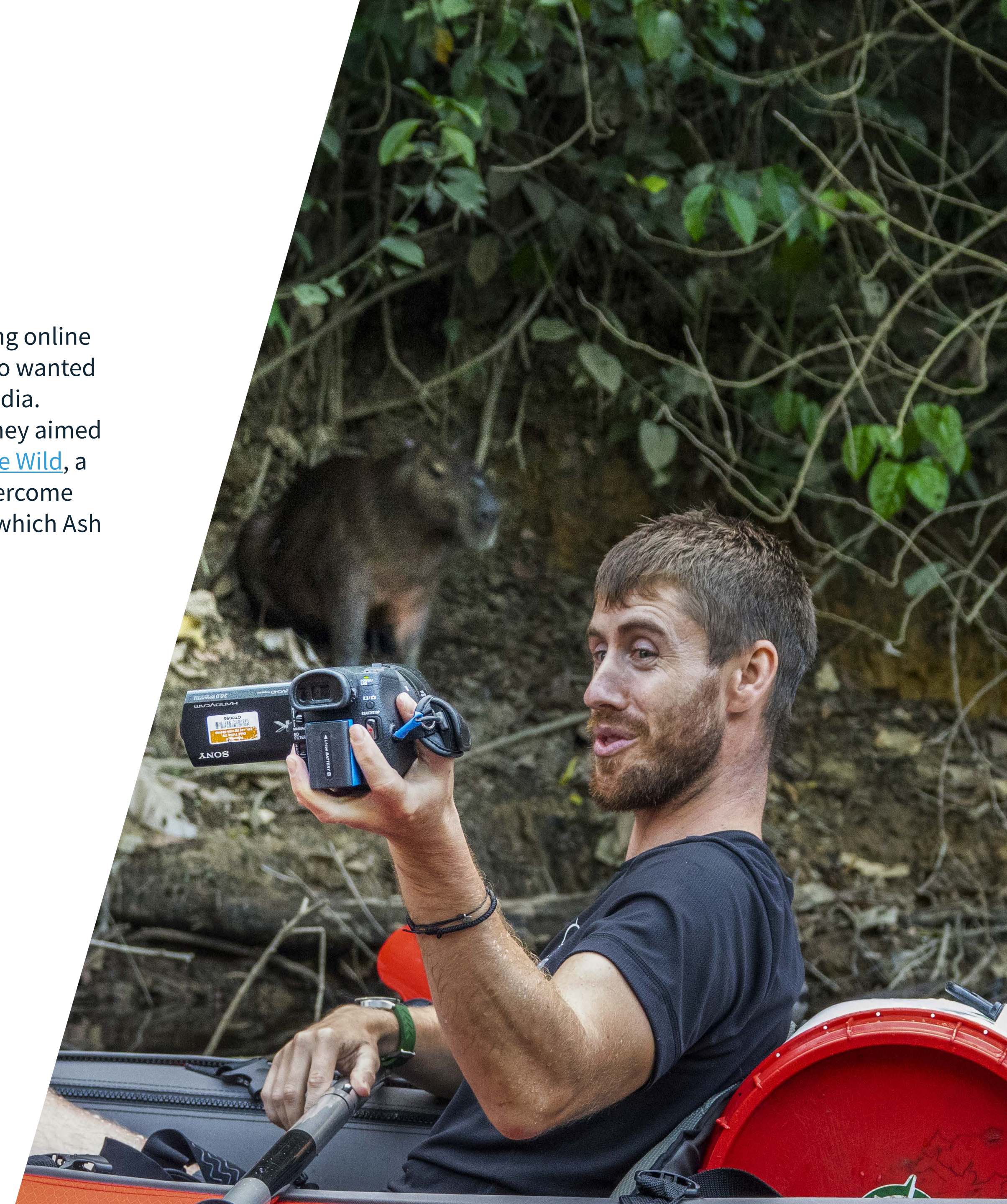
# Reaching the world's most remote regions

## The challenge

Nestled between Brazil, Guyana, and French Guiana, Suriname is the world's greenest country with more rainforest per square mile than any other country in the world. It is thought to have more than 90% rainforest cover, making it one of the last truly wild places on Earth. The area is also home to a range of incredible but dangerous creatures, including bullet ants, venomous wasps, tarantulas, caiman, venomous snakes, jaguars, pumas, piranhas, wolf fish and stingrays.

Unlikely to encounter any other humans throughout the expedition, the team needed a way to communicate reliably with the outside world. Connectivity would be vital in keeping family and friends updated and staying in touch with their base camp in Suriname's capital Paramaribo, to receive medical advice or organize an evacuation in

an emergency. With a loyal following online of more than half a million, Ash also wanted to share content through social media. Documenting their incredible journey aimed to help raise awareness for [Free The Wild](#), a charity organization working to overcome the mistreatment of wild animals, which Ash partnered with for the expedition.





# Satellite terminals designed for adventure and exploration

## The solution

Ash and his team travelled with our [Go-anywhere Pro](#) service and our [IsatPhone2](#) device to stay connected from the rainforest, with data provided through our connectivity partner in the Americas, [Globalsat Group](#).

Go-anywhere Pro — previously known as BGAN — is the industry standard for mobile satellite connectivity. It's delivered by our highly reliable L-band satellite network and trusted by governments and businesses worldwide. As an easily portable terminal smaller than an average laptop, the device allows internet and voice communications on the go, globally. By pointing the device at our satellites, Ash and the team could then connect their mobiles to access the internet and share files online.

Meanwhile, the powerful and rugged satellite phone, IsatPhone 2, helped the team stay connected with voice and text communications. When they reached

openings in the jungle or were on the banks of the Coppename River, they were able to call and text family and friends. As well as the features you'd expect as standard (voicemail, text messaging, Bluetooth), the IsatPhone 2 also allowed incoming call alerts, location tracking, built-in access to GEOS emergency assistance, and a one-touch support mode to send their GPS location data to a pre-set emergency number.

Both devices are highly reliable, dependable and durable, working with inbuilt batteries. With the expedition lasting more than a month, the team kept the devices topped up with a pack-away solar charger.





# Breaking world records while connected by satellite

## The result

Battling sleep deprivation, infections, malnutrition and hallucinations, the team fought their way upstream on the Coppename. With a final 50-mile push during the final days of the expedition, they finally reached the mouth of the river in early October 2024. Covering 373 miles in just 37 days, they set two world records as well as successfully identifying and mapping the source of the Coppename.

Throughout the expedition, Ash was able to use our Go-anywhere Pro service, with data provided by Globalsat, to post regularly on social media and share content with his social media followers from the remote jungle. The team also used our IsatPhone 2 to text and connect with family and friends regularly throughout the trip.







In the middle of the jungle, when wildlife expert Matt Wallace was stung by the Black Amazonian Scorpion — the most venomous in Suriname — the rest of the team used Viasat satellite connectivity to keep in touch with their base in Paramaribo, Suriname’s capital, in case an evacuation was required. Thankfully, Matt’s symptoms eventually subsided, and he was able to continue.

Following their return, the team’s achievements were verified by Guinness World Records and Ash returned to significant public interest, featuring in a host of national publications like the BBC, The Telegraph, The Daily Mail, and Daily Star.



# Summary

- › In September 2024, Welsh explorer Ash Dykes, along with Jacob Hudson, Dick Lock and Matthew Wallace completed Uncharted: Suriname, setting two Guinness World Records.
- › They achieved records for the fastest time to climb Julianatop, the highest mountain in Suriname, and the first team to row the length of the Coppename River by canoe/kayak. Along the way, they also successfully identified the river's source.
- › The team relied on our Go-anywhere Pro and IsatPhone2 services to stay connected and safe while navigating through some of the most remote areas of the Amazon, while sharing their journey on social media in real time.

## Inquire about mobile connectivity solutions

[Visit our website to learn more about Go-anywhere Pro](#)

[Learn more about Globalsat Group](#)

