

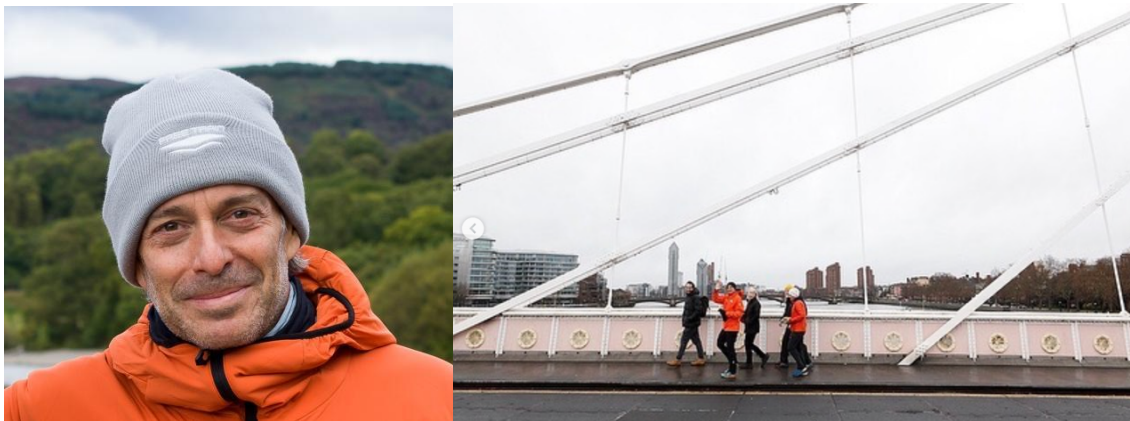
# walk it back<sup>®</sup>

## **PUSHED BY CLIMATE GUILT, A BUSINESSMAN WALKS FROM LONDON TO ISTANBUL TO CAMPAIGN FOR CARBON REMOVAL**

**CRAIG COHON WILL ARRIVE IN SERBIA APRIL 15**

**PRESS RELEASE – 10 APRIL 2023**

**On the eve of his 60th Birthday, former Coca-Cola executive and businessman Craig Cohon embarked on a 4,000km walk from London to Istanbul to campaign for carbon removal. He will walk through Serbia between April 15 and May 7 (route below).**



The latest IPCC Report says there is no way of keeping within 1.5 degrees of warming without eliminating carbon already in our atmosphere. Natural solutions alone are unlikely to be enough<sup>1</sup>. Carbon removing tech solutions need to be radically scaled at the same time. So why isn't everyone talking about carbon removal?

One man is on a mission to change that. Craig Cohon, a 59-year-old from Canada, has joined forces with the global youth movement ReEarth Initiative to drive a new global conversation about carbon removal.

Craig has not only invested his pension fund into carbon removal solutions, but he is walking from London to Istanbul via 82 cities and towns to raise awareness of the subject. Along the way, he is walking and talking to mayors, CEOs, activists, scientists and policy makers about the opportunities and challenges of carbon removal.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.stateofcdr.org/>

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## **The *walk it back* journey**

This Canadian entrepreneur left London on January 3 for a 5-month journey that will take him over 4,000 km across Europe on foot, via the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Germany, Poland, Czech Republic, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey.

He should arrive in Istanbul on June 5, the day of his sixtieth birthday and World Environment Day.

Cohon will cross the border from Hungary to Serbia on 15 April, arriving in Gornji Tavankut that day. He will reach Belgrade on 22 April and set off towards Bulgaria on 7 May.

## **Craig Cohon's story**

For years, Craig Cohon travelled the world on behalf of large companies such as Coca-Cola and Cirque du Soleil before settling on a barge on the banks of the River Thames thirteen years ago.

In 2022, Craig launched the [walk it back](#) campaign after becoming the first private citizen to undertake a personal 'lifetime carbon audit' following COP26. This process saw him calculate in molecular detail how many tonnes of carbon he'd emitted over decades of fast living (high-rolling holidays, lots of flights and hamburgers).

Last November, he repaid what he calls his debt to the earth – giving over USD \$1 million of his pension to carbon removal projects.

## **Changing the course of climate history**

*walk it back* sets out to question how carbon removal is perceived currently and supported globally, calling for greater dialogue, coordination, knowledge, governance and investment in the sector in order to safely and quickly scale carbon removal solutions.

Cohon says: “Like many people of my generation, I was clueless about the climate emergency for years, but when I learnt that all the carbon we've emitted is still up there I started looking into carbon removal. What I discovered is that, although it takes a lot of will and investment, it *is* possible to take huge quantities of CO2 out of the atmosphere. The tech is there and improving all the time. But we need to get quicker and better at doing this, fairly and on a huge scale. If we succeed, it has the potential to actually change the course of climate history.”

## **Growing a community around carbon removal**

Founder members of the campaign include youth climate activist network [ReEarth Initiative](#) and city leadership networks [United Cities and Local Governments](#). Partners include climate platform [Patch](#), the bank, [EFG](#), and the investment firm [Searchlight Capital](#).

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In November 2022, *walk it back* published the paper [Getting to Net Negative](#) that highlights the critical role cities play in carbon removal, and Cohon's walk will feature special events in 10 cities along his route that engage city decision-makers. In London, for example, untapped carbon sequestration opportunities include afforesting the statutory Green Belt, the 1,269,800 acres of land that encircles the city: with huge cop benefits for air pollution and physical and mental health.

Craig and the walk it back campaign will be arriving in Belgrade on 22 April along with a mobile exhibition within recycled shipping containers, showcasing different carbon removal solutions.

Come and explore what carbon removal looks like, then join Craig in conversation with local experts as they discuss the promise and the perils of carbon removal options.