

## Dear Members and Friends of Linking Tourism & Conservation,

**I**would like to wish that you all conclude this year in a positive spirit and with good thoughts for 2020. In times of growing polarisation between different groups of society, it may be vital to seek dialogues and common ground wherever we can, and in particular, with those we think are our opponents. In our small but growing global network of Linking Tourism & Conservation, it should be possible to contribute in this way as “Linking” is our job. Many people believe that tourism and conservation exclude each other, that they are contradictions and cannot comfortably fit together. We know that this does not need to be true. In our network, we have already identified and profiled 38 Examples, where tourism is supporting national parks and other protected nature areas. We are sure there are many more examples to be detected. And much could be learned from those. There are numerous existing and potential win-wins between tourism and conser- ➤



vation of nature. Nature-based tourism is increasing most rapidly. The United Nations says that tourism has the potential to support all of the 17 globally agreed Sustainable Development Goals (the SDGs) to be reached by 2030. This potential needs to be realised. And everybody can contribute to it.

It is promising that we presently see a considerable movement and increasing awareness that recognises addressing both biodiversity protection and climate change is crucial if we want to achieve a healthy and sustainable future. We in LT&C have chosen to offer our support to SDGs 14 and 15, and specifically, the target, which calls for a global and representative network of protected areas to be established by 2020. Next year the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) will evaluate how much has been achieved under the Aichi Target 11 and what further work is needed in the next decade to safeguard the survival of all the ecosystems on earth as a foundation for our future. We at Linking Tourism & Conservation will use these findings to reform our strategy and contribution going forward.

I am personally an optimist. That is partly related to personal experiences where success stories were achieved through linking and joining forces with different organisations or parties. And, it is based on the increasing interest and evidence from dedicated members and partners that the opportunities are there for tourism to help protect critical natural areas. I, therefore, believe in positive surprises. You can be part of making these positive surprises happen. Whether you engage yourself in our organisation of Linking Tourism & Conservation for reaching the biodiversity goals, or with others to spread positive spirits and activities in support for any of the 17 SDGs, it will contribute to bringing the global society more together and increasing the chance that we reach the future all nations had agreed they wanted. I count on you!

I wish you positive thoughts and surprises in 2020!



Peter Prokosch

