

# Annual Report 2019





## Message from the Chair of the Board, Peter Prokosch

2019 was not only the year, where global awareness about the climate crisis has grown significantly, but the urgency to protect the world's biodiversity became equally apparent. The mission of Linking Tourism & Conservation (LT&C) makes more sense than ever: to ensure tourism supporting the completion of a global network of protected areas as a key tool to safeguard the diversity of nature on our planet. Therefore we are an organisation that is strongly aligned with what the world had agreed to under the UN Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD): To protect, by 2020, 17% of the land and 10% of the oceans, representing the different ecosystems and habitats. Whether this goal (the "Aichi target 11") will be reached is questionable. Too many national parks and other types of protected nature areas are just on paper or not properly managed.

However, increasingly much of tourism is nature-based and enormously benefiting from protected areas. On the other hand many of the world's national parks would not exist if tourists would not be interested in and visit them. That means that tourism must support protected areas, create win-wins, where both tourism and biodiversity can benefit. As that is the core of the LT&C mission, we can proudly report that our members in 2019 were able to showcase 8 new LT&C-Examples, where tourism is supporting protected areas. This brings the total number of inspiring examples that others can learn from and replicate to 38.

To make others learn from LT&C Examples and replicate the different recipes on other places, is still both our main goal and challenge. As we share this challenge with our conservation partners, such as Panorama or Blue Solutions, we continuously invest in partnerships, synergy and sharing experiences. In fact most of our members value the global network of highly motivated representatives and partners of both realms, conservation and tourism, as the most

important asset that LT&C has built up over the years.

We always try to combine our Annual General Meeting with a concrete workshop aimed at kicking off new developments or harvesting experiences from existing good cases. It is therefore a pleasure to see the movement on the Lofoten, where we met in 2019 and where a new national park had just been established. There is now a call for a much larger Biosphere Reserve, which should cover the main marine surroundings of the North-Norwegian island chain.

In Slovakia, we were able to show LT&C members how they can actively participate in a project related to financing. Supported by the EEA Norway Grants, our partner organisation, Aegis, in Slovakia uses experiences in our network and LT&C-Examples to develop in their country more effective ecotourism for national parks.

In 2020, governments will gather at CBD Conference of the Parties to take decisions on new biodiversity goals for the next decade. An increasing alliance of countries, such as Canada and Costa Rica, and conservation organisations are already striving for a target to have 30% of our planet protected. This could become the real test for tourism to support this goal politically and use the opportunity to demonstrate through good examples that tourism has a vital role to play in conserving these important areas. LT&C, at least, will continue to do its part, together with other conservation actors in the world.



## Highlights in 2019

2019 marked the sixth year of Linking Tourism and Conservation (LT&C) operating as a Norwegian-registered but global NGO.

LT&C continues to understand itself as a nature conservation organisation supporting the "Aichi target 11" of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity

(CBD) as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 14.5 and 15.1 to reach a complete, representative and well-managed global protected area network, 17% on the land and 10% of the coasts and oceans by 2020. LT&C believes that tourism can and must play an important role to reach this goal.

### 38 LT&C-Examples

As that is what LT&C is about, we can proudly report that our members and partners in 2019 were able to showcase eight new LT&C-Examples, where tourism is supporting the establishment or development of national parks or other types of protected areas. This brings the total number of published outstanding and inspiring examples to 38. They stand as an offer for others to learn from and replicate.



Global distribution of LT&C-Examples

**The following LT&C-Examples have been published in 2019:**



- Carnivore Tourism from Ecotur in Abruzzo National Park, Italy



- Amahoro tours and Redrocks Rwanda in Kahuzi-Biéga National Park, DRC



- Ecotourism on the Otago Peninsular, New Zealand



- Borana Conservancy and Lodge, Kenya



- Guided Nature activities in Soomaa National Park, Estonia



- MPA Torre Guaceto, Italy



- Game reserve turned into wildlife sanctuary Ranthambhore National Park, India



- Misool Private Marine Reserve, Indonesia



### **An Ecotourism Handbook for Slovakia with the EEA Norway Grants and partner organisation Aevis**

In cooperation with the Slovakian NGO Aevis, and under the EEA Norway Grants, LT&C implemented a national ecotourism project in Slovakia.

Guided by Aevis' Tomáš Vida, the project included a study trip to Slovakian National Parks and other ecotourism destinations for one week in September.

LT&C then prepared a best-practice handbook on ecotourism in Slovakia, in which a total of 11 interviews were conducted with members and experts from LT&C Examples.

Led by board member Diana Körner with LT&C intern/project assistant Nina Breck, the project ran from September to December 2019. The handbook will be published for a conference in May 2020 for the purpose to stimulate better conditions for protected area-supporting ecotourism in Slovakia.

### **New Website**

This year, the LT&C [website](#) was thoroughly updated with a new look and feel that makes it more user-friendly. It was launched in May 2019.

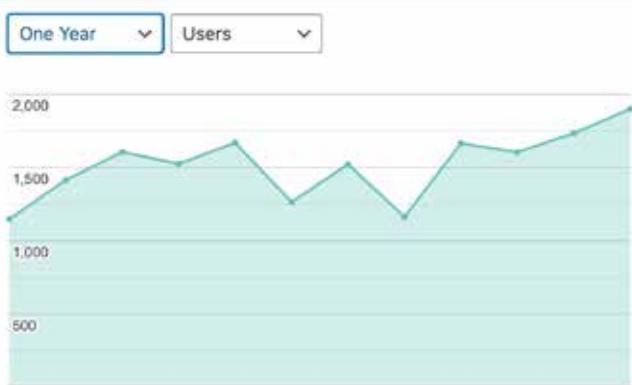
Over the year, we had 17 437 users visiting our website, peaking in December with almost 2000/month. More than 57% are from the United States, Norway, United Kingdom and Germany, but others are situated in almost all other countries of the world.

### **Communication Strategy**

In 2019 LT&C drafted a comprehensive communication strategy, which included broader outreach on social media, among the more traditional channels.

### **Africa by bike**

Our member, videographer and cyclist, George Podaras, embarked on a journey in September 2019, to cycle Africa from the most southern point to its northernmost, documenting wildlife in national parks and visiting LT&C Examples and members along the way. He is also using the journey to raise funds for LT&C member Dyer Island Conservation Trust in South Africa. He plans to finish his journey in late spring/early summer 2020.



Sessions	Users	Page Views
21,979	17,437	36,774
Bounce Rate	Organic Search	Pages/Session
78.17%	9,988	1.67
Time on Page	Page Load Time	Session Duration
00:02:02	16.34	00:01:22



Countries	Sessions
United States	5,803
Norway	1,583
United Kingdom	1,456
Germany	1,262
India	742
Australia	614
Netherlands	600
Canada	577
Philippines	521
Italy	442

## AGM on the Lofoten

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) in 2019 took place in Ramberg on the Lofoten, Norway. We visited the brand new [Lofotodden national park](#), which was one reason to have had our AGM there. In a side workshop we discussed how a larger part of the Lofoten, including its surrounding seas could be better protected. With that discussion we may have started a new movement: for a much larger Biosphere Reserve, which should cover both the outer and inner seas around the North-Norwegian island chain.

At the AGM, we raised the number of Board members from five to seven. Anne Franze-Jordanov, based in Gothenburg, Sweden, and Oliver Hillel from the CBD-Secretariat in Montreal, Canada joined our team. Also by unanimous vote, the Board members Denise Landau, Diana Körner and Sergio Chiarandini were reelected for a two-year period.

Over the year, the Board held regular meetings on a monthly basis via Skype.

## Members of the Board



**Dr. Peter Prokosch**, Co-Founder of LT&C and Chairman of the Board; Norway



**Denise Landau**, Co-Founder of LT&C and Board Member; US and the UK



**Anne Franze-Jordanov**, Board Member; Sweden



**Ottar Nakken**, Co-Founder of LT&C and Board Member; Norway



**Diana Körner**, Board Member; Tanzania



**Sergio Chiarandini**; Co-Founder of LT&C and Board Member; Italy and Thailand



**Oliver Hillel**, Board Member; Canada

## LT&C had two active Working Groups:

**“Communication Working Group”**, coordinated by Anne Franze-Jordanov. Other members are Nina Breck, Diana Körner, Leigh-Ann Hurt.

**“Training and Education Working Group”**, coordinated by [Sven Åke Bjørke](#). 28 students (Rockhopper Penguins) are natural members.

## Members and Partners

LT&C strives to implement joint activities that highlight the work of its global membership. Therefore, it is not a surprise that many of its members have identified one of the greatest benefits of LT&C to be part of its dynamic network of members and partners from both realms, conservation and tourism.. At

the end of 2019, more than 320 members were in our LT&C register, 52 new members joined us in 2019.

LT&C has four different levels of membership. In 2019, there were 28 Rockhopper Penguins (non-paying students were engaged through their university studies



Rockhopper Penguins



King Penguins



Royal penguins



Emperor Penguins



in activities related to the LT&C-mission), 250 Royal Penguins (basic members), 27 King Penguins (members with voting rights) and 15 Emperor Penguins (founding members and major life-long supporters). Members are represented on five continents, with a higher concentration in Europe, particularly in Norway and Germany. They comprise of tour companies, conservation organisations and individuals, who are experts or interested in tourism, environment or sustainable development.

### Partners



In addition to its members, LT&C cooperates with a number of national and mostly international **Partners** from conservation or sustainable tourism sectors:

### Corporate Members



A number of our members are businesses related to tourism or communication. They often play a role, which is aligned with the LT&C mission or are even contributing LT&C Examples. With member tour operators, LT&C offers also special tours, where LT&C-Examples are experienced, studied and supported.

### Compensating the Climate Footprint

In 2019 we established a closer partnership with our corporate member **South Pole**. LT&C introduced a climate compensation tool for visitors on its website, which allows members to offset their carbon emissions through two selected projects (Kariba REDD+ in Zimbabwe, and Lacándon Forest for Life in Guatemala), using South Pole's services. Both projects should benefit both climate and biodiversity, with Kariba REDD+ even being an LT&C-Example.

## Activities, Conferences and other Events

In 2019, LT&C actively participated or was involved in the following events:



**1. February 22:** Celebrating 5 years of LT&C: looking into its future in Königstein, Germany (LT&C Board and members)



**2. March 6-8:** ITB in Berlin, including Green Destinations event and LT&C member meeting (Diana Körner, Peter Prokosch, )



**3. March 10-11:** LT&C-Study Tour: ANTARCTICA – Polar Circle, Deep South Discovery Voyage (Sergio Chiarandini and Charles Walkers and 8 members)



**4. March 12-22:** LT&C-Study Tour: ANTARCTICA – WEDDELL Sea Tabular Iceberg Special (Sergio Chiarandini, Charles Walkers UK , Vineeta Hoon – Caress – India, Masaru Takayama – Asia Ecotourism network Japan and Franco Neirotti – Eco-Sailing Italy)



**5. April 26-28:** “Ringelganstage” on Hallig Hooe (LT&C-Example Wadden Sea; Peter Prokosch, Biosphäre Halligen, and 6 other members)



**6. May 5-9:** ANSESCo Alumni seminar on Rügen and Vilm, Germany (Tiemo Timmermann, Hans-Dieter Knapp, Peter Prokosch and former students from developing countries, incl. 2 Rockhopper Penguin members)



**7. May 28:** LT&C Seminar Future development of Raet national park, Arendal, Norway (Peter Prokosch, Hans-Dieter Knapp and local members)



**8. May 30-June 2:** AGM, workshop and excursion, Ramberg, Lofotodden national park (Board and members)



**9. June 5-16:** LT&C-Study tour Aberdeen – Jan Mayen – Svalbard (Peter Prokosch with 3 members)



**10. August 12-16:** Arendalsuka, Raet national park (Peter Prokosch and local members)



**11. September 2-6:** Study Trip Slovakia in relation to project under the EEA Grants with Aevis (Peter Prokosch, Diana Körner, Nina Breck)



**12. September 9-13:** UNWTO General Assembly, St. Petersburg, Russia (Diana Körner)



**13. September 24-28:** LT&C Round Table on “Ecotourism and Protected Areas” at Northern Sustainable Development Forum in Yakutsk, Russia (Peter Prokosch, Hans-Dieter Knapp, Natalia Malygina)



**14. October 7-9:** NordMAB meeting, Wester Ross, Scotland, UK (Peter Prokosch)



**15. October 16:** AECO Conference, Oslo, Norway (Peter Prokosch)



**16. November 20:** Annual Meeting of our partner The Long Run, Huilo Huilo, Chile (Sergio Chiarandini, Sibylle Riedmiller)



**17. November 27-29:** Sustainable Island Tourism Conference, Santo, Vanuatu (Diana Körner, Daniella Payet, Sergio Chiarandini)

## Communication and “Linking” work

Much of the activities of LT&C are related to facilitation, “linking” our members and partners for synergy, and communicating about best practices and examples.

Our newly designed website provides meanwhile a veritable goldmine of information for everyone interested to make tourism supporting the conservation of biodiversity. Through partnering and sharing the latest news, experiences, and guidelines with like-minded institutions and organisations, such as IUCN Tourism and Protected Areas Specialists Group (TAPAS), GSTC, Green Destinations, Blue Solutions, and several others, LT&C is mainstreaming its mission by spreading relevant information.

The news on the website is published on the 20th every month in the LT&C- Newsletter, automatically distributed to 512 members and subscribers.

LT&C continues as a voluntary organisation carrying out its mission with a very lean administration. In 2019 we had the privilege that one of our Founding Members sponsored an internship: Nina Breck joined us for six months in our office in Arendal and played a key role when developing our new communication strategy and the new design of our website. Later she was involved in the Slovakia ecotourism project. Otherwise, LT&C does not have any paid staff but bases all of its activities on the voluntary work of its Board and other members.

Many thanks to all of them!