



Linking Tourism
& Conservation

Annual Report 2021



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Message from the Chair of the Board, Peter Prokosch

In 2021, the eighth year LT&C is active worldwide, we were proud to announce the publication of more than [50 LT&C-Examples](#). By the end of the year, we had profiled 52 examples globally, where tourism is supporting the creation or further development of national parks and other types of protected areas. Those cases represent a wide spectrum of different financial, political or educational ways tourism can play a positive role in reaching the globally agreed biodiversity goals. They provide valuable blueprints for others to learn from and stimulate replication and multiplication.

2021 was also the year when a rapidly increasing number of countries, including the entire EU, committed to the so-called [30x30 Goal](#). They understand the urgent need to protect at least 30% of the planet, both the marine and the terrestrial biosphere, by 2030. LT&C partnered in this context, among others, with the [Campaign for Nature](#), who are calling all Parties of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to sign up for the 30x30 Goal. Hopefully, the final decision will be made at the second part of COP15 CBD, taking place in May 2022 in Kunming, China.

But 2021 was also the second year the COVID-19 pandemic ravaged the planet and was the reason COP15 CBD was partly postponed til 2022. It prevented us again from organising physical meetings and LT&C Study Tours. We, therefore, have increased our global activities on virtual platforms, using in particular Zoom to host webinars. There were many fruitful discussions, where participants learned from each other about how tourism is supporting protected areas in different parts of the world. We organised regional webinars for Africa, the Arctic and Central America (see [our Youtube channel](#))

The specific focus of the first half-year of 2021 was placed on Germany. The country is a champion in exporting tourism into the entire world with valuable initiatives for sustainable tourism, and many of our members are active there. We followed up on our cooperation agreement with [Nationale Naturlandschaften](#), the German NGO with all national parks, biosphere reserves and other large protected areas as their members. Under the leadership of Julia Rawlins, we developed a proposal for a pilot project exploring how to mainstream conservation in nature-based tourism. The project's core is the creation of twinning partnerships between protected areas in Germany and the global South to learn from each other, raise funds from tourism and increase the quality and size of the world's protected area network. The project is designed in the context of our present context: In addition to the enormous challenges of the current pandemic, there lies a great opportunity to work together to address the systemic problems which are causing the biodiversity, climate and pandemic crises. Studies show that the costs of inaction

far outweigh the costs of preventive action. Tourism, often seen as more of a problem and now suffering severely from the current crisis, has unique opportunities to improve relationships with the environment and nature and act as a forerunner and promoter of the global goal to protect at least 30% of our planet by 2030. We urgently need to set the course for sustainable nature conservation tourism.

Towards the end of 2021, we focused on the future development of LT&C. Facilitated by Georg Schwede, a SWOT analysis, interviews with members and partners and a strategic meeting on November 25 clearly showed us where our strengths and weaknesses are and what opportunities there are to overcome certain threats. Within our strategic process, we have agreed that "going for 30x30" is our primary purpose and that we need to engage in larger 30x30-targeted projects. We see us gradually transiting from a purely voluntary to a more project-based organisation. In 2022 final decisions are expected on joint ventures with other organisations and whether we should move our main base to Germany. We will undoubtedly grab more robust opportunities to bring tourism into a driving position for the 30x30 Goal.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Hübner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'J' being particularly prominent.

Highlights in 2021

2021 marked a significant year of Linking Tourism and Conservation (LT&C). As a Norwegian-registered but globally operating NGO, we crossed the milestone of providing 50 examples worldwide of how tourism supports protected nature areas.

LT&C continues to understand itself as a nature conservation organisation supporting the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), particularly their protected area goals, as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 14.5 and 15.1. LT&C believes that tourism can play an essential role in reaching these goals. In the face of the severe biodiversity crisis, equally to the climate crisis, we count on a decision of the CBD to conserve at least 30% of the planet's lands and waters by 2030. LT&C, therefore, strengthened its relationships with partners, such as the "Campaign for Nature", by collaborating on the [30x30 Goal](#).

52 LT&C-Examples

As that is what LT&C is about, we can proudly report that our members and partners in 2021 were able to showcase six 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 successful examples to 52. They stand as an offer for others to learn from and replicate.

See global distribution of all LT&C-Examples attached to this report



The following LT&C-Examples were published in 2021:



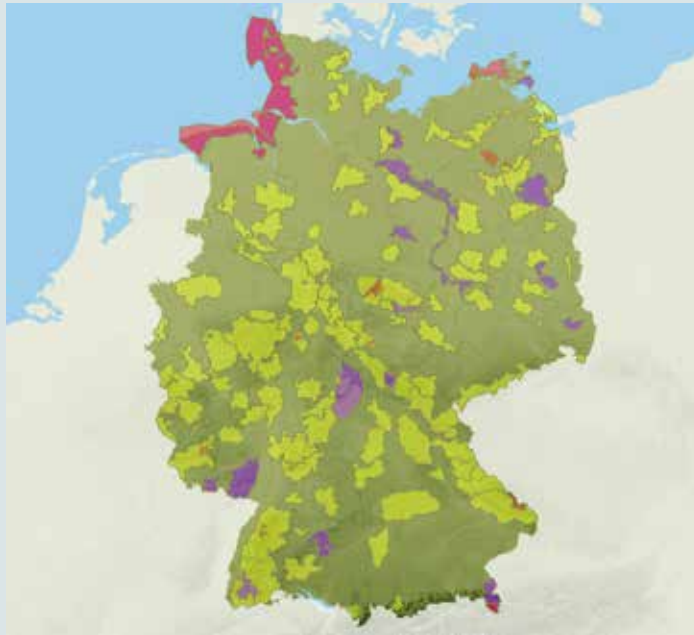
Homalco Wildlife & Cultural Tours



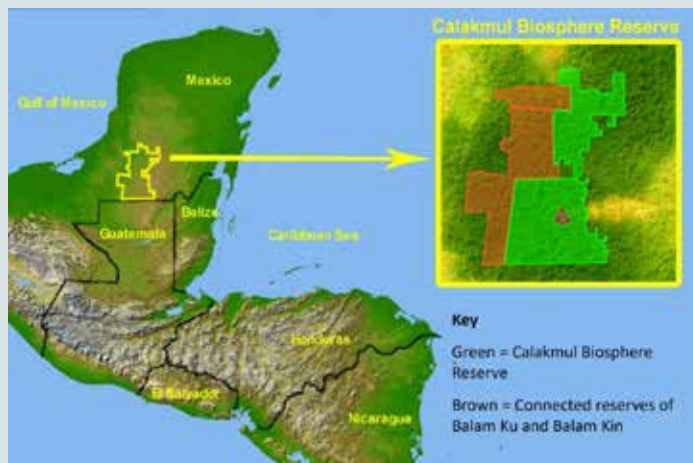
The Great Bear Rainforest



National Park and Biosphere Reserve Partner Programme
– Example: waddensea.travel



Partners of the National Natural Landscapes in Germany



Restoring and protecting Calakmul Biosphere Reserve



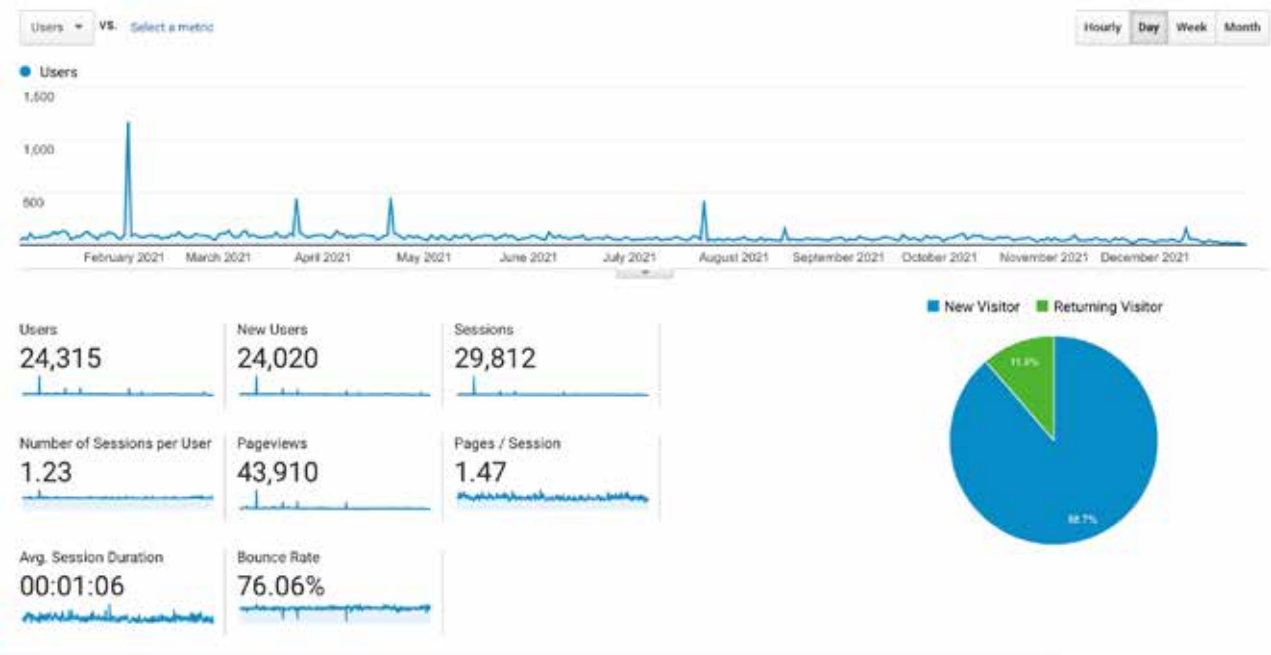
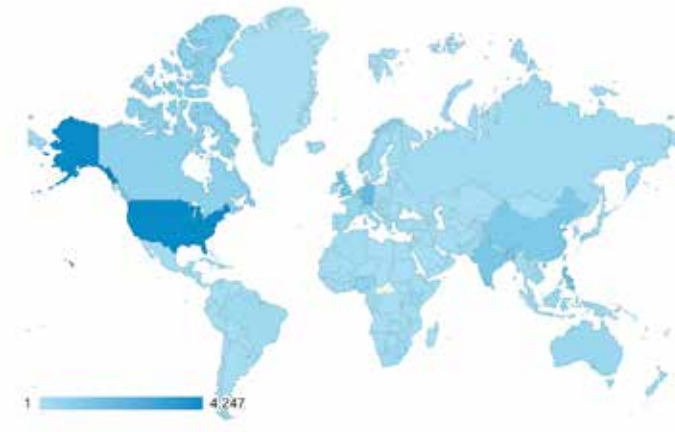
Vamos Expeditions – Eco- and Adventure Travel in Peru and Latin America

Communication and “Linking” work

Also, in 2021, much of our activities related to facilitation, “linking” members and partners for synergy, and communicating about best practices and examples.

Our website provides a veritable goldmine of information for everyone interested in making tourism support biodiversity conservation. LT&C published in 2021 on its website **53 relevant News posts**. This news is re-published on the 20th of every month in the LT&C- Newsletter, automatically distributed to 657 members and subscribers, accounting for a slight decline in subscribers, with the equivalent of seven audience members unsubscribing in the past year. The average newsletter open rate in 2020 was at 36%, with the average click rate at 5.6%, being above the average industry standard.

Over the past year, we had 24 000 users visiting our website, increasing 12% compared with 2020. Accounting for 88.7% of new visitors and 11.3% returning visitors. In 30 000 sessions (+13.3% compared to 2020) 43 910 pages were visited. Visitors on our website came from almost all countries of the world, whereby dominantly from the US (17.53%), Germany (7.21%), Philippines (6.69%), UK (5.59%), India (4.97%) and China (4.44%).

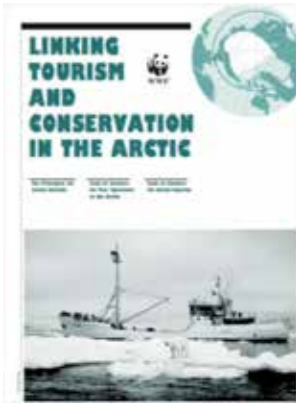


LT&C Events

As started in 2020, we continued our **LT&C-Webinar Series: How to design post-COVID tourism and conservation strategies for LT&C Champions:**



On **January 21, 2021**, we focused on **Africa**. After the first round of webinars in 2020 in which we found out what worked and what didn't for LT&C champions around the globe, we looked on a continent where tourism has played a fundamental role for conservation as well as for development, and where several innovative approaches have been tested over the years, from community-based tourism to conservancies and from concessions and PPPs to State-run park tourism agencies: Africa, our common origin. We looked at specific champions and innovative financial instruments to allow the sector to recover. As before, our goal was to identify how LT&C champions can face the post-COVID-19 tourism protocols and the future client expectations regarding safe travels and diversity in their activities to optimize economic returns on their stewardship of protected areas and other area-based means of conservation. Our goal was to share those examples to ensure the sector continues to be a critical contributor to the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. Among others, our member and tourism specialist with the World Bank Group, [Shaun Mann](#), offered a talk about his work on a concept for an "Innovative strategic financing instruments for tourism in Africa: proposals to democratize conservation". [Netsai Bollmann, based in Botswana](#), talked about "Pushing the Boundaries: Reimagining and repackaging destinations across Southern African Transfrontier Conservation Areas against a COVID-19 backdrop". See the [recording of the webinar](#).



March 9, 2021, we conducted a **webinar on Linking Tourism and Conservation in the Arctic**. 25 years ago, WWF had mobilized a group of experts from both conservation and tourism to publish 10 principles and guidelines for Arctic tourism, called [Linking Tourism and Conservation in the Arctic](#).

In 2021 the [Arctic Council](#) celebrates its 25th anniversary at a time of unprecedented opportunity and threat for this key region on the planet. We brought together experts from all eight Arctic countries and global players to look for answers to the following questions:

1. What impact did the WWF Arctic tourism guidelines from 1996, and subsequent ones, produce, and what lessons can be learned from their value today?
2. What lessons from the Arctic Council's programmes on [Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna \(CAFF\)](#) and [Protection of Marine Environment \(PAME\)](#) can be drawn to achieve more support from the tourism sector in the future?
3. What opportunities for the tourism sector do the 3 Rio Conventions this year offer, so that the Arctic becomes the first region in the world to achieve most of the SDGs, in particular SDG 14 & 15, including the expected target of protecting 30% of its territory?

In the [video of the recorded webinar](#) you can listen to the answers to those questions.

Over the year we were involved and conducted a number of webinars:



May 27, UNWTO hosted a very relevant webinar if to find answers on some pressing questions about tourism after COVID-19. What kind of tourism meets the Future We Want, meaning the Agenda 2030, which all governments in the world had agreed to when in 2015 committing to the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#)? What kind of tourism has the chance to recover? Or what kind of tourism should actually recover and therefore should receive support from

governments? If interested in some of the answers, [the webinar can still be revisited on YouTube](#).

June 3, 2021, we conducted an LT&C-webinar with **Central and Latin American** operators. They have been ecotourism leaders for many decades for reasons including the region's unique diversity of life, culture, and land- and seascapes, as well as its proximity to the North American and EU outbound markets. Certification systems for sustainable tourism, support to community-based operations, competent guiding, networks, and associations of nature-based operators, and ingenious combinations of research and tourism have made many destinations in this region global references, also for the sector's capacity to contribute to financing protected areas and private reserves. The region has witnessed significant investment and expertise in this sector, from governments to agencies and development organizations. The questions for this webinar were among others: How are these champions faring in the post-COVID 19 circumstances, with associated limitations and restrictions? What works, and what does not? Which strategies have allowed them to adjust and evolve, and which needs and expectations do LT&C champions in the region have from public and private organizations which can help? How does the region compare with previous ones examined by LT&C, such as Africa or Europe? Have a look at who was speaking and which answers were given. See the video of the webinar.

Other Webinars LT&C took an active role in

January 23, LT&C Board Member and sustainable tourism expert, **Diana Körner**, in a TEDxSUMAS in Gland, Switzerland, spoke about **the role tourism can play in protecting ecosystems worldwide**.



Two LT&C members, Dr. Frauke Fischer and Julia Rawlins, had the pleasure to participate in the co-design and delivery of a special event ahead of World Environment Day. Alongside global experts, they were speakers at the third edition of the **24hr Sustainable Hospitality Hackathon** on June 2-3, 2021. A strong partnership of higher education institutions, under the leadership

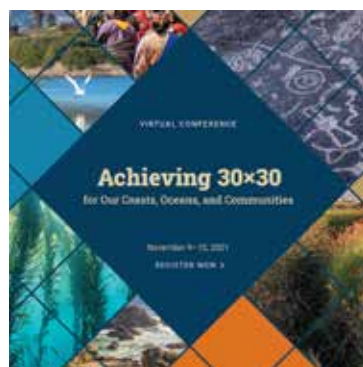
of Prof. Willy Legrand (IU International University of Applied Sciences) came together to support students from 4 European universities to gain insights into the 'linkages' between tourism and biodiversity, and to work together on innovative solutions under the theme of 'Regeneration Now'. More information about the event can be found here: <https://www.hospitalitynet.org/opinion/4104790.html>.



September 18-19 & 25-26, LT&C was engaged in the **East Atlantic Flyway Youth Forum** under the theme **“Taking off #ForNature from Africa to the Arctic”**. The objective was to set the scene for coordinated youth engagement across the East Atlantic Flyway for increased intergenerational communication and cooperation for the conservation of wetlands and migratory waterbirds.



September 28, the **Northern Sustainable Development Forum (NSDF)**, had for the third time invited LT&C to design and run a special workshop for its third NSDF event, in Yakutsk, Sakha Republic (Yakutia), Russia, in the frame of the 30th anniversary of the **Northern Forum**. The topic of the LT&C workshop was the **“Role and potential of Arctic regions to support and implement the 30X30 Goal with support of tourism”**.



November 9-10, **Coastal Quest**, organised a 2-day virtual conference on **“Achieving 30x30 for Our Coasts, Oceans, and Communities”**, where Peter Prokosch for LT&C gave a presentation and was on the panel in the session **“Building Private Sector Support”**.

Strategic Process



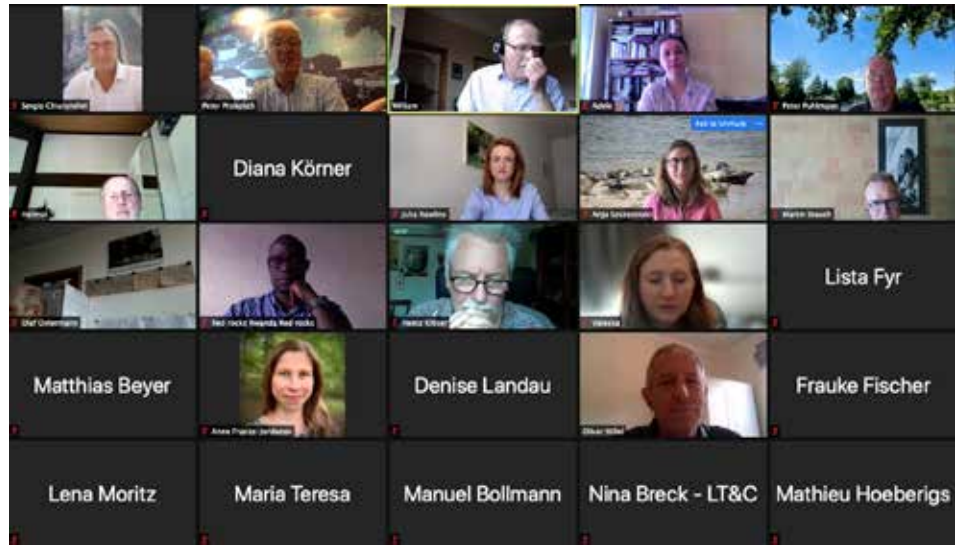
Discussions about the **future development of LT&C** started at our workshop on Vilm in spring 2020, where we decided to establish our own Chapter in Germany. In the second half of 2021, we continued this strategic process under the leadership and facilitation of Georg Schwede. We conducted various assessments, including an internal SWOT analysis and interviews with external experts. Within an **Extended Board Meeting on November 25**, where about 30 members participated, we came to some basic conclusions, among others:

- To further explore the combination of a voluntary and a project-based organisation.
- “LT&C-Examples” should remain the main focus and pillar of any future LT&C Program.
- Stay focused in line with our current vision and mission to make tourism a prominent supporter of the protected area goals of the United Nations (CBD).
- Ensure there is a sound financial basis in the future to run more influential projects and activities, enabled by paid personnel and administrative capacity.

In building up partnerships and synergies with other organisations, follow-up discussions were conducted with the German NGO “Ecological Tourism Europe” (Ö.T.E.). Different options for joining forces and bringing together the values and capacities of LT&C with those of Ö.T.E. will be further explored in 2022 and maybe finally decided at the AGM

Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2021

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) in 2021, again performed in a hybrid format from Arendal, took place on June 10. Five members met physically in our former offices at the Knowledge Harbour at Kystveien 2 in Arendal. About thirty members joined us per Zoom.



The meeting was chaired by William Dick and started with a visual presentation and annual report 2020 by Peter Prokosch. The annual report, the financial report 2020 and the budget for 2021 were unanimously approved, and the work of the Board was acknowledged.

Five Board members, Diana Körner, Anne Franze-Jordanov, Denise Landau, Sergio Chiarandini and Oliver Hillel, were re-elected for two years and applauded for their continuous engagement for LT&C.

Diana Körner and Oliver Hillel provided an enthusiastic outlook for the future development of LT&C, foreseeing an increasingly important role for the global protected area goals and that the organisation will grow to a level where it can afford its own personnel to run larger projects. The meeting was recorded, and the video is still available for our 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..

Benefits for members LT&C offers:

- Feature your national park, ecotourism business, project or initiative as LT&C example and promote it to the world through our global channels;
- Take part in LT&C study tours to experience unique conservation examples and biodiversity sites, often at reduced rates for our members;
- Be part of a global network of members and partners – interact and exchange directly or on social media or via the member profiles on our website;
- Be part of our LT&C projects, where we seek expertise from our network;
- Be our social media guest – you will get access to the LT&C social media channel and can promote and inform our audience about your activity or organisation or business;
- Use the LT&C logo to show that you are committed to our cause;
- Offset your emissions through our partner South Pole and thereby contribute to selected, verified offsetting projects, which support both climate & biodiversity;
- Gain access to the photo library of GRID-Arendal to use breathtaking photos free of charge;
- Be an ambassador for the mission of LT&C by spreading the word about LT&C Examples and inspire others to join the “march of our penguins” (members) to more examples of protected areas supported by tourism.

During the second Corona year 30 new members joined and 6 left us, bringing the total number at the end of 2021 to 248 members. LT&C has four different levels of membership. 2021, there were 20 Rockhopper Penguins (non-paying students were engaged through their university studies in activities related to the LT&C-mission), 185 Royal Penguins (basic members), 28 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 organizations and individuals, who are experts or interested in tourism, environment or sustainable development.



Partners and Corporate Members

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

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 2021 we continued recommending our members to compensate their climate emissions through our corporate member **South Pole**. By using the

tool on our website, we made it easy to offset through two selected projects (Kariba REDD+ in Zimbabwe, and Lacándon Forest for Life in Guatemala). Both projects should benefit both climate and biodiversity, with Kariba REDD+ even being an LT&C-Example

LT&C still works without paid staff

LT&C continues as a voluntary organisation carrying out its mission with a very lean administration. LT&C still does not afford any paid staff but bases all of its activities on the voluntary work and enthusiams of its Board and other members for our [mission](#).

Many thanks to all of them!



The Board of LT&C

The Board of LT&C consisted in 2021 before and after the AGM of the following seven members, which cooperated and held over the year regular meetings on a monthly basis via Zoom:

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



Diana Körner, Board
Member; Tanzania

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



Oliver Hillel, Board
Member; Canada

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



Anne Franze-Jordanov,
Board Member; Sweden

Denise Landau,
Co-Founder of LT&C
and Board Mem-
ber; US and the U



LT&C had two active Working Groups:

1. "Communication Working Group", coordinated by Anne Franze-Jordanov. Other members are Nina Breck, Diana Körner, Leigh-Ann Hurt, Valeska Oudhof and Julia Rawlins.
2. "Training and Education Working Group", coordinated by Nina Breck and Sven Åke Bjørke. 20 students (Rockhopper Penguins) are natural members.

Linking Members & Partners for Synergy



Corporate & Organisations Members

