

# TRAVEL WEEKLY

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## A New Chapter for Exploration: Passion, Care and Conservation

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The cliché is that the world is shrinking, yet when we take a step back we see that the world is still a big place. And while we like to think that the tourism industry has it all covered, in reality there's still much to learn and explore.

A major contributor to this Thought Leadership column, as well as a longstanding and influential voice in the industry at large, is shifting his talents and experience to do some of that exploration. Sven Lindblad has come full circle, moving out of the CEO chair (becoming Co-Chair of the Board), to focus on the innovation of new products, the development of new geographies, and energizing new and existent social programs.

Lindblad's move took place in May and Lindblad Expeditions is going strong, with new CEO Dolf Berle taking the reins. This frees up Lindblad to do what he has always loved doing, what is in his blood: exploring. He will of course be bringing his gospel of conservation and sustainability everywhere he goes and into all that he does.

"In a sense it's going back to my roots—what I did in the 80s and 90s—as a primary focus. And, as I've told people who have asked me, I am both grateful and excited for this new chapter. I started my career as an explorer and then built a company around that zeal of exploration," Lindblad says.

Lindblad cut his teeth in East Africa in his 20s and became fiercely committed to conservation. It was in 1979, after a brief stint working for his renowned father, the dean of eco-tourism Lars-Eric Lindblad, that he started what was then called Special Expeditions. His mission was to provide people with remarkable experiences which would hopefully translate into enhanced reverence for nature, culture and history. There was always a greater cause than simply traversing the globe. That has never changed.

What is the roadmap for Lindblad's new challenge? Beginning in March '22, he'll take a team to the South Pacific. While he has already traveled extensively there, he believes there's still so much to learn.

"I intend to focus on new business opportunities. I want to stay closely connected with our conservation and education endeavors, and to look for new opportunities. Then I want to focus on reconnaissance, finding new geographies.

"I'm beyond excited. Nothing replaces solid R&D and the world needs a better understanding of places and what their value is," he says.

For a man who has spent decades traveling and studying the globe, he says, "There still are a multitude of places that are not well explored or understood. Hopefully we can ... find creative ways to conserve our resources, both natural and human."

### **Setting Sail**

Lindblad's ship in the South Pacific will be the 47-meter Hanse Explorer. The ship served him and the industry well, as he and Eric Sala, Marine Ecologist and National Geographic Explorer in Residence, chartered her and a team in 2009 for two expeditions. The goal was to research, document and lobby for the creation of large marine protected areas. The program, Pristine Seas, succeeded with the creation of 23 marine protected areas covering over 4 million square kilometers.

So now that ship is in his hands. It has been a dream of his, to set sail and report on his findings, and investigate the geographies and details that will be part of expeditions to come.

"I love exploring the world, but I love exploring it with a purpose, and that purpose is to create a richer experience for our guests. They deserve to have programs that are thoroughly researched. Whenever we get into a new geography, it requires that kind of work.

"The thing that I respect most about the time our guests spend with us is their time. Guests only have a certain amount of time, and that time should be well spent. Ultimately the goal is what's of value to the guest."

In addition, the team will uncover information that will aid in an overall understanding of the area and of the best ways to preserve it. Journalists, scientists and filmmakers will be involved at times and of course add to the body of knowledge about the destinations.

Lindblad believes his research will manifest itself in expedition enhancements fairly quickly. Lindblad Expeditions already has several voyages in the Pacific so if his research discovers ways to improve those trips, he'll incorporate them right away.

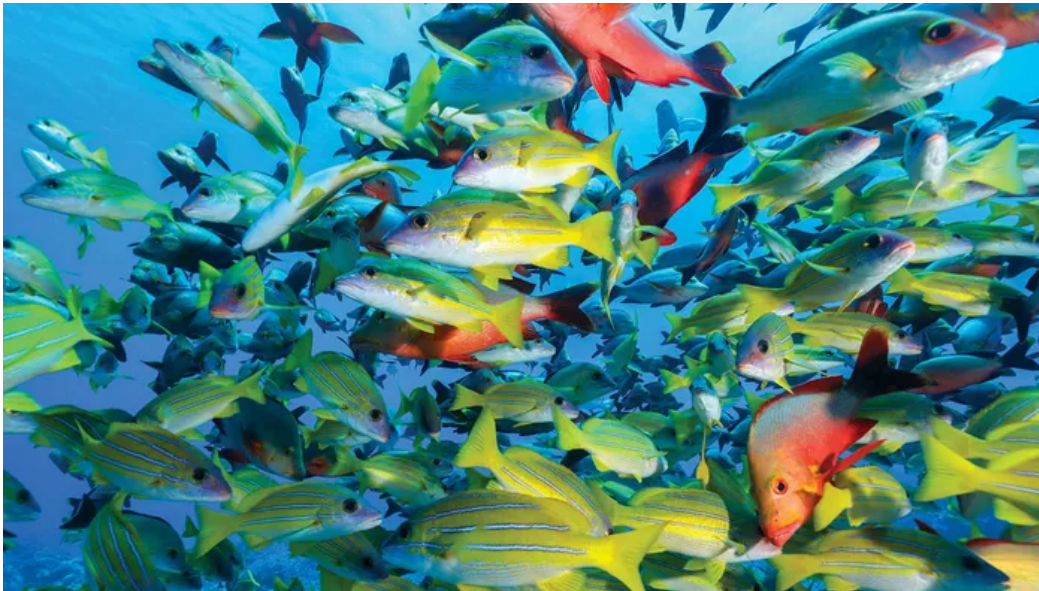
Our advice: stay informed as there will be an abundance of discoveries and innovations, not to mention tour opportunities, resulting from Sven Lindblad's journeys in the years to come.

### For More Insights

For more information about how Lindblad Expeditions is working toward creating a better world through travel, go to [www.expeditions.com/sustainability](http://www.expeditions.com/sustainability). For more insights into sustainable and regenerative travel, see [What Will Tourism's Rebirth Look Like?](#), [Global Tourism: Opportunity for a Reset?](#), [Overtourism Is Bad—Undertourism Is Worse](#), [Regenerative Tourism: Beyond Sustainable Tourism and Travel's Local Impact — What You Can Do to Bring It Back](#). Also read the series, [Exploring With Sven on TravelPulse.com](#).

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### Where in the World?



Why is Lindblad beginning his R&D efforts in the South Pacific? "The South Pacific is so full of opportunities, and it's not particularly well understood. If you take French Polynesia for example, on a good year, 200,000-250,000 people visit, in an area that east to west is the size of Europe. And then you look at Hawaii and it has 10 million visitors. There's a lot to explore in the South Pacific and I intend to explore as much as humanly possible."

Education is a big part of the overall endeavor. "There are places that are so fantastic but people have no idea. The region is limited in terms of people's knowledge. For example, the only thing most Americans know of the South Pacific is Bora Bora. But Fakarava is amazing. And the South Pacific is full of those kinds of nuggets."

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