

## WORLD FIRST: Aurora Expeditions dedicates its new expedition ship *Sylvia Earle* to leading female conservationists



**NEWS ALERT - Sydney, 8 March 2021:** Australia's award-winning expedition operator, Aurora Expeditions, is celebrating International Women's Day 2021 by dedicating its new expedition ship to five of the world's leading female conservationists.

The new purpose-built ship *Sylvia Earle*, launching in November 2021, is named after the renowned marine biologist, oceanographer and explorer Dr. Sylvia Earle.

In a world first, each of the vessel's public decks will bear the names of other pioneering female conservationists – Dr. Carden Wallace AM, Joanna Ruxton, Sharon Kwok and Bernadette Demientieff – along with a deck dedicated to Dr. Earle herself.

"Female scientists are leading the way in global conservation initiatives and we want to honour these five extraordinary women who work tirelessly to make the world a better place," says Aurora Expeditions CEO Monique Ponfoort.

"The scientists we have chosen are inspiring leaders in their fields, and as part of the deck theming, we will educate our expeditioners on the impressive and important conservation work they continue to do. We are so proud to be able to honour these incredibly talented women." she adds.

The new ship's public decks will be named after:

### **Dr. Sylvia Earle: Hero of the Planet**

Image: ©Todd Brown



Dr. Earle was the first female chief scientist of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; has been a *National Geographic* explorer-in-residence since 1998; and was named by *Time* magazine as its first 'Hero of the Planet'. Her own conservation initiative Mission Blue is creating a global network of marine protected areas known as Hope Spots, and her new Deep Hope project aims to deliver two 'deep-dive' submersibles to collect crucial scientific data of as-yet unseen ocean depths.

### **Bernadette Demientieff: Arctic Wildlife Guardian**



Bernadette is a passionate mother/advocate for the rights of Alaska and the Gwich'in people northeast Alaska and northwest Canada. As Executive Director of the Gwich'in Steering Committee, she speaks for the protection of the calving grounds of the porcupine caribou herd known as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge against any destruction from oil and gas companies.

Image: ©Chad Brown

### **Dr. Carden Wallace AM: Coral Conservation Champion**



Principal Scientist Emeritus at the Queensland Museum since 2014, Dr. Wallace is a preeminent Australian scientist and the first curator/director of the Museum of Tropical Queensland from 1987 to 2003. She is an expert on corals and was part of a team that discovered the mass spawning of coral in 1984. In recognition of her contribution to marine science, Dr. Wallace was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2021.

Image: © Queensland Museum, Gary Granitch

### **Joanna Ruxton: Plastic Free Pioneer**



Image: © Alistair Scarlett

Joanna has the rare distinction of being hailed as ‘the person responsible for the plastic-free movement’ by Sir David Attenborough himself. She spent many years at the BBC Natural History Unit working on the first ‘Blue Planet’ documentary series. Her award-winning film ‘A Plastic Ocean,’ released in 2016, shows the devastating impact of plastic waste on ocean ecosystems and has helped to turn the tide against single-use plastics. In 2009, Joanna co-founded Plastic Oceans UK (now known as Ocean Generation), with the

goal of inspiring an inclusive global movement to restore a sustainable relationship between humanity and oceans.

### **Sharon Kwok: Future Generation Educator**



In 2013, Sharon founded the AquaMeridian Conservation and Education Foundation to promote marine education and inspire the next generation to protect and preserve ocean biodiversity. Sharon continues her advocacy as a Mission Blue and WildAid board member and as Executive Director of the AquaMeridian Conservation & Education Foundation.

For more information, images, or to enquire about interviews, please contact:  
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### **Notes to Editors**

Images of the Sylvia Earle: <https://library.aurora-expeditions.com/web/f5f037eb04a1a46c/the-sylvia-earle-external-renders/>

Headshots **PLEASE NOTE COPYRIGHT REQUIREMENTS:** <https://library.aurora-expeditions.com/web/1232a51642b4ec20/sylvia-earle-deck-names-/>

### **About Aurora Expeditions**

Aurora Expeditions is an Australian-owned adventure company founded by renowned mountaineer and explorer, Greg Mortimer, and his wife Margaret. Over the past 30 years it has become the leader in small-group, expedition-style travel to polar regions and other wild, remote places including Antarctica, South Georgia and the Falklands, the Arctic (European and Canadian), Alaska, the Russian Far East Costa Rica, Baja California and West Papua.

In 2020, Aurora Expeditions received the World’s Leading Polar Expedition award at the renowned World Travel Awards.

Aurora Expeditions offers its passengers intimate experiences in remote destinations through a range of flexible, innovative itineraries. Some voyages offer mountain climbing, sea kayaking, camping, photography, and polar snorkelling and scuba diving options. Aurora Expeditions’ expert naturalists, geologists, historians, guides and crew help unlock the wonders of these special places.

Committed to the preservation of the environment, Aurora Expeditions was one of the founders of the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators (IAATO), which created the environmental protocols for all commercial visitors to Antarctica and is also a member of the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO). In doing so, Aurora Expeditions encourages its passengers to respectfully visit the planet's wilderness areas and return as ambassadors charged with protecting these important regions.

Aurora Expeditions has recently updated its health and safety protocol, as well as implementing a new deposit protection scheme. Further information can be found here: <https://www.auroraexpeditions.com.au/why-travel-with-us/health-safety/>

**For Bookings:**

For more information or to book, visit [www.auroraexpeditions.com.au](http://www.auroraexpeditions.com.au)

Call us on 1800 637 688 (Freecall AUS only)