



# Biosphere Foundation

## Officers & Directors



### **Abigail Kingsley Alling, M.S. (USA)**

Abigail co-founded the non-profit organization, Biosphere Foundation (BF), in 1991 while living inside Biosphere 2 and continues today as its President and Chief Executive Officer. Biosphere Foundation's primary goal is to inspire intelligent stewardship of our biosphere. At present, BF's primary projects are based onboard its research vessel, *Mir*, where its team has initiated coral reef, sea turtle and marine mammal conservation programs in Asia.

At Biosphere 2 (1986-1994), Abigail managed its research program and created & operated the largest artificial ecological marine system - a 1,000,000-gallon mangrove marsh and coral reef. She has sailed the world's oceans including a voyage to the Antarctic Peninsula to study humpback whale population genetics in collaboration with the National Cancer Research Institute. In the early eighties she lived in Sri Lanka for five years to set up a marine mammal sanctuary with WWF, IUCN and the National Aquatic Resource Agency and in 1987, she was the marine biologist who supervised the historic first successful release of two captive bottlenose dolphins back to the wild.

Abigail is a Fellow of the Academy of Arts & Sciences, New York Academy of Sciences, Linnaean Society and Explorers Club. She graduated from Middlebury College (Biology) with Honors and received a Masters in Environmental Sciences with Honors from Yale University.



### **Mark Van Thillo (Belgium)**

Mark co-Founded Biosphere Foundation while living inside Biosphere 2 in 1991 and continues today as its Chief Operations Officer. He is also the Captain and Engineer of sailing vessel *Mir*, Biosphere Foundation's research vessel based in Singapore. Over the past two decades he has managed the logistics and technical operation of its coral reef research vessels; Wastewater Gardens® project (a sub-surface constructed wetland for recycling of wastewater); and a 1,000 acre sustainable rainforest project in Puerto Rico. He is presently working onboard *Mir* overseeing "Studio of the Sea," a film studio dedicated to featuring films about ocean challenges, sea creatures and island cultures.

From 1986 to 1994, Mark was Co-Captain and Manager of Technical Systems for Biosphere 2. Previous to that project, he traveled extensively and participated in a voyage

around the world to film indigenous cultures. He is fluent in Flemish and English and additionally converses in basic French, Spanish and German.



**Sally Eva Silverstone (UK)**

Sally joined Abigail and Mark in 1991 as Biosphere Foundation's Chief Financial Officer and Director for Sustainable Agriculture and Rainforest Conservation Programs. Her life's work has focused on the development of productive agriculture/horticulture gardens. She has been impassioned about gardening since a young girl and has worked in India, Africa, Asia and the Caribbean.

From 1991 to 1993 she was both the Co-Captain of the Biosphere 2 experiment as well the Manager of Agriculture Systems which entailed all aspects of growing and processing food for eight people on less than ½ acre. From 1996 to 2007 she was Project Director of a 1,000 acre sustainable rainforest project in Puerto Rico. During those years she was the principal investigator for Earthwatch funded programs that worked in collaboration with the International Institute of Tropical Forestry and the University of Puerto Rico.



**Orla Doherty, M.S. (UK)**

Orla is the Director of the Menjangan Coral Reef Conservation Project in Bali and Studio of the Sea Project. Previously she lived onboard the Planetary Coral Reef Foundation's vessel (2000 – 2008) and was its Managing Director. During those years, she sailed 45,000 nautical miles, assisted more than 50 people complete an apprentice program, made films for Xinya TV, Current TV and Link TV, studied numerous coral reefs and completed a book about the current state of coral reefs worldwide.

A Guide to Coral Reefs will be translated into Bahasa Indonesia in 2011 to be published as Indonesia's first complete text on reefs.

Orla is a graduate of Oxford University where she also received a Masters in Chemistry. Subsequently, she moved to the world of media where she became a producer and director with the BBC and made prime-time factual programming and documentaries for British television.



**Dr. Wallace "J" Nichols (USA)**

Wallace Nichols is the Director of Biosphere Foundation's Durai Island Sea Turtle Protection Project in the Anambas Islands. Additionally, he advises a motivated group of international graduate students and serves as an advisor to numerous non-profit boards and committees as part of his commitment to building a stronger, larger, more innovative and connected environmental community. He founded Ocean Revolution and is very engaged in a variety of marine crises as an expert consultant,

such as over-fishing, the recent oil spill in the Gulf, and the misuse of plastics.

Wallace is a Research Associate at California Academy of Sciences. He earned his MEM in Environmental Policy and Economics from Duke University's Nicholas School and his PhD in Wildlife Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from University of Arizona.

**Carol Louise Milner, M.S. (UK)**



Carol is a coral reef scientist and officer onboard sailing ship *Mir*. She is actively engaged with Biosphere Foundation's coral reef conservation programs and was the P.I. for the coral reef research program at Durai Island in July 2011. Her interest specifically lies in the land/sea interface and her objective is to bring community-based waste management programs to each of the projects. During the years of 2001 to 2008 she was the Chief Engineer onboard Biosphere Foundation's ship and part of the coral reef scientific team studying reefs in the South Pacific, Southeast Asia and Melanesia.

Carol received a Masters in Environmental Science and Management from York University, UK. From 1997 to 2001, she worked as a Broadcast Engineer for the BBC in London.

**Cynthia Lazaroff (USA)**



Cynthia's career spans more than twenty years as a Russian-American specialist, educator, filmmaker and activist. Presently, she is Executive Vice-President of the Biosphere Foundation where she coordinates the activities from its home base in California.

A magna cum laude graduate in Politics and Russian Studies from Princeton University, Cynthia speaks fluent Russian and has made over forty trips to the former Soviet Union since 1978 and supervised the development of several feature film and television programs about Russia. As Co-Founder and President of the first US-USSR Youth Exchange Program, Cynthia successfully launched an international grassroots educational effort to break down enemy stereotypes during the 1980's and pioneered a variety of Soviet-American exchanges in the fields of art, literature, theatre, education, film, sports, wilderness adventures, urban leadership and environmental service.

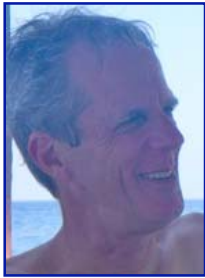
**Katharine Elisabeth Currier (USA)**



Katharine is currently pursuing her M.A. and Ph.D. degrees at the University of California, Santa Barbara, in the Department of Geography. The focus of her dissertation research is developing a geographic information system (GIS) framework for studying human-environment dynamics surrounding coastal marine ecosystems, possibly in the Anambas Islands, Indonesia.

From 2004 to 2008, Katherine was an Officer onboard Biosphere Foundation ship. She created its Google Earth-Ocean Demonstration Project that was awarded a Google Earth Pro Grant for the project and featured in the Google Earth Ocean Gallery.

## **Biosphere Foundation Conservation Advisors**



**Dr. Phillip Dustan (USA)**

Phil is a coral reef ecologist and a Professor of Biology at the University of Charleston, South Carolina, USA. Previously, he was the principal scientist on board Jacques Cousteau's Amazon Expedition in 1982-83 and he served as the Science Advisor for The Cousteau Society from 1998-2003. In 1974 Phil established long-term reef monitoring sites in the Key Largo National Marine Sanctuary, the oldest permanently marked coral reef study site in the Caribbean. In 1995, he became principal investigator on the Environmental Protection Agency's Florida Keys Coral Monitoring Project.



**Dr. Tundi Spring Agardy (USA)**

Tundi is an internationally renowned expert in biodiversity conservation, with extensive field and policy experience in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, North America and the Pacific. She currently heads Sound Seas, an independent policy group based in the Washington, DC area, specializing in biodiversity conservation, coastal planning and assessment, marine protected areas, and fisheries management. She also serves as Director of the Marine Ecosystem Services (MARES) Program of Forest Trends, is Science and Policy Director for the World Ocean Observatory, and is the Editor-in-Chief of Marine Ecosystems and Management (MEAM), published through the University of Washington. Prior to forming her own organization, she was the Senior Director for the Global Marine Program at Conservation International and, before that, Senior Scientist for WWF.

## **Biosphere Foundation (BF) Board of Directors**

**Abigail Alling, M.S.** is the Co-founder and President of Biosphere Foundation. For the past 33 years, Ms. Alling has been actively engaged in marine conservation and environmental projects. She received a Masters of Science degree from Yale University and was the former Associate Research & Development Director for the "Biosphere 2" project.

**Dr. Paul J. Coleman, Jr.** is professor emeritus of space physics at UCLA. The former president of the Universities Space Research Association, Dr. Coleman also served as the head of NASA's interplanetary sciences program and the director of the National Institute for Global Environmental Change at the University of California.

**Orla Doherty, M.S.** is the Director for BF's *Menjangan Coral Reef Conservation Program* in Bali and *Studio of the Sea* film program. She received a Masters in Chemistry at Oxford University and was a former television director for the BBC.

**Kenneth R. Heitz** is a Senior Partner in the Los Angeles based law firm Irell & Manella where he served as managing co-partner for six years. His areas of expertise include securities litigation, corporate governance and the negotiation of complex financial transactions.

**Cynthia Lazaroff** is Executive Vice President of BF. She is a graduate in Politics and Russian Studies from Princeton University with more than thirty years of experience as a Russian-American relations specialist, educator and filmmaker.

**Bruce Ludwig** is the Senior Relationship Manager for ING Clarion in the Middle East. He is a Trustee of the American University in Cairo, a founding Chairman of the Directors Roundtable of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and founder of the Los Angeles Music Center. He is currently a member of the National Geographic Council of Advisors.

**Dr. Wallace J Nichols** is a re-known sea turtle specialist who is the Principal Investigator for BF's *Sea Turtle Protection Program* in the Anambas Islands. He did his graduate studies at Duke University and University of Arizona and his academic research as a Fulbright Fellow. He is currently a Research Associate at the California Academy of Sciences.

**Sally Silverstone** is the Chief Financial Officer of BF. She was the former co-Captain and Manager of Agriculture Systems for Biosphere 2 and Managing Director for a 1,200 acre rainforest enrichment project in Puerto Rico for over a decade.

**Mark Van Thillo** is Chief Operations Officer for BF and Captain of sailing yacht *Mir*. During the past two decades he has managed all logistic and technical aspects of BF's projects. He was the former co-Captain and Manager of Technical Systems for the Biosphere 2 project.

**William G. Walker** is the Chairman of BF and attorney whose practice emphasizes civil trial litigation. He received the Co-Honoree of the Year (1987) from the American Civil Liberties Union and an Award for Law from the Trial Lawyers for Public Justice.

**Dr. Hugh Wheir, DVM** is a vet with a practice of over 30 years. He is the former Executive Director of Animal Alliance, which he founded in 1989 to reduce animal suffering and protect endangered species. He is a graduate of Texas A & M School of Veterinary Medicine.