



Homeward Bound co-founder Mary-Anne Lea at the Weddell seal colony on Goudier Island. Picture: Oli Sansom

Pioneering women on rescue mission



Tia Ewen

From labs to rocky terrain, brilliant scientific minds from across the globe set sail on a once-in-a-lifetime journey to find solutions to save the planet.

Drawn from 25 countries, 188 women who specialise in science, technology, engineering, mathematics or medicine (STEMM) have participated in the global Homeward Bound program in hope of breaking down planetary boundaries and beating climate change.

"It's actually just an incredible joy and very inspiring to be around such a diverse group of people who are really operating at the top of their game, and who have their sights focused on doing something good for the planet," co-founder Mary-Anne Lea, (pictured), said.

"It's about bringing positive voices together, enabling innovation, enabling solutions to problems that



Showing passion for their cause as part of the Homeward Bound program.

Picture: @naturalflash/ Joel Reyero

perhaps we don't even know that we have yet and thinking outside the box."

The global leadership program is designed to empower 10,000 women in STEMM to lead, influence, collaborate and contribute in shaping a more sustainable planet.

Over 12 months, women participated in an online leadership program, which included lectures,

workshops and collaboration sessions. In November, the cohort set sail on a 19-day return voyage from Argentina to Antarctica on MV Ushuaia.

"Our goal is to help raise the visibility of women in STEMM and collaborate for more sustainable solutions for our planet," chief executive Pamela Sutton-Legaud said. "The adventure these women are experiencing give them an unparalleled view of one of the most remote locations on the planet.

"Antarctica not only provides early warning signs of climate change – it also represents the fragility of our natural world and why we need to protect it.

"As this group navigated an epic journey, they were reminded that women in STEMM are not just the key to understanding our planet's challenges; they are the architects of the solutions to improving the sustainability of our planet."

tia.ewen@news.com.au