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SIMS CEO Professor Martina Doblin and Mosman Mayor Ann Marie Kimber at the SIMS Emerald Dinner. Picture: John Appleyard

Celebration for ocean saviours

The Sydney Institute of Marine Science celebrated its 20th anniversary at a gala fundraising dinner last week.

The annual Emerald Dinner took place at Sergeants Mess in Mosman and guests were invited to wear a splash of green.

SIMS director and CEO Professor Martina Doblin delivered an address to the crowd on the night.

"While there may be expansionist views and signifi-

cant investment for humans to explore and inhabit other planets, a more secure path to our future is in ensuring that Planet Ocean doesn't get destroyed," she said.

"Our hope, our path to solving the issues facing marine ecosystems, lies in research, and its translation and uptake across our broader society."

Guest speaker and Australian freediving champion Adam Stern gave an impassioned and heartfelt

speech about the need to restore and protect our oceans for future generations.

There was a hauntingly beautiful performance by Dyagula, a Wiradjuri song-woman, who sang a selection of classic pop songs in English and her Indigenous language.

Award-winning science writer and presenter Bernie Hobbs was once again master of ceremonies.

Jill and Tim L'Estrange won the Lindblad Expedi-

tion's prize of a Mediterranean cruise for two aboard the National Geographic Orion.

The prize was presented to them by living legend and SIMS ambassador Valerie Taylor, who is the ship's godmother.

Other highlights of the auction prizes offered on the night included a holiday for two at the luxurious Lizard Island Resort and a one-off specially designed pendant featuring a stunning emer-

ald, the 20th anniversary gemstone. Two quirky and very popular prizes were naming rights to a seahorse hotel and a guided snorkel of Chowder Bay to view some of the endangered White's seahorses bred in captivity by SIMS, raised in their aquarium and still thriving in the wild more than 18 months after their release.

About \$230,000 was raised at the event and will be channelled into SIMS' education programs.

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