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REGIONAL NEWS

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Editorial

Dear readers,

■ The economic consequences of the pandemic, combined with the effects of climate change and armed conflict in several African countries result in an alarming food crisis. 45 million people face acute or catastrophic levels of food insecurity. More information in the article about Switzerland's contribution to help Madagascar deal with the food crisis. This serious situation is completely underreported in the international media.

■ Warm regards,
Gisela Piercey



GISELA PIERCEY,
EDITOR «SWISS REVIEW
SOUTHERN AFRICA»

Switzerland launches a US\$1 million mine clearance project in Zimbabwe

Switzerland, through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), has provided US\$1 million to APOPO Mine Action for clearing a dense minefield in the Sengwe Wildlife Corridor in southern Zimbabwe for the next two years.

The project is set to save lives and improve safe access to agricultural land and conservation in the area.

Through the new initiative, at least 1,630,419 square metres of land will be made safe for local communities and wildlife in the area. The new intervention builds on an earlier phase implemented in 2020 that cleared 1,093,152 square metres of the same minefield.

Southern Zimbabwe faces numerous challenges due to the existence of landmines laid four decades ago during the war of liberation which have imperilled the lives of both people and animals. The project, Enabling Development through Landmine Clearance in the Sengwe Wildlife Corridor will create a safe passage for local communities while reducing human-wildlife conflict.

The project will complement Zim-



Zimbabwe is one of the most heavily mined countries in the world, where landmines have killed more than 1,500 people since independence in 1980. © Apopo 2021

babwe's efforts of becoming a landmine free zone by 2025 which Switzerland has been supporting through the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and the Zimbabwe Mine Action Centre (ZIMAC).

The Ambassador of Switzerland, Mr. Niculin Jäger, said "The Government of Switzerland is proud to support APOPO's demining activities in the Sengwe Wildlife Corridor as this will help the local community regain their economic footing through accessing previously contaminated land for agricultural production – something that they have not been able to do for the past 40 years. The process will also support greater opportunities for transnational tourism between Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa."

DROUGHT IN MADAGASCAR: SWITZERLAND PROVIDES ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION OF CHF 900,000

Switzerland is making an additional contribution of CHF 900,000 to help deal with the serious food crisis in Madagascar. In releasing this sum, which is intended to support the activities of the World Food Programme (WFP), Switzerland is responding to a recent joint appeal by the government of Madagascar and the UN for international aid.

Alarming situations are also unfolding in many other countries where millions of people lack food because of armed conflict, economic disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the effects of climate change.

Food insecurity in Madagascar continues to worsen. Since the beginning of the year, the authorities and humanitarian organisations have redoubled their efforts to mitigate the consequences of the worst drought in 40 years and the economic recession linked to the COVID-19 pandemic.

More than one million people are currently in need of emergency food assistance and nearly half of all children aged 6 months to 5 years are suffering from chronic malnutrition.

In view of this crisis, Switzerland has decided to make an additional contribution of CHF 900,000. This amount is intended to support the WFP's operations on the ground. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) of the FDFA had already allocated around CHF 1.5 million since the beginning of 2021 in order to mitigate the consequences of the crisis.

Critical Situation Worldwide

Besides Madagascar, at least 80 other countries, particularly in Africa and Asia, are facing food insecurity. Famine-like conditions are prevalent in 43 countries, with 45 million people facing acute or catastrophic levels of food insecurity, as compared to 41 million people in June 2021. Distributed by APO Group on behalf of Federal Department of Foreign Affairs Switzerland.



Food insecurity in Madagascar continues to worsen (Photo: World Food Programme)

NEW PROCESS OF LIFE VERIFICATION FOR CERTAIN OASI/DI (AHV/IV) PENSION BENEFICIARIES

The process of life verification (life certificate) will be simplified from 2022 with the introduction of an automated exchange.

Swiss nationals residing abroad who are duly registered with the Swiss representation in their country of residence will, in principle, no longer receive the "Life certificate" form to be certified, as this information will be transmitted directly from the Register of the Swiss Abroad to the Central Compensation Office in Geneva.

This simplified procedure, however, does not exempt from the obligation to inform the Swiss representation or the Central Compensation Office of any changes such as changes of address, changes in marital status, etc. In exceptional cases, registered persons may nevertheless receive such a request for life certificate.

IMPORTANT:

Persons who have not yet returned their life certificate for 2021 are still obliged to do so. For more information please consult the webpage of the Central Compensation Office www.zas.admin.ch

ASO news

The years 2020 and 2021 were marred with COVID restrictions, which meant that all ASR Council Meetings had to take part on a virtual basis. At this stage it is too early to say, if the ASO Congress can take place as planned in from 19th to 21st August in Lugano.

There seems to be some movement again on the E-Voting front. Hopefully in a few years we will all be able to vote electronically. The banking issue is still a thorn especially for us here in the Southern African Region. Post Finance and BCG (Geneva) seem to be willing to assist. Accounts must however be opened in person in Switzerland. There is no way around that. Prepaid credit cards (VISA) are available from Bonuscard in Switzerland. During the past 24 months I was able to assist countless Swiss needing info and/or help. Swiss Expats in the SADEC region can contact me via aso@hbosch.com.

Hans-Georg Bosch –
ASR Ratsmitglied / Delegate of Council for Southern Africa

SWISS CLUB INFO

PLEASE NOTE: THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SWISS CLUBS MAY BE AFFECTED BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN LOCKDOWN RESTRICTIONS.

SWISS CLUB IN JOHANNESBURG

Swiss Society Helvetia, 31 Moerdyk Ave, Vorna Valley, Midrand.

Chairman: *Mario Valli*, 082 451 8040;
office: *Max Waspe* 083 412 0161,
T 011 805 3039, office@swissclubjhb.co.za,
www.swissclubjhb.co.za,
Swiss Country Club Rest.

«The Courier», *Devan Govender*,
T 011 053 040, C 0795193563,
Tue-Sat 11-21h30 Rest./kitchen,
11-24h Bar, Sun 10-17h

■ Our Clubs of Society: Amicale Suisse Romande, Boccia, Skittling Club. Associated Groups: Swiss Choir, Swiss Rifle Club, Swiss Golf, Senior Swiss Circle meets every 2nd Saturday of the month for Lunch, Swiss Ladies meet every 4th Thursday of the month for lunch.

SWISS RIFLE CLUB JOHANNESBURG

We shoot every 4th Sat of the month, from 9am. We normally shoot two different programs, with Swiss rifles, provided by the club. Visit our Facebook site or call Daniel: 082-5699146.

SWISS CLUB IN PRETORIA

Swiss Society Alpina,
President: *Hans-Georg Bosch*,
T 012 347 8310, C 082 551 0222,
swissclub.pta@hbosch.com,
Secretary: *Biffy van Rooyen*,
bvrooyen@gmail.com,
Facebook group: Swiss Club Alpina

The Swiss Club Pretoria held a its Year End Function on the 20th November at the Church Hall of the Johannesgemeinde next to the DSP, our usual venue. It was the first face to face meeting, since the AGM in February 2020. The Event was well attended and all had a wonderful afternoon. The Committee will plan for events this year according to the COVID restrictions in place. Provided that we can organize it, a Fondue Evening is planned as well as a 1st August National Day Event. More details will follow in the next Swiss Revue. *Hans-Georg Bosch*, President

SWISS CLUB IN CAPE TOWN

Swiss Social&Sports Club,
www.swissclub.co.za
President: *Christian Schiess*, president@swissclub.co.za, C 079 088 8233.
Vice President/Treasurer: *Andreas Reichmuth*, treasurer@swissclub.co.za, C 083 297 3803
Secretary: *Chayenne Rusi*, secretary@swissclub.co.za, C 082 569 8446
Come visit us at our beautiful Clubhouse & campsite in Jonkershoek Valley, Stellenbosch. To receive regular updates about our events in Jonkershoek and other locations, become a member via our website or send a mail to: secretary@swissclub.co.za

SWISS RIFLE CLUB CAPE TOWN

The Swiss Rifle Club Cape Town can be found on <https://www.facebook.com/www.swissclub.co.za>.
President: *Dierk Lüthi*,

hdluthi@gmail.com & dierk@telkomsa.net; C 0834414626
Shooting takes place mostly at the SA Navy 'Klawer Valley' range off Red Hill road above Simon's Town. Dates and times are listed on the Facebook page.

SWISS CLUB NATAL

President: *Philippe Lanz* C 082 493 2673,
T 031 765 1625, p.lanz@absamail.co.za

■ JASS EVENTS

This is held on the second Friday of each month and will commence at 2 p.m. and is held at Rolf Klein Jass Stube, 3 Bona Terra Road, Assagay (directions on our website).

■ SPORT TARGET SHOOTING

Held on the 4th Saturday of each month (weather permitting) commencing at 08:30 a.m. Nottingham Road. (calendar available on our website).

IMPORTANT NOTICE

*For up-to-date information regarding times/venues/directions, please visit our most informative website www.swissclubnatal.org.za

SWISS CLUB PORT ELIZABETH

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C 078 534 2021, jladerach@gmail.com

SWISS CLUB EAST LONDON

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IMPRESSUM

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NEXT REGIONAL ISSUE DEADLINES

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FOR ADDRESS CHANGES, PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICIAL SWISS REPRESENTATION IN YOUR COUNTRY AND DON'T EMAIL THE EDITOR OF SWISS REVIEW SOUTHERN AFRICA. THANK YOU.

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