



## PORTRAIT OF THE “FRIENDS OF THE SERENGETI SWITZERLAND”

Organisation	Association «Friends of the Serengeti Switzerland · FSS»
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Foundation of the Association 5. May 1984	<p>Since the 1980s poaching has become an increasing problem in Africa. That is why the Swiss couple David and Lilian Rechsteiner living in Tanzania decided – together with a group of Swiss participants of a safari - to found an association for the protection and conservation of the animals of Africa.</p> <p>The renowned zoologist and conservationist Prof. Bernhard Grzimek supported the new society and acted as its honorary president. Thanks to his popularity the FSS became very well-known in interested circles in a short time.</p>
Membership	102 members (October 2018)
Purpose of the FSS	<p>The purpose of the FSS is research and the conservation of the biodiversity of Africa, especially of the eastern African rhinoceros. In Tanzania, the FSS's main area of operations, the support of rangers in their fight against poachers is the main focus of attention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Based in Zurich, politically and denominationally neutral, its sole objective is the pursuit of charitable purposes,</li><li>- ZEWO certified and exempted from tax,</li><li>- Functioning needs oriented, non-bureaucratically and according to strict rules and guidelines, in close co-operation with partners and institutions in Tanzania,</li><li>- Implementation and monitoring of projects by FSS representatives and partners in Tanzania,</li><li>- Funds are used for specific purposes in transparent ways and according to ecological guidelines,</li><li>- All board members are volunteers working in an honorary capacity. The costs of inspection tours to Tanzania are (privately) covered by the members themselves,</li></ul> <p>In Switzerland the FSS lobbies raise funds for projects and to create awareness of the importance of wildlife protection in Africa. It publishes the quarterly magazine HABARI (Kiswahili for “News”) and maintains the website <a href="http://www.serengeti.ch">www.serengeti.ch</a>.</p> <p>Topics are current challenges regarding conservation, poaching, indigenous people, human rights and extinction of species.</p>



Board	Adrian Schläpfer	chairman, board member since 2014 Former ambassador of Switzerland to Tanzania (2008-2011)
	Jan Bolte	Vice-chair, board member since 2005 Entrepreneur in Tanzania
	Robert Bickel	Finances, board member since 2012 Mechanical engineer
	Alex Rechsteiner	FSS representative in Tanzania, board member since 2005, entrepreneur, grew up and lives in Arusha/ Tanzania
	Judith Wyss	Fundraising and bequests, board member since 2014, lawyerBarbara Trentini Organization and Finances, board member since 2018, certified public accountant
	Walter Epting	Concept and networking, board member since 2018
Secretariat	Marisa Suremann	Since 2013 (20% part-time)
Public relations since 2017	Ruedi Suter	Free-lance journalist, editor of HABARI Public Relations, (50% part-time) FSS-member for 25 years, grew up in Africa and Switzerland
FSS-representation in Tanzania	Since 2009 FSS has been represented by the non-profit organization <i>Friends of Serengeti Switzerland (Tanzania) Ltd.</i> FSS board member and representative in Africa Alex Rechsteiner is authorized signatory of the Tanzanian FSS. He is supported by Susan Peter Shio, who has been his assistant for many years. The Accounting Department of <i>Burka Coffee Estates Ltd.</i> , Arusha, handles the FSS' accounts in Arusha/Tanzania.	
Award	On 21. February 1991 the FSS was awarded the «Certificate of Merit» by the Tanzanian government for its outstanding contribution to the conservation of natural resources and environment.	
FSS Projects	<p>Already at independence in 1961, Tanzania's first president Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere had enacted the "National Parks Act" to establish, control and manage areas of protection and conservation. Since then Tanzania has set aside 1/3 of its total area for conservation, in 19 National Parks as well as numerous other protected areas. To be able to achieve the aim of protecting such large areas, Tanzania needs the support of international organizations.</p> <p>Right from the beginning the FSS' projects have been focused on supporting the rangers of the National Parks: improving their living and working conditions to enable them to fight poaching effectively.</p> <p>The fight against poachers is dangerous. Poachers often possess the most modern means to kill especially elephants and rhinoceroses. Extremely high prices are paid for ivory and rhino-horn on the black- market. Rangers often risk their lives in their fights against poachers. However, without them, fighting poaching is a lost cause.</p>	





#### Support of rangers

- Developing remote areas/ securing border regions
- Construction of adequate and secure accommodation
- Equipping ranger posts with solar power and water
- Supply with other adequate equipment
- All-terrain vehicles for patrolling
- Bridges and drifts for access the whole year round

The core tasks of the FSS have not changed over the last 34 years. New challenges have to be added however, like global warming, water shortages, population explosion, poverty, dwindling natural resources, a severe increase in poaching and administrative hurdles.

It is necessary to find new and holistic solutions. That is why it is extremely important to integrate the local population into the process of conservation and protection.

#### Co-ordination Switzerland - Tanzania

Alex Rechsteiner co-ordinates the exchange between the FSS and its partner organizations and the local authorities in Tanzania. He is in constant touch with the board in Switzerland. Delegates of the board visit and inspect FSS-projects on a yearly inspection tour and cultivate contacts. Hence, a constant adaption to new requirements and coordination of FSS activities is assured.

#### Partner

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| TANAPA | National Park Authority, <a href="http://www.tanzaniaparks.com">www.tanzaniaparks.com</a>                       |
| TPF    | Tanzania People and Wildlife Fund, <a href="http://www.afripw.org">www.afripw.org</a>                           |
| UCRT   | Ujamaa Community Resource Team,<br><a href="http://www.ujamaa-crt.org">www.ujamaa-crt.org</a>                   |
| GAWPT  | George Adamson Wildlife Preservation Trust,<br><a href="http://www.georgeadamson.org">www.georgeadamson.org</a> |
| ZGF    | Zoological Society Frankfurt, <a href="http://www.fzs.org">www.fzs.org</a>                                      |

#### Political context

Since the election of John Pombe Magufuli as Tanzania's president in autumn 2015, the framework conditions for our work have on the one hand become somewhat more conducive again. Above all, the president's vigorous stance to fight corruption and mismanagement in the public sector has resulted in a much stronger commitment in the fight against the illegal decimation of wildlife. On the other hand, however, the Government's increasingly authoritarian and unpredictable behaviour – notably also in its treatment of Non-Governmental Organisations – make it more difficult to plan in the long term.

For the time being, in the main areas of FSS' operational presence, i.e. the National Parks of Serengeti, Tarangire and Mkomazi, poaching appears to be by and large under control. This is a clear consequence of our successful cooperation with the Tanzanian Park Authority and our support to the rangers.

