GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report
Master Golf

Prepared by independent verifier Sanni Sjoblom

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2024
Recertification due: 2027

GEO Foundation
Sustainability in and through golf

“The facility is well managed, clean, and modern. Big investments are made on ecology and awareness on ecological issues is high. There are plans to extend those plans, too. I look forward to seeing how the wider application of GPS systems will impact the course management performance in the future.”

Sanni Sjoblom
(GEO accredited independent verifier)

Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Master Golf has successfully achieved GEO Certified® status for its outstanding work to foster nature, conserve resources and support the community.

GEO Certified® is the most respected certification for golf, based on a credibly and transparently developed modern sustainability Standard of best practice.

Master Golf has:

1. Met the required certification criteria for sustainable golf operations
2. Successfully completed the official third-party verification process
3. Successfully passed the final evaluation by GEO Certification Ltd. (autonomous subsidiary of GEO Foundation)

GEO agreed with the conclusions of the official verification report, that, having achieved all mandatory criteria; and with specific Continual Improvement Points (CIP) set for the future and Critical CIP's (CCIPs) to be reviewed at recertification, Master Golf should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Master Golf can therefore claim a position as a leader in advancing sustainability in golf – making important contributions in protecting nature, conserving resources and strengthening communities.

The GEO Certified® Report that follows comments on the actions undertaken against the criteria, as observed by the independent verifier during the assurance process.

Certification is nearly always the result of a dedicated team effort resulting in many practical and valuable social and environmental results around the golf course, maintenance facility and clubhouse. These dedication and leadership qualities are an important part of ensuring the resilience of the golf facility and the golf industry into the future and also as part of society's wider effort to pull together for people and planet.

We congratulate all involved.

Jonathan Smith
Founder and Executive Director, GEO Foundation
GEO Certification Ltd. Board Member

Kelli Jerome
Executive Director, GEO Foundation

Carole Kerrey
Manager, Data and Reporting, GEO Certification Ltd.

Verification and Certification

Verification

The official third-party audit was carried out by an independent verifier, accredited by GEO to undertake verifications of golf facilities applying for certification.

Verification involves reviewing practices and data, using the International Voluntary Standard for Sustainable Golf Operations as the guide to ensure comprehensive and consistent evaluation of performance. A detailed verification report is submitted for evaluation by GEO Certification Ltd, a subsidiary of GEO Foundation.

Certification

GEO Certification Ltd, an autonomous subsidiary of GEO Foundation [both not-for-profit entities], undertook a full review of all content submitted through the OnCourse® online platform and the report submitted by the verifier, ensuring:

- Comprehensiveness – that activities undertaken touched on all elements of the Standard
- Consistency – that the verification approach was balanced, well weighted and with consistent depth of evaluation across each theme
- Accuracy - matching the verification report with evidence submitted by the golf facility to ensure statements and claims were accurate

GEO Foundation is an international not-for-profit founded to advocate, support and reward sustainability in and through golf. Over more than ten years, the group has worked collaboratively with dozens of golf industry associations and government and non-government organisations around the world, to help golf become a sustainability leader, striving for a net positive social and environmental impact. In addition to managing and assuring GEO Certified®, GEO Foundation also provides a suite of credible, practical programmes for golf facility management, new golf developments and golf tournaments called OnCourse®, often delivered in partnership with national golf bodies. Find out more at **www.sustainable.golf**

Credibility

GEO Certified® is part of the ISEAL Alliance, a group of the world's foremost credible certification systems including Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, Forest Stewardship Council, Marine Stewardship Council and many others. GEO Foundation earned and retains full membership of the ISEAL Alliance global association following a rigorous evaluation against the ISEAL Codes of Credibility in Sustainability Standards and Certification. The ISEAL Codes cover standard-setting, assurance, and monitoring and evaluation. Find out more at **www.isealalliance.org**

The Sustainability Agenda for golf covers the following themes and action areas:

THEMES	ACTION AREAS
Nature	• Habitats & Biodiversity • Turfgrass management • Pollution prevention
Resources	• Water • Energy • Materials
Community	• Partnerships & Outreach • Golfing & Employment • Advocacy & Communications

Included below are the observations made by the Independent Verifier against each item in the Standard.

NATURE

N1 Habitats and Biodiversity

Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
N1.1 Understand the site and surroundings	**N1.1.1 Sound understanding of the nature and landscape value of the site**	Map all habitats and vegetation types on the site; Regularly update landscape / biodiversity surveys	The golf course belongs to building plans of Bodom Manor. The golf courses are limited to national parks (before Natura 2000). There are two different protected habitats, one is a noble tree zone of Bodom Smets, and the other is a rocky area that is connected to larger Nuuksio National park. Forest course is built half on woodland and half of it is old field. Master course is built completely on old fields. Nature survey was completed some years ago. The city of Espoo is going to do a larger nature survey on the whole district of Bodom. If necessary, a new survey will be done after the larger survey.
	N1.1.2 Knowledge of legal designations for protected areas, habitats and species	Understand legal responsibilities for protected landscapes and species; Record and monitor protected, endangered, or rare species found on the site	The lake Matalajärvi belongs to Natura 2000. The birdlife on the lake is precious. The knowledge of the natural reserve is important to the golf club. Employees are educated on the meaning of the natural reserve and how it effects the golf course operations. For example, cutting thicker trees requires permission in certain areas. Environmental authorities have set signposts on the area to inform people. The protected land that belongs to the golf course is not maintained in any way.

	N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site	Bodom manor house is protected.
N1.2 Opportunities to naturalise the course	**N1.2.1 Measures taken to identify and minimise the required area of managed turfgrass**	Observe, track and / or monitor golfer play	Tall turfgrass areas are increased yearly by reducing fairways. Tall turfgrass is maintained as a meadow. It is cut in the autumn and clippings are cleaned away to keep the soil poorish. To plan the reduction of maintained grass, the game is monitored, and decisions are made based on the observations. There is GPS in golf carts that guides where they can be driven. There will be 15 more golf carts that have more accurate GPS.
N1.3 Actively manage habitats for wildlife	**N1.3.1 Projects to manage habitats in the best way for wildlife and golf**	Regularly review and follow a habitat management plan; Prioritise native species when planting and landscaping	A habitat management plan is reviewed once a year, and necessary changes are decided. Not so many changes are done middle of the season. During nesting, the shores of waterbodies such as ponds are left uncut. No large plantings take place on the course as the design is kept the same over the years. When the course was built, berry bushes and apple trees were planted on the course. Those might be replanted if needed. Invasive species are prevented, such as withered rose, giant knotweed and lupine that are not native species in Finland.
N1.4 Conserve key species	**N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species**		Oak and Maple on Master course. Pineforest 80% on Forest course.
N2 Turfgrass			
N2.1 Maintain optimum turf and soil health	**N2.1.1 Appropriate turfgrass varieties adapted to climatic and**	Select appropriate grass species for climate	Agrostis stolonoifera is favored on greens. Poa prantesis and carex perdentata on tees and fairways

		other geomorphological factors		Meadow flowers are planted on the peripheries. The reason for the turfgrasses of choice are: - They require little fertilization and irrigation, and they last drought and are disease resistant. - There are no test batches of such, but one green is tested for not using any pesticides. Only special tree acids are used. More test projects will take place next year.
		N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		Aeration, needling, dressing by sand and humus takes place during spring, early autumn and during planting in midsummer.
		N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	Confirmed. Nitrogen levels are cut to half from 2021 to 2024 in greens. Liquid fertilization is increased and granulates are cut down. This decreases the risk of leakages. The level of organic fertilizers is growing.
	N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	**N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management**	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding	Surface moisture removal. Topcut, reduction of the density, dressing, aeration. Goal is to keep the top level aerated and dry. Sharp blades decrease the risk of diseases. Broad leaves are manually weeded.
	N2.3 Use chemicals responsibly	**N2.3.1 Application of chemicals only when necessary to prevent or cure defined / identified turf health issues**	Establish patterns and levels of risk for pests and diseases; Scout the course daily for early signs of pests and disease; Accurate pest and disease identification; Map and track pest and disease hotspots; Establish pest and disease thresholds	Pesticides are used only when it cannot be avoided. The exception is the winter mold. This is treated in advance before the snow layer.

			Spraying is done based on indicative greens, that are strictly monitored. Only greens are sprayed. Roughs and tees are not sprayed. There is an ongoing process to inform the players to tolerate certain levels of diseases on the golf course.
	N2.3.2 Application of chemicals with full safety precautions	Use only legally registered and approved products; Ensure staff are fully qualified and licenced to use pesticides; Regularly calibrate and test applicators; Use appropriate protective equipment; Dilute and dispose of leftover product on untreated areas of turf .	Four members of staff have applicator licenses. Two of them are permanent staff. Protective equipment is confirmed. The modern spraying equipment calculates the need of chemicals accurately. Basically, there are no leftovers what so ever. The possibility is that the spraying is not possible to do when planned. In that case, the product is restored and used later. The sprayer is brand new and therefore not calibrated yet. There is an external calibrator who comes if invited. Nozzles are changed every year.
N3 Pollution Prevention			
N3.1 Prevent pollution across the entire site	**N3.1.1 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from golf course operations**	Document procedures for emergency spill responses; Maintain mowing buffer zones around water and all ecologically sensitive areas; Maintain spraying and spreading buffer zones around water and all ecologically sensitive areas; Create a map / aerial visual reproduction, drawing etc of the course showing buffer zones and no-spray, no-spread areas.	There are oil tanks at the refueling station, maintenance hall, and storage. Also, absorbent materials are available. Buffer zones are confirmed. Spraying zone is reduced all the time. The personnel that conduct the spraying are knowledgeable of the zones and buffer areas. **CIP: Please try to map any buffer zones separately. There will be GPS in the sprayers that can provide further information on buffer zones.**

				CIP: Please continue to develop the monitoring of soil and growth conditions e.g., sampling the growth of the turf determine the need for fertilization more accurately. **CIP: Please continue with plans to integrate the soil moisture meter with GPS in the future.**
		N3.1.2 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from clubhouse operations	Ensure all hazardous materials are safely and securely stored; Ensure compliance with all required standards and systems for hazardous waste and wastewater discharge	Municipal wastewater permit (HSY). Batteries and lamps are collected. Waste oil, solid (absorbent materials) and aerosols are collected by L&T (permitted contractor).
		N3.1.3 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from maintenance facility operations	Ensure wash areas are on impermeable, leak-free surfaces; Mixing and loading of pesticides and fertilisers over an impermeable surface; Triple rinse pesticide containers and applicators	The Master Golf has washing area separately for golf carts. Water is led to a municipal wastewater treatment network. The wash area for the maintenance equipment is little old. There is an impermeable surface and a well that is emptied by a contractor Lokaveto Oy. Water used for washing is the same as the irrigation system. (Surface water) **CIP: Please consider renewing or improving the washing area, adding a dry blowing station and ensuring appropriate connection of wastewater to the municipal system.**
	N3.2 Safely manage hazardous substances	**N3.2.1 Legal compliance in the storage, handling, application and safe disposal of all hazardous substances**	Maintain a register of hazardous materials available to authorised staff; Safe storage in secure and ventilated concrete or metal building; Sufficient storage capacity; Impermeable flooring; Spill containment kits present; Emergency wash area; Fire extinguisher in the immediate area;	Confirmed register is electronic and in the appropriate storage. Hazardous materials storages are ventilated, heated, and have impermeable flooring. Oil tanks have double hulling or a secondary containment in case of leakages.

			Secondary containment for fuel, either externally constructed, or integrally manufactured; Regular inspection of storage tanks	Spill containment kit confirmed. Wash area confirmed. Fire extinguisher in the area. Inspected by work safety officials and fire safety officials on a regular basis.
	N3.3 Responsibly manage waste / storm water	**N3.3.1 Appropriate wastewater usage and discharge licences**	Wastewater discharge licence; Appropriate treatment of machinery wash water (impermeable surface, oil / grease / clipping separation)	Wastewater is led to municipal system of HSY. Machinery wastewater is separately collected. There are wells for separation of oil, sand and clippings. **CIP as per N3.1.3 above: Please consider renewing or improving the washing area, adding a dry blowing station and ensuring appropriate connection of wastewater to the municipal system.**

RESOURCES

R1 Water

Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
R1.1 Minimise water demand	**R1.1.1 Measures to reduce the need to consume water**	Target irrigation to essential playing surfaces only	Surface water from Lake Bodom is used. There is an unlimited permit. The use of irrigation water is strictly measured. The area for tall gras, decreasing the area of fairways, selection of drought resistant turf species and a certain level of moisture are methods to cut down the irrigation volume. New pumps also work accurately. New rain and moisture meters are used.
R1.2 Maximise water efficiency	**R1.2.1 Practical measures to use water more efficiently on the golf course**	Conduct regular irrigation performance checks; Provide staff training on efficient irrigation practices; Ensure effective application of water to target areas; Ensure irrigation schedules are informed by weather patterns and soil moisture analysis	Irrigation performance is constantly monitored. The staff is trained at the golf club. There is a moisture meter in use. Irrigation software is licensed and updated on a regular basis. There is a general guideline for the staff to follow the moisture of the course for over irrigation (leakages) or drought. Anomalies are informed in a WhatsApp group.
	R1.2.2 Practical measures to use water more efficiently in buildings	Audit water use regularly; Review bills frequently and look for irregularities; Encourage water-saving practices amongst staff and visitors; Categorise and track water consumption	The three water meters are read monthly. Of all the operations, most of the water is used at the restaurant. The equipment at the kitchen was renovated in 2023. Toilets have a big and small flush.

R1.3 Source water responsibly	**R1.3.1 Measures towards alternative, lower quality sources of water**	Ensure appropriate water abstraction permit and reporting, as required	The golf club can pump water from Lake Bodom unlimitedly. No need to report. City of Espoo is the authority.
R2 Energy			
R2.1 Reduce energy demand	**R2.1.1 Measures to reduce the amount of energy consumed in course maintenance**	Minimise areas of managed turf to reduce mowing, irrigation, and turf inputs	The volume of maintained turf has been cut down every year. The turf species planted are drought resistant.
R2.2 Maximise energy efficiency	**R2.2.1 Measures to use energy and fuels more efficiently in buildings**	Audit energy use regularly; Regularly review bills; Categorise and track energy consumption	More heat pumps are installed. The clubhouse is heated by ground heat and no oil is used anymore. Bills are monthly reviewed and reported. Temperatures in the buildings are left to drop during the winter. The use of electricity is growing due to an increase in electrical machinery and electric car charging stations.
R2.3 Source energy responsibly	**R2.3.1 Measures to source alternative, renewable forms of energy**	Determine potential sources of renewable energy in the area and on-site, through renewable energy providers	Ground heat and solar panels installed, producing 21000kWh/season. The whole season consumes 400 000 kWh approximately. **CIP: Please continue work to find the best methods to use clean green energy. The aim is to reduce energy consumption everywhere it is possible.** The scrabs from forest maintenance are used as a source of energy at a power station.
R3 Materials			
R3.1 Reduce materials demand	**R3.1.1 Products and materials selection based on**	Undertake a review of materials consumed	The mixed waste, energy waste and cardboard is collected at the maintenance hall. Plastics are recycled as an energy.

	necessity, including opportunities for recycled, reused and locally sourced alternatives		At the clubhouse there is mixed waste, bio, cardboard, glass and metal. The decision of the collection points is done by the waste collector. They are L&T and Romeo. Two years ago, a new waste bin storage was built. Waste generation is audited once a year, and L&T gives out reports. Heating oil is not used anymore.
R3.2 Purchase responsibly	**R3.2.1 Practical use of an ethical / environmental purchasing policy**	Adopt a sustainable, or ethical / environmental purchasing policy to maximise the use of locally sourced goods and goods made from recycled, recyclable and certified materials	Locally produced food is used at the restaurant. The apples collected from the apple trees of the golf course are used at the restaurant. The fertilizers and pesticides are from Berner that produces most of the chemicals in Finland. Also, chemicals used for cleaning and personal hygiene are produced in Finland.
R3.3 Reuse and recycle	**R3.3.1 Waste stream separation for maximum recycling and re-use opportunity**	Demonstrate waste separation, reuse and recycling; Track how much waste goes to landfill, or is reused / recycled	Confirmed
R3.4 Demonstrate legal compliance	**R3.4.1 Compliance with all local and regional waste management regulations**	Use authorised waste and recycling contractor for general, hazardous, industrial and green waste	L&T, Remeo.

COMMUNITY

C1 Outreach

Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
C1.1 Diversify access and provide multi-functionality	C1.1.1 Social and recreational activities at the facility		During the winter the golf course is open for anyone to ski or take dogs out. Forest areas are open and free to use by every man's law e.g. for picking up mushrooms. There is a bicycle route that crosses the course. Different events are held at the manor house. It is a popular place to have weddings. Some movies are filmed at the golf course and at the clubhouse. Popular TV show First Date at the Altar is shot at Bodom Manor.
C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		Events for charity. Volunteer to monitor water quality between the lakes.
C1.3 Establish active community partnerships	C1.3.1 Positive and constructive engagement with neighbours, the local community and other groups	Create a 'sustainability working group'	Master Golf is a member of Lake Matalajärvi union, and Bodom Protection union.
C2 Golfers & Employees			
C2.1 Improve health and wellbeing	C2.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities		Mobility and coverage of social issues, especially for aged population. Ladies and senior committees hold events, such as lectures on healthy habits, yoga classes etc.

C2.2 Be open and inclusive	**C2.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies**	Demonstrate inclusive policies for members and visitors	Everyone can buy shares. Green fee and open for all.
C2.3 Employ fairly and safely, and provide career opportunities	**C2.3.1 Ethical and legal employment, working conditions and professional development**	Follow all relevant national legislation and best practice for employment, health & safety etc	The lowest age to employ is 15. The staff are educated on health and safety. There are safety cards for all the different tasks that staff can do. The staff health service provider (Terveystalo) does safety and risk assessment for different tasks.
C3 Communications			
C3.1 Engage golfers and members	**C3.1.1 Communications activities that raise awareness and understanding amongst members and visitors**	Provide information on the facility's sustainability commitments, actions, or achievements	Homepage, member seasonal letters, shareholder's letters, signposts, bush radio, printed magazine two times a year. PR agency is used. Environmental and ecological issues are informed to certain level. E.g. a birdlife statement was given out to members. **CIP: Please try to inform members about sustainability and the surrounding national parks.**
C3.2 Celebrate and promote sustainability	**C3.2.1 Activities that raise awareness and engage people in the wider community**	Provide evidence of external communications and community engagement	Internet pages, social media are the most important. The golf club communicates regularly with the local resident's communities. Especially important are the issues on safety.

Golf and Sustainability

Among all sports, golf has a particularly close relationship with the environment and communities, golf facilities can bring many benefits to people and nature - from the protection of greenspace and conservation of biodiversity; healthy recreation for all ages; local supply chains; and jobs, tourism and other forms of economic value.

Adopting a more sustainable approach is also good for golf. It's about presenting a high-quality golf course and providing a memorable experience in natural surroundings. It's about being as efficient as possible. And it's about supporting the community in a range of ways that bring increased recognition, respect and contact.

At a broader level, it's important that golf credibly demonstrates its commitment, and its social and environmental value – strengthening the sport's image and reputation for the long term.

Golf facilities that participate in OnCourse®, an international sustainability initiative assured by the non-profit GEO Foundation, are taking a comprehensive approach and striving to be leaders in the community.

Find out more at www.sustainable.golf