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Voluntary International Certification Standard – Golf Facilities



NATURE

Objective	Requirement	Mandatory Practices	Example Evidence	Notes
<u>N1 Habitats & Biodiversity</u>				
N1.1 Understand the site and surroundings	N1.1.1 Sound understanding of the nature and landscape value of the site	<p>Map all habitats and vegetation types on the site;</p> <p>Regularly update landscape / biodiversity surveys</p>	<p>Confirm map(s), aerial reproductions, images etc;</p> <p>Confirm survey / audit information;</p> <p>Observe habitats and vegetation types;</p>	
	N1.1.2 Knowledge of legal designations for protected areas, habitats and species	<p>Understand legal responsibilities for protected landscapes and species;</p> <p>Record and monitor protected, endangered, or rare species found on the site</p>	<p>Observe site(s);</p> <p>Discuss with facility representative(s) what the designation is, who the authority is, restricted or informed management practices, other responsibilities or legal requirements etc</p>	

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	N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site	Observe site(s) and / or feature(s); Discuss as N1.1.2;	
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	Discuss how this is undertaken, i.e. mapping, GPS player tracking, surveying players etc;	
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	Confirm document(s) and / or action plan(s); Observe habitat project(s) and / or view images; Discuss management plans if no formal written documentation	
N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species		<i>No specific international requirements, however, discuss management conservation activities, as appropriate</i>	
<u>N2 Turfgrass</u>				

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<p>N2.1 Maintain optimum turf and soil health</p>	<p>N2.1.1 Appropriate turfgrass varieties adapted to climatic and other geomorphological factors</p>	<p>Select appropriate grass species for climate</p>	<p>Confirm turf species present;</p> <p>Discuss how cool season or warm season varieties are informed by climate;</p> <p>Observe projects to transition species i.e. trial plots, practice areas etc;</p> <p><i>Note: 'Transitional' climates to explain justification and extent of cool season species present</i></p>	
	<p>N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition</p>		<p><i>No specific international requirements, however, discuss course management and agronomic activities, as appropriate</i></p>	
	<p>N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation</p>	<p>Soil tests and nutrient analysis</p>	<p>Confirm test / report document(s);</p> <p>Discuss the informed basis and approach to fertilisation</p>	

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<p>N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance</p>	<p>N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management</p>	<p>Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding</p>	<p>Discuss the informed non-chemical approach to turf management</p>	
<p>N2.3 Use chemicals responsibly</p>	<p>N2.3.1 Application of chemicals only when necessary to prevent or cure defined / identified turf health issues</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>Discuss the informed assessment of chemical applications to turf i.e. preventative / curative / combination approach</p>	
	<p>N2.3.2 Application of chemicals with full safety precautions</p>	<p>Use only legally registered and approved products;</p>	<p>Confirm chemical / product log;</p>	

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		<p>Ensure staff are fully qualified and licenced to use pesticides;</p> <p>Regularly calibrate and test applicators;</p> <p>Use appropriate protective equipment;</p> <p>Dilute and dispose of leftover product on untreated areas of turf</p>	<p>Confirm applicator licences;</p> <p>Observe spraying and protective equipment;</p> <p>Observe turf areas for disposal of leftovers;</p> <p>Discuss as N2.3.1</p>	
<u>N3 Pollution Prevention</u>				
N3.1 Prevent pollution across the entire site	N3.1.1 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from golf course operations	<p>Procedures for emergency spill responses;</p> <p>Maintain mowing buffer zones around water and all ecologically sensitive areas;</p> <p>Maintain spraying and spreading buffer zones around water and all ecologically sensitive areas;</p>	<p>Confirm emergency spill response plan;</p> <p>Confirm map(s);</p> <p>Observe buffer zones and no-spray areas</p>	

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		Create maps of the course showing buffer zones and no-spray, no-spread areas		
	N3.1.2 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from clubhouse operations	<p>Ensure all hazardous materials are safely and securely stored;</p> <p>Ensure compliance with all required standards and systems for hazardous waste and wastewater discharge</p>	<p>Observe storage;</p> <p>Confirm licences / contracts for disposal of hazardous waste;</p> <p>Confirm wastewater discharge licence</p>	
	N3.1.3 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from maintenance facility operations	<p>Ensure wash areas are on impermeable, leak-free surfaces;</p> <p>Mixing and loading of pesticides and fertilisers over an impermeable surface;</p> <p>Triple rinse pesticide containers and applicators</p>	Observe washing and preparation areas	

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<p>N3.2 Safely manage hazardous substances</p>	<p>N3.2.1 Legal compliance in the storage, handling, application and safe disposal of all hazardous substances</p>	<p>Maintain a register of hazardous materials available to authorised staff;</p> <p>Safe storage in secure and ventilated concrete or metal building;</p> <p>Sufficient storage capacity;</p> <p>Impermeable flooring;</p> <p>Spill containment kits present;</p> <p>Emergency wash area;</p> <p>Fire extinguisher in the immediate area;</p> <p>Secondary containment for fuel, either externally constructed, or integrally manufactured;</p>	<p>Confirm local authority inspection report for storage tanks, if applicable;</p> <p>Observe fuel storage tanks, secondary containment and surroundings;</p> <p>Observe first aid and emergency response procedures</p>	
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		Regular inspection of storage tanks		
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)	Confirm wastewater discharge licence / sewerage agreement; Observe wash bay with impermeable surface and drainage recipient; Discuss on-site treatment of wastewater, as applicable	

RESOURCES

Objective	Requirement	Mandatory Practices	Key Evidence	Verifier Notes
<u>R1 Water</u>				
R1.1 Minimise water demand	R1.1.1 Measures to reduce the need to consume water	Target irrigation to essential playing surfaces only	Discuss irrigation practices and considerations	
R1.2 Maximise water efficiency	R1.2.1 Practical measures to use water more efficiently on the golf course	Conduct regular irrigation performance checks;	Confirm soil moisture sensor;	

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		<p>Provide staff training on efficient irrigation practices;</p> <p>Ensure effective application of water to target areas;</p> <p>Ensure irrigation schedules are informed by weather patterns and soil moisture analysis</p>	<p>Confirm irrigation programme software;</p> <p>Discuss irrigation hardware and maintenance</p>	
	<p>R1.2.2 Practical measures to use water more efficiently in buildings</p>	<p>Audit water use regularly;</p> <p>Review bills frequently and look for irregularities;</p> <p>Encourage water-saving practices amongst staff and visitors;</p> <p>Categorise and track water consumption</p>	<p>Confirm water auditing procedures;</p> <p>Confirm internal record keeping, utility bills and invoices, data management</p>	
<p>R1.3 Source water responsibly</p>	<p>R1.3.1 Measures towards alternative, lower quality sources of water</p>	<p>Ensure appropriate water abstraction permit and reporting, as required</p>	<p>Confirm water abstraction permit and reports to regulating authority, if applicable</p>	

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<u>R2 Energy</u>				
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	Observe areas removed from intensive maintenance; Discuss areas identified for ongoing naturalisation	
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	Confirm energy auditing procedures; Confirm internal record keeping, utility bills and invoices, data management	
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	Discuss reviews of renewable energy provision / generation	
<u>R3 Materials</u>				
R3.1 Reduce materials demand	R3.1.1 Products and materials selection based on	Undertake a review of materials consumed	Confirm waste auditing procedures;	

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	necessity, including opportunities for recycled, reused and locally sourced alternatives		Discuss materials and products that have been identified, reduced or eliminated	
R3.2 Purchase responsibly	R3.2.1 Practical use of an ethical / environmental purchasing policy	Adopt sustainable, or ethical / environmental purchasing policies to maximise the use of locally sourced goods and goods made from recycled, recyclable and certified materials	Confirm examples of local, seasonal, certified products; Observe specific items used or consumed	
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	Confirm internal record keeping, utility bills and invoices, data management; Observe labelled bins around the facility and waste receptacle areas	
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;	Confirm business / trade waste licences	

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COMMUNITY

Objective	Requirement	Mandatory Practices	Key Evidence	Verifier Notes
<u>C1 Outreach</u>				
C1.1 Diversify access and provide multi-functionality	C1.1.1 Social and recreational activities at the facility		No specific international requirement, however, discuss activities as appropriate and look for continual improvements	
C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		No specific international requirement, however, discuss activities as appropriate and look for continual improvements	
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'	Confirm meeting minutes and agendas, if available; Discuss composition and roles of group, frequency of meetings etc	

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<u>C2 Golfers & Employees</u>				
C2.1 Improve health and wellbeing	C2.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities		<i>No specific international requirement, however, discuss as appropriate</i>	
C2.2 Be open and inclusive	C2.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies	Demonstrate inclusive policies for members and visitors	Discuss membership and visitor policies	
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	Discuss employee induction procedures, health & safety, risk assessments etc	
<u>C3 Communications</u>				
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	Discuss club's website, social media activity, awareness raising materials, internal notices, on course educational signage, mailing campaigns, links with external PR agencies, other awards or certifications,	

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			newspaper / magazine articles etc	
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	Discuss relations and partnership work with stakeholders, other businesses, suppliers / contractors, organisations, charities, educational establishments etc; open access to facilities; event hosting etc, which extend the reach and awareness of the club	