



GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report Dom Pedro Pinhal Golf Course

Prepared by independent verifier Alexandra Almeida

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2024
Recertification due: 2027

“I can confidently say that Pinhal Vilamoura Golf Course demonstrates a strong commitment to both environmental sustainability and social responsibility. Through effective water management, biodiversity protection, and waste reduction initiatives, the course actively contributes to preserving the surrounding natural environment.

Additionally, the course’s social initiatives, such as supporting golf education for young people and collaborating with local organizations, help create lasting positive impacts on the community. The combination of these efforts reflects a genuine dedication to building a sustainable future, both on and off the course.”

Alexandra Almeida

(GEO accredited independent verifier)



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Dom Pedro Pinhal Golf Course 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.

Dom Pedro Pinhal Golf Course 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, Dom Pedro Pinhal Golf Course should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Dom Pedro Pinhal Golf Course 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.isealliance.org



Verifier's Report

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	Vilamoura Resort began its development in the late 1960s and early 1970s, transforming a rural landscape into a premier tourist destination. The resort now features two exceptional beaches—Falésia and Vilamoura—along with five golf courses, an international college, tennis courts, fitness facilities, a sailing club, a casino, conference venues, hotels, restaurants, and bars. Adjacent to the Old Course, the Pinhal Course, the second of Vilamoura's five courses, is an 18-hole parkland-style course that opened in 1976. Originally designed by Frank Pennink, it was refined in 1985 by Robert Trent Jones Jr, who retained some holes from the previous layout and added new challenges. Further improvements were made by Martin Hawtree, who redesigned the 5th, 12th, 15th and 16th holes. With narrow fairways, the course is set in rolling countryside bordered by umbrella pines and Atlantic maritime pines, strategically placed and lined with luxury holiday villas. The first 9 holes meander through wild pine trees, while the remaining 9 holes offer players with sea views. The layout includes ponds which come into play on 3 holes. The golf course has 32 hectares actively maintained, while the facility includes 23 hectares of designated non-playable areas. The areas with Umbrella Pine (<i>Pinus pinea</i>) and Atlantic Maritime Pine (<i>Pinus pinaster</i>) are actively undergoing a proactive management program. Selective felling, pruning, and density reduction measures have already improved tree health and overall course conditions. The Pinhal clubhouse was renovated in the late 90s, enhancing its facilities and modernizing its design to better serve the growing number of golfers. The clubhouse serves as a central hub for both golfers and visitors, providing a comfortable setting to relax after a round while enjoying the course's stunning natural surroundings. Adjacent to the clubhouse is the Vilamoura Golf Academy.

			The village of Vilamoura, and its golf courses, remains surrounded by traditional farmland, grasslands, coastal lagoons, and reedbeds. Integrated in the Environmental Park of Vilamoura, the Caniçal de Vilamoura (IBA – BirdLife International) is an extensive reed-covered (<i>Phragmites australis</i>) wetland with several open lagoons, bordered by cereal fields and rainfed orchards to the south, two artificial ponds from a sewage treatment plant to the east, and golf courses to the north. Part of the largest continuous reed bed in the Algarve, Caniçal de Vilamoura serves as a vital refuge and nesting site for numerous bird species. Despite its small size, it plays a crucial role in bird migrations, providing a network of resting and nesting habitats. In this area, more than 200 bird species are registered. The wetlands and lakes attract large numbers of wintering birds, including the <i>Northern Lapwing</i>, <i>Eurasian Golden Plover</i>, <i>Eurasian Skylark</i>, <i>Osprey</i>, <i>Black-winged Kite</i>, <i>Richard's Pipit</i>, <i>Ring Ouzel</i>, <i>House Sparrow</i>, <i>Spanish Sparrow</i>, and <i>Alpine Accentor</i>. It is also a key breeding ground for the <i>Western Marsh Harrier</i>, <i>Little Bittern</i>, and <i>Purple Swamphen</i>. Documents and data relating to biodiversity issues were reviewed on site. Practices implemented and confirmed: • Documented information of flora and fauna occurring on site (studies were carried out in 1999 and 2020) • The Tela Verde project, set to launch in 2025 in partnership with the Instituto da Conservação da Natureza e das Florestas (Institute for Nature Conservation and Forests), aims to enhance biodiversity through updated ecological studies, the creation of wildlife refuges, and the installation of educational information panels. Note: ICNF is the Portuguese government agency responsible for managing protected areas, biodiversity conservation, forestry policies, and environmental regulations • The 2025 Environmental Management Plan and the investment plan include habitat mapping and the introduction of bird nest boxes and bug hotels made from recyclable materials. • Communication efforts will feature new leaflets on local flora and fauna, as well as informative panels highlighting the diverse wildlife and ecosystems found across Vilamoura's golf courses.
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			CIP: Please consider using appropriate signage to restrict golfer and maintenance staff access to environmentally sensitive areas. CIP: When planning new flora and fauna brochures, please consider informing golfers about the Environmental Park's bird hides and trails.
	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	Practices implemented and confirmed: The Pinhal team, including the superintendent and greenkeeping staff, has a good knowledge of the local flora and fauna. CIP: Please try to improve communication efforts e.g., through a dedicated web page on the Vilamoura Golf Website. Consider regularly compiling, updating, and publishing a list of notable and protected fauna and flora species found on-site to enhance awareness and engagement.
	N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site	Not applicable.
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	Practices implemented and confirmed: Measures to minimize the managed turf area have been implemented incrementally. The team has reduced the irrigated area to the essential playing surfaces only. Fairways and tee boxes have been planted with bermudagrass to further reduce water consumption.
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	Practices implemented and confirmed: - The management team has implemented a woodland management plan focused on selective thinning and felling to promote healthier, more stable tree and understory growth. This approach encourages a mixed-age, mixed-species structure, enhances biodiversity, improves nesting conditions, reduces shading of tees and greens, increases air flow, and minimizes damage from tree roots. - The water quality of the lakes is actively monitored annually. CCIP: Please study the feasibility of implementing a biodiversity management plan.

			CCIP: Please review the planting strategy to increase the number of native species on-site at the golf facility. CIP: Please consider studying the feasibility of establishing wildlife sanctuaries in the out-of-play areas.
N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species		Other conservation measures discussed included the installation of nesting boxes and bug hotels.
N2 Turfgrass			
N2.1 Maintain optimum turf and soil health	N2.1.1 Appropriate turfgrass varieties adapted to climatic and other geomorphological factors	Select appropriate grass species for climate	Practices implemented and confirmed: - Turf species confirmed: Fairways and tees with warm-season turfgrass (<i>Cynodon dactylon</i> x <i>C. transvaalensis</i>), while the remaining playing areas are predominantly covered with cool-season grasses. - Warm-season grass is well-suited to the region's warm climate and offers several benefits for the course: thrives in high temperatures with minimal irrigation, reducing water consumption, is drought resistance, withstands heavy traffic and recovers quickly, ensuring consistent playing surfaces, less mowing, fertilization, and pesticides, lowering maintenance costs and environmental impact.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		Practices implemented and confirmed: - The course management plan includes physical maintenance to re-establish compaction and maintain low tach. - Records of cultural operations, including topdressing, scarifying, hollow coring, and verticutting, are consistently maintained and regularly updated.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	Practices implemented and confirmed: - Soil testing is conducted regularly to assess the need for inputs or other interventions. - Fertilizer applications are planned based on soil test results and environmental conditions.

			The fertilization program is guided by soil tests and water monitoring results.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding	Practices implemented and confirmed: Non-chemical control strategies, such as removing surface moisture, are employed alongside chemical treatments. In recent years, the superintendent has focused on introducing biological products to reduce fungicide use on the greens.
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	Practices implemented and confirmed: - The Superintendent understands chemical use restrictions on golf courses and applies pesticides only when necessary. - The Superintendent follows IPM principles, with a monitoring program tailored to pest types and objectives. The greenkeeping team conducts daily course inspections, maps pest and disease hotspots, and tracks them. Pest and disease thresholds have been established.
	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 .	Practices implemented and confirmed: - Pesticides are applied in accordance with label instructions, under appropriate environmental conditions, by qualified personnel using good practice and appropriate equipment. - Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is used. - Pesticide application equipment is regularly inspected - sprayers/equipment have been tested for accurate and safe application. - Pesticide leftovers are managed properly, following label instructions and regulations.
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;	Practices implemented and confirmed: In 2024, a self-assessment tool was introduced to improve the emergency response process, and training needs were identified.

		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.	- Emergency instructions for fire, flood, accidental spillage, earthquake, and storm have been prepared, and emergency spill response procedures are in place. - The 2025 training and education plan includes safety and emergency training. - Annual drills were conducted until 2020. The Emergency Management Plan includes the reactivation of drills in 2025. - The buffer zones around the lakes, with 1.5 meters in width, are designed to protect water quality and preserve the natural environment. CCIP: Please conduct at least one safety drill per year on the golf course and document the results. CCIP: Please establish a procedure for the regular inspection and replenishment of emergency spill kits. CIP: Please consider producing a map of the course that identifies buffer zones and no-spray, no-spread areas.
	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	Practices implemented and confirmed: Domestic wastewater is directly discharged into the local sewerage system, which is equipped with a wastewater treatment plant.
	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	Practices implemented and confirmed: - The maintenance facility is an old building with a roofed structure and impervious flooring, which features designated areas for repairs, routine maintenance, staff operations, storage, and breakout spaces. The current building will be replaced by a new building. - The effluent from the wash-pad is discharged into the local sewerage system (Vilamoura sewage treatment plant). - The wash-pad is a concrete pad that drains into a basin where sand and clippings are collected. Clippings and sand filtered from the wash water are gathered by the staff and the waste is properly disposed of using certified waste treatment operators.

			The effluent and the waste from filtration are regularly monitored by an accredited and certified laboratory. • Wastewater discharge permit issued. • Hazardous wastes, including pesticide containers, are properly disposed of using certified waste treatment operators, ensuring compliance with local regulations. • Emergency spill kits are in place to enable quick and efficient cleanup of chemical spills. Additionally, fire extinguishers are available to ensure a rapid response to fire hazards, enhancing overall facility safety. • Pesticide safety data sheets are available. • The mixing and loading area (Laguna Maintenance Facility) has an impermeable surface with proper containment measures to prevent runoff. • Containers are sent to recycling, after triple-rising. • Flushing instructions on the pesticide container label are followed. • Wastewater contaminated by plant protection products (PPP) from sprayer cleaning operations are properly managed and disposed of, following label instructions and regulations.
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; Secondary containment for fuel, either externally constructed, or integrally manufactured; Regular inspection of storage tanks	Practices implemented and confirmed: • The pesticide storage area, located within the Laguna Maintenance Facility, serves all of Vilamoura's golf courses. All chemicals used on the five courses are stored here. • The store, along with the mixing and loading area, is designed to prevent accidental releases and has been approved by the relevant local authorities. • The chemical storage area is well ventilated, locked and secured to prevent unauthorized access (structure is fireproof with an impermeable surface and with an appropriate fire extinguisher). The door is properly identified with a sign.

			- The management team maintains an organized register of hazardous materials used in golf course maintenance, including an up-to-date inventory of all pesticides and chemicals. - Fuel tanks (diesel and petrol) and their refuelling station are properly maintained, with the 2013 project duly notified to the municipality as required by law. - The storage area is located outdoors, covered to prevent direct sunlight, and equipped with secondary containment to control leaks. - A fire extinguisher is readily available. - Spill response plan and fire response plan are in place. - Outdoor eyewash station located outside chemical storage area. CCIP: Please conduct regular inspections of storage tanks and secondary containment systems in all areas where hazardous substances are stored. Proactively replacing any damaged systems will help manage any potential leaks or spills more effectively.
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)	Practices implemented and confirmed: - Wastewater from the clubhouse and the maintenance facility are collected and sent to the Vilamoura wastewater treatment plant for treatment. - Wastewater discharge permit issued.

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	Practices implemented and confirmed:

			• Tee boxes and fairways have been planted with bermudagrass to reduce water consumption. • Since 2022, the maintenance team has achieved incremental savings in water demand by rigorously auditing irrigation sprinkler placement and condition. The increased use of part-circle sprinklers has enabled more precise water application and a reduction in the overall irrigated area. As a result, they have successfully reduced water usage by 15% compared to 2022 volumes through ongoing water auditing and close monitoring of turf conditions • Increased use of wetting agents. • Biodegradable materials from tree maintenance are being shredded and used to enhance non-playable and landscaped areas, with grass replaced by wood chips in some sections. Note: ACCIONA, in collaboration with local company Tecnorém and commissioned by Águas do Algarve, was awarded a contract to enhance the tertiary treatment of water from the Vilamoura wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). This project aims to produce high-quality reclaimed water for irrigation purposes, particularly for local golf courses. The plant is expected to be operational by mid-2026. Additionally, an investment of €12 million is planned to complete approximately 12 kilometers of piping to the Vilamoura WWTP by 2025. This infrastructure will facilitate the use of treated wastewater for irrigating five golf courses in the area, including the Old Course, Pinhal, Laguna, Millennium, and Victoria, as well as other green spaces.
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	Practices implemented and confirmed: • Water management plan implemented to improve the efficiency of golf course irrigation. • A state-of-the-art computerized irrigation system allows the superintendent to monitor, record, and adjust water levels across the course, providing real-time irrigation control and optimizing schedules based on weather forecast. • The greenkeeping team received consistent training on adjusting sprinkler nozzles. • The greenkeeping team conducts regular and preventive inspections of the irrigation and drainage systems, leading to the

			timely identification and repair of leaks and clogged sprayers. This proactive maintenance has been shown to decrease water wastage and improve overall system efficiency by ensuring even water distribution across all essential areas.
	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	Practices implemented and confirmed: Water use is recorded and monitored. The management team regularly reviews bills for irregularities and encourages water conservation water-saving practices among staff.
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	Practices implemented and confirmed: - Potable water provided by the municipality. - The water used for irrigating the golf course is sourced from two boreholes. The abstraction of groundwater for this use is authorised by the competent authority. The quality of the groundwater is monitored three times a year, in April and October, and in June (pesticides). - Appropriated permits are in place and the management team constantly monitors the quality and quantity of water withdrawn from the boreholes to ensure full compliance with the relevant licenses. This information is reported to the local water 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	Practices implemented and confirmed: Biodegradable materials from tree maintenance, including pruned branches and pine trunks, were shredded and repurposed. The resulting wood chips were applied to enhance non-playable and landscaped areas of the golf course. In some zones, grass was replaced with wood chips, effectively reducing water usage, pesticide and fertilizer application, and the human resources required for ongoing maintenance.
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	Practices implemented and confirmed: Energy bills are reviewed monthly, and energy consumption in the clubhouse and maintenance facility is closely monitored.

			- The management team regularly checks for irregularities in the bills and promotes energy-saving practices among staff. - The primary energy sources in the clubhouse are electricity from the national grid and thermal energy generated on-site using LPG-fueled boilers. - In the maintenance facility, the main energy sources are electricity from the national grid, fuel, and petrol. CIP: Please consider designing the new maintenance building to include solar panels.
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	Practices implemented and confirmed: The potential for renewable energy production at the site is currently being investigated. In 2024, renewable energy production totalled 36.7 TWh, the highest value ever recorded in the national electricity system, driven by the growth in renewable installations and generally favourable conditions. Overall, renewables supplied 71% of the national consumption.
R3 Materials			
R3.1 Reduce materials demand	R3.1.1 Products and materials selection based on necessity, including opportunities for recycled, reused and locally sourced alternatives	Undertake a review of materials consumed	Practices implemented and confirmed: Wood chips, produced from green waste (tree trimmings), are used in landscaping areas, reducing the need for irrigation.
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	Practices implemented and confirmed: - The management team prioritizes purchasing from local suppliers to support the regional economy and minimize transportation emissions. - The restaurant primarily sources its ingredients locally. - Seafood is mainly sourced from local fishermen. - Bulk orders are placed whenever possible to further reduce transportation emissions.

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	Practices implemented and confirmed: - The clubhouse and the maintenance facility have separate bins for recycled waste. - All waste generated by the golf facility—including oils and oil filters, fertilizer bags, pesticide containers, paper, cardboard, glass, metal and plastic packaging, used cooking oils, and batteries—is properly separated. Hazardous wastes generated on site are treated, stored, and handled in accordance with all regulatory requirements. Licensed contractors collect the waste for off-site reuse, recycling, or disposal. The off-site movement of waste complies with all regulatory requirements, including the use of appropriately licensed vehicles and the completion of necessary documentation. - The restaurant has removed single plastic usage. - All quantities are reported annually to the environmental authority. CCIP: Please enhance the outdoor waste storage areas at the maintenance facility by providing clear, compliant signage indicating the types of waste accepted. Ensure that the storage area is properly labelled according to the relevant waste streams to facilitate correct segregation and compliance. CIP: Please consider installing composting machines or bins at the clubhouse to efficiently manage organic waste and food leftovers. CIP: Please consider installing water fountains at the golf course / clubhouse, providing refillable water bottles for members, and offering ready-to-go bottles at the clubhouse.
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	Practices implemented and confirmed: Waste is collected by licensed waste transport and disposal companies.

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		Practices implemented and confirmed: - The clubhouse includes a restaurant, golf shop, living room, and terrace. - The Pinhal Vilamoura Golf Course features a driving range equipped with a dedicated short game area and a well-maintained putting green. - The Vilamoura Golf Academy, part of the Vilamoura Golf complex, is situated within the Pinhal Vilamoura Golf Course. The academy is a facility dedicated to enhancing golfers' skills through comprehensive training programs. The academy's team of certified golf professionals delivers individual and group lessons, catering to beginners seeking to learn the fundamentals and experienced players aiming to refine their game. - The Golf Academy is indeed certified by the Portuguese Golf Federation. This certification ensures that the academy meets high standards in golf instruction and facilities. It also guarantees that the academy's teaching methods align with the Federation's guidelines, making it a reliable choice for golfers seeking professional coaching and development in Portugal.
C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		Practices implemented and confirmed: - The golf facility organizes initiatives to celebrate both International and National Environment Days, actively engaging internal teams and the local community. These efforts aim to raise awareness and encourage action towards protecting the environment and regenerating biodiversity. 'Paper for Food' Campaign – In collaboration with the Portuguese Federation of Food Banks, the golf facility donates cardboard and paper to certified waste management companies. The proceeds are converted into basic food products, which are then distributed locally to those in need. Recycling Donations – Used batteries, light bulbs, and other electrical equipment are donated for recycling to AHBV - Loulé (Loulé Municipal Fire Brigade) as part of the 8th edition of 'Quartel

			Electrão.' The fire brigade collecting the most equipment wins a €68,000 fire truck. • Golf Equipment Donation – Reusing golf club bags extends their lifespan and reduces waste. Donation of 50 golf bags to the Portuguese Golf Federation to promote golf education in schools. • Furniture Donation – Donation of furniture to the Vale de Judeu Church. • Charitable Gifts – Provided gifts to Casa Santa Isabel users and Christmas hampers to needy families. • Notable Charity Events - EDGA Vilamoura Open 2022: In February 2022, the course hosted the EDGA Vilamoura Open, a significant tournament for golfers with disabilities. This event was part of the European Disabled Golf Association's "Portugal Swing" and featured 43 players from 15 countries. The competition included Gross, Net, and Stableford categories, highlighting the course's dedication to inclusivity in sports. • Hilton Vilamoura's Charity Tournament - In March 2023, the Hilton Vilamoura organized a charity tournament at Pinhal golf course to support families in need. The event coincided with Earth Hour, promoting environmental awareness and community solidarity. The tournament's proceeds were donated to Associação Mãozinhas Solidárias, an organization dedicated to supporting low-income families.
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'	Practices implemented and confirmed: • In 2023, the Pinhal Vilamoura Golf Course was recognized as one of the 100 companies awarded the 'Sustainability Engaged' seal by Turismo de Portugal under the 'Tourism 360 Programme.' This recognition reflects the club's ongoing efforts to promote sustainable tourism in the Algarve. The 'ESG Engaged' label indicates a strong commitment to environmentally responsible practices, supported by the implementation of measurable actions, as reported through the analytics and sustainability performance reporting tool, FOREST - Organisational and Reporting Tool for Sustainability in Tourism. CCIP: Please create a 'sustainability working group'. CIP: Please encourage golfers and visitors, particularly youth, to actively participate in outdoor activities like birdwatching, beach

			clean-ups, native species planting, and scheduled night sky observation sessions.
C2 Golfers & Employees			
C2.1 Improve health and wellbeing	C2.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities		Practices implemented and confirmed: There is an awareness of the benefits that golf provides for both mental and physical health.
C2.2 Be open and inclusive	C2.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies	Demonstrate inclusive policies for members and visitors	Practices implemented and confirmed: Friendly facility that welcomes golfers and non-golfers alike to enjoy a variety of golf and leisure activities.
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	Practices implemented and confirmed: - Detailed H&S procedures are in place to ensure compliance with all relevant national legislation - Employee benefits include established protocols with the central hospital and local restaurants, along with access to the staff canteen and a meal allowance.
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	Practices implemented and confirmed: A monthly newsletter for investors and staff, along with a marketing report, made available to all interested parties through various media communication channels.
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	CIP: Please encourage players and visitors to learn about resident or migratory wild birds by creating a 'Bird of the Month' initiative. CIP: Please consider placing informative signs next to tee markers identifying local flora and fauna. This would enable golfers, both young children and older players, to learn more about the local natural environment.

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