



GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report Rock Golf

Prepared by independent verifier Pentti Viluksela

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2026
Recertification due: 2029

GEO Certified®

 **GEO
Foundation**
Sustainability in and through golf

“Sustainable development practices have been well incorporated into the planning and operation of the 9-hole par 3 facility. Maintained turfgrass area is minimised, and there are large areas of low or no maintenance grass meadows, kuntta (natural ground cover vegetation) and pine woodland. Resource efficiency is very high, thanks to the modern irrigation system, electrified and robotised machine fleet, heating/cooling of buildings with heat pumps and well-organized waste management. The club collaborates with other local recreation providers. I’m looking forward to seeing a habitat management plan, further advances in electrifying and robotising golf course maintenance, and active environmental and sustainability communication and engagement with the club’s present and future stakeholders.”

Pentti Viluksela
(GEO accredited independent verifier)



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Rock 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.

Rock 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, Rock Golf should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Rock 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
Director, Certification and Credibility,
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 – 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	General knowledge of the wildlife and habitats on the site	Rock Golf was built 2023–24 and opened in 2025. A thorough landscape, nature and habitat survey was done as part of the planning process. The nine-hole layout includes woodland, heathland, meadows and several small lakes. During the visit, goldeneye, swan and white-tailed eagle were observed, as well as deer and duck tracks on bunker sand.
	N1.1.2 Knowledge of legal designations for protected areas, habitats and species	Identify rare, protected or endangered species found on the golf course; Understand legal responsibilities for landscape protection and special area designations, if applicable	There are no rare, protected or endangered species nesting or growing in the area. There are flying squirrels living in the area, but none were found on site in a specific survey. CCIP: Please develop a habitat management plan to follow and support biodiversity on site.
	N1.1.3 Sound understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site, if applicable	There are no legal designations. An old house ruin with surrounding domestic plants has been preserved to increase biodiversity, as recommended by the habitat survey.
N1.2 Opportunities to naturalise the golf course	N1.2.1 Measures taken to identify and minimise the required area of managed turfgrass	Monitor patterns of play to identify underutilised areas of turfgrass	Maintained turfgrass covers 4,6 hectares of the total golf course area of 15 hectares, the rest being lakes, meadows, heathland and woodland. Maintained areas were reduced during the planning process.
N1.3 Actively create and manage habitats for wildlife	N1.3.1 Projects to create and manage habitats in the best way for wildlife and golf	Prioritise native species of varying size and structure when planting Prioritise native trees and shrubs when planting Prioritise native aquatic species of varying size and structure when planting Establish mowing buffer zones next to water bodies and wetlands	Map of the site checked. Most of the water edges are low or no maintenance and provide easy access for wildlife. There are carps in the ponds. A wooded hill in the middle of the site is in natural state with fallen trees etc. Near the 6th green, a natural rocky hillock with lichen, moss, heather etc., is marked as hazard, and playing or retrieving balls is forbidden.

N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species	Follow local best practice to protect or attract endangered, protected or rare species found on site	Highlight: Heather, blueberry and lingonberry, crowberry and mosses and are typical species of old forest ground cover, called "kuntta" in Finnish. There is about 1 hectare of kuntta on the course, supporting pollinators and birds with flowers and berries. There are plans to introduce a flower meadow to support pollinators.
N2 Turfgrass			
N2.1 Maintain optimum turfgrass and soil health	N2.1.1 Appropriate turfgrass varieties adapted to climatic and other geomorphological factors	Select appropriate grass species for the climate	Top agronomists have chosen the optimal grass species for the course, taking into account soil and climate conditions. Greens and tees are creeping bentgrass and fairways are Kentucky bluegrass and fescue. The intrusive annual bluegrass has not been encountered. IPM approach is used in course maintenance.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition	No specific international requirement, however, identify course management and agronomic activities and look for continual improvements	IPM approach is used in course maintenance. Pesticides will be used as last resort. Up to now, there have been hardly any attacks of pests.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Test and monitor soil pH; Follow legal requirements when timing fertiliser applications Ensure staff are fully qualified to use fertilisers Ensure staff use appropriate protective equipment Regularly calibrate and test applicators	Soil and pH tests are taken yearly, and the fertilisation plan is drawn up based on the test results. Biostimulants and organic fertilisers are in use. The two sprayers are new and well equipped. Protective equipment is available and in use.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Change hole locations frequently	Mowing blades are sharpened weekly. Surface moisture is removed using brushes. Hole locations are changed daily during the high season.
N2.3 Use chemicals responsibly	N2.3.1 Application of chemicals only when necessary to prevent or	Identify and track pest and disease hotspots, including sensitive areas	Up to now, there have been hardly any attacks of pests. Signs of pests and diseases are monitored continuously by staff.

	cure defined / identified turf health issues	Scout the course daily for early signs and symptoms Accurately diagnose to determine the cause of weeds, pests and diseases	Minor weed infestations have been treated by hand weeding.
	N2.3.2 Application of chemicals with full safety precautions	Use legally registered and approved products; Prefer products for the specific weed, pest or disease; Follow legal requirements; Ensure staff are fully qualified to use pesticides; Ensure staff use appropriate protective equipment; Regularly calibrate and test applicators; Dilute and dispose of leftover product on untreated areas of amenity turfgrass	Mechanical methods are prioritised in pest and disease management. There are one larger and one smaller sprayer with up-to-date technology. The sprayers are inspected every 5 years. Course manager has plant protection certificate. Protective equipment is available and in use. Leftover products are diluted and disposed of on a suitable secondary area.
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 ; Retain no-spray/no-spread buffer areas next to water bodies and wetlands; Retain no-spray/no-spread buffer zones in and around ecologically sensitive areas	Rescue plan and risk assessment confirmed. Both documents are comprehensive. A 5-metre buffer zone is maintained around water bodies. Targeted treatment is applied using a backpack sprayer.
	N3.1.2 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from clubhouse operations	Formal wastewater discharge agreement, if applicable	Wastewater is led to the sewer system of the Siuntio municipality. The clubhouse facilities are modern and very well organised.
	N3.1.3 Practical measures to ensure	Wash machinery over an impermeable, leak-free surface;	Both washing and mixing are done on impermeable surface.

	pollution risks are minimised from maintenance facility operations	Mix and load pesticides and fertilisers over an impermeable, leak-free surface; Triple rinse pesticide containers and applicators	Triple rinsing is in use; the sprayers have separate rinse water tanks. The washing bay has impermeable tarmac floor. The two halls of the maintenance facility have concrete floors.
N3.2 Safely manage hazardous substances	N3.2.1 Legal compliance in the storage, handling, application and safe disposal of all hazardous substances	List of hazardous substances, made available to authorised staff; Product and material data safety sheets; Well ventilated concrete or metal building; Impermeable, leak-free flooring; Sufficient storage capacity; Spill containment kits; Secondary containment e.g., bunds or drip trays; Emergency wash area, as per local requirements (body shower and / or eye wash station); Hazardous substances safely collected by a registered company or body ; Follow any additional legal requirements	List of hazardous substances checked. Safety data sheets are available both in the chemicals cabinet and digitally. Hazardous substances are stored adequately in lockable and ventilated metal cabinets in the maintenance facility. Emergency response is covered in the rescue plan. First aid training has been organised for the staff. First aid cabinet with eye wash bottle, fire extinguishers and absorbent material for spill containment are available. Up to now, the amount of hazardous waste fractions has been minimal. A contractor will be chosen in the future. Minor items like oil filters are taken by staff to a local recycling centre.
	N3.2.2 Legal compliance in the storage and handling of fuels and gases	Tank secured to a horizontal, flat, non-combustible surface; Secondary containment of fuel in the event of spills e.g. bunds and drip trays; Inspection of storage tank(s) at least quarterly, if required; Fire extinguisher in the immediate area	There are two up-to-date fuel containers outside the maintenance facility on impermeable tarmac surface. Both have double-walled structure. Fuel storage area is equipped with crash protection, absorbent material, fire extinguisher and appropriate signage.
N3.3 Responsibly manage waste / storm water	N3.3.1 Appropriate wastewater usage, treatment and discharge	Impermeable, leak-free surface; Treatment as per local requirements (oil, grease and / or clipping separation;	Wastewater is led to the sewer system of the Siuntio municipality. Rainwater is collected and led to the water bodies and used for irrigation.

		Formal discharge agreement, if applicable	The wash bay has tarmac surface and oil/sand/clippings separation system.
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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	Select appropriate grass species for the climate e.g., drought and disease tolerance; Target irrigation to essential playing surfaces; Prioritise native, drought tolerant species for landscaping and planting	The grass species were chosen considering climatic and soil conditions as well as winter survival. There are 360 sprinklers in the irrigation system, and these can be individually controlled to ensure targeted and efficient irrigation.
R1.2 Maximise water efficiency	R1.2.1 Practical measures to use water more efficiently on the golf course	Schedule irrigation based on informed assessment of soil moisture and weather forecasts; Evaluate new irrigation technologies e.g., central control, precision sprinklers etc.; Provide staff training on efficient irrigation practices; Adjust sprinklers to playing surfaces only	Highlight: In addition to a manual moisture meter, there are 10 online moisture sensors and a weather station providing data for the irrigation system. The system is thoroughly checked in the spring and emptied in the autumn. All greens have a water connection point to enable targeted manual irrigation. Irrigation water is filtered to prevent blockages etc.
	R1.2.2 Practical measures to use water more efficiently in buildings	Monitor and record water consumption (bills, flow meter etc.); Encourage water conservation practices amongst players and staff	Water to buildings is supplied by the municipal water utility. Water consumption in the clubhouse, maintenance facility and the on-course restroom is collected in a digital logbook. The buildings have automatic taps and waterless urinals.

R1.3 Source water responsibly	R1.3.1 Measures towards alternative, lower quality sources of water	Water abstraction permit, if required; Report water consumption to environment agency, if required	Irrigation water is taken from a nearby river and supplemented by rain/meltwater. The system is automatic and can be monitored online. Waster abstraction permit checked. There are monthly consumption limits and reporting requirements.
R2 Energy			
R2.1 Reduce energy demand	R2.1.1 Measures to reduce the amount of energy consumed in golf course maintenance	Naturalise non-playing areas to reduce mowing and other energy intensive inputs	The course design is quite efficient, and there are limited possibilities for reducing maintained area. However, the possibilities for naturalisation are observed as the course matures.
R2.2 Maximise energy efficiency	R2.2.1 Measures to use energy and fuels more efficiently in buildings	Monitor and record energy consumption (bills, meters etc.)	Electricity consumption is separately monitored online for the two irrigation water pumping stations and maintenance hall/clubhouse. CIP: Please consider installing a separate meter for the clubhouse. Lighting system used Led light bulbs and motion sensors. Most of the course maintenance machines are electric. Robotic mowers are in use. Heating/cooling of the maintenance building is done with air-to-water heat pump and the clubhouse with geothermal heat pump.
R2.3 Source energy responsibly	R2.3.1 Measures to source alternative, renewable forms of energy	Understand the energy mix of your electricity supplier; Explore possible greener energy providers	Highlight: There are 108 solar panels on the roofs of the clubhouse and the maintenance facility. The club purchases renewable electricity from the supplier Fortum.
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	No specific international requirement, however, identify activities to reduce the demand for materials and look for continual improvements	Drinking water is available on tap at the clubhouse and on the course, reducing the need for disposable water bottles. Cardboard scorecards are hardly used anymore.
R3.2 Purchase responsibly	R3.2.1 Commit to sustainable purchasing practices	Favour responsible, lower impact products	Purchasing practices include minimising packaging waste. CCIP: Please develop a sustainable procurement policy.

			The restaurant uses seasonal and locally sourced ingredients and organic and certified products.
R3.3 Reuse and recycle	R3.3.1 Waste stream separation for maximum recycling and re-use opportunity	Put in place a recycling separation system, according to local rules and availability; Clear, simple and visible bin signage; Monitor and record weight of waste for each stream e.g. invoices, bills etc.	Detailed reports of waste streams are provided online by L&T, the waste management contractor. Waste collection and sorting at the clubhouse, at the maintenance facility and on the course is very well organised. Waste bins for each fraction are well marked and placed.
R3.4 Demonstrate legal compliance	R3.4.1 Compliance with all local and regional waste management regulations	Authorised waste collector for general, hazardous, industrial and green waste, if required	Waste management regulations are followed.

COMMUNITY			
<u>C1 Health & Wellbeing</u>			
Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
C1.1 Improve health and wellbeing	C1.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities	Plans in place to respond to incidents and emergencies	Rescue plan and risk assessment confirmed. CCIP: Please install signs showing emergency assembly points, used in case of evacuation. Health services for staff are obtained from Terveystalo, a leading service provider. First aid training has been given to staff. There are adequate first aid kits including defibrillators. The back tee of hole no. 6 has been moved to eliminate the risk of stray shots to the 5th green.

C1.2 Be open and inclusive	C1.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies	Membership policies free from discrimination across age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and ethnic background	No discrimination is allowed regarding staff, members, visitors and partners.
C1.3 Employ fairly, safely and provide career opportunities	C1.3.1 Ethical and legal employment, working conditions and professional development	Adopt an equal opportunity recruitment and hiring policy; Follow all relevant legislation and best practice for hiring and employment; Follow all relevant legislation and best practice for worker safety	Course manager is responsible for induction. Job rotation is encouraged, and a list of staff competences is maintained. CIP: Please consider formalising the induction process (e.g. document with the inductee's signature) to strengthen motivation and commitment. Health and safety arrangements are in place, e.g. protective clothing, personal protection, first aid equipment. The club supports professional development of staff.
<u>C2 Outreach & Inclusion</u>			
C2.1 Diversify access and provide multifunctionality	C2.1.1 Social and recreational activities at the facility	No specific international requirement, however, identify multifunctional activities and look for continual improvements	The paths on and around the golf course are used by locals for walking, cycling etc. Club restaurant is open to all, and available for private functions.
C2.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C2.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes	No specific international requirement, however, identify activities to support volunteering and charity and look for continual improvements	A charity competition will be organised to raise funds for Naisten Pankki (Women's Bank), supporting women entrepreneurs in developing countries. The club supports a few promising junior golfers.
C2.3 Establish active community partnerships	C2.3.1 Positive and constructive engagement with neighbours, the local community and other groups	No specific international requirement, however, identify partnerships and community activities and look for continual improvements	The club has teamed up with local paddling and tennis clubs to offer a versatile activity package for company outings etc. Housing development in the form of Housing Fair will take place in the area surrounding the golf course in 2027. The club aims to become a central point of the future Rock Resort.
<u>C3 Communications & Advocacy</u>			
C3.1 Engage staff and golfers	C3.1.1 Communications activities that raise awareness and	Involve staff and committees in sustainability efforts;	Environmental and sustainability issues are included in the work of the Advisory Board, which include members outside the golf facility.

	understanding amongst members and visitors	Involve golfers in sustainability efforts; Post sustainability information in the clubhouse and / or on the golf course	Environmental and sustainability content has been published on the club website and in social media. CCIP: Please expand environmental and sustainability communication and dialogue to members, visitors and other stakeholders, using suitable communication channels.
C3.2 Celebrate and promote sustainability	C3.2.1 Activities that raise awareness and engage people in the wider community	Share at least 3 Highlights on sustainable.golf	Three highlights have been published. Additional highlights could include energy efficiency in buildings, electric vehicles charging, efficient irrigation and electrical/robotic course maintenance.
C3.3 Follow a journey of continuous improvement	C3.3.1 Measures to help track, review and improve sustainability and climate action	Put measures in place to ensure that OnCourse can be updated annually	Course manager is responsible for collecting records to OnCourse, supported by the managing director.

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

