



**GEO Certified®**

# **GEO Certified® Report Golf Gonten AG**

Prepared by independent verifier Ludwig Gloecklhofer

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2025  
Recertification due: 2028

*“Golf Gonten is a well-integrated facility within the sensitive Appenzeller peatland landscape. The course demonstrates professional turf management, targeted use of inputs, and strong measures for habitat conservation, including exemplary skylark protection. Naturalisation, rainwater harvesting, and renewable energy projects highlight a clear commitment to resource efficiency. The facility is open and inclusive, providing year-round value for the community with walking paths, winter cross-country trails, and charity events. Looking ahead, I see great opportunities to further strengthen sustainability by updating the habitat map, expanding biodiversity monitoring and promoting these achievements more widely through community partnerships and communications.”*

**Ludwig Gloecklhofer**

**(GEO accredited independent verifier)**



# Introduction

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GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Golf Gonten AG 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.

Golf Gonten AG 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, Golf Gonten AG should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Golf Gonten AG 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

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## 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](http://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](http://www.isealliance.org)



## Verifier's Report

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

| THEMES    | ACTION AREAS                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nature    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Habitats &amp; Biodiversity</li><li>• Turfgrass management</li><li>• Pollution prevention</li></ul>              |
| Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Water</li><li>• Energy</li><li>• Materials</li></ul>                                                             |
| Community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partnerships &amp; Outreach</li><li>• Golfing &amp; Employment</li><li>• Advocacy &amp; Communications</li></ul> |

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                                                                                                                                     | <p>The course has good baseline documentation (2012) and robust independent monitoring (2022). However, the habitat map is outdated and does not reflect current species distribution.</p> <p><b>CCIP: Please update the biodiversity and habitat map to reflect current conditions and species distribution.</b></p> <p><b>CCIP: Please engage an external ecological specialist or local NGO to support the development of a revised habitat management plan, including a comprehensive flora and fauna inventory. Try to have this in place during 2026.</b></p> |
|                                                  | N1.1.2 Knowledge of legal designations for protected areas, habitats and species      | <p>Identify rare, protected or endangered species found on the golf course;</p> <p>Understand legal responsibilities for landscape protection and special area designations, if applicable</p> | <p>Strong commitment to skylark conservation is evident and well documented. These efforts have been communicated as sustainability Highlights. However, systematic monitoring of other species groups (amphibians, pollinators, wetland fauna) is not yet in place.</p> <p><b>CCIP: As per N1.1.1 above, please commission an external biodiversity survey in 2026 to establish a comprehensive inventory of flora and fauna, supporting a long-term ecological monitoring programme.</b></p>                                                                      |
|                                                  | N1.1.3 Sound understanding and respect for cultural heritage                          | Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site, if applicable                                                                                                     | <b>Highlight: Part of the golf course lies within a former peat extraction area. Near holes 13 and 14, two historic buildings remain, including a museum that documents the history of peat cutting. The museum is open to the public and freely accessible.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 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                                                                                                                          | <p>The golf carts are equipped with GPS trackers, allowing their movements to be monitored.</p> <p><b>CIP: Please analyse GPS data to identify areas that are underused and could be naturalised.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

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|                                                              |                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>CIP: Please consider introducing GPS trackers for walking golfers to ensure a complete dataset and identify further underutilised areas for naturalisation.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>N1.3 Actively create and manage habitats for wildlife</b> | <b>N1.3.1 Projects to create and manage habitats in the best way for wildlife and golf</b>           | <p>Prioritise native species of varying size and structure when planting</p> <p>Prioritise native trees and shrubs when planting</p> <p>Prioritise native aquatic species of varying size and structure when planting</p> <p>Establish mowing buffer zones next to water bodies and wetlands</p> | <p>Habitat creation and maintenance are systematic and evidence-based. However, the management plan is outdated and does not integrate recent monitoring data.</p> <p><b>CCIP: As per N1.1.1, please involve an external ecological specialist or NGO in the development of a revised management plan and long-term monitoring.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>N1.4 Conserve key species</b>                             | <b>N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species</b>                                   | <p>Follow local best practice to protect or attract endangered, protected or rare species found on site</p>                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p>Strong commitment to skylark conservation is evident and well recognised in Sustainable Golf communications. Other potential key species (amphibians, pollinators, wetland birds) are not systematically monitored. A more structured approach would demonstrate broader ecological responsibility.</p> <p><b>Highlight: Sensitive out-of-bounds zones are clearly marked, access is prohibited, and GPS-controlled carts automatically stop at the boundary.</b></p> <p><b>CCIP: As per N1.1.1, please expand monitoring to include amphibians, bats, and pollinators.</b></p> |
| <b>N2 Turfgrass</b>                                          |                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>N2.1 Maintain optimum turfgrass and soil health</b>       | <b>N2.1.1 Appropriate turfgrass varieties adapted to climatic and other geomorphological factors</b> | <p>Select appropriate grass species for the climate</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>Practices are professional and data-driven, ensuring high-quality playing surfaces while controlling nutrient inputs. Integration of soil test results is positive. However, systematic performance indicators (e.g. infiltration, thatch) are not yet tracked.</p> <p><b>CIP: Please introduce regular measurement of turf performance indicators (infiltration, thatch) and record results annually to support data-driven decision-making.</b></p>                                                                                                                           |
|                                                              | <b>N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition</b>                                | <p>No specific international requirement, however, identify course management and agronomic activities and look for continual improvements</p>                                                                                                                                                   | <p>Preventive measures to minimise leaching are in place, particularly important due to proximity to the moorland.</p> <p><b>CIP: Please try to use products that enhance the rhizobiome and natural plant health.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

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|                                               |                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>CIP: Please try to develop a long-term programme by 2026 to progressively reduce reliance on mineral fertilisers in favour of organic and biological products.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                               | <b>N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation</b>          | <p>Test and monitor soil pH;</p> <p>Follow legal requirements when timing fertiliser applications</p> <p>Ensure staff are fully qualified to use fertilisers</p> <p>Ensure staff use appropriate protective equipment</p> <p>Regularly calibrate and test applicators</p> | <p>Routine soil and nutrient analyses underpin data-driven fertilisation and turf management.</p> <p>Fertiliser application and timing comply with Swiss regulations.</p> <p>Two Staff Members are qualified and equipped with appropriate protective gear for fertiliser use.</p> <p>The GPS field sprayer is regularly calibrated and tested.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance</b> | <b>N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management</b>                                                          | <p>Sharpen mowing blades;</p> <p>Remove surface moisture;</p> <p>Change hole locations frequently</p>                                                                                                                                                                     | <p>Golf Gonten operates its own blade sharpening machine, ensuring mower blades are maintained to a high standard.</p> <p>Surface moisture is regularly removed to maintain turf quality and playability.</p> <p>Hole locations are rotated frequently to distribute wear and maintain turf quality.</p> <p>Soil cultivation practices, including aerification or topdressing, are implemented to preserve soil structure and promote long-term turf and plant health.</p>                                                                                                            |
| <b>N2.3 Use chemicals responsibly</b>         | <b>N2.3.1 Application of chemicals only when necessary to prevent or cure defined / identified turf health issues</b> | <p>Identify and track pest and disease hotspots, including sensitive areas</p> <p>Scout the course daily for early signs and symptoms</p> <p>Accurately diagnose to determine the cause of weeds, pests and diseases</p>                                                  | <p>Intensive turfgrass is primarily affected by fungal diseases such as <i>Microdochium nivale</i> and <i>Sclerotinia homoeocarpa</i>. Insect damage is less prominent but chafer grubs can occasionally present challenges.</p> <p>Greens and approaches are monitored through daily inspections and seasonal records to identify recurring disease hotspots.</p> <p><b>CIP: Please develop a comprehensive Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programme by 2026, reducing fungicide reliance through increased use of biostimulants and resistant turf varieties (see N2.1.2)</b></p> |
|                                               | <b>N2.3.2 Application of chemicals with full safety precautions</b>                                                   | Use legally registered and approved products;                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | All pesticides applied at Golf Gonten are legally registered and approved in Switzerland.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

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|                                                      |                                                                                                      | <p>Prefer products for the specific weed, pest or disease;</p> <p>Follow legal requirements;</p> <p>Ensure staff are fully qualified to use pesticides;</p> <p>Ensure staff use appropriate protective equipment;</p> <p>Regularly calibrate and test applicators;</p> <p>Dilute and dispose of leftover product on untreated areas of amenity turfgrass</p> | <p>Two trained staff members are licensed to apply pesticides and are equipped with appropriate protective gear.</p> <p>Application machine with GPS field sprayer, is regularly calibrated and tested to ensure accuracy and minimise drift.</p> <p>Any leftover spray solution is diluted and applied on designated untreated turfgrass areas, in line with environmental best practice.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>N3 Pollution Prevention</b>                       |                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>N3.1 Prevent pollution across the entire site</b> | <b>N3.1.1 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from golf course operations</b> | <p>Document procedures for emergency spill responses ;</p> <p>Retain no-spray/no-spread buffer areas next to water bodies and wetlands;</p> <p>Retain no-spray/no-spread buffer zones in and around ecologically sensitive areas</p>                                                                                                                         | <p>A documented emergency spill response plan is in place and regularly reviewed.</p> <p>Buffer zones and no-spray areas comply with the legal minimum distances from water bodies. With numerous ponds and streams present across the course, maintaining and strengthening these buffers is essential to avoid any pesticide or fertiliser runoff into the adjacent sensitive moorland.</p> <p><b>CCIP: Please mark protective buffer zones in a map.</b></p> <p><b>CCIP: Please try to conduct regular water testing of ponds, ditches, and streams to detect potential contamination at an early stage and ensure protection of the adjacent moorland.</b></p> |
|                                                      | <b>N3.1.2 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from clubhouse operations</b>   | <p>Formal wastewater discharge agreement, if applicable</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <p>Wastewater and hazardous substances from the Clubhouse are managed in accordance with Swiss law.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                                      | <b>N3.1.3 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from</b>                        | <p>Wash machinery over an impermeable, leak-free surface;</p> <p>Mix and load pesticides and fertilisers over an impermeable, leak-free surface;</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <p>Machinery washing, mixing/loading, and container management take place on impermeable surfaces, fully compliant with Swiss law and presenting no pollution risks.</p> <p>A cantonal inspection by the authorities has not yet been carried out.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

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|                                                    | <b>maintenance facility operations</b>                                                                             | Triple rinse pesticide containers and applicators                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>N3.2 Safely manage hazardous substances</b>     | <b>N3.2.1 Legal compliance in the storage, handling, application and safe disposal of all hazardous substances</b> | <p>List of hazardous substances, made available to authorised staff;</p> <p>Product and material data safety sheets;</p> <p>Well ventilated concrete or metal building;</p> <p>Impermeable, leak-free flooring;</p> <p>Sufficient storage capacity;</p> <p>Spill containment kits;</p> <p>Secondary containment e.g., bunds or drip trays;</p> <p>Emergency wash area, as per local requirements (body shower and / or eye wash station);</p> <p>Hazardous substances safely collected by a registered company or body ;</p> <p>Follow any additional legal requirements</p> | <p>A register of hazardous materials is maintained and available to authorised staff as well as government authorities.</p> <p>All hazardous substances are stored in a well-ventilated concrete building with impermeable flooring, secondary containment, and sufficient storage capacity.</p> <p>Spill kits and an emergency wash station are in place.</p> <p>Hazardous waste is collected by a licensed contractor in compliance with Swiss law.</p> <p>Emergency response and first aid procedures are documented, and staff are trained accordingly.</p> <p>All key infrastructure and documentation were observed and found to be fully compliant.</p> |
|                                                    | <b>N3.2.2 Legal compliance in the storage and handling of fuels and gases</b>                                      | <p>Tank secured to a horizontal, flat, non-combustible surface;</p> <p>Secondary containment of fuel in the event of spills e.g. bunds and drip trays;</p> <p>Inspection of storage tank(s) at least quarterly, if required;</p> <p>Fire extinguisher in the immediate area</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>Fuel tanks are secured on flat, non-combustible surfaces with appropriate secondary containment (bunds/drip trays).</p> <p>Tanks are inspected regularly in line with legal requirements, and infrastructure was observed to be in good condition.</p> <p>Hazardous fuel is managed in compliance with Swiss law and collected by licensed contractors.</p> <p>Fire extinguishers are available in the immediate vicinity, ensuring compliance with safety requirements.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>N3.3 Responsibly manage waste / storm water</b> | <b>N3.3.1 Appropriate wastewater usage, treatment and discharge</b>                                                | <p>Impermeable, leak-free surface;</p> <p>Treatment as per local requirements (oil, grease and / or clipping separation;</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <p>Wastewater discharge is managed in compliance with Swiss law.</p> <p>The wash bay has an impermeable surface and is equipped with oil and clipping separation.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

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|  |  | Formal discharge agreement, if applicable |  |
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## RESOURCES

### R1 Water

| Objectives                            | Requirements                                                                      | Mandatory Practices                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Verifier Notes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| <b>R1.1 Minimise water demand</b>     | <b>R1.1.1 Measures to reduce the need to consume water</b>                        | <p>Select appropriate grass species for the climate e.g., drought and disease tolerance;</p> <p>Target irrigation to essential playing surfaces;</p> <p>Prioritise native, drought tolerant species for landscaping and planting</p>                                                                             | <p>Turfgrass species have been selected to suit the local climate, with priority given to drought and disease-tolerant varieties.</p> <p>Automatic irrigation infrastructure is limited to greens and tees, reducing overall water demand.</p> <p>Landscaping is carried out exclusively with native, drought-tolerant species to support water efficiency and ecological value.</p> <p><b>CIP: Please install a rain sensor or automatic shut-off for the irrigation system.</b></p> |
| <b>R1.2 Maximise water efficiency</b> | <b>R1.2.1 Practical measures to use water more efficiently on the golf course</b> | <p>Schedule irrigation based on informed assessment of soil moisture and weather forecasts;</p> <p>Evaluate new irrigation technologies e.g., central control, precision sprinklers etc.;</p> <p>Provide staff training on efficient irrigation practices;</p> <p>Adjust sprinklers to playing surfaces only</p> | <p>Irrigation is scheduled according to soil moisture conditions and weather forecasts, with adjustments limited to essential playing surfaces.</p> <p>Sprinklers are aligned carefully to playing surfaces.</p> <p>Staff are trained in efficient irrigation practices.</p> <p>System maintenance is carried out regularly.</p>                                                                                                                                                      |
|                                       | <b>R1.2.2 Practical measures to use water more efficiently in buildings</b>       | <p>Monitor and record water consumption (bills, flow meter etc.);</p> <p>Encourage water conservation practices amongst players and staff</p>                                                                                                                                                                    | <p>Water consumption is monitored through utility bills, and staff are encouraged to follow conservation practices. Records are maintained to track usage and ensure efficiency.</p> <p><b>CIP: Please introduce awareness measures such as signs, noticeboards, or staff/player communication to encourage water conservation in clubhouse facilities.</b></p>                                                                                                                       |

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| <b>R1.3 Source water responsibly</b>   | <b>R1.3.1 Measures towards alternative, lower quality sources of water</b>                                                                       | Water abstraction permit, if required;<br><br>Report water consumption to environment agency, if required                                  | Rainwater is harvested and stored in two silos at the greenkeeping facility.<br><br>Legal use agreements are in place.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>R2 Energy</b>                       |                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>R2.1 Reduce energy demand</b>       | <b>R2.1.1 Measures to reduce the amount of energy consumed in golf course maintenance</b>                                                        | Naturalise non-playing areas to reduce mowing and other energy intensive inputs                                                            | Non-playing areas have been naturalised to reduce mowing and other energy-intensive inputs. Additional areas with potential for further naturalisation were observed.<br><br><b>CIP: Please collaborate with the local nature conservation NGO (Pro Natura) to optimise naturalisation efforts. Include potential additional use of GPS data, as per N1.2.</b> |
| <b>R2.2 Maximise energy efficiency</b> | <b>R2.2.1 Measures to use energy and fuels more efficiently in buildings</b>                                                                     | Monitor and record energy consumption (bills, meters etc.)                                                                                 | Energy use is monitored via utility bills. Staff are encouraged to conserve energy. Appliances are modern.<br><br><b>CIP: Please conduct an energy audit and /or install smart meters.</b>                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>R2.3 Source energy responsibly</b>  | <b>R2.3.1 Measures to source alternative, renewable forms of energy</b>                                                                          | Understand the energy mix of your electricity supplier;<br><br>Explore possible greener energy providers                                   | The facility operates a photovoltaic system to generate renewable electricity and is currently planning a district heating project in cooperation with a neighbouring farmer.<br><br><b>Highlight: Planned district heating project shows proactive commitment to renewable energy.</b>                                                                        |
| <b>R3 Materials</b>                    |                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>R3.1 Reduce materials demand</b>    | <b>R3.1.1 Products and materials selection based on necessity, including opportunities for recycled, reused and locally sourced alternatives</b> | No specific international requirement, however, identify activities to reduce the demand for materials and look for continual improvements | Materials are procured based on necessity with stock control. Local and recycled products are considered.<br><br>Material consumption is efficient but not systematically reviewed.<br><br><b>CIP: Please introduce an annual review of material consumption.</b>                                                                                              |
| <b>R3.2 Purchase responsibly</b>       | <b>R3.2.1 Commit to sustainable purchasing practices</b>                                                                                         | Favour responsible, lower impact products                                                                                                  | Purchasing already shows positive elements, such as the use of local food produces and the construction of all buildings by local contractors. However, there is scope for improvement in developing a structured sustainable procurement approach.                                                                                                            |

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|                                          |                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>CCIP: Please establish a formal sustainable procurement policy, potentially driven by an internal sustainability working group, to review procurement practices and identify areas for improvement.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>R3.3 Reuse and recycle</b>            | <b>R3.3.1 Waste stream separation for maximum recycling and re-use opportunity</b> | <p>Put in place a recycling separation system, according to local rules and availability;</p> <p>Clear, simple and visible bin signage;</p> <p>Monitor and record weight of waste for each stream e.g. invoices, bills etc.</p> | <p>Waste separation bins are clearly marked and available throughout the facility, ensuring compliance with local rules. Quantities of restaurant waste and organic material sent to composting are not systematically recorded.</p> <p><b>CCIP: Please introduce systematic recording of waste volumes for each stream, including restaurant and organic waste, to support monitoring and reduction efforts.</b></p> |
| <b>R3.4 Demonstrate legal compliance</b> | <b>R3.4.1 Compliance with all local and regional waste management regulations</b>  | Authorised waste collector for general, hazardous, industrial and green waste, if required                                                                                                                                      | All waste streams are managed in accordance with Swiss regulations, using licensed collectors for general, hazardous, industrial and green waste.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

| <b>COMMUNITY</b>                         |                                                                                              |                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| <b><u>C1 Health &amp; Wellbeing</u></b>  |                                                                                              |                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Objectives</b>                        | <b>Requirements</b>                                                                          | <b>Mandatory Practices</b>                                                                                           | <b>Verifier Notes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>C1.1 Improve health and wellbeing</b> | <b>C1.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities</b> | Plans in place to respond to incidents and emergencies                                                               | <p>Health and safety policies are in place, supported by risk assessments.</p> <p>The golf school provides team-building events accessible to all.</p> <p>The club actively supports and promotes junior players.</p> |
| <b>C1.2 Be open and inclusive</b>        | <b>C1.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies</b>                   | Membership policies free from discrimination across age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and ethnic background | The course is open and inclusive, offering year-round recreational value for the community.                                                                                                                           |

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| <b>C1.3 Employ fairly, safely and provide career opportunities</b> | <b>C1.3.1 Ethical and legal employment, working conditions and professional development</b>              | <p>Adopt an equal opportunity recruitment and hiring policy;</p> <p>Follow all relevant legislation and best practice for hiring and employment;</p> <p>Follow all relevant legislation and best practice for worker safety</p> | <p>Employment practices follow all relevant Swiss legislation, with equal opportunity recruitment and fair working conditions. Staff are provided with appropriate protective equipment and a safe working environment. Training and professional development opportunities are available to support staff in their roles.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b><u>C2 Outreach &amp; Inclusion</u></b>                          |                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>C2.1 Diversify access and provide multifunctionality</b>        | <b>C2.1.1 Social and recreational activities at the facility</b>                                         | <p>No specific international requirement, however, identify multifunctional activities and look for continual improvements</p>                                                                                                  | <p>The facility is open and integrated into the local landscape, with public path (Barfussweg) crossing the course.</p> <p>It provides year-round recreational value for the community, especially in winter when a cross-country ski trail runs across the course.</p> <p>The clubhouse restaurant is open for everybody and a popular stop for hikers and cyclists.</p> <p>The clubhouse provides event spaces and guest accommodation, which are available for both community use and private bookings.</p> |
| <b>C2.2 Provide for volunteering and charity</b>                   | <b>C2.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes</b>          | <p>No specific international requirement, however, identify activities to support volunteering and charity and look for continual improvements</p>                                                                              | <p>At least one charity event is held each year, with the funds donated to charitable organisations. In 2024, the proceeds supported the Hospice Service of Appenzell Innerrhoden and Ausserrhoden.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>C2.3 Establish active community partnerships</b>                | <b>C2.3.1 Positive and constructive engagement with neighbours, the local community and other groups</b> | <p>No specific international requirement, however, identify partnerships and community activities and look for continual improvements</p>                                                                                       | <p>Because the golf course is located on a former peat-cutting site, there is a public museum documenting the history of the area.</p> <p>The course is a member of Appenzellerland Regionalmarketing AG, supporting local products and crafts. However, no active partnership exists with the museum or community NGOs.</p> <p><b>CIP: Please establish partnerships with local NGOs (Pro Natura, schools, history clubs).</b></p>                                                                            |
| <b>C3 Communications &amp; Advocacy</b>                            |                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

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| <b>C3.1 Engage staff and golfers</b>                   | <b>C3.1.1 Communications activities that raise awareness and understanding amongst members and visitors</b> | <p>Involve staff and committees in sustainability efforts;</p> <p>Involve golfers in sustainability efforts;</p> <p>Post sustainability information in the clubhouse and / or on the golf course</p> | <p>Course information is shared on a blackboard and digital screen in the clubhouse. A digital club magazine ("The Green – News des Golfclub Appenzell") is published. Sustainability information is not yet systematically included.</p> <p><b>CCIP: Please establish a sustainability communication plan across the website, magazine and social media.</b></p> |
| <b>C3.2 Celebrate and promote sustainability</b>       | <b>C3.2.1 Activities that raise awareness and engage people in the wider community</b>                      | Share at least 3 Highlights on sustainable.golf                                                                                                                                                      | The facility has strong sustainable stories but lacks systematic promotion. Examples of potential Highlights include skylark conservation, peatland protection, renewable energy initiatives, community access in winter, etc..                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>C3.3 Follow a journey of continuous improvement</b> | <b>C3.3.1 Measures to help track, review and improve sustainability and climate action</b>                  | Put measures in place to ensure that OnCourse can be updated annually                                                                                                                                | <b>CCIP: Please establish a sustainability working group to coordinate and advance sustainability efforts and communications.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

## 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](http://www.sustainable.golf)