



GEO Certified® Report Koninklijke Haagsche Golf & Country Club

Prepared by independent verifier Paul van Kan

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2025
Recertification due: 2030

“As the oldest golf club in the Netherlands (1893), the Royal Hague Golf & Country Club ranks among the most sustainable golf clubs in the Netherlands. De Haagsche has been certified since 2010. GEO is in good hands with the Terrain and Nature Committee (former CtG committee), which includes manager, head greenkeeper and professional members. Compliments for the excellent preparation and arrangement of documents.

There is a strong guarantee through contacts with external professionals, experts in the field of sustainable golf, the local community and nature organisations. Many successes can be mentioned, but the most striking are the professional inventories of all species groups, including an area-wide vegetation mapping, and the strong reduction in energy consumption in recent years. The points for improvement from the previous audit have been tackled energetically. For example, work has been done on broadening external communication, fossil-free energy production on-site and a conscious purchasing policy. The growing number of volunteers involved is also seen as very positive.

I wish the Haagsche every success with the further (green) plans, such as the major metamorphosis that awaits the forecourt. 'The golfer is a guest in nature' is always your wonderful guideline.

Paul van Kan
(GEO accredited independent verifier)



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Koninklijke Haagsche Golf & Country Club 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.

Koninklijke Haagsche Golf & Country Club 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, Koninklijke Haagsche Golf & Country Club should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Koninklijke Haagsche Golf & Country Club 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, 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	The golf course is located entirely within a dune landscape with high parabolic dunes; dynamism is the main engine of the ecosystem and is maintained.

			Biodiversity is very well known for almost all species groups. Unique is the long-term bird monitoring from 1958 (archived at SOVON). Mushrooms and moths ongoing (archived at waarneming.nl). Flora and vegetation mapping 2021-22 (update in 2028).
	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	Ecological Work Protocol (2019) with update of legislation (2025). Tree safety study (2025) external VTA: all trees and edge trees documented with corresponding advice; especially old beech trees appear to be vulnerable (part replaced by large size). Annual inspection and maintenance round in-house.
	N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site	Estate status, meets the conditions of the Nature Conservation Act; golf course and architectural elements with historical added value. Other heritage: historic avenues, sightlines, oak ovens. Paths from Latexfalt with a natural look, partly converted into grass.
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	Future vision with regard to the transformation of the golf course has been implemented and thus completed. Preservation and restoration of the dune landscape (with dynamics) is the starting point. Compaction with grass, bush and thickets is prevented. Promising nature (open sand and sparse dune grassland) is being developed; maximum connection to the surrounding dune landscape.
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	Nature management plan (update 2025-30) as a guideline, based on zoning and sub-areas with unique characteristics and management tailored to them. Most important measures: grazing by sheep herd and year-round cattle, sodging of rough areas, sinus mowing, selective felling and control of exotic species. Impoverishment plan (from 2018) in collaboration with ecologist, annual update and fine-tuning.

N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species		A lot of attention to indicator species, including 5 amphibians/reptiles; species-appropriate measures: openings in shed for barn swallows, sandy areas for sand lizard, branch rills (provided they fit into the landscape), nesting boxes (35 for tawny owl, kestrel, starling, house martin); healthy population of roe deer under hunting management; rabbit strongly decreased (<150) and not hunted.
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	Target image with Festuca and Agrostis on green and rough; on fairway mainly agrostis and poa pratensis; agrostis appears to be vulnerable to diseases; the goal is Poa Annua at a maximum of 15% (overseeding with Festuca, at the right time).
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		Calcareous dune soils in fine sand as an (original) basis; above that, clayey top layer to retain water; Sanding necessary for water drainage and rooting; (sand with a grain of 300 mu, matched to natural substrate). Analysis of soil samples (external consultant), showing trends compared to baseline measurement.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	Based on soil samples, an annual fertilization plan is made. Preferred liquid fertiliser (more dosable); local fertiliser in solid form because of less chance of leaching; P dose is low (sufficiently present in soil); N dose is medium (in accordance with recommended dosage); K gift on fairway high (250 kg).
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding	Weed control on pavement by means of weedmaster and manual maintenance; greens are manually weeded for clover. On track: combination of weeding, sticking out (help volunteers). Prevention of mold: use of iron sulfate, sharp blades, robotic lawnmowers reduce worm casing.
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;	Golf course is located entirely within the water extraction area and is therefore subject to conditions. Round up is no longer used, Dicophar very selectively (touch). CIP: Please continue the phasing out of chemical control through

		Establish pest and disease thresholds	the use of prevention, biological measures and chemical-free techniques. Ensure registered disposal of disused chemicals.
	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 .	Environmental management plan (update 2025-30) as a guideline.
N3 Pollution Prevention			
N3.1 Prevent pollution across the entire site	N3.1.1 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from golf course operations	Document procedures for emergency spill responses; Maintain mowing buffer zones around water and all ecologically sensitive areas; Maintain spraying and spreading buffer zones around water and all ecologically sensitive areas; Create a map / aerial visual reproduction, drawing etc of the course showing buffer zones and no-spray, no-spread areas.	Environmental management plan (update 2025-30) as a guideline; use of biodegradable lubricants. Water elements are missing and therefore no buffer zones; fertilization at a distance from nature zones.
	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	Environmental management plan (2025-30) as a guideline. Oil and grease separator before wastewater goes into sewer. Cleaning company certified, non-environmentally harmful agents.
	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	Environmental management plan (2025-30) as a guideline. Floors, workshop and storage are liquid-tight; laundry room with liquid-tight floor during renovation (2016). Last inspection in 2022; drainage of rinse water via sump for grass and fats/oils (certified emptying); leachate from the bucket of clippings and prunings goes through the collection gutter and sump to the sewer. Certification and inspection evidence of tank and impermeable floors on OnCourse Documents Library.

			CCIP: Please check environmentally sensitive points (floors and especially seams, storage, procedures and resources in the event of incidents) at least annually. Continue to archive a report of this.
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	Closed, ventilated (certified) cabinets for hazardous substances. Diesel tank is inside, protected against collisions. Last inspection in 2023; gasoline in very small quantities (in leak-proof plastic containers of 10 and 20 liters). Waste oils and fats stored in containers in a steel drip tray that is in turn in a concrete container (1x /year disposed of by an authorized waste processor).
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)	All wastewater from buildings and sanitary facilities on the runway (2 locations) connected to sewer, via wells. Wastewater agreements in place. Redevelopment of parking falls within water extraction area, applicable environmental rules are binding.

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	irrigation with groundwater. Water consumption for sandy soils on average. The target is < 50,000 m3 in extremely dry years, <24,000 m3 in wet years. During extreme drought, drought-sensitive parts of the fairway are irrigated manually.

			CIP: Please explore the further reduction of (ground) water consumption, taking into account the ban expected in the future in extremely dry years.
R1.2 Maximise water efficiency	R1.2.1 Practical measures to use water more efficiently on the golf course	Conduct regular irrigation performance checks; Provide staff training on efficient irrigation practices; Ensure effective application of water to target areas; Ensure irrigation schedules are informed by weather patterns and soil moisture analysis	Irrigation controlled by new irrigation computer; entirely by means of sector nozzles. Irrigation in the evening and morning.
	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	Consumption of energy clubhouse on average. Borders around clubhouse with groundwater; machines with groundwater and air.
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	There are no alternatives (surface water is missing)
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	Diesel and petrol: 40% less consumption due to electrification of machinery. Fairway in autumn and winter with robotic lawnmowers, ditch mowers; maintenance and replacement of blades in-house; no transport machines required. Water pumped up with two renewed (economical) pumps.
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	Steady decrease in gas and electricity consumption. 30% reduction in gas consumption, including by replacing boiler with instantaneous water heaters and central heating control; three gas-fired high-efficiency boilers in a cascade, which respond to the temperature of the outside air by means of an advanced measuring system.

			Electric air conditioning heats the golf shop. Hybrid heat pumps changing rooms (as a pilot for future heating of the clubhouse). LED lighting, equipped with sensors and timers. Ventilation system with heat recovery. Cooling and freezing installations in the basement.
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	Since 2007 purchasing green electricity. Solar panels at 3 locations (bag shed, machine shed, golf school), 149 pieces; Share of electric equipment is growing: brush cutters, leaf blowers, robotic lawnmowers, fairway and green mowers (direct charging during the day with their own power solar panels). Charging points for electric vehicles included in car park redevelopment.
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	Committee members are closely involved in developments in the field of sustainability. Procurement protocol (2025) to check suppliers for sustainability. CIP: The extraction and transport of sand for drainage and aeration of the clay-rich top layer has a major impact (20 trucks per year). Please develop policies to reduce this demand in the future.
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	Procurement protocol (2025) to check suppliers for sustainability; catering leased to an entrepreneur (since 2019), is open to sustainable business operations. Daily contact, follows club policy; preference for local suppliers. CIP: Please motivate hospitality entrepreneurs in the transition to organic and/or fair trade as much as possible. This is not an easy

			process, but it will have a major impact. This process can be driven by promoting awareness among members.
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	Overview of the various waste streams available. Separate collection: paper and cardboard, plastic, glass, residual waste, waste oils and fats, iron, pruning waste, grass clippings, mixed sand and soil. In a central location is a container for plastic waste. Waste bins on holes limited. Clippings and pruning waste to the municipality's composting plant. Correct recycling separation system CIP: Please pay more attention to waste. Start with a waste audit: register waste flows, follow developments and implement measures to separate as much as possible and produce minimum waste. Respond to social awareness, trends and developments.
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	Certified waste management companies. Concrete bins for storage of clippings and pruning waste, soil and other materials.

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		There are no opportunities for walking or cycling (due to safety and lack of connections with the environment); tennis court and jeu de boules court available.

C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		About 235 volunteers involved, including winter work day (Bosgroep), weed control, nest box management, turf. Broad support for charities.
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'	GEO is in the hands of the Terrain and Nature Committee (former CtG committee), in which manager, head greenkeeper and professional members. Structural consultation on sustainability at dune course consultation, triptych of regional courses, Sustainable Golf and University of Wageningen. Close cooperation with adjacent drinking water company and Meijendel nature reserve. In consultation with neighbours, an integrated plan for the forecourt will be drawn up, together with the province (NNN), architect and ecologists, whereby the entrance, driving range and parking will be redesigned, within the requirements of environmental legislation and nature legislation.
C2 Golfers & Employees			
C2.1 Improve health and wellbeing	C2.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities		Professional and very solid emergency plan (2025-30). The following are discussed: evacuation plan, escape routes, accessibility of emergency services, speed of action, accidents, fire, acute medical assistance and emergency response test. Feedback in the event of incidents is anchored through the board.
C2.2 Be open and inclusive	C2.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies	Demonstrate inclusive policies for members and visitors	Member base inclusive, with a healthy structure in which all ages are represented. Committee for twenty-somethings and junior masterclasses. Committee new members.
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	Safe working environment through emergency plan, emergency response teams and AED. More than sufficient further training.

			Hospitality training company.
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	Excellent developed communication plan (2019) update in preparation. Bosgroep (20 volunteers) helps with maintenance and is involved in nature on the course. Winter Work Day (large group of members supports Bosgroep and greenkeeping). Members constantly informed about developments (awareness, acceptance). Growing number of participants in nature education and volunteer activities. Newsletter 2-weekly + insta more focused on young people.
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	Excellent developed communication plan (2019) update in preparation. Bird counting day led by a professional, preceded by a lecture (average of 50 participants). Communication stakeholders. Extra impulse in recent years (including the municipality of Wassenaar). Communication about the redevelopment of the forecourt

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