



GEO Certified® Report

Iberostar Bávaro Golf Club

Prepared by independent verifier: Craig Dewey

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2024
Recertification due: 2027

“Sustainability runs deep at the Iberostar Bávaro Golf Club and is also embraced by the 5 surrounding Iberostar Bávaro resorts. The resort, including the golf course, has eliminated single use plastics, installed a solar farm that includes expansion plans, established a recycling centre (Green Point) with the goal of zero emission to landfills, and was named the Dominican Republic’s best golf course two years running. Sustainability audits are performed every 2 years with action plans by the Director of Sustainability and team. The team at Iberostar should take great pride in what has already been accomplished and future plans and targets. True environmental leaders and stewards.

An additional highlight that is not directly related to the golf operations but supported by golf operations is the Coral Lab location directly on the beach. Coral Lab has three main pillars:

- 1. The education of clients to the dangerous situation that is facing coral reefs*
- 2. Experimentation and research of corals thermal tolerance*
- 3. Restoration of the local coral reefs”*

*Craig Dewey
(GEO accredited independent verifier)*



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Iberostar Bávaro Golf 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.

Iberostar Bávaro Golf 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, Iberostar Bávaro Golf Club should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Iberostar Bávaro Golf 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
Manager, Data and Reporting, GEO
Certification Ltd.



Verification and Certification

Verification

The official third-party audit was carried out by an independent verifier, accredited by GEO to undertake verifications of golf facilities applying for certification.

Verification involves reviewing practices and data, using the International Voluntary Standard for Sustainable Golf Operations as the guide to ensure comprehensive and consistent evaluation of performance. A detailed verification report is submitted for evaluation by GEO Certification Ltd, a subsidiary of GEO Foundation.

Certification

GEO Certification Ltd, an autonomous subsidiary of GEO Foundation [both not-for-profit entities], undertook a full review of all content submitted through the OnCourse® online platform and the report submitted by the verifier, ensuring:

- Comprehensiveness – that activities undertaken touched on all elements of the Standard
- Consistency – that the verification approach was balanced, well weighted and with consistent depth of evaluation across each theme
- Accuracy - matching the verification report with evidence submitted by the golf facility to ensure statements and claims were accurate

GEO Foundation is an international not-for-profit founded to advocate, support and reward sustainability in and through golf. Over more than ten years, the group has worked collaboratively with dozens of golf industry associations and government and non-government organisations around the world, to help golf become a sustainability leader, striving for a net positive social and environmental impact. In addition to managing and assuring GEO Certified®, GEO Foundation also provides a suite of credible, practical programmes for golf facility management, new golf developments and golf tournaments called OnCourse®, often delivered in partnership with national golf bodies. Find out more at www.sustainable.golf

Credibility

GEO Certified® is part of the ISEAL Alliance, a group of the world's foremost credible certification systems including Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, Forest Stewardship Council, Marine Stewardship Council and many others. GEO Foundation earned and retains full membership of the ISEAL Alliance global association following a rigorous evaluation against the ISEAL Codes of Credibility in Sustainability Standards and Certification. The ISEAL Codes cover standard-setting, assurance, and monitoring and evaluation. Find out more at www.isealalliance.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	Surtec audit and mapping of course. Sensitive areas identified. Endangered species, both flora and fauna, recorded and monitored. Highlight: Engagement with the National Botanical Garden Association to identify invasive species to include in the strategy to remove invasive species and replace with local species. Highlight: SURTEC Course Audit and mapping.
	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	No protected designations onsite. However, the golf course team helps with other projects such as resort beach clean-up on the Iberostar resort as well as adjacent properties.
	N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site	No cultural heritage designations onsite.
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	SURTEC audit last year to map course and minimize and naturalise playing surfaces. Goal to minimise water usage. Goal is to have 10-15 percent reduction. 5 percent currently completed.
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	Course has engaged the Dominican Republic's National Botanical Garden society to identify invasive species with the goal to eliminate invasive species and replace with indigenous species. Records are kept of the sites. Flora and fauna with endangered species are highlighted.
N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species		The course has a goal to eliminate 100% invasive species and replace with native species. Working with National Botanical Garden society to create strategy.

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	50% Bermuda 25% Crab Grass 25% Paspalum Cool season varieties not applicable.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		Please see N2.1.2 below.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	Last soil analysis was 6-7 years ago. CCIP: Please perform a solid soil analysis and record the results.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding	Course hand picks 90% of weeds in conjunction with salt diluted mixture. Green blades sharpened once a week. Fairway and rough blades sharpened once a month. Because of environmental conditions, removal of surface moisture is not required. HIGHLIGHT: The course are exploring the use of organic fertiliser using locally harvested seaweed. CIP: Please develop and document a formal Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan. This should outline scouting procedures, identification of problematic areas and management.
N2.3 Use chemicals responsibly	N2.3.1 Application of chemicals only when necessary to prevent or cure defined / identified turf health issues	Establish patterns and levels of risk for pests and diseases; Scout the course daily for early signs of pests and disease; Accurate pest and disease identification; Map and track pest and disease hotspots; Establish pest and disease thresholds	Superintendent and Director of Golf Operations perform daily inspections.
	N2.3.2 Application of chemicals with full safety precautions	Use only legally registered and approved products;	Chemical product log in Maintenance Building. Applicator licensing not required.

		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 .	One individual responsible for applications and is grandfather in the position (17 Years). Calibration of equipment performed every two months. CIP: Please keep records of each calibration. No leftover product during process. Protective equipment is used.
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.	Emergency spill response plan clearly displayed in storage facility. CCIP: Please display emergency spill procedures in the mixing area adjacent to the storage facility. 3-meter no-spray buffer zone for water and sensitive areas. HIGHLIGHT: Green Point Recycling Centre for all recyclable and composting of site foliage and grass clippings. Mandate of zero products to landfill. Compost is used for site gardens.
	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	Individual (William) responsible for the separation, contracts, licenses and management of hazardous materials and wastewater discharge.
	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	Washing and prep areas are on impermeable, leak free stations. Washing wastewater contained and disposed of via wastewater contract.
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;	No legal requirements. Hazardous materials listed and stored in contained storage facility. Fuel storage complete with secondary containment barrier. First aid and emergency response procedure posted in storage facility.

		Fire extinguisher in the immediate area; Secondary containment for fuel, either externally constructed, or integrally manufactured; Regular inspection of storage tanks	2-year inspection schedule for fuel tanks. CIP: Please keep records of each 2-year fuel tank inspection.
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)	3 rd party contracted for wastewater discharge. No licensing required. Wash bays and storage facility situated on impermeable surface, both with containment barriers. Wastewater holding tank that is contracted to be removed with wastewater contract.

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	50% - Bermuda 25% - Crab Grass 25% - Paspalum Only playing surfaces are irrigated. 50% of irrigation comes from Iberostar's resorts reclaimed water.
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	WeatherLink Davis Vantage irrigation. Review stats and performance weekly. Irrigation controlled manually based on moisture analysis and superintendent supervision. CIP: Please explore the feasibility of automated moisture analysis and irrigation.
	R1.2.2 Practical measures to use water more efficiently in buildings	Audit water use regularly; Review bills frequently and look for irregularities;	Water consumption audited daily. This audit includes water, gas, and electricity usages.

		Encourage water-saving practices amongst staff and visitors; Categorise and track water consumption	
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	50% reclaimed water from resorts. 50% abstraction permit. Abstraction permit is controlled by Iberostar resort and includes water usage for irrigation purposes.
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	SURTEC Audit last year to map course and identification of areas for naturalisation.
R2.2 Maximise energy efficiency	R2.2.1 Measures to use energy and fuels more efficiently in buildings	Audit energy use regularly; Regularly review bills; Categorise and track energy consumption	Daily audits of energy consumption including Water, Fuel and Electricity. Target of 35% of energy consumption. Policy: Offices are not to be cooler than 23 degrees Celsius.
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	Highlight: Solar panel farm located on site that feeds excess to local grid. 25% realised reduction in electricity use. Plans to expand farm with target of 35% reduction.
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	Highlight: Previous noted "Green Point" recycling and Compost centre. Highlight: WINNOW system in place for daily monitoring of food consumption waste. Used to understand trends in food waste. Centralise department monitors and manage both recycling mandates and food consumption. Resort and club have eliminated single use plastics.

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	Purchasing policies in place and highlights locally sourced product. Highlight: Golf course and kitchen staff maintain vegetable and fruit gardens that are used by clubhouse and resort. Examples include: Mint, Coconuts, Avocados, Rosemary, Peppers, Papaya and Mangos.
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	Mandate of zero kg to landfill. "Green Point" recycling centre manages recycling. Signage evidence of clubs recycling policy. CIP: Please try to add more recycling/garbage bins throughout the course. It was indicated that they have been ordered via Iberostar corp and are awaiting arrival.
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	No regulations in place. Club is truly stewards of sustainability within the region.

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		Club organises and conducts outreach activities with local schools. Groundkeepers and volunteers (schools invited) to take part in beach clean-up of Iberostar beaches as well as adjacent resort beaches. Mangrove and Coral restoration initiatives Highlight: Club resources organise and perform a beach clean-up.

C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		Club organises volunteer opportunities for beach clean-up. Donation of clothes to orphan charities. Toy collection. Food Donation. Golf tournament that 30% of proceeds to charitable organisations.
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'	Sustainability policy signage across the clubhouse and resort. Club organises and conducts outreach activities with local schools. Groundkeepers and volunteers (schools invited) to take part in beach clean-up of Iberostar beaches as well as adjacent resort beaches. Mangrove and Coral restoration initiatives. Encouragement of volunteers to help with mangrove restoration and beach clean-up.
C2 Golfers & Employees			
C2.1 Improve health and wellbeing	C2.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities		Several health and social benefits, as per below.
C2.2 Be open and inclusive	C2.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies	Demonstrate inclusive policies for members and visitors	Public course. Clients include 50% resort and 50% local usage. Club promotes spirit of golf to youth. Club youth sessions.
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	Resort employs Health and Safety officer that is also applicable to golf club.
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	Environmental and sustainability signage and promotion are clear throughout the resort and club. HIGHLIGHT: Achieved “Best Golf Course Dominican Republic” for the second straight year.
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	“We are Iberostar” highlights the accomplishments and goals of sustainability. Active in community in education programs with schools and employees. Sustainability is always on the agenda for corporate meetings. Superintendent and Director of golf share experiences with other Iberostar golf facilities.

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