



GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report Costa Rica Country Club

Prepared by independent verifier Fernando Calderon

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2025
Recertification due: 2028

GEO Certified®

 **GEO
Foundation**
Sustainability in and through golf

“CRCC continues to perform above standard levels with regards to their environmental footprint through the operation of the golf course. Their detailed and focused monitoring of natural conditions including the vegetation, fauna and now general consumption of resources throughout the property enables them to identify areas of opportunity and optimize areas where they are already excelling. With their new initiative to include a carbon calculator to document their real footprint, they will be even better suited to continue improving on their already exceptional performance.

The opportunities for further improvement will be better identified once they start getting feedback from their carbon calculator to mitigate their environmental footprint. It is also suggested that they perform social surveys in their community to identify improvements to the social aspects of the club as well as the overall wellbeing of their community.”

Fernando Calderon
(GEO accredited independent verifier)



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Costa Rica 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.

Costa Rica 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, Costa Rica Country Club should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Costa Rica 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, Certification and Credibility,
GEO Certification Ltd.



Verification and Certification

Verification

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

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

Certification

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

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

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

Credibility

GEO Certified® is part of the ISEAL Alliance, a group of the world's foremost credible certification systems including Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, Forest Stewardship Council, Marine Stewardship Council and many others. GEO Foundation earned and retains full membership of the ISEAL Alliance global association following a rigorous evaluation against the ISEAL Codes of Credibility in Sustainability Standards and Certification. The ISEAL Codes cover standard-setting, assurance, and monitoring and evaluation. Find out more at www.isealliance.org



Verifier's Report

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

THEMES	ACTION AREAS
Nature	• Habitats & Biodiversity • Turfgrass management • Pollution prevention
Resources	• Water • Energy • Materials
Community	• Partnerships & Outreach • Golfing & Employment • Advocacy & Communications

Included below are the observations made by the Independent Verifier against each item in the Standard.

NATURE			
N1 Habitats and Biodiversity			
Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
N1.1 Understand the site and surroundings	N1.1.1 Sound understanding of the nature and landscape value of the site	General knowledge of the wildlife and habitats on the site	CRCC continues to excel in knowing its surroundings by continuing its species surveying to make better maintenance decisions and be able to monitor and control the golf course conditions.
	N1.1.2 Knowledge of legal designations for protected areas, habitats and species	Identify rare, protected or endangered species found on the golf course; Understand legal responsibilities for landscape protection and special area designations, if applicable	The club is very clear with its member about their flora and fauna protection strategies through communication campaigns and signage throughout the course to protect habitats and protected areas.
	N1.1.3 Sound understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site, if applicable	There are no archaeological, historical or cultural designations in the club.
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	The club has an extensive and detailed ongoing vegetation plan to continue to naturalise the golf course and the playing conditions.
N1.3 Actively create and manage habitats for wildlife	N1.3.1 Projects to create and manage habitats in the best way for wildlife and golf	Prioritise native species of varying size and structure when planting Prioritise native trees and shrubs when planting Prioritise native aquatic species of varying size and structure when planting Establish mowing buffer zones next to water bodies and wetlands	Through their detailed flora and fauna studies, the club continuously use the vegetation plan to optimize species' habitats. They have been recording data for more than 10 years which guides their strategy in habitat and nature conservation.

N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species	Follow local best practice to protect or attract endangered, protected or rare species found on site	The flora and fauna study that the club has developed through the years includes information and location of priority species and methods on how to maintain/improve their habitats.
N2 Turfgrass			
N2.1 Maintain optimum turfgrass and soil health	N2.1.1 Appropriate turfgrass varieties adapted to climatic and other geomorphological factors	Select appropriate grass species for the climate	The club has a detailed integral pest management system that they use with data gathered from more than a decade about the turf's health, condition and typical pests and diseases to test and confirm the turf species that work best for their course. Through this system, and some trial plots that they have done, they have confirmed that the turf species they are using works best for their course. CIP: Please explore opportunities to reduce the managed surface in certain locations.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition	No specific international requirement, however, identify course management and agronomic activities and look for continual improvements	The course's IPM system continues to drive their decision-making with everything related to their practices to maintain good soil structure and condition. With the extensive data that they have already collected, along with new tests and trials that they perform, they are constantly evaluating and improving their soil management.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Test and monitor soil pH; Follow legal requirements when timing fertiliser applications Ensure staff are fully qualified to use fertilisers Ensure staff use appropriate protective equipment Regularly calibrate and test applicators	Their data-driven management system is continuously used to test, monitor and evaluate their fertiliser application to improve on the type of products and total amount of products used.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Change hole locations frequently	The course's management system continues to be used to make decisions on how to improve the maintenance processes by the club.
N2.3 Use chemicals responsibly	N2.3.1 Application of chemicals only when necessary to prevent or cure defined / identified turf health issues	Identify and track pest and disease hotspots, including sensitive areas Scout the course daily for early signs and symptoms	CRCC continues to make efforts to reduce chemicals in pesticides through conscious product selection. Combined with detailed tracking and documentation of the results, the club is very adamant about continuous improvement in the use of safe products.

		Accurately diagnose to determine the cause of weeds, pests and diseases	
	N2.3.2 Application of chemicals with full safety precautions	Use legally registered and approved products; Prefer products for the specific weed, pest or disease; Follow legal requirements; Ensure staff are fully qualified to use pesticides; Ensure staff use appropriate protective equipment; Regularly calibrate and test applicators; Dilute and dispose of leftover product on untreated areas of amenity turfgrass	CRCC continues to make efforts to reduce chemicals in pesticides through conscious product selection. Combined with detailed tracking and documentation of the results, the club is very adamant about continuous improvement in the use of safe products.
N3 Pollution Prevention			
N3.1 Prevent pollution across the entire site	N3.1.1 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from golf course operations	Document procedures for emergency spill responses ; Retain no-spray/no-spread buffer areas next to water bodies and wetlands; Retain no-spray/no-spread buffer zones in and around ecologically sensitive areas	The club has all the required response plans clearly communicated to all staff. As a new initiative, the club's Green waste is provided to a local farm for animal consumption and/or local legislation where they complete composting projects
	N3.1.2 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from clubhouse operations	Formal wastewater discharge agreement, if applicable	CIP: Please continue working on restructuring storage to improve wastewater and waste management operations.
	N3.1.3 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from	Wash machinery over an impermeable, leak-free surface;	The club has a detailed log of cleaning and maintenance procedures in the maintenance facility to reduce pollution risks.

	maintenance facility operations	Mix and load pesticides and fertilisers over an impermeable, leak-free surface; Triple rinse pesticide containers and applicators	
N3.2 Safely manage hazardous substances	N3.2.1 Legal compliance in the storage, handling, application and safe disposal of all hazardous substances	List of hazardous substances, made available to authorised staff; Product and material data safety sheets; Well ventilated concrete or metal building; Impermeable, leak-free flooring; Sufficient storage capacity; Spill containment kits; Secondary containment e.g., bunds or drip trays; Emergency wash area, as per local requirements (body shower and / or eye wash station); Hazardous substances safely collected by a registered company or body ; Follow any additional legal requirements	The club complies with all relevant and required practices to handle hazardous substances.
	N3.2.2 Legal compliance in the storage and handling of fuels and gases	Tank secured to a horizontal, flat, non-combustible surface; Secondary containment of fuel in the event of spills e.g. bunds and drip trays; Inspection of storage tank(s) at least quarterly, if required; Fire extinguisher in the immediate area	The club complies with all relevant and required practices to handle hazardous substances.
N3.3 Responsibly manage waste / storm water	N3.3.1 Appropriate wastewater usage, treatment and discharge	Impermeable, leak-free surface; Treatment as per local requirements (oil, grease and / or clipping separation; Formal discharge agreement, if applicable	The club has the adequate infrastructure to prevent pollution throughout the facility caused by water runoff from facilities.

RESOURCES

R1 Water

Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
R1.1 Minimise water demand	R1.1.1 Measures to reduce the need to consume water	Select appropriate grass species for the climate e.g., drought and disease tolerance; Target irrigation to essential playing surfaces; Prioritise native, drought tolerant species for landscaping and planting	The grass species has been carefully selected and monitored to ensure the most efficient water use.
R1.2 Maximise water efficiency	R1.2.1 Practical measures to use water more efficiently on the golf course	Schedule irrigation based on informed assessment of soil moisture and weather forecasts; Evaluate new irrigation technologies e.g., central control, precision sprinklers etc.; Provide staff training on efficient irrigation practices; Adjust sprinklers to playing surfaces only	The club has an irrigation system linked to their weather sensors to determine irrigation schedules, frequencies and volume.
	R1.2.2 Practical measures to use water more efficiently in buildings	Monitor and record water consumption (bills, flow meter etc.); Encourage water conservation practices amongst players and staff	The club has its own system of documenting total water consumed to identify areas of opportunities to reduce consumption and/or to detect possible sources of inefficiency.
R1.3 Source water responsibly	R1.3.1 Measures towards alternative, lower quality sources of water	Water abstraction permit, if required;	The club has its own wastewater facility which constantly monitors the water quality to ensure optimal conditions and has third party tests periodically completed.

		Report water consumption to environment agency, if required	
R2 Energy			
R2.1 Reduce energy demand	R2.1.1 Measures to reduce the amount of energy consumed in golf course maintenance	Naturalise non-playing areas to reduce mowing and other energy intensive inputs	They have implemented solar water heaters for the pool to further reduce their energy footprint.
R2.2 Maximise energy efficiency	R2.2.1 Measures to use energy and fuels more efficiently in buildings	Monitor and record energy consumption (bills, meters etc.)	One of the most innovative and proactive actions that the club is taking is by developing a carbon calculator to document footprint (started in 2024). The club is currently remodelling kitchen area to accommodate for more efficient HVAC systems and refrigeration The club has changed their light fixtures to about 95% of LED lights throughout. They will continue working to get to 100%.
R2.3 Source energy responsibly	R2.3.1 Measures to source alternative, renewable forms of energy	Understand the energy mix of your electricity supplier; Explore possible greener energy providers	The club is actively tracking and monitoring their energy consumption and have looked into investing in solar panels. CIP: Please continue to explore the feasibility of installing solar panels. This could be implemented in the next few years given the size of investment.
R3 Materials			
R3.1 Reduce materials demand	R3.1.1 Products and materials selection based on necessity, including opportunities for recycled, reused and locally sourced alternatives	No specific international requirement, however, identify activities to reduce the demand for materials and look for continual improvements	The club's purchasing policies establish the use of recycled, reused or locally sourced materials whenever available.
R3.2 Purchase responsibly	R3.2.1 Commit to sustainable purchasing practices	Favour responsible, lower impact products	As part of the purchasing policy, the club has identified the opportunities to use local/recycled products and continuously looks for responsible products which can be used throughout the club.
R3.3 Reuse and recycle	R3.3.1 Waste stream separation for maximum recycling and re-use opportunity	Put in place a recycling separation system, according to local rules and availability;	The club is very consistent about their data tracking of all waste generated including the use of audits to monitor waste being created and identify areas where it can be reduced.

		Clear, simple and visible bin signage; Monitor and record weight of waste for each stream e.g. invoices, bills etc.	
R3.4 Demonstrate legal compliance	R3.4.1 Compliance with all local and regional waste management regulations	Authorised waste collector for general, hazardous, industrial and green waste, if required	The club meets all the legal requirements with local and regional waste management regulations.

COMMUNITY			
<u>C1 Health & Wellbeing</u>			
Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
C1.1 Improve health and wellbeing	C1.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities	Plans in place to respond to incidents and emergencies	The club has received feedback from members that they would like to have additional carts available for the golf course, as part of the Health and Wellbeing initiative. The club provided a communication campaign to its members promoting walking the course for exercise and also to use less energy for the carts.
C1.2 Be open and inclusive	C1.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies	Membership policies free from discrimination across age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and ethnic background	While the club is a private club, they do observe policies free from discrimination.
C1.3 Employ fairly, safely and provide career opportunities	C1.3.1 Ethical and legal employment, working conditions and professional development	Adopt an equal opportunity recruitment and hiring policy; Follow all relevant legislation and best practice for hiring and employment; Follow all relevant legislation and best practice for worker safety	The club has done a great job of developing a healthy, productive and friendly corporate culture where employees are provided safe working conditions but also opportunities for training and improvement.
<u>C2 Outreach & Inclusion</u>			

C2.1 Diversify access and provide multifunctionality	C2.1.1 Social and recreational activities at the facility	No specific international requirement, however, identify multifunctional activities and look for continual improvements	The club has provided walking trails with distance markers for members who wish to go walk the course without having to play it.
C2.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C2.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes	No specific international requirement, however, identify activities to support volunteering and charity and look for continual improvements	Discussed.
C2.3 Establish active community partnerships	C2.3.1 Positive and constructive engagement with neighbours, the local community and other groups	No specific international requirement, however, identify partnerships and community activities and look for continual improvements	The club has done a remarkable job of developing relationship with local universities for agricultural students to be able to access the club for training purposes.
C3 Communications & Advocacy			
C3.1 Engage staff and golfers	C3.1.1 Communications activities that raise awareness and understanding amongst members and visitors	Involve staff and committees in sustainability efforts; Involve golfers in sustainability efforts; Post sustainability information in the clubhouse and / or on the golf course	CIP: As part of the new carbon calculator initiative, please continue exploring a communication campaign to educate members on how to reduce their carbon footprint.
C3.2 Celebrate and promote sustainability	C3.2.1 Activities that raise awareness and engage people in the wider community	Share at least 3 Highlights on sustainable.golf	The club is working on developing more social campaigns for conscientization for electrical waste to its members, while providing the infrastructure to facilitate their collection. In 2025 the club implemented a social program to inform about reducing energy consumption.
C3.3 Follow a journey of continuous improvement	C3.3.1 Measures to help track, review and improve sustainability and climate action	Put measures in place to ensure that OnCourse can be updated annually	The club is very consistent about record keeping in their own software and keep track of it for future planning.

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