



GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report Kungsbacka Golfklubb

Prepared by independent verifier Mårten Wallberg

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2024
Recertification due: 2029

GEO Certified®

 **GEO
Foundation**
Sustainability in and through golf

“Kungsbacka GK has one of the longest traditions in Sweden of having thorough and well-planned sustainability work. It is wonderful to recognise how this work engages all sectors of the club and also the visitors. If you were to shine a light on some specific areas of the sustainability work, it would be the energy with solar panels, the nature with demanding plans for restoring important biodiversity, and the engagement of the members, especially the “Thursday group”, containing several senior members doing priceless work for the club’s wellbeing. It was a pure joy visiting the club and I hope I’ll have the honour of also playing their fantastic courses in the future.”

Mårten Wallberg
(GEO accredited independent verifier)



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Kungsbacka Golfklubb 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.

Kungsbacka Golfklubb 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, Kungsbacka Golfklubb should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Kungsbacka Golfklubb 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.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	Kungsbacka GK is situated on a site with great variety when it comes to nature. It's an old cultural landscape with meadows, forests, cliffs etc. The club was founded in 1970 and the main course was built in 1974 and

			expanded with another 9 full length holes in 1990. The club has also built 9 short holes. Before the construction of the courses a large part of the area was used as agrarian fields.
	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	The course area is surrounded by nature reserves and Natura 2000 areas. The club has great maps of where rare flora species occur, as well as a management plan for priority habitats which are also mapped. A large inventory of amphibians has been carried out. This is displayed on a map.
	N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site	The three historical remains are preserved. No specific plan for them is found necessary. The stone walls are still protected.
	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 The new course manager has big plans on how to exclude several areas from mowing. This includes areas that "should not be in play". One idea is to plant heather (<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>) on some of these areas.
	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 New ponds have been constructed. They are looking good and both amphibians and plants have been established by themselves. The meadows are doing great, and the management is under control. The club has no immediate plans for creating new meadows for the moment. The beehives are still working, and the shore meadows are being harvested about every second year close to the Natura 2000-area. The club still have some insect hotels. The amount of nesting boxes for birds is now around 150. The club has a collaboration with the local botanical club when it comes to management of the nature areas. When it comes to the management plans for the nature areas, action plans with timetables have been done but they need further development. But the club has plans, including maps, for how to get rid of invasive species, especially three plant species. One of them is successfully removed with two remains to be taken care of.

			CIP: Please develop an inventory of mosses and lichens, while also continuing the work with invasive species.
N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species		The collaboration with the Swedish Department of Transportation concerning promoting environments for red-listed bird species small woodpecker and green woodpecker is doing well. The club has increased the possibilities for the woodpeckers to survive by drilling holes in trees, cutting down trees etc. The reason for this collaboration is that the area where a new road is planned includes habitats for the woodpeckers. In order to create similar habitats for the woodpeckers at other areas on the course, the project will help the birds to survive. In Sweden this is called "nature compensation".
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	The club has for the last years sown creeping bent and perennial ryegrass. This action has been quite a success on both greens and fairways. The club is continuously supporting sowing.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		The club is continuously using classic integrated pest management (IPM), for example aeration and dressing. All things are done in order to among other things cut down the use of chemicals.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	The use of fertilizers is cut down to a minimum. In order to do this, thorough soil analyses is being carried out. Tests have been carried out on all greens in order to record how many nutrients are fixed in the soil, which in turn determines how much fertilization is needed. No organic fertilizers are being used generally, with the exception of new greens. The problem with organic fertilizers is that they smell and are sticky, all according to the club.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding	Silvery thread moss (<i>Byrum argenteum</i>) occurs on certain areas of the course. Mechanical actions are mostly being taken against that. The occurrence of the moss is mostly connected with the will to keep nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium at a minimum level, which makes the turf vulnerable to the moss.
N2.3 Use chemicals responsibly	N2.3.1 Application of chemicals only when necessary to prevent or	Establish patterns and levels of risk for pests and diseases;	The information that the club has about indicator places on the course is still to be placed on a map and is planned to be carried out which includes disease spots. In order to increase the job being carried out with

	cure defined / identified turf health issues	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	this, there is a collaboration with the Botanical garden and department at the Gothenburg University. The tests show if something is wrong. A good idea is to extend the work that has been done with the map of the presence of Dollar Spot to include all kinds of diseases. CIP: Please improve the maps of pests, diseases and indicator places with, for example, tolerance thresholds and proposed procedures.
	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 .	The spread of leftovers of products on untreated areas, spotted on a map, is approved by the authorities. The employees are trained and authorized in using pesticides and the applicator is also approved. Close to where the chemicals is being held a safety data sheet is placed.
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.	A very clear plan for emergency spill response is in place. There is no risk of missing it.
	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	A licensed company is still handling and taking care of all the hazardous waste.
	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	The pesticides and fertilizers are mixed and loaded on a safe impermeable surface.

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	All the storage handling, application and safe disposal of hazardous substances is being carried out according to Swedish law. The safety data sheets for workshop chemicals have been updated. Chemicals no longer in use are now being discarded.
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)	Everything is being carried out according to Swedish law. A licensed company inspects the oil separator on a regular basis.

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	The club use grass species that suits the climate where the courses are. They only irrigate on the most important parts of the course. This means that no irrigation is being carried out in the rough.
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	The club has decreased its use of tap water for irrigation during the last years. In 2021 the use of tap water was 11,000 m3 and reused 16,000 m3 and in 2023 the figure was 4,500 m3 for tap water and 20,000 m3 for reused. The reason for this is the newly constructed dams which gives much more reused water for irrigation. Valve-in-head has been put in on all of the greens in the last years. Moisture meters are being used manually on the greens in order to control where to irrigate. The club has invested in a new and better weather station.

			Priority actions now in a master plan are being mapped. The club is investigating the status of the irrigation facility in a thorough way.
	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	The club has a bit more control of the use of municipal water, but the work on that could increase. CIP: Please encourage water-saving-actions in buildings.
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	The club has invested in new dams in order to use more reused water for irrigation. It has taken a big leap towards using more lower quality water.
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	In 2025 the club invested in more geothermal heating. Since then, this kind of heating is not only used in the machinery hall but also in the clubhouse. The club has invested in a construction that turns on the lights when twilight comes. The lights can be turned off with the help of an app. The club now has separate documentation on the use of energy for the different parts of the facilities, which of course is very good. CIP: Please conduct a thorough energy audit.
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	Over the last few years, the club has re-designed the clubhouse. With that, the heating systems are now new and more efficient.
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	New solar panels were installed on the new clubhouse in 2022 as a complement to those already installed at the machine hall. The energy from the solar has increased from 30 000 kwh in 2022 to 75 000 kwh in October 2025. The total energy used each year is 228 000 kwh. Information boards at the restaurant show clearly the amount of energy received from the panels. All of the grid energy is renewable (Green tariff). The club could still invest in clippers driven by renewable energy.

			CIP: Please explore the feasibility of investing in clippers driven by renewable energy. CIP: Please consider adding information on the website on how to get to the club using public transport.
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	The club has well-documented data of all fractions of waste.
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	The club has a purchasing policy that it follows, but it is not integrated in one document and resolved by the board. CIP: Please resolve the purchasing policy with the board.
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	As mentioned in R3.1.1, the club has total control of its waste with all fractions.
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	The club has all the legal compliances that are needed in order to follow Swedish and EU law.

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		One way of using a golf course multi-functionally in the Nordic countries is to make tracks for cross country skiing when there is snow. The club does this in great style. It is also a way to establish good community partnerships. CIP: Please explore new ways of improving the multi-functionality of the course and clubhouse.
C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		The club has a fantastic group of senior members. They gather every Thursday to do all sorts of work on the courses and buildings in the off-season. The work is conducted by the course manager, and the total days of work is about 550! This is a great way of showing how to involve members in a creative way.
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'	The club has a good collaboration with the local cross country skiing club. The environmental committee is still a hard-working group. It consists of the greenkeeper, a representative from the board and four members. One is a specialist when it comes to nature. A clear and comprehensive action plan for the sustainability work is continuously being updated.
C2 Golfers & Employees			
C2.1 Improve health and wellbeing	C2.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities		The club offers training cards. For a fixed sum of money for one year you can choose from different exercise passes (putting, driving, chipping etc) during the week, day or evenings, just like an ordinary gym card. The club offers members reduced prices at the local gym.
C2.2 Be open and inclusive	C2.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies	Demonstrate inclusive policies for members and visitors	In order to encourage more women to play golf and also make them occupy leading positions, the club is a part of the Swedish Golf Federation's "Vision Project 50/50".
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	The board has the highest responsibility for the employees. The board employs a club director, who in turn employs the rest of the staff. The club is part of a Collective Labor Agreement which provides the employees safe employment in all aspects.
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	The club used to work with management led value creating work called "Keep an eye on the ball" but has now changed to, in the club's view, a better system. There is also a value creating management plan and all the sections (ladies, juniors etc) are involved in this. This plan is a "living" project and is discussed and developed each 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	The club's sustainability work is communicated through, for example, the course guide, the website and boards on the courses informing about the nature on and off the courses. A few more boards have been put up since 2021.

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