GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report
Golf Club Montreux

Prepared by independent verifier David Billy

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2025
Recertification due: 2028

GEO Foundation
Sustainability in and through golf

“The Golf Club Montreux is situated on a small piece of land where they try to include the maximum amount of hardrough and habitat features possible between golf holes, including patches of wildflower and biotope, bird boxes and micro habitat structures. The greenkeeper is doing a good job managing the turfgrass and keeps irrigation consumption very low. The club has a number of projects on the go including the construction of a new washing and filling station and a new building for carts and clubs. They also intend to completely renovate the clubhouse which will greatly improve their energy efficiency in the future. I am looking forward to seeing the club develop other future projects for more targeted habitat management, resource efficiency as well as communication on their sustainability commitments.”

David Billy
(GEO accredited independent verifier)

Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Golf Club Montreux has successfully achieved GEO Certified® status for its outstanding work to foster nature, conserve resources and support the community.

GEO Certified® is the most respected certification for golf, based on a credibly and transparently developed modern sustainability Standard of best practice.

Golf Club Montreux has:

1. Met the required certification criteria for sustainable golf operations
2. Successfully completed the official third-party verification process
3. Successfully passed the final evaluation by GEO Certification Ltd. (autonomous subsidiary of GEO Foundation)

GEO agreed with the conclusions of the official verification report, that, having achieved all mandatory criteria; and with specific Continual Improvement Points (CIP) set for the future and Critical CIP's (CCIPs) to be reviewed at recertification, Golf Club Montreux should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Golf Club Montreux 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.isealalliance.org**

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	This 18-hole championship golf course built in 1900 and then renovated in 2005, is one of the oldest in Switzerland. It was originally built on a former orchard. The management has a general understanding of the vegetation and habitats on site. The course has many large trees separating the golf holes and some hardrough meadows or natural areas within the trees, which are simply left to grow wild. There are a couple of small ponds as well as a couple of biotopes, one which is of good size. There is no particular understanding of the species or real habitat value of these surfaces. There are no habitat maps or formal written biodiversity strategy, but the management team has a general idea of where they would like to go and what they would like to improve every year. **CCIP: Please develop a habitat management plan for the course. Try to include a map of the different areas.** **CCIP: Please commission an external biologist or habitat specialist to undertake a flora and fauna survey. This is important to understand more thoroughly the biodiversity across the entire golf course property, and is especially true of the few areas which have some good potential, but where the club is not really aware of how they could manage for any particular species.**
	N1.1.2 Knowledge of legal designations for protected areas, habitats and species	Identify rare, protected or endangered species found on the golf course;	There are two areas of legally designated forest on the site. A forester comes by a couple of times per year to inspect this, however no one is allowed to enter these forest areas and nothing is done by the golf club regarding maintenance of these forest areas.

			Understand legal responsibilities for landscape protection and special area designations, if applicable	The club has noted a number of birds on site including some Water Hen, Ducks and Egyptian Geese who settle on the larger biotope at some times of year. Other birds are also observed around the course as well as various species of mice, however there is no official recording or monitoring of protected, endangered or rare species. **CCIP: As per N1.1.1 above. Please commission an external biologist or habitat specialist to undertake a flora and fauna survey.**
	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 known cultural designations on the site.
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 observes how the golfers play the course and try to keep the turfgrass surfaces to a minimum for playability on this very tight piece of land. The club is nevertheless trying to increase the areas of wildflower meadow or eco-area. These small meadows are cut only once per year. The other environmental areas are cut down every couple of years.
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	The golf course has a couple of biotopes which would appear to provide interesting habitat potential. The club tries to cut the edges back for playability, however there was no specific management plan for habitat. The course has a very large number of big old trees of various species which surround the course and separate the golf holes. Many of these trees are being choked by ivy and the management is slowly trying to remove this ivy. The club collaborates with an external tree specialist for the big tree work. Some microhabitat features like stone piles and brush piles have been constructed within the environmental areas, however they are not sure for which species. There are about 40 birdboxes throughout the course for different kinds of birds. This was organised by an external bird association; however management is not sure of the name. There is a cypress hedge along a road boundary and some laurel hedges within the property.

			CIP: Please try to replace these exotic, invasive hedges with native hedgerows for improved habitat value. Consider doing this in collaboration with a habitat specialist. **CCIP: Please see N1.1.1 above on a habitat management plan and map for the golf course.**
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	There are no known priority species and therefore no conservation measures are in place.
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 greenkeeper is managing appropriate turfgrasses for this climate. No transition is envisioned but the greenkeeper continues to overseed a number of times per year on the greens with Agrostis capillaris and stolonifera to try to maintain these species as dominant.
	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 greenkeeper undertakes regular mechanical practices to maintain healthy soil and turf, including regular aerification, verticutting or spiking and additions of sand topdressing. A deeper aeration (drill and fill) is done once every 2 years. The greens were constructed with poor quality material and mechanical practices are done to try to improve the quality of the greens for drainage and space for roots. Green quality seems to be improving. Sandbags are given out at the first tee to fill divots.
	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	Regular inputs of mostly Nitrogen and Potassium are given to tees and greens. Liquid feeds are done in the spring due to temperatures and then granular starting in summer. These are generally organic on all surfaces. Simple soil analysis is done by an external specialist to inform on the need for fertilization.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	**N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management**	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture;	The greenkeeping team does regular sharpening of mower blades. They remove surface moisture daily with a hose or with a brush on the mowers.

		Change hole locations frequently	Some hand-weeding is done as well but mostly mechanical weeding on fairways.
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 Accurately diagnose to determine the cause of weeds, pests and diseases	Few chemical treatments are applied on the playing surfaces, mostly against Dollar Spot and Fusarium. This is generally done preventatively with conditions quite similar every year. Because the course is open all year, the greenkeeper feels that there is no time to act curatively. He does watch humidity and temperature using a greenkeeper application, which helps to inform on the best times for application. A number of old trees were removed over the past years to allow more light and air to the turf surfaces. This has made them more resistant and less susceptible to disease. **CIP: Please be more proactive with scouting instead of adding the chemicals preventatively.**
	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	Use of only legally registered products in Switzerland. Good safety practices throughout the maintenance area and across the golf course. Staff are well trained for chemical and fertilizer applications with three of the greenkeeping staff holding a licence for these applications. Protective equipment of masks and gloves are available and used as necessary for chemical applications. At the moment the tank is rinsed and emptied at the washing station. Written procedure covering the handling, dilution and disposal of leftover spray product on untreated turf, including photographs of the designated disposal area.
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;	Emergency spill bags are in place in the maintenance shed. A specialist company comes once per year to control the sprayer. Jets are removed after every application to check for leaks.

			Retain no-spray/no-spread buffer zones in and around ecologically sensitive areas	Buffer zones for mowing, spraying and spreading were not purposely maintained around any sensitive areas or water bodies. Plan developed for the establishment of buffer zones. It identifies the relevant sensitive areas, the distances to be observed and the practical measures that will ensure consistent application, together with any site-specific constraints and their justification. **CCIP: Please ensure that the plan for the establishment of buffer zones continues to be put into action.**
		N3.1.2 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from clubhouse operations	Formal wastewater discharge agreement, if applicable	Any materials such as cleaning products are stored correctly in the clubhouse. The clubhouse is compliant with Swiss law and the discharge of wastewater into the public sewer system.
		N3.1.3 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from maintenance facility operations	Wash machinery over an impermeable, leak-free surface; Mix and load pesticides and fertilisers over an impermeable, leak-free surface; Triple rinse pesticide containers and applicators	The mixing and loading of pesticides and fertilizers is done on an impermeable surface. The wash area does not conform with government regulations at the moment. It will be up and running by the beginning of September and will be controlled by the government. Evidence of dedicated and operational filling / mixing / washing station submitted.
	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);	The hazardous materials are safely and securely stored in a locked cabinet. A sign is present on the door to warn of hazardous materials within. They will be using a new container for storing both fertilizers and pesticides, separately. Liquid fertilizers are stored separately from dry fertilizers however the greenkeeper keeps very little stock because a distributor is located nearby. Storage of fuels is under a covered protected area. Fuel containers are doubled walled (secondary containment). Emergency wash area is present in the maintenance area. Fire extinguishers are present in all maintenance areas.

			Hazardous substances safely collected by a registered company or body ; Follow any additional legal requirements	
	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 a wastewater discharge licence for all buildings of the golf course, as per Swiss law. The wash area does not conform with government regulations at the moment. It will be up and running by the beginning of September and will be controlled by the government. Evidence of dedicated and operational filling / mixing / washing station submitted.

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	Minimal water is applied to golf surfaces to maintain playability and the yearly water consumption is very low. Cool season fescues and perennial ryegrass dominate fairways and roughs which require less water inputs. In the summer the club generally lets the fairways go brown and limits irrigation to greens and tees. Last year the fairways were not irrigated at all. A simple weather station is on the grounds to help inform on the irrigation regime. **CIP: Please try to invest in a more advanced weather station to provide more accurate data to help with course management.**

	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	Irrigation scheduling is based on weather patterns and soil moisture measurements. The irrigation system is quite old and still on block systems. Water is applied a few minutes at night and then a few minutes in the early morning. Aeration is also done with the goal of getting more water into the ground. A wetting agent is sometimes used to improve water absorption. Some manual syringing is done on dry areas. **CIP: Please try to slowly upgrade irrigation for better efficiency.**
		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 clubhouse consists of a restaurant, toilets and changing rooms below. The reception, offices and proshop are in a separate building connected to the club and cart storage. Water efficient shower heads are found in the renovated part of the changing rooms. Minimal water is used for these areas. **CCIP: Please review and audit water consumption regularly, while also encouraging water saving practices amongst staff, players and visitors.**
	R1.3 Source water responsibly	**R1.3.1 Measures towards alternative, lower quality sources of water**	Water abstraction permit, if required; Report water consumption to environment agency, if required	Water for irrigation and the other needs is potable water from the public mains. The club has looked for other sources of water but has not yet found anything suitable. There is simply not enough room for water storage lakes, and it is not allowed to take water from the Rhone in this Canton. **CIP: Please continue to explore alternative water sources.**
	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	The club tries to avoid any unnecessary maintenance. They are slowly increasing some areas of wildflower meadow, which is reducing the need for regular mowing.

	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.)	The clubhouse building is old and not energy efficient. Plans are in place to replace this clubhouse with a more energy efficient building as well as other buildings. This needs to be done in phases. For example, the visitor changing rooms have already been upgraded and they are constructing a new building for cart and club storage. All laundry for towels etc. in the changing rooms are washed and ironed on site and not outsourced. Some LED bulbs in certain areas of the clubhouse or reception. Motion sensors present in different areas. The club was involved with the PIKE study to see where they can save energy. **CCIP: Please audit energy bills each year to look for ways to reduce energy consumption.** **CIP: Please encourage energy saving initiatives.**
	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	Presently the club is using regular grid electricity. The heater in the clubhouse was replaced recently, although it is still using heating oil. There is a project to study solar panels on some of the maintenance buildings. There is a project in process with the local authorities where the golf club will be connected to a network which benefits from heating from an incineration plant. This will come into play with the new clubhouse is built. Machinery is mostly diesel and petrol machines with 6 electric golf carts for players. The club has tested electric robot mowers and they are planning to use them for fairway mowing in the future. At present the greenkeeper has 4 hybrid mowers.
	R3 Materials			
	R3.1 Reduce materials demand	**R3.1.1 Products and materials selection based on necessity, including opportunities for recycled,**	No specific international requirement, however, identify activities to reduce the demand for materials and look for continual improvements	Materials for greenkeeping are sourced locally with business relationships with seed and fertilizer companies in close proximity. The club also works with a tree nursery reasonably close for supply of any native trees for new planting projects.

	reused and locally sourced alternatives		**CIP: Please undertake a review of materials consumed to have a better understanding of where these could be reduced, including opportunities for recycling or reuse.**
R3.2 Purchase responsibly	**R3.2.1 Commit to sustainable purchasing practices**	Favour responsible, lower impact products	No specific sustainable purchasing policy is in place at the moment. Products for course maintenance are sourced locally where possible. The restaurant is not managed by the golf facility, and they have limited influence on the purchasing however organic products are favoured when possible. Honey is made by a beekeeper with the hives just off-site on land which is rented by the club for storing green waste. The honey is sold in the reception. **CCIP: Please develop a formal and more substantial sustainable purchasing policy.**
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; Clear, simple and visible bin signage; Monitor and record weight of waste for each stream e.g. invoices, bills etc.	The waste from the maintenance area is kept on site, mostly on a piece of rented land adjacent to the club property. This green waste is slowly composted and reused on the course. Some other material is given to the local farmers for feed. Other materials from the course maintenance area are collected in a large recycling bin which is collected by a local waste company. Recycling bins around the course were built by a member carpenter offering waste separation. No plastic bottles are given out to golfers. **CCIP: Please develop a more complete recycling programme for more maximum recycling and re-use.**
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 works with an authorized recycling contractor for all general, hazardous and industrial waste.

COMMUNITY

C1 Health & Wellbeing

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 golf club restaurant is open to everyone in the community including the possibility to rent it out for receptions.
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	The club organises a number of tournament events every year including a charity event. Last year was to subsidize an ambulance in Madagascar. There is a volunteer day amongst members and others to clean the course.
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 a collaboration with a private school in the region, who come for lessons and have free access to the equipment. The club shares machines with other golf courses in the region. **CIP: Please explore further community partnerships.**

C2 Outreach & Inclusion

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	Walking is encouraged although a few electric carts are available. There is a bike stand which is used by a few members and staff. A bus stop is just across the street allowing some golfers to arrive by public transport.
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	The golf club supports golf for all. They have a junior programme linked with Swiss Golf. There is a diversity in membership with many female and junior members.

			The club embraces inclusivity.
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 is a fair employer and provides good career opportunities to employees. They also work with an employment agency who helps injured or handicapped persons get back into the workforce. Staff are regularly given different trainings. At the moment, 2 employees are being trained to manage the irrigation system.
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	The club manager regularly includes information in the newsletters explaining why the course is being maintained in a certain way for better efficiency and biodiversity. **CCIP: Please undertake further communication to inform members and visitors of the sustainability commitments and actions.**
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	**CIP: Please communicate with local businesses and the community to raise awareness of sustainability commitments and actions.**

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