



GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report

Pei Tou Kuo Hua Golf & Country Club

Prepared by independent verifier Brad Revill

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2026
Recertification due: 2029

GEO Certified®

 **GEO
Foundation**
Sustainability in and through golf

“Hua Kuo Golf Club is a special place in the mountains above Taipei. The club measures success by it’s sustainability and environmental initiatives, rather than a focus on the pursuit of surface performance. Of particular note are the various products creatively made from the cut branches of trees on the golf course, which I have not yet seen in Asia. I look forward to visiting the course again and seeing the results of their newest initiatives.”

Brad Revill
(GEO accredited independent verifier)



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Hua Kuo 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.

Hua Kuo 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, Hua Kuo Golf Club should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Hua Kuo 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
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



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	There is a basic habitat map included as part of the biodiversity study. This can be improved and expanded on to include the different types of habitats located on the property. CIP: Please further develop the habitat map to show the different types of habitats located on the property.
	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	No legal restrictions around the waterway except that they are not allowed to collect the water from the creek for their own use.
	N1.1.3 Sound understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site, if applicable	There is a cemetery and old graves around the property that they need to allow public access to. These are protected and a shrine has also been constructed by the club for family members to worship their elders whose graves are lost.
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 visually monitor patterns of play and identify areas in need of action through wear patterns. The club is considering limiting golf cart access to certain areas of the course or to members only. They are embarking on a naturalisation project for the creek that runs through the property.
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	A biodiversity assessment was conducted by the local university. It includes a list of all flora and fauna with high quality photos. It was completed in 2025 and is very thorough. There is no spraying of chemicals anywhere in the rough, which creates a large buffer zone for the water bodies and surrounding forests.

		Prioritise native aquatic species of varying size and structure when planting Establish mowing buffer zones next to water bodies and wetlands	CIP: Please formalise a habitat management plan which can also include your naturalisation projects.
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 Collared Scops Owl, Crested Serpent Eagle, Bursar Hawk have been identified on site and are Level 3 protected species under Taiwan law. Naturalisation projects are under way and protective buffers are already 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 turfgrass varieties used on the course are some of the most suitable for the region, in terms of input requirements. Greens: Bermuda Fairways: mixed, primarily Bermuda Rough: mixed, primarily local grasses Tees: being transitioned to Paspalum The club is currently trialling transitioning their fairways to Paspalum which will provide a more consistent playing surface.
	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 club uses tree vinegar for some pest control, made locally from dead trees taken from the golf course. There are no pesticide applications made to fairways or rough. There was minimal chemical usage on tees and greens as it was only applied when pest levels were high. Spot spraying of weeds is utilised in the fairways.
	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	A soil analysis is performed annually and the team follow the lab recommendations. All applicators are trained and adequate PPE is provided for them. Application equipment is regularly calibrated.

		Ensure staff use appropriate protective equipment Regularly calibrate and test applicators	
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	Mower blades are ground regularly by their mechanic utilising onsite specialised grinding equipment. Spot spraying of weeds is the primary mode of herbicide application as well as hand removal. Pesticide is only applied when infestation levels are high. CCIP: Please formalise weed, pest and disease thresholds as part of an IPM document. This document can also outline your other IPM strategies.
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	The course is scouted daily but there are no scouting reports recorded. CCIP: Please create a scouting report document that can be used to record the data around sighting disease and pest activity on the course. This should include an accurate identification of the pest/disease, specific location, date and a photo if available.
	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	No new chemical importation is permitted into Taiwan, so the team is reliant on locally available products only. Appropriate PPE is provided, and the staff are using it to perform the applications. Leftover product is diluted and sprayed in weaker areas around the course. The sprayer was in good working condition, but it was covered in chemical residue and should be thoroughly cleaned regularly to remove all chemical residue. CCIP: Please ensure the sprayer and all application equipment is thoroughly cleaned after each use.

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	There is a spill response plan in place. All rough areas are no-spray buffer zones.
	N3.1.2 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from clubhouse operations	Formal wastewater discharge agreement, if applicable	Wastewater discharge license is in place. All hazardous substances were safely and securely stored.
	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	Application equipment is washed in the wash bay which has a concrete surface and an oil/water separator installed. Used chemical containers are triple rinsed before disposal by a registered waste disposal contractor. There is an SOP in place for the entire process from mixing to application and wash down.
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;	First aid and fire safety training are provided every year. A folder with all chemical MSDS is in place. Spill kit is in place. There is an emergency shower and eye wash station at the wash bay where the products are mixed and also at the location where the products are stored. The storage room is secure, well ventilated, has bunding installed around the concrete floor and has sufficient space to store all products. CCIP: Please change the chemical storage shelving from wood to either metal or plastic.

		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	
	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	Due to legal requirements in Taiwan, no large fuel tanks are permitted to be installed on site. The club must use multiple small containers in order to comply. The fuel storage room is well ventilated, has bunding installed and a sand spill kit is in place. There is a fire extinguisher located close by.
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	Wastewater discharge license is in place. The wash bay is an impermeable concrete surface with an oil separator installed. Clippings are also separated by a mesh screen and sediment trap.

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;	The turfgrass species used on the course are very suitable to the conditions as most surfaces are a mixed polystand of local grasses and are the most hardy as they are the only ones that have survived through each dry season.

		Prioritise native, drought tolerant species for landscaping and planting	
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	As of the inspection, fairways are only partially irrigated and no roughs are irrigated. 2023 started installing irrigation in the fairways. The irrigation system needs to be operated at night via manual gate valves as it is not computer operated. The pump station is manually operated and won't be adequate to operate the entire golf course irrigation system once it is installed on all areas. The club is planning to begin installation of a computer operated irrigation system beginning in 2027. CIP: Please complete the installation of a new computer operated irrigation system and efficient irrigation pump.
	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	Water usage is tracked but need to add charts to track trends over time and discuss in leadership meetings. CCIP: Please improve water auditing reports to include usage history for improved evaluation ability. CIP: Please encourage water conservation in team meetings, through signage and other means.
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	Confirmed. Limited to 2,500L/day
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 is in the process of beginning a creek naturalisation project that will clean the surrounding area and plant new native landscape.
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.)	Monitoring is in process, with meters for each department/building, but the usage history is not easily visible for ease of tracking. CCIP: Please improve energy auditing reports to include usage history for improved evaluation ability.

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	Highlight: The club has installed solar panels on the roof of the golf cart storage building and has plans to expand this to other buildings. They also utilise a fleet of electric autonomous mowers for all of their rough areas.
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	- Apps for clocking in instead of paper. - Digital scorecard. - Digital name card. - Planning to reduce bottled water and provide refill stations. - Digitalising internal paperwork. - Paper bags in the golf shop. CIP: Please eliminate single use plastic from the property.
R3.2 Purchase responsibly	R3.2.1 Commit to sustainable purchasing practices	Favour responsible, lower impact products	Already look at eco-friendly options as part of the purchasing process. The club recently achieved Green Restaurant certified status. 90-95% of ingredients used in the restaurant are seasonal and local ingredients. Highlight: The club creates many products from materials sourced on-site, including: hole-in-one and eagle certificates which are wooden plaques made from fallen trees, insect repellent and hand wash made from wood vinegar also from fallen trees.
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.	Waste is not yet being tracked. CCIP: Please monitor and collect data on the quantities of waste being generated from the property, including: landfill, all recycling (separated into different streams), and food/organic waste.

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	License confirmed.
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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	Risk assessment template in place, just need to start compiling a folder of all identified risks. CIP: Please identify all current and potential risks on the property, and include measures to avoid those identified.
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	Anybody can be a member. Guests are also allowed.
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	Both front of house and back of house work areas appear safe and free from hazards. Professional skills based and knowledge training is provided to the team to improve their abilities.

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	The club regularly hosts educational days involving local school students. The students learn about the environment and all the different flora and fauna present on the golf course.
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			The club also hosts local photography enthusiasts who can come for bird watching and photography. These initiatives are aimed at opening up the club to the community to reduce the negative stigma around a private golf club and the negative perception many people have around golf courses and the environment.
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	Foundation for teaching kids to play golf. Every round 50NT goes towards the foundation. Once the kids pass the test, the junior golfers can come to play the course for a special Junior rate. The club also plans to invite international teaching pros to teach the kids.
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	Local schools, wildlife photographers and falconers were invited into the property for a field day to learn about falconry and explore the wildlife species on the golf course. This looks like it will turn into a regular event.
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 weekly staff meetings include sustainability efforts and planning. Annual staff party which also communicates and celebrates all of their achievements. There is eco-friendly signage around the club promoting their efforts. Communicate sustainability and environmental efforts to members and guest through Line groups and regular social media posts. Members birthday's presents are the organic soap and repellent products that are developed from trees from the property.
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	Highlights have been shared on the Oncourse platform
C3.3 Follow a journey of continuous improvement	C3.3.1 Measures to help track, review and	Put measures in place to ensure that OnCourse can be updated annually	The owner is very bought in to sustainability and environmental leadership and so all departments and staff are.

		improve sustainability and climate action		
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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