



GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report

上海林克司乡村俱乐部

- Shanghai Links Golf & Country Club

Prepared by independent verifier Gao Shan

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2026

Recertification due: 2029

GEO Certified®

 **GEO
Foundation**
Sustainability in and through golf

“Recognised as one of the finest links-style courses in the region, this 18-hole championship course owes its character as much to restraint as to design. Through precision irrigation, reduced fairway acreage, and targeted fertilization, resource consumption has been significantly lowered—without compromising playability or conditioning. Framed by coastal beauty and sustained by modest inputs, the links course speaks a quiet truth: less is more.”

Gao Shan
(GEO accredited independent verifier)



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Shanghai Links Golf & 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.

Shanghai Links Golf & 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, Shanghai Links Golf & Country Club should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Shanghai Links Golf & 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.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	The site is located along a major route for bird migration: the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. It faces the JiuDuanSha Wetland National Nature Reserve across the strait. Migratory birds begin to arrive in late October, the birds spend the entire winter in this area and begin departing northward around March. Waterfowls such as mallard, Chinese spot-billed duck, falcated duck, northern pintail, northern shoveler appearing in this site have been reported. Related media articles have been checked. A white egret was spotted during the visit though it is not in the migration season.
	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 site is located on a reclaimed land and no legal protected areas/habitats in the site.
	N1.1.3 Sound understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site, if applicable	The Links Golf Museum focusing on the golf development in Shanghai over the last century was officially opened on 21 April 2005, it is located at the old club house adjacent to the starter area. The museum was visited and an article about museum collections published on Golf Heritage Society Bulletin by Jeffery Wu was noted.
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	All golf carts are equipped with GPS and monitored by mobile app. The mobile app was demonstrated by the duty staff. A parcel of land inside the golf course is kept undeveloped and the undisturbed area was visited.

	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	A detail site survey has been conducted in 2025 and the survey map produced by Shanghai Shanchuan Survey & Design Ltd was observed. Nicklaus Desing was invited for landscape improvement and course upgrading work in 2025. Currently upgrading work for Hole 6 & 7 is in tender process.
	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	<i>The thuja sutchuenensis</i> franch shrub zones were observed and the choice of landscape plants was discussed, it was explained how consideration is given based on landscape value, season adoption, cultivation experience and maintenance cost.
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 site experiences a subtropical climate with hot, humid summers, cold winters, and four distinct seasons. Bentgrass is used on green and fairway. With proper routine care, Bentgrass at the golf course is able to tolerate temperatures as high as 40°C and as low as -4°C. Paspalum is used on tee for its long green period, Bermudagrass is used on rough area for its robustness. Those species are commonly used in this area. Ryegrass is used for overseeding during September to maintain green turf through winter. A summary report about the turf grass in this club was noted.
		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 turf soil samples are collected and analysed annually. The 2025 analysis report from Harris Lab was checked during the visit. It was noted that Korea turfgrass research institute was engaged for soil health improvement In August 2025.
		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	The evergreen lawn research centre has been set up by the club for low carbon turf management study. The centre and a turf master studio were visited. The fertiliser application process was discussed, the fertiliser application is applied with calculated amount and timing to improve the absorption efficiency and reduce runoff losses.

		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	Hand weeding was discussed, it is adopted mostly for small area which is not suitable for chemical weeding. An unmanned weeding machine was observed during the visit.
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 and the pesticide application logging sheets were checked. A display board summarising the prominent pests and diseases in the golf court was presented and a study paper about sclerotinia homoeocarpa sensitivity to various agrochemicals was noted. The club is exploring the possibility of using drone for site scout.
	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	The garage was visited. Spraying equipment and PPE instructions were checked. The SOP for equipment usage and qualification certificates for trained staffs are displayed on the garage wall. PPE usage was checked by site observation and photo record review, no violation was identified. The storage warehouse was visited with an on-duty staff. The chemicals are stored in locked container rooms, and the materials are well sealed and labelled. Material Safety Data Sheets in the storage rooms were checked.
N3 Pollution Prevention			
N3.1 Prevent pollution across the entire site	N3.1.1 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are	Document procedures for emergency spill responses ;	Notice boards for chemical risk grades and emergency treatment guidelines were observed. The treatment procedures for fire, explode, poisoning and suffocation are documented in the safety handbook and the safety handbook was checked.

	minimised from golf course operations	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	Rough grass buffer, mainly Imperata cylindrica, surrounding water bodies are maintained where possible. Eco-friendly outdoor fly trap was observed.
	N3.1.2 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from clubhouse operations	Formal wastewater discharge agreement, if applicable	The hazardous material management plan was checked. The contract with hazardous waste treatment contractor were checked. Catering wastewater is treated with grease interceptor and discharged into the municipal sewer network together with domestic wastewater through a grit chamber. The discharge permit issued by the Municipal Water Resource Bureau was noted.
	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 washing area were visited. It is confirmed that the washing and mixing was conducted on a concrete floor. Washing water is collected through a drainage channel and filtered through one filter pit before discharging. The pesticide containers and package boxes are sent to the hazardous waste storage room.
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 ;	The club hazardous waste management regulations (version 2023) were checked. The hazardous material is disposed by Shanghai Tianhan environmental management Ltd. The contact was checked. The hazardous waste storage room was visited. The storage room is an isolated building with concrete floor, it is well labelled and securely locked, equipments such as emergency alarm and fire extinguishers were observed. The inventory registration form for 2026 was noted. Notice boards for chemical risk grades and emergency treatment guidelines were observed.

		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	The gas station was visited. The station is located in an open space and protected by a locked fence with no-smoking & explosive warning signs. Monitoring CCTV has also been installed. Fire extinguishers and sand box were checked and the equipment are all in good condition. The SOP for gas station and risk notice board were observed.
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	Storm water is collected by the inside lakes through underground pipes or surface runoff. The wastewater test report dated on 2025 September 26 by Shanghai Data Testing Service Technology Ltd was checked.

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	Through long-term research on local climate records, combined with observations of seasonal turf water requirements and trials of irrigation methods, a set of precision irrigation techniques tailored to the golf course has been developed for effectively conserving water resources. The recognition certificate for the irrigation techniques was noted.

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	Spectrum TDR350 meter is used for soil moisture monitoring. A soil sampler made by used golf iron is developed by the staffs for quick accessing the soil moisture condition. Those devices and the irrigation control station were confirmed during the site visit.
	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 monthly water usage record (2025) was checked. Water saving faucets have been installed in the washroom.
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	The irrigation water is extracted from the inside lakes. The pump station was visited, the extraction permit issued by the Municipal Water Resource Bureau is displayed on the entrance wall, the pump station management regulations was checked, the water extraction amount is remotely tracked by Water Resource Bureau and the monitoring device was noticed. Monthly water extraction records (2025) were checked.
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	Around 20000 m² fairway area has been reduced in the 2025 upgrading project. The sketch of modification locations was presented by the club manager.
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 monthly electricity record (2025) was checked.
R2.3 Source energy responsibly	R2.3.1 Measures to source alternative, renewable forms of energy	Understand the energy mix of your electricity supplier;	The grass clippings and wood chips are sent to a biomass power plant own by the parent company. A PV power station project for the club and nearby residential community is on feasibility study stage.

		Explore possible greener energy providers	CIP: Please evaluate the feasibility of using solar street lights.
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 sand yard of the club was visited. It was noticed that the sand collected from the previous upgrading work was reused for daily maintenance work after sieving.
R3.2 Purchase responsibly	R3.2.1 Commit to sustainable purchasing practices	Favour responsible, lower impact products	The procurement procedure was discussed, it is regulated by a set of documents issued by parent group and local government. The document encouraging local products purchasing issued by Worker Union on 9 April 2025 was presented.
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.	Shanghai municipal regulations on management of domestic waste is published in 2019, the waste is classified as hazardous waste, recyclable waste, household food waste and residual waste. The garbage room was visited and it is confirmed that the regulations have been followed and the bins are clearly labelled.
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 daily waste materials are collected by a contractor approved by local environmental sanitation authority. Hazardous waste materials are collected by professional licensed contractors.

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 Skyscan lighting/storm detector has been installed. The list of shelters for lighting/storm weather is displayed on the notice screen at the stater point. Staff are trained with emergency response plans to manage various situations. Photos of training workshop on safety response plan at peak period were presented.
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 is a private club and provide service to its members and guests of members.
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 following activities were noted: 1) 2025-2026 signing ceremony for Master-Apprentice Partnerships 2) the 2025 staff skills competition 3) 2026 training workshop for management staff 4) Frontline workers care and support activities 5) 2025 team building tour at Sheshan national park The staff canteen was visited, and it was well equipped and maintained.

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	Haiyi Swing Empowerment Center was launched by the Club on October 28, 2025. It is a comprehensive platform combining golf-specific fitness training, rehabilitation therapy and swing simulation. The golf museum and a local brand coffee shop shows the club's effort to be a destination of culture, sports and recreation.
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 Shanghai junior golf interschool competition was hold in the Links club on 2025 July 29, the competition is sponsored by YongDa Charity Foundation and supported by the club.

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	It is a key venue and active participant in the Shanghai Golf Club Charity Tour. The club is a sponsor for HSBC junior golf program and the designated court signage was noted. V-Kings Golf Institute has been engaged to provide golf training course. Photos of children's day celebration with families from residential community were noted.
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	A post for awareness of saving and cherishing food was observed in the canteen. CCIP: Please develop more posters and display boards promoting environmental sustainability in the clubhouse and if possible, on the course.
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	1. Set up a research centre on low carbon turf management study. 2. Open a Golf Museum celebrating golf culture with city development history 3. Recycle grass clippings and wood chips for biomass power generation.
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	2 staff have been assigned for annual data input.

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