



GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report Tawast Golf & Country Club Oy

Prepared by independent verifier Pentti Viluksela

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2026
Recertification due: 2031

GEO Certified®

 **GEO
Foundation**
Sustainability in and through golf

“Tawast Golf successfully manages the parkland golf course, catering for nature and for golfers. Supporting the reduction of eutrophication of the lake and naturalising of out-of-play areas enhance biodiversity. Robotic mowers and electricity projects improve resource efficiency. Environmental communication on different channels reach many golfers and stakeholders. I’m looking forward to seeing the results of the biodiversity and renewable energy projects and the increased sustainability information and engagement activities.”

*Pentti Viluksela
(GEO accredited independent verifier)*



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Tawast Golf & Country Club Oy 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.

Tawast Golf & Country Club Oy 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, Tawast Golf & Country Club Oy should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Tawast Golf & Country Club Oy can therefore claim a position as a leader in advancing sustainability in golf – making important contributions in protecting nature, conserving resources and strengthening communities.

The GEO Certified® Report that follows comments on the actions undertaken against the criteria, as observed by the independent verifier during the assurance process.

Certification is nearly always the result of a dedicated team effort resulting in many practical and valuable social and environmental results around the golf course, maintenance facility and clubhouse. These dedication and leadership qualities are an important part of ensuring the resilience of the golf facility and the golf industry into the future and also as part of society's wider effort to pull together for people and planet.

We congratulate all involved.

Jonathan Smith
Founder and Executive Director, GEO Foundation
GEO Certification Ltd. Board Member

Kelli Jerome
Executive Director, GEO Foundation

Carole Kerrey
Director, Certification and Credibility,
GEO Certification Ltd.



Verification and Certification

Verification

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

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

Certification

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

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

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

Credibility

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



Verifier's Report

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

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

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

NATURE			
N1 Habitats and Biodiversity			
Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
N1.1 Understand the site and surroundings	N1.1.1 Sound understanding of the nature and landscape value of the site	General knowledge of the wildlife and habitats on the site	The course is located by the lake Katumajärvi. Landscape is varied with streams, ponds, wetlands, hills, forests and meadows, which provide different habitats for wildlife. The updated Environmental Plan includes nature and landscape protection guidelines. Bird species survey identified 42 nesting and 26 other birds.
	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	There are no nature protection areas on site. A private protection area with a birdwatching tower lies north of the site.
	N1.1.3 Sound understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site, if applicable	There are two historical stone structures on site, protected by the Finnish Heritage Agency. These are clearly marked (no play, drop zone). Vegetation around the structure is minimally managed, as specified in the document " <i>Management of protected areas</i> ".
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	Maintenance is minimised on non-essential areas, identified by player observation. Many small forest areas between and outside playing zones are completely naturalised. Highlight: Mowing of the perimeter and non-play areas has been reduced, leading to more wildflowers to support pollinators and more habitats for insects etc.
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	The updated environmental plan outlines nature and habitat conservation policies. Native species are used when planting trees etc.

		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	Tawast Golf is a supporting member of the Lake Katumajärvi protection association. In 2026, more log bundles were installed in the river at the northern edge of the site to provide habitat for nutrient-consuming micro-organisms, thus reducing eutrophication and supporting biodiversity.
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	Nature protection principles are included in the Environmental plan. Highlight: There are many nesting boxes for birds. A bug hotel has been built near the parking lot, and several more are being planned. There are buffer zones of variable width by the water features. The ponds have natural vegetation.
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	Colonial bentgrass and creeping bentgrass are preferred, especially colonial bentgrass has been found the best for the local climatic and soil conditions. IPM approach is in use. Pesticides are used as the last resort; other methods are preferred. An area for growing rolled turf for greens is being established on a non-playing area.
	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	Soil tests are done every year to provide basis for fertilisation plan. Organic fertilisers are in use. Topdressing added on greens and fairways to improve the clay-rich soil.
	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	Fertilisation plan is based on the soil analysis, including pH. Five greenkeepers have plant protection certification. Sprayer is calibrated once a year. Protective equipment is available and used.

		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	A non-chemical approach is always preferred to chemicals use. Possible outbreaks of snow mould during the summer months are mostly left untreated, as they normally disappear in due time. Topdressing used in the spring to improve the clay-rich soil. Rope is used to remove excess surface moisture. Hand weeding is done in bunkers.
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	Frit fly has been encountered once. Snow mould occurs more often. Greenkeeping staff scout for early signs of diseases on greens when changing flag positions. Greens that have suboptimal construction and weaker grass species (e.g. annual bluegrass) are most vulnerable to diseases.
	N2.3.2 Application of chemicals with full safety precautions	Use legally registered and approved products; Prefer products for the specific weed, pest or disease; Follow legal requirements; Ensure staff are fully qualified to use pesticides; Ensure staff use appropriate protective equipment; Regularly calibrate and test applicators; Dilute and dispose of leftover product on untreated areas of amenity turfgrass	Use of chemicals is kept to a minimum. Possible pest and disease outbreaks are observed to determine the best approach. Five staff members have applicator licenses. Leftover products are disposed of on driving range or a suitable rough.
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	Rescue plan is dated 2015. CCIP: Please update the rescue plan as soon as possible. All chemicals handling takes place on non-impermeable tarmac or concrete surface. Mowing buffer zones around water features vary in width. No chemicals are used near water features.
	N3.1.2 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from clubhouse operations	Formal wastewater discharge agreement, if applicable	Clubhouse and maintenance facility are connected to the municipal water/sewerage network. Machine wash area and on-course toilets have closed wastewater tanks which are emptied by a registered contractor and processed in the municipal water purification plant. Chemicals and other hazardous substances are stored in a locked, ventilated storeroom with concrete floor and raised threshold.
	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	Machinery washed and chemicals handled on tarmac surface. Pesticide containers and applicators are triple rinsed, and the rinse water is disposed of on driving range or suitable rough. Regional Rescue service and Occupational health authority carry out inspections every few years.
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;	List of hazardous substances and materials safety data sheets checked. CIP: Please update the hazardous substances list in a more user-friendly format. Hazardous wastes collected by a registered company. First-aid training provided regularly to staff. First-aid cabinets, including eye-wash bottles, are available. The chemicals storage is locked and has a raised threshold. Maintenance buildings have concrete floors, and the yard has a tarmac surface.

		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	Fuel tanks located on tarmac surface under roof and are equipped with bund tray/double wall construction. CCIP: Please install a fire extinguisher near the fuel tanks. Petrol jerrycans are stored in the lockable storeroom for chemicals. Fuel tanks are included in the fire inspection by the Rescue service.
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 management of clubhouse and maintenance facility provided by the municipal service provider. Wastewaters from machine wash bay and on-course toilets collected in closed tanks, emptied by a registered contractor and processed in the municipal water purification plant. Wash bay has impermeable tarmac surface.

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;	Colonial and creeping bentgrasses have proven to be best for the local circumstances. Irrigation targeted to essential playing surfaces with e.g. sector sprinklers.

		Target irrigation to essential playing surfaces; Prioritise native, drought tolerant species for landscaping and planting	Irrigation water consumption is followed by the data from the pumping station.
R1.2 Maximise water efficiency	R1.2.1 Practical measures to use water more efficiently on the golf course	Schedule irrigation based on informed assessment of soil moisture and weather forecasts; Evaluate new irrigation technologies e.g., central control, precision sprinklers etc.; Provide staff training on efficient irrigation practices; Adjust sprinklers to playing surfaces only	The irrigation system is checked in the beginning and emptied at the end of the season. Maintenance and repairs done as needed. A TDR device is used to measure soil moisture.
	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 consumption data is collected from invoices. CIP: Please consider launching an information campaign encouraging golfers and staff to save water and electricity.
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	Irrigation water has been taken from the lake Katumajärvi since the establishment of the course in 1989. No reporting obligations.
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	Trimming has been reduced in several areas, e.g. around tees and by service roads. There are possibilities for more naturalisation e.g. by the north end of the course. Highlight: Robotic mowers have been taken into use, reducing the use of fossil fuels.
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.)	Energy audit is underway, including the evaluation of solar panel installation, which could be connected to golf cart and electric vehicle charging stations.

			CIP: Please consider launching an information campaign encouraging golfers and staff to save water and electricity. See 1.2.2 above.
R2.3 Source energy responsibly	R2.3.1 Measures to source alternative, renewable forms of energy	Understand the energy mix of your electricity supplier; Explore possible greener energy providers	The present electricity provider supplies low carbon electricity.
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	Use of disposable coffee cups and drink bottles has been reduced, as well as printed scorecards and office paper.
R3.2 Purchase responsibly	R3.2.1 Commit to sustainable purchasing practices	Favour responsible, lower impact products	Procurement guidelines are included in the Environmental plan. Priority is given to eco-labelled and environmentally responsible products. Herbs for the restaurant are grown outside the clubhouse. Many ingredients are locally produced.
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 data is collected from the invoices. Bins for different waste fractions at the clubhouse, in the maintenance facility and on the course are clearly marked.
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	Waste management service providers are registered companies.

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	Health and safety plan, including risk assessment, done regularly with the occupational health service provider. CIP1: as per N3.1.1. above. The course is set up for safe play. Blind shot locations are equipped with bells and "greenkeeper at work" signs, as applicable. First-aid equipment including a defibrillator available at the clubhouse.
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	There is no kind discrimination in membership or visitor policies.
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	Working conditions both in the clubhouse and in the maintenance facility are adequate. Protective equipment is available and used. Induction is done by experienced greenkeepers. Professional development is supported, e.g. in the nearby vocational institute.

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 clubhouse can be used for private functions, and the restaurant welcomes non-golfers as well. Golf course is used for skiing, and its roads for walking outside the golf season.
---	--	---	--

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	Tawast Golf hosts a Naisten Pankki (Women's Bank) charity competition, raising funds to support women's entrepreneurship in developing countries.
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	School pupils are welcomed to the club as part of their physical education classes. The club supports the multi-stakeholder lake protection association (see N1.3.1) through water quality monitoring and water purification projects.
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	Sustainability team has members from greenkeeping, office and restaurant. CCIP: Please find ways to encourage golfers and other stakeholders to take part in environmental and sustainability activities. Highlight: Environmental and sustainability communication is active, including GEO Certified logo on the welcome sign, responsibility webpage, articles in the member magazine, plant name signs, poster on the course and social media posts.
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	Three additional highlights have been published both in <i>sustainable.golf</i> site and in local communication channels. Potential future highlights include renewable energy and biodiversity support (birds, insects).
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	A system is in place to obtain the annual data and enter it into OnCourse. The staff are continuously scouting for improvements in different areas of sustainability.

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