



GEO Certified® Report Hørsholm Golf

Prepared by independent verifier, Ole Riger-Kusk

Certified by GEO Foundation: November 2021
Valid until: November 2024

“Hørsholm Golf Club has for many years implemented initiatives with the result that it can be consistently operated with a low environmental impact. Thus only a limited amount of pesticide is used on the course and consumption of water and fertilizer is low due to careful selection of grasses. The course, in collaboration with Hørsholm municipality, is well integrated into the surrounding environment. It is recommended to work even more on external communication with partners and stakeholders in future because the club has been impressive in documenting their progress towards the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).”

Ole Riger-Kusk

GEO accredited independent verifier



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that **Hørsholm Golf** 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.

Hørsholm Golf 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 set for the future, **Hørsholm Golf** should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, **Hørsholm Golf** 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

Richard Allison
Manager, GEO Certified Facilities



Verification and Certification

Verification

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

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

Certification

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

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

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

Credibility

GEO Certified® is part of the ISEAL Alliance, a group of the world's foremost credible certification systems including Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, Forest Stewardship Council, Marine Stewardship Council and many others. GEO Foundation earned and retains full membership of the ISEAL Alliance global association following a rigorous evaluation against the ISEAL Codes of Credibility in Sustainability Standards and Certification. The ISEAL Codes cover standard-setting, assurance, and monitoring and evaluation. Find out more at www.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	Map all habitats and vegetation types on the site; Regularly update landscape / biodiversity surveys	The club has an in-depth understanding of the course's integration into the surroundings and how the course can be included and enhance the overall biodiversity in the area. It was explained thoroughly during the audit, what principles and initiatives the club

			has implemented since the last audit and how the course integrates and strengthens biodiversity in relation to the environment, which is done in collaboration with the municipality of Hørsholm to ensure maximum effect.
	N1.1.2 Knowledge of legal designations for protected areas, habitats and species	Understand legal responsibilities for protected landscapes and species; Record and monitor protected, endangered, or rare species found on the site	The club works closely with the municipality of Hørsholm, which is the authority for the course. Consultations are held regularly with the municipality in relation to the construction and adjustment of course elements, and how these best enhance biodiversity in interaction with the environment and in this connection there is a special focus on protected species on and around the course.
	N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site	There are archeological findings on the course. Findings are continuously mapped in connection with various excavations. Most recently under the supervision of an archaeologist from the National Museum. However, they found nothing.
N1.2 Opportunities to naturalise the course	N1.2.1 Measures taken to identify and minimise the required area of managed turfgrass	Observe, track and / or monitor golfer play	An adjustment of the mowed area is carried out on an ongoing basis. The adjustment is based on the principle that areas that are not directly included in golf must not be cut, although it is also important that the time for a round must not be significantly affected by elements on the course.
N1.3 Actively manage habitats for wildlife	N1.3.1 Projects to manage habitats in the best way for wildlife and golf	Regularly review and follow a habitat management plan; Prioritise native species when planting and landscaping	The management plan includes initiatives for the course to appear as natural as possible in the landscape. Areas are sown with seeds of plants that are naturally occurring in the area. The big violence is not managed, which is why it will be overgrown with plants that occur naturally in the area. Great emphasis is placed on sowing / planting in such a way that the course all year is beautiful play because of interesting colors on the course. It can be recommended that consideration concerning color in the vegetation is not given too high a priority compared to consideration for biodiversity and the integration of the course in the environment. The clubhouse consists of a very beautiful old building, around which a beautiful landscape has been established. The outer facade of the clubhouse is classified as worthy of preservation.
N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species		Measures are implemented so that sensitive plant species that are given high priority are moved to areas (typically at a good distance from the golf course) where they can develop naturally and are not affected by management and players.

N2 Turfgrass			
N2.1 Maintain optimum turf and soil health	N2.1.1 Appropriate turfgrass varieties adapted to climatic and other geomorphological factors	Select appropriate grass species for climate	Hørsholm Golf Club is managed almost completely without the use of pesticides and with a very low consumption of fertilizer and water. In order to implement this principle grass varieties such as Festuca rubra and Agrostis tenuis / capillaris on greens and Festuca rubra and Lolium perenne on fairways have been selected. These grass mixtures make it possible to have a good and robust course to play and with appropriate mechanical care to reduce the environmental impact of the course's management to a minimum. The club has achieved remarkable results as a result of many years of focused work on this area.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		Soil samples for analysis are taken on an ongoing basis and the results are used to determining the extent and type of fertilization and the mechanical management of the course.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	As a result of the comprehensive analysis of the soil, a program for fertilization can be established which together with the choice of grass varieties reduces the consumption of fertilizer to a minimum.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding	The interplay between the choice of grass types and mechanical care has made it possible to almost completely refrain from using pesticides in management of the course. It is very remarkable that it is possible to achieve a golf course of this very high quality on the basis of this strategy for management. Certain areas of the rough are managed by the use of cows (cows are used due to their particularly gentle way of caring for the grass and because they usually omit the many wildflowers. They are also more efficient around our water holes where they eat reeds, etc.). Previously, the club has tried to have sheep on greens and fairways, but unfortunately it caused problems causing burning spots on the greens, that is way this experiment had to stop. The club has a machine park with many and efficient machines for mechanical care of the course.
N2.3 Use chemicals responsibly	N2.3.1 Application of chemicals only when necessary to prevent or cure defined / identified turf health issues	Establish patterns and levels of risk for pests and diseases; Scout the course daily for early signs of pests and disease; Accurate pest and disease identification; Map and track pest and disease hotspots;	A very limited amount of pesticides is used. Pesticides are only used in the establishment phase of new elements on the course.

		Establish pest and disease thresholds	
	N2.3.2 Application of chemicals with full safety precautions	Use only legally registered and approved products; Ensure staff are fully qualified and licenced to use pesticides; Regularly calibrate and test applicators; Use appropriate protective equipment; Dilute and dispose of leftover product on untreated areas of turf	A very limited amount of pesticides is used. Pesticides are only used in the establishment phase of new elements on the course.
N3 Pollution Prevention			
N3.1 Prevent pollution across the entire site	N3.1.1 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from golf course operations	Document procedures for emergency spill responses; Maintain mowing buffer zones around water and all ecologically sensitive areas; Maintain spraying and spreading buffer zones around water and all ecologically sensitive areas; Create a map / aerial visual reproduction, drawing etc of the course showing buffer zones and no-spray, no-spread areas.	There is a plan of actions concerning accidents with spills (i.e. spills of fertilizer) on the course. 10 m wide zones have been laid out around lakes and water courses where no fertilizer is used. Rough is not fertilized.
	N3.1.2 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from clubhouse operations	Ensure all hazardous materials are safely and securely stored; Ensure compliance with all required standards and systems for hazardous waste and wastewater discharge	The clubhouse is heated with a heat pump, and there is therefore no tank for heating oil at the clubhouse. Waste, including hazardous waste, is sorted and stored in accordance with regulations from the municipality of Hørsholm and the waste company (Norfors). Wastewater from the clubhouse and the management facility is lead to the municipal sewer system in accordance with a permit granted by the municipality.
	N3.1.3 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from maintenance facility operations	Ensure wash areas are on impermeable, leak-free surfaces; Mixing and loading of pesticides and fertilisers over an impermeable surface; Triple rinse pesticide containers and applicators	Management facility and washing area are designed according to instructions from and approved by Hørsholm Municipality. The washing area is thus designed with paving and drainage to the municipal sewer system in accordance with an outlet permit from the municipality.
N3.2 Safely manage hazardous substances	N3.2.1 Legal compliance in the storage, handling, application and safe disposal of all hazardous substances	Maintain a register of hazardous materials available to authorised staff; Safe storage in secure and ventilated concrete or metal building; Sufficient storage capacity;	Chemicals, including hazardous chemicals and fuel, are stored in accordance with regulations and instructions from Hørsholm Municipality. The conditions are checked and approved by the municipality. The conditions have also been inspected during this

		Impermeable flooring; Spill containment kits present; Emergency wash area; Fire extinguisher in the immediate area; Secondary containment for fuel, either externally constructed, or integrally manufactured; Regular inspection of storage tanks	audit and have been found sufficient. Tank facilities at the management facility are covered by a municipal scheme for tank facilities, which includes inspection and testing every 5 years.
N3.3 Responsibly manage waste / storm water	N3.3.1 Appropriate wastewater usage and discharge licences	Wastewater discharge licence; Appropriate treatment of machinery wash water (impermeable surface, oil / grease / clipping separation)	There is a valid permit for discharging wastewater from the clubhouse and management facility to the municipal sewer system. Washing machines takes place in an area with paving and with drainage to the municipal sewer system in accordance to the applicable drainage permit.

RESOURCES			
R1 Water			
Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
R1.1 Minimise water demand	R1.1.1 Measures to reduce the need to consume water	Target irrigation to essential playing surfaces only	Only greens, tees and 4 % of fairways and a very small part of the practice area are irrigated. This means that the consumption of water for irrigation is very low and it can probably not be reduced further if the course is to have good playing conditions all year round.
R1.2 Maximise water efficiency	R1.2.1 Practical measures to use water more efficiently on the golf course	Conduct regular irrigation performance checks; Provide staff training on efficient irrigation practices; Ensure effective application of water to target areas;	The club has a relatively new mechanical system for irrigating the course. The system is controlled by modern software. Irrigation is conducted on the basis of weather data and the greenkeepers experience. Greens and tees are equipped with modern and precise sprinklers that are continuously maintained and adjusted.

		Ensure irrigation schedules are informed by weather patterns and soil moisture analysis	
	R1.2.2 Practical measures to use water more efficiently in buildings	Audit water use regularly; Review bills frequently and look for irregularities; Encourage water-saving practices amongst staff and visitors; Categorise and track water consumption	Consumption of water in the clubhouse and management facility is monitored, and the water consumption has been relatively constant over the years. A large number of water-saving initiatives have been conducted in i.e. toilets and kitchen.
R1.3 Source water responsibly	R1.3.1 Measures towards alternative, lower quality sources of water	Ensure appropriate water abstraction permit and reporting, as required	Water used in the clubhouse and management facility comes from a municipal water supply. Water for irrigation of the course comes from the clubs own approved drilling. The water from this drilling does not comply with the requirements for drinking water, which is why it is only used for irrigation.
R2 Energy			
R2.1 Reduce energy demand	R2.1.1 Measures to reduce the amount of energy consumed in course maintenance	Minimise areas of managed turf to reduce mowing, irrigation, and turf inputs	Water consumption for irrigating the course is very low i.e. because only a very small part of the course is irrigated, which results in a correspondingly low energy consumption. Pumps are maintained according to the manufacturer's instruction which also helps to minimize energy consumption.
R2.2 Maximise energy efficiency	R2.2.1 Measures to use energy and fuels more efficiently in buildings	Audit energy use regularly; Regularly review bills; Categorise and track energy consumption	An audit concerning the energy consumption in the clubhouse and management facility has been carried out. This audit led to the installation of a heat pump for heating the clubhouse, which has led to a significant reduction in energy consumption in the clubhouse. Power-saving bulbs are installed everywhere indoors and outdoors.
R2.3 Source energy responsibly	R2.3.1 Measures to source alternative, renewable forms of energy	Determine potential sources of renewable energy in the area and on-site, through renewable energy providers	The electricity used at the course comes from the normal supply system, which for approx. 70 % consists of green power from wind turbines, solar cells and biomass. It may be considered whether it could be relevant to install solar panels on the golf course, as solar panels produce electricity at the time of the year when the consumption of electricity on a golf course is highest.
R3 Materials			
R3.1 Reduce materials demand	R3.1.1 Products and materials selection based on necessity, including	Undertake a review of materials consumed	Waste is sorted so that recycling and reuse are maximized. It may be advisable to focus further on local procurement.

	opportunities for recycled, reused and locally sourced alternatives		
R3.2 Purchase responsibly	R3.2.1 Practical use of an ethical / environmental purchasing policy	Adopt a sustainable, or ethical / environmental purchasing policy to maximise the use of locally sourced goods and goods made from recycled, recyclable and certified materials	Local suppliers are used to some extent. It may be advisable to examine the possibilities for further use of local suppliers. It may also be advisable to investigate the possibility of enter into an agreement with the contract holder of the kitchen in the clubhouse for the use of organic raw ingredients.
R3.3 Reuse and recycle	R3.3.1 Waste stream separation for maximum recycling and re-use opportunity	Demonstrate waste separation, reuse and recycling; Track how much waste goes to landfill, or is reused / recycled	Waste is sorted according to instructions from the municipality of Hørsholm and the waste company Marius Pedersen. This maximizes recycling and reuse of waste. Further sorting of waste will not lead to increased recycling or reuse. Sorted waste is disposed to Norfors/Marius Pedersen for further environmentally appropriate treatment.
R3.4 Demonstrate legal compliance	R3.4.1 Compliance with all local and regional waste management regulations	Use authorised waste and recycling contractor for general, hazardous, industrial and green waste	According to current legislation, all waste in Denmark must either be delivered to a waste company or an approved private company. Hørsholm Golf Club complies with all legislation when handling waste, which maximizes reuse and recycling.

COMMUNITY			
C1 Outreach			
Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
C1.1 Diversify access and provide multi-functionality	C1.1.1 Social and recreational activities at the facility		The golf course is used for other purposes that can be combined with golf. The course is used i.e. for skiing if snow is present.

C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		In recent years, Hørsholm Golfclub has completed the Danish Championships in paragolf with a lot of volunteers to help. Likewise, Hørsholm Golfclub has also fundraising tournaments (Make A Wish) for the benefit of sick children. For the season 2022 the club has an agreement with another aid organization for a big tournament.
C1.3 Establish active community partnerships	C1.3.1 Positive and constructive engagement with neighbours, the local community and other groups	Create a 'sustainability working group'	The club ensures a good relationship with the neighbors by regular contacting them. Agreements have thus been entered with a farm concerning fencing and the use of adjacent areas.
C2 Golfers & Employees			
C2.1 Improve health and wellbeing	C2.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities		The club has a wide range of members (young/old/women/men) and the course is played intensively at all times of the day, week and year. During this audit it could be ascertained that the course is used extendedly even in the morning.
C2.2 Be open and inclusive	C2.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies	Demonstrate inclusive policies for members and visitors	Hørsholm Golf Club has initiated an impressive work to document the club's opportunities to work according to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This work includes preparation of comprehensive and visually very beautiful information material to members, green fee players, neighbours and the municipality. It will be exciting to follow this work in the future.
C2.3 Employ fairly and safely, and provide career opportunities	C2.3.1 Ethical and legal employment, working conditions and professional development	Follow all relevant national legislation and best practice for employment, health & safety etc	The Danish Working Environment Authority carries out both notified and unannounced inspections of the working environment on the course. These inspections have not resulted in injunctions. The club reported an accident (a lift) in 2019, which however, did not result in an order from the Danish Working Environment Authority.
C3 Communications			
C3.1 Engage golfers and members	C3.1.1 Communications activities that raise awareness and understanding amongst members and visitors	Provide information on the facility's sustainability commitments, actions, or achievements	The club has a very active website and regularly sends informative emails to the members. Mails have replaced the club news magazine to reduce paper consumption. The club is to some extent collaborating with the universities for optimization of management of the course, including taking care of the lakes on

			the course. In addition, there has been collaboration with the university for reducing energy consumption on the course.
C3.2 Celebrate and promote sustainability	C3.2.1 Activities that raise awareness and engage people in the wider community	Provide evidence of external communications and community engagement	The club has to some extent communicated with the surroundings i.e. with newspapers and local media. It can be recommended to expand this collaboration especially because the club contributes with many positive initiatives for improving the environment on and around the course.

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