GEO Certified® Report
Golfclub Breitenloo

Prepared by independent verifier, Hector Forcen

Certified by GEO Foundation: November 2022
Valid until: November 2025

‘Golf Club Breitenloo regularly advances its commitment to the environment and its efforts for sustainability and is a clear example of golfing tradition professionally managed using the latest technology. The club is aware of the need to do things a little better every day and proof of this is that the facility has been transformed over the past number of years to improve their course playing conditions and environmental credentials. Wildflower meadow, naturalized roughs and maintained turf are professionally managed, along with creating awareness of the local habitats and biodiversity.’

Hector Forcen

(GEO accredited independent verifier)

Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that **Golfclub Breitenloo** 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.

Golfclub Breitenloo 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, **Golfclub Breitenloo** should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, **Golfclub Breitenloo** can therefore claim a position as a leader in advancing sustainability in golf – making important contributions in protecting nature, conserving resources and strengthening communities.

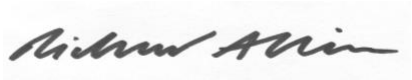
The GEO Certified® Report that follows comments on the actions undertaken against the criteria, as observed by the independent verifier during the assurance process.

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.isealalliance.org**

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

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

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

NATURE

N1 Habitats and Biodiversity

Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
N1.1 Understand the site and surroundings	**N1.1.1 Sound understanding of the nature and landscape value of the site**	Map all habitats and vegetation types on the site; Regularly update landscape / biodiversity surveys	Golf Club Breitenloo is located in the canton of Zurich near the city and the airport, surrounded by agricultural land and natural forests with an important ecological value since they are the habitat of numerous species, both animal and plant.

				The golf course was built on land that was a glacier in its time and proof of this are the numerous glacial rocks that the club decided to keep along the course so as not to forget the geological origins of the land. The club has plans with surfaces, habitats and areas.
		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 is seriously working on environmental issues and cooperates closely with local authorities and associations.
		N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site	No archaeological, historical or cultural designation are present (or known) on the course.
	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	Some rough areas on the course have been naturalised with carried grasslands and wildflowers meadows. During site visit confirmed, enough surface area for further nature development is available. The club has acquired a plot attached to the course where there was an old fish farm raft and is naturalizing it in an interesting project that will take several years to complete. The club has its own GPS and makes continuous updates to its plans and maps with different data of the existing components on the plot.
	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 club is working, for several years, with prestigious professionals in the environmental field and they have carried out various studies and works that can be consulted. In hole 14 there is an area with an important amphibian habitat. Due to climate change and rising temperatures, numerous trees are being affected by diseases and insects, and a program has been launched to replace species with others more adapted to current conditions. About 20 trees are planted each year. **CIP:** The club should create a habitat management plan. **CIP:** Amphibian hibernacula, Kingfisher nest and Insect hotel are some project ideas that the club could launch in the coming years.
	N1.4 Conserve key species	**N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species**		With the help of local farmers and specialized companies, each year they carry out the maintenance of the trees in the golf course, composting branches and using the wood in neighbouring farms. Meadows are not fertilized to maintain the natural flora. Overgrown and low edges / banks in ponds are kept protecting species that lives in small waters and lakes.
	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	The head greenkeeper keeps searching and testing the most suitable turf varieties. Greens are well maintained during all the season and composition is about 60% Agrostis stolonifera and 40% Poa annua. **CIP:** The club could consider carrying out trials with fine fescue and agrostis capillaris, more sustainable species that I believe will be key in the near future of zero phyto to which the country is heading.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		On the greens deep aeration is practiced during spring and autumn and micro spikes and top-dressed program every monday during the season, this is one of the key operations to keep greens in perfect condition throughout the season. Topdressing and aeration programme on approaches, tees and fairways is being implemented with excellent results. The club keeps investing in new machinery more efficient and productive for the greenkeeping department. Soil tests are carried out more as a precautionary measure and guidance as fertiliser is kept to a bare minimum.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	In terms of fertilization the applications are made mainly of liquids with trace elements with a supply of some granular fertilizer only in specific occasions if needed. The amounts in recent years have been reduced.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	**N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management**	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding	Mowers cylinders and knives are sharpened regularly. Machines are washed every time after they have been used. Dew moisture and leaves are removed to keep the turf as dry as possible. Standard good practises (daily inspections, local weeding etc) are used to reduce herbicide use as much as possible.
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; Establish pest and disease thresholds	Diseases are closely monitored, and when problems are noticed, local corrective actions are taken. The use of pesticides is kept to minimum and only curative applications are made with cultural efforts for prevention are prioritized. The use of new turf varieties on the greens together with the mechanical works carried out (including snow cleaning during winter months) has reduced the number of fungicidal treatments for winter diseases. It is important to emphasize the careful and studied nutritional program that reduces the applications of N to minimal helping to control diseases.

	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	Only legislated chemicals are used. The use of phytosanitary products has been reduced to a minimum. The applications are made by trained and qualified employees using the necessary security measures. The sprayer has a cabin to protect the applicator. Ecological conditions and weather are considered before the application is carried out. Leftover products are diluted and sprayed on the driving range before cleaning the tank.
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.	The club is respecting the security perimeters established by Swiss law in humid and natural areas. **CIP:** The club should prepare an emergency spill response plan.
	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	Contracts for disposal of hazardous waste from the facility are established with external local companies that are specialists in waste management. Wastewater is led to the municipal wastewater treatment plant.
	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	In the workshop all drums with oils for machinery maintenance have their corresponding anti-spill containment system. The machine's washing area has an impermeable pit that is emptied by external companies, taking the content to the recycling points stipulated by the regulations of the canton.
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; Impermeable flooring; Spill containment kits present; Emergency wash area; Fire extinguisher in the immediate area;	All fuel tanks are installed according to legislation and have approved inspections and controls. Records of products and treatments are maintained in a suitable room for the storage of phytosanitary products. Hazardous waste is provided to a licensed contractor. Fire extinguishers are placed in locations with fire risks. They are inspected annually by a certified company.

			Secondary containment for fuel, either externally constructed, or integrally manufactured; Regular inspection of storage tanks	
	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)	The wash bay outside the machine hall has an impermeable surface and is emptied by external companies, taking the content to the recycling points stipulated by the regulations of the canton.

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	In 2020, under the direction of golf course architect Christoph Städler, bunkers and the irrigation system were modernized with 3 irrigation lines in fairways reducing consumption and considerably increasing efficiency. Only irrigates when is necessary based on the course manager and irrigation technician experience in combination with soil moisture analysis and weather station data. Measurements are made with moisture sensor before planning the night irrigation to adjust the amounts applied. Surfactants and penetrants are used to improve water infiltration and soil moisture retention.
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; Ensure irrigation schedules are informed by weather patterns and soil moisture analysis	Efficiency has been achieved thanks to a modern irrigation system with individual sprinkler control, quick valves for hand-watering, nozzle technology has also allowed an improvement in distribution and uniformity on the application of water. The pumping system was renewed with a modern filter system, improving efficiency with considerable savings in electricity consumption. The club has his own weather station. The irrigation system has a central computer with modern software that helps in the efficiency of each irrigation day. Both the irrigation system and the pumping system are checked and serviced every year.

				Soil moisture sensor used regularly by the assistant before irrigation programming. **CIP:** The club consider the possibility to audit the irrigation system in a close future.
		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	The clubhouse is of recent construction and is very well equipped. Equipments of the latest technology and quality have been installed. Water saving activities are in place including the use of low-flow urinals and toilets, pressure reduction nozzles on taps and water-efficient dishwashers and washing machines are installed. Drinking water tests are performed every year.
	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	The club has legal access to extract water for irrigation. The club is studying the possibility of increasing the number of lakes to be more autonomous in irrigation water. All current lakes are interconnected and receive rainwater and drainage. The water consumption is read and reported to the municipality that is the supplier of freshwater to the clubhouses.
	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	The bunkers were extensively renovated using materials that make them more efficient and reduce working hours during storms. The naturalized areas of the club have been increased. The maintained rough has been diminished. And adjusted fertilization program together with the application of growth regulators is allowing to reduce the mowing frequency some areas with the consequent energy saving that it supposes. The head greenkeeper is helped by a computer program when planning work, treatments, and other information, being a highly valued tool and in a certain way helping to be more efficient in the daily maintenance of the club.
	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	The new clubhouse was inaugurated on May 22, 2010 - a modern building with an elegant restaurant and bar, a large, slightly raised veranda and a spacious area for reception, administration, and the pro shop. Clearly the club, is fully aware of its “energy-use” responsibilities, has installed several energies saving measures including low energy lighting and motions sensors, is switching from more traditional energy consuming lighting to LED lighting and in coming years the club hopes to be fully equipped with LEDs.

				They have 5 electric buggies, but they are only authorized with a medical certificate, the club's policy is that people exercise and walk while playing golf. For some years now, the club has been trying to promote energy saving measures among its members and proof of this is the bell to leave electric cars or other devices disconnected during the winter closing period.
	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	On hole 12 they have toilets that are electrically powered by energy from solar panels. The club is working on an alternative energy project that consists of the installation of solar panels both on the roof of the clubhouse and in the maintenance warehouse.
	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**	Undertake a review of materials consumed	The club works with a local waste management company for recycling. All waste is stored according to legislation. **CIP:** The club could study the possibility to prepare his own compost system in the future.
	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 distributors are used. As with most restaurants nowadays, local products are preferred if it is economically viable. **CIP:** Could develop a more structured, formal sustainable purchasing policy.
	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	The club keeps internal record/bills/invoices of annual quantities and all fractions of produced. The waste is derived from hazardous and household waste. Almost all waste is recycled or reused, including PET, aluminium, metals, glass, paper and cardboard. Materials from the kitchen and maintenance area such as detergents, oils, lubricants, pesticides and batteries are collected and disposed by specialized company.
	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	Authorized waste and recycling contractors are used for both housekeeping waste, industrial and hazardous waste. Waste is collected by the municipal contractor and the specialized recycling company. Regarding the golf course and its maintenance, all regulations are complied with.

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 Breitenloo Golf Club is a family private club with a limited number of members and is one of the leading golf courses in Switzerland. Founded in 1964 as a private club. Have 600 members and, in addition to a unique club life, have a very well-kept, recently redesigned 18-hole course, a diverse training facility and a modern clubhouse with a stylish restaurant. The club is characterized by a friendly and family atmosphere. Members approach each other openly and treat each other warmly. The club celebrate unforgettable parties and enjoy the great ambience and the very special spirit in Breitenloo together. Great importance is attached to the next generation of golfers. The junior training, led with great commitment by our pros, is very popular. Company meetings are held in the clubhouse.
C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	**C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes**		Golf Breitenloo competition program includes 1 annual charity event which raises a significant sum of money for a local children's hospital thanks to the generosity of its members.
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'	Within the public golf course there are marked trails to practice hiking and horse riding. Every year the club organizes a party for the residents of the area in which about 60 people who are not golfers from the area gather for dinner. During the hunting season, the greenkeepers invite the hunters of the area to hot drinks in the maintenance warehouse, thus creating a very good atmosphere with the community of the area. head greenkeeper inform members regularly through a greenkeeping notes on the web page. The club gives free plots of land to nearby farmers who use them to graze their cows. **CIP: The club should create a Sustainability working group.**

	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 takes care of its employees and makes available non-alcoholic beverages, coffee, sunscreen, uniforms and all the necessary safety equipment for the correct and safe performance of daily tasks. Staff have golfing privileges. Defibrillators are installed on the club house and staff if formed every year. Apple trees, pear trees and other fruit trees are found on the course which produce delicious fruits and apple juices are made by the greenkeepers.
	C2.2 Be open and inclusive	**C2.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies**	Demonstrate inclusive policies for members and visitors	Golf Club Breitenloo is a private golf course open to members and green fees which enjoy a magnificent golf course and excellent restaurant.
	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	Greenkeeping staff receive regular education on pesticide handling, habitat management, health & safety, and waste administration. Free working clothes, employee locker rooms, lunchroom, personal protection equipment, and first aid is available.
	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 truly promotes awareness within the employee community with respect to energy and safety aspects. **CIP:** The club should communicate its environmental activities to the members.
	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	Golf Breitenloo is a private club of members who are properly informed of all activities and actions carried out in the club.

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