



GEO Certified[®]

GEO Certified[®] Report Golf Engadin St Moritz Ag Zuoz

Prepared by independent verifier, Dominik Scheibler

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

GEO Certified[®]

 **GEO
Foundation**
Sustainability in and through golf

'The golf course at Zuoz-Madulain belonging to Golf Club Engadin is a great place for nature with many outstanding features for biodiversity. The overall management of Golf Club Engadin facilities is on a good way towards sustainable golf. I am looking forward to seeing improvements at Zuoz concerning enhancing soil fertility on the fairways and maintained roughs, and also infrastructure improvements to the secondary maintenance facility.'

Dominik Scheibler

(GEO accredited independent verifier)



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that **Golf Club Engadin St Moritz Ag Zuoz** 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.

Golf Club Engadin St Moritz Ag Zuoz 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, **Golf Club Engadin St Moritz Ag Zuoz** should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, **Golf Club Engadin St Moritz Ag Zuoz** 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



Verifier's Report

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

THEMES	ACTION AREAS
Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitats & Biodiversity • Turfgrass management • Pollution prevention
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Energy • Materials
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	Maps and aerial images are available. A green management plan containing the natural habitats is available.

			<p>The implementation of a GIS is planned.</p> <p>The golf course was built in 2003. Before, the land was used for intensive agriculture. The golf course is therefore definitively an improvement and an opportunity for nature.</p>
	<p>N1.1.2 Knowledge of legal designations for protected areas, habitats and species</p>	<p>Understand legal responsibilities for protected landscapes and species; Record and monitor protected, endangered, or rare species found on the site</p>	<p>The golf course is situated in the En-valley between Zuoz and Madulain on the south-east side and slope of the valley.</p> <p>A floodplain of national importance (Federal Inventory of Floodplains of National Importance, No. 188, San Batrumieu) is also located in this part of the valley. The river En was revitalized in the year 2009 in this section. The golf course also borders on two grasslands of national importance (Federal Inventory of Dry Grasslands of National Importance (DGS), No. 8988, Pradatsch Grand and No. 8991 Pradatsch), situated on the slopes of the valley south-east of the golf course.</p> <p>The wild and dry grasslands on the golf course, with steep slopes, old dry walls and bushy areas are a wonderful habitat for insects, reptiles and birds. There is a spot where a rare ant species is especially fostered. → Highlight</p>
	<p>N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage</p>	<p>Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site</p>	<p>There are no historic buildings on the site of the golf course Zuoz. On the other side of the valley lies the railway line of the Rhaetian Railway in the UNESCO World Heritage Albula / Bernina area.</p>
<p>N1.2 Opportunities to naturalise the course</p>	<p>N1.2.1 Measures taken to identify and minimise the required area of managed turfgrass</p>	<p>Observe, track and / or monitor golfer play</p>	<p>There is only little potential to minimise the required area of managed turf grass.</p>
<p>N1.3 Actively manage habitats for wildlife</p>	<p>N1.3.1 Projects to manage habitats in the best way for wildlife and golf</p>	<p>Regularly review and follow a habitat management plan; Prioritise native species when planting and landscaping</p>	<p>A recently updated green management plan is available. In the future, the plan can be managed and displayed in the GIS.</p> <p>The wildflower meadows are not cut until fairly late in the fall (Aug – Oct), and the cutting is used as horse fodder. A part of the area is also used as a pasture.</p> <p>The management and quality of the natural habitats are on a high level.</p> <p>CIP: Discuss if the wild grass areas near Pradatsch and Pradatsch Grand could be grazed with horses and if the area could be opened more by taking out more trees.</p>

<p>N1.4 Conserve key species</p>	<p>N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species</p>		<p>With the building of the golf course, four new ponds were constructed. Amphibians, dragonflies and other insects quickly found and used these ponds. Therefore, it is important to keep all waterbodies as free as possible from pesticides and fertilizers. This can be achieved through technical measures like sparing use of such products, strictly respected no-spray/no-spread-zones and allowing a maximum area of wetlands /wet meadows for natural self-cleaning around the ponds.</p> <p>There are very well constructed large stone piles with wood and soil, and also old dry walls present. These structures are of high importance for snakes and other reptiles and are well managed. → Highlight</p> <p>CIP: Keep the open grassland on the golf course as free as possible from trees in favor of sky larks, other ground-breeding birds, insects and reptiles. If more structures on the golf course are needed, prefer low growing native bushes.</p>
<p>N2 Turfgrass</p>			
<p>N2.1 Maintain optimum turf and soil health</p>	<p>N2.1.1 Appropriate turfgrass varieties adapted to climatic and other geomorphological factors</p>	<p>Select appropriate grass species for climate</p>	<p>The used seed mixtures for turf grass are rich in species and cultivars. Consulting by Eric Schweizer AG has enabled the creation of resilient special mixtures suited for this dry, alpine climate.</p> <p>A trial plot at the golf course allows for testing and cultivating of seed mixtures since 2007.</p> <p>CIP: Evaluate if the use of Festuca ovina (or other drought-resistant grass species) on the fairways and primarily on the maintained rough could reduce the need for irrigation.</p>
	<p>N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition</p>		<p>The use of heavy machines during wet weather conditions is generally avoided.</p> <p>The soil beneath the fairways is extremely compacted due to the use of stone mills while constructing the golf course.</p> <p>CIP: Consider optimizing soil fertility, structure, and humus formation (e. g. by using substantial amounts of compost) on the fairways.</p>
	<p>N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout</p>	<p>Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis</p>	<p>Three-yearly soil tests (or tests as needed) are done and available in a reporting tool (Punctus). These reports are discussed.</p> <p>Organic fertilizers do not work well due to the low temperatures.</p>

	the year to avoid over-fertilisation		<p>Rhizo-Mic-products (biostimulant) are applied on the greens every two weeks in the spring and the fall.</p> <p>CIP: Consider mulching maintained turf areas like fairways, driving range and tees to further reduce the need for fertilizer.</p>
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	<p>Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding</p>	<p>Removal of surface moisture is performed daily (rolling or mowing).</p> <p>Weeding by hand further reduced the use of pesticides.</p>
N2.3 Use chemicals responsibly	N2.3.1 Application of chemicals only when necessary to prevent or cure defined / identified turf health issues	<p>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</p>	<p>The course is scouted daily for early signs of pests and disease.</p> <p>Dealing with snow mould and other fungi is a challenge due to the long duration of snow cover but is handled very well.</p> <p>The mowing height on the greens is set to a minimum of 4 mm, which prevents many problematic issues.</p> <p>Experience and training by the greenkeeper association allows for accurate pest and disease identification.</p> <p>Thanks to well-defined thresholds, the use of pesticides has been further reduced.</p> <p>Chemicals are used very sparingly and thoughtfully. In 2021, it was possible to do without fungicides and insecticides altogether on the fairways. → Highlight</p>
	N2.3.2 Application of chemicals with full safety precautions	<p>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</p>	<p>Only legally registered and approved products are used, except propiconazole which was still in store. The approval of this chemical as plant protective agent was revoked in 2020 in Switzerland and therefore shouldn't be used anymore.</p> <p>Two staff members are fully qualified and licenced to use pesticides.</p> <p>New GPS-controlled applicators with single control allow for efficient and targeted application of chemicals. The used machine has a fully enclosed cabin.</p> <p>Protective equipment is available in the maintenance facility and on the used machine.</p> <p>Leftover product is diluted and disposed of on untreated fairways or correctly discarded.</p>

			CIP: Have the propiconazole removed by a licenced contractor
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.	An emergency spill response plan was not available. The mowing buffer zones around water bodies were too narrow in some places. Spraying and spreading buffer zones around water bodies and all other ecologically sensitive areas are defined and ensured by GPS-control. In the future, it will be possible to map and display mowing buffer zones, no-spray and no-spread areas with the planed GIS-software. CIP: Mowing buffer zones should be implemented around all water bodies and broadened to about 3 m of semi-rough / hard-rough (ideally wet meadows).
	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	No irregularities observed. Hazardous waste is disposed of correctly. Wastewater discharge licence is present.
	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	The main maintenance facility is located on the golf course of Samedan. The wash area at Samedan has impermeable, leak-free surfaces. Mixing and loading of pesticides and fertilisers is done over an impermeable surface. Applicators are well rinsed. Pesticide containers are rinsed and disposed of correctly and promptly. CIP: The situation in the maintenance facility in Zuoz is sufficient for certification, but should be improved in the future, especially concerning the floors and wash area.
N3.2 Safely manage hazardous substances	N3.2.1 Legal compliance in the storage, handling, application and safe	Maintain a register of hazardous materials available to authorised staff; Safe storage in secure and ventilated concrete or metal building;	All mandatory practices (described on the left) are fully complied with and are on a high standard. First aid and emergency response procedures are at hand.

	disposal of all hazardous substances	Sufficient storage capacity; 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	
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)	Wastewater discharge licence is present. An oil, grease and clipping separation is present at the wash area in Samedan.

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	Irrigation practices and considerations were discussed. A reduced irrigation of the fairways and especially the maintained rough should be possible (see also CIP at N2.1.1).
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	Irrigation software (Site-pro / Toro) is used. Remote control is possible. The irrigation system was built in 2003 and is in good condition. The areas can be irrigated block-wise or separately, as needed. The turf of the driving range is only partly irrigated.

	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	All mandatory practices (described on the left) are complied with.
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 abstraction permit is present. CIP: Discuss if there is a possibility to use water directly from the river En or from ground water instead of drinking water.
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	See N1.2.1 It was possible to spare fossil fuels by using hybrid mowers. → Highlight
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 club house is heated via a community heating feed with wood located at the village S-chanf. The club house is quite new and well insulated.
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 energy provider provides electricity from hydropower plants and other renewable sources (about 87%). The remaining part is based on natural gas. CIP1: Consider purchasing electricity that has the nature-made star label. CIP2: Discuss if there is a possibility to purchase self- or locally produced energy, e.g power from the nearby biogas plant or from solar panels on the roofs.
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	Used materials and products were discussed. There is not much potential for further reduction. Sand (from northern Italy) is only used on greens and tees for aerification and top dressing.

			Digital office reduced amount of paper use.
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	<p>The restaurant uses many locally produced goods from local suppliers.</p> <p>There are some seasonal menus available.</p> <p>Certified (organic / fairtrade) products were not observed.</p> <p>Vegetarian menus are available.</p> <p>CIP: Discuss possible improvements in sustainable purchasing (especially concerning organic / fairtrade products) and menu offers with the contractor of the restaurant.</p>
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	<p>Waste is collected separately and disposed of or recycled correctly according to Swiss standards (no landfills). Glass and PET are collected separately (even out of the waste bins at the tees!).</p> <p>Grass clippings from the greens are brought to a biogas plant.</p>
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	Every form of waste is disposed of correctly.

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		Due to the constricted space, the golf course can be used only for playing golf in the summer season to ensure safety. However, there is also a cricket field near the driving range.

			<p>A hiking path on the south-east side and a cycling road on the western side of the golf course are present.</p> <p>In winter, a cross-country ski trail is prepared across the golf course. This ski trail is rather problematic for the turf and also for some natural areas.</p> <p>Non-golf social events were not mentioned.</p>
C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		<p>There are opportunities for volunteering on the golf course, especially during events and "spring cleaning".</p> <p>A sizable amount of money is raised to support charities. They organize 2-4 golfing events per year; the entry fees are donated to charities supporting children, education or disabled people.</p>
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'	There is an ecology commission which meets twice a year. It is comprised of two golfers, representatives of the municipality, forest and agriculture, NGOs (WWF, ProNatura) and an expert in ecology.
C2 Golfers & Employees			
C2.1 Improve health and wellbeing	C2.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities		<p>Trainings are offered for interested persons / beginners.</p> <p>«Golf for school» is present with trainings for school children.</p> <p>About 150 junior golfers are active and benefit from low fees.</p>
C2.2 Be open and inclusive	C2.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies	Demonstrate inclusive policies for members and visitors	The course is open to golfers with a license and an active membership in a golf club. Many guests play the course.
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	<p>The Golf Club Engadin has many long-standing employees, which implies good working conditions.</p> <p>Due to the short season (long winter) it is not possible to do without seasonally employed workers. They also have very good terms of employment: written contracts, training, sick pay, performance reviews, support for finding lodging etc.</p>
C3 Communications			

<p>C3.1 Engage golfers and members</p>	<p>C3.1.1 Communications activities that raise awareness and understanding amongst members and visitors</p>	<p>Provide information on the facility's sustainability commitments, actions, or achievements</p>	<p>CIP: Speak more and regularly about the rich nature values on the golf course and other topics concerning sustainability with golf club members, but also with the local residents. Use social media, local print media and other channels to spread the news.</p>
<p>C3.2 Celebrate and promote sustainability</p>	<p>C3.2.1 Activities that raise awareness and engage people in the wider community</p>	<p>Provide evidence of external communications and community engagement</p>	<p>The golf club is well integrated in the local community. Local suppliers are considered.</p>

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