



GEO Certified[®]

GEO Certified[®] Report Foshan Golf Club

Prepared by independent verifier: John Zhao

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2023
Recertification due: 2026

GEO Certified[®]

The logo features a green circular icon with a white golf ball inside, followed by the text 'GEO Foundation' in bold green, and 'Sustainability in and through golf' in a smaller green font below it.

**GEO
Foundation**
Sustainability in and through golf

“Sustainable development has been well adhered to through the management work of Foshan Golf Club. The use of disease-resistant turfgrass varieties has greatly reduced the use of pesticides, thus reducing the potential risk of environmental pollution. Wedelia and Bahia grasses have been used to replace the turf, reducing the area of the maintained turfgrass, and making the environment more natural. The club purchased equipment to treat kitchen waste, convert it into organic fertilizer for the maintenance of green space. This recycling of waste has a good environmental protection effect. There is a wide variety of plants in southern China, and I look forward to seeing how Foshan choose to use more native plants, reducing the area of the turf and increasing the degree of naturalization of the course. It is believed that Foshan Golf Club will achieve more results in environmental sustainability with the help of the OnCourse platform.”

John Zhao

(GEO accredited independent verifier)



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Foshan Golf Club has successfully achieved GEO Certified® status for its outstanding work to foster nature, conserve resources and support the community.

GEO Certified® is the most respected certification for golf, based on a credibly and transparently developed modern sustainability Standard of best practice.

Foshan Golf Club has:

1. Met the required certification criteria for sustainable golf operations
2. Successfully completed the official third-party verification process
3. Successfully passed the final evaluation by GEO Certification Ltd. (autonomous subsidiary of GEO Foundation)

GEO agreed with the conclusions of the official verification report, that, having achieved all mandatory criteria; and with specific Continual Improvement Points (CIP) set for the future and Critical CIP's (CCIPs) to be reviewed at recertification, Foshan Golf Club should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

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

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

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

We congratulate all involved.

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

Kelli Jerome
Executive Director, GEO Foundation

Carole Kerrey
Manager, Data and Reporting, 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 – 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	Foshan Golf Club began construction in 2010. This was completed with a trial operation in 2012. When they officially

			<p>opened in 2013, they applied for and passed GEO certification in the same year. The first Foshan Open was held at the same time.</p> <p>Through the interview with Mr. Wang Minggang, the superintendent of the golf course, and Ms. Holly Hou, the general manager assistant responsible for GEO data management, I learned that Foshan Golf Club has an 18-hole course with a course area of 430,000 square meters, and the supporting buildings for course management and operation are about 17,800 square meters. In addition, there is a driving range and supporting houses. There are also adjacent communities around the golf course. 800 villas, 8,000 apartment buildings, schools, kindergartens and other forms the scale of the town. The club is located in a hilly area. Grassy fields, ponds, streams, shrubs, and nearby wild woods are the main green landscape.</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>In the ecological environment of Foshan Golf course, the main plants and trees include: eucalyptus, banyan tree, small leaf olive kernel, redwood, large leaf lagermyrtle, small leaf lagermyrtle, pine, metasequoia, acacia, phoenix wood, south jacaranda and podocarpus, among which banyan tree, small leaf olive kernel and eucalyptus are the main species, accounting for about 90%.</p> <p>Shrub include: big red flower, azalea, forsythia, yellow banyan tree, duck foot wood and so on. Animals and birds are pheasant, egret, magpie, turtle dove, wild duck, sparrow, snake, hare, lizard, fox, etc. There are no rare or protected species. The course preserves wetlands and natural forests, providing habitat for animals and birds. There are strict rules against cutting down trees and catching animals and birds.</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 heritage sites in the golf course 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>In recent years, the course has expanded the low-maintenance area of bahia grass (<i>Paspalum notatum</i> Flugge) and wedelia (<i>Sphagneticola calendulacea</i> (L) Pruski) to an area of about 2,000 square meters, reducing the area of grass requiring fine maintenance. Every year trees are planted and the area of the forest increases.</p> <p>CIP: Please continue to monitor patterns of play to identify underutilised areas for further naturalisation.</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>Bahia grass and wedelia planted in rough areas are suitable as local ground cover plants. These do not need maintenance and are a natural plant in the ecological environment.</p>
<p>N1.4 Conserve key species</p>	<p>N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species</p>		<p>The local tree species are mainly eucalyptus, banyan tree and small leaf olive. Eucalyptus consumes a lot of water, and to clean the fallen leaves and loose bark increase the workload of course maintenance. At the same time, Eucalyptus trees can easily be blown down during typhoons. There is a plan to replace and remove them every year.</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 golf course is located in the subtropical monsoon humid climate zone. Warm season turfgrass is used for course turf. The green turfgrass is hybrid bermudagrass. Tifeagle is the turfgrass on tees. The fairways and semi-rough areas are hybrid Bermudagrass Tifsport. Tifsport can adapt well to the local climate and is easy to maintain. The course is not overseeded with cool season turfgrass in winter. The original soil on which the course was built was acid clay. The soil in the root layer of the turf is a mixture of well- drained sand and organic matter.</p>

	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		The course turf is cored and topdressed with sand, and fertilized with organic fertilizer every year to maintain good soil structure and condition.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	Soil fertility and turfgrass plant nutrition test once a year as the basis for guiding fertilization.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding	Use of physical method of pest control with an LED insect trapping lamp to reduce insecticide use. The blades of mowing machines are grinded regularly to keep the cut neat. Chemicals are mainly used to control diseases on greens. Minimal fungicide applications on the TifSport turf with strong disease resistance on tees, fairways and semi-rough areas. Weeds are mainly pulled manually during the peak period.
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	The use of chemical agents is strictly controlled in course maintenance. This is mainly reflected in the maintenance of the greens. The main fertilizer is organic fertilizer, and the ratio of low nitrogen and high potassium is adopted to increase the resistance of turfgrass. The drainage, ventilation and root growth conditions of turf were improved through physical operations such as coring and topdressing. When there is less light and more rain, the turf is more prone to disease. The course undertake prevention in advance, timely identification of disease spots and carry out accurate prevention and control.
	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 .	The pesticides used all have three certificates. Skilled plant protection workers are responsible for spraying to ensure accurate dosage control. Spray machine equipped with wind hood. When cleaning the remaining pesticides and the tank, they dilute it with water and spray it to the turf nursery. This covers an area of about 10,000 square meters.

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 oil spill emergency response plan was checked to be found with complete documentation and implementation. The lakeside of the course has a buffer zone, and the 3-5-meter-wide grass is not sprayed with pesticides.
	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	Discharge of domestic sewage into municipal sewage systems with discharge permits. There is a kitchen waste treatment system, and the food waste is reused as fertilizer after treatment. Hazardous waste such as oil, pesticide packaging and batteries are stored in special warehouses and transported away regularly by professional companies.
	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	There is a wastewater treatment system in the vehicle and mechanical cleaning area. The wastewater is cleaned and treated, draining into the lake of the course. The cleaning area has anti-seepage treatment. The pesticide spraying equipment is cleaned three times and sprinkled into the designated turf area.
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;	Hazardous waste such as oil and pesticide packaging is stored in a special warehouse, and the ground has anti-seepage treatment. Hazardous wastes are regularly handled by professional companies. There are professional gas stations to store fuel and check regularly to effectively avoid secondary pollution. There are 2 heart defibrillators, with professionally trained personnel to provide first aid in case of problems. There is a first aid plan and first aid kits are available at the clubhouse and departure 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)	<p>There is a sewage discharge permit and diversion of rain and pollution. The area for washing vehicles and machinery has special sewage collection facilities, and the ground is impermeable treatment. Grass clippings are dispersed to the long grass area for degradation, and some were composted and reused.</p> <p>CIP: Please enhance efforts for composting, ensuring that clippings with high nutritional content do not disrupt the balance of surrounding grassland ecosystems. Composts can be used for gardens, divot mixes, course renovations and to donate to growing projects in the local community.</p>

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	The drought-resistant turfgrass TifSport was selected and applied to the grass areas outside the greens of the course. Sprinkler irrigation only covers the green, tee and fairway. Other areas rarely sprinkler irrigation. Bahia and wedelia areas are not watered.
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;	Use a soil hygrometer to monitor soil moisture content and guide watering. Automatic sprinkler system with comprehensive cover and high watering efficiency.

		Ensure effective application of water to target areas; 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	All water supply points in the clubhouse and other buildings have slogans to save water. Faucet adopts induction switch to optimize and save water. The water outlet switch of the toilet is optimised to reduce water use.
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	Use of the ecological side ditch and terrain of the course to collect rainwater as the water source for course and landscape green space irrigation. The sewage produced by car washing is purified by its own sewage treatment system as a water source for green space watering. They have a water drawing permit.
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	Planting low-maintenance ground cover plants such as bahia and wedelia to reduce the amount of turf area requiring frequent mowing and watering, thereby reducing fuel and electricity consumption. In addition, they have reduced 8 gasoline turf mowers and are using electric machinery to replace fuel machinery, including mowers, transport vehicles, forklifts, blow machine etc.
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 air-conditioning in the clubhouse and other ancillary buildings are set at the recommended temperature to reduce electricity consumption. Lighting with LED lamps. Solar water heater is used to heat the shower water of locker room of the clubhouse.

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	Course maintenance machinery using electric machinery instead of fuel machinery. Use solar energy to heat bath water. CIP: Please continue to assess the feasibility of onsite micro-renewables e.g., solar panels.
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	Increasing the use of electronic documents to reduce printing and the use of paper and ink cartridges. Use electric vehicles to reduce fuel use. Provide drinking water to guests in compostable beverage cups instead of bottled water. Do not use disposable tableware. Old towels from the locker room are used for cleaning cars and machinery.
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 sources are preferred for procurement. Shop around for goods. Purchase environmentally friendly and degradable tableware and beverage cups.
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	In 2022, they started to classify waste into hazardous waste, recyclable waste, kitchen waste and other waste. The trash can identification is obvious, and the garbage is collected and transported by the garbage disposal company regularly.

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	They sign garbage removal agreements with qualified companies.
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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 club is a member only club, accepting members and guests accompanied by members. It also holds many activities to provide more opportunities for the community to learn about golf. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the club held fewer activities, but still maintained the training of the youth team and provided free playing opportunities for teenagers. At the same time, the club runs 'golf into the campus' activities. Once a week, the club golf coach goes into the school to do teaching. Activities are now back to normal. In addition, the club's driving range is open to the public.
C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		Every year, the club holds the Spring Cup and the New World Friendship Competition charity activities. The funds are donated to the Red Cross hospital and school.
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 set up a special publicity column to publicize the Nature, Resources and Community of GEO. They hold community men's golf tournaments, women's golf tournaments,

			<p>and couples tournaments to attract community residents to the club experience.</p> <p>CIP: Please consider creating a sustainability working group to create plans and procedures for improving sustainability across the facility.</p>
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 holds 12 members' monthly golf tournaments each year, and the general manager of the club will communicate the good effect of golf on people's physical and mental health.
C2.2 Be open and inclusive	C2.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies	Demonstrate inclusive policies for members and visitors	In addition to receiving guests from members, the club provides a variety of channels for people to experience the club through commercial events, professional events, and driving ranges open to the public.
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 recruitment, employment and work of employees fully comply with the requirements of the national labor law and relevant regulations. They pay social insurance for all employees, and provide training, learning and promotion channels for management and employees.
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's wechat public account platform, the club's publicity board, and the TV screen at the entrance of the club have good publicity and interactive communication with the guests of the club. The general manager communicates with the golfers in the club's monthly membership.

<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 Foshan Open was covered by various media inside and outside the industry to promote the philosophy of the club and GEO.</p> <p>Through the owner's side, New World Group's platform promotes the club and GEO to the public and the community.</p>
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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