



GEO Certified® Report

Royal Park I Roveri Golf Club

Prepared by independent verifier: Paolo Croce

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2022
Recertification due: 2025

“The Club is located within one of the most prestigious Regional Parks in Italy, deriving its unique character from being completely enclosed by a wall, as well as being very large and rich in highly valuable tree and shrub vegetation. The area is rich in waterbodies and has a varied use - 4 golf courses, a small private property, and the test track for cars produced by FIAT. The vast majority is occupied by public land, which attracts thousands of visitors to the various agricultural and breeding farms at the weekend. The Reggia di Venaria Reale (larger than Versailles) borders the wall of the Regional Park. On certain occasions, visitors are also welcomed inside the Club thanks to close collaboration with the Park Management.

Courses Management is conducted with extreme attention to the provisions of the park and in compliance with the most innovative technological solutions to guarantee the sustainability of the site. This goal is very much taken into consideration by the owner family which, by virtue of its notoriety, seeks to provide the best possible image in this matter. In the three years considered, also thanks to the change of management that took place in 2019, environmental sustainability has become a central aspect of running the Club.

*No limiting factors have been found that could affect the conduct of the club in terms of the environment. Even the presence of *Agrostis stolonifera* which, contrary to what happens in the Center and South, is still widely used in Northern Italy, does not prevent favoring the sustainability of the site – especially considering the limited use of water resources, nutrients and the almost total absence of pesticides. The strong investment that is underway, such as more spaces in the clubhouse, new machinery, a new irrigation system on the older course, new wild areas, the production of honey, and the serious consideration of the conversion into warm season grass of tees and fairways of at least one course, is a strong signal that the family intends to address the environmental challenges of the third millennium.”*

Paolo Croce
(GEO accredited independent verifier)



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Royal Park I Roveri 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.

Royal Park I Roveri 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, Royal Park I Roveri Golf Club should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Royal Park I Roveri 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.isealliance.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	The Royal Park Golf is located within the Royal Estate of the Mandria, today a Regional Park (established in 1978), which is considered the largest in Europe and is entirely

			enclosed by a wall (over 2,000 hectares). The site is also registered by Natura 2000. The club is located a few steps from the Royal Palace of Venaria Reale, the largest of the Savoy residences of considerable architectural and cultural importance, built in 1651 for the hunting trips of Duke Carlo Emanuele II Savoia. The two golf courses (18 holes by Robert Trent Jones Senior and 18 holes by Hurdzan/Fry) are characterized by the presence of large water bodies (lakes and streams) as well as valuable tall trees.
	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 property has a total area of 168 ha, of which 80 ha is for playing surfaces, about 85 ha is for natural vegetation and about 3 ha is for the building complex (Club house, Maintenance Centre, Service areas, Dormy house, car parks and viability). The management of tree vegetation and non-playing surfaces must comply with the provisions of the Area Plan of the Piedmont Region (attached)
	N1.1.3 Understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site	Inside the property there are no historic buildings of particular interest, but inside the park there are farmhouses dating back to the 18th century. The park then borders, as written above, with the Royal Palace of Venaria Reale. Inside the Park there is the eighteenth-century building called della Bela Rosin (the beautiful Rosina in the local slang), lover of King Vittorio Emanuele II, the first King of Italy.
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	The prestigious design of the two courses has made it possible to contain the surface area intended for play: 3 ha of greens, 3 ha of tees, 22 ha of fairways, 49 ha of rough and uncultivated fields. The irrigated surface is very small with about 40 ha (for the two courses).
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 Head Greenkeeper is a qualified technician with the necessary knowledge to promote the environmental sustainability of the site. Originally the site consisted of woods and bodies of water as well as uncultivated meadows intended for grazing. The fields were built on these meadows

			and on a small portion of the woods. As sustainability measures, the following stand out: non-fertilised uncultivated areas, non-simultaneous uncultivated areas, transition strips between woods and turfgrasses, no spray and no mow bands around water bodies (buffer zones), bird nest houses.
N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species		The numerous species of interest are recorded by the Regional Park and consist of: Mammals (4), Birds (40), Amphibians and Reptiles (20), Insects and Invertebrates (305), Fish (25), Mushrooms (38), grasses, shrubs and trees (350). The Park has respect for these entities and ensures that they are guaranteed the best possible habitat. In any case, the Club makes use of a professional studio (Studio Verde Consulting Group) for consultancy on the matter.
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	Like many golf courses in northern Italy built up to about 50 years ago, the dominant species established was <i>Agrostis stolonifera</i> . Today this species is still well present even if rather infested by <i>Poa annua</i> , while the <i>Lolium perenne</i> detected is the result of overseeding. <i>Festuca arundinacea</i> essentially dominates the rough. Today climate change tends to make these choices obsolete, and this is why the property is evaluating the possibility of converting a path to warm season grasses. Following climate change, the potentially limiting factor of this operation is no longer the temperature, but the shading of the tall trees present. The Head Greenkeeper then initiated a number of plot trials to verify the feasibility of the tees/fairways conversion.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition		The soil of the property is decidedly clayey and prone to compaction. For this reason, many maintenance operations consist of continuous aerification (coring, forking, air injections, spiking), essentially to ensure healthy growth of

			the turf. It is therefore very committed in creating the best possible habitat for the healthy growth of the turf through all available cultivation operations
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Undertake soil tests and nutrient analysis	The Head Greenkeeper carries out soil analyses on regular basis and sets the fertilization program on them. There are no substantial differences in the three-year period regarding the supply of nutrients. As is known, <i>Agrostis stolonifera</i> is very demanding in terms of the request for nutritional elements and therefore it is not possible to go below certain limits in the supply of N, P, K. Fertilization management is a good combination between fertilizers solids, liquids for foliar absorption and water-soluble. Also, the spreading of Nitrogen is carried out using in a targeted way products with quick and slow release products, in particular natural organics.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Hand weeding	All the listed operations are carried out with the right frequency.
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	Due to the presence of PAN, National Action Plan which prohibits the use of chemicals on golf courses, great importance is given to the prevention especially of fungal diseases. In the three previous years only two treatments per year were carried out for the control of a couple of diseases (<i>Fusarium spp</i> and <i>Dollar Spot</i>) - thanks to an exemption, applicable to all lawns, provided for by the Ministry of Health. In terms of weeds, <i>Agrostis stolonifera</i> is very competitive and tends to prevail over the vast majority of other grasses (with the sole exception of <i>Poa annua</i>).
	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;	No chemicals are used to control pests (with the above exceptions). Also for these golf courses a few biological products are under observation and tested on greens.

		Dilute and dispose of leftover product on untreated areas of turf .	All distributions of chemicals are conducted with the instruments and equipment necessary to ensure the safety of Club operators and users.
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 has no operational protocols to manage these emergency situations, but this is explained by the legal impossibility of using pesticides. As regards the storage of fuel and lubricating oils, the tanks are made in accordance with the law and all the staff have followed special refresher courses on safety protocols. The buffer zones (3 m wide) are present along all water bodies, and it should be remembered that fertilizers and any pesticides in derogation are not distributed on semirough and rough, as well as obviously on all areas not subject to maintenance
	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	As regards the Club House and Maintenance facility, the storage and distribution of potentially dangerous materials (fuels, lubricants and more) takes place in full compliance with the legislation in force. The same for wastewater discharge. Confirm Confirm
	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 machine-washing area is waterproof and also equipped with a non-slip curb and equipped with all the legal devices.

			<p>Loading and unloading of fertilizers takes place on the concreted square of the Maintenance Centre, where rainwater is collected.</p>
N3.2 Safely manage hazardous substances	N3.2.1 Legal compliance in the storage, handling, application and safe disposal of all hazardous substances	<p>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; Secondary containment for fuel, either externally constructed, or integrally manufactured; Regular inspection of storage tanks</p>	<p>The storage and use of potentially hazardous substances takes place in accordance with the law</p> <p>The Club has its own plan to manage emergency situations and the necessary devices are in place for rapid intervention before the arrival of external help. There are containment kits for liquid spills.</p> <p>The devices are verified according to the law.</p>
N3.3 Responsibly manage waste / storm water	N3.3.1 Appropriate wastewater usage and discharge licences	<p>Wastewater discharge licence; Appropriate treatment of machinery wash water (impermeable surface, oil / grease / clipping separation)</p>	<p>The discharge of wastewater takes place in accordance with the law.</p> <p>The washing water is filtered (from grass, oil and grease).</p> <p>The sewage water is conveyed to a consortium purifier in the area (there is a housing complex inside the property), but there is no use of the wastewater by the Municipality.</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 water emergency is a well-known problem by the Head Greenkeeper and every precaution is taken to avoid wasting the water resource. Precisely for this reason, in 2022 the Club began work on the complete reconstruction

			of the irrigation system (including the pumping station) of the Trent Jones course (the oldest one). This will make it possible to reduce the irrigated surface and ration water distribution. In particular, there is the possibility of excluding the portion of turf occupied by semirough and rough from the irrigation cycle. In the three-year period under examination there were no substantial annual differences in terms of water used for irrigation of the grass (average 105,000 m ³), but it should be noted that this quantity is absolutely of little significance in consideration of the extent of the irrigated surface (40 ha) and the dominant species (<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>) – which is very demanding in terms of water.
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	The irrigation system is computerized and the recently installed software allows for better control of the water resource, optimizing its distribution in terms of quantity and frequency. There is a soil moisture sensor as well as a rain sensor.
	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	Confirm Confirm Despite a considerable expansion of the buildings intended for Club Houses and services for users (Golf Academy, Conference hall, etc.) and a consequent increase in attendance by users, the consumption of drinking water has undergone a 7% reduction from 2019 to 2021 (from 3000 m ³ to 2779 m ³). In the Maintenance Centre, in the same years the reduction in consumption was even more significant (-36%). The large lake of the Risera, inside the Regional Park, supplies all the water necessary for the golf courses (there

			are two other adjacent ones owned by other owners) and for all the agricultural crops and livestock that are practiced on the estate. Therefore there is no competition with the surrounding agricultural crops. With very rare exceptions, there are no withdrawals from the groundwater even in the presence of wells.
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	Confirm
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	<p>The playing surfaces, subject to intensive maintenance, are extremely small (less than 50% of the totale area). Further uncultivated areas have been identified on which hives have been placed for the production of honey. There are no substantial reductions in the energy used in the maintenance of the courses in the three-year period, but it should be specified that new machinery has been purchased in order to obtain, in the long term, better qualitative performances and shorter maintenance times.</p> <p>In 2021, electricity consumption overall increased by about 20%, but this is due to the expansion of the buildings mentioned above.</p> <p>CIP: consider the use of electric maintenance equipment, where possible</p>
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	<p>Confirm</p> <p>Confirm.</p>
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 Club has adhered to the Italian Golf Federation proposal to evaluate the formation of a consortium of Italian golf courses with the aim of producing all the

			<p>electricity necessary for their maintenance on its own. The Project will be made public in detail by 2023.</p> <p>Currently a portion (about 15%) of the energy consumed comes from renewable sources.</p>
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	<p>Confirm.</p> <p>The amount of total waste produced has been stable for some years. The % of recycled waste (is 100%) for paper, glass and plastic. Overall, the total amount of recycled waste is equal to 70% (140,000 kg out of 200,000 kg).</p> <p>CIP: consider other recycling initiatives such as composting green waste (clippings etc.) from the course</p>
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>Confirm.</p> <p>There are no precise protocols for searching for more virtuous suppliers in terms of environmental sustainability, but 60% of the total is made up of local suppliers. In the choice of machinery and materials, however, more sustainable products are preferred. The Club's policy is to replace appliances and / or systems with more energy efficient solutions as they come to an end of use.</p> <p>CIP: consider enhancing the sustainable procurement policy by sourcing ethical products (e.g. fairtrade etc.)</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	Confirm

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	Confirm
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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 property policy is to encourage staff and members to represent the facility in local community groups. There are excellent relations with the Regional Park and collaborations are underway for student visits (i.e. the University of Turin and Bologna).
C1.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C1.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes		The property is the main supporter of an important Research Center against cancer (AIRC - Italian Association for Cancer Research) which is based in Candiolo (TO). In this context, the Golf Club is highly active and in the three-year period considered, €330,000 was raised for the Foundation. Normally 7 events are organized a year in favor of AIRC and 4 other charities.
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 are excellent relationships between the Club Management and the Regional Park Management.
C2 Golfers & Employees			

C2.1 Improve health and wellbeing	C2.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities		
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 Club is private, but access is allowed to all golfers in possession of the Italian Golf Federation membership. (Since 2016 membership is free and it is not necessary to be a member of a club). The attendance of foreign players is completely free (paying the green fee).
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 choice of collaborators is made on the basis of the skills acquired in terms of experience and qualifications. Normally a consultancy firm is appointed which works in concert with the Management. All personnel regularly attend refresher courses on safety matters, but also for the specific tasks they occupy.
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 website is complete and very detailed and there is a special office in charge of carrying out public relations and disseminating press releases among members and externally.
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 owner family is the same as the Juventus Football Club, and there are important synergies with the world of football, both through the memberships of many players (most of whom live in the housing that has been developed externally) and through the great notoriety of the family in Italy and in the world.



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