



GEO Certified®

GEO Certified® Report Golfclub Kagerzoom

Prepared by independent verifier Adrie van der Werf

Certified by GEO Foundation: 2026
Recertification due: 2031

GEO Certified®

 **GEO
Foundation**
Sustainability in and through golf

“Golfclub Kagerzoom has been active with respect to GEO from 2013 onwards. In that period the club and especially the GEO-team constantly improved the course in relation to maintenance and nature development. More recently nature friendly banks in several water bodies and eco-zones have been created. Solar panels have been installed, further reducing their carbon dioxide footprint. Also during our discussions it became clear that this not the end of the line with respect to nature development and sustainability actions.”

*Adrie van der Werf
(GEO accredited independent verifier)*



Introduction

GEO Foundation is pleased to confirm that Golfclub Kagerzoom 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 Kagerzoom 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, Golfclub Kagerzoom should be awarded GEO Certified® status.

For the certification period stated above, Golfclub Kagerzoom 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
Director, Certification and Credibility,
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 – 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	• 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	General knowledge of the wildlife and habitats on the site	During our discussion, the GEO committee clearly demonstrated knowledge and passion on this topic. A nice booklet on species present on the course, and maps of the course and its habitats are available.
	N1.1.2 Knowledge of legal designations for protected areas, habitats and species	Identify rare, protected or endangered species found on the golf course; Understand legal responsibilities for landscape protection and special area designations, if applicable	Biodiversity records are available and species richness has been described in several documents. The club organises annual plant excursions for their members and non-members (locals). These excursions are led by external experts. The head greenkeeper indicated that his team is aware of protected areas and acts accordingly with respect to course maintenance.
	N1.1.3 Sound understanding and respect for cultural heritage	Protect any archaeological, historical or cultural designations on the site, if applicable	n/a A document that describes the history of the environment is available
N1.2 Opportunities to naturalise the golf course	N1.2.1 Measures taken to identify and minimise the required area of managed turfgrass	Monitor patterns of play to identify underutilised areas of turfgrass	During our course visit it became clear that a further reduction in playing area is not foreseen. The 9-hole course consists of ~ 12 ha playing area and ~ 6 ha nature areas. Green ecozones have been established over the years.
N1.3 Actively create and manage habitats for wildlife	N1.3.1 Projects to create and manage habitats in the best way for wildlife and golf	Prioritise native species of varying size and structure when planting Prioritise native trees and shrubs when planting Prioritise native aquatic species of varying size and structure when planting Establish mowing buffer zones next to water bodies and wetlands	Mowing buffers and fertilization buffers are present around many waterbodies. Over the years several new nature areas have been created. Also new nature friendly banks for plants and amphibians have recently been created. CIP: Please continue to expand efforts to protect and restore habitat and biodiversity.

N1.4 Conserve key species	N1.4.1 Practical conservation measures for priority species	Follow local best practice to protect or attract endangered, protected or rare species found on site	See N1.1.2 and N1.3.1; Over the years, bird nests for typical species, like e.g. the kingfisher and starling have been installed. It was mentioned that this was not always successful. Recently, several bat boxes have been restored/renewed, and hopefully this will attract bats more than in the past. Also, non-native species, such as the red swamp crayfish are now being controlled to protect native wildlife.
N2 Turfgrass			
N2.1 Maintain optimum turfgrass and soil health	N2.1.1 Appropriate turfgrass varieties adapted to climatic and other geomorphological factors	Select appropriate grass species for the climate	As mentioned by the head greenkeeper, IPM is in action, and grass species (varieties) are being used that are suitable for this environment.
	N2.1.2 Practices to maintain good soil structure and condition	No specific international requirement, however, identify course management and agronomic activities and look for continual improvements	Standard practises, like e.g. use of physical and chemical soil data are in action. Also, bio stimulants are being used to improve the resistance against abiotic stresses, and combinations of it.
	N2.1.3 Careful and responsible fertiliser application throughout the year to avoid over-fertilisation	Test and monitor soil pH; Follow legal requirements when timing fertiliser applications Ensure staff are fully qualified to use fertilisers Ensure staff use appropriate protective equipment Regularly calibrate and test applicators	As was mentioned by the head greenkeeper, the staff are fully qualified to use e.g. fertilizers and know how to act in case of emergencies.
N2.2 Prioritise mechanical maintenance	N2.2.1 Non-chemical pest, disease and weed management	Sharpen mowing blades; Remove surface moisture; Change hole locations frequently	This is business as usual for the greenkeeping team. Standard practises are applied, like e.g. removal of surface moisture and daily scouting. Nesting opportunities for starlings have been introduced in the hope that the starlings may reduce plagues of e.g. grubs. Unfortunately, the breeding success of the starlings has been extremely low until now.
N2.3 Use chemicals responsibly	N2.3.1 Application of chemicals only when necessary to prevent or	Identify and track pest and disease hotspots, including sensitive areas	Standard practises to prevent pests and diseases are in action (see also 1.2.1). A list of chemicals used is available and its use is within legislation.

	cure defined / identified turf health issues	Scout the course daily for early signs and symptoms Accurately diagnose to determine the cause of weeds, pests and diseases	
	N2.3.2 Application of chemicals with full safety precautions	Use legally registered and approved products; Prefer products for the specific weed, pest or disease; Follow legal requirements; Ensure staff are fully qualified to use pesticides; Ensure staff use appropriate protective equipment; Regularly calibrate and test applicators; Dilute and dispose of leftover product on untreated areas of amenity turfgrass	See N2.3.1. As mentioned by the head greenkeeper, staff are qualified to use pesticides, and appropriate protective equipment is in use.
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 ; Retain no-spray/no-spread buffer areas next to water bodies and wetlands; Retain no-spray/no-spread buffer zones in and around ecologically sensitive areas	An emergency spill response plan is available, and greenkeepers know how to act in case of e.g. pollution.
	N3.1.2 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from clubhouse operations	Formal wastewater discharge agreement, if applicable	n/a The clubhouse is not owned by the golfclub, and therefore data with respect to clubhouse management etc are not available.

	N3.1.3 Practical measures to ensure pollution risks are minimised from maintenance facility operations	Wash machinery over an impermeable, leak-free surface; Mix and load pesticides and fertilisers over an impermeable, leak-free surface; Triple rinse pesticide containers and applicators	This is well documented, also during our visit to the maintenance facility it became clear that e.g. impermeable flooring and its control is in action, oil/grease separation is present and controlled regularly.
N3.2 Safely manage hazardous substances	N3.2.1 Legal compliance in the storage, handling, application and safe disposal of all hazardous substances	List of hazardous substances, made available to authorised staff; Product and material data safety sheets; Well ventilated concrete or metal building; Impermeable, leak-free flooring; Sufficient storage capacity; Spill containment kits; Secondary containment e.g., bunds or drip trays; Emergency wash area, as per local requirements (body shower and / or eye wash station); Hazardous substances safely collected by a registered company or body ; Follow any additional legal requirements	In principal, chemicals are not stored in the maintenance facility or anywhere else on the course. As a result of renovation work and the reorganisation of the maintenance facility, the old shower was removed and not replaced. The person in charge stated that a new shower would be installed immediately. CCIP: Please install an emergency wash areas as soon as possible.
	N3.2.2 Legal compliance in the storage and handling of fuels and gases	Tank secured to a horizontal, flat, non-combustible surface; Secondary containment of fuel in the event of spills e.g. bunds and drip trays; Inspection of storage tank(s) at least quarterly, if required; Fire extinguisher in the immediate area	As far as I could judge, all was according to legislation and no actions are needed.

N3.3 Responsibly manage waste / storm water	N3.3.1 Appropriate wastewater usage, treatment and discharge	Impermeable, leak-free surface; Treatment as per local requirements (oil, grease and / or clipping separation; Formal discharge agreement, if applicable	Impermeable floor present, and actions in case of pollution are well described in the document of the contractor.
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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	Select appropriate grass species for the climate e.g., drought and disease tolerance; Target irrigation to essential playing surfaces; Prioritise native, drought tolerant species for landscaping and planting	Biostimulants are being used to increase e.g. drought resistance; irrigation regime based on daily checks of especially greens. Fairways are only irrigated when absolutely necessary (ground water level is already extremely high).
R1.2 Maximise water efficiency	R1.2.1 Practical measures to use water more efficiently on the golf course	Schedule irrigation based on informed assessment of soil moisture and weather forecasts; Evaluate new irrigation technologies e.g., central control, precision sprinklers etc.; Provide staff training on efficient irrigation practices; Adjust sprinklers to playing surfaces only	Soil moisture content of the greens is measured weekly with a soil moisture sensor and based on the outcome each green gets its appropriate irrigation rate. In case of heavy drought periods fairways are now irrigated by a mobile sprinkler reel. In total 4000-6000 m3 irrigation water is being used for greens, tees and fairways. It is advised to measure or at least estimate how much is irrigated on them separately.

	R1.2.2 Practical measures to use water more efficiently in buildings	Monitor and record water consumption (bills, flow meter etc.); Encourage water conservation practices amongst players and staff	Water consumption in maintenance/administrative building is relatively low and varies between 80-120 m3 a year. It was discussed that a further reduction is not necessary/impossible. As mentioned above, clubhouse data are not available.
R1.3 Source water responsibly	R1.3.1 Measures towards alternative, lower quality sources of water	Water abstraction permit, if required; Report water consumption to environment agency, if required	A water abstraction permit is not required. This was agreed already many years ago.
R2 Energy			
R2.1 Reduce energy demand	R2.1.1 Measures to reduce the amount of energy consumed in golf course maintenance	Naturalise non-playing areas to reduce mowing and other energy intensive inputs	See N1.2.1
R2.2 Maximise energy efficiency	R2.2.1 Measures to use energy and fuels more efficiently in buildings	Monitor and record energy consumption (bills, meters etc.)	The maintenance/administrative building is now fitted with solar panels, and electric maintenance equipment and mowing machines are now being energized by these solar panels. Despite the increase in electricity demand of electric machines, the absolute use via the electricity supplier remained constant over the years due to the installation of solar panels. The introduction of new and more electric machinery has also resulted in a lower fossil fuel consumption.
R2.3 Source energy responsibly	R2.3.1 Measures to source alternative, renewable forms of energy	Understand the energy mix of your electricity supplier; Explore possible greener energy providers	See N2.2.1. The electricity supplier already makes use of green energy (e.g. wind energy). Data are available.
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	No specific international requirement, however, identify activities to reduce the demand for materials and look for continual improvements	The clubhouse is not owned by the golfclub, and therefore data with respect to clubhouse management in relation to recycling etc. are not available.

R3.2 Purchase responsibly	R3.2.1 Commit to sustainable purchasing practices	Favour responsible, lower impact products	The contractor uses e.g. sustainable slow-release fertilizers which are produced in an eco-friendly way according to the information given by the producer.
R3.3 Reuse and recycle	R3.3.1 Waste stream separation for maximum recycling and re-use opportunity	Put in place a recycling separation system, according to local rules and availability; Clear, simple and visible bin signage; Monitor and record weight of waste for each stream e.g. invoices, bills etc.	Waste stream clubhouse not known (see N1.2.1). The maintenance contractor separates waste streams, and this is clearly described in their waste separation document. The competition committee does not supply any plastic bottles during golf matches. Members and visitors are asked to take their plastic waste back home.
R3.4 Demonstrate legal compliance	R3.4.1 Compliance with all local and regional waste management regulations	Authorised waste collector for general, hazardous, industrial and green waste, if required	With respect to course maintenance, this is all according to legislation and well described in a contractor's document.

COMMUNITY			
<u>C1 Health & Wellbeing</u>			
Objectives	Requirements	Mandatory Practices	Verifier Notes
C1.1 Improve health and wellbeing	C1.1.1 Benefits to human physical and mental health from golf and facility activities	Plans in place to respond to incidents and emergencies	Actions in case of incidents and emergencies are mentioned on their scorecard; this also holds for safe playing instructions.
C1.2 Be open and inclusive	C1.2.1 Inclusivity and diversity in membership and visitor policies	Membership policies free from discrimination across age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and ethnic background	The club is open to everybody regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and ethnic background.
C1.3 Employ fairly, safely and provide career opportunities	C1.3.1 Ethical and legal employment, working conditions and	Adopt an equal opportunity recruitment and hiring policy;	As the club has no employees, this subject was not further discussed.

	professional development	Follow all relevant legislation and best practice for hiring and employment; Follow all relevant legislation and best practice for worker safety	
<u>C2 Outreach & Inclusion</u>			
C2.1 Diversify access and provide multifunctionality	C2.1.1 Social and recreational activities at the facility	No specific international requirement, however, identify multifunctional activities and look for continual improvements	Yearly bird and plant watching days are in action and led by external specialists. Also bat excursions are organized.
C2.2 Provide for volunteering and charity	C2.2.1 Opportunities available for volunteering and support of charities and good causes	No specific international requirement, however, identify activities to support volunteering and charity and look for continual improvements	The club supports the “Grand Old Dad – Foundation”. Money raised by this organization helps young people with disabilities so that they can play sport, play games and get active.
C2.3 Establish active community partnerships	C2.3.1 Positive and constructive engagement with neighbours, the local community and other groups	No specific international requirement, however, identify partnerships and community activities and look for continual improvements	Safety issues around the course are discussed with the neighbours and the local community. Based on these discussions, walking trails around the course have been restructured such that safety for walkers has increased.
<u>C3 Communications & Advocacy</u>			
C3.1 Engage staff and golfers	C3.1.1 Communications activities that raise awareness and understanding amongst members and visitors	Involve staff and committees in sustainability efforts; Involve golfers in sustainability efforts; Post sustainability information in the clubhouse and / or on the golf course	The GEO-cie regularly informs the members about all kinds of nature activities; also information on nature activities is published via a large screen at the entrance of the 9 holes course; furthermore, information on nature development and species present is given on a series of information boards near the entrance and on the course. Also a nice brochure on species present on the course has been published.
C3.2 Celebrate and promote sustainability	C3.2.1 Activities that raise awareness and engage people in the wider community	Share at least 3 Highlights on sustainable.golf	Nature development/protection: Over the years several new nature areas have been created. Also new nature friendly banks for plants and amphibians have recently been created.

			Energy savings: solar panels have been installed recently, and electric mowing machines are now being used Golf course maintenance: playing rough is now grazed by sheep during the summer months.
C3.3 Follow a journey of continuous improvement	C3.3.1 Measures to help track, review and improve sustainability and climate action	Put measures in place to ensure that OnCourse can be updated annually	This was discussed and agreed that more recent reports with respect to e.g. nature development would be uploaded regularly. Several documents were shown that were not uploaded yet.

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