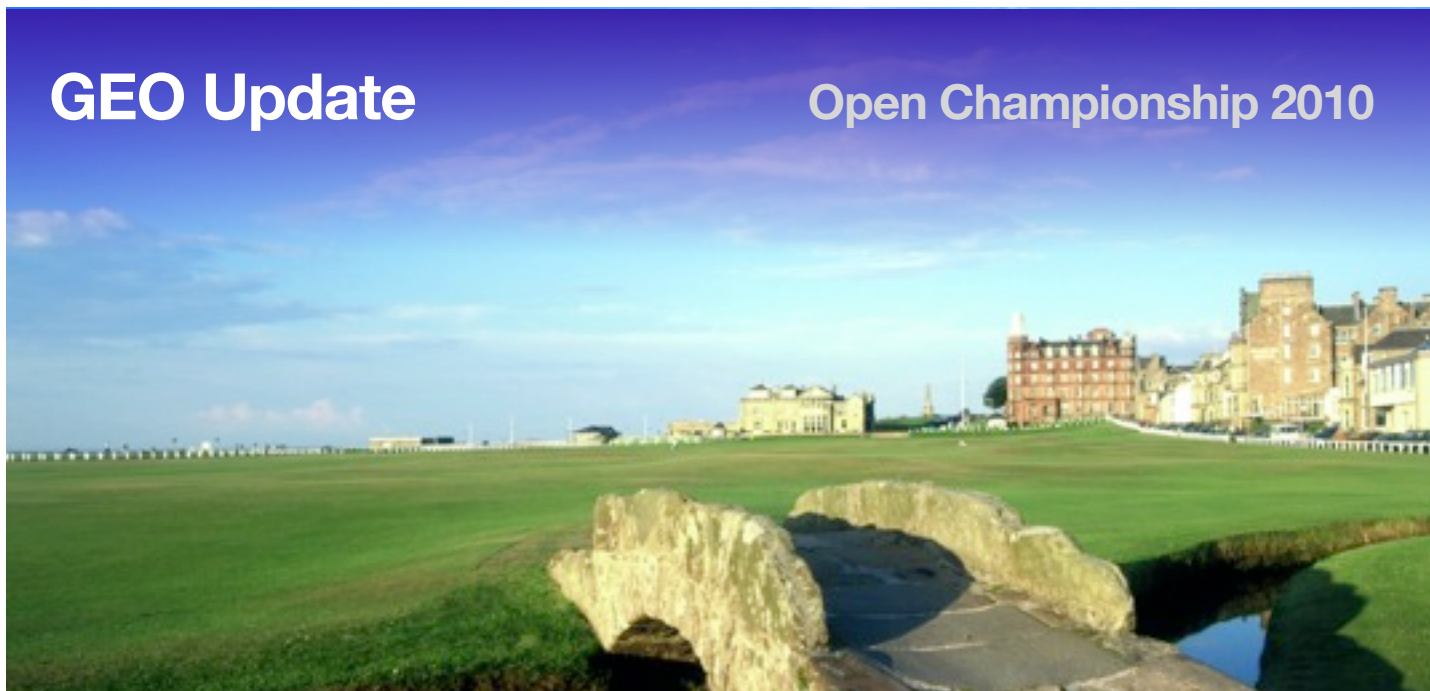




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Partnering for a Greener Future

*Since **April 2005** the Golf Environment Organization (GEO) has been actively partnering with golf and environmental organizations across Europe, and around the world, to promote sustainability in golf.*

The only international, non profit sustainability actor entirely dedicated to the golf sector, GEO and partners continue working hard to bring modern day sustainability principles and programmes into the game. Together we have started to demonstrate **an agenda of diverse opportunities** which cut to the heart of strong, dynamic, profitable and expanding business interests.

In a short time we believe GEO has shown itself to be a committed partner, bringing heightened awareness, greater clarity and more credibility to the sector's sustainability efforts.

Going forward, GEO hopes to step up the pace of this collective effort.

We want to help embed the rationale, guidelines and programmes that have been developed, into and across the sector. These can underpin practitioner education; act as a focus for consistent communications within golf; and generate substance for the expression of golf's social and environmental value to the outside world.

Given the significant progress that has been made, and the credible platform that has been established, GEO hopes to work with partners to bring profile and visibility to golf's sustainability efforts.

Via multi-partner communications, campaigning, and by carrying straightforward messages across the industries' sub sectors - we can build even greater momentum.... safe in the knowledge that golf efforts are credible, and that practitioners and decision makers have the solutions they need.



What is Sustainable Golf?

Sustainable golf is a hard concept to define. Modern day sustainability, for any sector of society, is not easily captured in a few words. Golf's diversity, from pollution to players, and from media to merchandise, makes that all the harder. Whilst the basic Brundtland Commission definition ("meeting today's needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs") may form the best starting point for us all to get our heads around a complex subject, it is the agenda that golf works to, and the integrated social, economic and environmental outcomes that arise through golf, that ultimately defines the game's overall sustainability.

*This **common agenda** can be consistently applied to every aspect of the golf industry. Across development, management, events, tourism and products*

This is about golf responding to, and being part of, a resurgent green economy



*As the only '**Blue**' planet known to man, our dependence on the earth is no secret.*

GEO believes that sustainable golf requires all parts of the sector to work to, and deliver against a common agenda. An agenda that encompasses planet, people and profit. Recognising that the planet is the provider of all life's basic needs (air, water, soil, food, medicines etc.), that society functions on that planet, and that profits and economic growth are, in turn, a function of society.

Golf's Sustainability Agenda

Landscape & Ecosystems

Golf protecting green-spaces and coastlines, enhancing degraded land and landscapes, enriching biological diversity; improving the functioning of local and regional ecosystems



Water

Golf contributing the natural functioning of watersheds, enhancing water quality, avoiding the use of high quality water, and minimising all water consumption



Energy & Resources

Golf integrating passive designing principles, focusing on the reduction of energy demand, minimising turfgrass areas and striving to export renewable energies



Materials & Supply Chains

Golf reducing the embedded energy of goods and materials by looking locally; applying ethical and environmental procurement filters; using recycled and recyclable materials



Environmental Quality

Golf improving air, water and soil quality; creating stable, naturalised green-spaces for people and wildlife; and helping to transform degraded and contaminated land



People & Communities

Golf delivering jobs, careers, education, health, social interaction, volunteering, charitable contributions and infrastructure benefits in rural and urban areas



Management

GEO Certification Version One

The world's first credible, public facing recognition programme for golf facilities. Launched June 2009. First year saw 400 participants from over 35 countries. 30 sites On Course and 12 fully GEO Certified. Four sites 'pending' minor improvement.

GEO Certification Version Two

August 2010 scheduled launch of programme upgrades (V2). Improvements include:

- ◆ Easy and productive participation: 30 minute OnCourse™ Self Assessment and automated Sustainability Action Plan
- ◆ New 'in-line' guidance to make participation more educational
- ◆ Updated Certification Questionnaire: more targeted, more opportunities to generate a comprehensive Sustainability Statement
- ◆ Refined transparency and better contextualisation of reported data
- ◆ More international programme partners ready to promote facility achievements
- ◆ New on line 'shop' where participants can purchase marketing materials - flags / clubhouse plaques etc
- ◆ Updated, streamlined International Criteria. Contextualised and weighted through multiple Regional Priority annexes - produced in association with our programme and regional partners.

GEOSA Network

As an evolution of the original network of GEO Accredited Verifiers, GEO has expanded the international network to over 40 people (25 of whom are in Europe). The dual value of the network is being promoted. Firstly, as the Accredited Verifiers to GEO Certification, and simultaneously as high quality Sustainability Advisers with specific golf expertise. The GEOSA network is a vital part of the delivery and quality of GEO's programmes, but will also develop as a highly valuable support network of sustainable golf business advisers to the sector - available to work across sites, and also support the industries' education and communications.

Management Guidance and Tools

as well as the guidance built into V2 of certification, GEO will also provide useful tools for golf facilities. These include downloadable Sustainability Policies, template agendas for internal committee meetings etc.

Knowledge

The existing GEO Knowledge Centre is being re-structured to target further reading materials, research findings and resources against each core sustainability theme, and across management, development and events.

GOAL

Thousands of participating, continually improving, credibly certified golf facilities

Education

Using the above agenda as a framework for consistent, long term CPD, GEO are ready and willing to work with practitioner associations to build sustainability into formal and informal programmes.



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Development

Sustainable Golf Development

GEO is about to open a set of international guidelines supporting sustainable golf development for consultation across the sector.

Produced by a team of technical and golf development experts, the guidelines are designed to: help raise levels of awareness of the social, economic and environmental benefits that golf can bring, and also; to improve social and environmental standards in golf development proposals.

The project is funded and supported by The R&A, The European Golf Course Owners Association and The European Institute of Golf Course Architects, and Ransomes Jacobsen.

The project has the backing of the world's major golf architect bodies, including The European Institute, the American Society of Golf Course Architects, the Society of Australian Golf Course Architects and the Japanese Society of Golf Course Architects.

GOAL

Thousands of sustainability stories emerging from diverse types of golf development around the world



GEO Legacy Certification

In response to requests for GEO to bring forward a recognition programme for golf developments (that addresses golf facility planning, design and construction), we have put together the pilot programme content of GEO Legacy - Support and recognition for Sustainable Golf Development and Renovations. This certification will encourage the highest standards and promote the most credible examples of socially and environmentally responsible golf development. Every GEO Legacy project will be a case study of sustainability, with GEO active in telling the practical stories of social, economic and environmental benefits of each and every project.

Knowledge

The existing GEO Knowledge Centre is being re-structured to target further reading materials, research findings and resources against each core sustainability theme, and for management, development and events.

Education

GEO will support the application of the guidelines by using them as the basis for formal and informal education of golf architects, and also as a means to make contact with government agencies and planning offices around the world.

Events

With golf events already the stimulus for millions of dollars worth of economic development, infrastructure investment, travel and tourism, media and sponsorship engagement, the events sector is well placed to demonstrate multiple strands of golf's Corporate Responsibility. The media spotlight can be a catalyst for extensions in the venues social and environmental action; easy practical actions multiplied across contractors and suppliers can significantly reduce the footprint of the event; and simple measures can ensure that people see the event as a leader in sustainable lifestyles and livelihoods. Actions at and around sporting events can also bring momentum to local sustainability projects and to the golf sector's wider drive.

The 2010 Ryder Cup

GEO's flagship 'green event' aims to be the environmentally and socially responsible - reducing resource consumption, raising awareness and showcasing innovation. Aligning with government and public expectations, the 2010 Green Drive aims to benefit golf, local communities and the environment.

Sustainable Golf Event Guidelines

GEO is already in discussions with a number of international golfing and environmental organisations over the potential to pool knowledge, resources and experiences to create a Sustainable Golf Events toolkit. GEO has liaised with UNEP and the IOC's technical institute as external partners in this project.

Recognition

GEO is working closely with the European Tour and a number of other promoters and sponsors, with a view to rolling out the sustainable golf events programme.

GOAL

Weekly showcases of golf's social, economic and environmental value



Ryder Cup 2018

In partnership with Ryder Cup Europe, GEO has defined sustainability criteria for the selection of The 2018 Ryder Cup venue. For the first time, social and environmental best practice will be evaluated as a core part of their proposals.



Communications

GEO's work, and the sustainability of golf in general, are issues of interest within both industry and mainstream media. Whether producing content for magazines, TV spots or social media, GEO is positioned to talk credibly and openly about the good and bad sustainability performance it observes in golf.

Becoming recognised as an authority figure on golf and environment, GEO has developed an interesting and unique database of media contacts, that straddles governments and government agencies, the environmental NGO community, golf and general interest media.

GEO recognises that more needs to be done to reach out to diverse audiences more regularly. From golfers to members of the public, and from course managers to developers - there are many decision makers, in golf and outwith, who need to be engaged.

GEO are also interested in how achievements in golf can stand as an example to local communities, though international tourism and the global sports media.

A huge part of golf's sustainability contribution relates to the communication of these issues.

2010 Highlights

♦ **National Geographic**
Feature article on golf and environment in their international Green Supplement

♦ **International Herald Tribune** Editorial

♦ **CNN Living Golf**
Sustainable golf feature

♦ **European Tour TV**
Greening of the Ryder Cup vignette

♦ **IMG Golfing World** Six vignettes filmed / planned

♦ **golfenvironment.org**
videos, blogs, people perspectives, testimonials, snippets of sustainability stories and their business benefits



Partnerships

United Nations Sport and Environment Unit

GEO has regular direct engagement with UNEP's dedicated Sport and Environment team in Nairobi. We are a much valued interlocuter on matters relating to golf's sustainability

UNEP Global Forum for Sport and Environment (G-ForSE)

GEO is part of this sport and environment network, and through this golf's sustainability efforts are regularly reported

WWF International

GEO regularly engages with senior officials at WWF HQ, as well as through national affiliates - listening to concerns they may have and finding out what the aspirations of the global NGO community are for a sector like golf

GEO's continuing success
relies on broad support
from golf and environmental
organisations

World Resources Institute

GEO has been sharing golf's progress with this international NGO, community and government advisory think-tank

Cooperation on Health and Biodiversity (COHAB)

GEO has involved the COHAB Initiative

European Commission

GEO retain contact with several senior civil servants in DG Environment and the EU Sport Unit, and share information with the EGA Golf Course Committee on any matters of EU interface

International Standards Organization

GEO are part of a working group seeking to develop an ISO Standard for golf services

European Water Partnership

GEO are discussing how GEO Certification criteria for water can synch up with this non-profit organisations own water standards



SportAccord

GEO recently represented golf's sustainability efforts at the 2010 Sport Accord Convention in Dubai. A presence on the expert panel that discussed Sustainability in Sport, GEO's insight into golf's unique issues, opportunities and action was of great interest and well received by other sports sectors;

The AISTS

GEO recently presented to the IOC's Institute of Technology, with whom, there is an opportunity to collaborate on guidelines for Sustainable Golf Events.

GEO works with golf and environmental organizations worldwide including:



The Future

- ◆ Pan-industry promotion of GEO Certification V2 - widespread OnCourse™ participation will tell its own story of industry commitment

- ◆ Launch and promotion of the Sustainable Development Guidelines

- ◆ GEO Legacy Pilot Phase: recruitment of pioneer sites

- ◆ Deliver and report on The Ryder Cup Green Drive

- ◆ Begin work on The Economics of Sustainability

- ◆ Work with international golf tourism partners to promote an initiative around sustainable golf tourism - tapping back to core programmes for development, management and events

GEO has a clear vision for the next steps as we continue to support golf in advancing its sustainability

- ◆ Work with product manufacturers, suppliers and distributors to showcase sustainability in golf products - course management, golf equipment and apparel

- ◆ Production of international guidelines for Sustainable Golf Events

- ◆ Speaking openly and objectively about clearly unsustainable and environmentally damaging golf developments

- ◆ Strengthening partnerships, growing resources and advocating greater golf industry investment in the subject

CRITICAL PROJECT

THE ECONOMICS OF SUSTAINABILITY

GEO have identified a critical piece of work. A carefully targeted desk-top research project into the economics of sustainability. It is crucial that we can all draw upon real world evidence of the bottom line benefits derived from social and environmental responsibility.

The work is particularly important in the development of new golf facilities, where economic pressures relating to capital investments, security of investment and short term return on investment are more acute. However, it equally applies to long term management in relation to minimising maintenance costs, reducing resource expenses and waste, marketing, publicising and positioning your product.



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