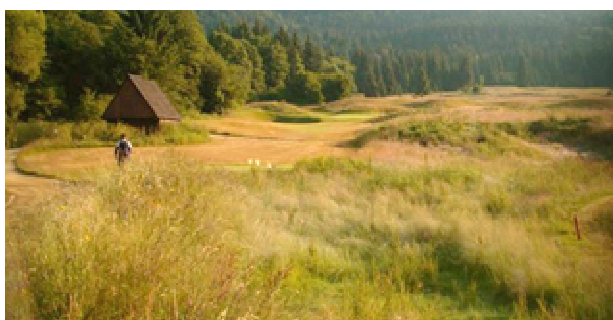
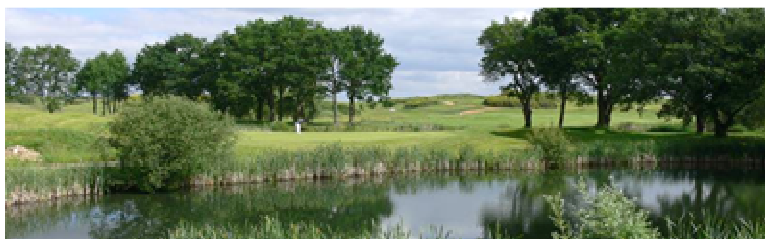


Contribution to Biodiversity

Sustainability fact sheet
Benefits of golf courses series

The issues

- Greater biodiversity means ecosystems are more stable and healthy.¹
- Human expansion and development are putting increasing pressure on the stability and security of species and their habitats.^{2,3}
- The preservation and enhancement of biodiversity is a focus of the United Nations' programmes for sustainable development and they have declared 2010 as *The International Year of Biodiversity*.^{4,5}
- Signatories to the UN'S *Convention on Biological Diversity* are now legally committed to conserving, protecting and enhancing biodiversity.⁶
- Nature reserves will never be sufficient to counter the impacts of growing global populations² on biodiversity, and need to be supported by good areas of habitat across the countryside.



Golf course solutions

- There are over 25,000 golf courses worldwide⁷, with over 5,500 in Europe covering a total of approximately 275,000 hectares.²
- 40%-60% of the average course is potentially available for wildlife use, being outside of intensive playing areas.²
- Although new golf course developments can cause drastic changes to the natural environment^{7,8,9}, new and established courses can contribute positively to supporting wildlife.^{9,10,11,12,13,14,15}
- Golf courses are often situated in ecologically significant areas such as heathland, acid grassland, fixed dune grassland and ancient woodland^{2,3,16}, supporting some of the rarest and most endangered wildlife species.^{3,9,13}
- Golf courses heighten biodiversity value when situated close to urbanised areas, on degraded landscapes such as landfills, quarries and eroded lands, and areas of intensive agricultural use.^{7,15}

To learn more about the benefits of sustainability and best practice visit www.randa.org/thegolfcourse

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Contribution to Biodiversity

Sustainability fact sheet
Benefits of golf courses series

Golf course solutions

- Encouraging native species of plants supports a greater diversity of insects and birds.^{9, 13, 16}
- Cost effective course management limits environmental impact through the use of native turfgrasses and plants which require less water, fertiliser and pesticide.^{1, 17}
- Rough grassland can support indigenous species and wildflowers¹⁰ and reducing rough mowing frequency allows a larger arthropod population to develop, increasing the food stock for other wildlife.¹
- Golf courses can incorporate wildlife corridors which allow species to move between habitats.^{10, 18}
- Water bodies on golf courses create important aquatic habitats.¹² Seasonally flooded wetlands have an ecological value that far outweighs the space they occupy and the time for which they are under water.¹⁹
- For golf courses to contribute positively to biodiversity, a balance must be struck between the needs of the golfer and those of the natural environment.^{1, 2, 19}



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