



GEO Certified[®]
TOURNAMENT

GEO Certified[®] Report

OMEGA EUROPEAN MASTERS

Certified by GEO Foundation: February 2023

Independent verifier: Valentine Godin



For a tournament renowned for its spectacular setting in the Swiss Alps at Crans-sur-Sierre, it is fitting that the Omega European Masters is leading the way across a range of sustainability indicators and demonstrating best practice in promoting nature, the circular economy and efficient use of resources, community impact and taking climate action. It is a journey and the collective ambition to continually improve is evident throughout. The steps taken so far are an inspiration for other events not only in golf but all sport. Our congratulations to the organisers, sponsors, host venue and all stakeholders on their leadership and for achieving GEO Certified® Tournament status for the first time.

Jonathan Smith
Founder and Executive Director
GEO Foundation for Sustainable Golf



A positive union between sport and sustainability that is great to see! Through dedication, creativity and passion, the Omega European Masters brings the industry a new example for others to follow. A commitment to sustainability with a clear long-term vision which places legacy and local communities at the heart of their mission. With a clear agenda and a long-term vision, the tournament showcased a commitment to eco-friendliness across its activities. An inspiring start on a new sustainability journey striding towards a greener future which I am excited to follow and see thrive.

Valentine Godin
Independent Verifier



INTRODUCTION

GEO Foundation is delighted to recognise the 2022 Omega European Masters as a GEO Certified® Tournament, achieving this award for a first time. Hosted by Crans-sur-Sierre Golf Club, Crans Montana, in Switzerland, the tournament took place from August 22-25, 2022.

As a result of a concerted team effort and with concrete commitments to the future, the Omega European Masters has:

- Undergone an official verification process, undertaken by independent verifier Valentine Godin.
- Successfully passed the GEO Certified® evaluation.
- Met the required criteria of golf's voluntary standard for sustainable golf tournaments.
- Agreed the Continual Improvement Points set during 2022 Verification.

GEO Certification Ltd agrees with the verification assessment that, having achieved 49 out of the 58 credits available, and with Continual Improvement Points set for the future, the Omega European Masters should be awarded GEO Certified® Tournament status for the 2022 event.

This certification recognises the organisers' credible and important leadership in advancing sustainability - in and through golf – helping foster nature, conserve resources, take climate action and strengthen communities. The Omega European Masters has also helped to raise awareness locally and across a global audience.

This official GEO Certified® Tournament Report summarises the commitments made, actions undertaken, results generated, and continual improvement points accepted for future editions of the tournament.

Jonathan Smith
Executive Director

GEO Foundation for Sustainable Golf





VERIFICATION

The official tournament verification audit was carried out by an independent verifier, Valentine Godin.

Verification was conducted according to the protocols and processes of the GEO Certification Ltd programme. Verification involved the following activities and considerations, using the International Sustainable Tournament Standard as the guide to ensure comprehensive and consistent evaluation of performance:

- Prior to the event, reviewed with organisers individual credits sought and plans in place.
- During the event, received an in-depth operations tour of the event venue and related sites.
- Interviewed relevant staff of the event host organisation, including engaged sponsors and contracted parties where needed.
- Reviewed submitted documents to ensure compliance met the intent of individual credit criteria.
- Provided feedback considerations for continued future improvement on standard criteria within GEO Sustainable Tournaments Standard Verification Workbook.

A full verification report was then submitted for evaluation by GEO Certification Ltd.

About the Independent Verifier - Valentine Godin

Entrepreneur, environmental engineer and passionate sustainable consultant, Valentine helps businesses align their commercial ambitions with their long-term sustainable objectives. With Global Vision Engineering in 2020, Valentine has worked a portfolio of golf courses and sporting venues in Europe to implement sustainable management practices. She seeks to bring positive impacting solutions adapted to the local circumstances, strategic vision and available resources. Placing innovation and technology at the forefront of her work, Valentine is a strong believer in leveraging data-analytics to drive transformative impact across all levels of the business. Working with an international portfolio of clients, Global Vision Engineering has grown to have experience in resource management (water, energy, waste and materials), supply chain management and landscape conservation.

GEO Certification Review

GEO Certification Ltd undertook a full review of all tournament and verification materials and evidence, ensuring:

- **Comprehensiveness** - those activities undertaken touched on all elements of the Tournaments Standard.
- **Consistency** - that the verification approach was balanced, well weighted, and with a consistent depth of evaluation across criteria.
- **Accuracy** - matching the verification report with evidence submitted by the tournament to ensure statements and claims were accurate.



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

GEO Credit Summary		
Section	Potential Credits	Awarded Credits
Staging	42	37
Communications	6	6
Legacies	10	6
Total	58	49
Certification requires 46 credits achieved (80% of potential credits).		

- Sustainability section of tournament website highlighting the positive actions and detailed 2021 report.
- 100% renewable energy used throughout the site alongside measures to optimise energy efficiency.
- Host venue focused on best practice, becoming GEO certified in 2022. Highlights include a gravity fed irrigation system.
- Strong engagement with suppliers with ambitions to collectively strive to improve in future years.
- Waste minimised through efforts to remove PET bottles and single use cutlery, alongside comprehensive waste sorting systems.
- Priority to reuse where possible, evident through the annual reuse of furniture and engagement with local community to use lockers when not in use elsewhere. Items such as curtains and tarpaulin also going to secondary use.
- Strong communications throughout the site to engage fans and stakeholders.
- A biodiversity course walk helped highlight the rich flora and fauna found at the course.
- Calculation of the carbon footprint to identify hotspots and help prioritise areas to reduce in future editions.



BEST PRACTICES HIGHLIGHTS

Sustainability was implemented in a planned and coordinated way across all key elements of event staging, and in line with the GEO tournament certification criteria.

A wide range of actions spanned the following sustainability action areas:

- **Venue**
- **Staging**
- **Communications**
- **Legacies**

Venue

Highlights

- Crans-sur-Sierre became GEO Certified in 2022, awarded for best sustainability practice in fostering nature, conserving resources, strengthening communities and taking climate action.
- Modernised irrigation system, new sprinkler heads and control systems have all helped reduce water consumption.
- Site protection plans in place to preserve the environment and prevent visitors straying into sensitive areas, supported by volunteers to direct fans as necessary.

Staging

Highlights

- Strong communications of sustainability strategy and actions through the website and on-site engagement, reinforcing the fact sustainability is a key theme throughout the event.
- Energy efficiency is optimised, voltage minimised and electricity delivered with 100% renewable energy.
- Important investment over the years has installed fixed systems and connected event energy needs directly to the grid. No additional generators required.
- Additional car charging station also connected to the main grid.
- Irrigation powered via a gravity-led system, further optimising resources and saving important amounts of energy.
- Other energy efficiency actions included maximum heating of 19C, LED lights turned off when possible and temporary structures designed with windows both sides to optimise natural light.
- Strong engagement with suppliers through Procurement Code, sustainability survey and importance of sustainable sourcing and accepted materials. Initiatives also opened up new conversations.



Staging Highlights continued

- Waste minimised throughout the event with very little food waste, reusable forks, knives and plates.
- A deposit system for the glasses of water and all beverages was in place.
- The event eliminated PET where possible.
- Sauces (ketchup, mayonnaise etc) all available to customers via large shared pumps.
- Plastics in gifts for media and guests minimised with either cardboard or no packaging.
- VIP catering extremely eco-conscious, with all food purchased packaging free, spices and herbs supplied in compostable brown paper bags. Only orange juice in plastic bottle and these were recycled directly by the staff during the event.
- Surplus food donated to staff to take leftovers at home.
- Buffet options with food options thought-through to reuse food and minimise waste (cold options, small portions etc).
- Reuse opportunities maximised. Event curtains and tarpaulin upcycled.
- Furniture has been reused since 2008.
- Sponsors panels and other boards around the event are made from DIBOND - a composite aluminium that is reusable and recyclable).
- Lockers in the media centre used from the local swimming pool closed during the event.
- All caterers provided vegan and vegetarian options.
- Zero waste sent to landfill
- Clear signage to assist people with disabilities, equity and fairness in hiring practices and incentives for all volunteers.
- Tournament works with local schools and the local community on various projects.





Communications

Highlights

- Strong communication plan for highlighting sustainable initiatives both locally on site and across global platforms - website, social media and broadcast partners.
- Public conference with Alicia Moulin, Sustainability Manager of Swiss Golf, talking about sustainability while Jonathan Smith of GEO Foundation helped reinforce commitment alongside other stakeholders.
- An informative Swiss Golf stand on biodiversity was located at the entrance to the event.
- A biodiversity course walk and other activities promoting sustainability and raising awareness amongst the public. A competition quiz helped engage fans with biodiversity trivia and local fauna/flora on the course.
- All stakeholders embraced the sustainability drive, such as implementing paperless stands, and keen to do more.

Legacies

Highlights

- Clear vision to continually engage with stakeholders to improve and implement best practices, such as through an event survey.
- Post event survey with 670 responses incorporated elements of economic impact review.
- Using the tournament platform to engage the club, local community and Swiss Golf and promote the benefits of sports, nature and well-being.
- Carbon footprint calculated.





CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT POINTS

Staging

- Continue efforts to improve data quality from suppliers for carbon footprinting.
- Explore climate mitigation options.
- Expand energy efficiency measures such as mechanisms to turn lights off automatically in bathrooms through motion sensors or timers as lights remained on in some areas.
- Ensure installations are 100% LED.
- Document all on-site appliances and energy users to continue to embrace new innovations to optimise energy use in future years.
- Collect water data to provide information on water conservation strategies.
- Continue engagement with suppliers post data collection and surveys to identify areas for improvement and enhance quantified results.
- Define KPIs for suppliers to balance quantitative with qualitative data gathering, and work on improving response rate. Consider shortening the survey to encourage engagement and focus on quantitative key data that can provide KPIs instead of qualitative data which although very valuable is much harder to aggregate.
- Share and communicate sustainable sourcing requirements with suppliers.
- Continue efforts to reduce waste - no PET bottles on site to visitors and deposit system; minimise errors in sorting with continued education of staff; encourage caterers to eliminate PET containers.
- Ensure sustainable sourcing of the napkins and understand recycling needs (some are compostable some aren't) and share the information clearly with visitors, such as with signage at eco-point. Napkins for all caterers should have same end life to ease sorting.
- Produce food charter promoting best sustainable practices. Work to ensure all meat and fish sourced sustainably.
- Encourage and highlight 'carbon friendly' or 'low environmental impact' and 'local' options on menus. Other options include flags of where does the food is sourced from and the eco-friendly options via symbols.
- Encourage reuse of water bottles and remind all stakeholders, visitors and players to bring their own. Try to avoid providing new bottles to all each year but instead only provide to first-timers, as was the case in the media centre. Clearly communicate this to encourage all visitors to bring their own, such as through a competition or signage on the electronic ticket.





CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT POINTS

Staging

- Continue efforts to minimise plastics in the village and continue good governance around recycling using nudging to encourage recycling by the visitors with positive reinforcement post above all the ECO POINTS. Potential to gamify game 'who will win this year tournament?' or to ask some other tournament related question - think of changing the question every day to keep user entertained and engaged (see <https://behaviourchangecornwall.co.uk/signs-to-stop-plastic/> for example and inspiration).
- Improve recycling signage anticipating visitor uncertainties : eg paper napkins used at tournament, compostable or not? Try to use compostable ones AND let visitors know at the ECO POINT.
- Keep a record of waste from the different zones (VIP section, village etc) to focus efforts in future years on zones which are producing higher waste.
- Continue to encourage more sustainable transport solutions, perhaps via a page on website 'how to get there' designed with a focus on footprint associated with each transportation option.
- Aim to increase electrical vehicles.
- Ensure actions cited in 2023 (see OEM mobility plan) vision are implemented in next year tournament with as many efforts and initiatives are put in place That is:
 - QR code pour calculer son bilan carbon (QR code for visitors to calculate carbon footprint)
 - QR code qui présentera le projet de compensation carbone choisit (mitigation project to compensate footprint from transport)
 - Inciter au covoiturage (cette fois en proposant le partenaire choisi (voir plus bas)) (encourage car sharing with suggested partner)
 - Proposer sur le site internet et réseaux sociaux des alternatives (increased communication on event website around transport options to and from the tournament)
- For more details on 2023 implementation, see mobility plan document.
- 'Communication sur le site internet et réseaux l'offre vélo '





CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT POINTS

Communications

- Communication on good practices and initiatives being implemented could be reinforced further to increase awareness: For example, posting highlights, encouraging visitors and staff to bring own water bottles, highlighting the tournament 100% renewables energy or that the course is irrigated via a gravity-powered system.
- Build on the Swiss Golf biodiversity initiative as a key part of the tournament.

Legacies

- Set clear economic impact KPI pre-event with target and to build a clear baseline that can be tracked and follow year after year.
- Develop potential partnership for study on economic impact and look for new partner to 2024.
- Initiative reusing and redistributing cotton did not happen due to what seemed miscommunication between on-site parties. Initiative should be kept and re-introduced next year with increased care on communication involving all relevant actors.





ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY, IN AND THROUGH GOLF

GEO Foundation for Sustainable Golf is an international not-for-profit organisation entirely dedicated to advancing sustainability in and through golf, collaborating with the golf industry worldwide to:

- Strengthen the social and environmental contribution of golf
- Help the sport credibly communicate its commitment and value
- Champion sustainability in front of a large audience.

GEO Foundation manages and assures the OnCourse® program for facility and course management, new golf development and tournaments – currently used in 76 countries worldwide.

In addition to the delivery of programs and solutions, GEO's wider activities include research and innovation, communications and reporting, and support for strategy and policy.

GEO also administers GEO Certified®, the international mark of credible and comprehensive sustainability in golf, and part of an elite group of well-known ecolabels which include Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, and Forest Stewardship Council. After completing OnCourse®, a golf facility, development or tournament can apply for this international distinction.

Join OnCourse® - for sustainability, climate action and golf's future!

Congratulations to the organisers for making sustainability such a central part of what they do, and for highlighting action and continual improvement through the Omega European Masters.

