

Golf and Sustainability in Australia



Exciting new pilot - free for first 20 clubs

The Australian Sports Turf Managers Association and Golf Australia are launching a pilot project in partnership with The R&A and the international non-profit, GEO Foundation to roll out a new sustainability support and recognition program to golf clubs.

The program is called OnCourse®, and is a custom-built, easy-to-use tool which helps course managers and other decision makers in clubs to:



- Quickly self-assess and record all current best practices and track key annual data
- Gain new ideas to action right away or over time – often saving time and money
- Engage staff, golfers and the local community around the value delivered for nature and people, as well as future commitments to key environmental and social issues, including climate action
- Access a variety communications templates and tools to help great for staff and member pride as well as marketing
- Become part of a growing national and international community sharing ideas and highlights and being recognised for their contributions.

OnCourse can be used on its own for guidance, tools and annual data tracking, and it also leads seamlessly to the GEO Certified® label for sustainable golf, which gives clubs credible, world-leading recognition for their efforts to foster nature, conserve resources, take climate action and benefit community.

This leadership distinction also comes with marketing and communications toolkit to easily share with golfers, local community and local government.



GEO Certified®

The purpose of the pilot

The pilot program will allow us to get feedback from the local clubs and gather insights for further customisations to meet any regional or national context. We will also be able to begin informing government and other key stakeholders/audiences that golf is building these solutions into its new sustainability strategy – an important way to help gain greater respect and understanding from regulatory bodies, local communities, etc.

- During the pilot, access to OnCourse will be entirely free. Usually there is a small annual subscription, but the first 20 clubs that come forward will not have to pay.
- Telephone support will be provided by ASTMA and the OnCourse team at GEO Foundation
- Due to COVID-19, the verification/audit for those that choose to become GEO Certified® will be carried out remotely. Verification fees will be subsidised and reduced, costing clubs that want to be certified only \$500 AUS (this covers a three-year certification period). There is a possibility that remote verification will become a permanent option.

Future possibilities

Feedback from the pilot will inform the further development of a regionalised version - OnCourse® Australia, complete with additional national and state guidance.

OnCourse is built on a powerful database, so while every club that uses the program gains benefit, it also helps the industry associations to better support their members' interests. Anonymous data will help by informing the industry itself, as well as being used to gain greater respect and understanding from government.

Great stories (highlights) will be gathered into a collective national gallery which can be used as a knowledge share of ideas back across golf, and also positive stories to help improve golf's public image – locally, regionally and nationally. National associations can use the data and stories to help develop national reports and reviews of the environmental responsibility and social value of golf across the country.

