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## **Press Release**

### **Olympic Golf Course achieves recognition from Golf Environment Organization**

5 August 2016: The Rio Olympic Golf Course has today been recognised for its commitment and contribution to the enhancement of the environment.

Following three years of extensive reporting, monitoring, evaluation and site visits from an independent auditor, spanning the design, construction and grow in phases of the project, The Rio Olympic Golf Course has achieved GEO Certified® Development status.

A spokesperson for the Golf Environment Organization (GEO) said:

"The achievement is in recognition of the many nature conservation and resource efficiency activities undertaken to date. It takes into account the longer term net positive social and environmental impacts that the facility is set to deliver in the months and years ahead, which are framed within the management agreements.

"While this has been a complex and sensitive project, developed under tight deadlines, requiring considerable additional monitoring and evaluation from staff and the accredited, independent auditor, the work carried out by the design, construction and maintenance teams delivers against established best practices and industry standards that have been developed with input from numerous international specialists and stakeholders.

"The final outcomes are that a degraded site, that was primarily either devoid of vegetation or becoming over-run with exotic species, and potentially vulnerable to other forms of 'harder' development, will now be actively managed for nature conservation, local community recreation, education, and sports development by a non-profit sports body in collaboration with other local stakeholders, and guided by a robust environmental management plan. We look forward to working with those partners and stakeholders in the project going forward to help make sure that the venue goes on to maximise its role in nature conservation, resource efficiency and innovation and community engagement.

"We are also pleased to highlight the valuable role the Rio Olympic Golf Course played in the road testing and development of a new sustainability standard for golf development, which is to be launched internationally in the near future."

Antony Scanlon, Executive Director of the International Golf Federation (IGF), said: "The IGF is delighted that more than three years of planning, design and construction of the Reserva de Marapendi Golf Course have culminated in the course being awarded GEO Certified® Development status.

“From the start, it was imperative that this once degraded site should emphasise the biodiversity of the location while maintaining its environmentally protected status and ensuring that the risks to the indigenous species and habitat would be minimised. We believe this has been achieved successfully, and we are very proud of the fact that once the athletes leave, Rio will have a sustainable, environmentally protected setting to play an important social, educational and sporting role in the years ahead.”

Notable actions and achievements highlighted in the independent GEO Certified® Development report include:

#### Nature

- 80% of the existing site had zero vegetation cover
- Successful transplantation of more than 15,000 native plants with 95% success rate for establishment
- Establishment of on-site plant nursery to propagate more than 475,000 plants from native seeds and stock onto the golf course site
- Removal and control of existing exotic species
- Overall compensation for 1.4ha of loss of reduced quality restinga habitat, with net increase in conservation managed restinga of more than 33 ha
- Design of ‘naturalised’ golf course, creating opportunities for gradual re-colonisation by native species, and strong habitat connectivity across the site
- Long term ecological and environmental monitoring and management plan in place and approved by local authorities
- 167% increase in vegetation cover
- Net increase in biodiversity reported of 118 to 263 species found on the site
- Speedy recolonisation by rare and protected species including burrowing owl, caiman, capybara, lapwings, sandpipers and egrets
- Comprehensive pollution prevention measures carried out across the course throughout construction and management, and integrated into the design and construction of the modern maintenance facility

#### Resources

- Use of entirely on site construction materials - no extra sand or soil imported
- Use of Zeon Zoysia and SeaDwarf Seashore Paspalum grown locally - the most drought and pest tolerant species for the site, propagated in Brazil, which also allows for lower quality irrigation water, reducing need for water treatment
- Use of fuel efficient and hybrid maintenance machinery. All Jacobsen equipment uses GreensCare™, a 96% biodegradable hydraulic fluid made of renewable seed-oil based product
- Clubhouse designed using passive design principles
- Clubhouse utilisation of local, recycled and certified materials
- 100% recycled slate quarry waste for the pathways
- More than 90% of all construction materials were sourced from within 400Km of the site
- Cleared exotic plants were recycled as mulch to aid transplantation operations
- The Toro irrigation system is pressurised with the most up-to-date energy efficient pump system in order to optimise pressure and minimise energy use

#### Community

- Agreement between municipality and BGC to run the facility as the Brazilian golf centre of excellence for coaching and training - of local golfers, as well as national teams
- The agreement establishes that the golf facility will be free-access to the public and the development and implementation of four centres:
  - An environmental education centre to increase awareness about the environment and sustainable golf development at the local schools and communities
  - A knowledge and technical centre for youth ages 14-18, to promote social inclusion through sport, in partnership with technical schools and universities, offering caddie, coach and referee development programmes and specialized vocational training in greenkeeping and sports turf, Machine Operator and environmental management
  - A high performance Golf Academy - to improve the quantity and the quality of the Brazilian players at the world ranking

A development golf centre to grow the quantity of new golf practitioners through programmes like “Golfe para a Vida” (golf for life), in partnership with public and private schools and/or other communities.

#### **Social media**

For up-to-the-minute information on Olympic Golf and regular updates, please follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Youtube](#)

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#### **About the International Golf Federation:**

The IGF was founded in 1958 to encourage the international development of the game and to employ golf as a vehicle to foster friendship and sportsmanship. The IGF is comprised of 146 National Federation Members in 141 countries and 22 Professional Members. The IGF serves as the International Olympic Committee’s recognised International Federation for golf.

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