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CERTIFICATION SCHEMES BENEFIT CONSUMERS

Governments should give a funding boost to producers to help them meet the stringent requirements of different sustainable certification schemes, said Roland Higgins, policy advisor for the Rainforest Alliance, in a video interview at the World Export Development Forum today.

But all stakeholders should work to improve outcomes for citizens.

"I have seen (the schemes) work in Latin America, in Africa and Asia and it makes a difference for the people who produce, for the people who process and the people who consume, and in the end that's our dream," Mr Higgins said at the World Export Development Forum (WEDF) in Montreux, Switzerland today.

Mr Higgins said that the schemes – whether they focus on organic produce, climate change, biodiversity or fair trade – shared basic principles.

"But we should be making these schemes come closer together, because they are all needed as the task of saving the planet is huge," Mr Higgins said.

He said governments should set internationally agreed minimum standards for the various certification schemes to help consumers recognize a credible programme.

The Rainforest Alliance works to conserve biodiversity by encouraging responsible business and consumer behaviour.

WEDF – one of the most influential global forums on trade and export issues for the developing world – is organized every year by the Geneva-based International Trade Centre (ITC).

www.intracen.org/wedf

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