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## Rainforest Alliance and UTZ to merge



New organisation will retain Rainforest Alliance name and aims to simplify the certification process

**T**he Rainforest Alliance and UTZ, two of the world's leading sustainability certification organisations, have announced their intention to merge later this year.

The new organisation, to be named the Rainforest Alliance, will tackle environmental and social issues around the world, including climate change, deforestation, poverty, and unsustainable farming.

The move will create a single global certification standard that will simplify certification for farmers and empower companies to build more responsible supply chains, more efficiently. It will also work to expand advocacy efforts and through new partnerships ensure conservation of entire landscapes in priority regions from India to Indonesia, and Guatemala to Ghana.

The future Rainforest Alliance

will help ensure that more products are responsibly sourced, helping farmers and companies meet the growing demand for products with sustainable credentials.

The future sustainability standard, a single certification programme known as the Rainforest Alliance standard, will utilise the respective strengths of the current Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) and UTZ standards while creating a single auditing process for certificate holders.

As a result, it will be an easier path for companies to achieve proven sustainability certification, allowing them to drive innovation throughout their supply chains.

According to the group, adopting the name Rainforest Alliance helps retain well-established engagement with consumers.

By combining

forces, the two NGOs will provide a leading platform to help increase demand for responsibly sourced products.

Together, the new organisation will act as an advocate for change, continuing to protect the natural environment and striving to make sustainable agriculture and forest management the norm by working side by side with communities, businesses and governments – aims that are already at the core of the missions of UTZ and the Rainforest Alliance.

Once the two organizations have merged, Han de Groot, current executive director of UTZ, will be the CEO of the Rainforest Alliance. Nigel Sizer, current president of the Rainforest Alliance, will take on the role of chief program officer, advocacy, landscapes and livelihoods.