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## GI holds promise but no quick fix

By Adam Sharpe

COFFEE producers looking to implement Geographical Indications (GI) strategies to their products should consider the financial implications and long-term investment of the project, according to leading industry analysts.

Daniele Giovanucci, a consultant at the International Trade Centre, told the International Coffee Organisation's (ICO) Seminar on Geographical Indication for Coffee that commercially successful GI programmes do not simply emerge and success is often measured in decades, requiring social, commercial and political patience.

The failure to establish suitable organisational and institutional structures to create, maintain and market GI products and the lack of a sustained commitment of resources for ongoing operational costs, are some of the reasons why projects fail, he said.

But countries such as Colombia, Ethiopia and Indonesia, which all have GI schemes in place, have seen an upturn in demand and profits for their products.

"Our research demonstrates that indeed many – but certainly not all – regions who implemented GI schemes for their coffee have seen an upturn in demand and profitability," Mr Giovanucci told *The Public Ledger* after the seminar. "It must be noted that while GIs are very powerful approaches, they are also long-term investments and not

a quick panacea."

Nestor Osorio, executive director of the ICO, agreed that GI could be a powerful tool for coffee producers looking to add value throughout the supply chain but said all should be very aware of the financial implications.

"It's up to the individual countries to ascertain in terms of costs and benefits what suits them best," he told reporters at a press conference in London, but added that he was very positive about the future of GI coffee.

"It has the potential to be similar to GI wine (in terms of popularity)," he said. "It is starting to get to that level."

Meanwhile, Mr Osorio said the coffee berry borer pest poses the biggest threat to global coffee production in terms of pests and diseases and a concerted effort to share knowledge of how to combat outbreaks is needed.

An ICO study into the health of coffee plantations on a global level found the pest to be the biggest problem many growers around the world were having to face and the ICO plans to set up a workshop to exchange ideas on combating it.

"The coffee berry borer is the most common, the most dangerous, the most damaging and costliest pest there is," Mr Osorio said. "The projects to fight the pest are considered to be of a very high priority."