

Tetra Pak, one of the world's biggest foods packaging company, is looking for investment opportunities in Africa. Ethiopia is on the list of countries the company is keen on exploring for a possible venture.

The company will send a high level delegation to assess opportunities the coming May 2015, Capital learnt.

Tetra Pak made its ambition known during the first Ethio-Swedish Agro Technology Forum of the dairy, sugar and energy sectors that was held at the Sheraton Addis Hotel on Tuesday, February 10. The event brought together major actors in the agro processing, dairy and energy sectors such as Tetra Pak, De Laval, Alfa Laval and Valley International Projects (VIP).

The Swedish company currently has two production facilities in Africa, South Africa and Kenya. "The government is ready to support industries that are linked to the agricultural sector. The raw commodities that we are currently exporting are expected to go through a transition to become processed and value added so that they can be linked to the global value chain," stated Dr. Mebrahtu Melese, State Minister of Industry when addressing participants of the Ethio-Swedish forum.

He also stated that companies such as Tetra Pak should really consider investing in the country to take advantage of the opportunity in the market as well as to enable the agro-processing sector export value- added products.

Swedish Ambassador to Ethiopia Jan Sadek said farming, food production and food packaging have been one of the most important pillars for Sweden's economic development. He also said that innovation, invention and research within agro-techniques, in particular by companies such as Alfa Laval, De Laval and Tetra Pak, were instrumental in developing Sweden's agro business and related services.

"I believe that agriculture and dairy here in Ethiopia, as it was the case in Sweden, have a potential for the domestic economy, livelihood, biological diversity, energy production and more. We know that these areas have an important role in the current Ethiopian Growth and Transformation Plan and they are also likely to remain important in the future to come," the Ambassador stated. He further

said that the forum was an occasion to share experiences, create ties between Ethiopian and Swedish stakeholders and the beginning of a mutually beneficial business opportunity.

“Today, our cooperation is more about development, environment, peace and stability, of course trade and investment. Sweden wants to encourage a broader cooperation with Ethiopia with increased trade and investment relations and knowledge transfer,” the ambassador said.

The Forum was organized by the Ethiopian Embassy in Stockholm, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Valley International Projects (VIP).

VIP, a company that is also engaged in Agro-forestry stated that it has an interest to invest in the forestry sector in Ethiopia. The company has a plan to launch a project called a Paulownia Forest Project involving a fast growing tree that can provide a byproduct for energy. According to estimates, the project could cost around USD 200 million and is planned to be carried out in Oromia; Amhara; Tigray, and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region.

Source: Capital (Ethiopia)