

Sweden Supporting Development of Ethiopia's Forestry Resource

Addis Ababa February 25/2017 Sweden is committed to supporting the development of Ethiopia's forestry resource which contributes to the livelihood of communities and to mitigate climate change.

Ethiopia has been working to increase its forest coverage to 30 percent in the coming 15 years.

Forest resources are significant for the nation's economy, environment, biodiversity and the ecosystem as well as the well being of people.

Over the past years, the country has been mobilizing the public, particularly in rural areas, through nationwide watershed management campaigns.

In an exclusive interview with ENA, Annika Nordin, Development Cooperation Section Head at Sweden Embassy, said participatory forestry is very important area that Sweden can support.

"This is the priority in our strategy we embarked on last year. It is a new strategy where we are going to find the best way to support Ethiopia", she said.

She added that Sweden is committed to supporting the management of forestry resource which is very important in tackling climate change and building resilient green economy.

According to her, it is important to conduct research on land issues and forests to gain more knowledge and see how to combine what Sweden supports here bilaterally with all the support it renders regionally and globally.

“We are going to link the institutions of Sweden to those in Ethiopia so that they can work together on capacity building, research, and knowledge of forestry management”, Nordin elaborated.

Appreciating Ethiopia’s effort in protecting the environment, the head said “I think it is very important to always have the community with you when you do things and try to change things that are owned by people living close to forest and they can be involved in managing and protecting the forest”.

She further indicated that the programs are something they try to integrate into agriculture to bring resilience to drought and also climate change.

The programs are also trying to integrate gender issues and to see how the poorest of the poor, the landless in rural areas can work on forest protection and management.

Climate Change Implementation Coordinator Director-General at Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Debasu Bayleyegn said Ethiopia has been exerting maximum effort to increase forest coverage so as to reduce carbon emission.

“We have about a 15 percent of forest coverage in the country. This it has enabled us to reduce some level of carbon emission, however given the level of favorable conditions that we have, we should be able to achieve more”, he said.

In this regard, it has been undertaking research and study in collaboration with various institutions, including Mekele, Bahirdar, and Assosa universities and Ethiopian Environment and Forest Research Institute, for the successful attainment of the program.

The director-general said the country has been implementing CRGE strategy over the past five years with the core objective of eradicating poverty, reducing carbon emission and building green economy before 2022.

In this respect, the plan is to reduce carbon emission to less than 137 million metric at the end of GTP-2.

“The country is endowed with favorable geographical location, good climate and varieties of species of trees, if we utilize this resource we will be able create a situation under which we would further utilize our forest resources”, he said.

The government of Ethiopia has initiated Climate Resilient Green Economy Program in 2011 to protect the country from adverse climate change and build green economy. Source ENA