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IDLE LAND TAX LONG OVERDUE 1

Idle land tax long overdue

Taxing idle land in efforts to boost agricultural production is in the offing after the government finalised the guidelines.

Land secretary Farida Karoney says that the Idle Land Taxation Policy is awaiting parliamentary approval.

A new World Bank report shows that taxing land not under production is key to achieving food security under President Uhuru Kenyatta’s Big Four agenda.

Considering Kenya’s perennial hunger problem against the backdrop of huge chunks of arable land lying unused, the taxation policy should be implemented without further ado.

However, the government ensure that the tax guidelines are well received by Kenyans and that the policy doesn’t end up hurting the poor. The government must, for instance, state the size of land that falls under the taxation bracket.

There are peasants whose land indeed lies fallow, but that is because they lack the wherewithal to put it to productive use. Some also have very small pieces of land reserved for cultural practices which they may not wish to use for farming.

Such salient issues should to be taken into consideration while ensuring that those holding thousands of hectares face the penalties.