

Problems encountered in the ornamental aquatic plant trade

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Ornamental aquatic plant export industry in Sri Lanka is in a developing stage. However the industry is constrained by many problems. The major problems have been caused by extraction of wild plants for export.

Current regulations prohibit wild collection of aquatic plants for commercial purposes. However the exporters encounter a short supply without wild collection and are unable to meet the demand. The lengthy procedures in obtaining export permits also create problems for the exporters.

Law enforcement has also been a problem due to identification problems and skilled manpower limitations in law enforcement agencies as well as inadequacy in present regulations.

Nomenclature problems have caused confusion as trade names and synonyms are used in the export trade. Some plants are identified by several synonyms while same name refers to several plants. The problems are mainly encountered with endemic species which are threatened due to over exploitation and environmental constraints.