

## **A Review on Export Trade of Freshwater Ornamental Fish Species in Sri Lanka**

T.D.N.K.S. Rathnamurthi, P.C.B. Dias, J.M.D.R. Jayawardana, J.D.M. Senevirathne and N.P.P. Liyanage

*Department of Animal Science, Uva Wellassa University, Badulla, Sri Lanka*

Freshwater Ornamental Fish industry of Sri Lanka has developed rapidly during the last few decades due to high export demand. Industry sustains with culture of exotic species rather than a wild collection of ornamental fish including endemics. Hence, a review on the present status of the export industry of Freshwater Ornamental Fish and identification of the existing gaps are important for further development in the industry. Secondary information on exporting levels, species and countries were collected from Sri Lanka Customs. Further, 32 registered exporters were identified using NAQDA registry and pretested questionnaire was used to collect information on knowledge of exporters, productivity and export details. Results revealed that majority of export fish varieties were Guppy (87%) followed by Platy (3.3%), Molly (2.2%), Tetra (2%), Zebrafish (1.7%) and Barb (0.9%). According to the results, demand for the exporting fish is changed with the quarters of the year and majority of the species (Guppy, Platy, Molly, Tetra) have high demand in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. Demand for Zebra fish and Barb fish has high demand in 4<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of the year respectively. Results of the survey indicated that 80% of companies target only the export market rather than local trade. Majority (55%) of the exporters depended on local farmers to fulfill their requirement of export market. This vast export demand still cannot be achieved due to the communication barriers (67%) among farmers and exporters. The major constrains were identified as difficulties of recognise the actual market demand (87%), lack of adequate knowledge and technical approach regarding disease control (73%) and water quality management (87%). “Ceylon Fish Guide” a user-friendly android tool was developed to enhance the knowledge and communication of farmers and exporters. Therefore, improving the ornamental fish industry with novel technologies is important to compete with global market.

*Keywords:* Freshwater ornamental fish, Sri Lanka custom, Exporters, Mobile application, Lanka Fish