

## Current scenario on import of plant-based Ayurvedic raw materials in Sri Lanka

Hansini KGDM<sup>1</sup>, Peiris RM<sup>2</sup>, Sakunthala HS<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Dravyaguna, Gampaha Wickramarachchi Ayurveda Institute, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

<sup>2</sup>Department of Ayurveda Basic Principles, Gampaha Wickramarachchi Ayurveda Institute, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

### Abstract

Sri Lanka is an island rich and flourishing in its natural resources with herbal, mineral and animal pharmaceuticals which are the main resources of the Ayurveda and indigenous systems of medicine. Since ancient period, plants have been playing an important role not only as therapeutic agents but also as contributors in healthcare system in Sri Lanka. Although Sri Lanka is identified as one of the most biologically diverse countries in Asia with about 20% of the area under forest, it is not capable of fulfilling its own requirement in manufacturing Ayurveda pharmaceuticals due to lack of raw materials. Hence, this study was carried out to investigate the plant-based raw materials that are mainly imported despite their availability and cultivation potential in Sri Lanka. The information was gathered via visits, interviews with relevant institutions, individuals and statistics compiled with reference to published literature and a market survey was conducted following the collection of data. Overall findings of the survey revealed that the number of imported plant-based Ayurvedic raw materials without any tax was about 90. It is also revealed that nearly twenty commonly used plants among them which were highly potent to grow in Sri Lanka are also imported in large scale. It can be concluded that the proper cultivation of medicinal plants and value addition in processing chain, with mediation of responsible authorities can contribute to uplift health sector and retain foreign currency within the country as well.

**Key words:** Ayurveda, plant based raw materials

**Corresponding E-mail:** manujahansini@yahoo.com