



media release

**From the RSPB, World Parrot Trust, RSPCA and
British Veterinary Association**

The Daily Telegraph

December 1, 2006

Sir,

Today's announcement by Tony Blair of the UK's support for an end to the large-scale cruel, unsustainable and risky trade in wild caught birds is to be welcomed.

The Government has recognised that the reasons for ending this trade are overwhelming. The trapping of millions of birds in the wild and then transporting them half way around the world is impoverishing wild populations and threatening some species with extinction.

This trade was also responsible for the first case of avian influenza to arrive in the UK. Continuing this trade would undoubtedly increase the risk of further introductions of disease as pointed out by a recent report by the European Food Safety Authority. Millions of birds suffer with up to seventy percent of birds dying before reaching pet shops.

A recent survey indicates that ninety two percent of the British public are against the trade in wild birds and we are delighted that the Prime Minister has noted this and is to push for a permanent import ban.

It will now be up to the Government to persuade its EU partners to follow its lead.

Yours faithfully

Graham Wynne, Chief Executive, RSPB
David Catlow, President, British Veterinary Association
Jackie Ballard, Chief Executive, RSPCA
Jamie Gilardi, Director, World Parrot Trust