

ORAL QUESTION H-1023/06  
for Question Time at the part-session in December 2006  
pursuant to Rule 109 of the Rules of Procedure  
by Avril Doyle  
to the Commission

Subject: Wild bird trade in the EU

Despite the fact that many species can now be bred in captivity, the 25 Member States of the EU are the largest consumers of wild birds taken from their natural habitat. Between 2000 and 2003 more than 2.7 million CITES-listed birds were imported into the EU, representing approximately 93 percent of total global imports. The USA has already banned commercial imports of wild birds. The EU bans the export of our own bird life, but paradoxically is responsible for the extraction of hundreds of thousands of birds from the wild for importation each year, which raises serious animal welfare questions, as the mortality rates for these captured birds are frighteningly high. Furthermore, the illegal trade in CITES-listed species is estimated to be as lucrative as the illegal drugs and arms trades.

Will the Commission extend the current temporary ban on the import of wild birds, introduced in October 2005 as a precaution against avian influenza and due to expire at the end of 2006? What measures are being taken to stop the illegal trade in wild birds?

Tabled: 22.11.2006  
en