

*These notes refer to the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland)  
2011 (c.16) which received Royal Assent on 29 March 2011*

# Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

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## **EXPLANATORY NOTES**

### **COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS**

#### **Part 1 - Introductory**

##### *Section 1 – Animals to which this Act applies*

The Act applies only to vertebrate animals, as these are currently the only demonstrably sentient animals. However, section 1(3) makes provision to extend the Act to cover invertebrates of any description in the future if the Department is satisfied on the basis of scientific evidence that these too are capable of experiencing pain or suffering.