

*These notes refer to the Antarctic Act 2013 (c.15)  
which received Royal Assent on 26 March 2013*

# **ANTARCTIC ACT 2013**

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## **EXPLANATORY NOTES**

### **BACKGROUND**

#### *Antarctic Treaty*

3. The Antarctic Treaty establishes a mechanism for international co-operation to protect and preserve Antarctica for peaceful purposes. The United Kingdom was the first country to ratify the Treaty, which came into force in 1961. There are currently 28 Consultative (executive) Parties and 20 non-Consultative Parties. The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties meet annually to exchange information and consult on matters relating to Antarctica and may adopt measures “in furtherance of the principles and purposes of the Treaty” which become effective when approved by the Governments of all Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties. The full text of the Treaty can be found at: [www.ats.aq/documents/ats/treaty\\_original.pdf](http://www.ats.aq/documents/ats/treaty_original.pdf).