

UK Government to Recognize Animals as Sentient Beings



The British Government has introduced a bill to formally recognize vertebrate animals as sentient beings. This will be a key part of the country's broader plan to improve the state of animal welfare in the UK. If passed, the new law will put the potential experience of the individual animal, including the potential for pain or joy, at the center of any new animal welfare legislation being drafted.

Introduced in UK Parliament as the "Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill" on May 30, the bill is intended to act as a foundation for future animal rights laws, part of the UK's Action Plan for Animal Welfare, a program intended to "improve standards and eradicate cruel practices for animals both domestically and internationally," according to the UK Government's

website. The bill calls for the formation of an Animal Sentience Committee and will have a reach that extends beyond the agricultural sector, to ensure improved animal welfare standards in all fields, from agricultural animals to domestic pets.

“Vertebrate animals will be recognized as sentient beings for the first time in UK law thanks to the introduction of the Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill, introduced in Parliament today,” as stated on the [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) website. “The legislation will also ensure that animal sentience is taken into account when developing policy across Government through the creation of an Animal Sentience Committee which will be made up of animal experts from within the field.”

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