

PROPOSED MODIFICATION OF ARTICLE 6 OF THE UPDATED ANIMAL PROTECTION LAW
2/2008 PASSED ON THE 15TH OF APRIL 2008

MOTIVES FOR THE MODIFICATION

Catalonia pioneered an Animal Defence Law 1988. This avant-guard law, 3/1988, passed on the 4th of April 1988, among other things, prohibited the building of new bull-rings in Catalonia. The law has been modified and up-dated various times, always in favour of the rights of animals. An important modification was to prohibit children under 14 from going to bull-fights, as the witnessing of a violent act was seen to have a negative emotional influence on young people.

Another important addition to the law (22/2003 Animal Protection Law, 4th of July, 2003), declared that it considered that animals are psychologically as well as physically sensitive and it prohibited a number of spectacles and events where animals were caused suffering and were killed. So it would seem logical that, in the light of these modifications and additions, the law should include and protect bulls instead of excluding them. Objectively, bullfighting implies mistreatment and causes pain and suffering to the animals so the law should protect them.

Taking into account all these modifications, one sees that they form part of a process in the relationship between animals and humans. This process began from the totally anthropocentric point of view where animals were considered mere objects and continued to a substantiated point of view where, among other things, scientific evidence of the genetic similarity between species and of our parallel process of evolution, indicate that our laws must reflect this shift. Bulls (*bos primigenius taurus*) have a very similar nervous system to our own which means that we share many aspects of our neurological and emotional make-up.

Catalan society has, in general, accepted the evidence that bulls are capable of suffering and it has taken on board the shift in opinion which rejects mankind as having absolute rights over animals allowing them to treat animals with violence and aggression. This same shift in consciousness has meant that other countries, with long democratic histories, passed laws prohibiting events where animals were mistreated many years ago. . The combination of the growing concern among Catalan citizens to protect animals and the diminishing number of bull-fighting supporters plus the negative reaction that bull-fighting produces in visitors to our country and that fact that public money is spent to support these cruel events, clearly indicate the logical step which must now be taken: bull-fighting in all its legal forms must be abolished in Catalonia.

Therefore, in the light of the spirit of articles 148, and 149 of the Constitution and of articles 46, 116, 144 and 189 of the "Estatut d'Autonomia de Catalunya", the concerns of our Catalan society encourage us to formulate the following:

PROPOSED LAW

First Article

Letter "f" would be added to Part 1 of Article 6 of the updated text of the Animal Protection Law with the following text:

"f. Bull-fighting and events where bulls are killed, or wounded with the "sorts de la pica, banderilles i l'estoc" as well as any kind of event where bulls form part of a spectacle in bull-rings or anywhere else, except in the case of the events referred to in letter b) in Part 2 of Article 6.

Second Article

Letter “a” would be removed from the Part 2 of Article 6.

Additional arrangements

First. The Catalan Government will calculate an economic compensation to be given to those entities affected by the passing of this law; this compensation will be given within 6 months and will follow the usual legal procedure in such cases with petitions by those affected.

Second. The economic effects of this law will be accounted for in the budget of the following financial period.

Surrender of rights

Any ordinances or by-laws or rights which contradict this law or are incompatible with the contents of this law will be overridden or surrendered.

Final arrangement

This law will become operative on the day following its publication in the “Diari Oficial de la Generalitat de Catalunya”.