

Master and vessel owner fined for fisheries offences

News story

Master and vessel owner guilty of fisheries offences in prosecution brought by Marine Management Organisation (MMO)



Jan de Visser, master of Dutch registered fishing vessel Espada (WR19), and owner Rederji Gebr de Visser, were sentenced at Newcastle Magistrates' Court on 31 March 2022.

The court heard how Espada, which is a 26.98 metre Dutch registered vessel, was boarded for inspection by officers from the MMO on 27 November 2019.

The vessel was quad rigged and gear inspections uncovered offences in respect of the square mesh panels (SMP) in two of the four nets. The SMP is required to have a mesh size of 120mm and is an essential conservation measure in the North Sea to allow juvenile fish to escape the net. The two panels were under the required 120mm.

Mr de Visser pleaded guilty to the offences in court and was ordered to pay a fine of £2,000, costs of £1,710 and a £200 victim surcharge.

An MMO spokesperson said:

The recovery measures put in place in these areas are essential to the protection of fish stocks. It is vital that these measures, as well as the rules relating to mesh sizes are followed.

When this is not the case the MMO will always take the appropriate action, including prosecution, to ensure offenders do not benefit from such illegal activity and to protect fish stocks for the wider fishing industry and future generations.

Published 12 April 2022