

News story: Fine of £5,753 imposed for fisheries offences

On 21 June 2017 James West, owner of the vessel Replenish and its master Stanley Ross pleaded guilty to a breach of the Fisheries Act 1981 at Bodmin Magistrates' Court.

The court heard that in May 2016 when the vessel was fishing in a Biologically Sensitive Area (BSA) in the Celtic Sea targeting nephrops, it was boarded by officers from the Royal Navy vessel HMS Tyne which was carrying out fisheries enforcement duties in the area. During a gear inspection it was found that both port and starboard net codends were within a prohibited mesh size for the BSA, contrary to Section 30(1) Fisheries Act 1982 as read with Article 5(2) of Council Regulation (EC) 494/2002. .

The vessel owner James West was fined £1,000, with £2,051.50 costs and a victim surcharge of £100.

The vessel master Stanley Ross was fined £500, with £2,051.50 costs and a victim surcharge of £50.

A spokesman for the MMO said:

“Nets used in this kind of fishery can shrink over time; as a result nets that were made in permitted mesh size range may shrink to a size that is considered damaging to juvenile fish stocks. It is the responsibility of the vessel master and owner to allow for this and ensure the gear is correct according to the fishing area the vessel is operating in.

The Replenish was fishing in a Biologically Sensitive Area and it is therefore critical to ensure the appropriate fisheries regulations are adhered to in order to protect juvenile fish. This prosecution shows that when they are not the Marine Management Organisation will take the appropriate action.”