



Poole Fishermen pleads guilty for obstructing Fisheries Officers and retaining undersized clams

At Bournemouth Magistrates Court, Andrew Skinner, 25 of Hamworthy, Poole, Dorset pleaded guilty to retaining undersized manila clams on board his fishing vessel and obstructing fisheries officers by discarding his catch contrary to the Marine and Coastal Access Act, 2009.

On the 5 January 2016 the court heard how on Thursday 15 October 2015, Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) Officers came alongside Mr Skinner's fishing vessel in order to conduct an inspection of the catch. Fisheries Officers located a small quantity of manila clams on board the vessel and after measuring a sample of the catch ascertained that 70% were under the legal minimum size of 35mm. As Fisheries Officers reported their findings to Mr Skinner and their intention to measure a further sample, Mr Skinner obstructed the officers by throwing the remainder of the catch overboard despite being given numerous directions by the officers not to do so.

Officers are empowered under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 to board and inspect vessels, enter and inspect premises and vehicles and those being subjected to inspection, including the master and crew on vessels must provide assistance if it is requested.

Commenting on the case, IFCA Deputy Chief Officer Ian Jones said, "Fisheries regulations are an essential management tool that include minimum landing sizes that protect juvenile stock. Inspections ensure that fishermen are complying with the rules, and, by discarding catch overboard prevents officers from fulfilling that duty. Southern IFCA is committed to protecting its fishery's to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry. This type of illegal activity puts legitimate operators at a disadvantage and by taking these offenders to court we aim to support and protect the local fisheries".

Mr Jones further added "Intentionally obstructing officers in the performance of any of their functions under the Act will not be tolerated and we will pursue such matters vigorously through court".

Mr Skinner was ordered to pay a total of £430 in fines and costs.

Any information relating to illegal fishing activity can be reported to the Authority in confidence on 01202 721373

Ends.

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority

64 Ashley Road, Parkstone, Poole.
Dorset. BH14 9BN
Tel. 01202 721373
Email enquiries@southern-ifca.gov.uk
www.southern-ifca.gov.uk



Notes;

The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities vision is to:

“lead, champion and manage a sustainable marine environment and inshore fisheries, by successfully securing the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry”.

The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority is one of ten IFCAs whose jurisdictions cover the entire coastline of England. The marine element of the IFCA District extends 6 miles seaward and the terrestrial element covers the constituent local Authority areas. Southern IFCA manage the coastal waters of Hampshire Dorset and the Isle of Wight.

The Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) was created in 2011. Southern IFCA is a joint committee of the Councils which fund the Authority. Southern IFCA is tasked with the sustainable management of inshore sea fisheries resources in its District.

The IFCA is funded through its constituent local authorities by an annual levy. That levy is supported by central Government to enable the Authority deliver on national management objectives.

Further information

For further information please contact Southern IFCA on 01202 721373 or enquiries@southern-ifca.gov.uk

Or visit our website at

www.southern-ifca.gov.uk

