

# INTO THE

ACTION TO PROTECT OUR OCEAN

ISSUE 16 | JULY/AUGUST 2025

LEGAL WIN IN  
TUNA CASE

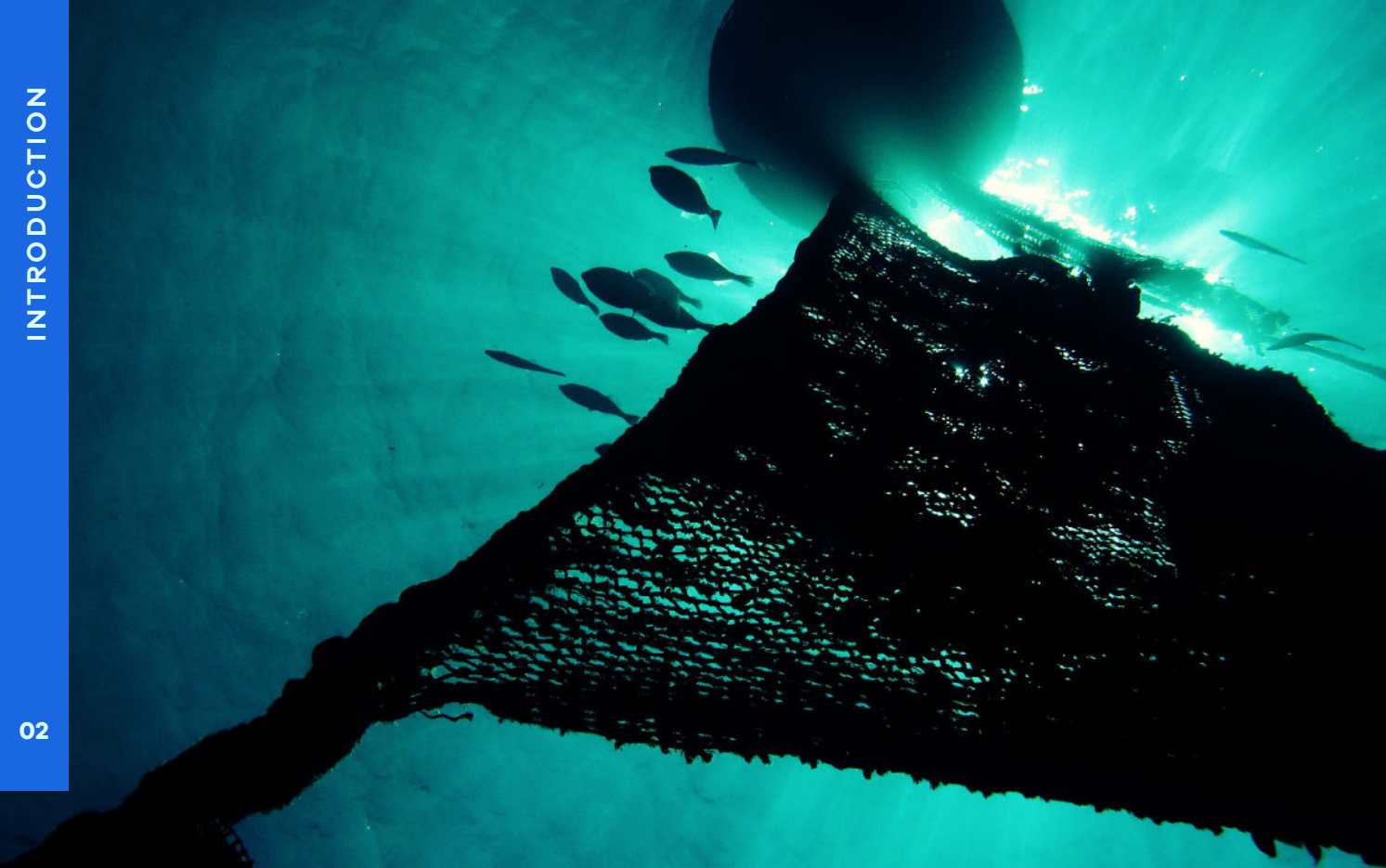
HOW EUROPEAN FLEETS EXPLOIT  
WEST AFRICAN WORKERS

A SITE TO  
BEHOLD

# BLUE

**Cover Photo:**

Aerial of the Maldives  
*Ocean Image Bank,*  
*Ishan Hassan*



# WELCOME

This edition brings exciting news of a win for Blue Marine in the EU courts that marks a major step forward for ocean protection. Blue Investigations released a disturbing new report that reveals the exploitation of West African crews by European tuna vessels operating in the Indian Ocean. We have details of a huge step forward in our pursuit of a ban on bottom-trawling in England's MPAs – and we'll show you how you can add your voice.

Elsewhere, we unveil Blue Marine's crisp new website, featuring the launch of helpful hubs for Media and Education resources and new pages devoted to our campaigns. Our initiative on protecting vital seagrass in the Maldives is gathering momentum – and we find out which book Charles Clover has on the go. We hope you enjoy the issue.

Don't forget to follow Blue Marine on [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#) for the latest news.

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM

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Fish Aggregation  
Device

**Photo:** *iStock*



# Legal win in tuna case

03

In a landmark ruling, the European Court of Justice has sided with Blue Marine in its challenge against the European Commission, marking a major step forward for ocean protection. In February 2025, Blue Marine and Bloom Association

challenged the EU's decision to block measures aimed at protecting Indian Ocean tuna and the marine environment from drifting fish aggregating devices (FADs). The result means the European Commission must review that decision. →

READ THE FULL  
OCEANOGRAPHIC  
STORY

A turtle swimming near a fish aggregating device

**Photo:** Alex Hofford, Greenpeace



The case also has wider implications for NGOs and the public seeking access to justice and highlights the importance of holding EU institutions to account when they fail to follow their own laws. Blue Marine renews its call for UK retailers to improve their tuna sourcing practices. Most still sell fish caught using drifting FADs, despite being warned two years ago of the impact this fishing

method has on tuna stocks and the coastal communities that depend on them. A poll revealed that 59 per cent of UK consumers would not buy fish if they knew it was sourced unsustainably. What can you do? Check the label. Choose one by one or FAD free – and ask your supermarket what it’s doing to protect the ocean. Read the full Oceanographic story [here](#).

A tuna purse seiner

**Photo:** Alex Hofford, Greenpeace

Drifting FAD washed up in the Indian Ocean

**Photo:** Courtesy of the FAD Recovery Project

Fish Aggregating Device

**Photo:** iStock

Abandoned buoys from drifting FADs in Seychelles

**Photo:** Jess Rattle





# How European fleets exploit West African workers



A report by Blue Investigations exposes the contrast between the profits of many European fishing companies and the exploitation of their West African crew.

[READ THE REPORT](#)

[READ THE FULL OCEANOGRAPHIC STORY](#)

Revealing a pattern of racism and unequal treatment, the report examines the working and living conditions of the crew on many of the European vessels that supply UK and EU retailers with tinned tuna. It includes accounts from Senegalese and Ivorian crew members of discrimination onboard and on shore. This ranges from insufficient medical care and unexplained dismissals to unfair employment terms and excessive working hours.

Blue Marine's, Head of Investigations, Jess Rattle said: 'Some crew members have given decades of their lives to a fishing

company before being let go without explanation, with others continuing to work gruelling hours at sea while still not being able to provide for their families.' As the global demand for tuna continues to grow, a handful of fishing companies control the European fleet in the Indian Ocean. The report finds that, despite many making significant profits and paying out millions in shareholder dividends, they still refuse to pay crew members the International Labour Organization's (ILO's) minimum base salary.

Read the report [here](#).

Read the full Oceanographic story [here](#).

European vessels and living conditions in West Africa

**Photo:** Jess Rattle



# Top work on 'The Bottom Line' campaign

The response to 'The Bottom Line' – Blue Marine's campaign to ban on bottom-trawling in UK's marine protected areas (MPAs) – has been overwhelming. More than 17,000 people registered their support for the e-action, triggering the UK government to open a consultation on proposals to ban the practice in 41 MPAs. This means a chance to add your voice on the second phase of the campaign with a simple e-action supported by Blue Marine, Only One and Oceana UK.

We launched 'The Bottom Line' to coincide with the world premiere of 'OCEAN WITH DAVID ATTENBOROUGH' in May. Never-before-

seen footage in the documentary went on to show audiences around the world the appalling destruction caused by industrial trawling. Now the open consultation is an opportunity to drive home the message that there is no place in Britain's MPAs for bottom-trawling, the indiscriminate technique that drags weighted nets along the seabed, bringing up vast quantities of 'bycatch' – marine life that is ditched, dead or dying, back into the ocean. With the consultation closing in September, it is vital to keep up the momentum on this campaign. Join the movement and follow this simple e-action: <https://only.one/act/uk-mpa-consultation>

## TAKE ACTION

The Bottom Line

**Photo:** Howard Wood/ COAST

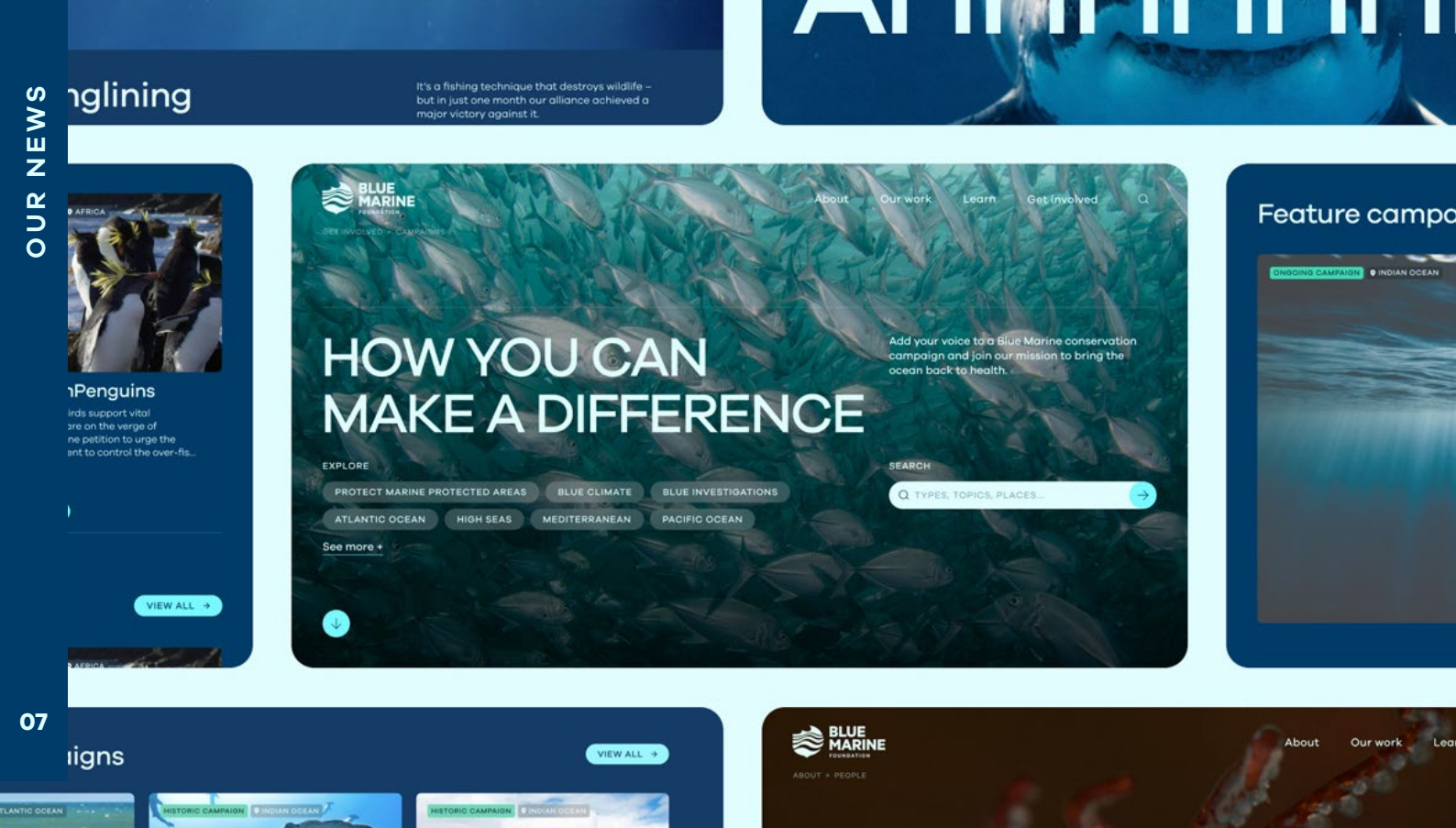
# TORN SEABEDS, BROKEN OCEANS

END BOTTOM TRAWLING IN UK MARINE PROTECTED AREAS.



Image credit: Howard Wood/COAST





# A site to behold

Blue Marine is thrilled to announce a fresh new website that captures more vividly than ever the dazzling vitality of the undersea world. The site is now home to a host of exciting new features, as well as updates from our projects in 27 countries. You can access the latest marine conservation stories and free materials to expand ocean awareness in the classroom and beyond.

We've launched new hubs that are home to resources from our expert teams in Blue Education and Blue Media. At our Education Hub we now provide an array of immersive resources to help bring the ocean into any learning journey. The Media Hub allows you to explore the world of ocean conservation

through videos, podcasts, 360 experiences and more. You can also find all the ground-breaking reports that Blue Marine has researched and published – from scientific discoveries to financial policy and conservation law. And with our new campaigns pages it's easier than ever to add your voice to a Blue Marine conservation campaign and join our mission to bring the ocean back to health. Dive in! <https://www.bluemarinefoundation.com>

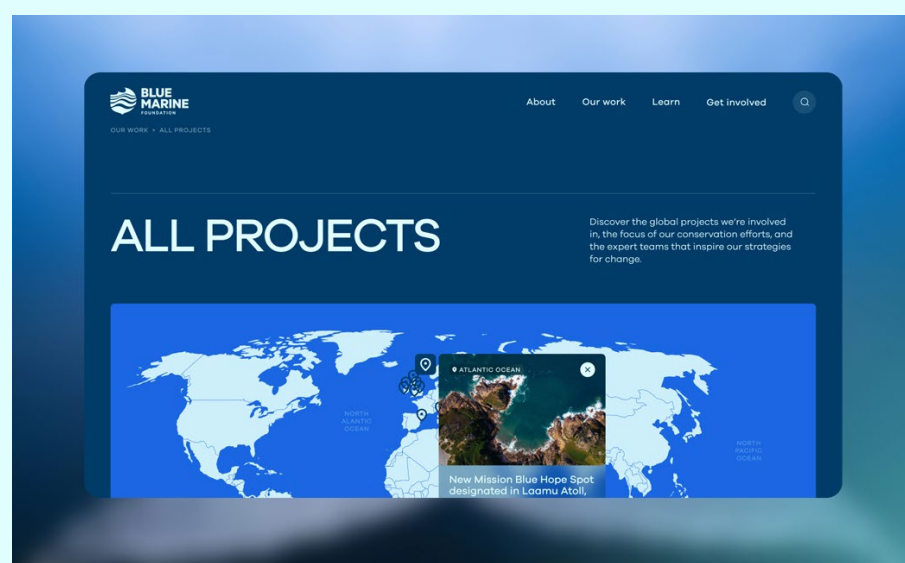
## VISIT THE WEBSITE

Website layout

**Photo:** Jory & Co

Explore our projects

**Photo:** Jory & Co





# Action for Maldives seagrass

In July, Blue Marine and Maldives Resilient Reefs launched the #SeagrassIndustryLeaders Circle to protect seagrass by showcasing it as a natural asset for tourism and an ally against climate change. More than a dozen resorts pledged to protect 80 per cent of their baseline seagrass area. In 2019, the campaign 'Protect Maldives Seagrass' convinced more than 25 per cent of the country's high end resorts to protect their seagrass meadows.

Seagrass prevents beach erosion, fights climate change by absorbing carbon dioxide, supports fisheries and houses juvenile coral reef fish. Despite this, it is considered a nuisance to tourism. Many resorts remove the seagrass around their islands because they think it spoils the look of clear water.

Learn more about the 'Protect Maldives Seagrass' campaign [here](#).

## LEARN MORE

Seagrass meadows

**Photo:** Maldives Resilient Reefs

Seahorse

**Photo:** Vivienne Evans

The Maldives

**Photo:** Ocean Image Bank, Fabrice Dudenhofer





# Solent film up for awards



A film produced by Blue Marine to support the Solent Seascape Project has been nominated for two awards. Simply titled 'Bill's Story', the poignant and engaging short follows 103-year-old Bill Smith, who has been swimming in the sea off the Isle of Wight for more than 50 years. The film is a contender in the best short film category at both the Eco Film Festival by Chysto. de in Ukraine, and Between the Blue and Green film festival in Sussex.

The Solent is one of the most heavily used waterways in Europe.

It faces many threats including habitat loss and poor water quality, but is greatly loved by those who live around it. The film looks at Bill Smith's connection to the ocean, the environmental changes he has experienced in his lifetime, and his hopes for the future of the Solent. Bill firmly believes that sea swimming has contributed to his long and happy life. But as he observes while lamenting the dumping of raw sewage: 'The sea now is not like it used to be.'

Watch 'Bill's Story' [here](#).

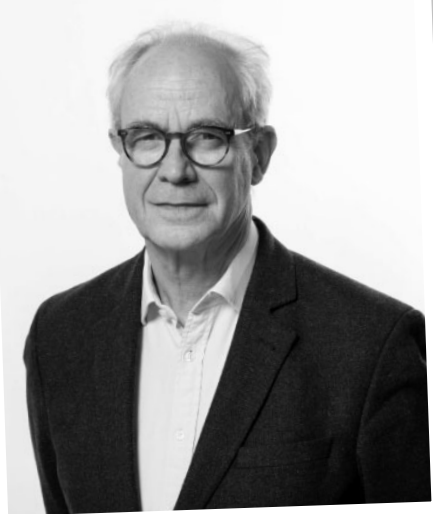
Film festival details [here](#).

[WATCH THE FILM](#)[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Bill Smith

**Photo:** *Matt Jarvis*





# Meet the team

Each month we like to introduce you to a member of the Blue Marine team. This month we'd like you to meet **Charles Clover**, Co-founder and Senior Advisor.

**Q** If you were a marine animal, what would you be?

**A** A bluefin tuna.

**Q** Where is your favourite place?

**A** I can't decide between the Ross of Mull in the west of Scotland, and Dedham Vale on the border of Essex and Suffolk.

**Q** Why do you care about the ocean?

**A** Because it was once teeming with life and so easily could be again.

**Q** What's one fact you wish everyone knew about the ocean?

**A** The amount of carbon taken up by fish is enormous. The white 'sand' beaches of the Caribbean are actually 70 per cent fish poo – calcium carbonate – which doesn't dissolve in hot water.

**Q** What is your favourite quote?

**A** 'One of the penalties of an ecological education is that one lives alone in a world of wounds.' Aldo Leopold, 'A Sand County Almanac' (1949).

**Q** What do you consider your greatest achievement?

**A** Writing 'The End of the Line' (2004), which has been described as the 'Silent Spring' for the global environmental problem of overfishing. The book led directly to the foundation of Blue Marine Foundation.

**Q** Why Blue Marine?

**A** Because we reckoned we needed a powerful, politically savvy, media-friendly conservation organisation to take on overfishing and move the dial. We are still moving it.

**Q** What are you reading at the moment?

**A** 'Life of a Chalkstream' (2014) by Simon Cooper.

**Q** What is your favourite thing about your job?

**A** Making change happen.







**THANK YOU**  
*for your  
support!*

To learn more about ocean conservation at Blue Marine please contact:

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To stay up to date with the latest news and events follow Blue Marine on social media.

[@bluemarinefoundation](https://www.instagram.com/bluemarinefoundation)



Waves breaking,  
Maldives

**Photo:** Ocean Image  
Bank, Arip Rasheed

