

# BOYS DON'T CRY

Is there a more damaging phrase than 'be a man'?





# Ethical living

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### THE ECO GUIDE TO... ALGAE

Ideally, in these days of busy news cycles, an eco problem needs to be visible from space to gain traction. Algae has obliged again this summer.

At Florida's largest freshwater lake, Okeechobee, the cyanobacteria blue-green algae bloom, covering 33 miles, has been clearly captured in Nasa satellite imagery.

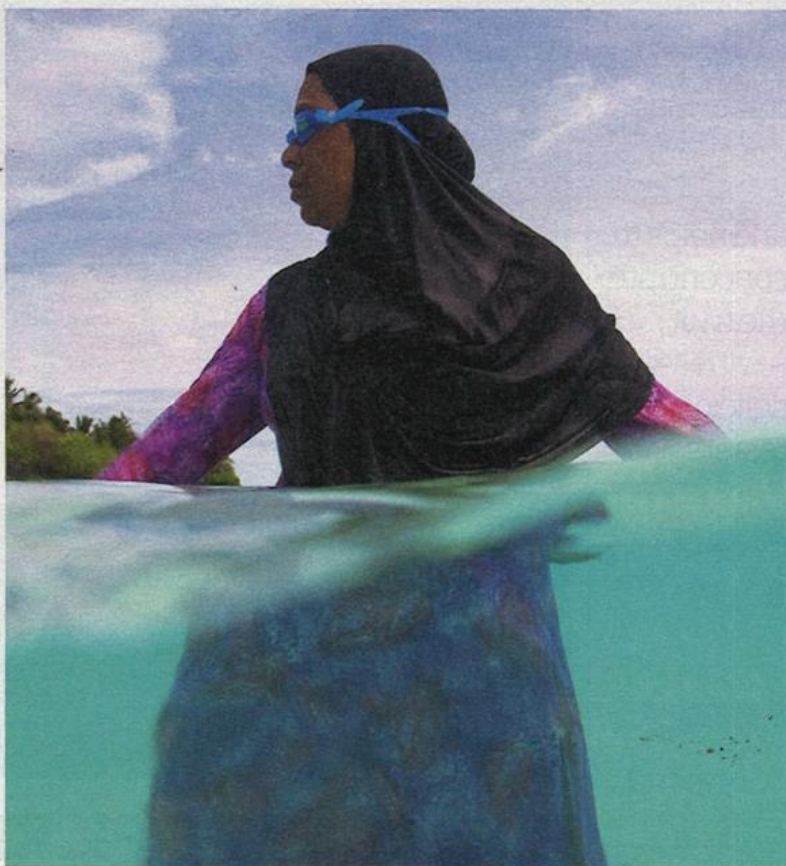
Ecologists are fond of describing the Okeechobee as the perfect nursery for toxic blooms. There's been a history of dredging, a heavy presence of nitrogen and phosphorus fertilisers from industrial agriculture draining into the lake, large quantities of water withdrawn for agricultural use (this can also be a factor) and warmer and wetter weather. It is hard to prove the exact causes of toxic algal blooms, but activists pose this formula: climate change + political inertia = cyanobacteria.

As the bloom dies off, algae decomposes and creates hypoxia (deficiency

in oxygen). The less-mobile animals near the floor of the waterway are the first to die, but the algal choke continues through the food chain. I've seen heart-breaking footage of Florida residents hosing down and feeding manatees fresh water after they've battled through the algal scum.

But the upside of algal blooms also represents a big green story. Could algae be a long-dreamed-of carbon-negative biofuel? If algae can be harvested and used as a source of power, then it represents what geo-hackers like to call a "twofer": a free source of biofuel using nutrients that would otherwise require an energy-intensive treatment process in order to be removed.

But to farm anything at scale we like predictability, while algal blooms are anything but. So the rise of algae as a green fuel means the rise of algal farms - which use yet more water and more energy. ■



### THE BIG PICTURE LEARNING TO SWIM IN THE BAA ATOLL

Away from the luxury holiday resorts, many islanders in the Maldives fear the ocean and cannot swim. The Soneva Learn-To-Swim programme has been set up by ocean explorer Jon Bowermaster and the sustainable resort Soneva.com. Cat Vinton photographs children and their mothers from the island of Eydhafushi swimming for the first time. The sea here is no longer just for rich tourists.

### WELL DRESSED THE GEOX NEW: DO

It's no secret in fashion that sportswear is migrating into daywear. In terms of sustainable manufacture, this could be a good thing, especially when it comes to shoes. Remember the Nike boycott in the 1990s?

Big names in the athletic shoe industry have really cleaned up their act since then. Some front-runners have invested heavily in green manufacture (using fewer, lower-impact materials for greater effect). An

example is Strobel-stitching (a way of sewing upper and lower parts of the shoe together) which minimises the use of toxic adhesive. This technique and other eco elements such as eco-certified leather

are used in Geox's New:Do, its most sustainable shoe yet. One in 10 Italians are shod in Geox footwear, so an improvement in sustainability is on a huge scale. Still, you might ask what took them so long.



The Geox New:Do  
£115, [geox.com](http://geox.com)