The 20 Greatest Maritime Experiences



The Main Presentation starts in about 5 minutes …

But, next, a ‘bad’ maritime experience movie for your entertainment …

First - Don't be on a small warship in a hurricane

I was ... HMS ALACRITY on 17 September 1989 enroute to Montserrat



Don’t’ be on a Russian merchant ship in the Black Sea being attacked by Ukrainian drones

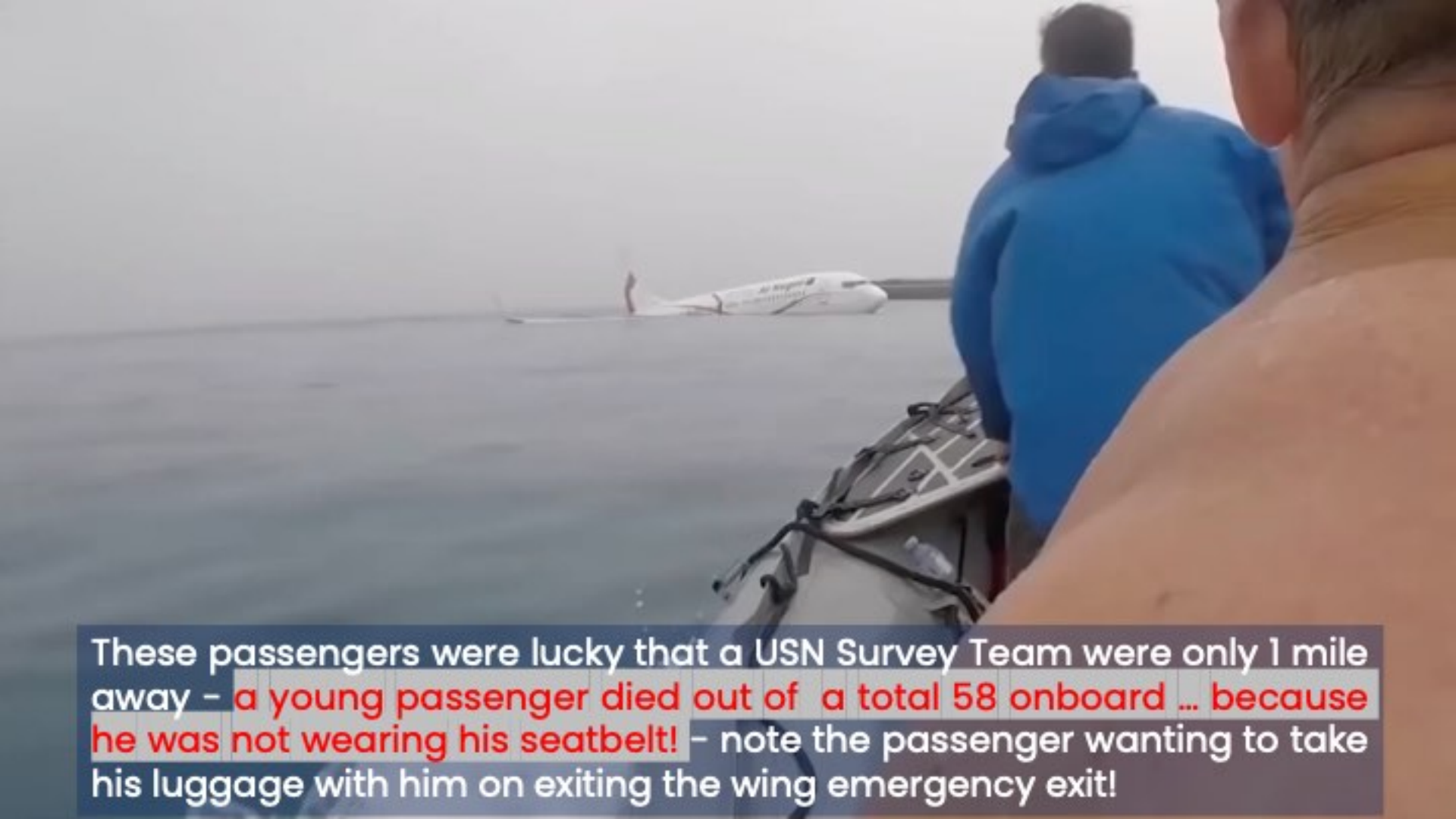
I do not intend to do this … ever!

(but go Ukraine - we salute your ingenuity, incredible bravery and true fortitude)

Try not to be on an aircraft that lands on the ocean rather than the runway - because it is like landing on concrete ... not marshmallow!
I have not done this ... but I did attend an Air Niugini accident in September 2018 in Micronesia (where a 737 did) whilst running a Disaster Response Company



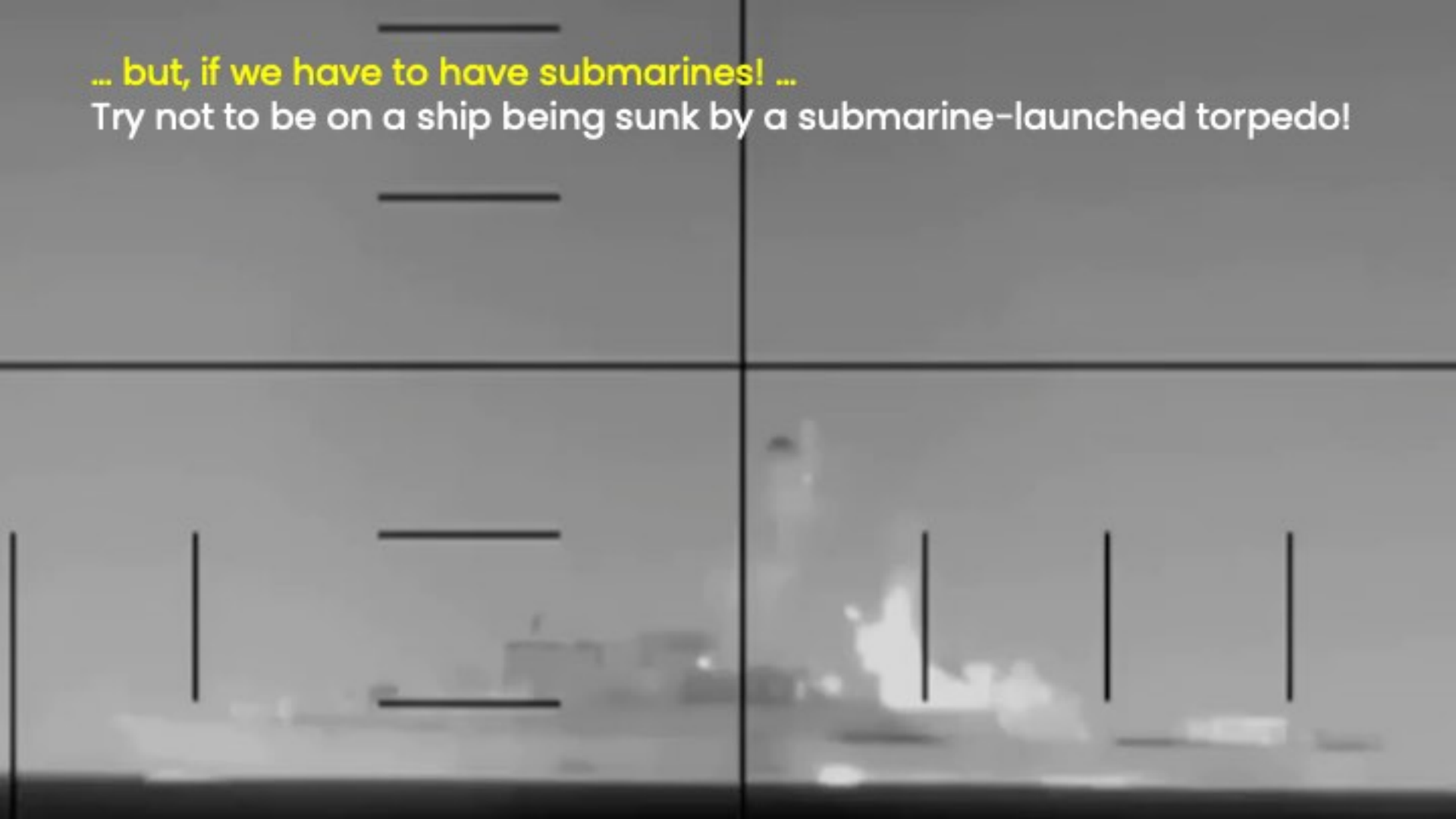



These passengers were lucky that a USN Survey Team were only 1 mile away - a young passenger died out of a total 58 onboard ... because he was not wearing his seatbelt! - note the passenger wanting to take his luggage with him on exiting the wing emergency exit!



Don’t accept an invitation to a submarine … any submarine

I spent a week submerged on a nuclear attack submarine in November 1986 … I loved it so much that I became an Anti-Submarine Warfare Officer!


... but, if we have to have submarines! ...
Try not to be on a ship being sunk by a submarine-launched torpedo!


Try not to be on a merchant ship going through the Strait of Hormuz
We very much under-value our brave merchant sailors


Try not to be on a ship meeting an iceberg in the fog
When the captain assures everyone that the Titanic was a very long time ago!


Try not to be on a ship with a Norovirus outbreak
When the most important navigation exercise on board is finding the nearest available heads!


Try not to be on a ship that runs aground on an island reef
When your seven-day cruise becomes an indefinite all-inclusive holiday ... with no bar!
Coral Adventurer - 27 Dec 25
Papua New Guinea


C
2
Try not to be arrive at the buffet five minutes after it closes
Possibly the worst maritime experience of them all!

And, finally, try not to be on a ship/aircraft getting lost in the Bermuda Triangle

Thankfully, we have a great ship and crew keeping us safe!

30 Jan 48
Star Tiger - AC Disappearance

5 Dec 45
Flight 19 - AC Disappearance

22 Dec 67
Witchcraft - Pleasure Cruiser Disappearance

1 Feb 63
Marine Sulphur Queen - Tanker Disappearance

March 2018
USS Cyclops - Collier Disappearance

17 Jan 49
Star Ariel - AC Disappearance


USS Cyclops


Flight 19


Star Tiger


Start Ariel


Marine Sulphur Queen


Be careful at nautical twilight tonight ... you never know!



With
Rear Admiral (Retired) Simon Hardern

www.voyagerstories.com

The 20 Greatest Maritime Experiences

From the headwaters of great rivers to the ends of the Earth – the trips passengers might consider making

Great Rivers

Lakes and Inland Seas

Canals and Passages

Ocean Extremes

The 20 Experiences at a Glance

Great Rivers

1 The Amazon

2 The Nile

3 The Mekong

4 The Rhine and Danube

5 The Mississippi

6 The Ganges

7 The Yangtze

8 The Congo

Lakes and Inland Seas

9 The Great Lakes

10 Lake Baikal

11 The Caspian Sea

Canals and Passages

12 Panama Canal

13 Suez Canal

14 Corinth Canal

Ocean Extremes

15 Norwegian Fjords

16 Strait of Magellan

17 Cape Horn and Drake

18 Northwest Passage and Greenland

19 Inside Passage, Alaska

20 Antarctica




Northwest Passage
Inside Passage
The Great Lakes
The Mississippi
Panama Canal
The Amazon
Strait of Magellan
Cape Horn
Antarctica
Norwegian Fjords
Rhine and Danube
Corinth Canal
Suez Canal
The Nile
The Congo
The Caspian Sea
Lake Baikal
The Yangtze
The Ganges
The Mekong



Great Rivers

Humanity built its greatest civilisations on riverbanks. These eight rivers carry history, faith, commerce and wilderness



1 The Amazon

South America

World's Greatest River by Volume

6,400 km / 3,980 miles

Length

1 in 10

of all species on Earth live in this river basin

The Amazon discharges one-fifth of all the freshwater on Earth into the Atlantic


Source: Mantaro River (headstream of the Amazon), Andes Mountains, Peru
Path: Flows east through Peru, Colombia, Brazil, and empties into the Atlantic Ocean
Mouth: Atlantic Ocean
Length: ~6,400 km (3,980 miles)
Venezuela
Guyana
Suriname
French Guiana (France)
Atlantic Ocean
Colombia
Negro River
Macapá
Mouth: Atlantic Ocean
Ecuador
Manaus
Santarém
Leticia
Iquitos
Tabatinga
Tapajós River
Madeira River
Tocantins River
Xingu River
Peru
Source: Mantaro River (Headstream of the Amazon)
Brazil
Bolivia
N
0
500
1000
1500
2000 km





The Flood Pulse

Water rises and falls 10 to 15 metres every year (peak flood May-June). At peak flood, an area the size of England vanishes, and fish swim through the forest canopy feeding on fruit



2 The Nile

Egypt and East Africa

The Cradle of Civilisation … and the World's Longest River

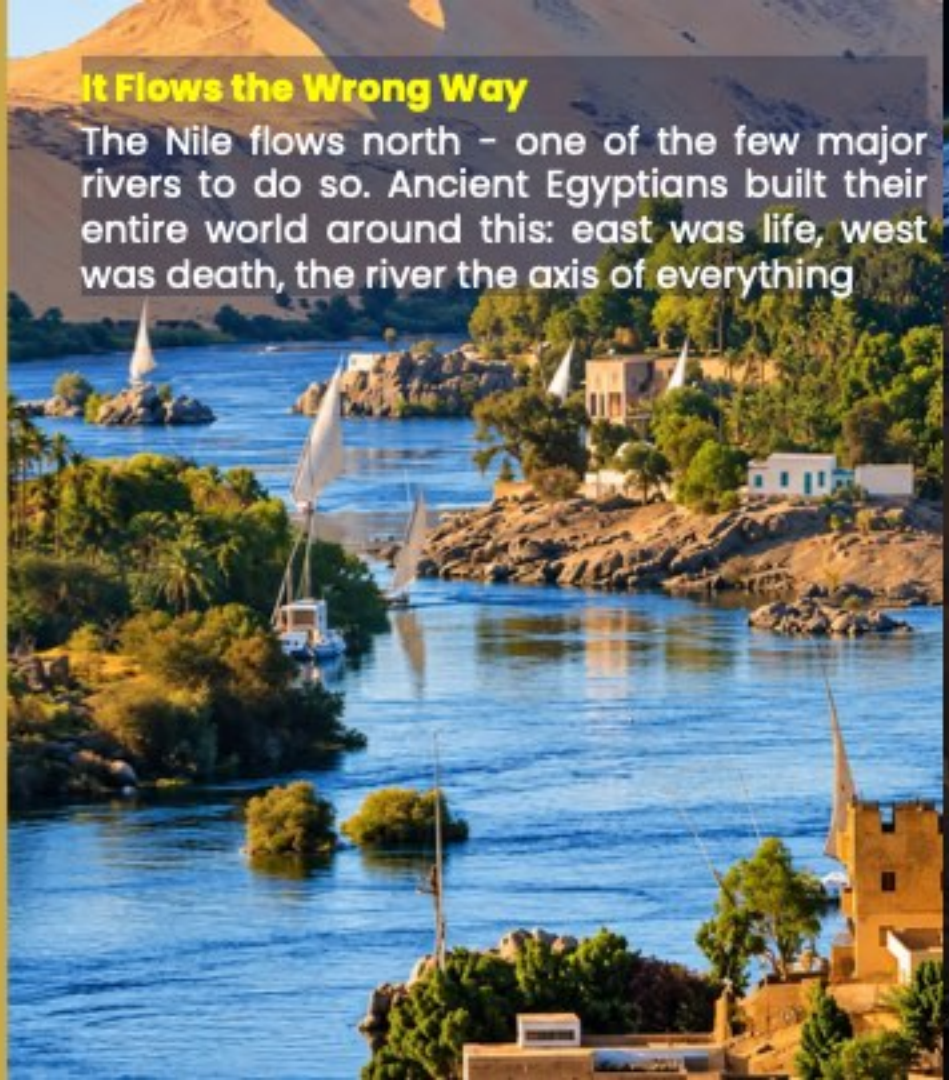
6,650 km / 4,132 miles
Length

5,000
Years of history

130+
Pharaonic monuments

The river that made Egypt possible … and Egypt made the world possible


Source: White Nile – Lakes Victoria and Albert (via the Kagera River), Uganda
Source: Blue Nile – Lake Tana, Ethiopia
Path: Flows north through Uganda, South Sudan, Sudan, and Egypt, and empties into the Mediterranean Sea
Mouth: Mediterranean Sea
Length: ~6,650 km (~4,130 miles)
Mediterranean Sea
Nile Delta
N
Cairo
Libya
Egypt
Nile
Aswan
Lake Nasser
Red Sea
Sudan
Khartoum
Eritrea
Lake Tana
White Nile
Blue Nile
Bahir Dar
South Sudan
Ethiopia
Uganda
Democratic Republic Of The Congo
Lake Albert
Lake Kyoga
Jinja
Kenya
Lake Victoria
Indian Ocean
0 250 500 750 1000 km



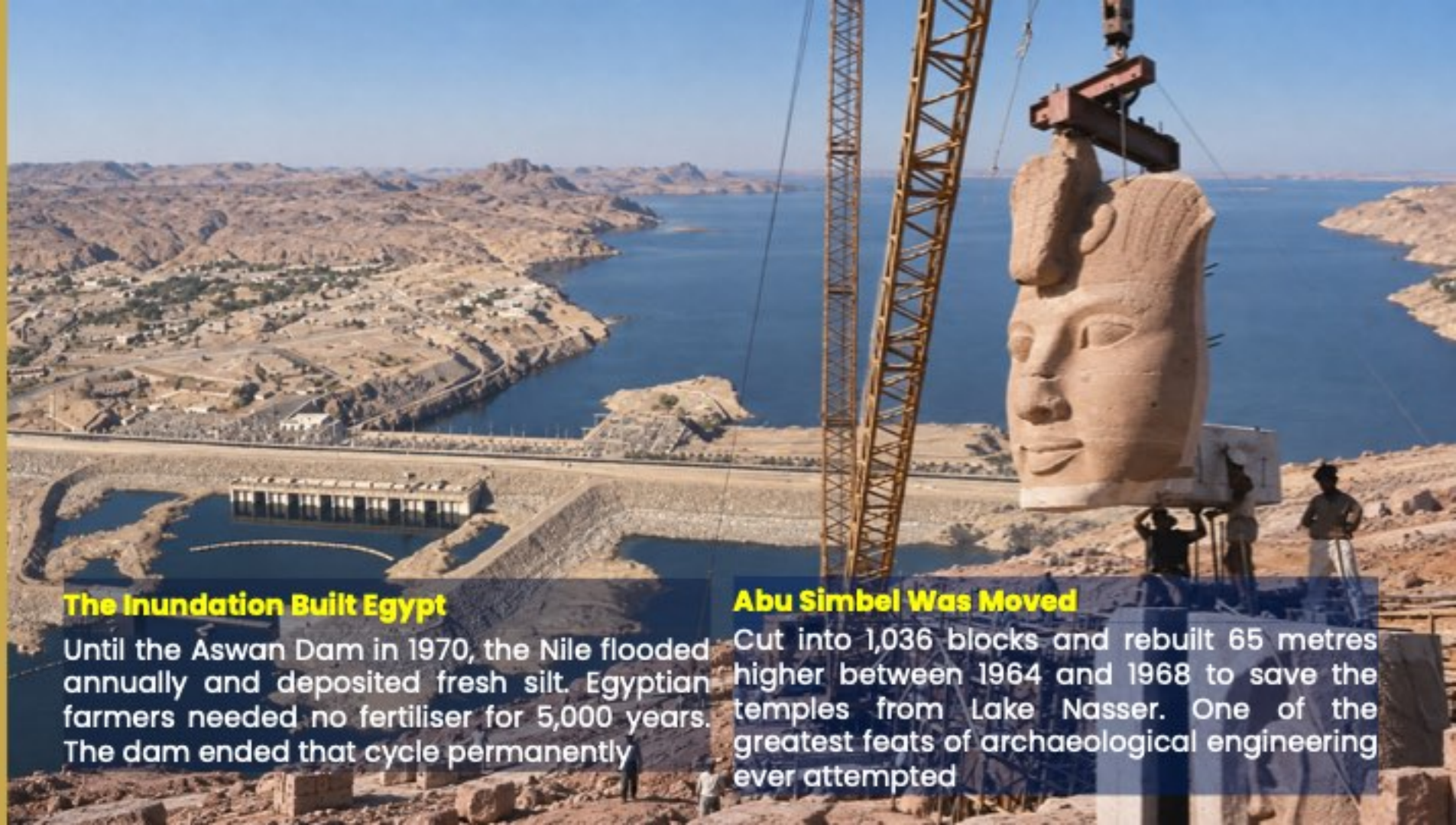
It Flows the Wrong Way

The Nile flows north - one of the few major rivers to do so. Ancient Egyptians built their entire world around this: east was life, west was death, the river the axis of everything



The River Runs Through Everything

96% of (120 million) Egyptians depend on the Nile for virtually all their water. The entire country - 96% desert - lives within 20 miles of the river

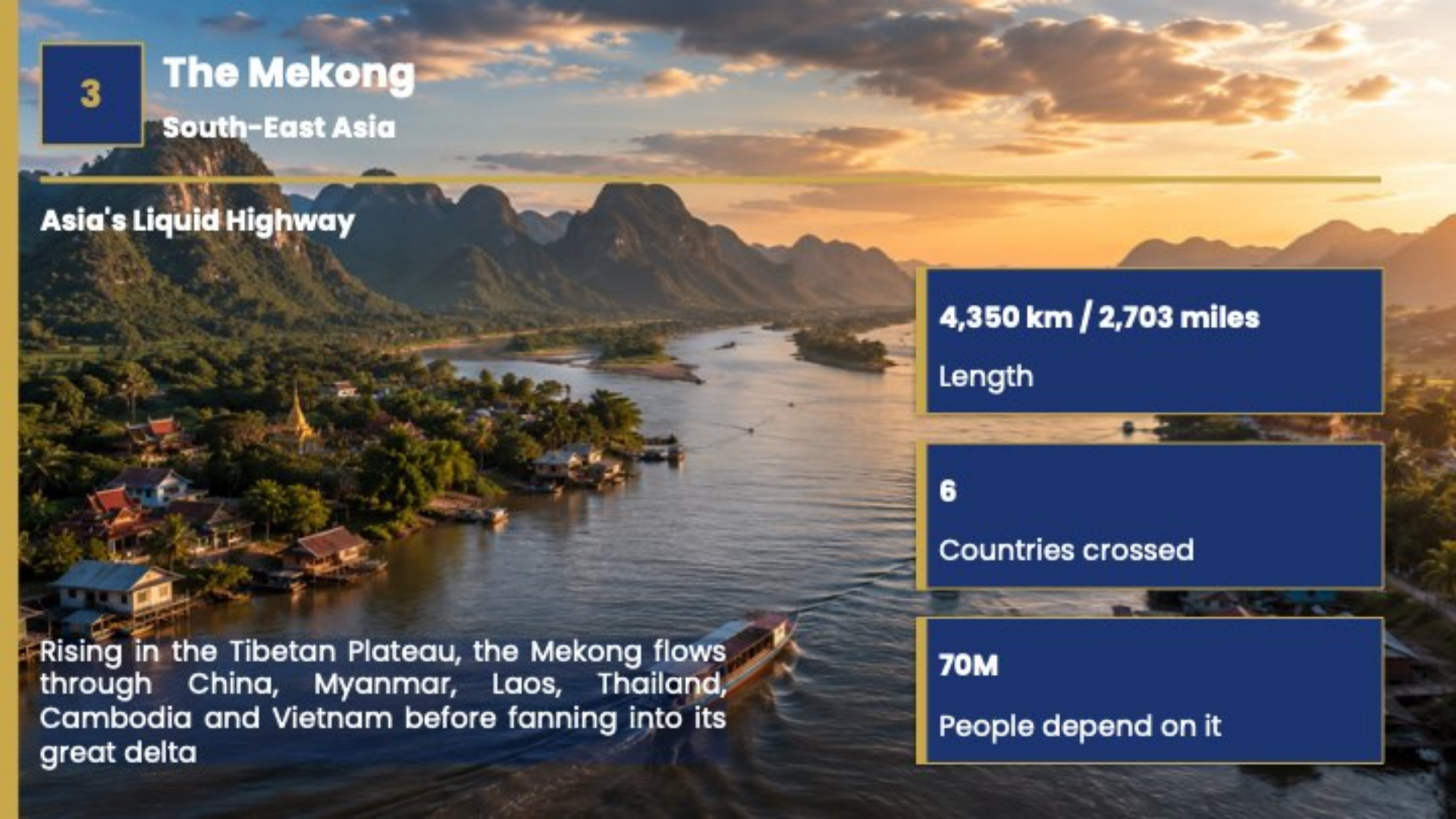


The Inundation Built Egypt

Until the Aswan Dam in 1970, the Nile flooded annually and deposited fresh silt. Egyptian farmers needed no fertiliser for 5,000 years. The dam ended that cycle permanently

Abu Simbel Was Moved

Cut into 1,036 blocks and rebuilt 65 metres higher between 1964 and 1968 to save the temples from Lake Nasser. One of the greatest feats of archaeological engineering ever attempted



3 The Mekong

South-East Asia

Asia's Liquid Highway

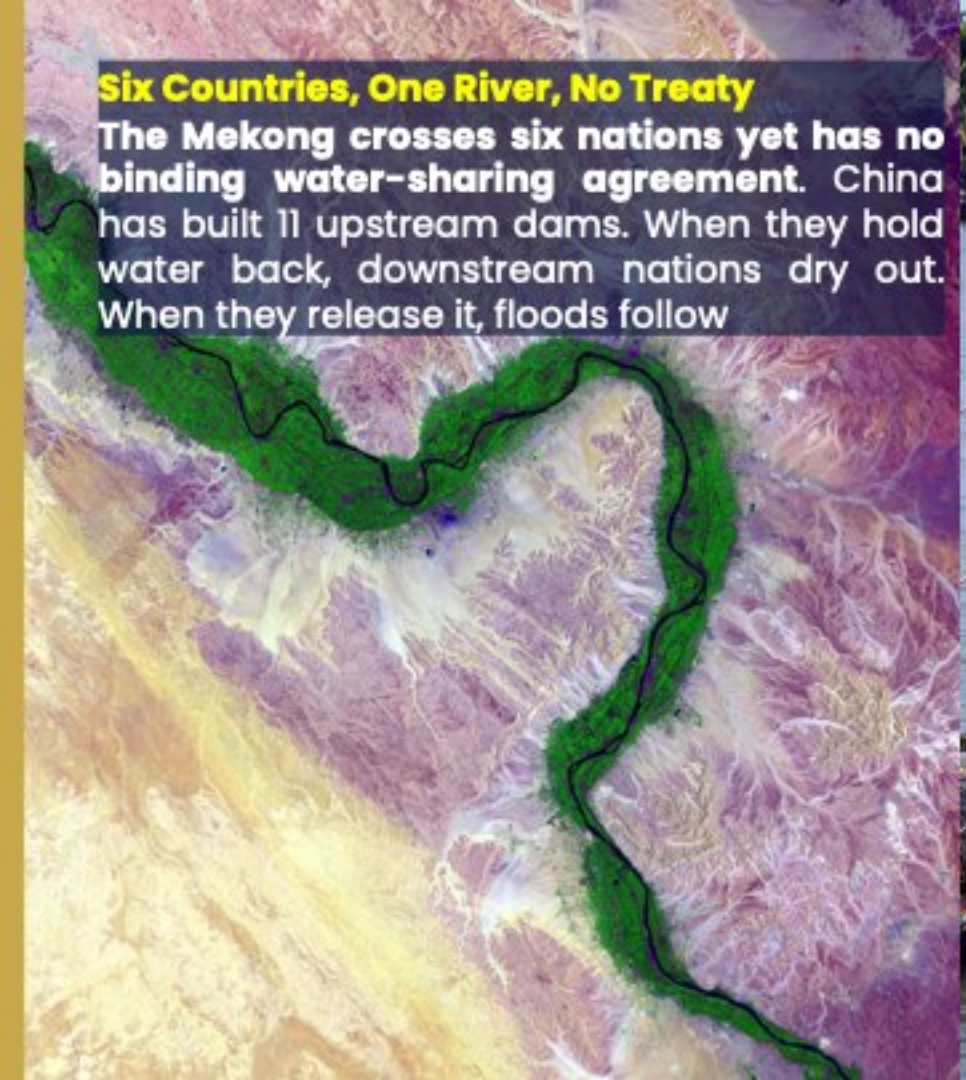
4,350 km / 2,703 miles
Length

6
Countries crossed

70M
People depend on it

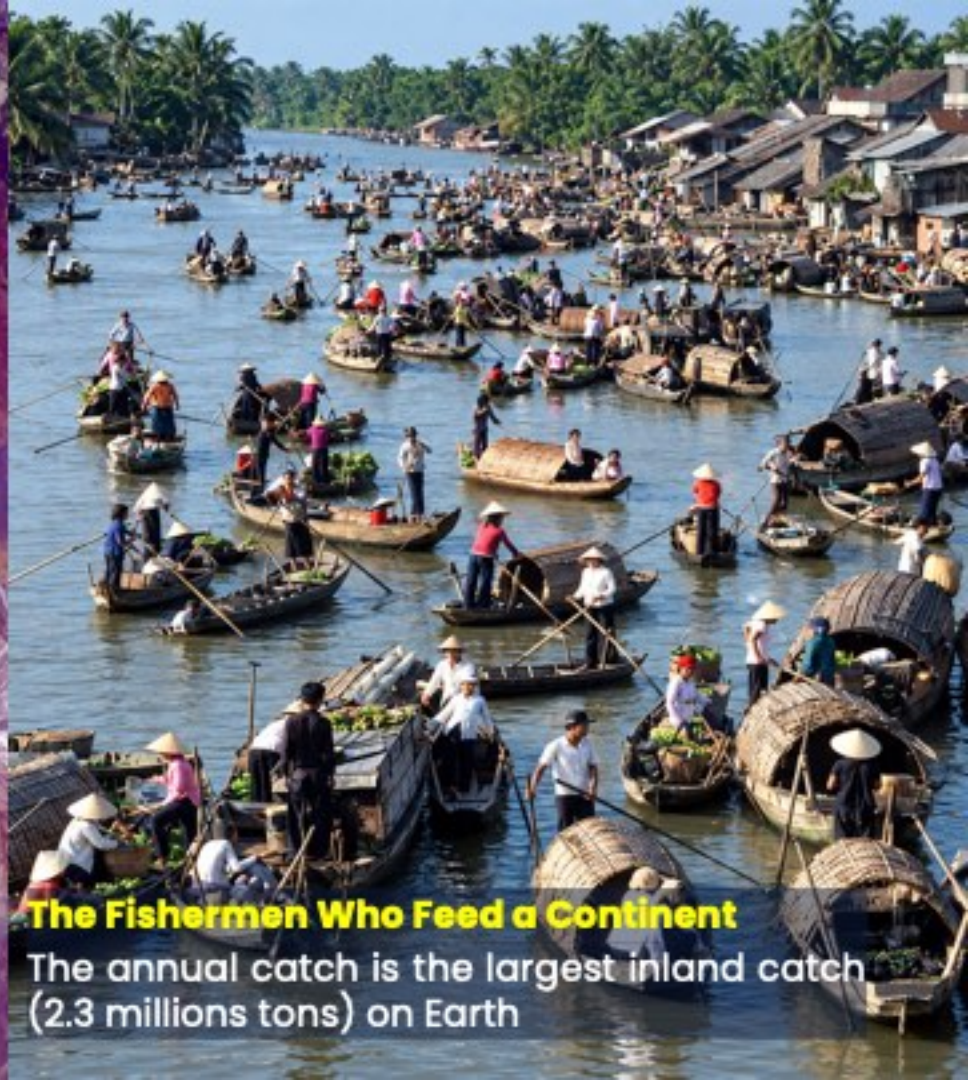
Rising in the Tibetan Plateau, the Mekong flows through China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam before fanning into its great delta


Source: Mekong Glacier, Tanggula Mountains, Tibet, China
Path: Flows through China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam, and empties into the South China Sea
Mouth: South China Sea
Length: ~4,350 km (2,703 miles)
Source: Mekong Glacier
Tanggula Mountains, Tibet, China
China
Dali
Jinghong
Myanmar
Jinghong
Laos
Luang Prabang
Mekong
Vientiane
Nong Khai
Thailand
Cambodia
Stung Treng
Vietnam
South China Sea
Andaman Sea
Phnom Penh
Ho Chi Minh City
Gulf Of Thailand
Mouth: South China Sea
N
0 250 500 750 1000 km



Six Countries, One River, No Treaty

The Mekong crosses six nations yet has no binding water-sharing agreement. China has built 11 upstream dams. When they hold water back, downstream nations dry out. When they release it, floods follow

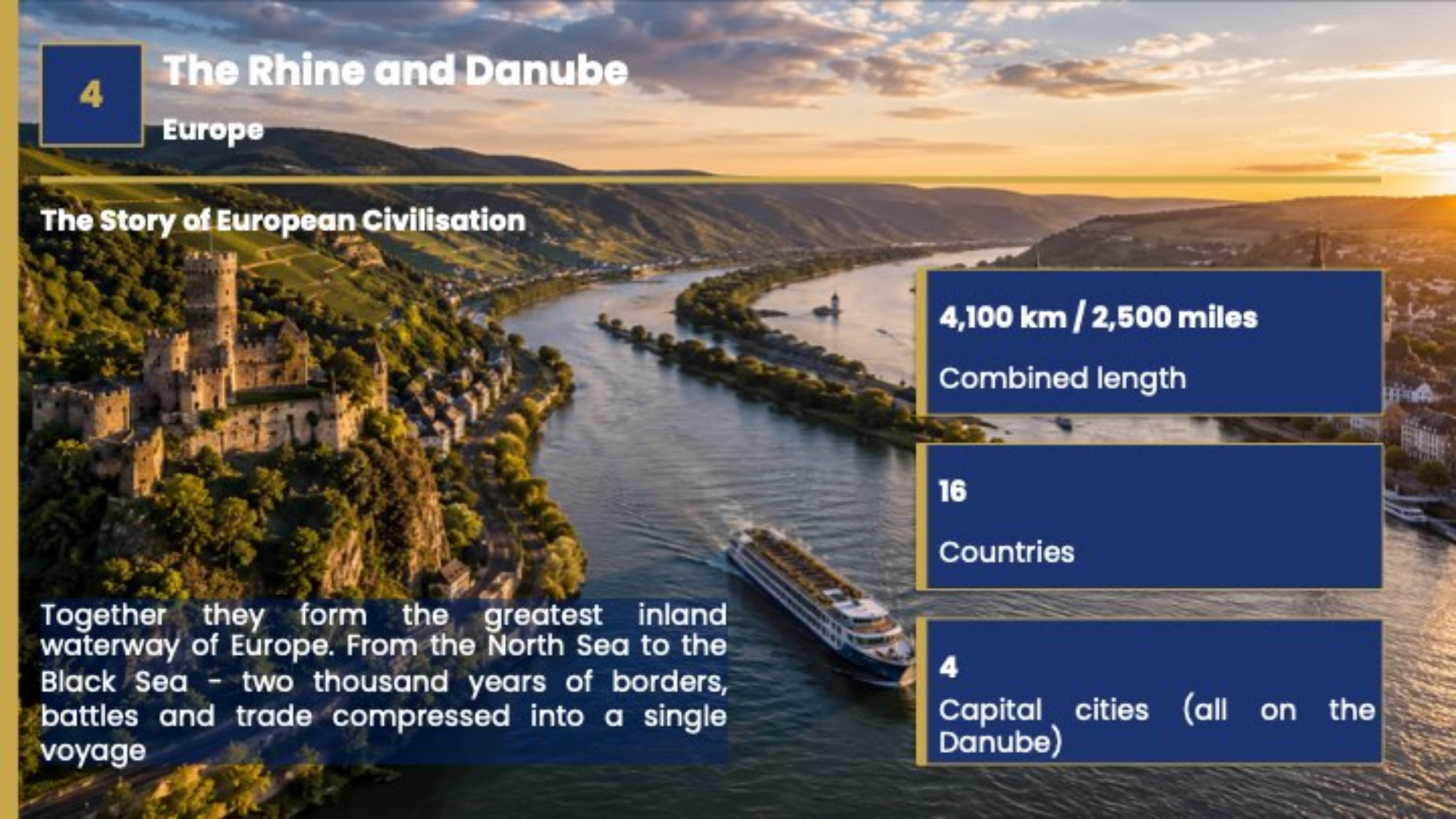


The Fishermen Who Feed a Continent

The annual catch is the largest inland catch (2.3 millions tons) on Earth


Moving up the Mekong ... or Not!





4 The Rhine and Danube

Europe

The Story of European Civilisation

Together they form the greatest inland waterway of Europe. From the North Sea to the Black Sea - two thousand years of borders, battles and trade compressed into a single voyage

4,100 km / 2,500 miles

Combined length

16

Countries

4

Capital cities (all on the Danube)

The Rhine River

Route of the Rhine

- **Source:** Rhein Glacier, Swiss Alps, Switzerland
- **Path:** Flows through Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Austria, Germany, France, and the Netherlands, and empties into the North Sea
- **Mouth:** North Sea
- **Length:** ~1,230 km (764 miles)







0 125 250 375 km

North Sea
NETHERLANDS
Rotterdam
Duisburg
GERMANY
Cologne
Rhine
BELGIUM
Mainz
Mannheim
FRANCE
Basel
AUSTRIA
LIECHTENSTEIN
SWITZERLAND
Chur
Source: Rhein Glacier, Swiss Alps

The Danube River

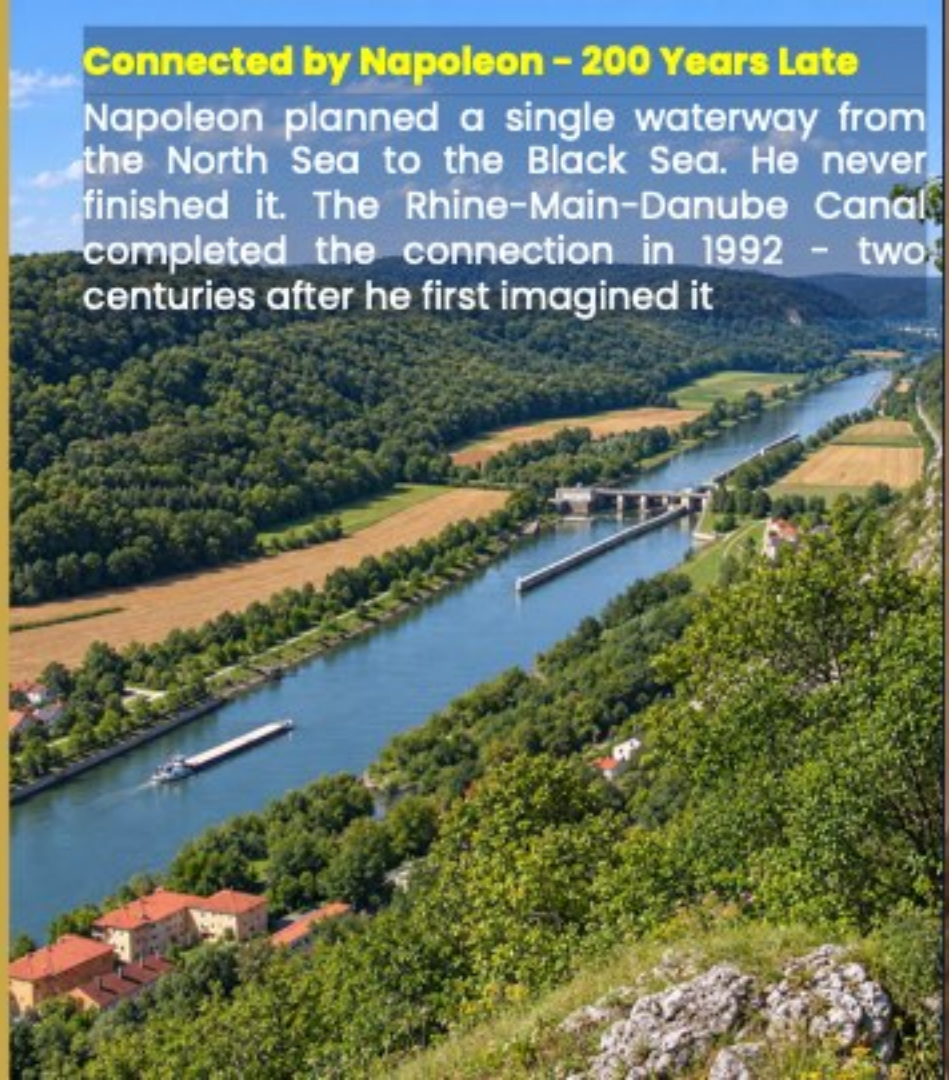
Route of the Danube

- **Source:** Black Forest, Germany
- **Path:** Flows through Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, and empties into the Black Sea
- **Mouth:** Black Sea
- **Length:** ~2,850 km (1,772 miles)



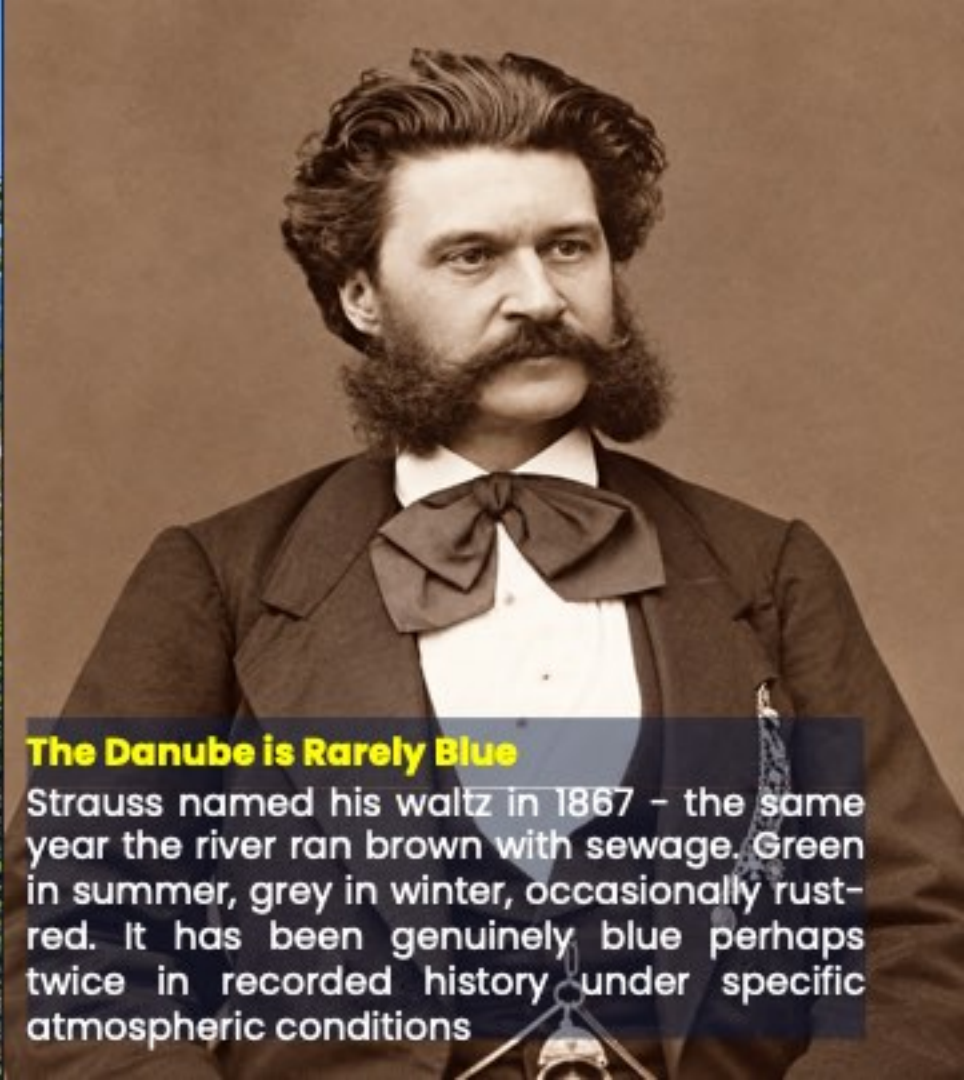
0 150 300 450 km

CZECHIA
GERMANY
SLOVAKIA
UKRAINE
Source: Black Forest, Germany
Ulm
Vienna
Bratislava
Danube
Budapest
AUSTRIA
HUNGARY
ROMANIA
Novi Sad
Galați
Bucharest
Izmail
CROATIA
Belgrade
Ruse
SERBIA
Black Sea
BULGARIA



Connected by Napoleon – 200 Years Late

Napoleon planned a single waterway from the North Sea to the Black Sea. He never finished it. The Rhine-Main-Danube Canal completed the connection in 1992 – two centuries after he first imagined it



The Danube is Rarely Blue

Strauss named his waltz in 1867 – the same year the river ran brown with sewage. Green in summer, grey in winter, occasionally rust-red. It has been genuinely blue perhaps twice in recorded history under specific atmospheric conditions





5

The Mississippi

United States

America's Commercial Spine

3,730 km / 2,318 miles

Length

41%
of the contiguous US is in the River catchments area

1811

First steamboat voyage

Mark Twain's river, the lifeblood of a continent

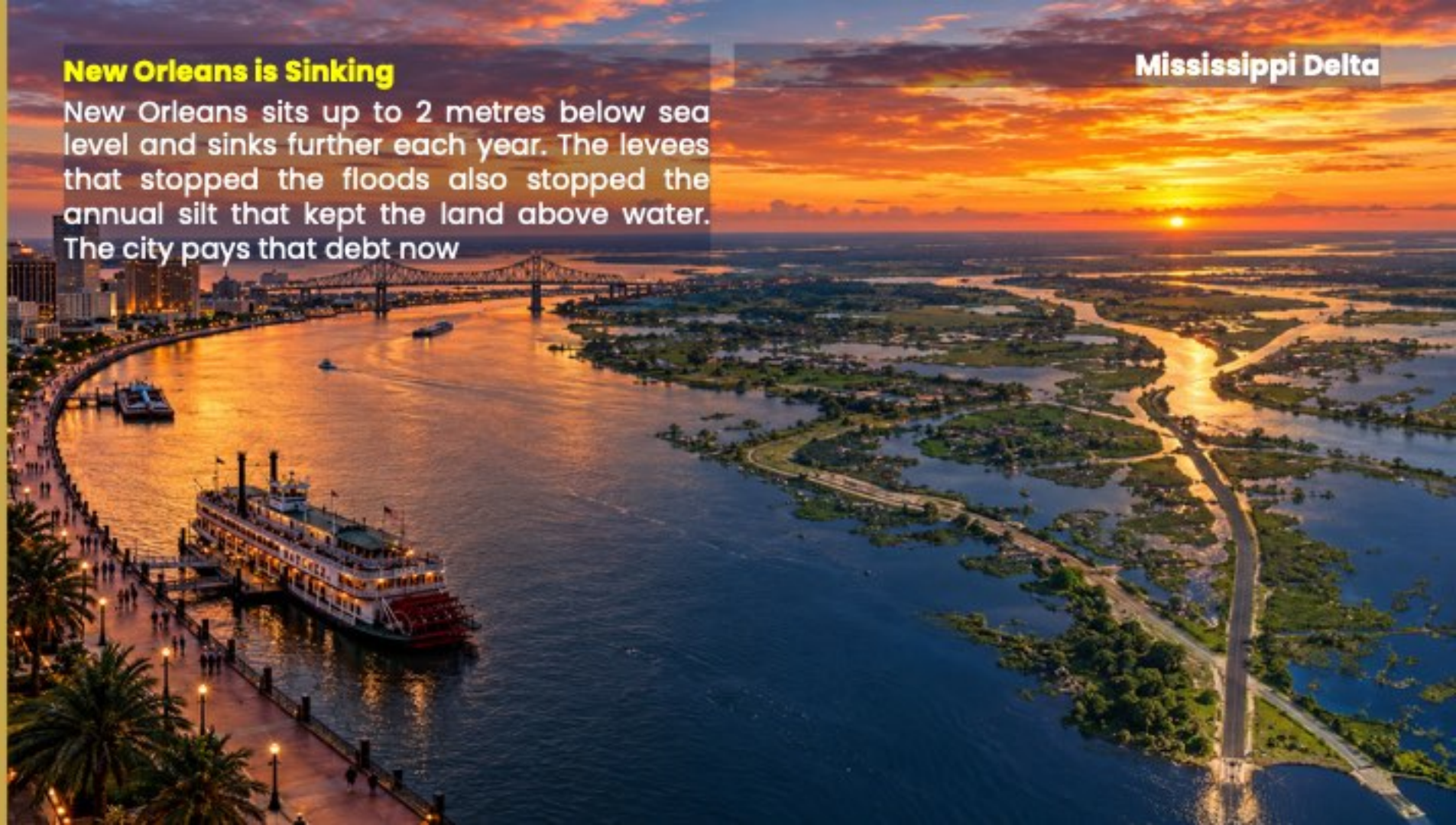

Source: Lake Itasca, Itasca State Park, Minnesota, USA
Path: Flows from Minnesota through the central United States, forming part of the boundary between several states, and discharges into the Gulf of Mexico
Mouth: Gulf of Mexico
Length: ~3,734 km (2,320 miles)
Canada
Lake Itasca
North Dakota
Minnesota
St. Cloud
Wisconsin
South Dakota
Minneapolis
St. Paul
La Crosse
Michigan
Iowa
Davenport
Illinois
Indiana
Ohio
Kansas
Missouri
St. Louis
West Virginia
Kentucky
Virginia
Oklahoma
Tennessee
North Carolina
Arkansas
Memphis
South Carolina
Mississippi
Alabama
Vicksburg
Atlantic Ocean
Louisiana
Baton Rouge
New Orleans
Atchafalaya River Run-Off
Gulf of Mexico
N
0 250 500 750 1000 km





The River Wants to Change Course

For decades, the Mississippi has been tending toward the shorter, steeper Atchafalaya route to the Gulf. The Old River Control Complex holds the flow at roughly 70% Mississippi and 30% Atchafalaya to prevent that capture. If the system failed, lower-Mississippi navigation, communities, and New Orleans' Mississippi River water supply would face profound issues!


New Orleans is Sinking
New Orleans sits up to 2 metres below sea level and sinks further each year. The levees that stopped the floods also stopped the annual silt that kept the land above water. The city pays that debt now
Mississippi Delta



For one billion Hindus, the Ganges is not merely a river - it is the Goddess Ganga incarnate

2,525 km / 1,569 miles

Length

400M

People on its banks

3,500

Years of pilgrimage at Varanasi


Source: Gangotri Glacier, Uttarakhand, India
Path: Flows through Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, and West Bengal in India, and into Bangladesh
Mouth: Bay of Bengal
Length: ~2,525 km (1,569 miles)
Gangotri Glacier
China
(Tibet)
India
Uttarakhand
Himalayas
Rishikesh
Ganga
Haridwar
Nepal
Uttar Pradesh
Bhutan
N
Kanpur
Prayagraj
(Allahabad)
Varanasi
Bihar
Patna
Farakka
Jharkhand
Bangladesh
West
Bengal
Hooghly
China
India

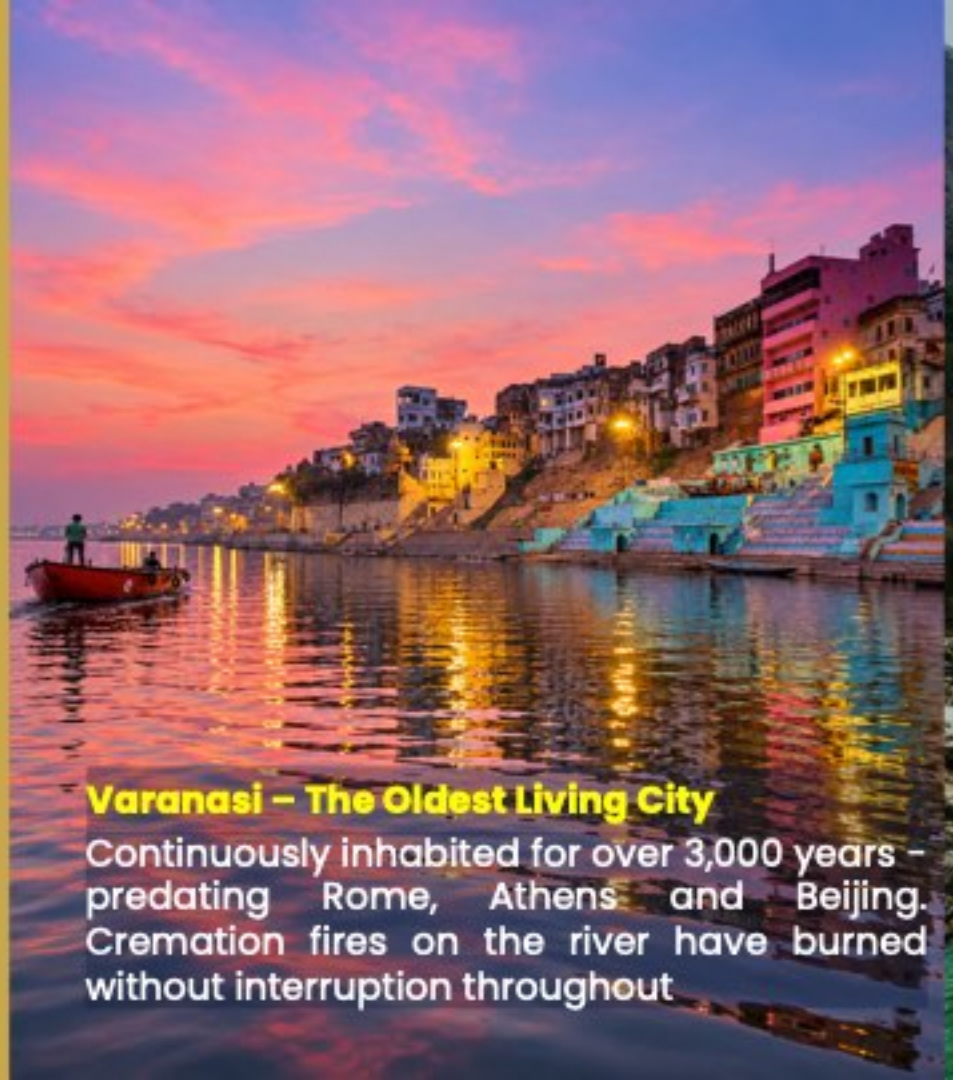


50 Million Pilgrims in a Single Day

The Kumbh Mela is the largest voluntary gathering of people ever recorded - visible from space, organised by religious tradition alone, with no central authority directing a single person

Sacred and Severely Polluted

The Ganges receives 3 billion litres of untreated sewage daily. Pilgrims bathe in it believing it purifies them. India has spent decades and billions on this contradiction - without resolution



Varanasi – The Oldest Living City

Continuously inhabited for over 3,000 years - predating Rome, Athens and Beijing. Cremation fires on the river have burned without interruption throughout

Upper Ganges in Uttarakhand

The River Carries the Dead to Heaven

Dying in Varanasi and having ashes scattered on the Ganges is believed to break the cycle of reincarnation. Bodies are cremated openly on the ghats, day and night, as they have been for 3,500 years



7 The Yangtze

China

Ancient River under Modern Transformation

6,300 km / 3,915 miles

Length

22,500 MW

Dam capacity

300M

Chinese who live in its basin

One third of of China's GDP generated in the Yangtze Economic Belt


Source: Tanggula Mountains, Qinghai, China
Path: Flows through Qinghai, Tibet (Xizang), Sichuan, Chongqing, Hubei, Anhui, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang in China, and into the East China Sea
Mouth: East China Sea
Length: ~6,300 km (3,915 miles)
China
Source: Tanggula Mountains, Qinghai, China
Qinghai
Yangtze (Chang Jiang)
Hubei
Jiangsu
Anhui
Three Gorges Dam
Yichang
Yichang
Nanjing
Tibet (Xizang)
Wuhan
Jiujiang
Shanghai
Sichuan
Chongqing
N
Zhejiang
Hunan
Jiangxi
China
Yunnan
East China Sea

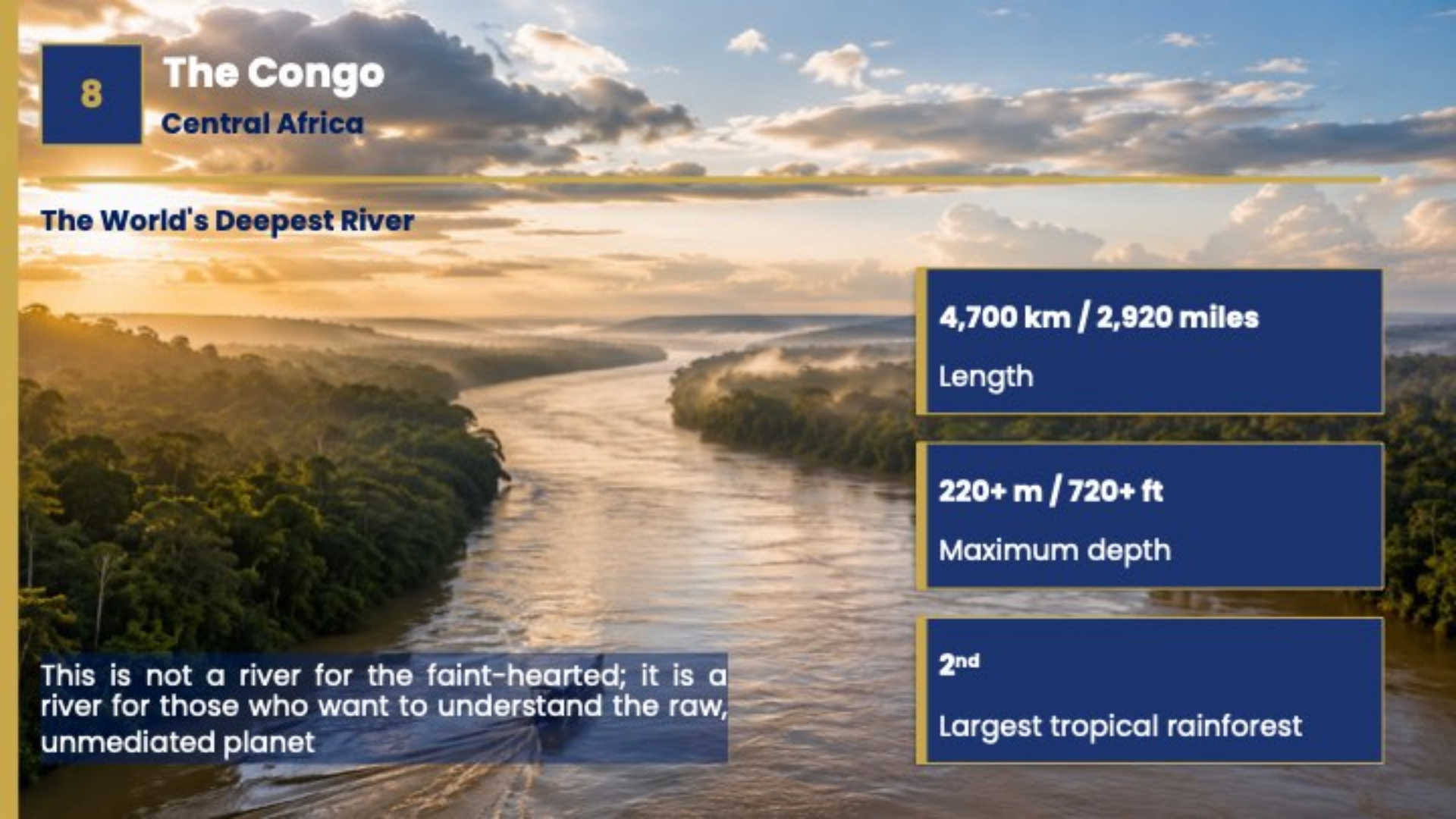


The Dam Moved the Earth's Rotation

The Three Gorges reservoir, completed in 2020 after a 26-year build programme, holds 42 billion tonnes of water. Scientists calculated **it marginally slowed Earth's rotation and shifted its axis by 2 centimetres**


How Ships Navigate to Dam





8 The Congo

Central Africa

The World's Deepest River

4,700 km / 2,920 miles

Length

220+ m / 720+ ft

Maximum depth

2nd

Largest tropical rainforest

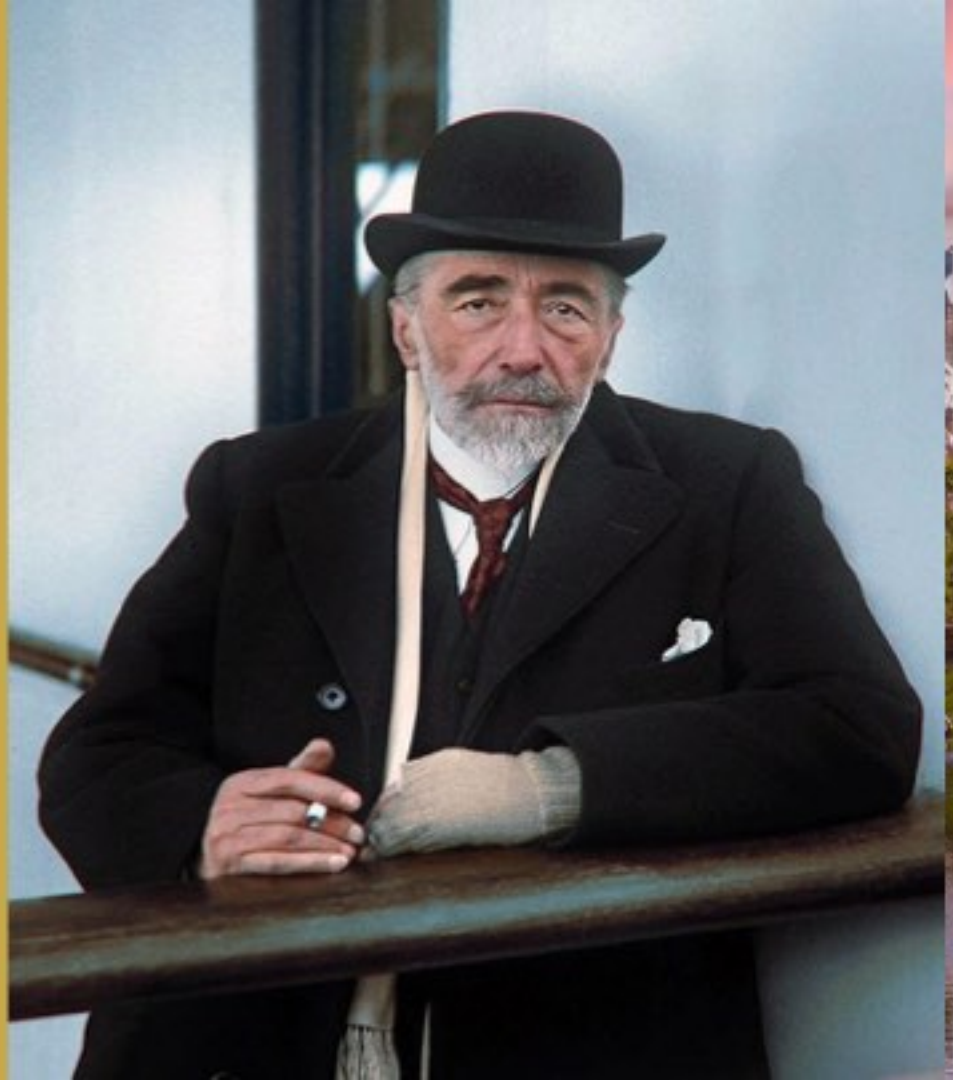
This is not a river for the faint-hearted; it is a river for those who want to understand the raw, unmediated planet


Source: Lualaba River (Chambeshi), Katanga Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo
Path: Flows through the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and into the Atlantic Ocean
Mouth: Atlantic Ocean
Length: ~4,700 km (2,920 miles)
Central African Republic
South Sudan
Cameroon
Lake Albert
Congo River
Mbandaka
Kisangani
Gabon
Lake Edward
Uganda
Kinshasa
Brazzaville
Democratic Republic Of The Congo
Kindu
Rwanda
Matadi
Mouth: Atlantic Ocean
Burundi
Atlantic Ocean
Lake Tanganyika
Lualaba River
Kamina
Tanzania
N
Angola
Source: Lualaba River (Chambeshi)
0
250
500
750 km
Zambia



The World's Second Lung

The Congo Basin rainforest is the only tropical forest currently absorbing more carbon than it emits. Critical to every climate calculation on Earth - and almost entirely unexplored - parts of the Amazon became net emitters from about a decade ago



Conrad Got it Right ... and Wrong

Heart of Darkness, published in 1899, was based on Joseph Conrad's own 1890 journey. Accurate about the horror of Belgian colonial extraction - but wrong about the silence. The Congo is one of the most acoustically alive places on the planet. Rumour has it that Apocalypse Now was based around his novel



Two Capitals Face Each Other Across It

Kinshasa and Brazzaville are just 4 km apart across the river - the closest pair of national capital cities on Earth. They share a view and almost nothing else





Great Lakes and Inland Seas

Lakes that dwarf small nations. Inland seas where horizons vanish. Three bodies of water that hold a third of the world's accessible freshwater



9

The Great Lakes

North America

Freshwater Seas Without Horizon

5

Lakes

17,600 km / 10,900 miles

of shoreline

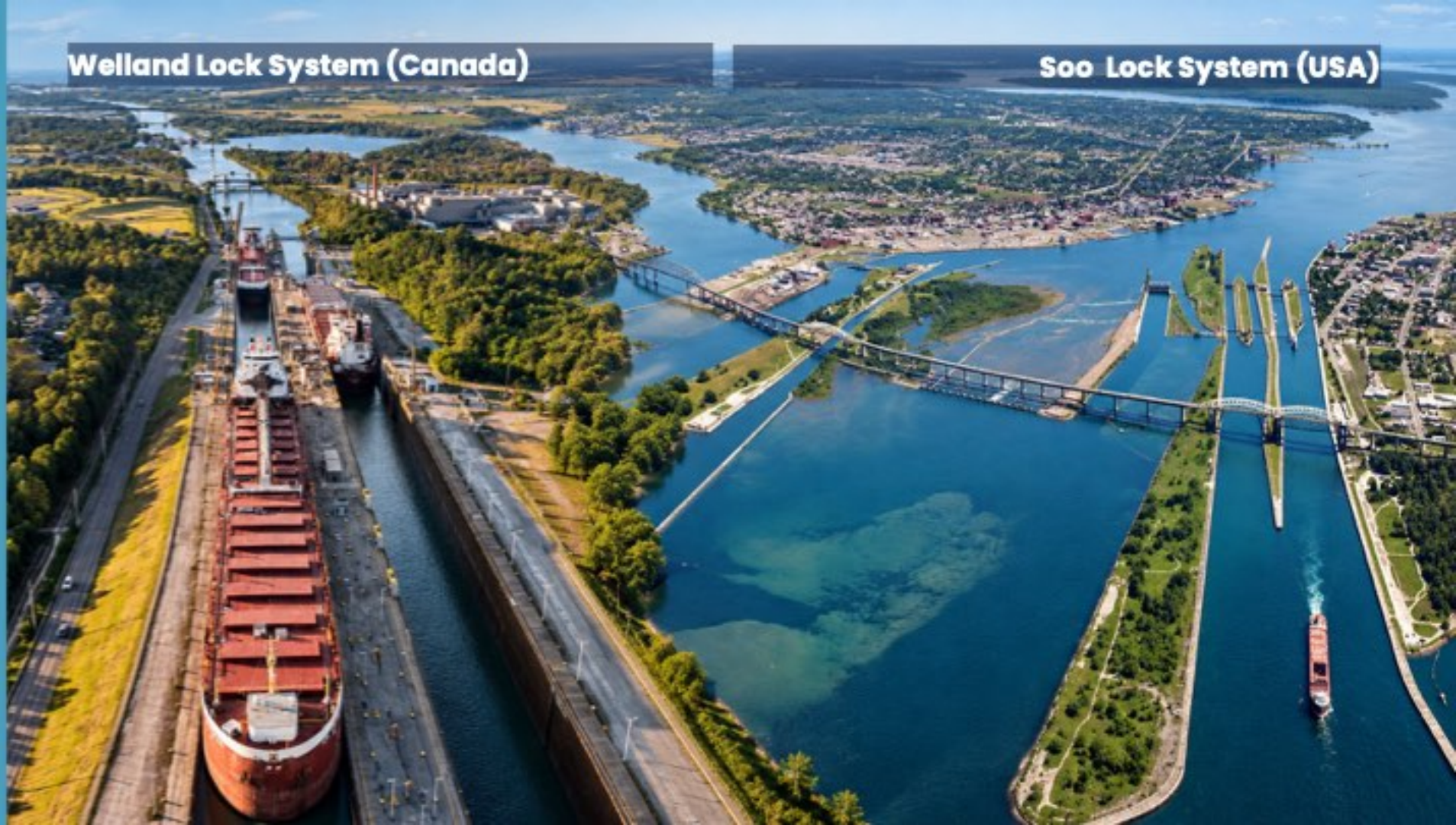
Superior (the biggest in volume by far), Michigan, Huron, Erie and Ontario together hold 21% of the world's surface freshwater


Minnesota
Canada
Lake Superior
Duluth
Sault Ste Marie
Mackinac Island
Wisconsin
Lake Huron
Toronto
Lake Ontario
Milwaukee
Michigan
Buffalo
Lake Michigan
New York
Detroit
Lake Erie
Chicago
Cleveland
Illinois
Indiana
Ohio
Key Facts
• Total surface area: 243,700 km² (94,250 mi²)
• Total shoreline: ~17,600 km (10,900 mi)
• Average depth: 85 m (279 ft)
• Formed by glaciers about 10,000–15,000 years ago
• Provide drinking water, transportation, recreation, and support rich ecosystems and industries.

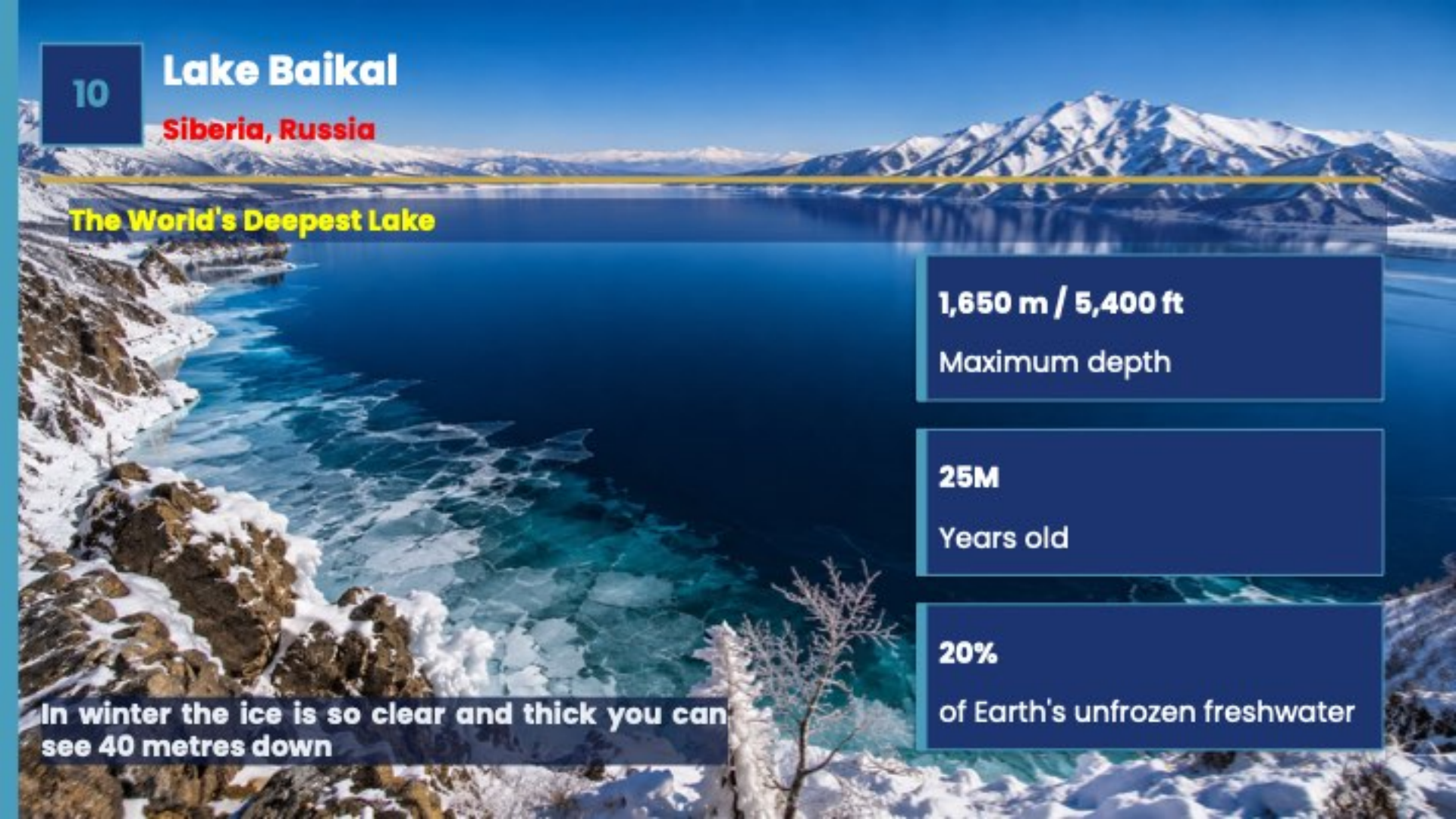


Wrecks Are Perfectly Preserved

Superior's cold fresh water does not decompose timber as saltwater does. Some 19th-century ships on the bottom are intact enough to see the cargo still on deck


Welland Lock System (Canada)
Soo Lock System (USA)


Mackinac Island


10
Lake Baikal
Siberia, Russia
The World's Deepest Lake
1,650 m / 5,400 ft
Maximum depth
25M
Years old
20%
of Earth's unfrozen freshwater
In winter the ice is so clear and thick you can see 40 metres down



Crystal Clear Waters Of Lake Baikal

Baikal Seal Nerpa A Unique Species Found Only In The Lake

- **Location:** Southern Siberia, Russia
- **Length:** 636 km (395 mi)
- **Maximum Width:** 79.5 km (49 mi)
- **Maximum Depth:** 1,642 m (5,387 ft)
- **Surface Area:** 31,722 km² (12,248 mi²)
- **Volume:** 23,615 km³ (5,661 mi³)
- **Estimated Age:** 25 million years



11

The Caspian Sea

Central Asia

The World's Largest Lake – Geopolitically Contested



Technically a lake, the Caspian Sea defies categorisation. Bordered by Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Iran and Azerbaijan, it has been contested for centuries. The crossroads of Persia, the Silk Road and the Soviet empire, all reflected in brackish water

371,000 km² / 143,000 mi²

Surface area

5

Bordering nations

50B+ barrels

Estimated oil reserves below

Volga River

Atyrau

Astrakhan

Russia

Kazakhstan

North Caspian

Makhachkala

Aktau

Middle Caspian

Baku

Azerbaijan

Turkmenbashi

Turkmenistan

South Caspian

Babolsar

Iran

0 125 250 375 500 km

50+

rivers flow in – none flow out



Mangystau Coast Kazakhstan



Sunset Over The Caspian Sea



Caspian Seal

- **Location:** Between Eastern Europe And Western Asia
- **Type:** Endorheic Basin
- **Surface Area:** 371,000 km² (143,000 mi²)
- **Volume:** 78,200 km³ (18,800 mi³)
- **Maximum Depth:** 1,025 m (3,363 ft)
- **Shoreline Length:** About 7,000 km (4,350 mi)
- **Salinity:** Lower In The North Higher In The South
- **Average Water Level:** About −28 m (−92 ft)



It is Shrinking Rapidly

The Caspian has lost 7 metres of water level since 1995. Coastal towns that sat on the waterfront now look out over miles of exposed seabed. By 2100, it could lose a third of its surface area

The Sturgeon are Nearly Gone

The Caspian produces over 90% of wild beluga caviar. Sturgeon populations have collapsed 90% in a century. The Beluga can live 100 years and weigh a tonne. It is now critically endangered





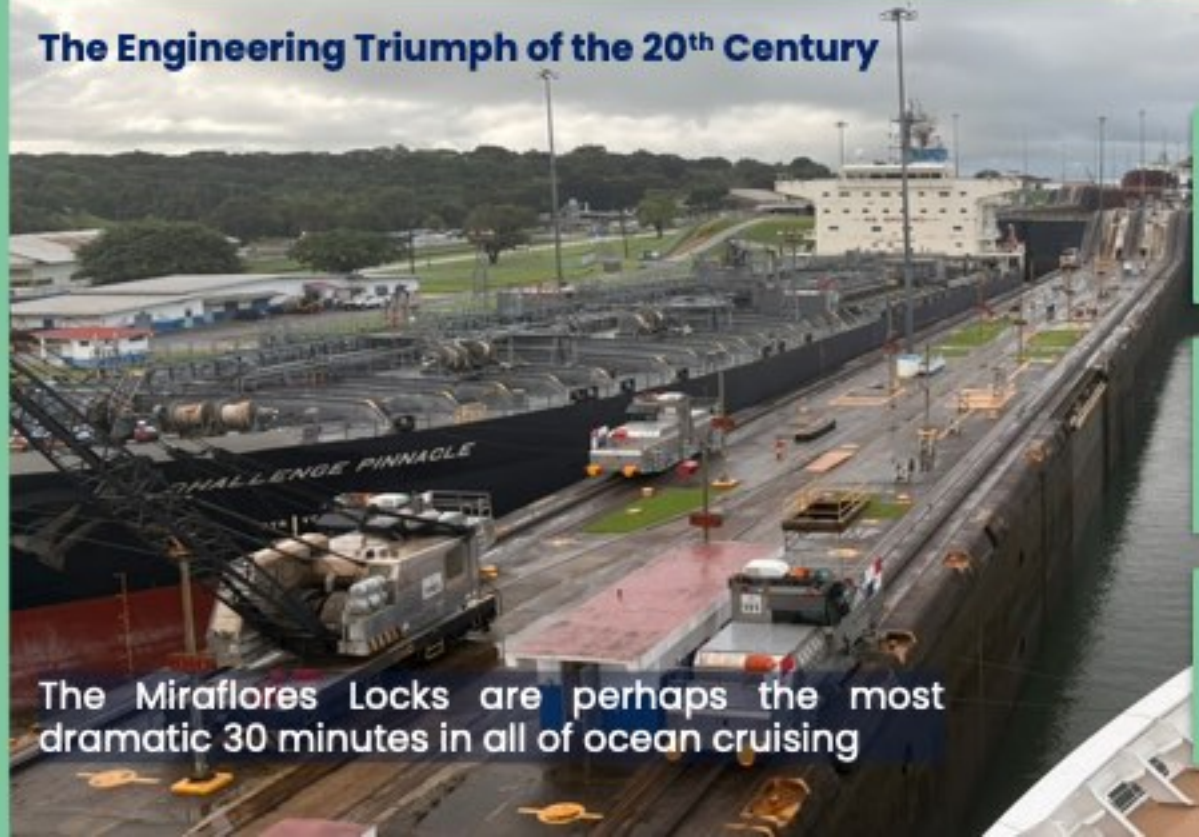
Canals and Engineered Passages

Where human engineering met geography and won. Three canals that redrew trade routes, ended empires, and still produce the most dramatic moments in all of cruising

12 The Panama Canal

Panama

The Engineering Triumph of the 20th Century



82 km / 51 miles

Canal length

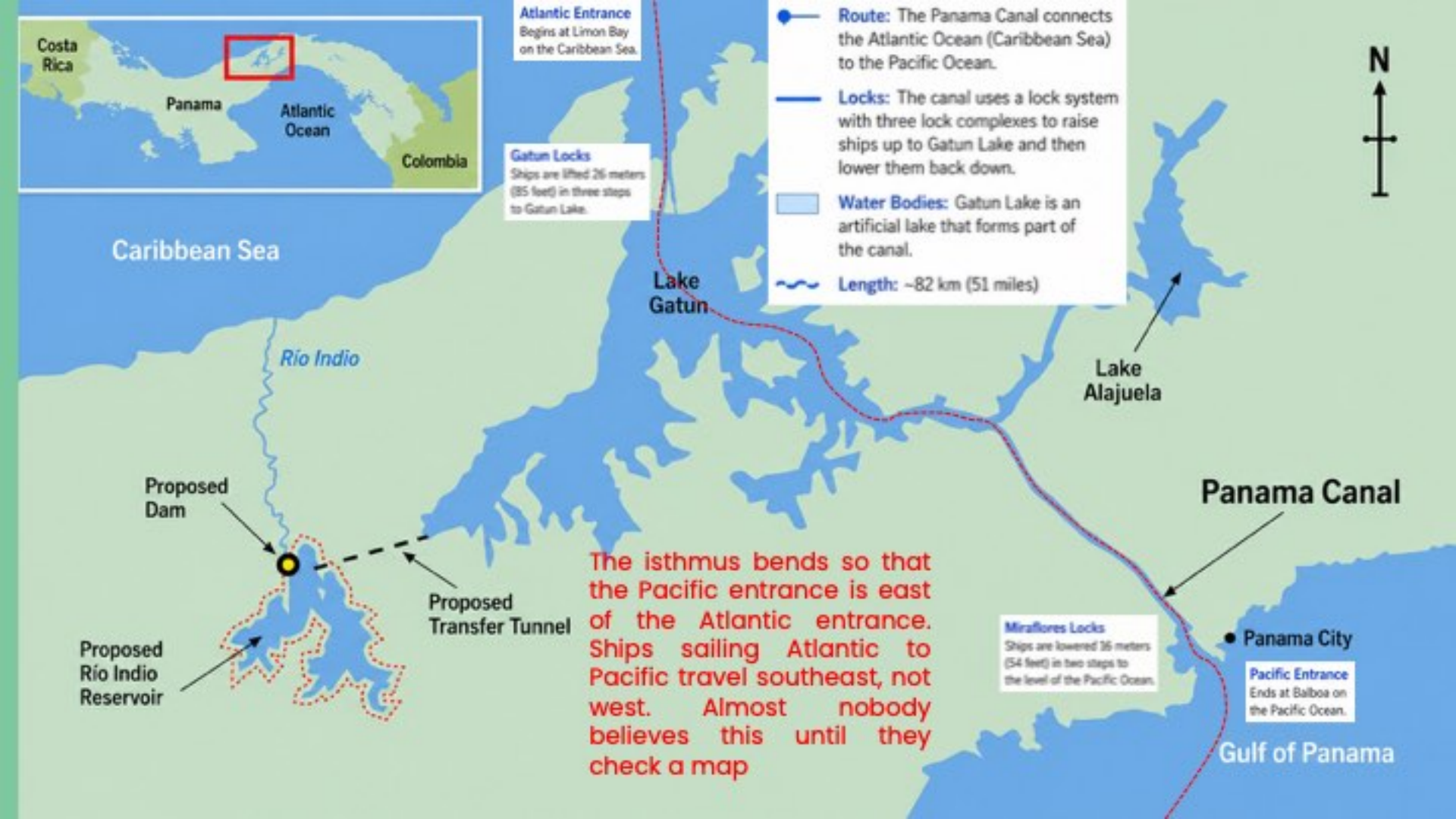
26 m / 85 ft

Ships raised and lowered

14,000

Ships transit annually

The Miraflores Locks are perhaps the most dramatic 30 minutes in all of ocean cruising


Costa Rica
Panama
Atlantic Ocean
Colombia
Atlantic Entrance
Begins at Limon Bay on the Caribbean Sea.
Gatun Locks
Ships are lifted 26 meters (85 feet) in three steps to Gatun Lake.
Route: The Panama Canal connects the Atlantic Ocean (Caribbean Sea) to the Pacific Ocean.
Locks: The canal uses a lock system with three lock complexes to raise ships up to Gatun Lake and then lower them back down.
Water Bodies: Gatun Lake is an artificial lake that forms part of the canal.
Length: ~82 km (51 miles)
N
Caribbean Sea
Lake Gatun
Río Indio
Lake Alajuela
Proposed Dam
Proposed Transfer Tunnel
Proposed Río Indio Reservoir
Panama Canal
The isthmus bends so that the Pacific entrance is east of the Atlantic entrance. Ships sailing Atlantic to Pacific travel southeast, not west. Almost nobody believes this until they check a map
Miraflores Locks
Ships are lowered 16 meters (54 feet) in two steps to the level of the Pacific Ocean.
Panama City
Pacific Entrance
Ends at Balboa on the Pacific Ocean.
Gulf of Panama

The French Failed Catastrophically

Ferdinand de Lesseps began in 1881. By 1889, he had spent $287 million, buried over 22,000 workers from Yellow Fever, and gone bankrupt. The Americans succeeded only after proving mosquitoes caused Yellow Fever





Nearly Built Through Nicaragua

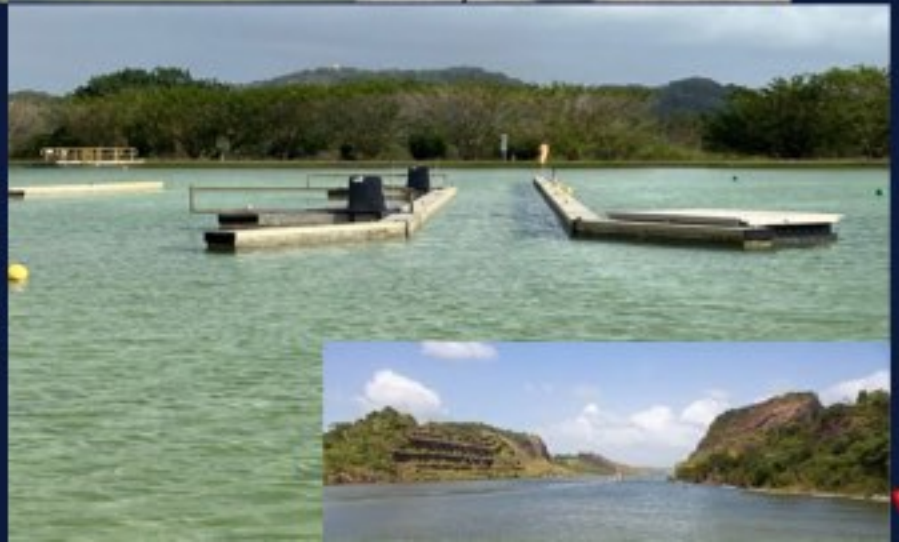
Congress came within one vote of choosing Nicaragua. A Nicaraguan postage stamp showing a volcano near the proposed route was distributed to every senator by a French lobbyist. Nicaragua lost





Manned Model Training Centre

The Center has manned model ships at a 1:25 scale and with an area of 15.5 hectares, including two lakes connected by a narrow channel, simulating the Culebra Cut. This represents a true to scale reproduction of Locks, docks, and channels of the Canal




New Canal Locks Looking Across to the Pacific

13

The Suez Canal

Egypt

Two Seas, One Corridor, a Thousand Years of Geopolitics



193 km / 120 miles

Length

12–16 hrs

Transit time

Opened in 1869, fought over in 1956 - there is no more geopolitically charged waterway on Earth

The Suez Canal

Linking the Mediterranean and Red Seas

Route: The Suez Canal connects the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea through the Isthmus of Suez in Egypt.

Length: ~193 km (120 miles)

Locks: None – sea-level canal

Opened: November 17, 1869

The canal is a vital shortcut for maritime trade, reducing the journey between Europe and Asia by ~7,000 km (4,350 miles).



Mediterranean Sea

N

Port Said

Lake Manzala

El Qantarah Lakes

El Qantarah

EGYPT

Ismailia

Great Bitter Lake
The widest and deepest section of the canal.

Great Bitter Lake

Little Bitter Lake
Helps ships adjust to changes in water level and manage traffic.

Suez

South Entrance
The canal empties into the Red Sea.

Red Sea



A container ship transiting the Suez Canal near Ismailia.



Built on Forced Labour and Deception

The concession required Egypt to supply conscripted peasant workers. Britain opposed construction throughout, then bought Egypt's shares in 1875 - becoming the largest shareholder in something it had tried to prevent


South Suez Canal - 1872
South Suez Canal - Today



One Ship, Six Days, 60 Billion Dollars

The Ever Given ran aground on 21 March 2021. Six days, one ship slightly sideways, 10 billion dollars of trade halted per day. The entire global economy demonstrated its dependence on the Canal



14 The Corinth Canal

Greece

The Narrowest, Most Dramatic Cut in Cruising

6.4 km / 4 miles

Length

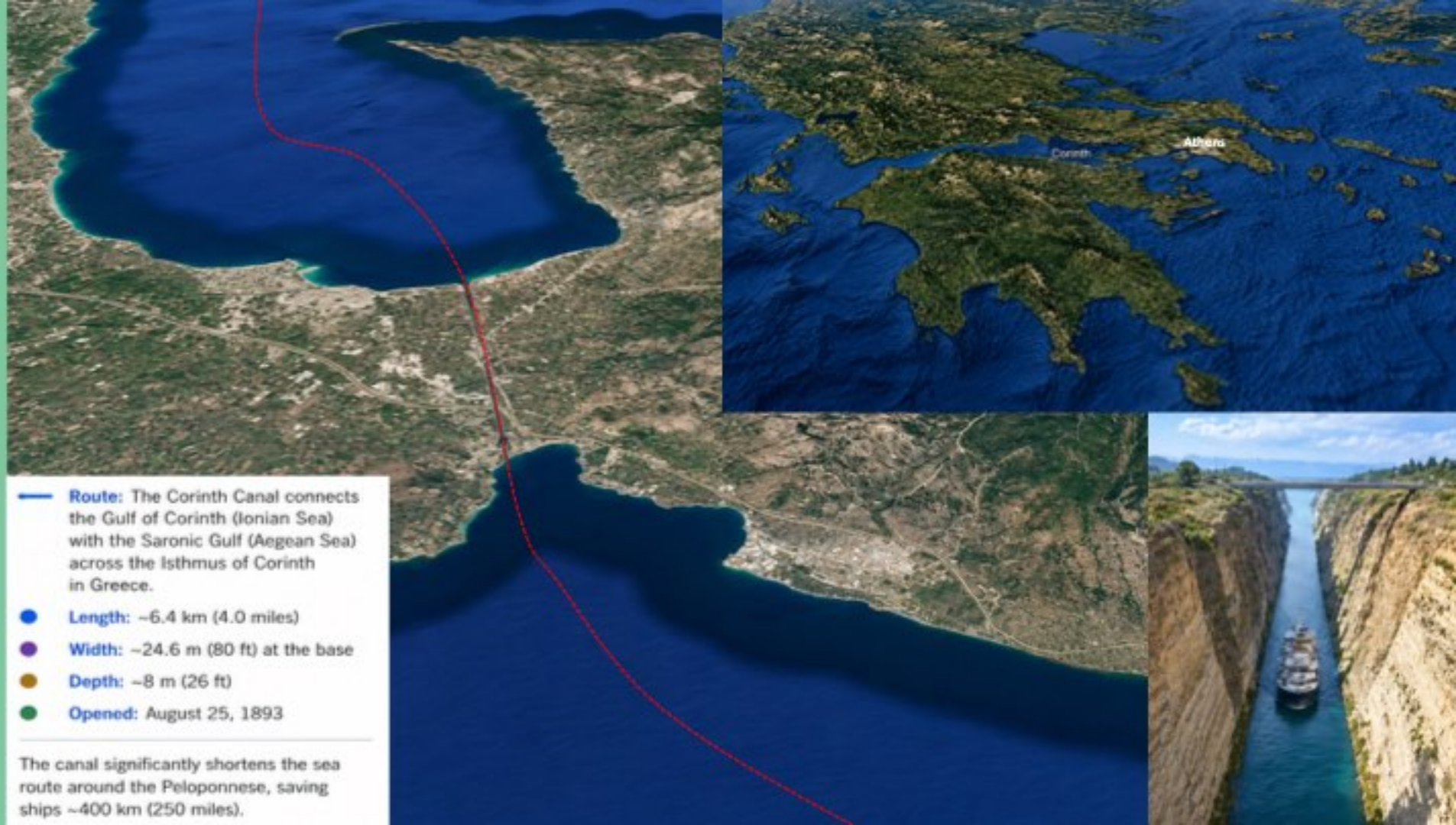
24.6 m / 80 ft

Width - barely wider than a ship

90 m / 295 ft

Vertical rock walls

The Romans planned it - Emperor Nero once tried to cut it with a golden pickaxe. The Greeks finally opened it in 1893. To transit it is one of cruising's most visceral moments - silent, vertiginous, unforgettable



Route: The Corinth Canal connects the Gulf of Corinth (Ionian Sea) with the Saronic Gulf (Aegean Sea) across the Isthmus of Corinth in Greece.

- **Length:** ~6.4 km (4.0 miles)
- **Width:** ~24.6 m (80 ft) at the base
- **Depth:** ~8 m (26 ft)
- **Opened:** August 25, 1893

The canal significantly shortens the sea route around the Peloponnese, saving ships ~400 km (250 miles).

Financially Ruinous from Day One

The Canal Company went bankrupt before opening. German forces pushed 6 locomotives (and 130 carriages) into it in 1944. It has never turned a profit and exists today primarily as a tourist attraction





It is Slowly Destroying Itself

Limestone rockfalls have blocked the canal at least four times since 1893. A major landslide in 2021 closed it for months



Ocean Passages and Extremes

The great passages and polar frontiers - where the ocean reasserts its authority and reminds us that the sea is still in charge



15

The Norwegian Fjords

Norway

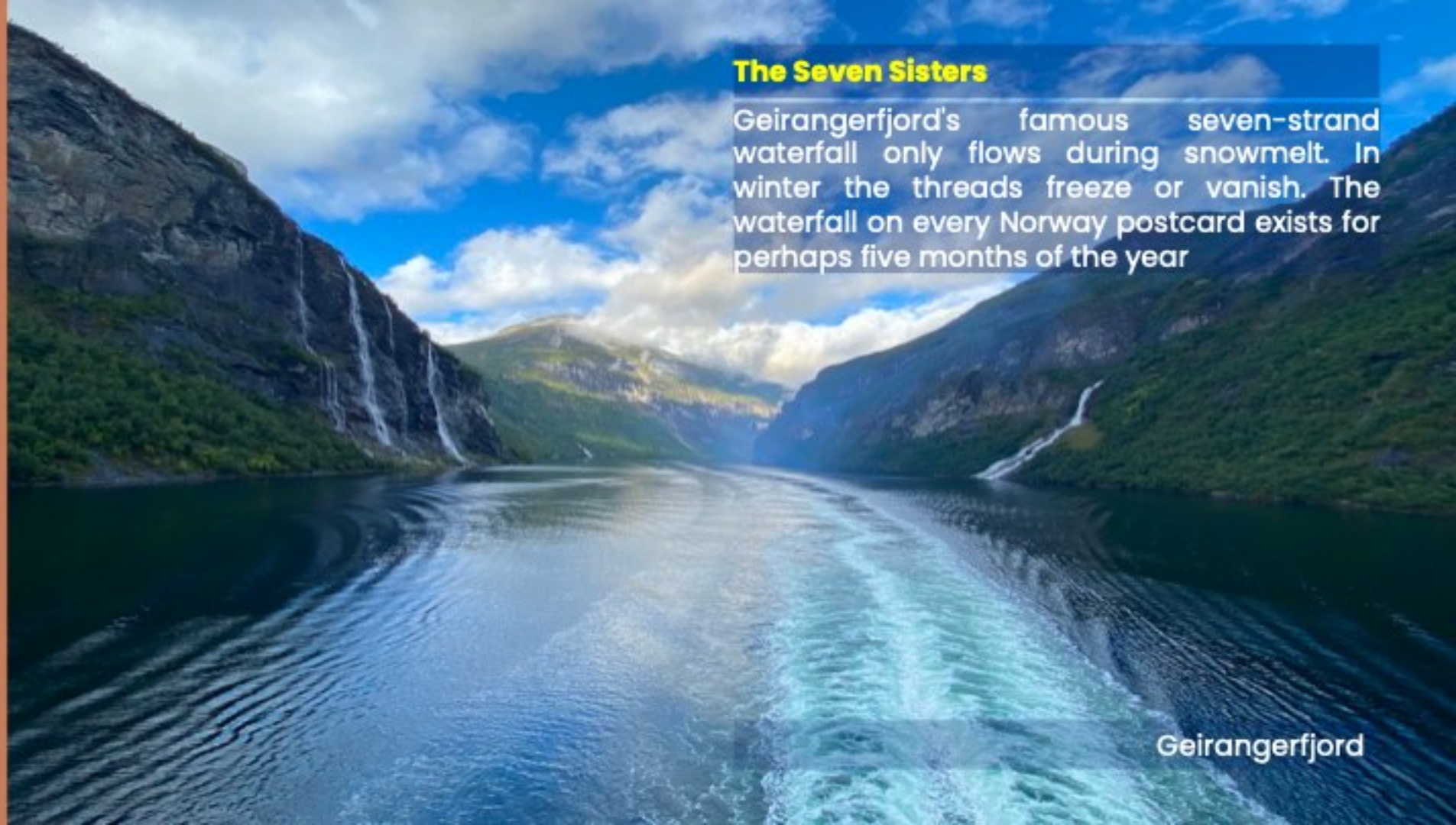
The Benchmark of Scenic Cruising

2

UNESCO World Heritage fjords

1,300+

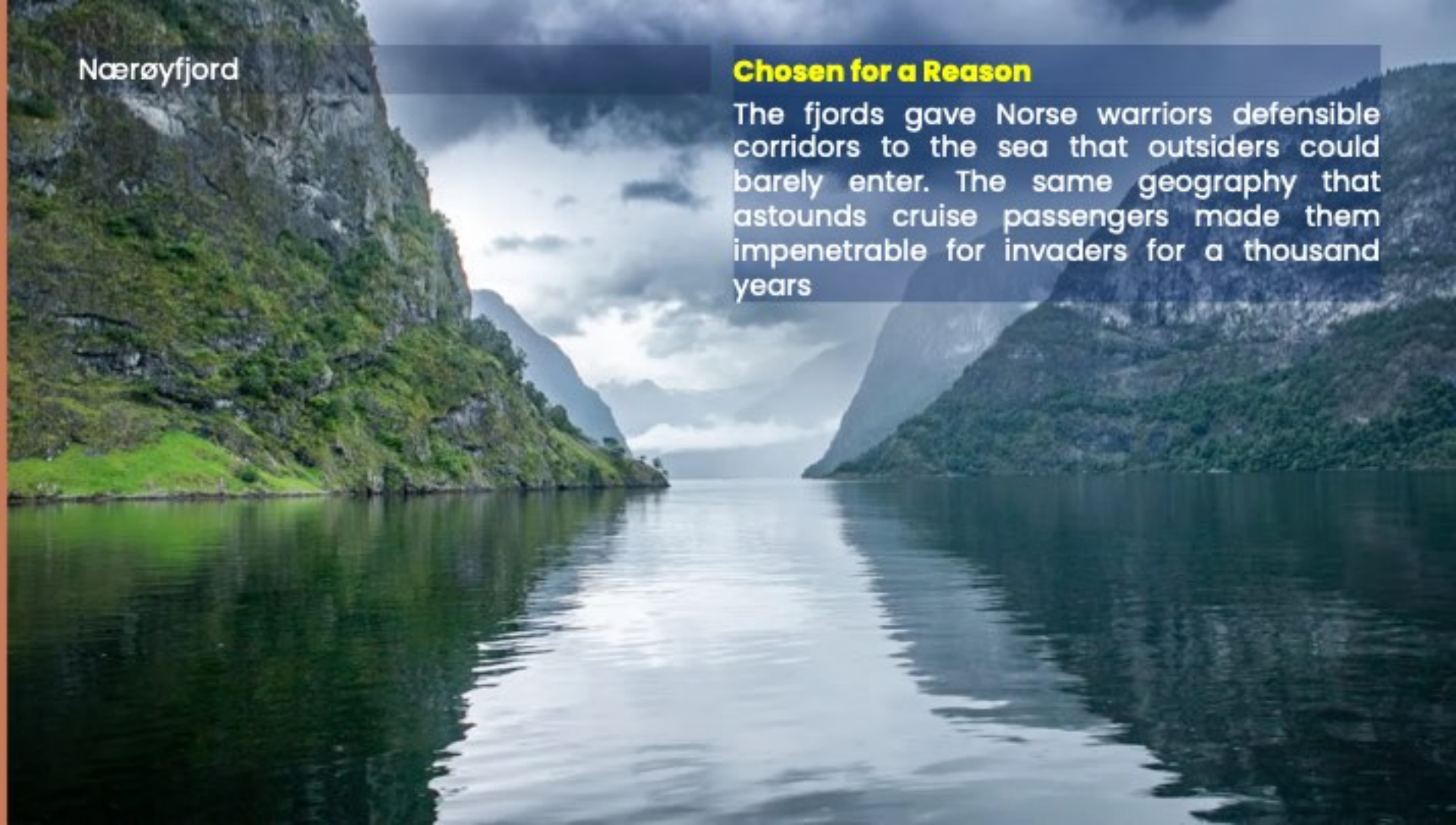
Named fjords



The Seven Sisters

Geirangerfjord's famous seven-strand waterfall only flows during snowmelt. In winter the threads freeze or vanish. The waterfall on every Norway postcard exists for perhaps five months of the year

Geirangerfjord



Nærøyfjord

Chosen for a Reason

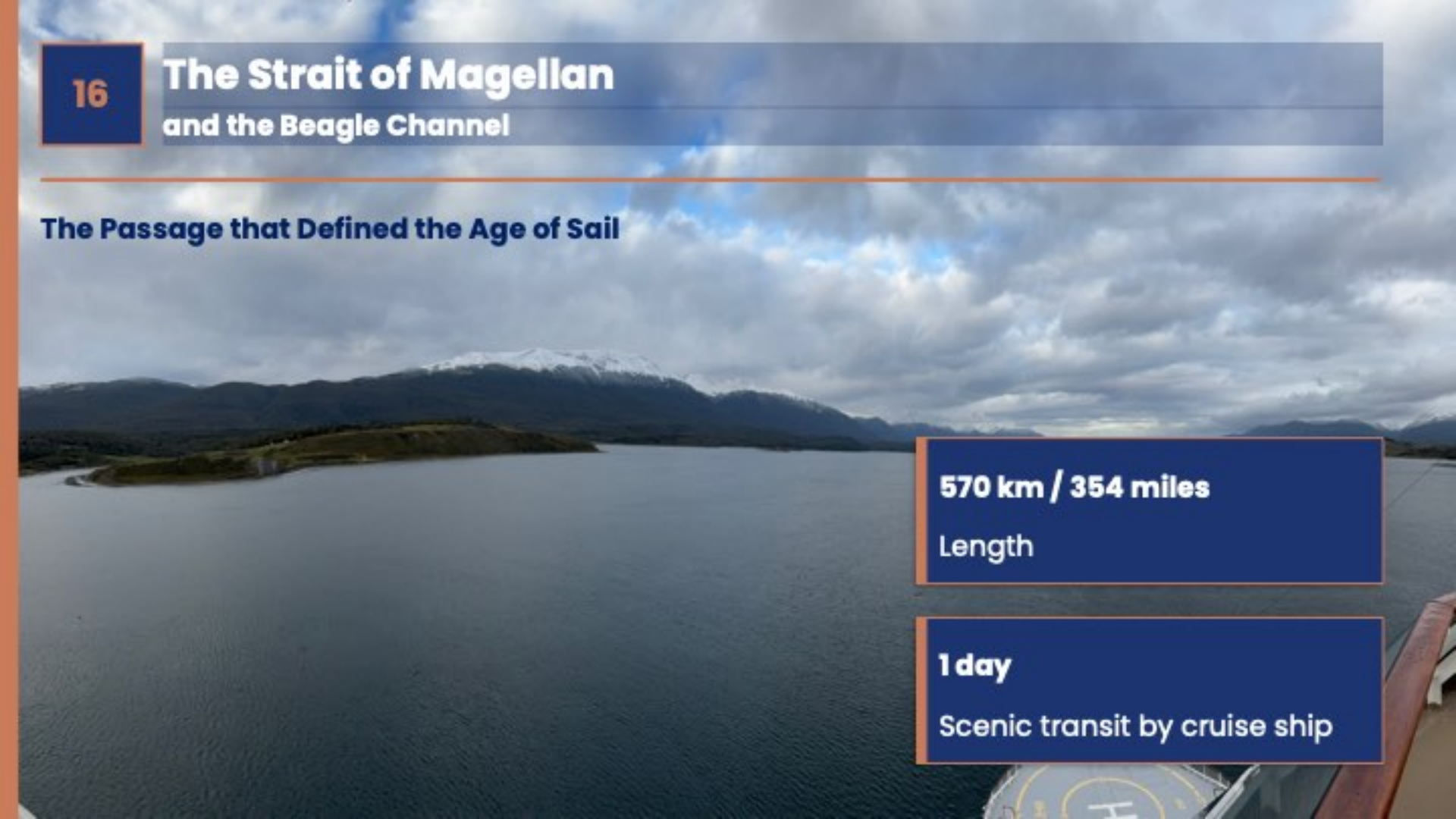
The fjords gave Norse warriors defensible corridors to the sea that outsiders could barely enter. The same geography that astounds cruise passengers made them impenetrable for invaders for a thousand years

16

The Strait of Magellan

and the Beagle Channel

The Passage that Defined the Age of Sail



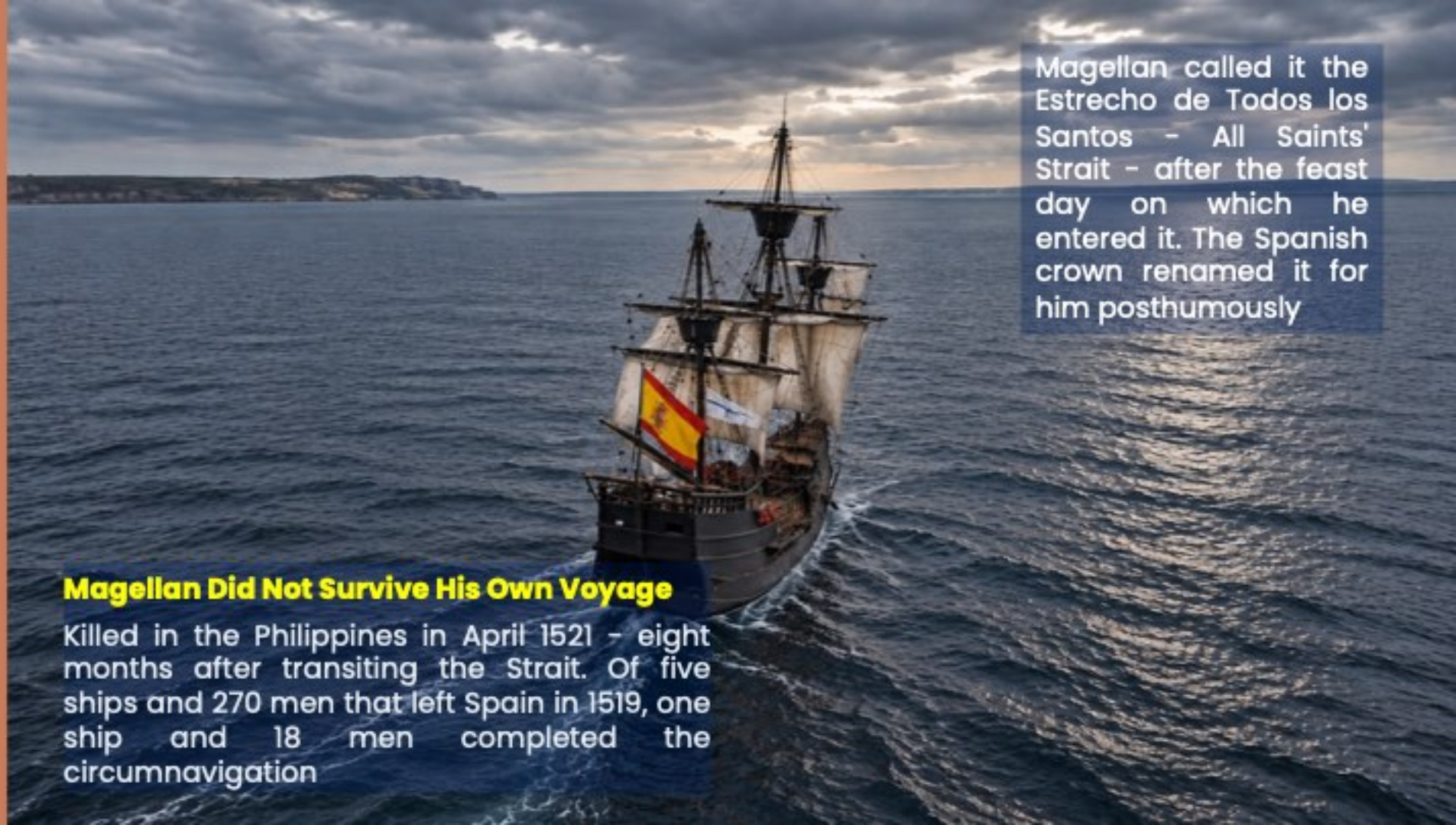
570 km / 354 miles

Length

1 day

Scenic transit by cruise ship


Chile
Punta Arenas
Tierra Del Fuego
Rio Grande
Argentina
Brookes Bay
Gabriel Narrows
Agostini Glacier
Straits Of Magellan
Ushuaia
Beagle Channel
Cape Horn



Magellan called it the Estrecho de Todos los Santos - All Saints' Strait - after the feast day on which he entered it. The Spanish crown renamed it for him posthumously

Magellan Did Not Survive His Own Voyage

Killed in the Philippines in April 1521 - eight months after transiting the Strait. Of five ships and 270 men that left Spain in 1519, one ship and 18 men completed the circumnavigation



Darwin Spent Five Weeks in the Beagle Channel

HMS BEAGLE made two passages (1826-1830 and then, the more famous one, 1834. Darwin's observations of the second one in these waters directly shaped the thinking that led to the publishing of 'On the Origin of Species'

17

Drake Passage (and Cape Horn)

Southern Ocean

The Most Feared Waters in Maritime History



56 degrees S

Latitude of Cape Horn

20 m / 65 ft

Maximum wave heights

The most southerly point is actually Diego Ramirez Island, 100 km further south. Cape Horn sits where three weather systems collide with no land to slow them for 22,000 miles - which is what makes it matter

The Drake Lake and the Drake Shake

In high pressure, the Drake Passage can be glassy calm - sailors call it the Drake Lake. Passengers who get it feel cheated. Passengers who get the Drake Shake feel they have earned something





Shackleton Crossed it in an Open Boat

In 1916, Shackleton sailed 800 miles through Drake Passage in a 22-foot lifeboat in winter, navigating by sextant in near-constant cloud. Universally regarded as the greatest small-boat navigation in history

The Stages of Drake Passage Sea Sickness

Stage 1: You are afraid you are going to die

Stage 2: You hope you are going to die

Stage 3: You are afraid you might not die





Drake Passage Dinner Comedy

In the Drake, you don't buy dinner; you merely 'rent' it for a few minutes before the sea demands its return




YAMAL

Franklin's Ships Found 170 Years Later

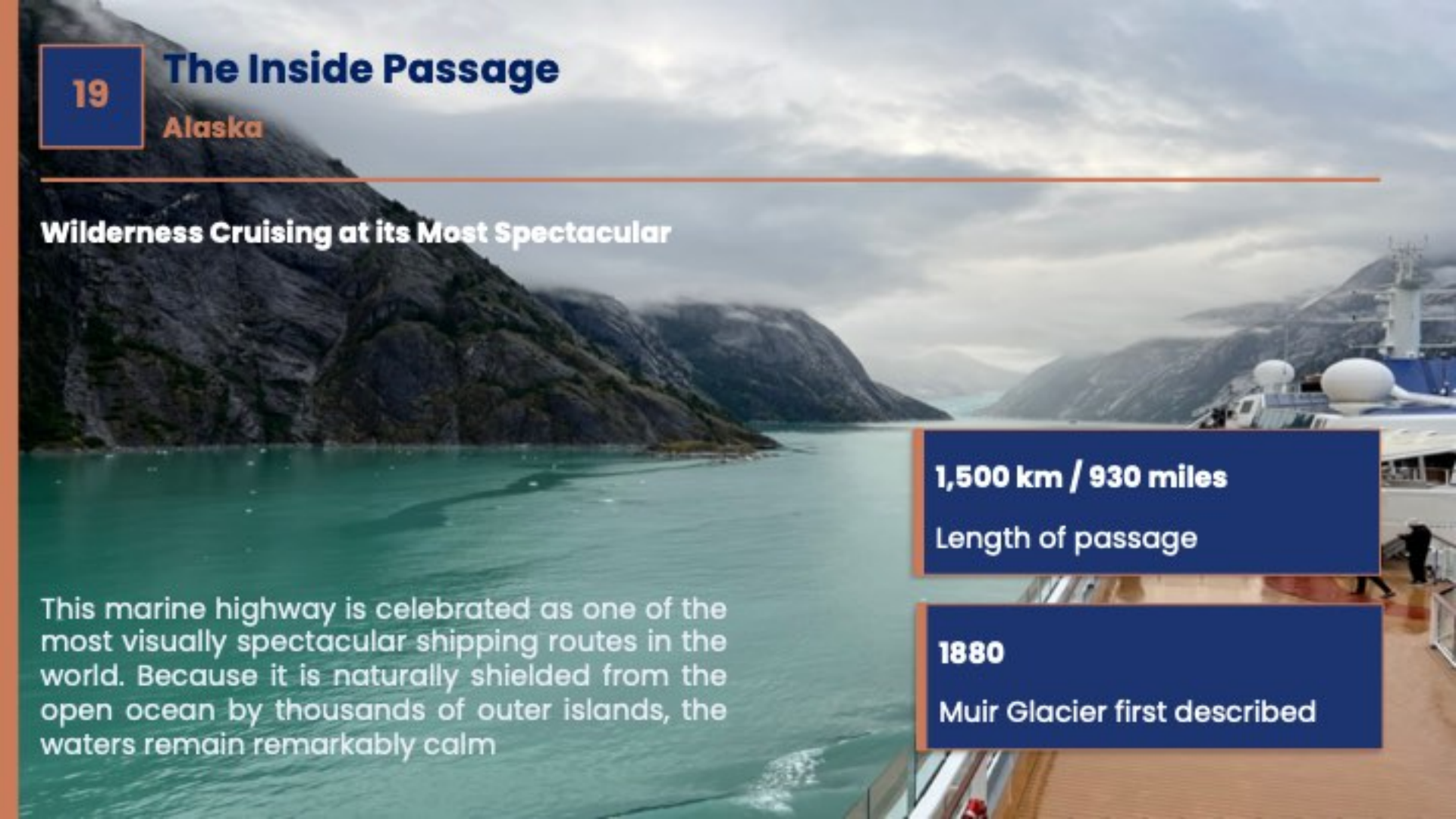
HMS EREBUS located in 2014, HMS TERROR in 2016 - both upright on the seabed. The ships were found almost exactly where the Inuit said





Greenland Has a City Under the Ice

A US nuclear-powered military base built inside the ice sheet in 1959, designed to house 200 soldiers. Abandoned in 1966, now buried by ice, with its radioactive waste slowly approaching the surface



19

The Inside Passage

Alaska

Wilderness Cruising at its Most Spectacular

This marine highway is celebrated as one of the most visually spectacular shipping routes in the world. Because it is naturally shielded from the open ocean by thousands of outer islands, the waters remain remarkably calm

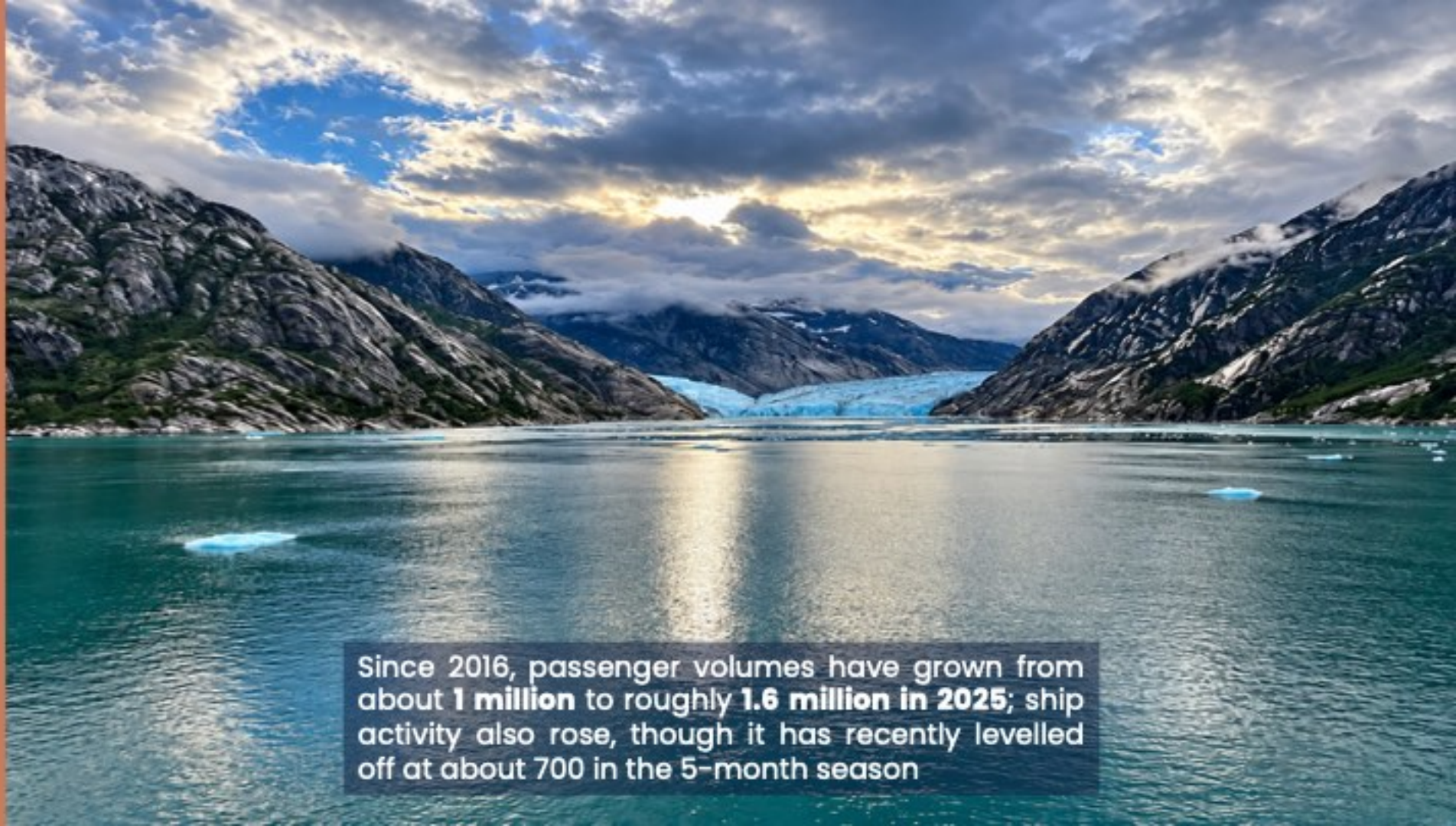
1,500 km / 930 miles

Length of passage

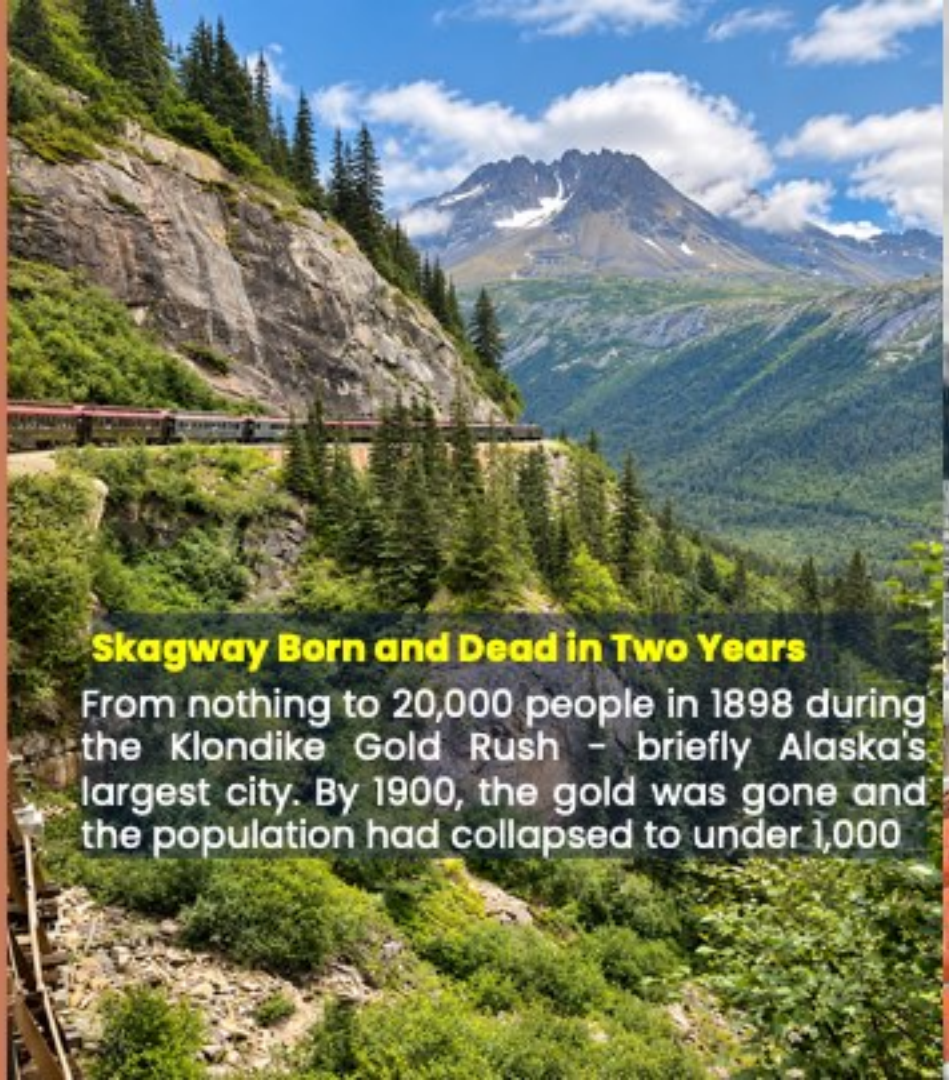
1880

Muir Glacier first described


U.S.
Canada
Skagway
Haines
Haines Highway
Tongass National Forest
Juneau
Pelican
Admiralty Island
Angoon
Alaska
Sitka
Petersburg
Wrangell
Hollis
Ketchikan
Metlakatla
Pacific Ocean
N
0 mi
50 mi
100 mi
To Bellingham, WA



Since 2016, passenger volumes have grown from about **1 million** to roughly **1.6 million in 2025**; ship activity also rose, though it has recently levelled off at about 700 in the 5-month season



Skagway Born and Dead in Two Years

From nothing to 20,000 people in 1898 during the Klondike Gold Rush - briefly Alaska's largest city. By 1900, the gold was gone and the population had collapsed to under 1,000



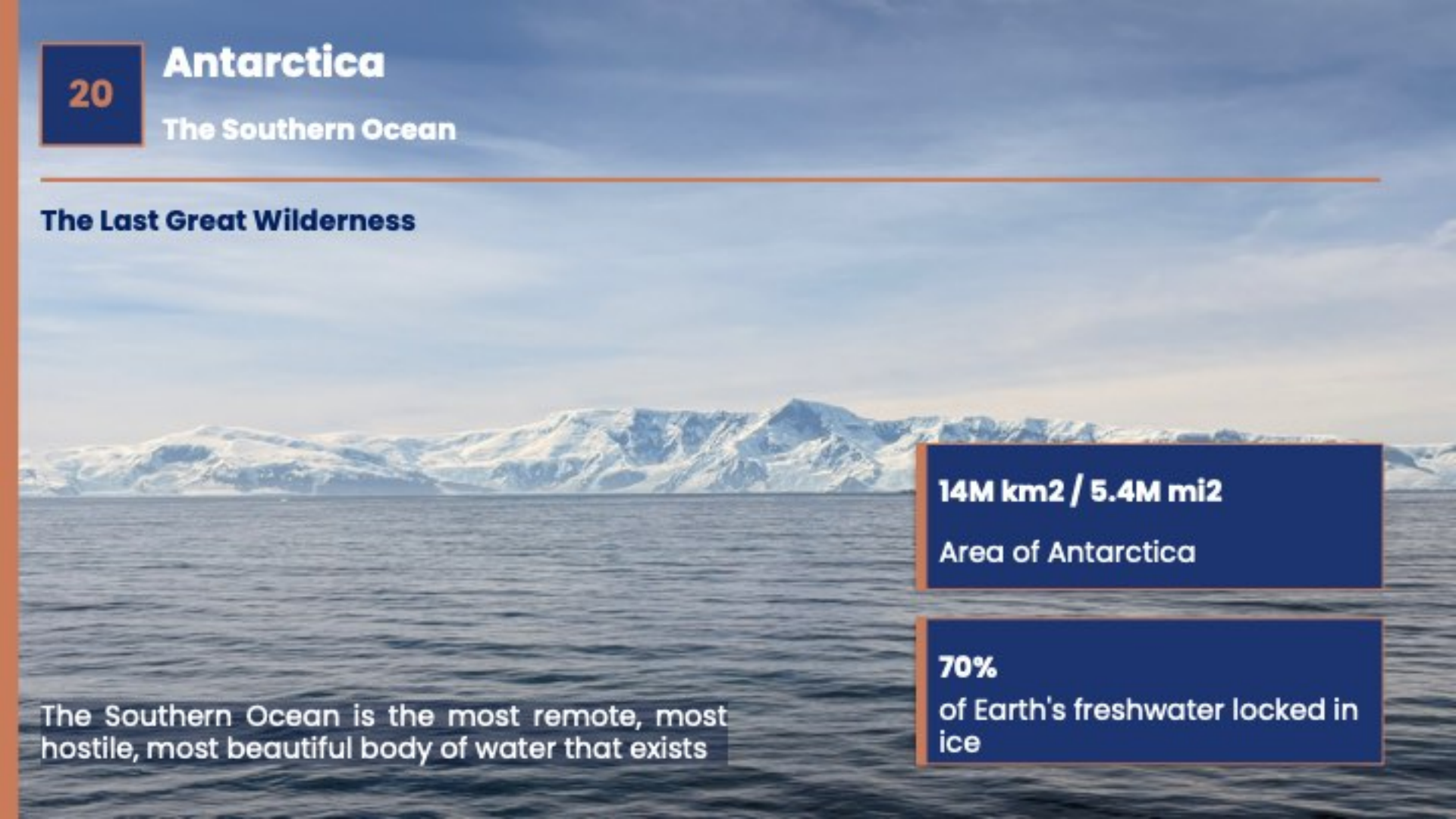
Inner Passage

20

Antarctica

The Southern Ocean

The Last Great Wilderness



14M km2 / 5.4M mi2

Area of Antarctica

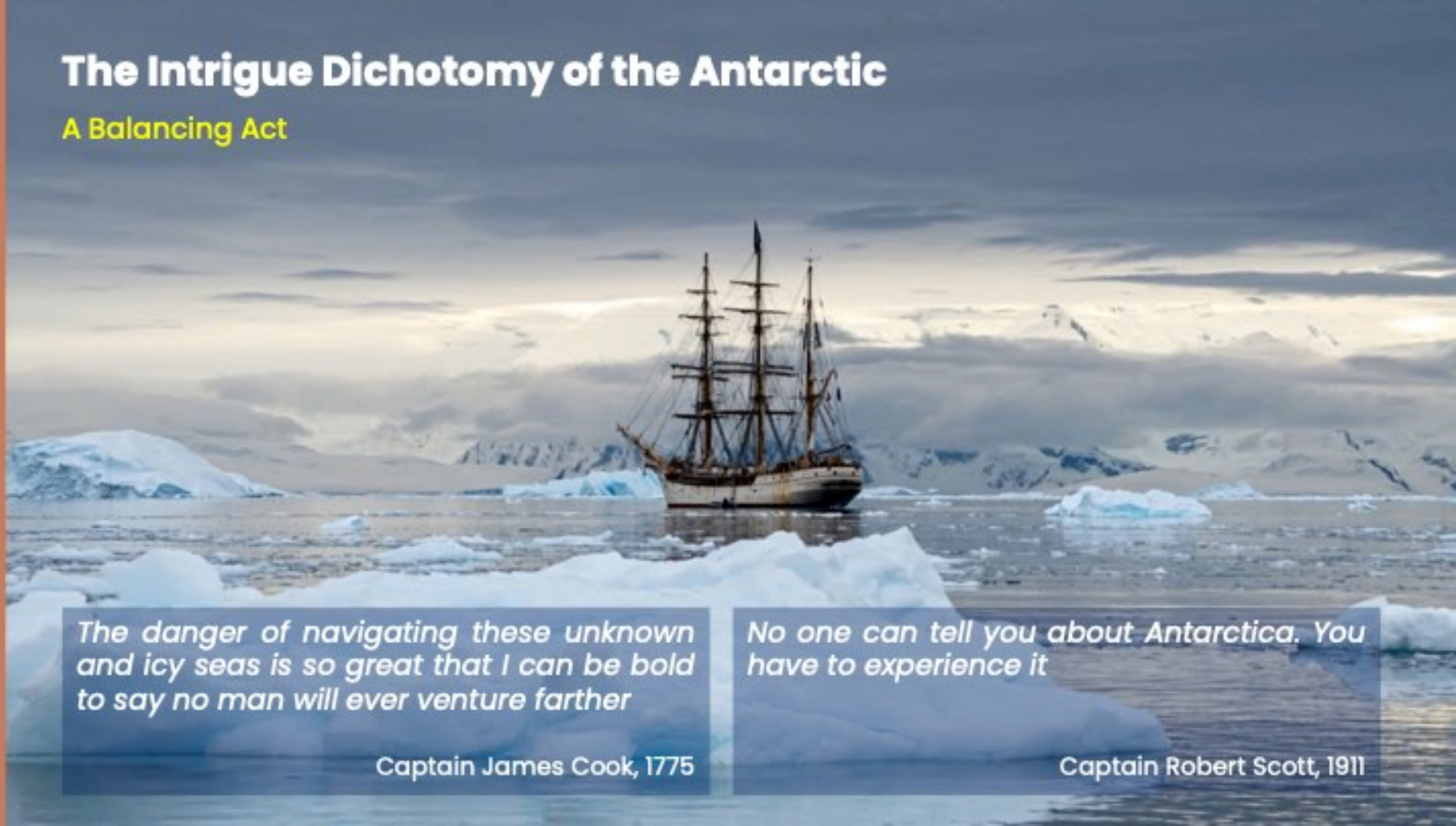
70%

of Earth's freshwater locked in ice

The Southern Ocean is the most remote, most hostile, most beautiful body of water that exists

The Intrigue Dichotomy of the Antarctic

A Balancing Act



The danger of navigating these unknown and icy seas is so great that I can be bold to say no man will ever venture farther

Captain James Cook, 1775

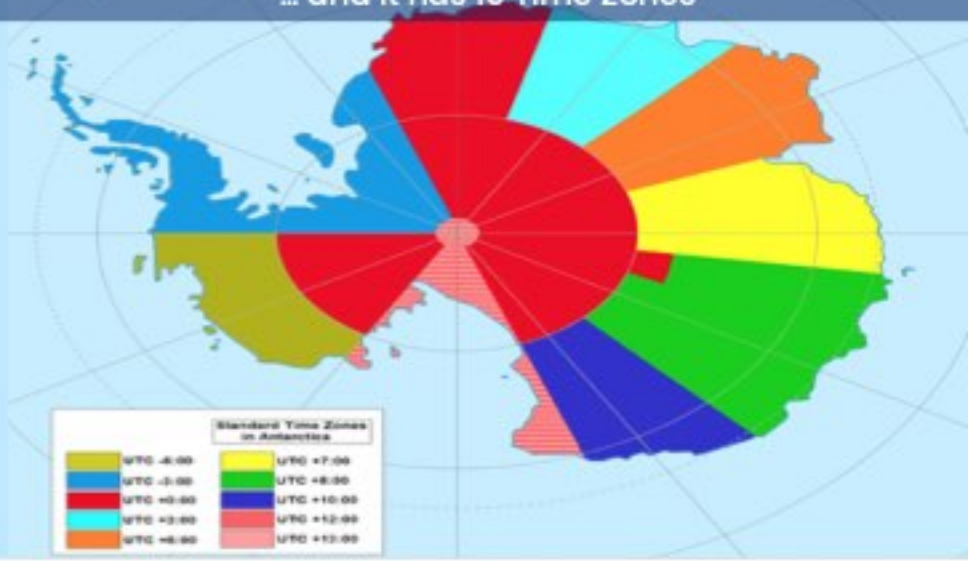
No one can tell you about Antarctica. You have to experience it

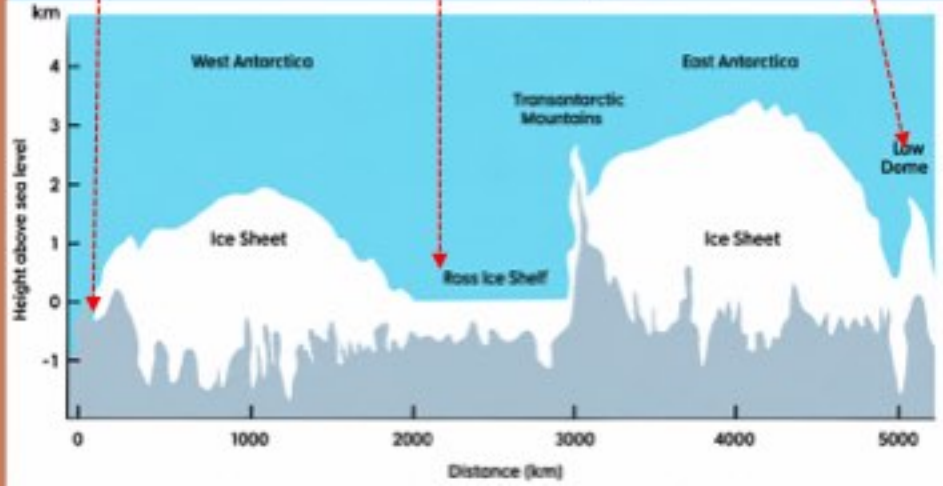
Captain Robert Scott, 1911

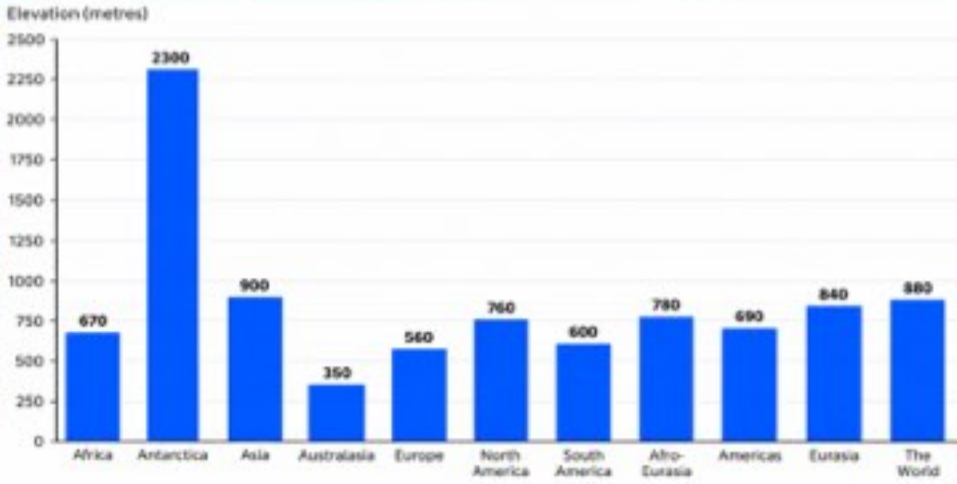
It is about 1 ½ times the size of the United States

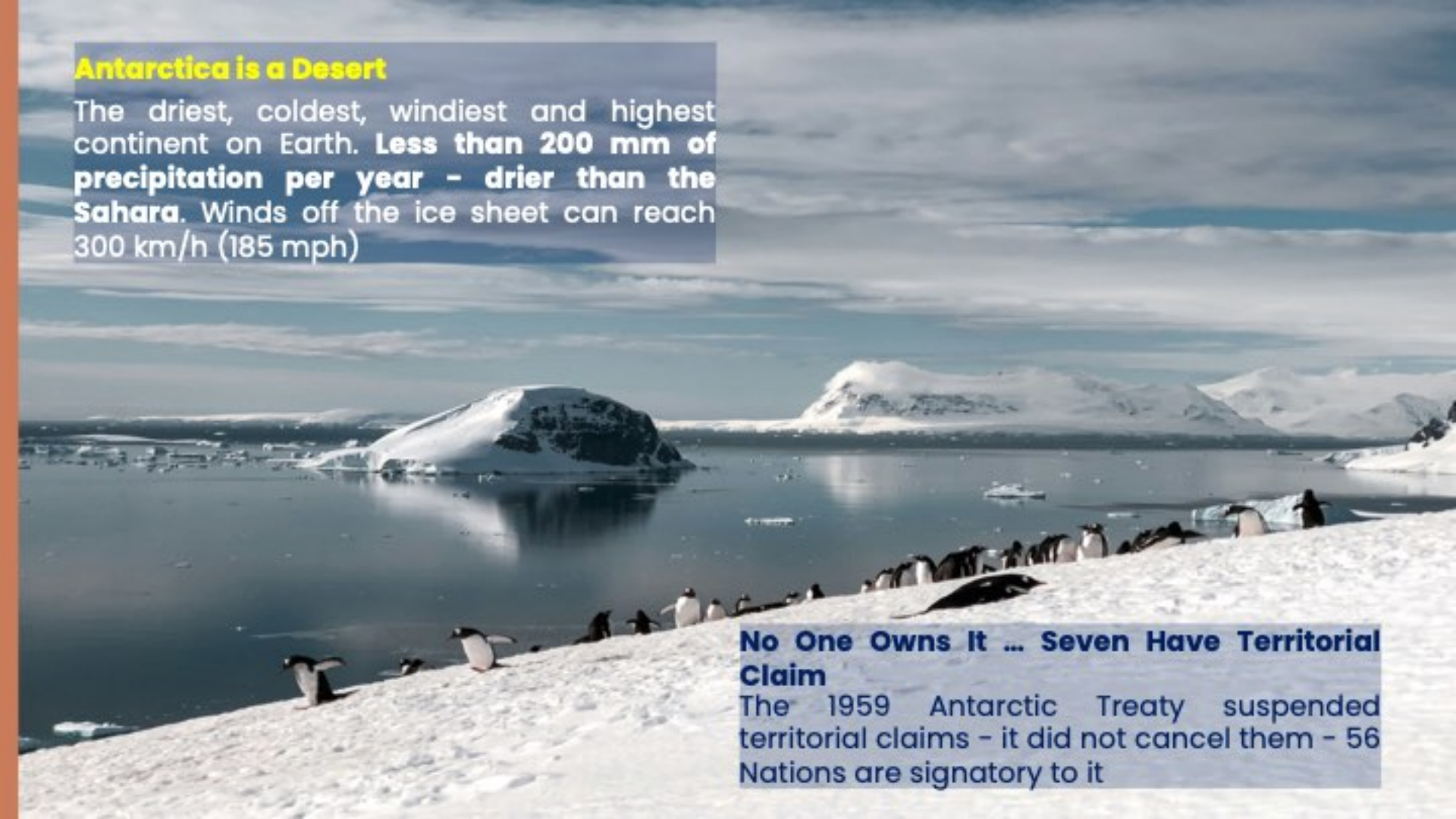


... and it has 10 Time Zones









Antarctica is a Desert

The driest, coldest, windiest and highest continent on Earth. **Less than 200 mm of precipitation per year - drier than the Sahara**. Winds off the ice sheet can reach 300 km/h (185 mph)

No One Owns It ... Seven Have Territorial Claim

The 1959 Antarctic Treaty suspended territorial claims - it did not cancel them - 56 Nations are signatory to it



Current Tourism Volume

Antarctica Visitors during the 2025-2026 Summer Season

113,500

This represents a reduction in Antarctica tourism since the 2023/24 Summer Season which recorded 122,000 visitors

107,000

Passengers are anticipated for this coming season

The Antarctic Peninsula



The Silence is Measurable

In still conditions, ambient sound drops below 20 decibels - quieter than an anechoic chamber. Passengers who step ashore and stop moving report hearing nothing but their own heartbeat

A Sobering Future?

Many of these Experiences could change if we don't change




Every Voyage is Someone's Lifetime First

Next (and Final) Presentation (Saturday at 1030)



Enjoy the next 2 days ...



Thank You



www.voyagerstories.com