

LAKE BAIKAL



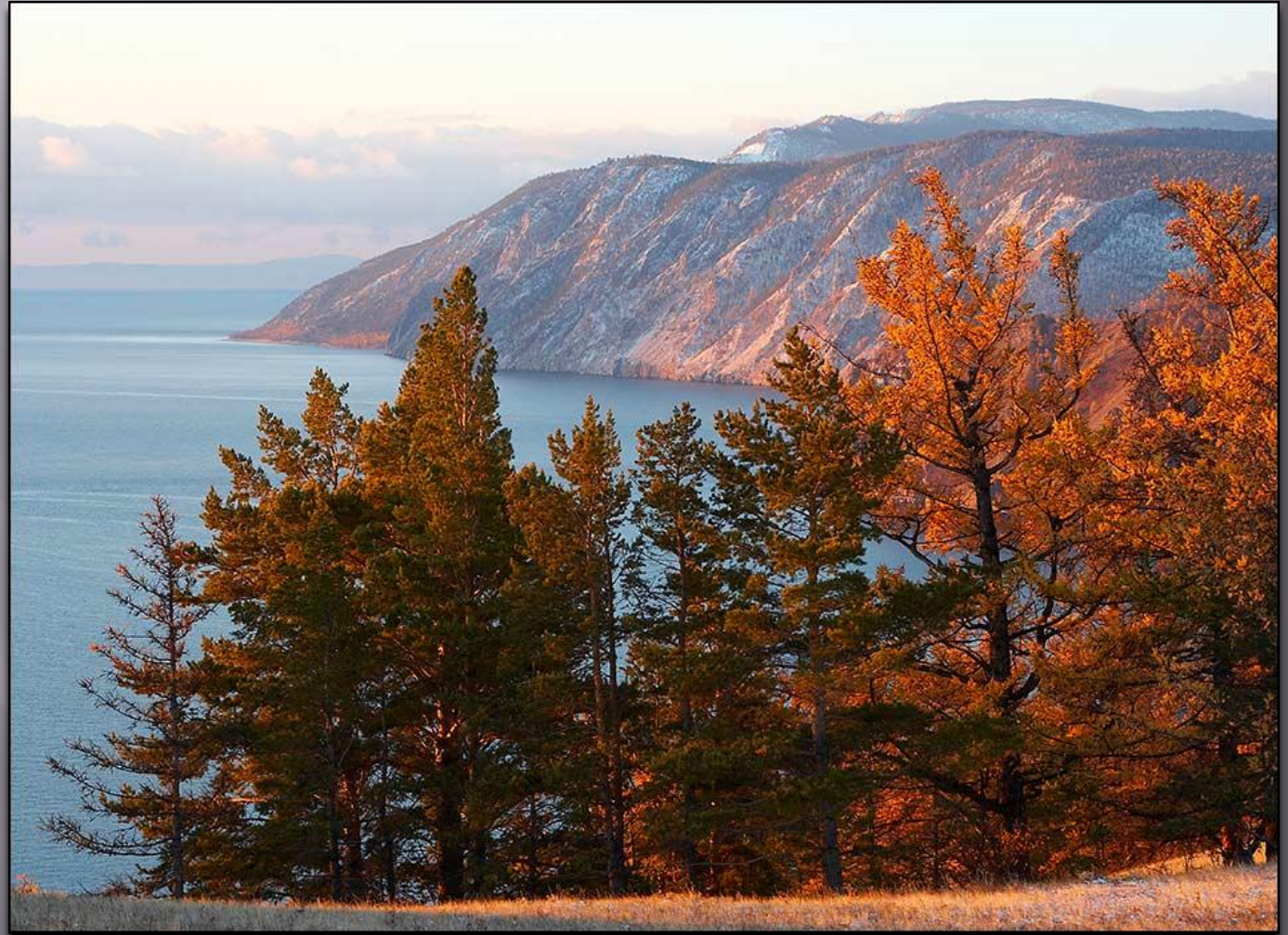
Lake Baikal is the world's oldest and deepest lake in the world. It contains 20 % of all fresh running water on the planet, making it the single largest reservoir.



- **Lake Baikal is 30 million years old. Its average depth is 744 metres. It is the second most voluminous lake after the Caspian Sea.**



Lake Baikal is situated in the south of the Russian region of Siberia, between Irkutsk region to the northwest and the Buryat Republic to the southeast.



The landscape surrounding the lake, with its mountains, forests, tundra, lakes, islands and steppes are exceptionally picturesque.



The lake is completely surrounded by mountains. The Baikal Mountains on the north shore and the taiga are protected as a national park. It contains 27 islands; the largest, Olkhon.



Baikal is home to more than 1700 species of plants and animals and it was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1996.

