AFAR TRIANGLE

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Context:

Geologists predict that the African continent's rift in the Afar Triangle could lead to the formation of a new ocean in 5 to 10 million years.

Background:

Over millions of years, this rift could continue to widen and eventually fill with seawater, leading to the formation of a new ocean. However, this is a process that would take millions of years and is based on current geological understanding and predictions. It's a fascinating example of how our planet is constantly changing and evolving.

About AFAR TRIANGLE:

1. The Afar Triangle, also known as the Afar Depression, is a geological depression situated in the Horn of Africa.
2. The Afar Triangle, located in the northeastern part of Africa, is one of the most geologically active regions in the world.
3. It's here that the Arabian, Nubian, and Somali tectonic plates are moving apart from each other. This movement has created a rift system, which is causing the African continent to split.

Geological Context:

1. The Afar Triangle is caused by the Afar Triple Junction, which is part of the Great Rift Valley in East Africa.
2. It overlaps the borders of Eritrea, Djibouti, and the entire Afar Region of Ethiopia.
3. The region is characterized by its unique geological features and has revealed fossil specimens of the earliest hominins—the earliest members of the human clade.
4. Some paleontologists consider it the cradle of human evolution.

Geographical Highlights:

1. The Afar Triangle contains Lake Assal in Djibouti, which is the lowest point in Africa, lying 155 meters (509 feet) below sea level.
2. The Awash River flows into the region, providing a narrow green belt that sustains flora, fauna, and the nomadic Afar people living in the Danakil Desert.
3. The northern part of the Afar Depression is also known as the Danakil Depression.
4. The area experiences extreme heat, drought, and minimal air circulation, making it one of the hottest places on Earth year-round.