

# Conserving the largest salmon in the world

Challenges and opportunities to protect taimen as threats escalate throughout northern Eurasia



Clemens Ratschan

## TAIMEN

SCB Workshop: WS20

**December 9:** 12:30 – 2:00 pm

**December 10:** 9:00 – 3:00 pm

Auckland University, New Zealand

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*Detailed agenda and speakers  
on back.* ➔

## Current Hucho Species Distribution



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*Taimen* (*Hucho* and *Parahucho* spp.) are coldwater salmonids found throughout Eurasia. Taimen are the largest salmonids in the world, reaching lengths of 2 m and living over 30 years of age. These fishes are under increasing threat from overfishing, poaching, habitat loss, and climate change. At the 2011 Annual Meeting of the Society for Conservation Biology, we are convening over 20 experts in the fields of research, management and conservation to summarize what has been learned

through case studies in the field, identify key research gaps and prioritize needed conservation actions to avoid local and species level extinctions. As part of this meeting, we will also assess the current status of all five taimen species using IUCN criteria. Through this and other allied efforts we hope to increase public awareness, motivate new research, and encourage new conservation actions to protect these enigmatic species.

## DAY 1: Research Symposium (12:30–2, 9 December 2011)

This session will be structured as a short science symposium, with short presentations outlining key scientific advances in the study of taimen throughout their range. It will include a short question and answer period. Planned presenters:

1. Steven Weiss [Austria] – Phylogeographic and phylogenetic perspectives on *H. hucho*, *H. taimen* and *Parahucho*
2. Olaf Jensen [USA]– Research on migration and recreational fishing impacts on *Hucho taimen* in the Eg-Uur River, Mongolia
3. Sergei Zolotukhin and Anatoly Semenchenko [Russia] – Studies of *Hucho taimen* and *Parahucho perryi* in Khabarovsk, Primorsky and Sakhalin, Russia.
4. Lev Zhivotovsky [Russia] – Genetic diversity of *Parahucho perryi* in Sakhalin and Iturup Islands, Russia, and its relevance to species conservation
5. Michio Fukushima [Japan] – Examination of extinction risk and factors linked to local extinction in *Parahucho perryi*, with focus on the species range in Japan.
6. Zhaobin Song [China] -- The distribution and habitat status of *Hucho bleekeri* and future threats to the species

*Some of the key issues we will address in a facilitated, group discussion format include:*

- Methods to promote best practices in taimen recreational fisheries, including catch & release angling and appropriate fishing gear; Strategies for educating foreign anglers.
- The scale and magnitude of illegal fishing (poaching) on taimen throughout their range, and approaches being used to reduce this risk.
- The potential role and importance of watershed or salmon councils, and other forms of community engagement, in conserving taimen.
- Potential actions to reduce taimen bycatch in commercial salmon fisheries, and explore the use of market incentives to change current fishery management practices through sustainable fishery certifications.

## DAY 2: Conservation Workshop (9–3, 10 December 2011)

This session will include a series of short presentation on conservation-related themes. We will have a short break, and then have a round table discussion on key conservation issues (some are listed below). We will also receive comments and suggestions on draft IUCN status assessments for three taimen species (Sichuan taimen, Korean taimen and Siberian taimen). We will conclude with discussions on the importance of launching an ambitious, international initiative to conserve these fishes. Planned presentations:

1. Gankhuyag Balbariin [Mongolia] – Understanding angler attitudes and promoting sustainable recreational fishing practices for *Hucho taimen* in the Onon River, Mongolia.
2. Purev Tsogtsaikhan [Mongolia] – Taimen conservation initiatives in Mongolia
3. Andy Parkinson and Amanda Fine [UK] – Conservation efforts on the Delger Muron, Mongolia
4. Dan Bailey [USA] – Foreign angler education efforts in Mongolia
5. Sergei Zolotukhin [Russia] – Creation of the first river reserve for *Parahucho perryi* in Russia, and future opportunities for special regulations and PAs to protect *P. perryi* and *H. taimen*.
6. Kouichi Osanai [Japan] – Creation of the first river reserve for *Parahucho perryi* in Japan
7. Zeb Hogan [USA] – Progress on a range-wide status assessment of *Hucho taimen*

*We would like to thank the following workshop sponsors: Chester Zoo, Ocean Park Conservation Foundation, Mohammed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund, USFWS Wildlife Without Borders, Taiwan Forestry Bureau, Sweetwater Travel, Oji Paper.*



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