

## Editorial

# Ignacy Sachs (1927-2023) – a sustainability pioneer

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The idea of sustainable development owes much to professor Ignacy Sachs, who passed away in early August 2023. Sachs stood out as one of Maurice Strong's advisers, the Secretary General of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in 1972 in Stockholm (Sweden), for being a pioneer in considering the environmental variable as an inseparable attribute of the quest to development. During this event, the concept of eco-development was launched, which would serve as inspiration for the Our Common Future Report from 1987, which proposed the sustainable development concept. Coordinated by former Prime Minister of Norway Gro Harlem Brundtland, the document was the backbone of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in 1992, in Rio de Janeiro. From then on, the debate on development had to consider the environmental issue.

Ignacy Sachs was a Polish economist who fled the Holocaust with his family when he was 12. In his autobiography (SACHS, 2007), he narrates the saga until his arrival on Brazilian soil, passing through several European countries. In Brazil, he studied economics, and at the end of the 1950s, he returned to Warsaw, where he worked, under the coordination of Michal Kalecki, at the School of Planning and Statistics, one of the cradles of the planning theory. His doctorate focused on development, based on his studying experience in New Delhi, India. Throughout his academic life, Sachs always evoked the relevance of comparative studies between Brazil and India, two countries that, in his view, should serve as a foundation for development strategies in third-world countries.

In Paris, he founded the Center for Research on Colonial and Contemporary Brazil – CRBC, at the School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences in the 1970s. Some important academic and political exponents of Brazilian politics that lived in exile during those times of military dictatorship had the chance to attend the weekly debates he organised. Leonel Brizola, Miguel Arraes, Celso Furtado and Fernando Henrique Cardoso are some of the participants.

Besides, many Brazilians were welcomed at the CRBC as students or researchers. The first to complete a doctorate under his guidance was Professor Cristovam Buarque. His experience inspired the creation of the Center for Sustainable Development – CDS at the University of Brasília, where he was dean.

Sachs had a strong presence in the post-dictatorship Brazilian intellectual and political landscape. He served as a political adviser, consultant and mainly as an academic reference. His ideas inspired the first master's and doctoral programs on environment and sustainability. The creation of the Graduate Program on Sustainable Development (master's and doctorate) at the University of Brasília and the Sustainability in Debate Journal can be linked to Sachs' actions that influenced our country.

His works are pillars of new studies and policies. When discussing the bioeconomy as a strategy for sustainable development in the Amazon, we cannot forget that Sachs had a pioneering and inspiring role when he proposed the notion of biomass-based civilisation (SACHS, 1993).

Sachs was also a pioneer in the debate on policy integration, avoiding the risks and setbacks of conflicts between sectoral policies. In the early 1980s, he coordinated a study for the United Nations University, in which he launched the Nexus concept around the interfaces between biofuel policies and food production. Currently, the Nexus approach is used in several analyses, especially when linked to water, energy, and food security, and, lately, socio-environmental security (COUTINHO *et al.*, 2020).

Ignacy Sachs continues to inspire us and help us see the light at the end of the tunnel. With this in mind, we are delighted to announce that our journal has been listed as a Q3 journal in 2023 by the Scimago Journal and Country Rankings (<https://www.scimagojr.com/journalsearch.php?q=21100824458&tip=sid&clean=0>). Thus, nothing is more normal than honouring and dedicating this issue to Ignacy Sachs's memory.

Let's continue turning his dream into reality.

In this second issue of 2023, SiD publishes ten articles in the *Varia* section. First, Cerezini and Hanai discuss the challenges and guidelines for integrated water management in river basins. Next, Gonçalves *et al.* discuss the relationship between industry dependence on fossil fuels, oil disasters, and the characterisation of the social determination of health in vulnerable territories. Canova *et al.* investigate how climate change has threatened the livelihood and cultural dimensions of peri-urban communities in Central Amazonia, while Fardin *et al.* discuss the identification of extreme rainfall events and disasters triggered by rain in the city of Petrópolis-RJ.

Ribeiro highlights the possibilities for generating energy from biomass in the state of Minas Gerais. Silva *et al.*, through a territorial focus, propose an approach to identify the determining factors for inserting mini and microsystems of distributed generation in the agricultural sector. Lobo and Pinto assess the level of road cyclability in the city of Belo Horizonte-MG based on an analysis of indicators to assess the degree of suitability of urban roads to bicycles as a means of transport. Finally, Rivaben *et al.* discuss agroecological paths for livestock in northern Uruguay, Muñoz-Ávila and Guerrero discuss the main synergies between the Escazú Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, while Streit *et al.* propose a framework to analyse cases of implementation of the circular economy from the perspective of Institutional Theory.

We wish you all a good read!

## REFERENCES

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