

I W C N e w s l e t t e r



*Those who would take over
the world and manage it,
I see they cannot grasp it,
For the world is a spiritual
[shen] vessel
And cannot be forced.
Whoever forces it spoils it.
Whoever grasps it loses it.*

Lao-Tzu

Environmentalists Must Also Undertake a Paradigm Shift

Wolfgang Sachs

"Development" is, above all, a way of thinking. It cannot, therefore, be easily identified with a particular strategy or program, but ties many different practices and aspirations to a common set of assumptions. Whatever the theme on the agenda in the post-war era, the assumptions of "development," like the universal belief in the superiority of economics, shaped the definition of the problem, highlighted certain solutions and consigned others to oblivion. Moreover, as knowledge is intimately related to power, 'sustainable development' thinking inevitably featured certain social actors (for example, international agencies) and certain types of social transformation (for example, technology transfer), while marginalizing other social actors and degrading other kinds of change.

Whereas in the 1970s, the main threat to nature still appeared to be industrial man, in the 1980s environmentalists turned their eyes to the Third World and pointed to the vanishing forests, soils and animals there. The crisis of the environment is no longer perceived as the result of unrestrained affluence for the global middle class in North and South, but as the result of human presence on the globe in general. No matter if nature is consumed for luxury or survival, no matter if the powerful or the marginalized tap nature, it all becomes one for the rising tribe of ecology bureaucrats. *(Continued on p. 3)*

UPCOMING EVENTS



Global Inequality, Ecology and the Search for Justice

Lecture: Wednesday, December 3
7:00 pm

La Casa de Maria

800 El Bosque Road, Montecito

Lecturer: **Wolfgang Sachs**

Does living in harmony with natural systems suggest how we might achieve justice and fairness in our relations with each other? Join one of the world's leading eco-philosophers as he explores the link between ethics and sustainable living.

Dr. Sachs is Senior Research Fellow at the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment, and Energy in Germany, a member of the Club of Rome, and author of numerous publications, including *Fair Future: Limited Resources and Global Justice*, the *Development Dictionary* and *Planet Dialectics*.



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Fair Wealth: Cultural Signposts for a Solar Economy

Seminar: Saturday, December 6
2:00 - 5:00 pm

Concord House, 1407 Chapala St.
Santa Barbara

Speaker: **Wolfgang Sachs**

Dr. Wolfgang Sachs, Sr. Research Fellow at the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy in Germany and member of the Club of Rome, will discuss the requirements of a global commitment to sustainability and fairness in resource development. Dr. Sachs is a prolific writer and much respected active voice in current debates about the impact of globalization and industrial technology. Dr. Sachs is head of the interdisciplinary project on "Globalization and Sustainability" and participated in the "Stock Exchange of Visions" project in 2007.

All are welcome to these free lectures sponsored by the Santa Barbara Ecological Education Coalition (SBEEC). Questions about either lecture may be directed to Philip Grant at 845-7222.

IWC Seasonal Celebration

Reception: Saturday, December 20

Time: 7:30 – 9:30 pm

Concord House, 1407 Chapala St.

Join in a seasonal celebration of the solstice and other holiday observances. Sing-a-long with talented song-writers and enjoy the fellowship of Institute members and guests in the special ambiance of a Victorian House decorated for the season. To contribute sweets, contact Ingrid Head at 967-0754 or Ingrid@worldculture.org.

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The persistence of "development", the newly-found potentials for less resource-intensive growth paths, and the discovery of humanity in general as the enemy of nature, formed the conceptual ingredients for the type of thinking which received its diplomatic blessings at the UN. The world is to be saved by elite managers. The message, which is ritually repeated by many politicians, industrialists and scientists who have recently decided to slip on a green coat, goes as follows: nothing should be or can be done to change the direction the world's economies are taking. Problems along the way can be solved, if the challenge for better and more sophisticated management is met.

As a result, ecology, once a call for new public virtues, has now become a call for new executive skills. In fact, UN development documents overflow with such formulas as "integrated approach," "rational use," "sound management," "internalizing costs," "better information," "increased co-ordination," and "long-term prediction." There is an almost total failure to consider any reduction of material standards of living and any attempts to slow down the plundering of the planet. In short, radical alternatives to development are blackballed, alternatives within development are welcome.

Nevertheless, it was an achievement for the UN to have delivered the call for environmental tools from a global *(continued on page 4)*

In December**Anniversaries**

- 1st Nikolai Ivanovich Lobachevsky, Russian mathematician, b. 1792
- 4th Thomas Carlyle, Scottish essayist, historian, b. 1795
- 4th Rainer Maria Rilke, German poet, b. 1875
- 5th Werner Heisenberg, German physicist, Nobel Laureate, b. 1901
- 7th Giovanni Bernini, Italian sculptor, architect, b. 1598
- 8th Horace, Roman poet, b. 65 B.C.E.
- 9th John Milton, English poet, author, b. 1608
- 10th/12th William Lloyd Garrison, American abolitionist, editor, b. 1805
- 10th Emily Dickinson, American poet, b. 1830
- 14th Nostradamus, French seer, apothecary, healer, b. 1503
- 15th Antoine Henri Becquerel, French physicist, Nobel Laureate, b. 1852
- 16th/17th Ludwig van Beethoven, German composer, pianist, b. 1770
- 16th Margaret Mead, American cultural anthropologist, b. 1901
- 17th (or November 11) Paracelsus, Swiss alchemist, physician, b. 1493
- 17th Sir Humphrey Davy, British chemist, inventor, b. 1778
- 18th J. J. Thomson, British physicist, Nobel Laureate, b. 1856
- 18th Francis Thompson, English poet, b. 1859
- 19th Albert A. Michelson, American physicist, Nobel Laureate, b. 1852
- 20th Sacagawea, Native American (Shoshone), guide, interpreter, d. 1812
- 2nd Srinivasa Ramanujan, Indian self-taught mathematical genius, b. 1887
- 24th James Prescott Joule, English physicist, b. 1818
- 24th Matthew Arnold, English poet, cultural critic, essayist, b. 1882
- 25th Anwar al-Sadat, Egyptian statesman, President of Egypt, Nobel Laureate, b. 1918
- 26th Thomas Gray, English poet, classical scholar, b. 1716
- 26th Charles Babbage, English mathematician, philosopher, inventor, b. 1791
- 27th Johannes Kepler, German mathematician, astronomer, b. 1571
- 27th Louis Pasteur, French chemist, microbiologist, b. 1822
- 30th Sri Ramana Maharishi, Indian teacher, sage, b. 1879
- 31st John Wycliffe, English theologian, translator, reformist, d. 1384

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rostrum, an opening that will give a boost to environmental engineering worldwide. But the price for this achievement is the reduction of environmental philosophy and ethics to managerialism. The task of global ecology can be understood in two ways: it is either a technocratic effort to keep development afloat against the drift of plunder and pollution; or it is a cultural effort to shake off the hegemony of tired Western values and gradually withdraw from the 'development race.'

These two ways may not be exclusive in detail, but they differ deeply in perspective. In the first case, the paramount task becomes the management of the biophysical limits to development. All powers of foresight have to be mustered in order to steer development along the edge of the abyss, continuously surveying, testing, and maneuvering the biophysical limits. In the second case, the challenge consists in designing cultural and political alternatives to 'development.' Each society is called upon to search for indigenous models of prosperity, which allow society's course to stay at a comfortable distance from the edge of the abyss, living

graciously within a stable or shrinking volume of production. The difference is analogous to driving a vehicle at high speed towards a canyon: either you equip it with radar, monitors and highly trained personnel, correct its course and drive it as hard as possible along the rim; or you slow down, turn away from the edge, and drive leisurely here and there without too much attention to precise controls. Too many global ecologists - implicitly or explicitly - favor the first choice. We must, instead, deeply meditate upon and plan for the second.

Edited by Philip Grant



HANDS ON GANDHIAN RETREAT

Explore Gandhi's ideas and practice Jan. 11-17 at La Casa de Maria with Shashi Tyagi, co-founder of GRAVIS. The IWC website explains the event (www.worldculture.org). You may also contact Sandhya Tillotson (sandhya.tillotson@gmail.com) or Renée Tillotson (renee@worldculture.org) for further information.

In December

Observances

- 1st Cherokee Indians forcibly moved from their lands, Trail of Tears 1838
- 1st Theodore Roosevelt was the first American to win the Nobel Peace Prize 1906
- 2nd First Sustained Atomic Chain Reaction 1942
- 3rd Discovery of Uranus by John Flamsteed 1714
- 6th Thirteenth Amendment to U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery ratified by Congress 1865
- 6th-9th Islamic Hajj or annual pilgrimage to Mecca in 2008
- 10th Human Rights Day marking the anniversary of the adoption of the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948
- 14th Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen reached South Pole in 1911
- 15th The Bill of Rights added to the United States Constitution 1791
- 17th First airplane flight by Wilbur & Orville Wright 1903
- 18th House of Lords in England abolished capital punishment for murder 1969
- 21st Landing of Pilgrims at Plymouth, Mass. 1620
- 21st /22nd Winter Solstice occurs in the Northern hemisphere in 2008
- 21st/22nd Chanukah (Jewish Festival of Lights) begins in 2008
- 25th Christmas Day traditionally celebrated as day of Christ's birth