



## Press Release No. 110/2019

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### “Climate change is a disability rights issue”

**In a high-profile Letter in *Science*, University of Konstanz climate scientist and ecologist Dr Aleksandra Kosanic, an Associate Fellow of the University of Konstanz’s Zukunftscolleg, draws attention to the fact that disabled populations have, until now, been absent from international conversations about climate change and its impact.**

“Global environmental change should be considered a disability rights issue”, first author Dr Aleksandra Kosanic and her colleagues Dr Mialy Razanajatovo (also University of Konstanz), Dr Jan Petzold (Center for Earth System Research and Sustainability (CEN), University of Hamburg) and Dr Amy Dunham (Rice University, USA) argue in their recently published Letter in *Science*, which has since been picked up on by *Forbes* and *Scientific American*. The researchers believe that climate change and the resulting loss of ecosystem services will affect the world’s disabled populations disproportionately by exacerbating inequalities and increasing marginalization. Not only may disabled communities experience limited access to knowledge, resources and services, which may prevent them from effectively responding to climate change, they write. Disabled populations may also prove more vulnerable to extreme climate events, as research on Hurricane Katrina has revealed, to the loss of ecosystem services or to infectious diseases.

**Read the full story in the University of Konstanz’s online magazine, *campus.kn*:**

<https://www.campus.uni-konstanz.de/en/science/climate-change-is-a-disability-rights-issue>

#### **Facts:**

- University of Konstanz researchers publish high-profile Letter on the topic of climate change in *Science*.
- Global environmental change should be considered a disability rights issue, climate scientist and first author Dr Aleksandra Kosanic, an Associate Fellow of the University of Konstanz’s Zukunftscolleg, writes.
- Original publication: Aleksandra Kosanic, Jan Petzold, Amy Dunham, Mialy Razanajatovo, Climate concerns and the disabled community, *Science*, Vol 366, Issue 6466, pp. 698-699, 8 November 2019 (DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aaz9045>).
- The Letter highlights the fact that disabled populations have mostly been absent from international climate change debates.
- More research urgently required.

- [campus.kn](https://www.uni-konstanz.de/campus.kn) is the University of Konstanz's online magazine. We use multimedia approaches to provide insights into science and research at the university, study and teaching as well as life on campus.

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