Definitions Brief

This document outlines many of the common terms deployed throughout the Disability and Climate Network and Strategy project. Each term described below is derived from the reviewed literature and assists in deepening our understanding of the intersections between disability and climate change. While this is a working document and subject to change, we use these terms to inform all project activities.

Term	Definition
Adaptive Capacity	*Adaptive capacity* is defined by King and Gregg (2021) as the "ability of communities, institutions, or people to adjust to potential hazards, to take advantage of opportunities, or to respond to [climate related] consequences" (p. 5). Much of the literature we reviewed on adaptive capacity focuses on the vulnerability of persons with disabilities, yet our project focuses on the expertise, resilience and lived experiences that persons with disabilities bring to climate change advocacy. Also see, *resilience; vulnerability*
Body Burden	Describes the amount of chemicals in the body (both natural and human made) at a given time. Includes chemicals accumulated through direct exposure and as well as those passed down through generations. Constant or repeated exposure leads to a higher body burden. (Crews & Gore, 2014).
"Building Back Better"	Using phases of reconstruction after disasters to enhance accessibility and sustainability of infrastructure and social systems with the goal of greater resilience for communities and nations more broadly (Jodoin et al., 2020).
Climate Precarity	According to several authors in our review, *climate precarity* refers to the additional risks that persons with disabilities and other marginalized demographics experience endure due to ineffective climate responses during emergencies. Climate precarity is especially important when accounting for individuals whose lives are made already made precarious by uncertainty and insecurity because climate change exacerbates these levels of vulnerability (Bell et al., 2024; Waite, 2009). Also see, *vulnerability*

Term	Definition
Climate Resilient Development	As described by a number of authors in our review, *climate resilient development* is a framework aligned with universal sustainability and a call for transformational values, practices and governance which underpin collective efforts to move towards international climate sustainability (Bell et al., 2024; Stein et al., 2024). Also see, *disability climate justice*; *critical realist model of climate justice*
Coping Capacity	*Coping capacity* refers to the "means by which people or organizations use available resources and abilities to face adverse consequences that could lead to a disaster" (Enarson & Haworth-Brockman, 2008, p. 64). Coping capacity includes the ability to manage resources when climate crises occur as well as in times where there is no immediate threat. Coping capacities can be strengthened by building resilience and addressing the vulnerability of populations which are made precarious. Also see, *vulnerability*; *resilience*
Critical Realist Model of Climate Justice	Much like the framework outlined by advocates of disability climate justice, King & Gregg (2021) define a *critical realist model of climate justice* as a framework that draws connections between environmental factors which cause disability, the risks associated with climate change events, and strategies to mitigate those factors which include capacity and resilience of persons with disabilities. In some ways, King and Gregg 's understanding of a critical realist model of climate justice attempts to illuminate the congruencies between medical and social understandings of disability, especially because they claim that climate disasters can disable bodies, societies, as well as the environment. Through an intersectional approach, the authors claim that this proposed model highlights how the interdependence between bodies and the environment play a significant role in advancing cross-disability issues as they pertain to climate change. Also see, *disability climate justice*
Disability	The 2010 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) defines *disability* as an evolving concept resulting from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full

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	and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. This means disability is not just about the physical or mental impairment themselves, but also the barriers society creates which prevents people with impairments from fully participating. Eviance's understanding of disability is aligned with the CRPD. However, Pirmasari & McQuaid (2023) add to the CRPD definition of disability, stating that disability is a site of "discrimination and critical embodied knowledge… a source of innovation, resilience and agency", both of which are inseparable from how bodies interact with sociocultural, political and environmental factors (p. 291). This definition is aligned with Gaskin and their colleagues (2017) understanding of disability; as they claim, disability should be understood through a biopsychosocial model, which is a holistic framework that situates disability in perpetual connectivity with psychological, social, and bodily phenomena.
Disability Climate justice	A disability justice perspective on climate includes both procedural and distributive forms of justice and addresses the inequitable distribution of resources during climate change events. As several authors in our review state, those who impact climate change the most often experience its effects the least, while those who impact the environment the least will conversely experience its effects at an accelerated rate (Dietz et al., 2020; King & Gregg, 2021). A *disability climate justice* framework takes into consideration the needs of cross-disability communities and accounts for an intersectional perspective of human diversity and systems change. It also promotes the values of self-actualization of disability communities and focuses on "everyday problem solving, interconnectedness, and environmental stewardship" (Stein et al., 2024, p. 243). This framework also acknowledges that persons with disabilities have a wide variety of expertise and experience which are impacted by their disability, race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexuality, culture, and geographical location (Ibid.). Sadlier, Stein, & Stein (2016) further define disability climate justice as an approach that includes full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in decision making and program development and supports values such as

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	"empowerment, equity, nondiscrimination, transparency, and accountability" across governmental sectors (p. 212). Stein & Stein (2022) add that approaching climate justice through this lens not only benefits persons with disabilities, but has positive impacts for all actors due to the knowledge and diverse experiences that persons with disabilities bring to climate change discourse. Also see, *critical realist model of climate justice*
Disaster	Enarson & Haworth-Brockman (2008) describe a *disaster* as a "social phenomenon that results when a hazard intersects with a vulnerable community in a way that exceeds or overwhelms the community's ability to cope and may cause serious harm to the safety, health, welfare, property or environment of people" (p. 64). Disasters may be caused by "naturally occurring phenomenon" or by human intervention and/or error and impact vulnerable populations at disproportioned levels (Ibid.). Also see, *vulnerability*; *hazard*
Disaster Risk Reduction / Emergency Management / Preparedness	*Disaster risk reduction* is a framework that encourages the minimization of vulnerabilities and disaster risks and emphasizes the importance of mitigation and preparedness so adverse impacts of climate disasters are less likely (Enarson & Haworth-Brockman, 2008). Similarly, *emergency management* accounts for the preparation needed to avoid risks during emergencies and includes "prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery" (Ibid., p. 64). Core to these two concepts is *preparedness*, which refers to activities "taken in advance to ensure effective response to the impact of hazards, including the… timely and effective early warnings and the temporary evacuation of people and property from threatened locations" (Ibid. p. 66). Also see, *prevention*; *mitigation*
Eco-Ability	First introduced by Nocella (2012), *eco-ability* is a philosophy that "respects differences in abilities while promoting values appropriate to the stewardship of ecosystems" (Nocella, 2017, p.141). At its core, eco-ability respects differences in ability and promotes responsible stewardship whilst acknowledging the

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	importance of interdependence. The symbiosis between disability and climate change scholarship and activism is a theme which challenges eco-ableism and informs all our actions in this project. Also see, *eco-ableism*.
Eco-Ableism	First coined by Wolbring (2013) and further explored by Bell and their colleagues (2024), *eco-ableism* refers to the ways that persons with disabilities have been excluded in climate change activism. It also refers to how persons with disabilities are underrepresented in policy, planning, and action concerning climate change. As a result of this omission, many climate change initiatives can even create new challenges for persons with disabilities. For instance, climate change initiatives to ban plastic drinking straws and the advocation for reducing vehicle omissions are important for advancing environmental discourse—however, many persons with disabilities have specific dietary and mobility needs which may be in conflict with these calls for action. Challenging eco-ableism includes finding synergies between climate change activism and disability rights rather than focusing on areas where they come into conflict. Also see, *eco-ability*
Emergency	An *emergency* is described by Enarson and Haworth-Brockman (2008) as an "imminent event that requires prompt coordination of actions concerning persons or property to protect the health, safety or welfare of people, or to limit damage to property or the environment" (p. 64). Also see, *hazard*
Empowerment	*Empowerment* refers to individuals controlling their lives, advancing their skills, and being involved in issues with impact their communities, which leads to an increase in self-confidence, problem solving, and enhancing their resilience (Enarson & Haworth-Brockman, 2008). This concept is especially important for this project because persons with disabilities are typically underrepresented in climate change planning. Also see, *resilience*

Term	Definition
Environmental Racism	Refers to policies and practices (especially environmental) which disproportionately and negatively impact racialized communities and individuals. For example, the locations of many Black and Indigenous communities are sites of environmental hazards. The "Chemical Valley" in Sarnia most impacts the Aamjiwnaang First Nation as the reserve is located closest to Canada's largest petrochemical complex (Waldron, 2020).
Hazard	According to Enarson and Haworth-Brockman (2008), a *hazard* refers to a "potentially damaging physical event, phenomenon or human activity that may cause the loss of life or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation" (p. 65). Further, hazards can be "single, sequential or combined in their origin and effects. Each hazard is characterized by its location, intensity, frequency and probability" (Ibid.) Also see, *disaster; prevention*; *mitigation*
Intersectionality	Although a complex and multi-faceted concept, Eviance adapts Hankivsky's (2014) definition of *intersectionality*: "Intersectionality promotes an understanding of human beings as shaped by the interaction of different social locations (e.g., 'race'/ethnicity, Indigeneity, gender, class, sexuality, geography, age, disability/ability, migration status, religion, mental status). These interactions occur within a context of connected systems and structures of power (e.g., laws, policies, state governments and other political and economic unions, religious institutions, media). Through such processes, interdependent forms of privilege and oppression shaped by colonialism, imperialism, racism, homophobia, ableism, sanism and patriarchy are created. According to an intersectionality perspective, inequities are never the result of single, distinct factors. Rather, they are the outcome of intersections of different social locations, power relations and experiences" (p. 2). Eviance emphasizes how lived experiences and systems of power are particularly related to persons with disabilities and their allies, as well as disability issues more broadly. In our review, we sought out articles which explicitly deployed an intersectional methodology, which do not yield as many results as we had hoped for.

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	Also see, *social justice*
Meaningful participation	Alexiadou (2023) defines *meaningful participation* within the context of the implementation of CRPD in climate action. As they state, meaningful participation includes strategies, policies, and decision making must be done by recognizing the role that persons with disabilities have in making change, and not only involving them in decision making but also Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs). Thus, state accountability and monitoring mechanisms regarding climate change action should be co-developed with persons with disabilities, who should be thought of as agents of change. Also see, *Organizations of Persons with Disabilities*
Mitigation	*Mitigation* refers to measures taken "to limit the adverse impact of natural hazards, environmental degradation and technological hazards." (Enarson & Haworth-Brockman, 2008, p. 66) Also see, *prevention*; *vulnerability*; *resilience*; *hazard*; *disaster*
Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) / Disabled Persons' Organizations (DPOs)	*Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPD)*, sometimes referred to as *Disabled Persons Organizations (DPO)* refers to organizations which are "governed, led and directed by disabled people and in which disabled people make up a clear majority at all decision-making levels" (Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2014; DPO Network, 2023, p. 8). While the CRPD does not explicitly define what an OPD or a DPO is, it does acknowledge the role that such organizations have in engaging with governmental issues which concern persons with disabilities. Historically, OPDs were community-based organizations run by, and for persons with disabilities and usually distinguished themselves from other organizations, such as service providers, family advocacy organizations, charities, and other groups organized by persons without disabilities. While definitions vary, Eviance strives for greater disability representation within OPDs. At Eviance we advocate for at least 75% of staff and leadership to identify as a person with a disability. Disability is a diverse experience, and we believe that striving for meaningful engagement includes working from many different perspectives within the organization.

Term	Definition
	Also see, *meaningful participation*; *disability*
Prevention	*Prevention* refers to taking action to avoid "adverse impact[s] of hazards" and minimizing environmental disasters (Enarson & Haworth-Brockman, 2008, p. 67). Cost/benefit considerations, systematic policy and infrastructure, and the level of precarity and resilience of persons involved all impact how preventive measures are justified. Further, the level of public awareness, and education impact the level of disaster prevention and mitigation, which may invoke what Enarson and Haworth-Brockman (2008) call a "culture of prevention" (p. 67). Also see, *mitigation*; *vulnerability*; *resilience*; *hazard*; *disaster*
Resilience	Lindsay & Yantzi (2014) refer to *resilience* as the ''ability of a social or ecological system to absorb disturbances while retaining the same basic structure and ways of functioning, the capacity for self-organization and the capacity to adapt to stress and change'' (p. 2197). The resilience of persons with disabilities is a strong theme throughout our review. Also see, *vulnerability*
Risk	*Risk* is referred to as the "probability of harmful consequences, or expected losses… resulting from interactions between natural or human-induced hazards and vulnerable conditions" (Enarson & Haworth-Brockman, 2008, p. 67). Also see, *hazard*; *emergency*
Risk Management	Enarson and Haworth-Brockman (2008) define *risk management* as the implementation of "policies, practices and resources to analyze, assess and control risks to health, safety, environment and the economy" (p. 67). Also see*, risk*; *disaster risk reduction*
Social Justice	The United Nations (2010) defines *social justice* as a core principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence which emphasizes the importance of equity, solidarity, human rights, and dignity. Justice also includes ensuring equal distribution of benefits and opportunities for all citizens, and addresses inequalities to create a more just and equitable society. Social justice is also one of the

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	core principles of intersectional thought, which informs the methodology for this project and informs all project activities. Also see, *intersectionality*
Solastalgia	According to Bell and their colleagues (2024), *solastalgia* refers to the anxiety and grief that people may feel when encountering environmental changes caused by climate disasters and other related climate events.
Vulnerability	Within climate change discourse, *vulnerability* refers to the tendency for persons with disabilities to experience "some degree of loss… from a hazardous event" (Enarson & Haworth-Brockman, 2008, p. 67). Vulnerabilities may occur at various levels, including the individual, economic, or community. The level of vulnerability during an environmental disaster also depends on a variety of factors, including the level of resilience and capacity of individuals and system actors to respond in an organized and timely manner. Importantly, Eviance understands that there is little correlation between vulnerability and disability, which is a theme found in charity and medical models of disability. Rather, persons with disabilities are *made* vulnerable by systems of inequity and oppression. Also see, *resilience*
Weather	As Lindsay & Yantzi (2014) state, *weather* refers to "specific material forms (e.g. rain, temperature) [which] redirect human action, providing a rationale for a range of adaptations and behavioral responses" (p. 2197). Weather impacts persons with disabilities (and others) depending on a variety of factors such as geographical location, the level of emergency measures put in place by communities and system actors, and level of vulnerability/resilience.

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