

SNAB/2024/1/07*

Santiago Network Secretariat: Head Office Location Assessment (January 2024)

Summary

The role of the Santiago network secretariat is to manage the day-to-day operations of the Santiago network, including but not limited to: building and managing the network of member organizations, bodies, networks and experts (OBNEs); ensuring the coordination and collaboration of the work of the Santiago network with relevant UNFCCC constituted bodies; receiving, assessing and managing the process of responding to requests from developing countries for technical assistance; managing and directing the disbursement of funds provided for the Santiago network.

Following the selection of UNDRR-UNOPS proposal for the hosting of the Santiago network secretariat at COP 28, this report provides an analysis of the cost-effectiveness, including a cost-benefit analysis, of various locations around the world as options for the location of the head office of the Santiago network secretariat from a pool of potential locations that can provide the privileges and immunities for members of the Advisory Board in line with existing practice.

The assessment includes a recommendation on which location would be the most cost-effective and suitable in the light of the functions of the Santiago network (Decision 19/CMA.3) and the roles and responsibilities and the organizational structure of the Santiago network secretariat.

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* This document has been re-issued for technical reasons.

A. Introduction

1. The mandate of the Santiago network is to catalyze the technical assistance of relevant organizations, bodies, networks and experts (OBNEs), for the implementation of relevant approaches for averting, minimize and addressing Loss and Damage at the local, national and regional level, in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change (Decision 2/[CMA.2](#), paragraph 43, noted in decision2/CP.25).
2. Recalling Decision -/CMA.5, paragraphs 14 and 15, endorsed in decision2/CP.28, UNOPS-UNDRR have undertaken and analysis of the cost-effectiveness, including a cost–benefit analysis, of various locations around the world as options for the location of the head office of the Santiago network secretariat from a pool of potential locations¹ that can provide the privileges and immunities for members of the Advisory Board in line with existing practice.²
3. The report includes a recommendation on which location would be the most cost-effective and suitable in the light of the functions of the Santiago network (Decision 19/[CMA.3](#), paragraph 9, endorsed in 17/CP.26)) and the roles and responsibilities and the organizational structure of the Santiago network secretariat as detailed in Annex I to Decision [12/CMA.4](#) (endorsed in Decision 11/CP.27)and the draft MOU between the UNFCCC, UNOPS and UNDRR included as an annex to Decision -/CMA.5 (endorsed in Decision 2/CP.28).³
4. This analysis is presented for consideration and decision by the Advisory Board at its 1st meeting, to be held in 2024.

B. Santiago network secretariat role & structure

5. The terms of reference of the Santiago network for averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change⁴, details that the Santiago network secretariat shall manage the day-to-day operations of the Santiago network. Its core responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Building and managing the network of member organizations, bodies, networks and experts, covering a wide range of topics relevant to averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage approaches;
 - b. Ensuring the coordination and collaboration of the work of the Santiago network with relevant UNFCCC constituted bodies, in particular the Executive Committee, as well as exploring synergies with other initiatives and networks;
 - c. Receiving, assessing and managing the process of responding to requests from developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change for technical assistance to avert, minimize and address loss and damage, in coordination with network members;

¹ Draft decision -/CMA.5, paragraphs 15.

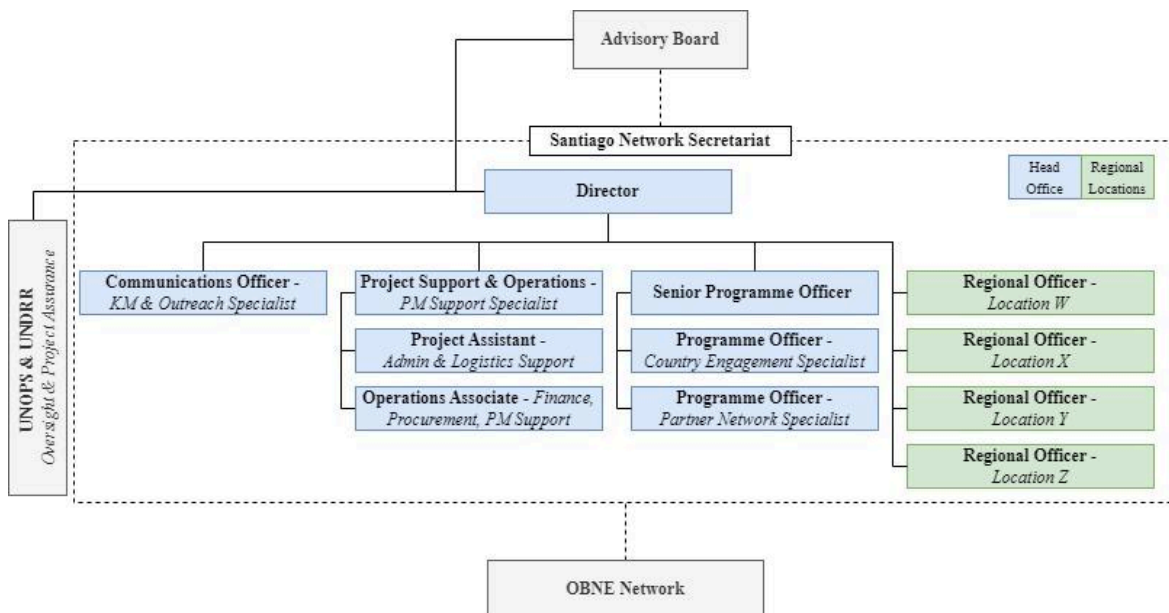
² Draft decision -/CMA.5, paragraphs 14.

³ As per annex to draft decision -/CMA.5, para. 9, 12, 13, 23.

⁴ [12/CMA.4](#) Annex I - section IV, A: Roles and responsibilities of the Santiago network secretariat

- d. Developing and executing the work programme approved by the Advisory Board, building on synergies with the five-year rolling work plan of the Executive Committee;
 - e. Promoting and disseminating information on the Santiago network in a manner that is comprehensible and accessible to communities particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change;
 - f. Managing and directing the disbursement of funds provided for the Santiago network consistently with the fiduciary standards, legal and ethical integrity policies, and financial rules and regulations of the host of the secretariat;
 - g. Administering the funds provided for technical assistance under the Santiago network in a cost-effective and transparent manner;
 - h. Maintaining a monitoring and evaluation system to assess the timeliness, appropriateness and outcomes of assistance provided;
 - i. Supporting and facilitating the work of the Advisory Board.
6. The proposed structure for the secretariat is detailed in Figure 1 below, it includes 7 full-time staff based in the secretariat head office and a further 4 regional officers. The regional officers will act as first points of contact for countries and will provide technical advice and contribute to building the network of OBNEs at the regional level, as well as support the secretariat in assessing and communicating the capacity gaps and needs at the regional and national levels.⁵

Figure 1: Organizational chart of the Santiago network secretariat



⁵ UNOPS Regional Office locations: Africa Region (Nairobi), Asia Region (Bangkok), Europe and Central Asia Region (Geneva), Latin America and Caribbean Region (LCR) (Panama City), Middle East Region (Jordan), UNDRR Regional Office locations: Africa Region (Nairobi), Asia-Pacific Region (Bangkok, with sub-office in Suva), Europe and Central Asia Region (Brussels), Latin America and Caribbean Region (Panama City), Arab States (Cairo).

C. Assessment Methodology

7. The assessment for the secretariat head office location was conducted on the basis of the following four-step approach:
 - a. **Development of evaluation framework:**
 - i. Identifying the minimum requirements for locations that would be assessed;
 - ii. Developing the scoring criteria that would be used to conduct the assessment;
 - iii. Identifying sources of data available (including both public and internal data sources owned by UNFCCC, UNDRR & UNOPS) to assess each criteria.
 - b. **Conducting an initial assessment against minimum requirements:**

All 193 UN Member States⁶ were assessed against the minimum requirements identified as part of the evaluation framework. Those locations that did not meet the minimum requirements were not considered further.
 - c. **Evaluation against scoring criteria:**

Locations that fully met the minimum requirements were evaluated using predetermined scoring criteria. Weighted values were assigned to each criterion in the form of a percentage. Each location that met minimum requirements was then assessed against each criteria using a 5 points scale. Scores were aggregated to obtain an overall score for each location.
 - d. **Compilation of a short list of recommended locations:**

Locations were ranked and a shortlist was identified based on the outcome of the evaluation against the scoring criteria, including a qualitative/quantitative assessment of Operational Efficiency, Cost and Other Factors.
8. The assessment was undertaken on the basis that in addition to a head office, the Santiago network secretariat will have dedicated staff in each region⁷ through the appointment of up to 4 regional officers. The final number and location of the regional officers will be assessed once the secretariat director is in post and will take into consideration the number and location of requests from developing countries for technical assistance as well as the location of OBNEs.

D. Initial assessment against minimum requirements

9. The following criteria were identified as minimum requirements:
 - a. **Family Duty Station:** Classification of the location as a family duty station was deemed to be a minimum requirement to enable the Secretariat to attract and retain a broad range of individuals in key roles. Consequently, only locations classified by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) as of January 2024 as family duty stations were assessed as meeting the minimum requirements.⁸

⁶ <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/member-states>

⁷ Africa Region, Asia Region, Europe and Central Asia Region, Latin America and Caribbean Region, & Middle East Region.

⁸ <https://icsc.un.org/Home/DataNonFamily>

- b. **Timezone:** Given the requirement for the Santiago network secretariat to work with a network of member OBNEs based *around the world* and to coordinate the provision of technical support to *all* developing countries, the need to balance coverage across different time zones to minimize communication gaps and maximize productivity is deemed critical. Consequently, only locations that have overlapping working hours between Eastern Standard Time (EST), Central European Time (CET) and Western Indonesian Time (WIT) were assessed as meeting the minimum requirements.
 - c. **UNDRR Presence:** The MOU between the UNFCCC, UNOPS and UNDRR, included as an annex to Decision -/CMA.5, endorsed in Decision 2/CP.28 details that “UNDRR and UNOPS shall make regional and subregional UNDRR offices in all United Nations geographical regions available, as appropriate, to serve as designated units for providing relevant services and support for catalyzing effective and timely technical assistance” (Paragraph 8) and “UNDRR will provide the Santiago network secretariat with technical backstopping and expertise in the domain of averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage consistently with the guidelines for preventing potential and addressing actual and perceived conflicts of interest in relation to the Santiago network” (Paragraph 12). Consequently, only locations where UNDRR has a presence and can provide technical backstopping and expertise were assessed as meeting the minimum requirements.⁹
10. Using the assessment approach detailed above, locations that did not meet one or more of these minimum requirements were eliminated leaving the following 5 locations for further consideration:
 - a. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
 - b. Bonn, Germany
 - c. Brussels, Belgium
 - d. Geneva, Switzerland
 - e. Nairobi, Kenya
11. **Privileges and immunities:** Paragraph 14 and 15 in Decision -/CMA.5, endorsed in Decision 2/CP.28, requests the location of the Santiago network secretariat to be selected from a pool of locations that “provide the privileges and immunities for members of the Advisory Board in line with existing practice”. While a more detailed analysis and confirmation with the Government of the country selected to host the head office of the Santiago network secretariat would be required, we have reviewed the above list of the UN Office of Legal Affairs and they do not anticipate any difficulties obtaining privileges and immunities for the members of the Advisory Board at any of these locations.

⁹ UNDRR operates in locations that deliver support regional, national and local implementation and monitoring, Interagency Cooperation and Partnerships and/or Risk Knowledge, Monitoring and Capacity Development were included in the assessment.

E. Evaluation against scoring criteria

12. In addition to the original criteria set out in the UNDRR-UNOPS proposal selected for the hosting of the Santiago network secretariat at COP 28, the assessment takes into consideration the criteria used for the assessment of the Global Service Delivery model for the United Nations Secretariat as referenced in documents [A/72/801](#) and [A/72/801.Add.1](#).¹⁰
13. The final criteria used for the evaluation of locations meeting the minimum requirements are as follows:
- a. **Operational Cost:** Minimizing operational costs to ensure as much funding as possible is available to provide technical assistance for the implementation of relevant approaches for averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage. Please note, the evaluation does *not* take into consideration any possible financial or in kind contributions by potential host governments:¹¹
 - i. Staff costs over 5 year period (2024-2028)
 - ii. Office costs over 5 year period (2024-2028)
 - iii. Set-up costs
 - b. **Operational Efficiency:**
 - i. **Strong host Government relations:** To ensure recognition of United Nations privileges and immunities and access to visas for United Nations staff, including their spouses and dependents, as well as the Advisory Board members;
 - ii. **Timezone:** The need to balance coverage across different time zones to minimize communication gaps and maximize productivity (beyond meeting minimum requirement of having overlapping working hours between Eastern Standard Time (EST), Central European Time (CET) and Western Indonesian Time (WIT));
 - iii. **Security and stability:** To ensure the safety of the secretariat's staff members and Advisory Board members who will attend meetings at the secretariat, the ability of the secretariat to attract talent, and the continuity of operations;
 - iv. **Environmental Impact:** To minimize the environmental impact of operationalising and running the Santiago network secretariat and hosting Advisory Board meetings.
 - v. **Accessibility:** A well-connected and accessible location to ensure operational efficiency and to minimize the environmental impact of travel;
 - vi. **Access to healthcare & education:** Including reliable medical facilities, educational facilities and a nearby international airport;
 - vii. **Infrastructure:** Reliable, modern information and communication technology and a capacity to expand the location quickly to accommodate staff to ensure that the secretariat can run efficiently and effectively;

¹⁰ <https://www.un.int/news/new-report-global-service-delivery-model-united-nations>

¹¹ At COP 28, Switzerland confirmed in writing on 09 Dec 2023, that if there was a collective interest in locating the Network's secretariat in Geneva, on top of the mentioned core contribution [of CHF 1 million for the years 2024-27], Switzerland would provide 'an additional unearmarked contribution of CHF 1 million, a yearly rent subsidy for the office as well as a one-off settlement contribution of a maximum of CHF 10'000 per person for office materials and infrastructure on site'.

- viii. **Workforce:** Availability of a qualified workforce with the requisite skill profiles.
- c. **Other factors:** Additional considerations linked to the function of the network and the role and responsibilities of UNDRR and UNOPS as detailed in the MOU between the UNFCCC, UNOPS and UNDRR included as an annex to Decision -/CMA.5, in particular paragraphs. 9, 12, 13, & 23. i.e.;
 - i. Location of related UN Agencies/Funds/Programmes, international organizations, bodies and entities engaged in the provision of technical assistance for averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage at the local, national and regional level.^{12 13}
 - ii. The location and role of UNDRR’s head, regional, and sub-regional offices.
 - iii. The location of and role of UNOPS’ head, regional, multi-country, and country offices. Please note that, under UNOPS Financial Rules and Regulations, regulation 7.03, UNOPS must ensure that all projects are covered by a Host Country Agreement (HCA)/Exchange of Letters (EOL) with the host Government.¹⁴
 - iv. In recognition that the focus of the Santiago Network is to provide technical assistance in *developing* countries particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change¹⁵, the assessment also noted the UNCTAD classification of each location as a *developing* (1400) or *developed* (1500) economy.¹⁶

14. Weighted values were assigned to each criterion in the form of a percentage as detailed in Table 1. below.

Table 1: Location assessment scoring criteria

Operational Efficiency (40%)	Operational Cost (40%)	Other factors (20%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strong host Government relations ● Accessibility ● Safety & Security ● Access to healthcare & education ● Infrastructure ● Environmental impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff Cost ● Office Costs ● Inflation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● UN Agencies, international organizations, etc. , programmes, OBNEs ● Location and role of UNDRR and UNOPS offices

¹² <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-system>

¹³ <https://unfccc.int/santiago-network/organizations>

¹⁴ [UNOPS FRR Regulation 7.03](#). The Executive Director shall ensure that: (i) the client and/or funding source for project recognizes where applicable, that UNOPS operates within the context of one or more agreements entered into by the United Nations, including its subsidiary organs, and the respective Government setting out the terms and conditions under which projects are to be executed within the Government’s boundaries, and (ii) the Government, as signatory to any such agreements, bears the risks of operations and holds harmless UNOPS in respect of claims or liabilities arising under the projects.

¹⁵ Decision -/CMA.5, paragraphs 23d and 23e,

¹⁶ [UNCTADstat - Classifications](#)". *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development*. The developing economies broadly comprise Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia without Israel, Japan, and the Republic of Korea, and Oceania without Australia and New Zealand. The developed economies broadly comprise Northern America and Europe, Israel, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, and New Zealand.

F. Results of Evaluation

15. A summary of the scores for each location is included in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Location assessment results (Ranked)

SR	Location	Operational Efficiency (Score out of 2)	Cost Score (Score out of 2)	Other factors Score (Score out of 1)	Total (Score out of 5)
1.	Nairobi, Kenya	1.5	1.6	1.0	4.10
2.	Bonn, Germany	2.0	1.2	0.7	3.85
3.	Geneva, Switzerland	2.0	0.8	1.0	3.75
4.	Brussels, Belgium	2.0	1.2	0.6	3.75
5.	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	1.5	1.2	0.6	3.25

G. Recommendation

16. Based on the outcome of this analysis and considering all criteria relevant to the location assessment, **Nairobi, Kenya** has been identified as the optimal location for the Santiago network secretariat head office as it offers the following advantages:

- a. Strong host Government relations, including an existing UNOPS Service Level Agreement with UNON for the provision of host country services under the UNEP Headquarters Agreement signed in 2007.
- b. Maximum time zone coverage to offer a stronger support and collaboration with OBNEs, UNFCCC, and developing countries.
- c. Co-location with UN agencies, funds and programmes including the UN’s headquarters in Africa ([UNON](#)), [UNEP](#), and [UN Habitat](#) to enable better coordination and collaboration.
- d. Co-location with existing UNDRR ([Regional Office for Africa](#)) and UNOPS offices ([UNOPS Africa Regional Office](#) and [Kenya Multi-Country Office](#)) to leverage existing knowledge, shared services, and support.
- e. Competitive operational costs when compared with other short-listed locations.

H. Implementation Plan

17. The above recommendation is presented for consideration and decision by the Advisory Board at its 1st meeting, provisionally scheduled for 18-20 March 2024 in Geneva.
18. In advance of the first Advisory Board meeting, UNDRR-UNOPS will develop job profiles for all positions within the Santiago network secretariat including the 4 regional officers.
19. Upon receipt of the Advisory Board’s decision on the preferred location of the head office, and following consultation and agreement with the relevant host country, UNOPS will immediately

progress recruitment of the director and staff of the secretariat head office through a merit-based, open and transparent process. The recruitment for the regional officers will commence subsequent to the appointment of the director.

20. In addition, once the location is confirmed further work will be conducted with relevant UNDRR/UNOPS offices to secure necessary office space in the chosen location.

Annexes

Annex A: Extracts from Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts Proposal by the President (Decision -/CMA.5)

9. UNOPS, in consultation with UNDRR, shall design a **lean, cost-effective organizational structure** and provide the necessary administrative and infrastructural support for the effective functioning of the Santiago network secretariat, in accordance with relevant UNOPS regulations, rules and procedures, and subject to the financing provided pursuant to section VII below.
12. **UNDRR will provide the Santiago network secretariat with technical backstopping and expertise in the domain of averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage** consistently with the guidelines for preventing potential and addressing actual and perceived conflicts of interest in relation to the Santiago network (see para. 15 below).
13. **UNDRR and UNOPS shall provide in-kind and other support for the Santiago network secretariat** to carry out its roles and responsibilities, as set out in the terms of reference of the Santiago network.
14. Requests the consortium, as host of the Santiago network secretariat, to ensure that the necessary arrangements are in place for the meetings of the Advisory Board of the Santiago network, including **privileges and immunities for members of the Board in line with existing practice;**⁷
15. Also requests the consortium, as host of the Santiago network secretariat, to undertake, by the end of January 2024, **an analysis of the cost-effectiveness, including a cost–benefit analysis, of various locations around the world as options for the location of the head office of the Santiago network secretariat from a pool of potential locations that can provide the privileges and immunities referred to in paragraph 14 above** and to provide to the Advisory Board of the Santiago network **the results of the analysis with its recommendation on which location would be the most cost-effective and suitable in the light of the roles and responsibilities and the organizational structure of the Santiago network secretariat** as detailed in annex I to decision 12/CMA.4 for consideration and decision by the Advisory Board at its 1st meeting, to be held in 2024;
23. The Santiago network secretariat shall make use of regional and subregional United Nations offices in all United Nations geographical regions, as appropriate, to serve as designated units to provide relevant services and support for catalysing effective and timely technical assistance in developing countries particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.

Annex B: Extract from Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts ([Decision 19/CMA.3](#))

9. Decides that the Santiago network is to have the following functions:
 - a. Contributing to the effective implementation of the functions of the Warsaw International Mechanism, in line with the provisions in paragraph 7 of decision 2/CP.19 and Article 8 of the Paris Agreement, by catalysing the technical assistance of organizations, bodies, networks and experts;

- b. Catalysing demand-driven technical assistance including of relevant organizations, bodies, networks and experts, for the implementation of relevant approaches to averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change by assisting in:
 - (i) Identifying, prioritizing and communicating technical assistance needs and priorities;
 - (ii) Identifying types of relevant technical assistance;
 - (iii) Actively connecting those seeking technical assistance with best suited organizations, bodies, networks and experts;
 - (iv) Accessing technical assistance available including from such organizations, bodies, networks and experts;
- c. Facilitating the consideration of a wide range of topics relevant to averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage approaches, including but not limited to current and future impacts, priorities, and actions related to averting, minimizing, and addressing loss and damage pursuant to decisions 3/CP.18, and 2/CP.19, the areas referred to in Article 8, paragraph 4, of the Paris Agreement and the strategic workstreams of the five-year rolling workplan of the Executive Committee;
- d. Facilitating and catalysing collaboration, coordination, coherence and synergies to accelerate action by organizations, bodies, networks and experts, across communities of practices, and for them to deliver effective and efficient technical assistance to developing countries;
- e. Facilitating the development, provision and dissemination of, and access to, knowledge and information on averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage, including comprehensive risk management approaches, at the regional, national and local level;
- f. Facilitating, through catalysing technical assistance, of organizations, bodies, networks and experts, access to action and support (finance, technology and capacity building) under and outside the Convention and the Paris Agreement, relevant to averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including urgent and timely responses to the impacts of climate change.

Annex C: Extracts from Terms of reference of the Santiago network for averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change ([12/CMA.4 Annex I - section IV, A: Roles and responsibilities of the Santiago network secretariat](#))

IV. Roles and responsibilities

A. Santiago network secretariat

- 4. The Santiago network secretariat shall be accountable to and operate under the guidance of the Advisory Board.
- 5. The Santiago network secretariat shall facilitate the implementation of the functions of the Santiago network.
- 6. The Santiago network secretariat shall manage day-to-day operations of the Santiago network, including:

- (a) Building and managing the network of member organizations, bodies, networks and experts, covering a wide range of topics relevant to averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage approaches;
- (b) Ensuring the coordination and collaboration of the work of the Santiago network with relevant UNFCCC constituted bodies, in particular the Executive Committee, as well as exploring synergies with other initiatives and networks;
- (c) Receiving, assessing and managing the process of responding to requests from developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change for technical assistance to avert, minimize and address loss and damage, in coordination with network members;
- (d) Developing and executing the work programme approved by the Advisory Board, building on synergies with the five-year rolling workplan of the Executive Committee;
- (e) Promoting and disseminating information on the Santiago network in a manner that is comprehensible and accessible to communities particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change;
- (f) Managing and directing the disbursement of funds provided for the Santiago network consistently with the fiduciary standards, legal and ethical integrity policies, and financial rules and regulations of the host of the secretariat;
- (g) Administering the funds provided for technical assistance under the Santiago network in a cost-effective and transparent manner;
- (h) Maintaining a monitoring and evaluation system to assess the timeliness, appropriateness and outcomes of assistance provided;
- (i) Supporting and facilitating the work of the Advisory Board.