

Santiago Network for Loss and Damage

Loss and Damage Landscape – Mechanisms and Implementation Pathways

As climate impacts intensify, some harms cannot be avoided through mitigation nor fully managed through adaptation. This reality has pushed Loss and Damage to the forefront of international climate policy. Rising sea-levels, advancing desertification, and more frequent extreme events cause economic and non-economic losses and damages: livelihoods disappear, communities are displaced, and cultural heritage and traditions erode.¹ The burden falls most heavily on vulnerable communities, particularly in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

Within the UNFCCC framework, Loss and Damage work is supported through three complementary bodies: The Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) for policy guidance and coordination, the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD) as funding arrangement and the Santiago Network, which catalyses technical assistance.

The Santiago Network was established as part of the WIM in 2019. Its mission is to connect developing countries with tailored, context-specific technical assistance to avert, minimize, and address losses and damages. It supports countries in identifying needs, facilitates collaboration among experts, and promotes knowledge sharing and dialogue.

The Matchmaking Process

At the heart of the Santiago Network's operations is the matching of technical assistance requests from developing countries with qualified network members. This process relies on two pillars: the requests themselves and the network of members responding to them.

1 IPCC CLIMATE CHANGE 2023 Synthesis Report Summary for Policymakers IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf P. 5

Technical Assistance Requests

Technical assistance requests must meet three core criteria:

- 1 Requests must **originate from within developing countries**. Not only governments and public institutions, but also academic institutions, non-governmental organisations and civil society organisations can act as proponents.
- 2 Requests must identify a **gap or challenge** and show they were developed through an **inclusive, country-driven process**. Urgent needs can be flagged.
- 3 Requests should **target communities particularly vulnerable** to climate change impacts and promote the development of national capacities, ensuring long-term sustainability or multiplier impact.

Technical assistance catalysed by the Santiago Network can include loss and damage assessments, risk and vulnerability analyses, policy and planning frameworks, data systems, and capacity development measures. It can address different dimensions of climate risk, including early warning systems, emergency preparedness, risk transfer mechanisms and non-economic losses. Technical assistance may focus on both sudden-onset events, such as storms or floods, and slow-onset processes like sea-level rise or desertification.

Network Membership

The Santiago Network's members form a global pool of expertise to respond to country requests. Membership is open to different types of actors:

- **Organisations:** independent legal entities such as research institutes, NGOs or development organisations
- **Bodies:** groups that are not necessarily independent legal entities
- **Networks:** interconnected groups of organisations or individuals collaborating towards common goals
- **Experts:** individual specialists with recognised expertise in relevant fields

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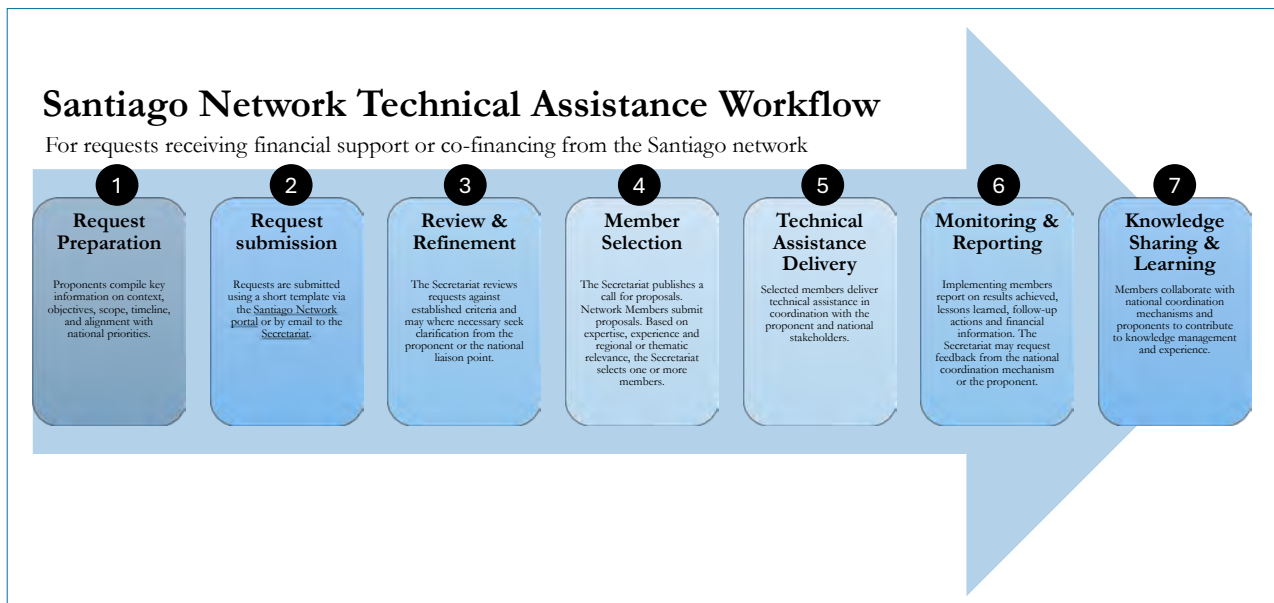


Figure 2: Santiago Network Technical Assistance Workflow (own illustration)

To join the Network, members must prove **expertise** in topics relevant to loss and damage, **experience** in providing technical assistance in related fields, and **commitment** to the objectives and principles of the Santiago Network.

Members represent a broad range of expertise relevant to addressing loss and damage. GIZ has been a member of the Santiago Network since December 2025. Members can respond to calls for proposals to deliver technical assistance, showcase their expertise, and exchange knowledge with other Network members.

Institutional Framework and Governance

The Santiago Network is supported by an institutional structure consisting of a Secretariat and an Advisory Board.

The Secretariat, hosted by a consortium of UNDRR and UNOPS and headquartered in Geneva, manages the Network's day-to-day operations. This includes building the global network of members, supporting proponents in preparing technical assistance requests, coordinating the matchmaking process and overseeing the delivery of technical assistance. The Secretariat plans to establish

regional and subregional presence across all UN geographical regions.

The Advisory Board provides strategic oversight and guidance to the Secretariat, ensuring that Network operations are aligned with the objectives of the WIM and UNFCCC decisions, and that technical assistance maintains high standards of relevance and quality. Its meetings are open to observers and generally held twice a year. Germany is represented through the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

To ensure a country-driven approach, the Secretariat invites governments to nominate National Liaisons to the Santiago Network, who help align technical assistance requests with national priorities and facilitate communication with the Network.

The first support is being delivered in Vanuatu, where a consortium of four Network members is working with the Government to develop a long-term, nationally determined programme to address loss and damage. Further technical assistances are currently ongoing.

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