4. Under the authority and guidance of the Conference of the Parties, and taking into account the multidisciplinary expertise referenced in paragraph 2 above, the Scientific and Technical Body shall provide scientific and technical advice to the Conference of the Parties, perform the functions assigned to it under this Agreement and such other functions as may be determined by the Conference of the Parties and provide reports to the Conference of the Parties on its work.

**Article 50**
**Secretariat**

1. A secretariat is hereby established. The Conference of the Parties, at its first meeting, shall make arrangements for the functioning of the secretariat, including deciding on its seat.

2. Until such time as the secretariat commences its functions, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, through the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, shall perform the secretariat functions under this Agreement.

3. The secretariat and the host State may conclude a headquarters agreement. The secretariat shall enjoy legal capacity in the territory of the host State and be granted such privileges and immunities by the host State as are necessary for the exercise of its functions.

4. The secretariat shall:

(a) Provide administrative and logistical support to the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies for the purposes of the implementation of this Agreement;

(b) Arrange and service the meetings of the Conference of the Parties and of any other bodies as may be established under this Agreement or by the Conference of the Parties;

(c) Circulate information relating to the implementation of this Agreement in a timely manner, including making decisions of the Conference of the Parties publicly available and transmitting them to all Parties, as well as to relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies;

(d) Facilitate cooperation and coordination, as appropriate, with the secretariats of other relevant international bodies and, in particular, enter into such administrative and contractual arrangements as may be required for that purpose and for the effective discharge of its functions, subject to approval by the Conference of the Parties;

(e) Prepare reports on the execution of its functions under this Agreement and submit them to the Conference of the Parties;

(f) Provide assistance with the implementation of this Agreement and perform such other functions as may be determined by the Conference of the Parties or assigned to it under this Agreement.

**Article 51**
**Clearing-House Mechanism**

1. A Clearing-House Mechanism is hereby established.

2. The Clearing-House Mechanism shall consist primarily of an open-access platform. The specific modalities for the operation of the Clearing-House Mechanism shall be determined by the Conference of the Parties.

3. The Clearing-House Mechanism shall:

(a) Serve as a centralized platform to enable Parties to access, provide and disseminate information with respect to activities taking place pursuant to the provisions of this Agreement, including information relating to:

(i) Marine genetic resources of areas beyond national jurisdiction, as set out in Part II of this Agreement;

(ii) The establishment and implementation of area-based management tools, including marine protected areas;

(iii) Environmental impact assessments;

(iv) Requests for capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology and opportunities with respect thereto, including research collaboration and training opportunities, information on sources and availability of technological information and data for the transfer of marine technology, opportunities for facilitated access to marine technology and the availability of funding;

(b) Facilitate the matching of capacity-building needs with the support available and with providers for the transfer of marine technology, including governmental, non-governmental or private entities interested in participating as donors in the transfer of marine technology, and facilitate access to related know-how and expertise;

(c) Provide links to relevant global, regional, subregional, national and sectoral clearing-house mechanisms and other gene banks, repositories and databases, including those pertaining to relevant traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and promote, where possible, links with publicly available private and non-governmental platforms for the exchange of information;

(d) Build on global, regional and subregional clearing-house institutions, where applicable, when establishing regional and subregional mechanisms under the global mechanism;