Shaping Global Sustainability in the Umbrella of “Comprehensive Globalisation”—Germany’s Role*

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Abstract

The current confrontation of irreconcilable concepts of global order poses a serious threat to international cooperation in crucial areas of global governance. German foreign policy faces many challenges in an international system characterised by “comprehensive globalisation”. This global constellation however also implies the great opportunity to establish new patterns of cooperation via transformative alliances with emerging actors of international politics. In this way, Germany could play a substantial transformative role in the global agenda for sustainability.

Keywords

Development – Globalisation – Sustainability – Cooperation – Multilateralism –
Global Governance

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1 The New Reality of the International System: “Comprehensive Globalisation”

Since the end of the Cold War, the following four mutually reinforcing waves of global transformation have created a new reality for the international system: a) the networked global economy: accelerating economic globalisation, which creates manifold opportunities along with global vulnerabilities and risks;¹ b) diffuse architectures of power: tectonic shifts of power towards emerging economies, above all China, India, and Brazil, which are challenging the dominance of the West and bringing forth polycentric constellations and blockades of power;² c) the Anthropocene Era, the geological era of human dominance: the insight that human beings have become the driving force in the planetary ecosystem and that over the course of this century a transformation of the earth system is likely, with unforeseeable consequences for a human population that will soon total nine billion, if the global economy continues to pursue its established path of greenhouse gas-driven and resource-based growth;³ d) digitisation—new communication infrastructures for global society: for the first time in human history, digital communications technologies have made possible a real-time exchange of information, knowledge and news that spans the globe, opening up new, virtual cross-border spaces and possibilities of cooperation, while at the same time creating previously unknown forms of data control and surveillance.⁴

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- 1 Joseph S. Nye and John D. Donahue, “Global Governance and development, Introduction: Governance in a globalizing world,” in *Governance in a globalizing world*, eds. John D. Donahue and Joseph S. Nye (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2004), 1–41.
 - 2 Dirk Messner, “Three waves of global change: the dynamics of global governance in the first half of the 21st century,” in *Global governance and building a harmonious world: A comparison of European and Chinese concepts for international affairs*, eds. Thomas Fues and Liu Youfa (Bonn: German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), 2011), 9–38; Raphael Kaplinsky and Dirk Messner, “Introduction: The impact of Asian drivers on the developing world,” *World Development Special Issue* 36 no. 2 (2008): 197–209.
 - 3 Mark Williams et al., eds., “The Anthropocene: a new epoch of geological time?,” *Phil. Trans. R. Soc. A* 369, Special Theme Issue (2011): 842–867; WBGU, *Human Progress within Planetary Guardrails: a Contribution to the SDG Debate* (Berlin: WBGU, 2014).
 - 4 Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee, *The Second Machine Age: Work, Progress, and Prosperity in a Time of Brilliant Technologies* (London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2014); Shoshana Zuboff and James Maxmin, *The support economy. Why corporations are failing individuals and the next episode of capitalism* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004).

These four waves of global transformation are translating and condensing into many different patterns of societal globalisation and worldwide social interdependencies affecting an increasing number of people. Ebola is spreading from West Africa around the globe through air travel, while fear of the disease is being proliferated rapidly on digital networks. Islamic Jihadism is financed by illegal oil exports, radicalises individuals via digital networks and uses social media to recruit followers around the world; so that what was initially a local conflict in Syria and Iraq is becoming a global security threat. The protests by students in Hong Kong in 2014 would almost certainly never have come about if the city had not been successfully integrated into the global economy, leading to the emergence of a broad-based, well educated and young middle class. Our increasing knowledge of the limitations of our planetary ecosystem means that we as Europeans cannot afford to be unconcerned with the consumption patterns and lifestyles being adopted by the emerging middle classes on the other side of the planet. Consolidation and acceleration of global networking between societies is far from over and is creating a new reality and a new quality within the international system, a process of “comprehensive globalisation” for which no political system has yet been “found or founded” which could ensure security, prosperity and democracy for as many of the world’s citizens as possible.⁵

The dynamics of the 19th century engendered the industrial revolution, the modern nation-state, the gradual spread of the ideas of the enlightenment and the dominance of Western societies.⁶ The first half of the 20th century was marked by two world wars with Europe at their centre and anarchy in the international system of nation-states,⁷ while the second half was characterised by the attempt to establish an international security architecture around the United Nations, and the triumph of market economies, which made tremendous gains in prosperity possible for some one billion people.⁸ The 21st century is taking shape under the influence of an emerging global society characterised by global interconnections; an unprecedented density of worldwide

5 Ashwani Kumar and Dirk Messner, eds., *Power shifts and global governance: challenges from south and north* (London: Anthem Press, 2010); Messner, *Three waves of global change*, 2011; Michael Zürn, Mathias Albert & Barry Buzan, eds., *Bringing sociology to international relations. World politics as differentiation theory* (Cambridge University Press, 2013).

6 Juergen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton University Press, 2014).

7 Jeremy Black, ed., *War since 1900* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2010).

8 Dieter Senghaas, *On Perpetual Peace: A Timely Assessment* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007).

cultural, economic and political exchange; a global market economy from which non-Western societies are also beginning to profit,⁹ but which also threatens to surpass the limits of our planetary ecosystem; further global systemic risks, and—at least in the early 21st century—a diffuse world political order without a clear centre, suspended between juridification (for example, the establishment of the ICC), informal networks of coordination (such as the G7/G8, G20 and BRICS), regression into sometimes apparently anachronistic power politics (as in the current Ukraine crisis), and totalitarian, globally-connected movements ruled by violence such as the “Islamic State”. We are living in an interim period between the era dominated by the nation-state, in which the lives of most people in the West essentially depended on dynamics within their own countries as long as “external peace” was ensured, and the era of a highly interconnected global society in which the lives of very many, if not most, people are significantly shaped by cross-border dynamics that take a course which individual nation-states can only influence to a limited extent on their own. At the same time, we are living in a transitional period that will determine whether or not humanity learns to assume responsibility for the stability of the planet and thereby to lay the foundations for the existence of many generations to come.¹⁰ Without a new quality of global cooperation, our societies will meander towards situations in which cross-border dynamics unleash increasing instability, volatility and crises of the legitimacy of “politics”, the ability of which to shape the outcomes of these challenges is limited.

The “old foreign policy” of the 19th and 20th centuries was closely intertwined with security policy in order to protect the internal and external sovereignty of states. The “new foreign policy” must be interwoven with almost every other field of politics that is involved in the global networks of interdependence. “Global domestic policy” and “global governance” are terms that seek to illustrate this new reality: reflections on them can be found as far back as the 1980 Brandt Report and the 1995 report of the Commission on Global Governance. In these early phases of the discussion of global governance

9 OECD, *Shifting wealth* (Paris, 2010); UNDP, *The Rise of the South. Human progress in a diverse world* (New York: UNDP, 2013).

10 Will Steffen, Paul J. Crutzen and John R. McNeill, “The Anthropocene: Are humans now overwhelming the great forces of nature,” *Ambio* 36, no. 8 (2000): 614–621; Dirk Messner, “Globale Ressourcenknappheiten und Erdsystemgrenzen im Anthropozän. Treiber Lösungsansätze und Ambitionsniveaus der Transformation zur Nachhaltigkeit,” in M. Reder, & H. Pfeifer, eds., *Kampf um Ressourcen. Weltordnung zwischen Konkurrenz und Kooperation* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2012), 138–158.

however, the second, third and fourth waves of global transformation were not yet discernible.¹¹ These concepts are not popular, as quick, simple progress can hardly be expected. At the same time, no blueprints have been drawn up for how the transformation of global cooperation would need to look in order to live up to the new realities. Instead, current literature on global governance is pervaded by a deep-seated scepticism towards cooperation.¹² The “No one’s world”¹³ is described as a warning sign. However, the future of German and European foreign policy must still be discussed, in light of the phenomenon of “comprehensive globalisation” and towards the search for new patterns of international cooperation. The only alternative would be to carry on as if there were no global interdependencies; a pattern of action which was applied by the international community prior to the current global financial market crisis. However, denial, escapism and a refusal to face up to reality would not appear to be viable strategies for the future.

2 Expectations of Germany as a Global Agenda Setting Power

Germany is thriving economically right now. Its international partners expect it to make larger contributions to managing international crises and shaping global processes. This opens up room to manoeuvre, but it also implies a high level of demand placed on German policy. Germany’s situation is a bit like China’s. Only two decades ago, Germany was (like China) still a minor political figure on the foreign and global policy stage. Today the two countries must take a position on nearly all foreign and global policy issues. These external expectations are not easily met. Doing so requires worldwide networks, agenda-setting capabilities, prioritisation, financial and human resources, military capacities, international and global expertise in nearly every ministry, and internationally well-positioned and networked research on global issues. All of these capacities can only be developed incrementally. The placement of rapidly rising external expectations on those responsible for foreign and global

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- 11 Dirk Messner, Franz Nuscheler, “Global Governance—Herausforderungen an die deutsche Politik an der Schwelle zum 21. Jahrhundert,” *Policy Paper*, no. 2 (Bonn: Stiftung Entwicklung und Frieden, 1996).
 - 12 Ian Bremmer, *Every nation for itself. Winners and losers in a G-Zero World* (New York: Portfolio, 2012); David Held, Tom Hale and Kevin Young, *Gridlock. Why cooperation is failing when we need it most* (London: John Wiley & Sons, 2012); Charles Kupchan, *No one’s world* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).
 - 13 Kupchan, *No one’s world*, 2012.

policy in a country that used to play more in the second league can easily lead to a kitchen-sink approach: help shape things a bit everywhere, be a bit present everywhere, try not to disappoint anyone. This kind of ad hoc-ism is, however, the opposite of strategic action.

While the comparison with China is not without warrant, there are significant differences. Unlike China, Germany needs a strong EU and Eurozone as a framework and support for the use of the aforementioned instruments of a global agenda setting power.¹⁴ If Germany is to become an influential global political actor, it cannot go it alone, but rather must work within the context of the EU; the EU as a network of nations might become a central pole of the newly emerging global order.¹⁵

The reflections of three external observers of German foreign relations outline the challenges that Germany faces. Andrew Cooper, one of the leading researchers in the field of global governance dynamics, recently remarked: “Germany is, after the US and China, the country with the greatest potential influence in world politics thanks to its economic progress, its highly regarded model of society, and its pioneering role in climate-change and energy policy.” Commenting on the foreign policy significance of the German transition to green energy, Jennifer Morgan, Director of the Climate and Energy Programme at the World Resources Institute in Washington DC, said: “If the US government had introduced such an epochal shift to sustainable energy, it would have sent hundreds of energy ambassadors out into the world to tout this policy in order to gain allies and shape the direction of global energy transformation as it did after the announcement of the Apollo Programme and during the Marshall Plan; nothing comparable, however, is being seen in Germany”. A member of an OECD expert commission that evaluated German development policy in 2010 summed up his impressions as follows: “All of this does not feel like one of the most important bilateral donors, like a global player. Germany is punching below its weight”.¹⁶

14 Jürgen Habermas, *Zur Verfassung Europas* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2011).

15 ETTG (European Think Tank Group), *Our Collective Interest. Why Europe's Problems Need Global Solutions and Global Problems need European Action* (London/ Brussels: ETTG, 2014).

16 This quote and the statements preceding it are based on interviews conducted by the author with the individuals in question; Cooper in 2014, Morgan in 2013 and the OECD expert in 2010.

3 After the Agenda-setting Speeches on Foreign and Security Policy: Germany as a Driver for a Global Transformation

Against this backdrop, the agenda-setting speech by Federal President Gauck at the 2014 Munich Security Conference and similar statements by Foreign Minister Steinmeier, Defence Minister von der Leyen and Development Minister Müller were important wake-up calls about Germany's increased responsibility in foreign policy and world politics.¹⁷ These public statements have initially focused on security policy issues. A quick glance at world political events of the past few months shows that these fields remain pivotal and, unfortunately, do not appear to lose importance. The authoritarian ruler of the Syrian regime can still feel relatively safe from military intervention after failed attempts by some Western states to induce regime change in other authoritarian states in order to enforce democratic structures from the outside. In Libya, a dictator was toppled with assistance from outside, but support for reconstruction remains limited and the state is in danger of failing. The "Islamic State" represents a globally networked terrorist organisation that is occupying whole regions of Syria and Iraq and has advanced as far as the borders of Turkey, a NATO member. Mali, the Central African Republic, South Sudan and Afghanistan are representing the roughly 30 countries¹⁸ that can be described as failed states, and from which regional or global security risks potentially emanate. Beyond this, the Ukraine crisis demonstrates that even in Europe, territorial conflicts that were long believed to have been overcome have not in fact been relegated to the past. Security thus is and remains a pivotal field of foreign policy. Tectonic power shifts and the attendant rivalries between "old" and emerging powers, have created new security problems and are making these problems even more difficult to handle.

But problems of global interdependence extend beyond the field of security policy, as the outlines of the four waves of global transformation show. Global sustainability policy is another vital field that must be tackled through international cooperation. The catch phrases are familiar: in the dawning Anthropocene Era, human beings are becoming a force altering the Earth

17 See also the home-pages of the German Federal Foreign Office and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development on which these future discussions are conducted: <http://www.review2014.de/> (May 1, 2015); <https://www.zukunftscharta.de/zukunftscharta/de/home> (May 1, 2015).

18 Joerg Faust, Joern Gravingholt and Sebastian Ziaja, Foreign aid and the fragile consensus on state fragility. *Discussion Paper 8/2013* (Bonn: German Development institute/ Deutsches Institut fuer Entwicklungspolitik, 2013).

system, with irreversible and virtually unforeseeable consequences for human civilisation;¹⁹ scientists have described runaway climate change and other planetary tipping points at great length.²⁰ Humanity is becoming the de facto architect of the Earth system, but has so far refused to face up to this role, which is arguably the greatest formative task of the 21st century. Many observers consider these challenges to be environmental policy issues (“soft politics”, peripheral realms of international policy) that one might approach with greater or lesser degrees of engagement and enthusiasm. But what is actually at stake here is a profound transformation of the global economy and the organisation of prosperity, security, and democracy in a nine-billion-people civilisation within the boundaries of the Earth system.²¹ Our planet is the greatest global common good, one that needs to be stabilised and preserved for many future generations to come. The issue of sustainability in the 21st century will be as pivotal for the future viability of the global market economy as the embedding of capitalist dynamics in democratic social welfare systems was in Western industrial societies after the Industrial Revolution.²²

It is time for an agenda-setting speech on Germany's role in global sustainability policy, and “climate Chancellor” Merkel would be the ideal person to deliver it. The Federal President, the Foreign Minister, and the Development, Environment, and Education and Research Ministers could play important roles here, too. They must make plain that a global transformation to sustainability needs to take place within a narrow window of time, and that this task cannot be postponed even in the face of multifarious resurgent security problems. A German strategy for sustainable global development could comprise four components:

- a) An effective international energy policy should bring together countries to form a transformative club that advances ambitious energy transformations towards renewables while also accelerating the climate-change

19 Williams et al., *The Anthropocene*, 2012; Messner, *Globale Ressourcenknappheiten und Erdsystemgrenzen im Anthropozän*, 2012; WBGU, *World in Transition—A Social Contract for Sustainability* (Berlin: WBGU, 2011).

20 Timothy Lenton et al., “Tipping Elements in the Earth's climate system,” *PNAS* 105, no. 6 (2007): 1786–1793; IPCC, *Fifth Assessment Report* (2014), <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5>.

21 Johan Rockström et al., “Planetary Boundaries. Exploring the Safe Operating Space for Humanity,” *Ecology and Society* 14, no. 2 (2009): 32–39; William Nordhaus, *The climate casino* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2013); WBGU, *Human Progress within Planetary Guardrails*, 2014; WBGU, *Climate Protection as a World Citizen Movement*, 2014.

22 Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1944); WBGU, *World in Transition*, 2011.

negotiation process. The “Renewables Club” founded by former Environment Minister Altmaier could be the starting point for such an initiative. Significant joint investments in research, education, and outreach; regulatory learning processes; and potentially, trade policies would be oriented towards creating shared advantages. Clubs could develop transformative potential through a range of characteristics. *Speed*: Mancur Olson argued as long ago as 1965 that small groups reach agreements more quickly, as there is a higher degree of social pressure between their members than between members of large groups, such as in the context of the UNFCCC process.²³ *Level of ambition*: Smaller groups can be more ambitious in their objectives and generate more visible shared benefits for all stakeholders than large groups, which are often based around the lowest common denominator.²⁴ *Implementation mechanisms*: By using positive incentives (club benefits) and sanctions (such as the threat of membership suspension), clubs are better placed to avoid free-riding by members and therefore to implement their goals more effectively than large alliances.²⁵ Ambitious clubs can use these mechanisms to encourage other actors to follow their lead, as they show what is possible. In this way, a transformative green energy club could bring about political tipping points in the UN climate process. At national level and as a group, the club members would pursue significantly more ambitious objectives than those currently achievable in climate-change negotiations, while also representing a more ambitious position as a club within the climate-change negotiation process. Last but not least, the club approach can be scaled up by admitting new members, with the club’s initially exclusive logic becoming progressively inclusive in the medium term.²⁶ The creation of a transformative green energy club would therefore accelerate processes of transition to low carbon global economy and would at the same time incrementally improve the conditions for a successful multilateral climate regime.²⁷

23 Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Harvard, 1965).

24 Frank Biermann, Philipp Pattberg and Harro van Asselt, “The Fragmentation of Global Governance Architectures. A Framework for Analysis,” *Global Environmental Politics* 9, no. 4 (2009): 14–40.

25 Joseph E. Aldy, Scott Barrett and Robert N. Stavins, “Thirteen Plus One: A Comparison of Climate Policy Architectures,” *Climate Policy* 3, no. 4 (2003): 373–397.

26 WBGU, *Climate Protection as a World Citizen Movement* (Berlin: WBGU, 2014).

27 Dirk Messner, John Schellnhuber, Jennifer Morgan, “A Renewables Club to Change the World,” *The Current Column* (Bonn: German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), 2014).

- b) The largest *global middle classes* in the world economy will take shape in the next two decades in the emerging economies, most notably in Asia.²⁸ This trend is tied with the most extensive *urbanisation trend* in the history of humanity.²⁹ Today 50% of the world's population lives in cities; by 2050, 80% will. Both of these trends must be decoupled from climate-damaging greenhouse gas emissions, resource exploitation, and excessive strain on ecosystems in order to prevent turbulences within the planet's ecosystems in the second half of this century. Germany is highly regarded—particularly in the emerging economies—as an economically and technologically strong sustainability pioneer. Concrete reciprocal partnerships with a select group of emerging economies (or regions in these countries) should be initiated in order to strengthen transformations to sustainability. Energy and mobility systems, green urban infrastructures, resource-efficient and low carbon innovations, and a strategy for transformation to sustainability would be at the centre of these partnerships. Their starting points would be joint research and training efforts, ambitious standards (e.g. in energy efficiency of buildings and in electric vehicles), the interlinking of emissions trading systems (which would require a reform of the European system), joint initiatives for sustainability in international organisations (such as the World Bank), and negotiation processes (such as climate-change negotiations).³⁰ The stated goal would be to build up transformative alliances with companies, societies and states together with emerging economies in order to strengthen the shift to a low carbon and resource-efficient world economy. Such a strategy would create markets for “green” innovation processes and would thus also be in the interest of German and European economic competitive advantages. In order to establish such transformative alliances, Germany and Europe would have to do their homework on sustainability.³¹ This would imply, first of all, systematically linking investment and growth strategies with concepts of climate neutrality, resource conservation and recycling. Secondly, Germany would need to push hard for a reform of the European Emissions Trading System.

28 Homi Kharas, *The Emerging Middle Class in Developing Countries*, OECD Development Centre Working Paper No. 285 (OECD Publishing, 2010).

29 WBGU, *World in Transition*, 2011.

30 WBGU, *World in Transition*, 2011; Dirk Messner, Alejandro Guarín and Daniel Haun, “The Behavioural Dimensions of International Cooperation”, *Research Papers 1* (Duisburg: Centre for Global Cooperation, 2013).

31 ETTG, *Our Collective Interest*, 2014.

Thirdly, the country would need to work to ensure that economic factors are systematically linked with sustainability requirements in negotiations on a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP).

- c) In the 21st century, *knowledge* will stand alongside (international) law and the intelligent use of soft power and money (to finance cross-border initiatives) as one of the most vital resources of international cooperation. “The main fuel to speed the world’s progress is our stock of knowledge”.³² However, it is important how this stock of knowledge is built up. If global cooperation is to be boosted, then it will be necessary to expand cross-border knowledge partnerships, particularly those with developing countries and emerging economies. International science policy and knowledge collaboration in a broader sense generate commonly accepted knowledge on global issues of the future, thereby providing legitimacy for joint action.³³ The World Bank has placed knowledge collaboration at the heart of its forward-looking strategy.³⁴ Germany could go one step further in this field than the World Bank, which is successfully establishing an increasing number of internationally connected knowledge platforms dealing with global development issues.³⁵ If global commons (such as the oceans, the climate system and resilient financial markets) are to be protected and global interdependencies managed effectively, then there is an urgent need to develop problem-solving approaches on a consistent basis from the perspective of global system logics and risks and of global common goods. However, even in the field of (applied) research into global development issues, the dominant perspectives have so far been those that are rooted in individual nation-state (ultimately, particular) outlooks. “Comprehensive globalization” necessitates that these “nationally focused” lines of research into global development matters be complemented by “world knowledge” that is thought through consistently from the perspective of the increasingly significant

32 Julian Lincoln Simon, *The ultimate resource 2* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1998): XVIII.

33 World Bank, *The World Bank Annual Report 2012, Volume 2: Responding with knowledge and experience* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2012); Joerg Faust, Dirk Messner, “Probleme globale Entwicklung und die ministerielle Organisation der Entwicklungspolitik,” *Zeitschrift für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik* 2, no. 5 (2012): 165–176.

34 World Bank, *The World Bank Annual Report*, 2012.

35 See, for example: www.greengrowthknowledge.org (May 1, 2015); www.jobsknowledge.org (May 1, 2015); www.urbanknowledge.org (May 1, 2015).

global systems.³⁶ In this field, too, Germany is highly regarded and has tremendous potential to become a major global node in the fields of knowledge that engage with worldwide sustainability issues.³⁷ In this context, the concept of knowledge cooperation must be re-imagined in conjunction with the roll-out of digital communications technology. Until recently, dense and high-speed communications networks, access to bodies of knowledge and libraries, and knowledge dialogue, all of them on an international scale, were the privileges of the Western middle classes and global elites. But the situation is changing rapidly. In 2000, just 700 million people, 70% of whom lived in OECD countries, had a mobile phone, giving many of them mobile access to the internet and global communications networks. By 2012, there were six billion mobile phone connections, with 75% of them in non-OECD countries. This is increasingly opening up completely new opportunities for collaboration as part of international knowledge cooperation, whether through joint research in virtual labs and networks, access to shared knowledge bases, and data with no need to construct expensive libraries in developing countries, or access to virtual learning events delivered by the best regional and global researchers as a public good. There is enormous scope here for social innovation in developing new forms of international knowledge cooperation:

36 In Germany, for example, the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, the Kiel Institute for the World Economy and the German Development Institute (DIE) are working in different dimensions of global development. Given that the addressees of the policy advice based on the research carried out by these institutes are, generally speaking, firstly the German Government, then the European Union, it is not surprising that the solutions proposed show a “German” or “European” bias. Against this backdrop, the Global Governance School at DIE, where researchers and research institutions from Europe and emerging economies work together on common solutions to global problems, is a social innovation. However, practical experience at the Global Governance School also shows how difficult it is, even for researchers, to put national perspectives to one side, that is, to break away from patterns of conventional international cooperation and (at least in theory) to adopt a global system perspective in which we are all global citizens: “Imagine that we had to solve the problems of climate change and financial market volatility not from the point of view of Germany, Europe, Brazil, China, India, South Africa, or Mexico, but rather from the perspective of an emerging global society. What conclusions would we draw then?”

37 WBGU, *World in Transition*, 2011.

This shift is due to continued simultaneous performance improvements and cost declines in both mobile phone devices and networks, and it has an important consequence: it will bring billions of people into the community of potential knowledge creators, problem solvers, and innovators.³⁸

- d) *Development policy* needs to move from being an aid industry to a driving force for building international alliances to shape global development dynamics in future. This would allow it to make major contributions to a German strategy for *sustainable global development* (Faust and Messner 2012; WBGU 2014a). On the one hand, this is a matter of continuing to combat poverty, especially in the roughly 30 countries that are known for being “failing states”. In this area, stabilisation of states and societies must be linked together with efforts to combat poverty (in cooperation between the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Federal Foreign Office and Federal Ministry of Defence). On the other hand, approaches should be taken which support transformations to sustainability and inclusive development in three groups of countries. Firstly, in the resource-rich countries of Africa and Latin America, these initiatives should prevent the familiar “resource curse” dynamic in times of high raw materials prices and mobilise growing foreign exchange revenues for sustainable development. Secondly, in the rapidly growing emerging economies, strategic partnerships can (as suggested above) create pro-poor sustainability pilot programmes (in this area, initiatives of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development would need to be sensibly combined with those of other ministries). Thirdly, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development has a comparative advantage over other ministries in cooperation with the large group of “in-between” societies that count among neither the poorest and most fragile states nor the ascending newly emerging powers—Vietnam, Peru, Caucasus countries, Morocco, and Kenya are examples of these “in-between” countries. In this group in particular, important trajectories will be set in the energy and infrastructure sectors over the coming decades, with significant and path-dependent consequences for natural resources, greenhouse gas emissions, and ecosystems, both locally and globally. When it comes to cooperation with emerging-economy societies and “in-between” countries, it is not only about selecting the “correct” areas for cooperation, but also about how

38 Brynjolfsson & McAfee, *The Second Machine Age*, 2014, at 95.

that cooperation is conducted. One of the key challenges is to develop an increasing number of cooperation models that are based on reciprocal partnership and that fuel change processes on both sides—in partner countries and in Germany. Conventional models of development cooperation that are geared towards shaping policies in developing countries and emerging economies, but that exclude or fail to consider cooperation in the other direction to change policies in Germany and Europe are losing legitimacy. “Meddling” in the internal affairs of partner countries is only likely to work in future if both partners are permitted to do so. To give a specific example, this would mean that cooperation between Germany and India as part of an energy partnership or an initiative for strengthening sectoral recycling industries should increasingly involve collaboration between networks of actors from the two countries who initiate or support reform processes in India and in Germany on an equal basis. Cooperating with increasingly self-confident countries would mark a shift away from established North-South, donor-recipient, and developed-underdeveloped patterns of collaboration associated with the old model of development cooperation. Development policy is therefore about quality of cooperation, about generating strategic impetus for transformations towards sustainability, and about jettisoning paternalistic patterns of cooperation,³⁹ but it is as well about quantity and real investment. If Germany wants to realign its role in the world and boost its international reputation, it should move up from its mid-table position among countries that invest in development cooperation (measured in terms of Official Development Assistance (ODA) provided in relation to their GNP, these “mid-table” countries include Australia, Austria, France and Belgium) to join the leading group of countries, which includes Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and the UK.⁴⁰

Many of the elements that have been outlined in this paper already exist, but the effort to root them in international politics must be greatly increased—by, let's say, a factor of 2–5 by 2025. “Factor 2–5” demands a broad range of efforts: “scale matters”, that is, the scale of investments in different areas must be increased; bundling the instruments and activities of different ministries and other players into effective packages is important; the priorities in this pooling must be clear in order to have an impact; international agenda-setting

39 Faust & Messner, “Probleme globale Entwicklung und die ministerielle Organisation der Entwicklungspolitik,” 2012.

40 OECD, *Development Cooperation Report* (Paris: OECD, 2013).

efforts must be stepped up; Germany's presence and active shaping role in international organisations and networks needs to be expanded; cooperation between the political and academic realms should be developed further. A corresponding strategy must not only apply to the use of German instruments, but also be introduced correspondingly into EU foreign, development, energy and climate policy.⁴¹

4 Transformative Pragmatism that Brings about a Leap Forward in the Quality of International Cooperation

A boost to the quality of international cooperation will not occur through a "big bang" (e.g. through swift and comprehensive reform of the United Nations or through a perfect climate regime as the outcome of the 2015 climate-change negotiations in Paris), as the new reality in international politics described at the beginning of this paper makes such an event inconceivable in the next few years.⁴² An incremental "a little bit more everywhere, everything a bit better" approach, however, is not a viable alternative. What is needed, rather, is for Germany to take an ambitious approach to strengthening its international role, an approach that ties pragmatism together with a demand for transformative action. Many of the elements needed to increase Germany's capacity to exert a formative influence are already present in some fields of foreign relations, and now they can be strengthened through pooling of individual initiatives, clear prioritisation, global agenda-setting and astute network-building, as well as through additional investment. The "new foreign relations" must be sustained by many ministries as well as exponentiated through interaction among them and with society and academia.⁴³ Within this framework the Federal Foreign Office is gaining, alongside the "traditional tasks" of diplomacy and of foreign and security policy, a vital role as a "network manager", making it possible to bring together various contributions of different ministries and action in joint corridors of action. In so doing, the Federal Foreign Office is thereby dependent on other strong and capable ministries contributing their

41 ETTG, *Our Collective Interest*, 2014.

42 WBGU, *The Budget Approach. How to Solve the Climate Dilemma* (Berlin: WBGU, 2009); WBGU, *Climate Protection as a World Citizen Movement*, 2014.

43 Zuern et al., *Bringing Sociology to International Relations*, 2014; Dirk Messner, Ist Außenpolitik noch Außenpolitik...und was ist eigentlich Innenpolitik? *PROKLA* 118 (2000): 112–145.

own respective competencies. Increasing its impact by a factor of 2–5 would be an aspiration for Germany as a relevant global player on the way to 2025.

This path has both continuities and new challenges. Germany's role as a global agenda-setting power working in close coordination with its European partners to advance European foreign policy shows continuity. With the new European Commission, whose programme includes establishing stronger links between outward-looking EU policies, beginning its work in autumn 2014, the next steps can be taken.⁴⁴ An orientation towards multilateral solutions and towards strengthening international law is another form of continuity, which is often severely put to the test in the context of power shifts and rivalries, flexible and polycentric architectures of power, and the weakness and resistance to reform of many international organisations, but which nonetheless must not be given up as a point of orientation. There is also specific room for improvement in this context, with the 2015 climate-change negotiation process in Paris providing an opportunity for Europe to work with its partners to establish at least some ambitious elements of a global climate agreement.⁴⁵ The Ebola crisis has revealed a clear and urgent need for the WHO to be reformed, strengthened, and placed on a solid financial footing. At the same time, the World Bank is undergoing a dynamic process of reform that could be more visibly supported by Germany and Europe.

A greater emphasis should be placed on building up alliances of trailblazers and clubs of the like-minded that can move projects forward more quickly and ambitiously than is possible within comprehensive multilateral processes which always have to take into account laggards and foot-draggers (see the aforementioned example of an ambitious club of countries shifting to green energy). Today's EU, Eurozone and WTO also started out as smaller clubs, gained the shared advantages of a club, increased their attractiveness, and thereby created impetus for broader multilateralism. Ambitious clubs could move the politics of global sustainability across various tipping points towards a sustainable global economy and Germany could play an important role in this area.

The creation of a global culture of cooperation is a formidable challenge in the 21st century if we do have a chance of giving shape to the increasingly dense network of global interdependencies, keep global systemic risks in check and stabilise the situation of our global common goods (above all the planetary ecosystem, but also the international financial markets) and use them on a basis of generally accepted criteria of fairness. We appear to be further away

44 ETTG, *Our Collective Interest*, 2014.

45 WBGU, *Climate Protection as a World Citizen Movement*, 2014.

from achieving this kind of civilisation now than we were just a few years ago. The incompatibility and conflict between the four aforementioned concepts of global order currently in existence (fair global governance and improved multilateralism; neo-imperialistic power play; narrow nation-state perspectives on international cooperation; and Islamic Jihadism) actually run the risk of producing an ice age in international cooperation at precisely the moment when “comprehensive globalization” calls for “comprehensive cooperation” in order to reign in global risks. “Policy disasters”⁴⁶ are conceivable if these road-blocks are not removed. At the same time, the current consolidation and acceleration of globalisation dynamics carries the seeds of an emerging cooperation culture. The Ebola crisis, the movement of refugees towards Europe as they flee failed states in North Africa, and the “Islamic State” on the borders of a NATO member country all demonstrate what has been analysed in global governance literature since the mid-1990s: the reality that there is no longer such thing as a stand-alone nation that is immune to the risks of global interdependencies. The fact that the many different opportunities afforded by globalisation can only be exploited in the long-term on the basis of global cooperation, common regulations, international law, and the cross-border reconciliation of interests is now far more tangible to people than when it was originally debated in initially abstract terms during the global governance debate of the mid-1990s.

Moreover, the clash between the four models of global order could give rise to new and surprising cooperation alliances. The “Islamic State” is serving to remind Europa, the United States, China, Russia, Brazil, India, and many, presumably almost all, other actors of the vital importance of a comprehensive global security architecture paving the way for prosperity and peace in the societies of individual nations and in the emerging global society. Achieving such an architecture under the conditions of comprehensive globalisation will require suitable initiatives, including but not limited to the G20. At the same time, it is likely that many emerging economies such as Brazil and India, and probably also the political actors within China, will view Putin’s neo-imperialistic strategies in the Ukraine with scepticism, as this approach is creating zones of instability and giving rise to the violation of international rules and norms that could undermine the benefits of economic globalisation that depends on rule based trade and the relative certainty of expectations. Therefore, it is conceivable that current global interdependency crises will create new incentives for global cooperation.

46 Patrick Dunleavy, “Policy Disasters”, *Public Policy and Administration* 10, no. 2 (1995): 52–70.

In his work for the “High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda”, former Federal President Horst Köhler has often pointed to the major challenge of creating a culture of global cooperation.⁴⁷ Power shifts, polycentric power structures, and the erosion of North-South and donor-recipient structures—the elements, that is, of the transition to a post-Western world order—demand great efforts to develop a viable and peaceful global architecture of cooperation. Various long-term dynamics are involved: opposing interests must be negotiated and shared interests generated. Dialogue must be conducted about divergent and shared norms and values as well as mechanisms of cooperation that accept cultural diversity without undermining fundamental human rights. Shared production of knowledge can help to work out common perspectives on international problems and shared approaches to solving them. The most important mechanisms of developing and stabilising collaborative relationships are familiar to us from cooperation research: reciprocity, trust, dense networks of communication, positive reputations, fairness, instruments to support rule-abiding behaviour and to sanction free-rider strategies, a sense of common identity, and shared narratives.⁴⁸ The chances of reigning in power plays within collaborative relations and the likelihood of implementing strategies of shared problem-solving against narrowly defined national interests increase in spaces and constellations of players in which these basic mechanisms of cooperation are especially pronounced (e.g. in the EU, despite all the current turmoil). None of this is easy. Setbacks are inevitable, and all the basic mechanisms of cooperation require time and patience. Looking at the foundations for cooperation, it becomes clear within the G20, for example, that it is not only a case of relatively emerging “new powers” and relatively declining “old powers” jostling for power, but that there is also an acute shortage of the aforementioned basic cooperation mechanisms at present. Overcoming this problem would make it possible, or at least easier, to keep selfish power plays in check and to develop an ability to act collectively. Since all the basic mechanisms of cooperation are man-made,

47 Horst Köhler, “Global Partnership—Thoughts on a New Leitmotiv for International Politics,” Jos van Gennip Lecture, The Dutch Senate, January 22nd, 2014, http://www.ncdo.nl/sites/default/files/Speeches%202014%20Jos%20van%20Gennip%20Lecture_o.pdf.

48 Michael Tomasello, *Why We Cooperate* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009); Michael Tomasello, *A Natural History of Human Thinking* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014); Martin Nowak and Roger Highfield, *Supercooperators: Evolution, Altruism and Human Behaviour or Why We Need Each Other to Succeed* (Edinburgh: Free Press, 2012); Dirk Messner, Axel Berger and Carmen Richerzhagen, “Neue Paradigmen der Entwicklungspolitik: Urbanisierung im Zeitalter des Klimawandel,” in Dirk Messner et al., eds., *Globalisierungsgestaltung und internationale Übereinkommen* (Wiesbaden: Springer vs, 2013): 59–98.

the question is: what initiatives would be suitable within the G20 for encouraging investment in the basic conditions of cooperation and for building up “cooperation capital”?⁴⁹

It is clear that a global culture of cooperation equal to the cross-border challenges of the 21st century will not emerge of its own accord from the dynamics of global transformation. Rather, the work of helping to advance this kind of a new global culture of cooperation is one of the gentle tasks of the “new German foreign policy”.

5 Conclusions

1. The debate surrounding Germany's new role in international policy-making is taking place in a specific phase of development in the international system and within the dynamics of global transformation: “Global interdependence is greater than ever before”. Four waves of global transformation have brought about “comprehensive globalisation”, thereby creating a new reality for the international system.

2. Germany currently has great potential for shaping international policy and, aside from the United States and China, is perhaps one of the countries from which the greatest things are expected. The agenda-setting foreign policy speeches by Federal President Gauck and Foreign Minister Steinmeier addressed in 2014 this weight of expectation, rightly highlighting the challenges it poses for the nation's policy-making.

3. Germany could play a transformative role in global sustainability policy. Four starting points (energy-related foreign policy, transformative alliances with emerging economies and powers, new patterns of international research cooperation, and sustainability partnerships with “in-between” countries such as Vietnam, Peru, Morocco and Kenya) are outlined for significantly increasing Germany's international impact in this field (“factor of 2–5 by 2025”).

4. A transformative development in international cooperation relationships raises some fundamental questions for the German government. How can the international capabilities of all the ministries be mobilised and networked? Can collaboration within alliances of trailblazers (e.g. on sustainability policy) reinvigorate the multilateralism that is currently blocked in many areas? How can a culture of global cooperation be fostered successfully? And how can this be achieved at a point in history when incompatible or barely compatible concepts of global order are colliding with one another, be they a) visions of a fair

49 Messner et al., *The Behavioural Dimensions of International Cooperation*, 2013.

and inclusive global governance architecture based on shared sovereignty, the development of global common perspectives and the reconciliation of interests, b) a neo-imperialistic approach à la Putin based on classic power play, c) the world views of many emerging powers (such as Brazil, China and India) that draw still heavily on classic concepts of national sovereignty and self-interested foreign policy or d) Jihadism, which seeks the destruction of others and is developing into an internationally connected political power.