"That's classic ministerial thinking... they could legitimize themselves through co-operation. But then you put yourself to the test, and you'd have to prove what you are better at, and where you could complement each other. I am sure that the BMBF manages a lot of things better than the BMZ – and vice versa. But it is eas-ier to stick to the institutional divisions as on paper than to reflect about the own capacities, what one's specific role could be. Thereby you would enter terrains you don't feel secure on." (EE06)

In more recent funding initiatives, a change in practices can be noticed, however – both in view of cooperating with other German ministries as well as in view of coop-eration with the partner countries' governments. For GlobE (BMBF 2011e) the BMBF and the BMZ cooperated in setting up the programme with distributed responsibil-ities. While GlobE still did not combine *instruments* of development cooperation and research funding, at least the financial funding was co-organized; the BMBF funds the German research partners, the BMZ funds the international CGIAR centres in-volved in the funding initiative (interviews with PA13, EE06). Here, an underlying reason of including the BMZ into the policy-making coalition probably was their access and available funding for the renowned CGIAR centres, which are conceived of as important research institutions in the thematic area of the call.

7.2   Cooperation countries: From objects of policy to partners in policy making

The countries that the BMBF funds research projects in and with present an inter-esting case. They are neither friends nor rivals: Rather, changes in the discourse on the modes of cooperation (ch. 9.4) convert them into speakers that the BMBF cannot exclude from policy production anymore. Thus, while they used to be ne-glected actors, they are now turning into partners within the production of policy discourse. In the past, the Sustainability Subdepartment did not necessarily co-ordinate their policy initiatives with the respective partner countries in bilateral agreements. This is mirrored in the BMBF's public strategic documents, which give little room to the needs and demands of the partner countries – or how these are going to be jointly negotiated. Instead of determining partnerships jointly on the policy level, the selection of cooperation countries was left to the researchers ap-plying for funding in IWRM and Megacities research. While in case of the call for proposals of the IWRM funding initiative, a few world regions were specified by the ministry, in case of the Megacities initiative, no partner countries were defined through the call for proposals at all (BMBF 2004a; 2004b). Based on the researchers' choices, in the Megacities initiative, research projects in/with Ethiopia and Iran – countries without cooperation agreements – were funded next to projects from

Peru, Morocco, China, India, South Africa and Vietnam, which have cooperation agreements with the BMBF (PT-DLR 2012). The BMBF did not seize its decision power over cooperation countries – thus allowing coincidences of the researchers' preferences to influence the policy direction, thereby introducing an element of coincidence. Next to diverse researchers' preferences, a further fact enhanced the wide spectrum of partner countries. In contrast to other policy fields of international cooperation, such as development cooperation, no external regulations delimit the range of potential partner countries in research cooperation.

In some cases, the thematic starting point of the Sustainability Subdepartment's unilateral funding initiatives even lead to the paradox situation that it funded cooperation with and in a partner country that officially *had* an ST&I cooperation agreement with Germany, but the research project took place outside of the frame of the agreement – as in the case of IWAS Brazil, for example. The practice of leaving the selection of partner countries up to the researchers, paired with the lack of cooperation between the BMBF departments thus led to the implementation of research cooperation projects in official partner countries which were not endorsed by the partner country's government or formally backed up and framed through the valid ST&I cooperation agreement (interview with EE08). The absence of partner country representatives from the discourse coalition within the agenda-setting process of older BMBF funding initiatives, such as IWRM or Megacities, thereby defied strategic action of the BMBF as a whole, as it often undermined the role of ST&I agreements set up and followed by the International Department.

So why did the Sustainability Department consent to – even promote – this loss of steering power, leading to a lack policy coherence within the ministry? Interviewees in the Sustainability Subdepartment justified funding unilateral initiatives in cooperation with developing countries and emerging economies by *freedom of research*, which included the choice of partner countries. At the same time, leaving the research country up to the researchers' choice also likely had practical reasons: A prescreening of all potential partner countries for a topic, let alone negotiations with these partner countries' governments about potential cofunding before a call for proposals, would have led to large-scale administrative efforts.

Beyond all arguments based on research ethics or bureaucratic reasoning, the ministerial practice of leaving the choice of partner countries open to researchers clearly embodies the perception of partner countries as research *subjects* rather than as *partners* on eyelevel (ch. 9). Excluding partner countries from discourse production severely neglected the partner countries' governments' rightful interest in influence on agenda setting – as well as the potential benefits that might arise from joint policy making.

In addition, the practice of funding unilateral initiatives, the lack of the involvement of the partner countries' government in decision making and the absence of

coordination with the International Department in many cases led to negative impacts in view of the implementation of the funded projects in practice. Researchers in the partner country did not receive matched funding and lacked political back up in the partner country, which had further negative consequences (ch. 9, 10). The lack of cooperation on the policy level was perceived as problematic both by researchers involved in cooperation projects as well as by partner country officials and is actually counter-intuitive to the impact that the ministry envisaged as a result of the projects (fieldnotes LiWa and IWAS Brazil, 01.08.2012 to 30.11.2012; interviews with EE08, EE13).

Interviewees from the BMZ, more sensitive to partnership issues after decades of debate on concepts such as ownership in development cooperation, emphasized the importance of joint agenda setting and noticed a change in more recent BMBF practice:

> "We don't issue programmes to be implemented in developing countries that are not induced by decisive actors there. So, in the end we do not act without concertation, we don't create unilateral programmes or define topics. We involve the relevant voices in the partner countries in the programme design beforehand. That's a BMZ principle which we advertise in all other ministries, including the BMBF. We perceive the BMBF to be on track in its more recent programmes." (PA16)

While the BMBF's recent determination to cooperate *on eyelevel* and create impact abroad already was foreshadowed in the discourse underlying the IWRM or Megacities initiative (ch. 9), not involving the partner countries' governments in the design of the IWRM or Megacities initiatives still contrasts with the ambitions. In SKAD terms, the practices and the dispositive of the discourse on cooperation with developing countries and emerging economies had not yet adjusted to the changing contents.

In more recent funding initiatives of the Sustainability Subdepartment as well as other thematic departments, a change in the practices of policy making can be observed. The examples of more recent funding initiatives thereby illustrate how a change on the level of discourse *contents* – the shared assumptions on the way in which cooperation should take place, the generally accepted ideas of modes of cooperation, stemming from discourses beyond science policy (ch. 9) – causes a change in practices as well as an inclusion of new actors. As such, the African RSSCs or CLIENT were defined in cooperation with the partner countries – who were thus included as speakers in the policy discourse (BMBF 2010b; 2015i; interview with PT01).

The example of CLIENT, a funding initiative for International Partnerships for Sustainable Technologies and Services for Climate Protection and the Environment (BMBF 2010b; 2015i) demonstrates that often discourse-external events lead to discursive change. In case of CLIENT, political initiatives at a larger scale seem to

have opened up the potential spaces for further speakers: During the G8 summit in Heiligendamm in 2007, the eight leading industrial nations agreed to establish a closer dialogue with developing countries and emerging economies, especially in view of climate change – not only on the political level, but in research as well (Bundesregierung 2009b). In order to strengthen science policy cooperation and to coordinate research agendas between Germany and BRICS countries on sustainability issues, the BMBF initiated a Dialogue for Sustainability in 2008 as a follow up. In the frame of the Dialogue for Sustainability, scientists identified topics of mutual interest in several conferences, which later turned into the basis of CLIENT as a joint research initiative between Germany, the BRICS states and Vietnam (BMBF 2009b; 2009c; BMBF and MCT 2010; BMBF and DST South Africa 2010; BMBF and DST India 2011).

In CLIENT as well as the African Regional Science Service Centers SASSCAL and WASCAL, the BMBF engaged in a dialogue and negotiation process with the partner countries' governments from the beginning. The process involved repeated meetings and long consensus building sessions (interview with PT01). In the more recent initiatives for cooperative research, the partner countries thus turned into speakers within the discourse on policy making for international cooperation in the Sustainability Subdepartment, occupying a valid speaker position and contributing their ideas on topic and mode of cooperation.

While in the case of CLIENT, partner countries cofunded the research partners in the respective partner country (interview with PA6), in the case of the RSSCs, opening a speaker's slot for partner countries cannot be attributed to their financial resources – the BMBF remained the principal provider of funding in the first phase of establishing the centres (interview with PT01). Whereas in case of CLIENT, the financial resources of the partners thus likely played a role, in view of the African RSSCs reasons for changing the circle of actors included in agenda setting (and thus in discourse production) may rather be explained by the changed framing and new importance attributed to cooperation. The political commitment on a high international level – thus external circumstances – as well a previous discursive change towards *cooperation on eyelevel* within the ministry (ch. 9) influenced who was considered as a valid speaker in the discourse coalition. The change in the discourse's contents led to a change of actors and practices, a phenomenon interesting in view of discourse production and coalitions.

The changes in the underlying ideas and in the practice of policy making in cases such as the RSSCs and CLIENT bear a potential of turning into institutionalized practice and dispositive – thus of standardly including partner countries in policy decisions. The Sustainability Subdepartment increasingly acknowledges the importance of coordinating their international activities with the respective partner countries: In this vein, FONA3 emphasizes that international cooperation in its frame shall be based on joint interest as one of the guiding principles, and explic-

itly states that cooperation shall take place in the frame of ST&I agreements (BMBF 2015e). The development to include partner countries in the production of policy discourse might ironically also lead to internal ministerial rearrangements: Opening up towards partner countries in agenda setting might pave the way to an enhanced cooperation between the departments – as the International Department's knowledge about cooperation as well as responsibilities for international cooperation agreements turn into useful knowledge for the Sustainability Subdepartment. This might potentially create a speaker position for the International Department in the policy creation. At the same time, the development also theoretically might lead to the abolishment of the International Department: Some interviewees have argued that the expertise on internationalisation might be better utilized if it were integrated into the thematic departments by dissolving the separate International Department and incorporating the staff and its expertise within the thematic ones (interviews with PA09, PA14).

7.3   Discourse coalitions

In contrast to the actors standardly *excluded* from the discourse production in policy making, other actors are routinely *included*. According to Keller, discourse coalitions may emerge as a coincidence if social actors support the same ideas or storylines. However, they may also be a (conscious) strategy of discourse reproduction (Keller 2013). Discourse coalitions – jointly supporting a specific discourse – contribute to *stabilizing* a discourse's meaning: More speaker positions are occupied by actors who share the same idea and argue in the same way. In case of policy making for research cooperation with developing countries and emerging economies, I argue that forming a discourse coalition has further functions. While the coalition stabilizes the discourse on the one hand and the consultation of experts adds legitimacy to policy decisions, there are also discourse-external effects that influence the specific actor constellation. The BMBF is in a position to gate-keep: While taking on board actors who stabilize the BMBF's discourse and add legitimacy, at the same time the ministry maintains its power over the further discourse production, its direction as well as the distribution of resources. Power thus is a central element in the case of coalition building scrutinized here. However, as often, reality is complex – as the distribution of power between the ministry and the project management agencies illustrates. Next to the project management agencies, the BMBF builds a coalition with different external experts as representatives of the research community – both on the institutional as well as individual level. In the last years, an inclusion of further actors can be observed.