The new interconnector between Doetinchem in the Netherlands and Wesel in Germany is essential to ensure the continued development of the North West European electricity market, to safeguard security of supply and to be able to exchange sustainable electricity. Construction started in 2015 and the interconnector is expected to be fully operational by late 2018. When completed, the interconnector will be 57 kilometres long and will have a physical transport capacity of 1,500 MW. To achieve this, we have installed 108 Wintrack pylons and carried out other construction in the region for over two years.

TenneT is fully aware of the impact, both positive and negative, that the construction of this interconnector has on society and the environment – an impact that will continue when it is up and running. Being honest about the impact of this new interconnector is crucial in our dialogue with stakeholders.

Maria van der Heijden, Director CSR Netherlands: “Infrastructure companies have a vital role to play in the transition towards a sustainable economy. Being transparent about their financial, ecological and social impact is for the benefit of companies and society as a whole.”

As such, we carried out a case study last year into how to monetise the impact of one of our smaller projects in Apeldoorn, link. This year we decided to take the next step and carry out a case study into how to monetise one of our major projects, i.e. the new Doetinchem-Wesel interconnector. Because the methodology is still being developed, we are being transparent about the calculation method we are using and have posted this on our website. The outcome of this case study should not be seen as absolute truth, but as an indication of the most material impact.

Otto Jager, Chief Financial Officer TenneT: “As a company that serves society, we understand that the impact of our projects is multi-layered and not merely financial. With these studies, we aim to be equally transparent about our financial and non-financial impact.”

For this case study, we focussed on the Dutch part of the new interconnector and the impact of the project on Dutch society compared to a situation with no new interconnector. The case study considered all the steps in the value chain, i.e. raw material extraction and production, the construction phase, the operation of the high-voltage connection and end of life.
In each step of the value chain, we determined the financial, social and environmental impact based on the most material aspects. The activities for each of these aspects were then translated into euros, which resulted in positive and negative social, environmental and financial volumes.

The results of the case study show that the economical impact is by far most significant. The economic impact includes the employment generated by the construction and operation of this interconnector, the price benefit of this interconnector when it is in operation and the investment costs, which have a negative economical impact for society.

The societal impact is minimal, because the impact of the connection on the living environment can be seen as neutral, since the new connection is replacing an existing connection. For the environmental impact, carbon footprint, material depletion and biodiversity were taken into account. Although the carbon emissions and material depletion have some impact, this is minimal compared to the economical impact. For more information on the assumptions and conversion factors, click here.