COWI is the chosen consultant to approve the design and construction on the Karnaphuli Tunnel in Bangladesh. The tunnel is part of the One Belt One Road initiative – the world’s largest and most extensive infrastructure investment connecting China with Europe and Africa.

The Karnaphuli Tunnel is a 3.4 km long and complex tunnel under the Karnaphuli river created as a part of a 20 km highway. The aim is to improve the infrastructure in Bangladesh enabling growth and development in the region known for extensive textile production.

The approximately $530 million project is primarily financed by the Chinese through Export-Import Bank of China under the One Belt One Road initiative.

“COWI, together with local consultancies, has been chosen to review and approve the design and ensure that all construction and design meets the standards as described in the project. Having us and the Australian partner SMEC is a condition for the investment and our job is to ensure the right quality in the construction,” says Bo Bendtsen, Vice President in COWI Tunnels and Underground Infrastructure.

The One Belt One Road initiative (OBOR) aims to revive the old Silk Road via a trade and infrastructure network spanning from East Asia to Europe and Africa with roads, railways, ports, pipelines and everything in between in a region with a huge need for improving the infrastructure. $900 billion are planned for investments in the initiative over the next 10 years.

“Connectivity is key in OBOR and this is spot on COWI’s core competencies and services. The Forum was an excellent opportunity to meet with business partners, exchange information on the OBOR initiative and identify areas for further collaboration,” says Tina Vejrum.

“We are consultants on one of the first projects in the OBOR and look forward to hopefully sign up for many more. There will be a huge demand for suppliers within bridge, tunnel and marine projects, where we have a lot of experience,” she adds.

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COWI Wins Bangladesh Tunnel Project

COWI already has extensive experience working in countries along the Silk Road. This includes being responsible for design of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau link, expected completion this year, and the ongoing ShenZhong Link in China as well as being involved in all major suspension bridges in Turkey, most recently the detailed design of Izmit Bay Crossing, which opened to traffic in 2016.

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