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# Media Release

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## University of Toronto researcher receives \$160,000 research award

### Dr. Shashi Kant's work to explore a new method to value Aboriginal land use viewed as key to negotiations of compensation for Aboriginal People

Toronto, Ontario, April 25, 2007 – Principal Investigator **Dr. Shashi Kant, Associate Professor at the University of Toronto**, will receive \$160,000 over two years to explore new methods to value Aboriginal land use activities that could play a key role in helping Aboriginal, government, and industry decision makers. This award is part of a \$3 million investment over two years by the Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Network.

As part of the project – which is supported by Kamloops Indian Band (British Columbia), Moose Cree First Nation (Ontario), Government of Ontario, Canadian Forest Products Ltd., Lake Abitibi Model Forest and National Aboriginal Forestry Association – Dr. Kant will develop valuation tools to assess Aboriginal land use activities that are consistent with Aboriginal culture and rights, and understandable to government and industry representatives. These tools should also be helpful to Aboriginal leaders, serving as a basis for negotiations on land use.

“The challenge is to develop Aboriginal land use valuation tools that are consistent with the basic features of Aboriginal culture and rights. Previous valuations of Aboriginal land use activities have used a market context while most Aboriginal land use activities occur outside the market context,” says Dr. Kant.

Working with Dr. Ilan Vertinsky of the University of British Columbia, Dr. Kant will develop new support tools and demonstrate their importance: by developing a new Aboriginal land use valuation method; demonstrating the economic impacts of forest resource development projects on Aboriginal communities; and developing and analysing different scenarios to aid government, industry, and Aboriginal leaders in compensation discussions.

#### **About The Sustainable Forest Management Network**

The Sustainable Forest Management Network facilitates collaborative, applied research partnerships among 32 industry, government, Aboriginal, and non-government partners in supporting the work of more than 190 researchers. Their research efforts are accomplished thanks to 300 highly qualified personnel working at 35 participating institutions across Canada. The SFM Network represents one of the few forums to bring Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal forest resource managers and policy makers around one table to promote dialogue and the development of a common understanding in a non-confrontational environment.

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For more project information, contact:

Dr. Shashi Kant  
Associate Professor  
University of Toronto, Forestry  
Tel: (418) 656-2593 Ext: 2131  
E-mail: [shashi.kant@utoronto.ca](mailto:shashi.kant@utoronto.ca)

Dr. Jim Fyles,  
Scientific Director  
Sustainable Forest Management Network  
Professor and Tomlinson Chair in Forest Ecology  
Department of Natural Resource Sciences  
McGill University  
Tel: (514) 398-7758  
E-Mail: [jim.fyles@sfmnetwork.ca](mailto:jim.fyles@sfmnetwork.ca)

Bill Woodward  
Network Manager  
Tel: (780) 492-3625  
E-mail: [bill.woodward@sfmnetwork.ca](mailto:bill.woodward@sfmnetwork.ca)

Marvin Abugov  
SFM Network Communications  
Tel: (780) 492-2492  
E-mail: [marvin.abugov@sfmnetwork.ca](mailto:marvin.abugov@sfmnetwork.ca)  
SFM Network website: [www.sfmnetwork.ca](http://www.sfmnetwork.ca)