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For Immediate Release

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**Research results provide important new guidance for
ecological forestry in Eastern and Central Canada**

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*New book for forest practitioners to be pre-launched,
changes in logging practices recommended*

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Québec City -- September 18, 2007 -- The results from research projects led by Québec researcher Dr. Sylvie Gauthier and a large team of scientists from across Canada are providing important new guidance for the ways in which tree harvesting can be used to effectively mimic natural forest disturbances. Following the recommendations of Québec's Coulombe Commission, which called for more ecologically-sensitive forest practices, researchers of the Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Network are filling gaps in knowledge about how fire, insects, and other natural disturbances affect Canadian forests. They are finding that by changing logging practices, forestry companies can create conditions similar to natural disturbances as a way to preserve forest biodiversity.

Here are some selected research highlights:

- The area of old-growth boreal forest has decreased as a result of current forestry practices and policy. However, alternative forest practices can be used to recreate old-growth forest conditions and decrease the potential loss of forest biodiversity.
- Mimicking forest fire patterns is one way foresters can incorporate ecological patterns into their forest management. One approach has foresters calculating the area of forest that historically would burn annually. By controlling any natural forest fires, it is possible to harvest that equivalent area, replacing the proportion of territory that would have burned under a historical forest fire pattern. This system should be complemented with old-growth forest conservation practices.
- Tree growth and soil health can be improved after a forest fire. For example, the growth of some black spruce forests tends to slow down over time due to build-up of organic matter on top of the soil. Forest fires usually burn this organic layer, releasing nutrients into the tree and soil. Current logging practices often do not disturb this thick organic layer and may actually reduce new tree seedling growth. The researchers suggest various alternative techniques, including for example, controlled burning to disturb the soil surface.

These and other findings will be discussed at a SFM Network workshop at the Carrefour Conference on Forestry Research – Room 206 B, Québec Congress Centre, Quebec City on September 19, 2007, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Among the organizations whose research will be featured include: Abitibi-Bowater, Tembec, Louisiana Pacific, and the Québec provincial government. Following this workshop, at 5:00 p.m., there will be a pre-launch of a new book for forest practitioners on ecosystem-based management edited by Dr. Sylvie Gauthier.

Media are invited to attend the workshop and book pre-launch. Interview and photo opportunities will be available. SFM Network Conference Link:

http://www.sfmnetwork.ca/html/events_workshops_f.html

About The Sustainable Forest Management Network

The Sustainable Forest Management Network, a Network of Centres of Excellence (NCE), facilitates collaborative, applied research partnerships among 30 industry, government, Aboriginal, and non-government partners in supporting the work of 196 researchers. Their research efforts are accomplished thanks to more than 300 highly qualified personnel working at 38 participating institutions across Canada. The Network's objective is to bring all these partners together to explore the foundations of sustainable forest management using the best available knowledge by considering the three dimensions of sustainability (ecological, economic and social, including scientific and traditional ecological knowledge).

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