U of T researcher receives $570,000 research award
Dr. Shashi Kant leads international research team to develop a global competitiveness index for Canada's forest industry taking into account global economic forces

Toronto, Ontario . . . . Principal Investigator Dr. Shashi Kant will receive $570,000 over three years for research leading to the development of a global competitiveness index specifically for Canadian forest industry. While the World Economic Forum produces a Growth Competitiveness Index and a Business Competitiveness Index, neither can be used directly by the forest industry because both of these indices provide only a general picture of a particular country as compared to a specific industry. While there has been some effort at the provincial level to refine the index, particularly in British Columbia, Dr. Kant's research will seek to resolve this challenge at the national level. He also intends to create an index that properly separates the lumber and pulp sectors.

The three main objectives of the research are to:
  (a) Develop an understanding of markets and institutional structures including government policies related to different forest products such as lumber, pulp and oriented strand board in Canada (including provincial variations) and other countries;
  (b) Examine the impact on the economic well-being of Canadians and the forest industry of market structures and relevant government policies including trade actions, forest tenures including Aboriginal tenures, protected area policies and policies related to the mountain pine beetle infestation;
  (c) Evaluate the global competitiveness with respect to other countries of different sectors of the Canadian forest industry and selected provinces.

Dr. Kant's proposal went through an extensive scientific peer-review process. His project received significant support from Environment Canada, Natural Resources Canada–Canadian Forest Service, the provincial governments of Alberta, Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Yukon as well as forward-thinking forestry companies including Abitibi-Consolidated Inc., Bowater Inc., Canadian Forest Products Ltd., Tembec Inc., and Weyerhaeuser Canada. The Alberta Forest Products Association, BC Forum on Forest Policy and Economics, Moose Cree First Nation and the Lake Abitibi Model Forest as well supported the project.

Dr. Kant will be supported by Dr. Susanna Laaksonen-Craig, University of Toronto, Dr. Van Lantz, University of New Brunswick and Dr. Cornelis van Kooten, University of Victoria and a total of five other research collaborators located in China, Brazil, Finland and two additional researchers from within Canada.

For more project information, contact:
Dr. Shashi Kant , Professor
Faculty of Forestry
University of Toronto
Tel: (416) 978-6196
E-mail: shashi.kant@utoronto.ca

More information about SFM Network:
Marvin Abugov
Communications Manager
SFM Network
Tel: (780) 492-2492
E-mail: marvin.abugov@sfmnetwork.ca