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.

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