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NSERC Forest Sector University R&D Networks aligned under One Organization, FIBRE

Ottawa, Ontario, November 15, 2011 — FIBRE, or **Forest Innovation by Research and Education**, is the newly created organization that has been structured to build synergies among eight Forest Sector University R&D Networks funded by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC). Together, FIBRE will work within the Forest Sector Innovation System contributing to the transformation of the Canadian forest sector. The mandate comes from a partnership comprised of: FPIInnovations, Natural Resources Canada, NSERC and Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC).

The University R&D networks are comprised of seven NSERC strategic initiatives, which are: **ForValueNet Network**, and **Value Chain Optimization Network**, both led by Laval University; **Bioconversion Network**, led by the University of Guelph; **Lignoworks**, led by the University of British Columbia; **Innovative Green Wood Fibre Products Network**, led by McGill University; **Sentinel Bioactive Paper Network**, led by McMaster University; **NEWBuildS**, led by the University of New Brunswick. The eighth R&D network is **ArboraNano**, the Canadian Forest NanoProducts Network, a Business-led Centre of Excellence.

“The FIBRE partnership is a unique opportunity to create and share knowledge and best practices from eight forest research university networks which draw on the R&D strengths of each other in an innovative approach,” says Theo van de Ven of McGill University and spokesperson for FIBRE. “It will also allow us to ensure better connectivity with other key components of the Canadian Forest Sector Innovation System.”

“A recent review of the NSERC Forest Sector R&D Initiative identified that going forward, the priorities of University Networks and key partners should make use of synergies and optimize effectiveness among the National Innovation System’s key players in line with market needs and the Forest Sector Transformation Strategy. This will be a top priority for FIBRE and key forest sector stakeholders,” states Pierre Lapointe, President and CEO of FPIInnovations.

“FPIInnovations has been a strong proponent of FIBRE from the outset because we believe that universities are playing a key role within the Canadian Forest Sector Innovation System. To enhance our support even further, we are very pleased to hire Paule Têtu as FPIInnovations-University Strategic Partnership Advisor in order to create additional synergies within and between our organization and FIBRE. In doing so, we are creating even stronger conditions for a sustainability and innovation-based forest industry in Canada,” says Mr. Lapointe.

Mrs. Têtu will be working with networks and partners to stimulate the commercialization of R&D results generated through FIBRE’s university networks. Her mandate includes ongoing

consultation on network programs with the forest sector, provincial governments, as well as non-traditional industries that can benefit from innovation in the forest sector. Throughout her 20-year career, Têtu has played a key role in the development of the Canadian Forest Sector, in both private and public arenas.

“The Government of Canada is continuing to invest in areas that will further the transformation and innovation of Canada’s forest sector and help ensure sustainable employment for the residents of Canada’s many forest communities,” said the Honourable Joe Oliver, Minister of Natural Resources. “Our support for FIBRE recognizes the invaluable contribution of academic R&D to that ongoing process of renewal. Together, we are building a more prosperous future.”

“NSERC applauds the creation of FIBRE. It emphasizes the need for strong partnerships to achieve real solutions for the forest industry,” stated Suzanne Fortier, President of NSERC. “The members of FIBRE have already generated high-impact results, and together will make a strong statement about the role innovation plays in the future success of the forest industry in Canada.”

“Ground-breaking research is helping transform our forest products sector into a dynamic and future-oriented industry,” says Avrim Lazar, the President and CEO of FPAC. “This type of partnership is crucial as Canadian forest companies compete to take advantage of an estimated \$200 billion market for new bio-products made from trees.”

About FIBRE

For more information about FIBRE, consult: www.reseauxfibrenetworks.ca or call for a copy of the FIBRE leaflet.

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