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## **University of Toronto researcher to lead national research team exploring automotive life cycle assessments**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 12, 2003

Toronto, ON: Considering the number of individual components that create an automobile, it's no wonder that end-of-life disposal is a challenge. Reusable and recyclable auto parts are a way to meet some of these challenges. Attention to the end-of-life phase during the initial design stage is becoming more and more important. A national research team being led by a University of Toronto researcher is investigating how life cycle analysis can be used to help create solutions for the future. Dr. Heather MacLean, a civil engineering professor, is coordinating the team that consists of researchers at the University of British Columbia and the University of Windsor. The team was recently awarded funding of up to \$315,000 from the AUTO21 Network of Centres of Excellence and several industry supporters.

"Life cycle analysis takes a 'cradle-to-grave' approach in helping determine how components are created, used and disposed of," says Dr. MacLean. The research team will explore how life cycle analysis is currently used in the auto sector, and how it can be enhanced for future application to conventional and alternative fuel/propulsion system vehicles including those with internal combustion engines, hybrid electric systems or fuel cells.

"The ideal solutions to the end-of-life phase for vehicles need to be technically and economically feasible and to meet regulatory requirements," says Dr. MacLean.

"The University of Toronto is thrilled to contribute to the AUTO21 Network of Centres of Excellence," says Dr. John Challis, Vice-President, Research and Associate Provost at the University of Toronto. "Dr. Heather MacLean is establishing an international reputation for leadership in the fields of environmental engineering and public policy. The automotive industry affects us all and we are certainly pleased that Heather is able to lend her expertise, in partnership with the University of British Columbia and the University of Windsor, to a project that will have a tangible, positive impact on society."

"We are pleased to support this innovative project that will enhance Canada's future automotive sector," says Dr. Peter Frise, CEO and Program Leader of AUTO21. "In addition to the technical knowledge created, the project provides an excellent training opportunity for five students per year at the three universities to work with expert researchers and also collaborate with industry representatives. This experience will help develop the students into the innovators of Canada's future automotive sector."

The project is one of seven new research projects worth a total of \$6.5 million being supported by the AUTO21 Network of Centres of Excellence and industry. AUTO21 is a federal program that supports 28

other auto-related R&D projects at 33 universities across Canada, with combined federal and industry funding of more than \$8 million per year. The new projects add 32 researchers and 53 student researchers to the AUTO21 investigative team. Over 250 university and industry researchers and more than 250 graduate and post-graduate students are already part of the AUTO21 team. AUTO21 is funded by the Networks of Centres of Excellence of Canada program.

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