

Katharine Servidio, Forest Economy Program Manager, Vermont Dept. of Forests, Parks and Recreation
Oliver Pierson, Director of Forests, Vermont Dept. of Forests, Parks and Recreation

Introduction

The goal of the Vermont Forest Future Strategic Roadmap was to assess the current state of Vermont’s forest products sector and forest economy and to identify opportunities to strengthen, modernize, promote, and protect its long-term viability.

Project Methodology

The development process was designed to follow a series of steps, including assessing current conditions and exploring stakeholder perceptions, building future scenarios and identifying a preferred future for Vermont’s forest economy in 2035, and developing a strategic framework and actions.

The process placed a high priority on stakeholder and industry engagement. Engagement highlights include over 850 responses to two surveys, over 50 participants in a two-part future scenario workshop, 20 virtual and in-person engagement workshops, five industry roundtables, a strategic framework workshop with 70 stakeholders, and 100 industry summit participants.

Conclusions/Next Steps

The Roadmap process engaged parties representing diverse users of Vermont’s forests in a robust public engagement process, resulting in the development of a 10-year plan. The plan provides a strategic framework, including strategic pillars with objectives, strategies, and recommended actions to achieve the identified preferred future that combines intentional forest management and proactive industry adaptation.

STRATEGIC PILLARS FRAMEWORK
Pillars are considered interdependent.

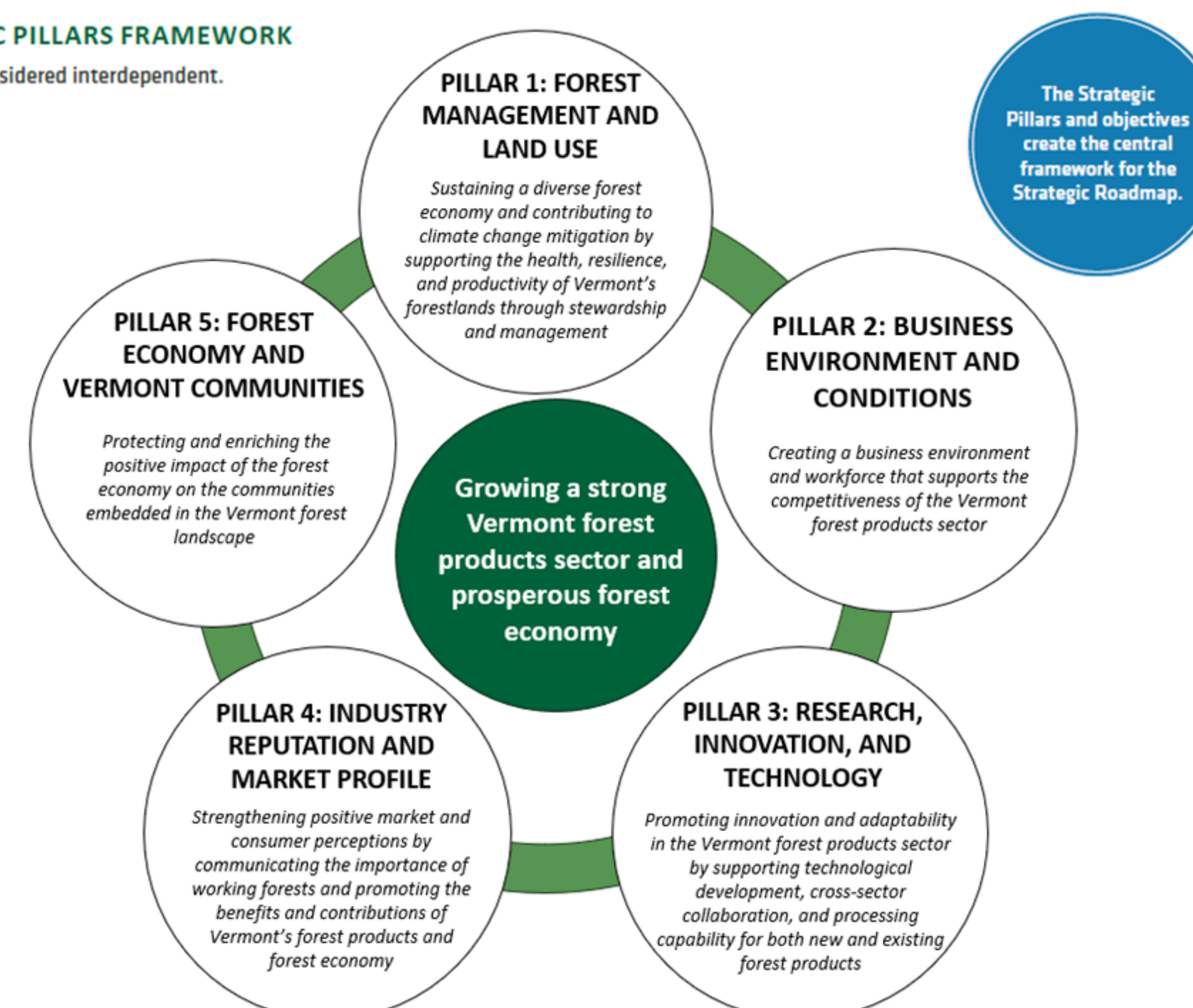


Figure 1. Strategic Pillars Framework



Figure 2. Images of Vermont Forest Future

Impacts and Benefits

As a small but heavily forested state, Vermont produces far more forest products than are processed locally. Consumer sentiment favors sustainably harvested forest products, but there has not been the same demand for locally or regionally sourced forest products. The Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation is currently engaged in several projects born out of the Roadmap that interface directly with the Agency of Transportation and other public agencies, including offering grants to improve transportation infrastructure at forest management work sites, promoting timber for transport funding opportunities, and a proposed multi-state effort to demonstrate the feasibility of adding nanocellulose to concrete mixtures to reduce their carbon footprint.