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NIRANTAR: Coordinating India’s Environmental Research Institutions

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NIRANTAR: Coordinating India’s Environmental Research Institutions

NIRANTAR links India’s environment research bodies through four verticals. It builds no new institution and adds no new posts. **UPSC 2026 tested which institute leads which vertical.**



A Botanical Survey of India building. BSI, Kolkata leads NIRANTAR’s Ecosystem Survey and Analysis vertical. Photo: DesiBoy101, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons.

At a Glance

Four facts to hold on to.

01
Ecosystem Survey

BSI, Kolkata leads.

02
Ecosystem Services

ICFRE, Dehradun leads.

03
Capacity Development

IIFM, Bhopal leads.

04
Exam trap

Not the Central Zoo Authority.

NIRANTAR A coordination platform of MoEFCC institutions.
Vertical A themed work stream with a lead institute.
Silo A body working apart from others.
Ecosystem services Benefits nature gives people.

What NIRANTAR Is

Must Know

The name

- NIRANTAR stands for National Institute for Research and Application of Natural Resources to Transform, Adapt and Build Resilience.
- It is a platform of institutions under the Environment Ministry (MoEFCC).
- Its aim is better coordination and collaboration.
- On 12 January 2026, Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav chaired a NIRANTAR meeting.
- Source: PIB, 12 January 2026.

A platform, not a new body

- NIRANTAR creates no new institution and adds no new staff.
- It links bodies that already work on forests, biodiversity, wildlife, pollution and climate.
- Each institution keeps its own identity.
- Source: ESG Times.

Four verticals

Vertical	Lead institute
Ecosystem Survey and Analysis	Botanical Survey of India (BSI), Kolkata
Research and Management of Ecosystem Services	ICFRE, Dehradun
Capacity Development Support	IIFM, Bhopal
Climate Change, Pollution and Emerging Challenges	Fourth vertical

- The Minister said the four verticals cover research, outcome assessment and use of results.

- The common mix-up is pairing the Central Zoo Authority with Ecosystem Services. ICFRE leads it.

> **Quick check 1.** The Central Zoo Authority leads NIRANTAR's Research and Management of Ecosystem Services vertical. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

The Dashboard and the Model

Good to Know

One window for data

- NIRANTAR uses a digital dashboard to link institutions such as the pollution control boards, FSI and ZSI.
- Reports say it can track environmental clearances, forest-fire alerts and wildlife-trafficking data.
- The aim is to end silo-based working.
- Source: Drishti IAS.

Why not merge them?

- Merging old, specialised bodies could lose their deep expertise.
- It would also need new laws and leadership structures.
- A shared platform gets many of the benefits without changing any body's structure.
- The Botanical Survey of India was founded on 13 February 1890. Source: Wikipedia, Botanical Survey of India.

> **Quick check 2.** NIRANTAR's dashboard is reported to track forest-fire alerts and wildlife-trafficking data. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Coordination, Not Merger

Great to Know

What the Minister stressed

- India’s strength lies in its natural resources, especially bioresources.
- Policy must balance environmental protection with industrial development.
- Himalayan and coastal bodies such as GB Pant NIHE and the National Institute for Sustainable Coastal Management could contribute.
- NIRANTAR should focus on research, policymaking and the way ahead.
- Source: PIB release, linked above.

Think it through: why build a shared platform instead of one big agency?

Old specialised bodies hold deep expertise. Merging them risks losing it and needs new laws. A shared platform ends the silos and leaves each body intact.

Quick check 3. The Botanical Survey of India was founded in 1890, before Indian independence. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Quick check 4. NIRANTAR creates no new institution and adds no new staff positions. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Exam Edge

Previous Year Questions

UPSC 2026 tested the vertical-lead pairings.

Quick check 5. UPSC 2026 treated all three NIRANTAR vertical-lead pairings as correct. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Quick check 6. NIRANTAR has only three verticals. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Quick Q&A

Full form?

National Institute for Research and Application of Natural Resources to Transform, Adapt and Build Resilience.

New staff?

None.

Ecosystem Services lead?

ICFRE.

Capacity lead?

IIFM Bhopal.

UPSC 2026 Q77?

1 and 3 only.

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Practice MCQs

1. Does NIRANTAR create a new organisation with new staff?

A. Yes, it is an entirely new autonomous body

B. No, it coordinates existing institutions with no new staff

C. No, it replaces the Ministry itself

D. Yes, but only for climate research

See answer ↓

2. Which institute leads NIRANTAR's Ecosystem Survey and Analysis vertical?

A. Central Zoo Authority, New Delhi

B. ICFRE, Dehradun

C. Botanical Survey of India, Kolkata

D. Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal

See answer ↓

3. Which institute leads NIRANTAR's Research and Management of Ecosystem Service vertical?

A. ICFRE, Dehradun

B. Central Zoo Authority, New Delhi

C. Botanical Survey of India, Kolkata

D. Wildlife Institute of India

See answer ↓

Answer Key

1. **B.** NIRANTAR creates no new organisation and adds no new staff. It coordinates the Ministry's existing institutions, breaking down the silos between them. ↑ Q1
2. **C.** Ecosystem Survey and Analysis is led by the Botanical Survey of India, Kolkata. ↑ Q2
3. **A.** Research and Management of Ecosystem Service is led by ICFRE, Dehradun, not the Central Zoo Authority — a frequent exam mix-up. ↑ Q3

Quick-check answers

1. **False.** ↑ 1
2. **True.** ↑ 2
3. **True.** ↑ 3
4. **True.** ↑ 4
5. **False.** ↑ 5
6. **False.** ↑ 6

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