

2.1 COMPOSITION OF THE ATMOSPHERE

The atmosphere has, broadly speaking, three categories of constituents—major, minor and trace. For pollution-free dry air at ground level, the components may be expressed as percent by volume, as follows (within parentheses):

Major Components:

Nitrogen (78.09),

Oxygen (20.94)

Water vapour (0.1-5)*.

Minor components :

Argon (9.34×10^{-1}),

Carbon dioxide (3.25×10^{-2})*.

Trace components:

Neon (1.82×10^{-3}),

Helium (5.24×10^{-4}),

Methane (2×10^{-4}),

Krypton (1.14×10^{-4}),

Nitrous oxide (2.5×10^{-5}),

Hydrogen (5×10^{-5}),

Xenon (8.7×10^{-8}),

Sulphur dioxide (2×10^{-8})

Ozone (trace),

Ammonia (1×10^{-6})

Carbon monoxide (1.2×10^{-5})

Nitrogen dioxide (1×10^{-5}),

Iodine (trace)*