In 1980 there were 16 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions made worldwide; emissions in 1980 were 70% of the carbon emitted in 2000.

In 1980 the most carbon dioxide emissions came from the United States, China and Germany. Emissions per person from the United States were 14 times greater than those from China. Emissions depend on levels and type of industrialisation, types of transport and fossil fuel usage. Per person the most polluting territories emit 1000 times more carbon dioxide than the least polluting. Although emissions have increased greatly over years between 1980 and 2000, the distribution of emissions remains similar.

Territory size shows the proportion of carbon dioxide emissions in 1980 that were directly from there.

“... the world need[s] to differentiate between the survival emissions of the poor and luxury emissions of [the] rich.”

Sunita Narain, 2002