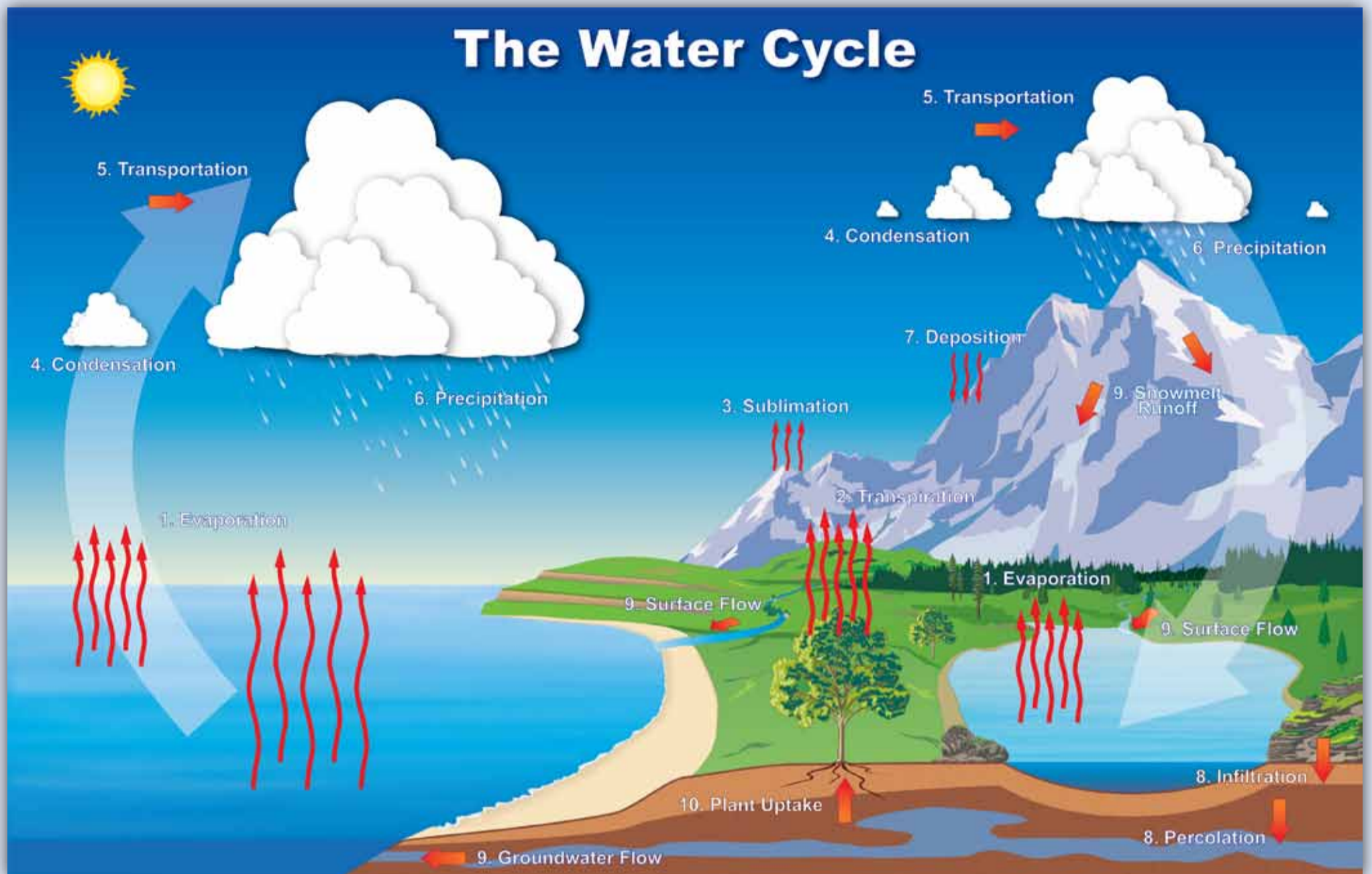


Groundwater – surface water interaction



The hydrological cycle describes the continuous movement of water above, on, and below the surface of the Earth. Surface water includes rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands, while groundwater is water held underground in gravels, sand or cracks in rock called aquifers.

Our rivers interact with groundwater in two ways:

- Rivers gain water from groundwater flowing in through the riverbed.
- Rivers lose water as it flows out of the riverbed to groundwater.

The amount that groundwater contributes to river flow varies throughout the year. In summer, groundwater contributes more (in some cases up to 100% at low flows). In winter, groundwater contributes proportionately less water as more rainfall reaches the river.

Groundwater management is important as abstraction of from an aquifer that interacts with a river can affect the river flow and therefore the habitat within that river.

Contact our Environmental Information team for more information. Call 0800 76 88 45 or email service@es.govt.nz