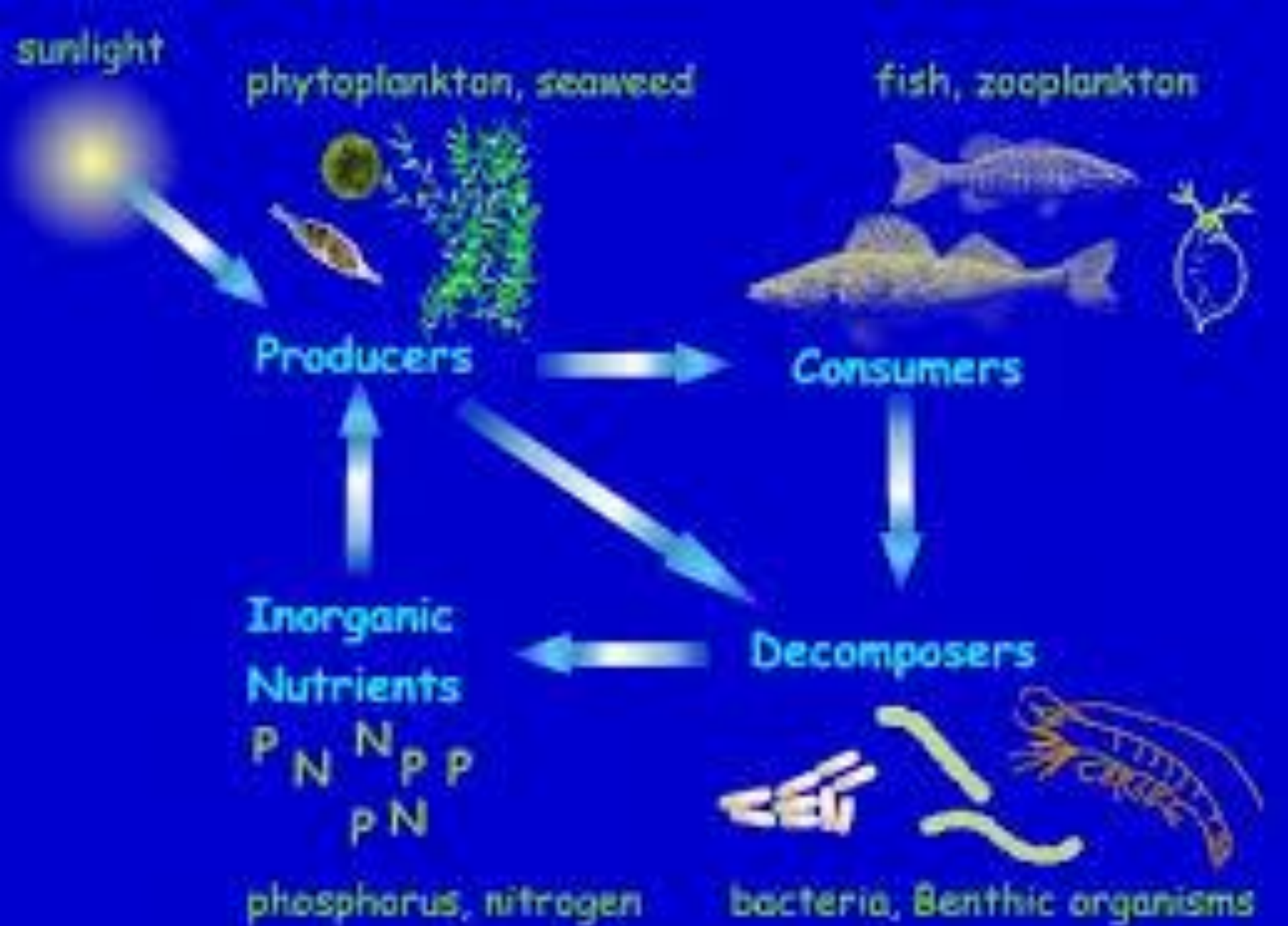




AQUATIC ECOLOGY 3

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Food webs

- Food webs are more complex, and consist of a network of linked food chains.

- Food webs include autotrophs, at the lowest feeding level, to the herbivores (primary consumers) and then to various carnivores (secondary consumers).

- Food webs show principles of ecological emergence through the nature of trophic relationships

- Food webs are composed of subgroups where members in a community are linked by strong interactions, and the weak interactions occur between these subgroups.

Trophic level

- An organism's position in the food chain as determined by the number of energy-transfer steps required to reach that level (Begon *et al.* 1990).

- A fish that has consumed an insect, which itself has just consumed algae, is at a higher trophic level than the insect.