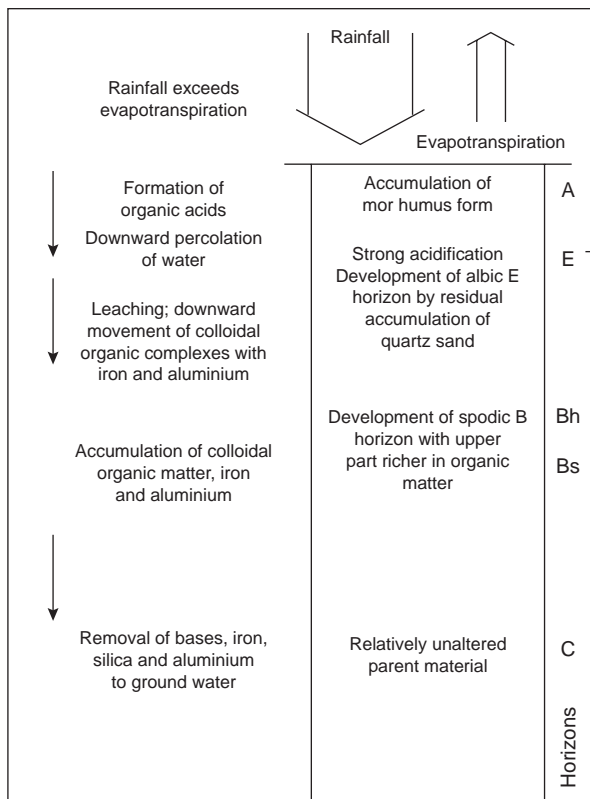


Window 3.4 Podzols

Podzols are characterised by the presence, just below the surface, of an ashy-coloured horizon. It is from this that they derive their Russian name (*pod*, 'under' and *zola*, 'ash'). They are very extensive in a circumpolar belt which extends approximately from the Arctic Circle southwards to the latitude of St Petersburg (in Europe) and the northern shores of the Great Lakes (in North America). They are particularly well developed on permeable sands and gravels and occur on some of the heathlands of Britain. They are frequently associated with coniferous boreal forest. Their horizons are as follows. Below the raw humus layer there is a grey and somewhat structureless Ea horizon from which virtually all free iron has been removed. Beneath this is the B horizon of illuviation which typically includes a humus-enriched layer (Bh) and a strong brown or rusty coloured Bs horizon of iron and aluminium enrichment. High available soil moisture and organic material promote the development of these horizons.



The process of podzolisation.