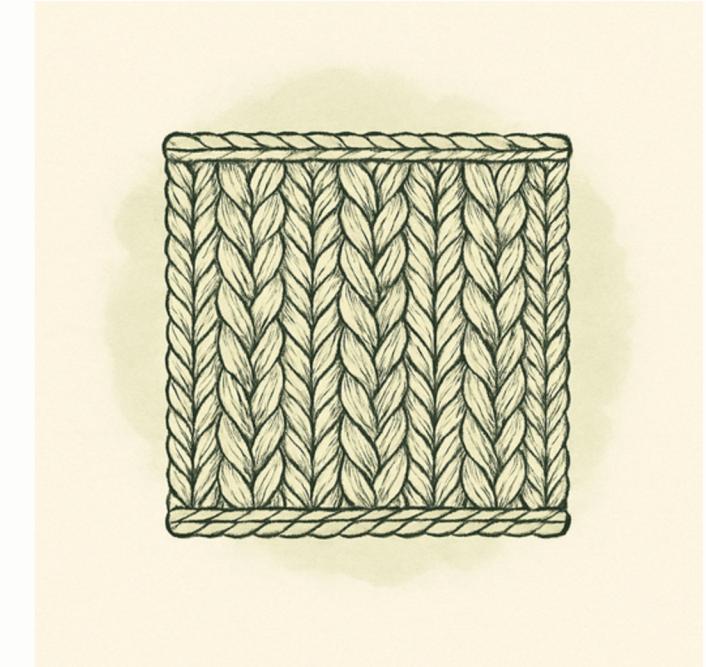
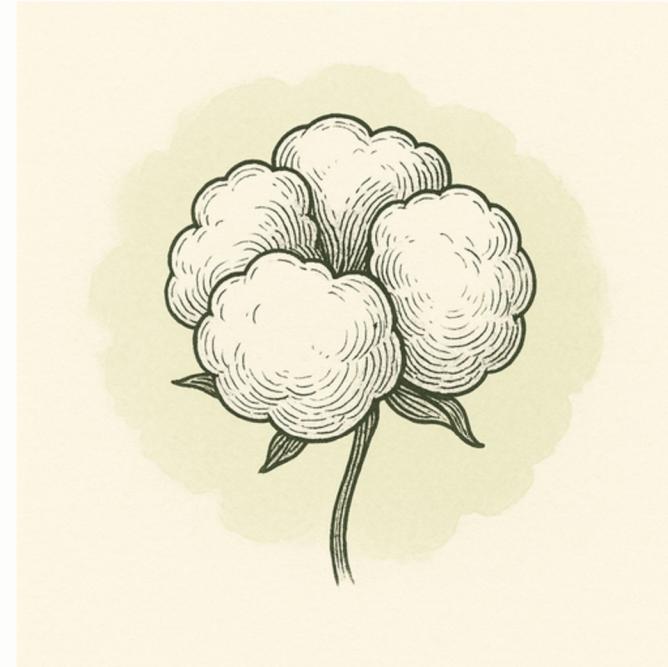
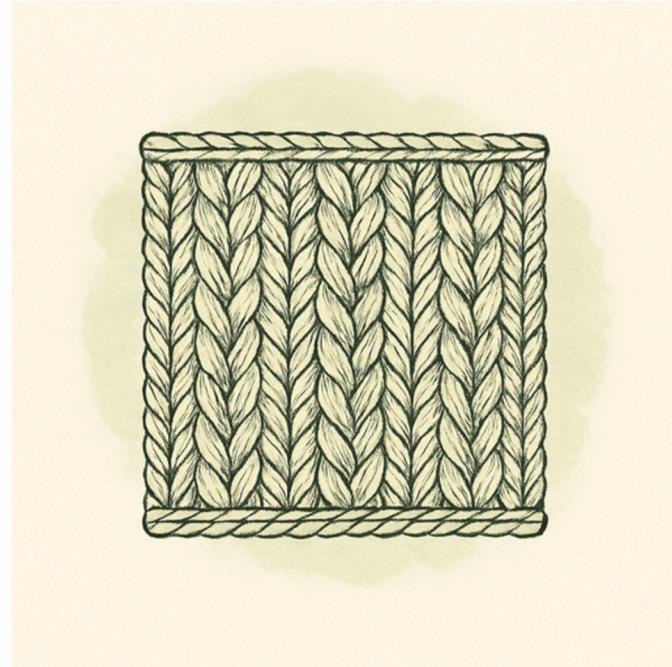
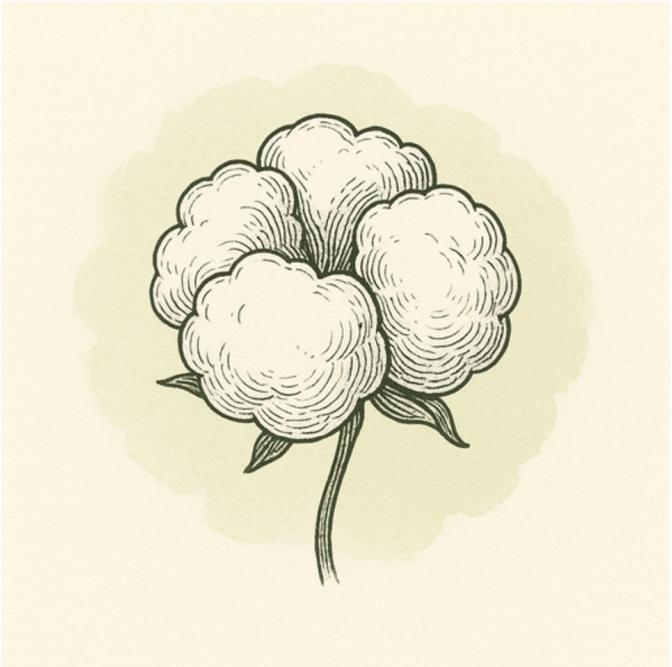


# cotton



from the plant to the sweater

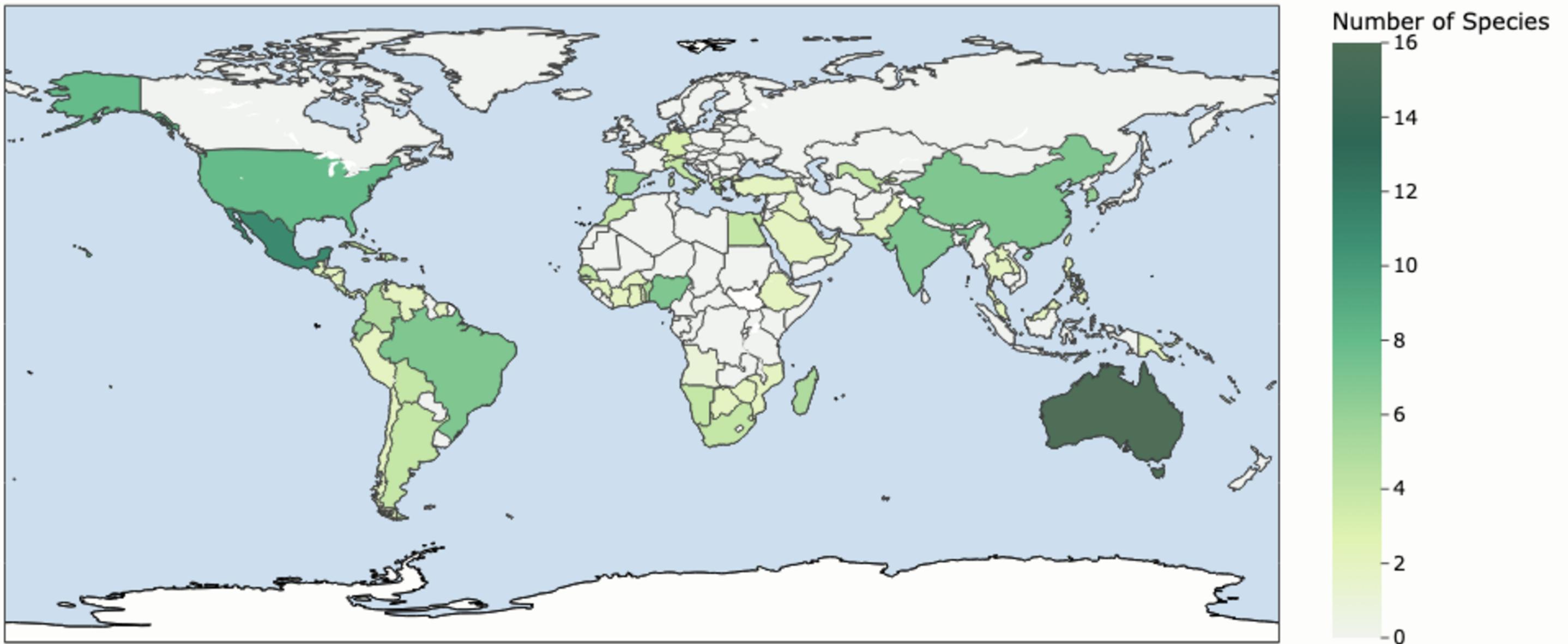
# diversity



Cotton, scientifically known under the genus **Gossypium**, represents a diverse group of species that contribute to ecological resilience, genetic resources, and cultural heritage. The 160 species are distributed all over the world, with notable patterns that reflect both natural evolution and human cultivation history.

# diversity

## Cotton Species Diversity by Country

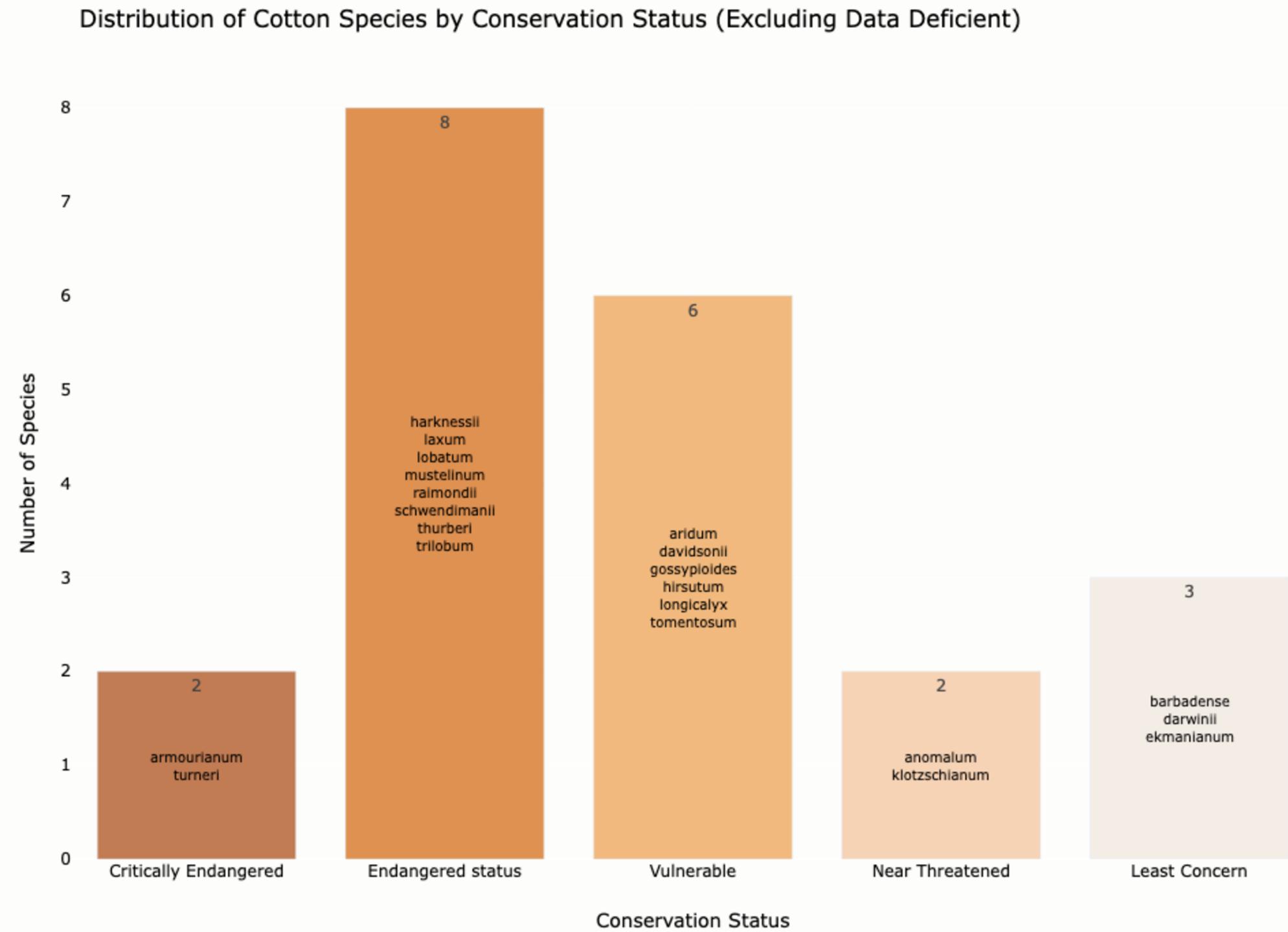


## Gossypium species



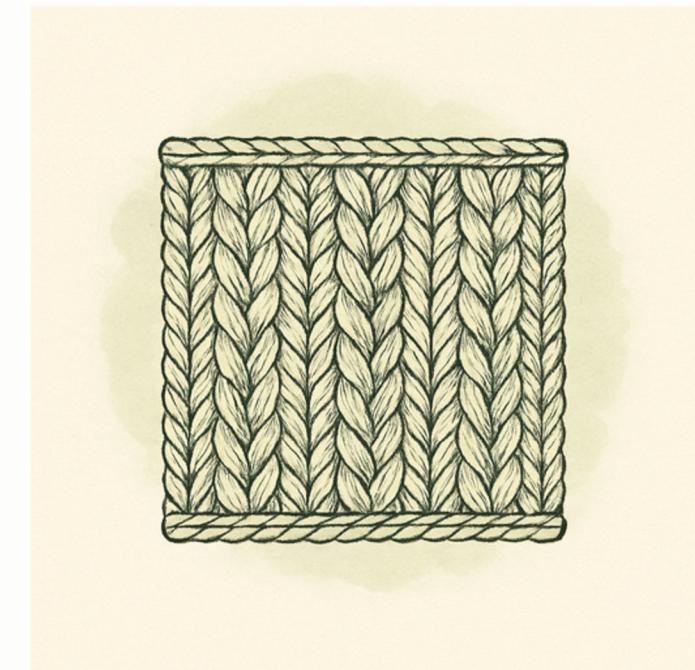
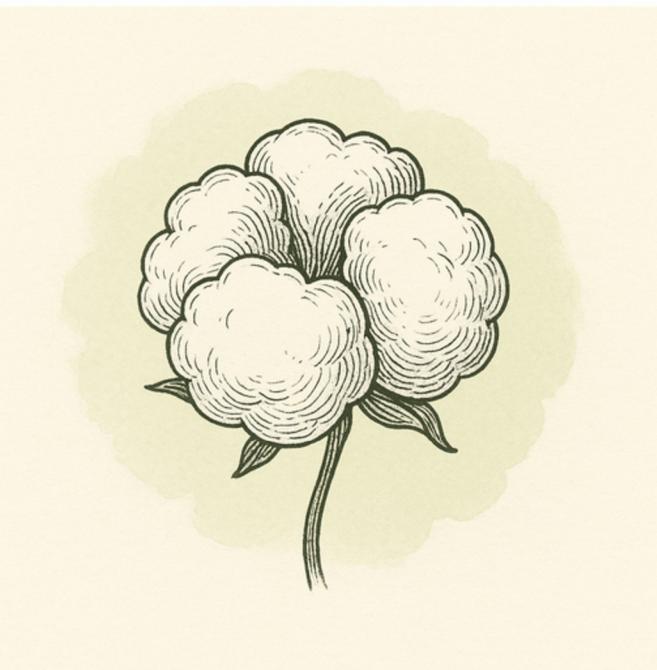
Many sub-species are also wild and endangered, but represent important genetic resources for crop improvement. As climate change continues to affect agricultural regions worldwide, endangered cotton species may harbor adaptations to extreme conditions and preserving them contributes to more sustainable agricultural practices.

# diversity



Gossypium species





trade

Cotton is one of the world's most strategic agricultural commodities, feeding both global trade and the fashion industry. Over the last two decades, shifts in production, trade, and government policies have shaped how cotton moves across borders and influences economies.

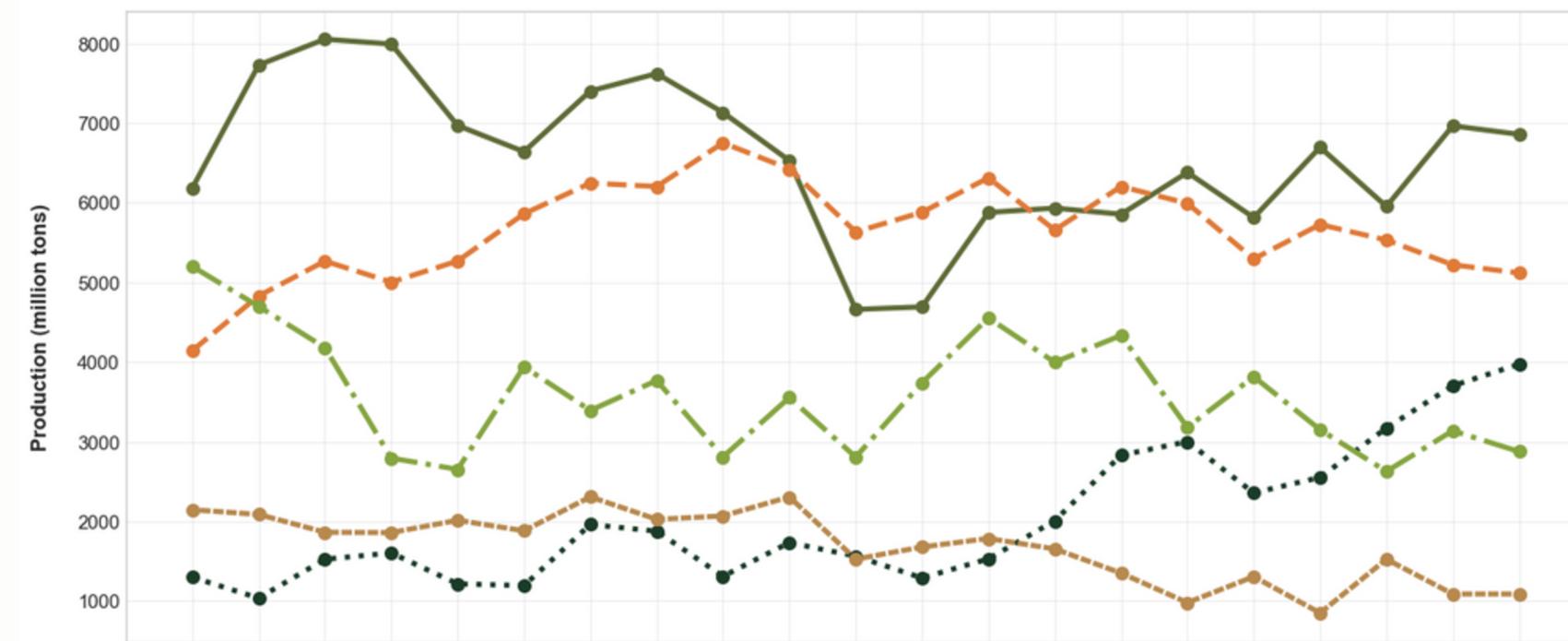
# trade

While the United States and India consistently lead in cotton production, Brazil shows steady growth, Pakistan remains relatively stable, and China experiences a notable decline in both production and trade balance over time.

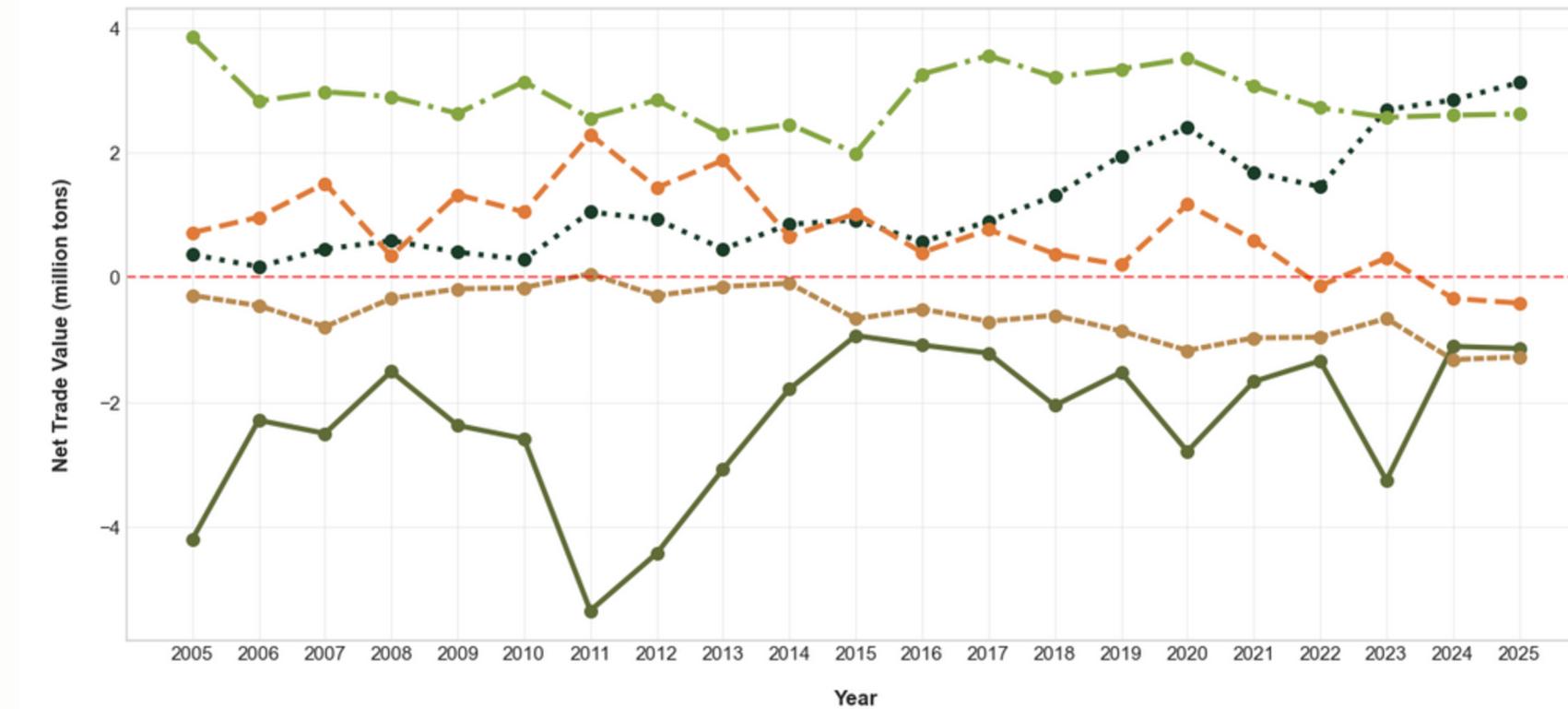
But what happened in China between 2010 and 2015?

Cotton Production and Trade Balance for Top 5 Countries (2005-2025)

Total Cotton Production for Top 5 Countries



Import-Export Balance (Net Trade) for Top 5 Countries



Source: Foreign Agricultural Service dataset, USDA

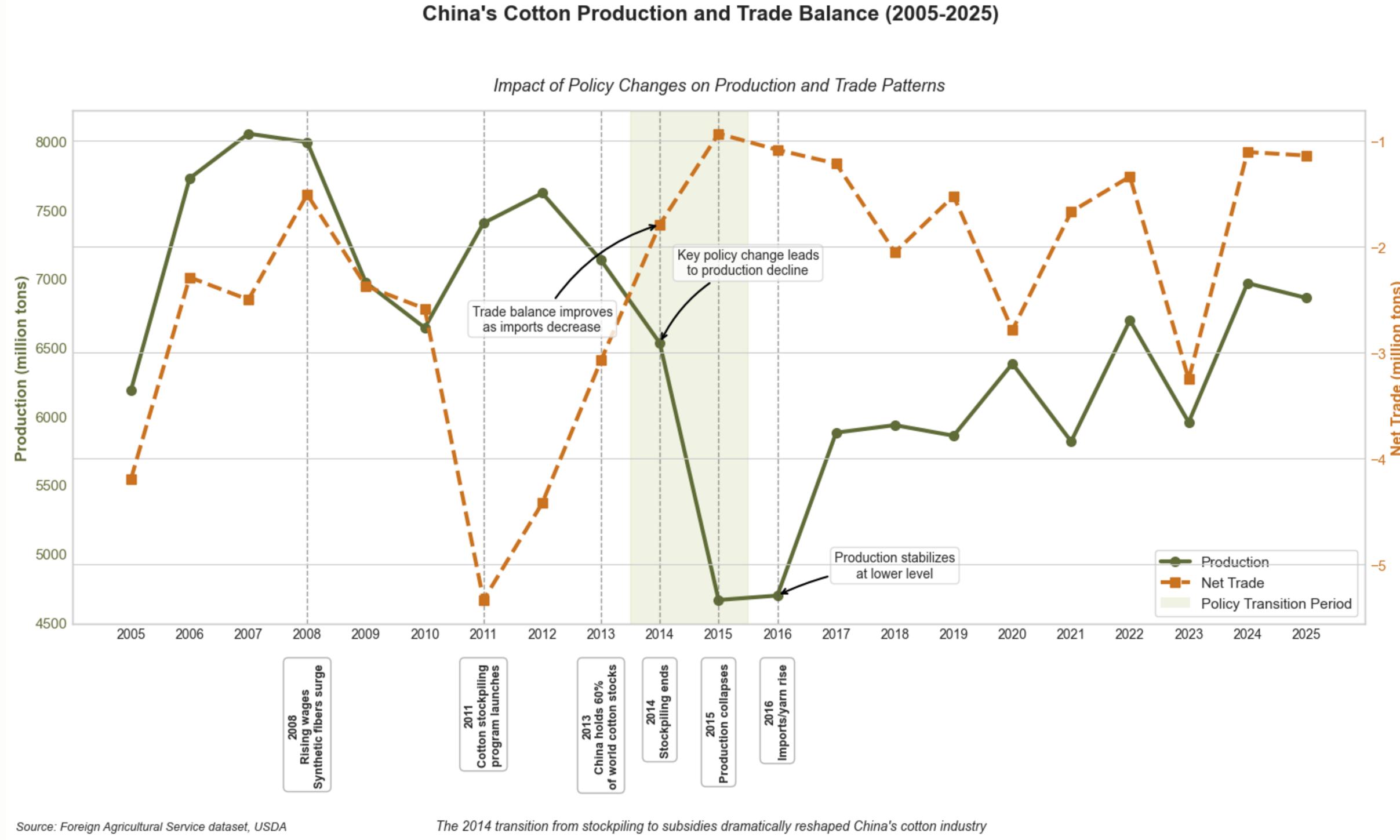
— Brazil  
— India  
— United States  
— China  
— Pakistan  
— Balance Line

Cotton Trades



China's cotton sector experienced sharp swings between 2010 and 2018. Chinese policies are to blame.

trade

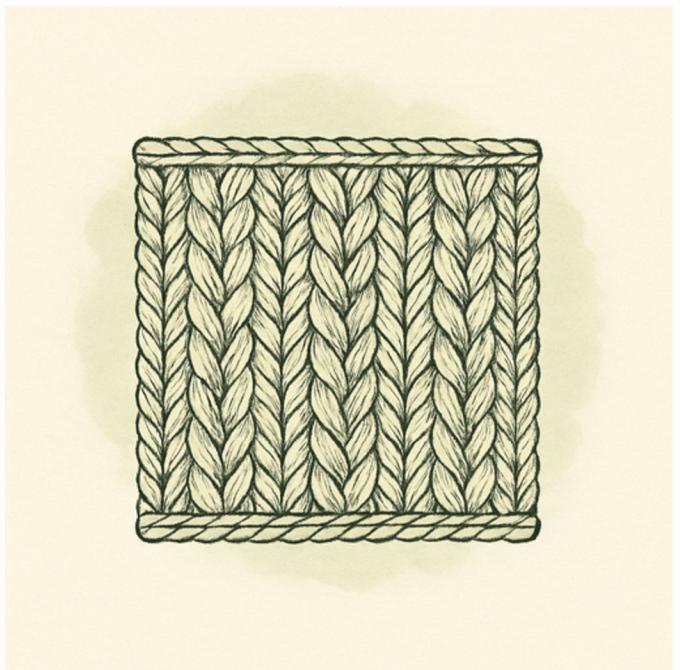
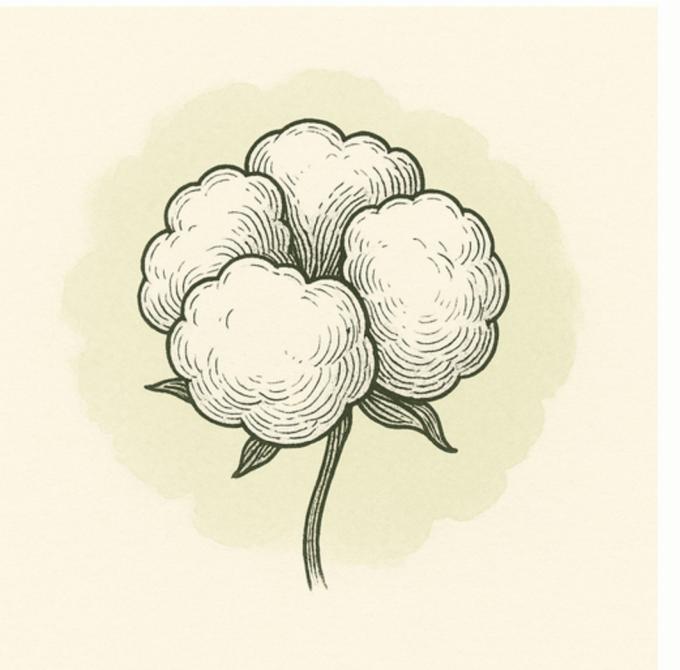


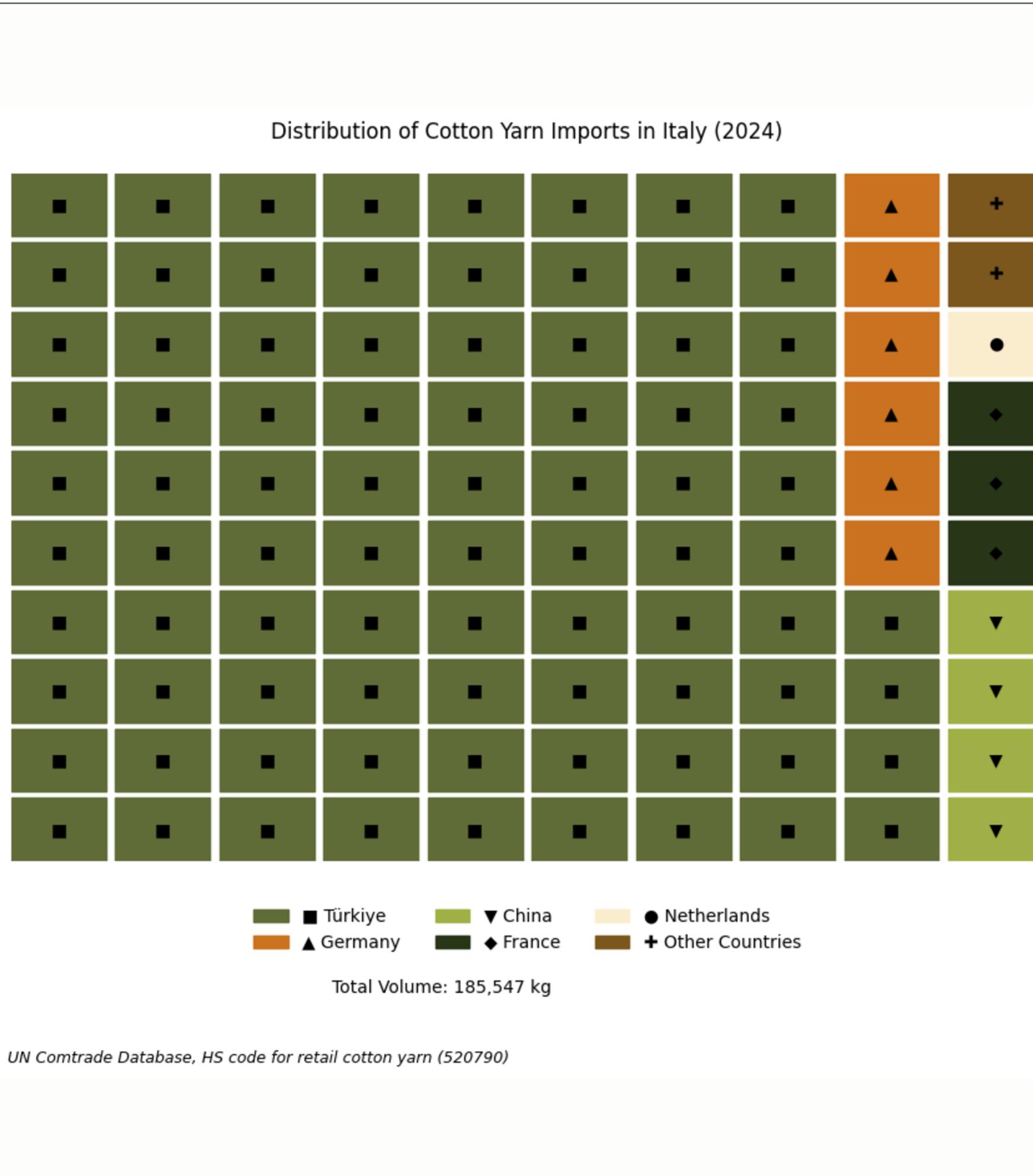
China's trade swings were driven by policy rather than demand. The 2011–2013 stockpiling program inflated reserves and made domestic cotton uncompetitive, pushing mills toward cheaper imports. When stockpiling ended in 2014, production collapsed outside Xinjiang, and reliance on imported cotton and yarn deepened. This shift not only reshaped China's domestic supply but also disrupted global cotton flows.

Cotton Trades



craft





In this micro-market, proximity and branding outweigh China's macro dominance, showing how global cotton politics filter down unevenly into cultural and artisanal practice.

If I buy yarn in Italy, where is more probable it comes from?

From the UN Comtrade Database, searching with HS code for cotton yarn (HS 520790 = cotton yarn, not sewing thread, containing >85% cotton), we retrieved Italian import data for this good.

craft



Usually, a ball of yarn weights 50g.

How many of them are needed for a sweater?

Yarn Type	Average yarn for a sweater
Lace	9 yarn balls
DK	11 yarn balls
Aran	13 yarn balls
Bulk	15 yarn balls

craft

The average sweater requires **600 grams** of yarn.

Italy imported **185.5 tons** of cotton yarn in 2024.

That's enough to knit approximately

**309,245 sweaters!**

Cotton Italian Crafts

