



Japan Local Government Centre

Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR), London

# Going zero waste: a rural town at the forefront of sustainability

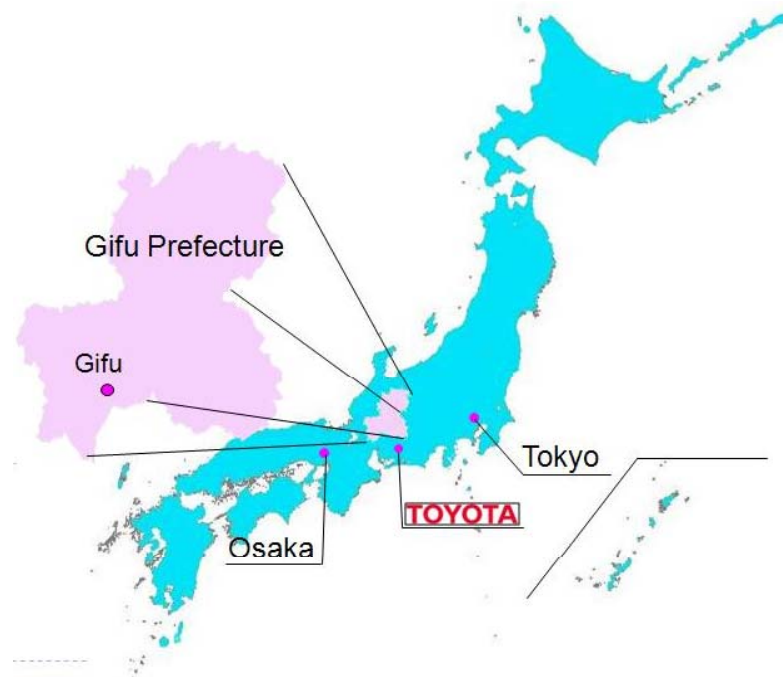
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# Introduction

- Waste in Japan
- 2000 Basic Law for Establishing a Recycling-based Society
- Introducing Kamikatsu and the 'Zero Waste Policy'
- The Kamikatsu Effect

# Gifu Prefecture

- Famous for its natural beauty and World Heritage Site: the Village of Shirakawa
- Mountains of 3000m



# A Brief Introduction to Waste in Japan

- 2000: 650 billion yen spent on construction and renovation of waste disposal units
- 2005: 78% of waste in Japan burned
- Over 1,300 incinerators in Japan

# Waste is sorted into categories...

- Burnable
- Non-burnable

- Recycling 

- Paper 

- Other 



# Waste Disposal in Daily Life

Sort waste into four categories then for recyclable materials:

- **PET Bottles:** rinse the inside, strip labels off, separate caps off and crush
- **Glass bottles and Cans:** rinse and sort them (glass bottle, aluminum, steel)
- **Polystyrenes Food trays:** rinse and sort
- **Papers:** sort into newspapers, magazine, cardboard, paper drink cartons and bundle
- **Plastic Containers and wrapping** (bottles, bags wrapping film, plastic trays): rinse and sort
- Take **Polystyrenes food trays, egg trays and drink cartons made from paper** to the supermarket
- Take **books and magazines** to the secondhand shop
- “My Bag” **Eco-bag culture**



# 2000 Basic Law for Establishing a Recycling Based Society

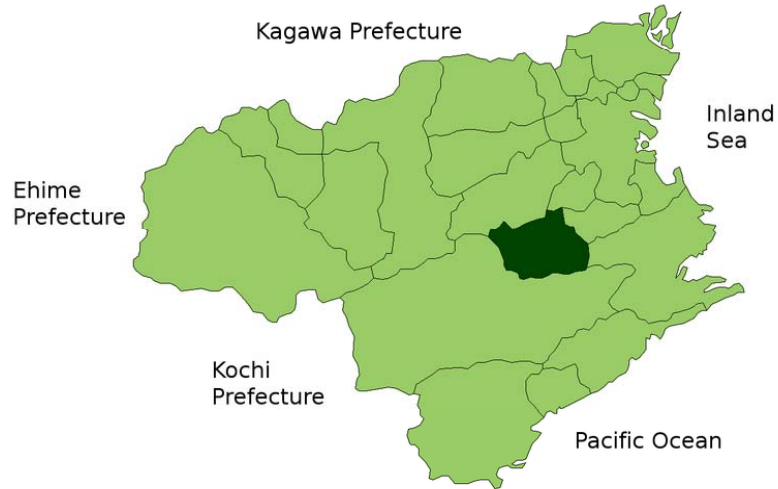
- **Law no.110 of 2000**

“to facilitate the policies for the transformation into the recycling-based society comprehensively and systematically and thereby contribute to ensure healthy and cultured living for both the present and future generations of the nation”

**Article 6.** **Recyclable resources must be recycled as much as possible**, in the light of the necessity of reducing their environmental load by decreasing the quantity of their disposal.

**Article 24.** The State shall take necessary measures to **promote the construction of public facilities (including mobile facilities) available for the recycling, disposal, collection or transport of recyclable resources**, and other public facilities contributing to the establishment of the recycling-based society.

# Introducing Kamikatsu Town



*Population: 1,970 (49%  
over 65 years old)*  
*Area: 109.68km<sup>2</sup>*  
*Access: Road only*  
*Terrain: Mountainous*



# Background to the Zero Waste Policy

- 1994:
  - Kamikatsu decided to move towards becoming a ‘recycling town’
  - 30% of waste was kitchen waste
- 1995: with a local government subsidy residents can buy a composter for 10,000yen
- 1998: 55% recycling rate
- January 2000: *Law for Special Measures Against Dioxins* = no more small incinerators
  - A large incinerator would be too large for today’s waste levels and would be high cost to a small locality
  - If waste was going to be reduced then it would eventually be financially unviable anyway



# Declaration: Zero Waste Policy

## Kamikatsu Town Zero Waste Declaration

In order to be able to pass on to the children of future generations an earth bountiful in clean air, pristine water and a healthy natural environment, Kamikatsu-cho hereby issues the Kamikatsu Zero Waste Declaration which spells out its program to reduce the waste generated to zero 2020.

- Kamikatsu Town will strive to **foster individuals who will not pollute our environment!**
- Kamikatsu Town shall promote waste recycling and resource reuse to the best of its ability to **eliminate waste incineration and landfill by 2020!**
- Residents of Kamikatsu Town shall join hands with people around the world in order to improve the earth's environment!

**September 19, 2003.** Kamikatsu Town, Katsuura, Tokushima Prefecture

(translated by Greenpeace Japan, September 19, 2003 )

# Includes...

- Kamikatsu will petition both national and Tokushima Prefectural governments **to set targets with deadlines** to reduce volumes of waste.
- Kamikatsu will require product manufacturers to establish systems that **ensure the cost of product recycling and resource reuse is included in the price of goods.**
- Kamikatsu will actively **promote exchange of information** with other municipalities throughout Japan as a way to **encourage the setting of similar targets and work towards the creation of a waste reducing network.**

# In practice

- Food waste is composted
- No collection by local authority
- Recycling station is open 7.30am-2pm daily
- Support groups to collect waste of those who can't get to the station
- Recycle shop
- 34 categories of waste but at station only 32 are taken
- Zero Waste Academy is an NPO who oversee the project





# The Kamikatsu Effect

- Introduced in media nationally and globally
- Raises awareness of recycling
- 4,500 visitors to Kamikatsu every year to study Zero Waste system
- Agricultural reputation in Kamikatsu benefits from being viewed as 'green'
- Inhabitants are proud of their recycling image and more likely to continue recycling

# The Zero Waste Trend

- In 2008 and 2009 two more towns in Japan became Zero Waste
- Canberra, Australia declared itself the first Zero Waste City in 1996: a population of 330,000
- Increased public awareness of recycling

# However...

Some citizens aren't completely happy with the scheme...

Most composters are electric...

Locals have to go to recycling station by car...

Some things cannot be recycled...

- Incinerate: shoes, futons, carpets
- Bury: ceramics, glass, light bulbs
- Ship to elsewhere for recycling: batteries

# Conclusion

- Collaboration between local government, NPOs, manufacturers and residents is necessary
- Need to change attitude from *how to deal with waste* to **how to stop waste in the first place**
- Not impossible to apply to large cities e.g. Tokyo with 13million people is already recycling = just one more step!

# Credits

## **Resources**

Katsushika-ku Recycle Manual

<http://www.city.katsushika.lg.jp/previews/000/000/126/12681-2.pdf>

<http://www.city.katsushika.lg.jp/kurashi/126/012681.html>

2000 basic Law for Establishing Recycling based Society <http://www.env.go.jp/recycle/low-e.pdf>

Recycle mark logos <http://www.kttays.net/mark/risaikurumark01.html>

Photos of Kamikatsu-town landscape [http://www.irodori.co.jp/asp/nwsitem.asp?nw\\_id=2&design\\_mode=0](http://www.irodori.co.jp/asp/nwsitem.asp?nw_id=2&design_mode=0)

Photos of sorting and composter <http://www.kamikatsu.jp/wakamono/eco.html>

Kamikatsu-town sorting manual <http://www.zwa.jp/about/activity/01.html>

Local voices in Kamikatsu <http://www.zwa.jp/about/kamikatsu/index.html>

Introduction to Kamikatsu <http://www.kamikatsu.jp/wakamono/eco.html>

- BBC News <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/7502071.stm>
- The Guardian <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2008/aug/05/recycling.japan>
- Greenpeace Japan [http://www.greenpeace.or.jp/campaign/toxics/zerowaste/localgov/kamikatsu\\_en.html](http://www.greenpeace.or.jp/campaign/toxics/zerowaste/localgov/kamikatsu_en.html)
- Japan Local Government Centre <http://www.ilgc.org.uk/en/pdfs/2009lgaconf/environment.pdf>

## **Photos**

Kamikatsu Town council

Zero Waste Academy

The Green Pages.co.au

Daniel Winters 'Great Controversy Blog'