

# *Kuni*

## Definition

*noun*

1. A nation (translation from Japanese)
2. An ancient community that is small, but independent

## KUNI MANIFESTO

A *kuni* can be created anywhere through the determination of one person. Even a hamlet on the verge of extinction can revive its future through the will of one person.

As we despair about shrinking rural areas and are intimidated by cities growing to a monstrous scale, where are we supposed to go? We are dazzled by image, enslaved by fads, and compelled to buy, buy, buy.

Can we stop buying and start making? Stop viewing and start finding? Stop speaking and start listening? When did these things become so difficult?

In a *kuni*, people meet and talk about the abundant harvest, the damage done by a typhoon, a newly born child, a death in the community, the taste of vegetables picked that morning, the taste of spring water from the mountain, the scent of the wind, and the cold rain from yesterday.

Do you think a *kuni* like this is a dream? All you need in the beginning is a small will.

- ***Kuni* is the name for a new community**

A *kuni* has at least 500 people but no more than 2,000. What is too small? Small rural communities in rapid decline lose diversity and experience the rise of mutual surveillance and small dictatorships. As for too big, in gigantic cities that grow exponentially, people become part of the scenery.

- **Everyone is equal in a *kuni***

In a *kuni*, people share in the abundance and the hardships provided by the land. This brings people together and forms a sense of “we.” There is no discrimination based on race, religion, income or ideology.

- ***Kuni* is equipped with a regional management organization (RMO)**

The RMO is a democratic organization that takes care of small public services. These services include diverse programs such as education programs to enhance children’s five senses, programs to maintain the health of the elderly, and administrative tasks. The RMO also serves as an intermediary for repeat visitors, nurturing regional economies using local resources, implementing small-scale transportation services, and conserving nature. By providing these services, young staff at an RMO also hone their skills in comprehensive policymaking.

- ***Kuni* is a link between residents and repeat visitors**

A *kuni* is not solely made up of residents, but becomes a community when it includes repeat visitors from cities, who feel affection and a sense of belonging to the land.

- ***Kuni* is self-sufficient**

*Kuni* requires an economy based on self-sufficiency and serves as a place of mutual benefit. For repeat visitors from cities, it serves as a kind of insurance policy against ongoing urban stress and anxiety. For residents, repeat visitors bring economic activity and new relationships.

- **Life in a *kuni* is circular and forms a beautiful spiral**

The basis of *kuni* is circularity, where production and consumption are in balance. A life with circularity forms a beautiful spiral over time.

- ***Kuni* embraces the whole person**

In a *kuni*, people are not cogs in a machine.

- **The time for *kuni* is now**

Cities are growing bigger, and wild and savage, and rural places are disappearing.

- ***Kuni* is a place for young people who seek interconnectedness**

Local governments are downsizing and are no longer capable of providing public services. The RMO can provide these services, and through work in the RMO, young people can help shape the future.

Be the Sisyphus of our time.

Rise up.

This is the beginning of a quiet revolution.