

Community engagement at Banzena

Dr Susan Canney, March 2011

Community meetings



A series of community meetings to discuss the problem at Banzena, find relocation sites and create the community structures required for sustainable and equitable natural resource management (NRM) in the relocation area, that has the accord of the whole community.



The community structures for NRM



These consist of:

- A management committee, that determines the rules of resource management
- Brigades of young men to patrol and apprehend those who are not respecting the rules of resource use
- A council of elders who determine the penalties for offenders

This photo shows the chief of the management committee (Aliou, left) ; the chief of the Brigade de Surveillance with his brother and deputy (Bebe and Kouna, centre and right respectively)

Field visits

Aims:

- To locate the proposed relocation sites
- To determine the boundaries of the 40,000 hectare pastoral reserve, proposed by the management committee to conserve pasture for the dry season



Team:

- community representatives (elected and traditional), government technical services; the government administration



Reserve boundaries



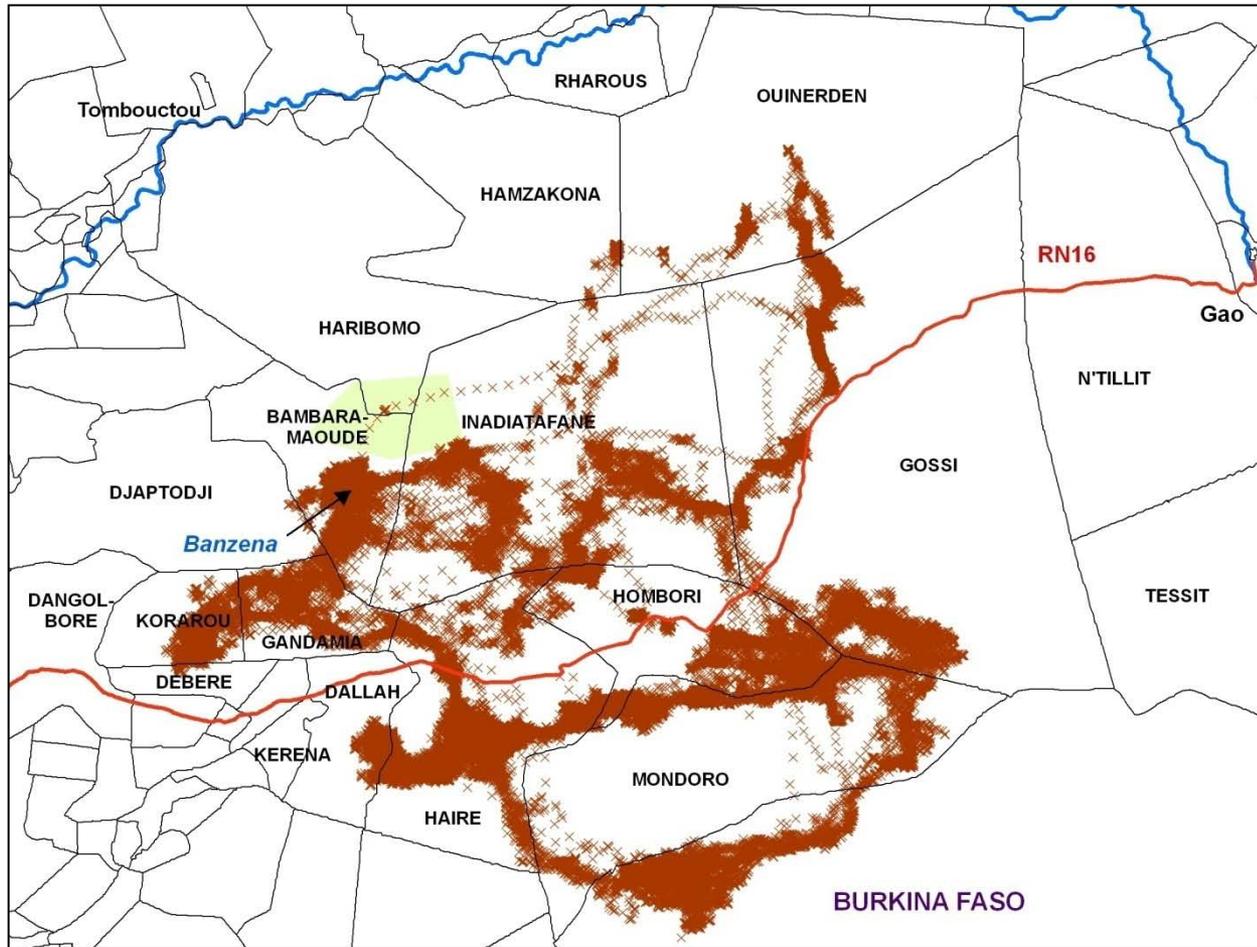
Tracing the boundaries of the reserve and marking them with signs

Integration of adjacent communes

Adjacent communes spontaneously decided to join the process and so we organized a series of workshops to harmonize the resource management process. Additional contiguous areas were designated as pastoral reserves to make a total area of 923,800 hectares.



Relocation area (green) in the context of the elephant migration (brown) and communes (black outline)



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Workshops to work out the detailed rules of resource use



Protection of the pastoral reserve from bush fire

Every year the Gourma loses much of its resources in pasture and forage to bush fires which sweep through the grassy areas during the dry season when the grass is tinder dry. These are generally caused accidentally from activities such as tea-making, or smoking, but in the south, agriculturalists may start them in order to prevent the transhumant cattle herds from staying in their area.

A pastoral reserve is made to ensure that there is pasture through the dry season but it needs to be protected by fire breaks. These take a good deal of effort to construct but are very effective if done properly. They also require a great deal of community organization to bring differing clans and ethnicities to work together. Supporting this activity is a good way to instantly increase the amount of natural resources available to the population.

6-9 camels were used and branches dragged over each spot at least 6 times. An area of 30m to one side is then cleared from the furrow to form the fire-break



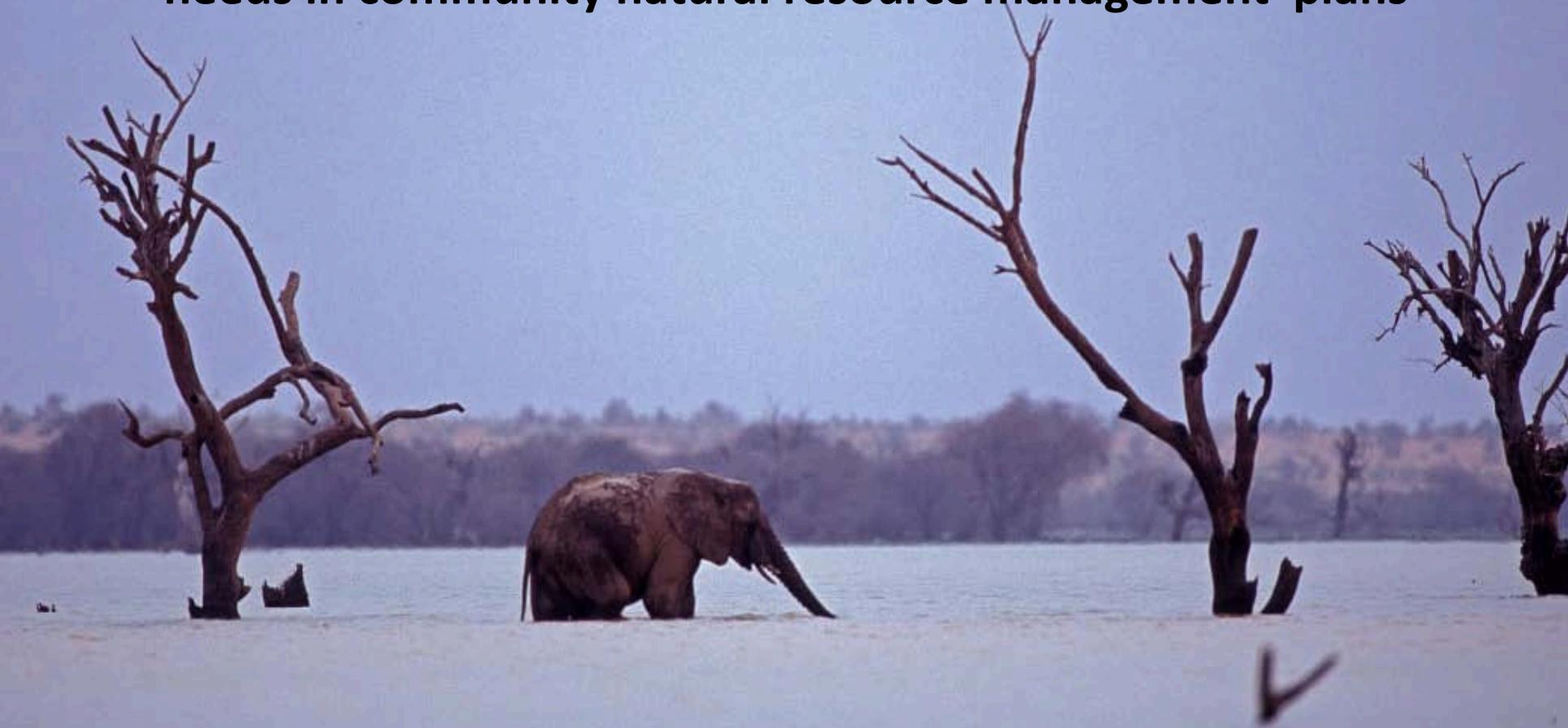
A team of 12 clear the vegetation with rakes



**This area was the only part of the northern Gourma
not to burn in bush fires this year**



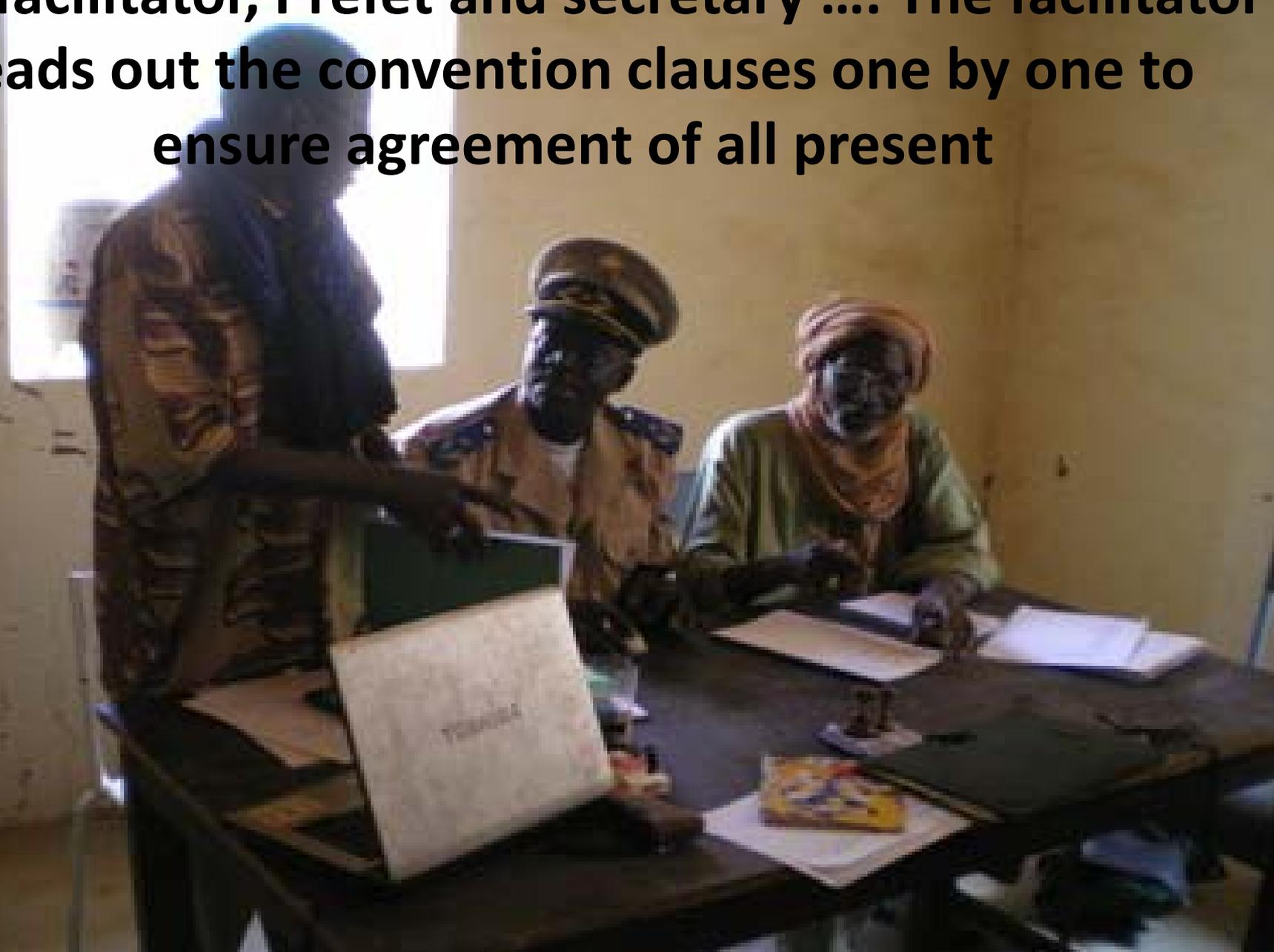
Next step: integrating the communes of Bambara-Maoude and Haribomo into the existing inter-communal convention between the communes of Gossi, Ouinerden and Inadiatafane to provide the supporting framework for including elephant needs in community natural resource management plans



Existing inter-communal convention: the signing ceremony The representatives of the community and government, including the women



The facilitator, Prefet and secretary The facilitator reads out the convention clauses one by one to ensure agreement of all present



**The convention is signed by representatives
of the people and the government**



The Prefet signs

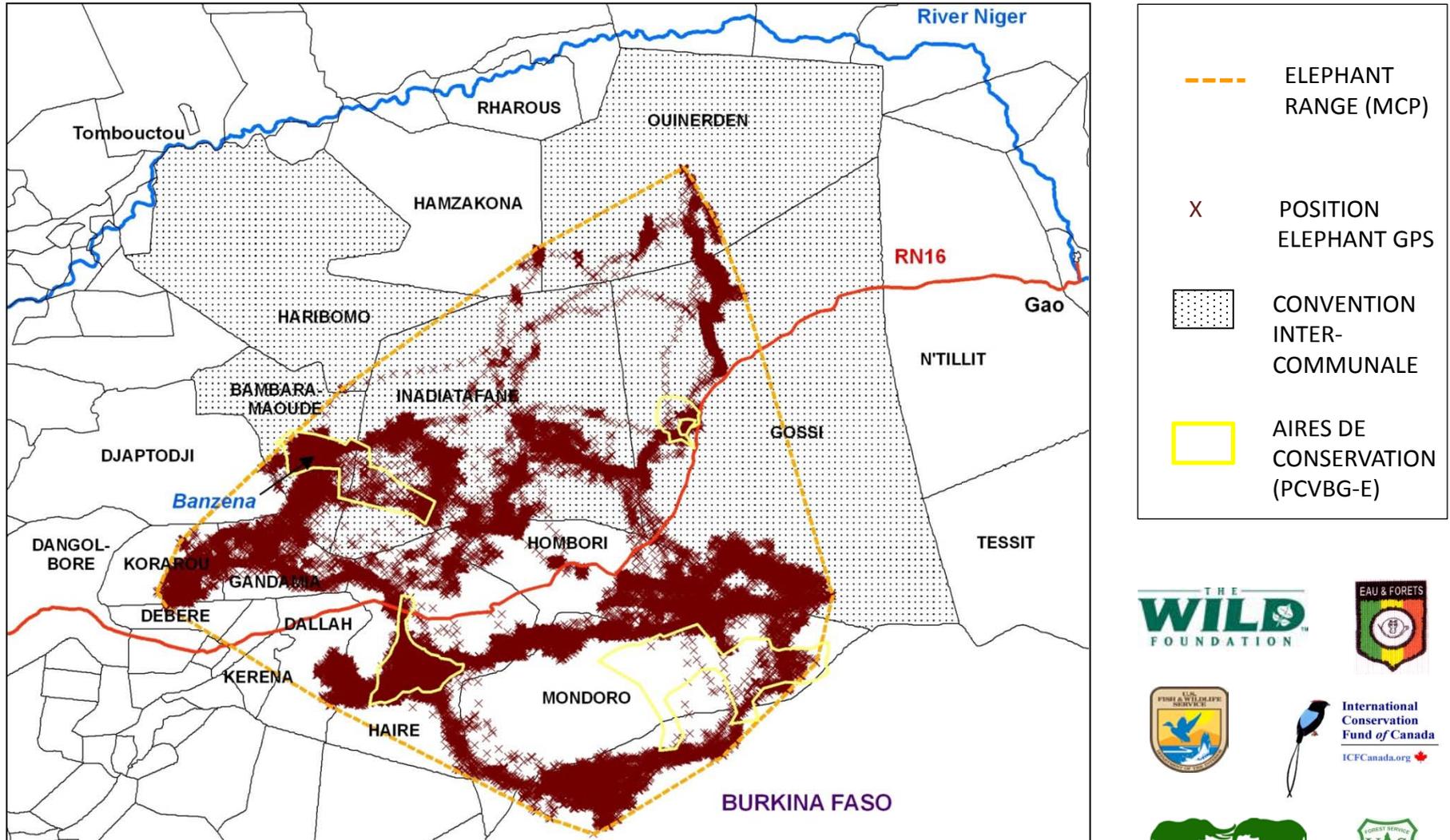


**Spontaneous
discourse by the
Chief of
Ebanguimallen,
welcoming the
initiative**

**“If all projects acted as this
one, the Gourma would not
be in the state it is in
today”**



When the two extra communes are included, 48% of the elephant GPS points and 50% of the elephant range (33,534 km² as defined by the « minimum convex polygon method) will be covered by an intercommunal convention



Carte créé par Dr Susan Canney, WILD Foundation, avec les données colliers de Save the Elephants



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The next step will be to create another two inter-communal conventions to cover the whole of the Malian range (the boundaries are shown below). The process for these will begin in the second half of the year

