



International Boundary Study

No. 171 – November 26, 1979

Cote D'Ivoire (*Ivory Coast*) – Mali Boundary

(Country Codes: IV-ML)

**The Geographer
Office of the Geographer
Bureau of Intelligence and Research**

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY STUDY

No. 171 - November 26, 1979

COTE D'IVOIRE (IVORY COAST) – MALI BOUNDARY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. Boundary Brief	2
II. Historical Background.....	2
III. Alignment.....	3
IV. Present Situation.....	4

COTE D'IVOIRE (IVORY COAST) – MALI BOUNDARY

I. BOUNDARY BRIEF

The Ivory Coast - Mali boundary is approximately 532 kilometers (331 miles) long. It extends between the Upper Voltan tripoint on the Leraba Occidentale and the tripoint with Guinea at the headwaters of the Dougoulinfolo on the Baoule-Sankarani drainage divide. The line is undemarcated except by rivers, which comprise about three-fourths of its length.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The colonies of French Sudan and Ivory Coast were included in the federation of French West Africa when it was constituted on June 16, 1895. A French decree of October 17, 1899, transferred a number of administrative units from French Sudan to other members of French West Africa, including Bouna, Kong, and Odienne to Ivory Coast. The remainder of French Sudan was organized into the civil territory of Upper Senegal and Middle Niger along with two and later three (after December 20, 1900) military territories having headquarters at Tombuctou, Bobo Dioulasso, and Zinder. Upper Senegal and Middle Niger was made a dependency of Senegal administered by the Governor of Senegal through a civil delegate at Kayes.

On March 23, 1902, the Governor General of French West Africa issued an arrete modifying the boundary between Ivory Coast and the Second Military District (headquarters at Bobo Dioulasso) as follows:

Article One. The border established by the convention, running from the Bagoé River on the west to the Leraba River on the east, drawn up in 1899 between the Second Military District (Cercle of Sikasso) and the colony of Ivory Coast (Cercle of Bandama) shall be modified so as to assign the village of Kankougou (Follona of N'Gokho) to the Cercle of Sikasso and the villages of Katogho and Kamene (Follona of M'Bengue) to the Cercle of Bandama.

On October 1, 1902, a decree ended the practice whereby the Governor of Senegal was also the ipso facto Governor General of French West Africa. Upper Senegal and Middle Niger was renamed Senegambia and Niger and placed under a delegate of the Governor General resident at Kayes. A decree of October 18, 1904, changed the name of the entity from Senegambia and Niger to the colony of Upper Senegal and Niger and moved the capital to Bamako. In 1911 the third or Niger military territory was detached from the colony and the first and second military territories were disbanded. A decree of March 1, 1919, detached various cercles from Upper Senegal and Niger to form the new colony of Upper Volta. Upper Senegal and Niger was renamed French Sudan on December 4, 1920.

Following World War II, French Sudan was made an overseas territory within the French Union, and in 1958 it became an autonomous member of the French Community. Sudan and Senegal joined to form the Federation of Mali on April 4, 1959. Senegal seceded from the federation and inaugurated an independent republic on August 20, 1960. The Republic of Sudan became the Republic of Mali on September 19, 1960.

In 1946 Ivory Coast also became an overseas territory of the French Union, and on December 4, 1958, it became an autonomous republic within the French Community. The Republic of Ivory Coast was proclaimed independent on August 7, 1960, under the terms of an accord with France.

III. ALIGNMENT

Located at approximately 10°25'12"N. and 5°30'48"W., the tripoint with Upper Volta is at the junction of the Danboro and Zagoundouba, which combine to form the Leraba Occidentale.¹ From the tripoint, the Ivory Coast - Mali boundary follows the Danboro westward for about 17 kilometers (11 miles). Crossing a narrow drainage divide to the headwaters of the Kafonrako, the line follows this river for about 21 kilometers (13 miles) to its junction with the Lofoon.

The boundary next turns southward, following the Lofoon upstream for about 14 kilometers (9 miles) to its source. The line again continues southward and then turns northward for a total of about 31 kilometers (19 miles) to the Yaka Anka, traversing an area of low local relief and in places utilizing small stream valleys. The boundary follows the Yaka Anka downstream for about 15 kilometers (9 miles) to its junction with the Bagoë.

It follows the Bagoë upstream for about 100 kilometers (62 miles) and then continues for about 42 kilometers (26 miles) across another area of low relief to the Kobani. Between the Bagoë and the Kobani, the boundary follows a straight line to a small stream at approximately 10°41'00"N. and 6°19'10"W., continues westward along the stream to approximately 10°42'00"N. and 6°25'00"W., extends southward to approximately 10°33'40"N. and 6°25'35"W., and then travels northwestward for the remainder of the distance.

The line follows in succession the Kobani upstream for about 21 kilometers (13 miles), the Babani upstream for about 53 kilometers (33 miles), and the Boronikono upstream for 8 kilometers (5 miles). The boundary then extends to low hills east of the Banifing and continues upstream along the Banifing for 40 kilometers (25 miles). From the Banifing, the

¹ Alignment of the boundary is taken from the French Institut Geographique National (IGN) topographic map series at a scale of 1:200,000 with individual sheets published between 1964 and 1975. The IGN sheets from east to west are as follows: NC-30-XIII (Nielle), NC-29-XVIII (Tingrela), and NC-29-XVII (Tienko). The rivers referred to in this study as the Danboro and Zagoundouba are not named on the Nielle sheet. Other sources indicate that the eastward-flowing river is named the Danboro and the southward-flowing river is the Zagoundouba.

line passes northwestward for about 44 kilometers (27 miles) to the source of the Zanso, cutting across a number of small streams and in other places utilizing various hills and short segments of streams.

The boundary follows the Zango downstream for about 8 kilometers (5 miles), the Degouni downstream for about the same distance, and then forms an arc eastward of the latter river utilizing two small streams -- the Tomako on the south and the Kotouba on the north. The line continues along the Degou, as the lower part of the Degouni is known, for about 23 kilometers (14 miles) to immediately south of Manakoro. It then proceeds primarily along ridges and low hills westward for about 35 kilometers (22 miles) to the Baoule.

The boundary then follows successively the Baoule, Gbolonzon, Bessin, and Dougoulinfolo upstream to the headwaters of this last river on the Baoule-Sankarani drainage divide. The tripoint with Guinea on the drainage divide is located at approximately 10°10'15"N. and 7°58'40"W.

IV. PRESENT SITUATION

A number of attempts have been made by the Department of State to obtain detailed information on the precise alignment of the boundary between Ivory Coast and Upper Volta since they gained independence in 1960. Efforts to obtain the official decrees establishing the boundary from the Governments of Ivory Coast, Mali, and France have been unsuccessful. The two African countries have not indicated what they consider to be their de facto boundary. There are no known disputes concerning the alignment of the boundary.

This International Boundary Study is one of a series of specific boundary papers prepared by the Office of The Geographer, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State, in accordance with provisions of the Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A-16.

Government agencies may obtain additional information and copies of the study by calling the Office of The Geographer, Room 8742, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520 (Telephone: 632-2021 or 632-2022).