



**Position**

Teacher-Researcher

**Institution**

Félix Houphouët-Boigny  
University

**Country**

Ivory Coast

**Education**

PhD, Hydrology at the Pierre  
and Marie Curie University -  
Paris 6

**Mentor**

Dr. Koné Brama, Teacher-  
Researcher, Péléforo  
Gon Coulibaly University,  
Korhogo, Ivory Coast

**Research Area**

Groundwater resources and  
their interactions with the  
surrounding environment

## Donissoungou Dimitri Soro

2019 One Planet Laureate Candidate

Soro Donissoungou Dimitri defines himself as passionate about water resources issues.

Born in the Nimbo maternity unit in the city of Bouaké, located in the centre of Ivory Coast, Soro spent his childhood in this city, then went to the economic capital Abidjan in his final year of school, where he obtained his Baccalaureate in Mathematics and Physical Sciences (Series C), and began his university course.

He obtained a bachelor's degree in Water Science and Technology from Nangui Abrogoua University (2006) and a Diploma in Advanced Study (DEA - Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies) in Remote Sensing and GIS from the Félix Houphouët-Boigny University (2010). With a DEA in climate change variability, his logical next step was to do a doctorate.

However, being the eldest son and with a retired father, he lacked the means to continue his studies, so, in his own words, he prioritised professional training to find a job.

This is how he joined the International Institute of Water (2iE) to pursue a double master's specializing in Integrated Water Resources Management (2011) and Environmental Sanitation and Water Resources Management (2012), thanks to a grant from the European Union.

Following this master's, he obtained funding from the WAEMU (West African Economic and Monetary Union) for a second master's degree specialising in Sanitary and Environmental Engineering. Next he did a sanitary and environmental engineering master's internship in a German research centre in Ouagadougou, who then offered him a work contract at the end of his internship period.

Despite good professional prospects, as soon as the opportunity arose, he did not hesitate to apply to write a thesis. At the time, "my father did not understand my choice to prioritise research over looking for a stable job," he recalls. "Fortunately, this choice has paid off," he said proudly.

Indeed, Soro received a scholarship funded by the French Research Institute for Development (IRD - Institut de Recherche pour le Développement) for a doctorate in Hydrogeology at Pierre and Marie Curie University - Paris 6.

His research work revolves around groundwater resources and their interactions with surrounding environments, more specifically, the impact of certain variables on aquifer systems.

Impatient to make his contribution to an issue that is particularly close to his heart, immediately after his thesis defence on 23 May 2017 in Paris, Soro returned to Ivory Coast in June 2017.

This return to the country fortunately coincided with a national recruitment of teachers in local universities. Married and the father of two children, since February 2018, Soro has been a teacher-researcher at the Félix Houphouët-Boigny University.

Holder of a unique doctorate in geosciences, natural resources and the environment, he says that he chose this discipline after seeing the realities of the field in terms of scarcity of water resources, particularly in the villages.

To date, his greatest satisfaction is seeing rural people happy when they are provided with water. He has worked mainly with local communities in semi-urban and rural areas in Burkina Faso. Now he wishes to use his expertise for the benefit of rural Ivory Coast communities.

Both honoured and surprised to be part of the first cohort of the One Planet Fellowship programme, Soro remembers with great emotion his researcher friend, a former member of the WASCAL programme (West African Science Service Center on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use), who sent him the One Planet scholarship link on the day of the application deadline.

Soro aspires to integrate other multidisciplinary research communities to reflect and initiate concrete actions that take into account all aspects of climate change, including its impacts on water resources.

“I spent an afternoon after finishing classes at the University, filling out the application and sending it less than two hours before the closing time.”

On a professional level, Soro wishes to work with other communities of multidisciplinary researchers to reflect and seek funding in order to initiate concrete actions taking into account all aspects of climate change, in particular its impacts on water resources.

In addition, he aims to sit his exams at the African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education (CAMES - Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur).

Finally, Soro's long-term goal is to work with a development structure to have a direct impact.

**Donissoungou Dimitri Soro** is one of the growing number of candidates selected to participate in the One Planet Fellowship. The One Planet Fellowship is a career development initiative that is building a robust pipeline of highly connected, inter-generational scientists equipped to use a gender lens to help Africa's smallholder farmers cope with climate change. The One Planet Fellowship is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the BNP Paribas Foundation, the European Union and Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC). African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) and Agropolis Fondation are jointly implementing the Fellowship.

Do you have any further questions? Send an email to: [oneplanet.award@cgiar.org](mailto:oneplanet.award@cgiar.org)