

**Comments on draft SNA chapter:
Chapter 3: Flows, stocks and accounting rules**

**Deadline for comments: 30 September 2007
Send comments to: sna@un.org**

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| Submission date: | 27 September 2007 |

This three-part template allows you to record your comments on draft chapter 3 easily and, at the same time, makes it easy for us to use your comments in considering revisions to the draft chapter. You may complete any one, any two, or all of the three parts of the template.

Especially when providing comments in Part III of the template, you are encouraged to focus on the new passages of the draft text. To facilitate this process, a file comparing the existing text and the draft text is available on the website under the following link: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/sna1993/projectmanagement/drafts/Chapter3dv2cdv0.pdf>

Save this template and send it as an attachment to the following e-mail address: sna@un.org

Part I: General comments

In the space below, please provide any general comments, such as about the clarity with which the new recommendations were incorporated (30 words or less).

Comment:

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| Click here and start typing. |
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Part II: Comments on specific draft paragraphs or passages

In your review of draft chapter 3, you may wish to devote particular attention to the passages listed below. For ease of reference, we have identified the relevant paragraphs.

For each passage, a Word table is provided for you to use in making your comments. There is a row for general comments at the top of the table. Thereafter please use a separate row for each paragraph on which you wish to make detailed comments.

Definition of an asset

Questions about the adequacy of the *1993 SNA* definition of an economic asset led to the issue being among the forty-four considered during the Update. An AEG meeting concluded that the 1993 definition did not adequately cover risk, demonstrable value and constructive obligations.

1. Section B, about stocks, opens with a new and fuller definition of an asset than appeared in the *1993 SNA*. Paragraphs 3.18 – 3.28 describe the concepts of benefits and of legal and economic ownership, and then paragraphs 3.29 - 3.30 present the new definition. Are these paragraphs clear?

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| General comment | Apart from the first paragraph and a few typos, the rest of this section is fine. |
| 3.18 | In standard English, “benefits” are things one receives or gains. One can also confer a benefit on someone else. But the way benefits are defined here is quite contrary to normal English usage, and it comes with quite a jolt. In the absence of a better word being available, the best solution might be to start off by describing the standard meaning of benefit in English and then go on to explain that in the SNA it has a broader meaning, i.e. it means not only advantages or gains one receives but also what one gives up to acquire things. |
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* Insert rows in this Word table for each paragraph on which you wish to comment.

Accounting rules: additions from *BPM6*

Section E presents the accounting rules of the System. Text from the draft *BPM6* has been added to the text from the *1993 SNA* in several places. These additions help implement the agreement to align the two manuals where appropriate. Of several additions (see file comparing the 1993 text with the present draft, where they are apparent), two in particular may be of interest.

2. Paragraphs 3.106 – 3.111 discuss quadruple entry accounting. Are these paragraphs clear and appropriate to the SNA?

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| General comment | Click here and start typing. |
| 3.106 | Click here and start typing. |
| 3.111 | This paragraph is confusing and difficult to understand. In particular, the second sentence which reads “Since the rest of the world is viewed from |

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| | the point of view of the domestic economy, imports to the economy of interest provide resources to the rest of the world and exports are a use of the rest of the world resources.” But the resources and uses of the rest of the world are accumulated with those of the domestic economy in the goods and services account, i.e., imports are recorded as a resource and exports as a use in the goods and services account, and the rest of the world is treated as another sector in the economy. So a more fulsome explanation is warranted. |
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* Insert rows in this Word table for each paragraph on which you wish to comment.

3. Paragraphs 3.113 – 3.128 are about valuation of transactions. In particular, paragraphs 3.113-3.114 explain how “market prices” should be interpreted. Are the paragraphs clear and appropriate for the SNA?

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| General comment | Clear |
| 3.113 | Click here and start typing. |
| * | Click here and start typing. |

* Insert rows in this Word table for each paragraph on which you wish to comment.

Discounted present value of expected future returns

Section E.2 discusses valuation, beginning with the relatively straight-forward cases when actual exchange values represent market prices and then moving to the more difficult cases, including those where market-price equivalents must be used.

4. Paragraph 3.126 notes, as did the *1993 SNA*, that when none of several methods to represent market-price equivalents can be applied, flows and stocks can be recorded at the discounted present value of expected future returns. Does the description of this method strike an appropriate tone given the greater use and acceptance of this method since the *1993 SNA*?

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| General comment | It is clear, but it does not provide advice about how it should be done. For example, how to deal with inflation by expressing the expected returns and discount rate in real terms and taking account of expected real holding gains and losses. Therefore, it would be a good idea to make a reference to chapter 19. |
| 3.126 | Click here and start typing. |

Part III. Other specific comments

You are welcome to make other comments. Please do so by using Adobe Acrobat Version 6 or 7 to comment directly on the PDF of the draft chapter.

If you don't have Adobe Acrobat Version 6 or 7 and would like to make detailed comments, please send a message to sna@un.org requesting a version of the draft chapter that permits you to comment. To optimize your commenting tools, please download Adobe Reader 7.0 for free from <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>