

Deploying Scalable EKS Infrastructure with Terraform





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In today's cloud-native landscape, Kubernetes has emerged as the de facto standard for container orchestration. Amazon Elastic Kubernetes Service (EKS) offers a fully managed Kubernetes solution that simplifies cluster operations, scalability, and integration with the AWS ecosystem. However, manually provisioning EKS and its underlying infrastructure can be time-consuming and error-prone.

This is where Terraform, an open-source Infrastructure as Code (IaC) tool by HashiCorp, becomes a game-changer. By defining your infrastructure in declarative configuration files, Terraform allows you to automate, version, and manage your entire EKS environment with ease and consistency.

In this guide, we'll walk through a step-by-step process to create an EKS cluster on AWS using Terraform. Whether you're a DevOps engineer looking to streamline deployments or a developer exploring Kubernetes at scale, this tutorial will equip you with the foundational skills to provision a production-ready EKS setup—all through code.

Elastic Kubernetes Service (EKS)

Kubernetes (often abbreviated as **K8s**) is an **open-source container orchestration platform** designed to **automate the deployment, scaling, and management of containerized applications**. Setting up and self managing kubernetes clustera is a tedious job. AWS decided to simplify deployment, scaling, and operation of Kubernetes clusters by creating their own kubernetes cluster known as Elastic Kubernetes Service(EKS) managed by their team. All the customer need is to setup EKS and deploy their application.

Terraform

Terraform is an **open-source Infrastructure as Code (IaC) tool** developed by **HashiCorp**. It allows you to **define, provision, and manage cloud**



infrastructure using a declarative configuration language called HCL (HashiCorp Configuration Language). Every cloud provider has their own IaC like aws has Cloud Formation but terraform is open source and can interact with different cloud providers

Prerequisite

- AWS account
- AWS cli
- Terraform
- Visual studio Code
- eksctl

Objective

- Setup aws credentials
- Create EKS with terraform
- Create Remote backend
- Modularize our terraform code
- Create State Locking using Dynamo DB
- Clean up

We will start with creating aws credentials.

The next stage is to configure aws credentials on our command line. Before you configure your credentials ensure that you have installed aws cli. you can refer to this article <u>AWS CLI</u> to install aws cli depending on your operating system.

To configure aws credentials

Important extensions that can improve productivity

HashiCorp Terraform





GitHub Copilot

Most companies modularize their terraform code. The reason is to

- Avoid Redundancy Prevent repetitive code and improve efficiency
- Enhance Reusability Allow easy reuse of infrastructure components.
- Improve Accessibility Enable seamless collaboration and management
- Maintain Clean Code Ensure a structured and maintainable codebase

In order to modularize our terraform code we will create 2 folders inside the root directory

- backend
- modules

Then inside modules

- EKS
- VPC

File structure

```
gitignore
backend
  _main.tf
  outputs.tf
main.tf
modules
  eks
    _main.tf
    outputs.tf
    variables.tf
  vpc
    _main.tf
    outputs.tf
    variables.tf
outputs.tf
variables.tf
```

Next step is to create our remote backend.





Why Use AWS Remote Backend?

- Collaboration Multiple engineers can access the same state file.
- **Disaster Recovery** Remote backups ensure state is not lost.
- State Locking Prevents simultaneous updates using DynamoDB.

AWS State Locking is a mechanism that prevents **simultaneous modifications** to the **Terraform state file** stored in **DynamoDB**. It ensures that only **one Terraform process** can modify the state at a time, preventing conflicts and corruption.

Prerequisite

- AWS Account
- AWS cli
- Terraform

To create remote backend and state lock we will create

```
main.tf
provider "aws" {
  region = "us-east-1"
}

resource "aws_s3_bucket" "terraform_s3" {
  bucket = "remote-backend-s3"

lifecycle {
  prevent_destroy = false
  }
}

resource "aws_s3_bucket versioning" "terraform_s3" {
```





```
bucket = aws s3 bucket.terraform state.id
versioning_configuration {
 status = "Enabled"
}
}
resource "aws_s3_bucket_server_side_encryption_configuration"
"terraform s3" {
 bucket = aws_s3_bucket.terraform_state.id
 rule {
 apply_server_side_encryption_by_default {
  sse_algorithm = "AES256"
 }
}
}
resource "aws_dynamodb_table" "terraform_locks" {
           = "remote-backend-locks"
 name
 billing_mode = "PAY_PER_REQUEST"
hash_key = "LockID"
 attribute {
  name = "LockID"
 type = "S"
 }
}
```





outputs.tf

```
output "s3_bucket_name" {
  value = aws_s3_bucket.terraform_state.id
  description = "The name of the S3 bucket"
}

output "dynamodb_table_name" {
  value = aws_dynamodb_table.terraform_locks.id
  description = "The name of the DynamoDB table"
}
```

To create the resource in aws

• You need to initialize terraform

terraform init

• To view resources before creation

terraform plan

• To create the resources

terraform apply



1. VPC & Networking Infrastructure

EKS needs a robust and well-designed network, because Kubernetes components and pods communicate over the network a lot.

a. Create a VPC

- Think of VPC as your **private**, **isolated network** inside AWS.
- You define a CIDR block (e.g., 10.0.0.0/16) which is the total range of IP addresses.

b. Create Subnets

- You split your VPC into subnets.
- Use at least 2-3 Availability Zones (AZs) to ensure high availability.

Public subnets:

- Used for things that need internet access (like NAT Gateways or bastion hosts).
- Can route traffic to/from the internet via an Internet Gateway.

Private subnets:

- These are where your EKS worker nodes live.
- More secure because they don't have direct internet exposure.

c. Set Up Internet Gateway & Routing

- Attach an Internet Gateway (IGW) to your VPC so public subnets can talk to the internet.
- Set up Route Tables:
 - Public subnets route traffic to the IGW.
 - Private subnets route internet-bound traffic through a NAT Gateway (located in a public subnet).

d. NAT Gateway

• Ensures **private subnet resources can reach out to the internet** (e.g., pull Docker images) without being directly exposed.



1 2. IAM Roles & Permissions

EKS interacts with many AWS services, so it needs permission through IAM roles.

a. EKS Cluster Role

- This IAM role is assumed by the EKS control plane.
- It needs policies that let it:
 - Manage networking (ENIs, security groups)
 - Create and attach load balancers
 - Work with EC2 and other AWS services

b. EKS Node IAM Role

- This role is assumed by worker nodes (EC2 instances).
- Needs permissions for:
 - Pulling container images from Amazon ECR
 - Pushing logs to CloudWatch
 - Communicating with the EKS control plane

3. Create the EKS Cluster

Now you set up the actual EKS cluster.

a. Control Plane

- Managed by AWS (you don't manage the master nodes).
- You specify:
 - The VPC and subnets to use
 - Security groups
 - Logging options (e.g., audit logs, API logs)
- The control plane is deployed across **multiple AZs** automatically for HA.





b. API Endpoint Access

- You decide whether the Kubernetes API is accessible:
 - Public (over the internet)
 - Private (internal VPC only)
 - o Or both

4. EKS Node Group Setup

These are the EC2 instances that act as Kubernetes worker nodes.

a. Managed Node Groups

- AWS provisions and manages the EC2 instances for you.
- You specify:
 - Instance type (e.g., t3.medium)
 - Min, max, and desired capacity
 - AMI type and disk size
 - Subnets (should be private)

b. Node Auto-scaling

- Nodes can scale in/out based on cluster load.
- Use Cluster Autoscaler later for dynamic pod-based scaling.

5. Set Up Remote State for Terraform

In teams or production environments, you need to store Terraform's state securely.

a. S3 for Backend

- Stores Terraform state files.
- Ensures the current infrastructure state is not lost between runs.

b. DynamoDB for Locking





Prevents two people from running terraform apply at the same time.

Before we can create EKS we need to create VPC because EKS does not work well with the default VPC

What we need to create VPC

- Public and private subnet
- Internet gateway
- NAT Gateway
- Route Table

What we need to create EKS

- iam role for eks cluster
- iam role for node group

Terraform has 4 important areas

- Provider Determines the cloud provider (aws, azure, gcp etc)
- Resources Creates and manages infrastructure on the cloud platform.
- Variable Makes values reusable and configurable
- output Displays the results of created resources

Inside the VPC folder

Create file with name main.tf



```
resource "aws_subnet" "private" {
             = length(var.private subnet cidrs)
 count
             = aws vpc.main.id
 vpc id
 cidr block
               = var.private subnet cidrs[count.index]
 availability_zone = var.availability_zones[count.index]
 tags = {
                               = "${var.cluster_name}-private-${count.index +
  Name
1}"
 "kubernetes.io/cluster/${var.cluster name}" = "shared"
                                          = "1"
  "kubernetes.io/role/internal-elb"
 }
}
resource "aws_subnet" "public" {
             = length(var.public_subnet_cidrs)
 count
 vpc id
             = aws vpc.main.id
               = var.public subnet cidrs[count.index]
 cidr block
 availability_zone = var.availability_zones[count.index]
 map public ip on launch = true
 tags = {
                               = "${var.cluster name}-public-${count.index +
  Name
1}"
```



```
"kubernetes.io/cluster/${var.cluster name}" = "shared"
  "kubernetes.io/role/elb"
}
resource "aws internet gateway" "main" {
 vpc_id = aws_vpc.main.id
 tags = {
 Name = "${var.cluster name}-igw"
 }
}
resource "aws_eip" "nat" {
 count = length(var.public_subnet_cidrs)
 domain = "vpc"
tags = {
 Name = "${var.cluster_name}-nat-${count.index + 1}"
 }
}
resource "aws nat gateway" "main" {
           = length(var.public_subnet_cidrs)
 count
 allocation_id = aws_eip.nat[count.index].id
 subnet_id = aws_subnet.public[count.index].id
```





```
tags = {
 Name = "${var.cluster_name}-nat-${count.index + 1}"
}
}
resource "aws_route_table" "public" {
vpc_id = aws_vpc.main.id
 route {
 cidr block = "0.0.0.0/0"
 gateway_id = aws_internet_gateway.main.id
tags = {
 Name = "${var.cluster name}-public"
 }
}
resource "aws_route_table" "private" {
count = length(var.private_subnet_cidrs)
vpc_id = aws_vpc.main.id
 route {
 cidr_block = "0.0.0.0/0"
  nat_gateway_id = aws_nat_gateway.main[count.index].id
```



```
tags = {
 Name = "${var.cluster_name}-private-${count.index + 1}"
 }
}
resource "aws route table association" "private" {
            = length(var.private subnet cidrs)
 count
             = aws subnet.private[count.index].id
 subnet id
 route table id = aws route table.private[count.index].id
}
resource "aws_route_table_association" "public" {
           = length(var.public_subnet_cidrs)
 count
             = aws subnet.public[count.index].id
 subnet id
 route table id = aws route table.public.id
Create another file output.tf
output "vpc id" {
 description = "VPC ID"
 value
          = aws vpc.main.id
}
output "private_subnet_ids" {
 description = "Private subnet IDs"
```





```
= aws subnet.private[*].id
 value
}
output "public_subnet_ids" {
 description = "Public subnet IDs"
          = aws subnet.public[*].id
 value
Create another file variables.tf
variable "vpc_cidr" {
 description = "CIDR block for VPC"
 type
          = string
}
variable "availability_zones" {
 description = "Availability zones"
          = list(string)
 type
}
variable "private_subnet_cidrs" {
 description = "CIDR blocks for private subnets"
 type
          = list(string)
}
variable "public subnet cidrs" {
 description = "CIDR blocks for public subnets"
          = list(string)
 type
```



```
variable "cluster_name" {
  description = "Name of the EKS cluster"
  type = string
}
```

Inside the EKS folder

Create main.tf

```
resource "aws_vpc" "main" {
 cidr block
                 = var.vpc cidr
 enable_dns_hostnames = true
 enable_dns_support = true
 tags = {
                               = "${var.cluster_name}-vpc"
  Name
 "kubernetes.io/cluster/${var.cluster_name}" = "shared"
 }
}
resource "aws_subnet" "private" {
             = length(var.private_subnet_cidrs)
 count
             = aws_vpc.main.id
 vpc_id
               = var.private_subnet_cidrs[count.index]
 cidr_block
 availability zone = var.availability zones[count.index]
```





```
tags = {
                               = "${var.cluster_name}-private-${count.index +
  Name
1}"
  "kubernetes.io/cluster/${var.cluster name}" = "shared"
  "kubernetes.io/role/internal-elb"
                                          = "1"
 }
}
resource "aws_subnet" "public" {
             = length(var.public subnet cidrs)
 count
             = aws vpc.main.id
 vpc id
               = var.public_subnet_cidrs[count.index]
 cidr block
 availability_zone = var.availability_zones[count.index]
 map public ip on launch = true
 tags = {
                               = "${var.cluster_name}-public-${count.index +
  Name
1}"
  "kubernetes.io/cluster/${var.cluster_name}" = "shared"
  "kubernetes.io/role/elb"
                                      = "1"
 }
}
resource "aws internet gateway" "main" {
 vpc_id = aws_vpc.main.id
```



```
tags = {
 Name = "${var.cluster name}-igw"
}
resource "aws eip" "nat" {
 count = length(var.public_subnet_cidrs)
 domain = "vpc"
 tags = {
 Name = "${var.cluster_name}-nat-${count.index + 1}"
 }
}
resource "aws_nat_gateway" "main" {
           = length(var.public subnet cidrs)
 count
 allocation_id = aws_eip.nat[count.index].id
 subnet_id = aws_subnet.public[count.index].id
tags = {
 Name = "${var.cluster_name}-nat-${count.index + 1}"
 }
}
resource "aws_route_table" "public" {
vpc_id = aws_vpc.main.id
```



```
route {
 cidr_block = "0.0.0.0/0"
 gateway_id = aws_internet_gateway.main.id
 }
 tags = {
 Name = "${var.cluster_name}-public"
 }
}
resource "aws_route_table" "private" {
 count = length(var.private subnet cidrs)
vpc_id = aws_vpc.main.id
 route {
 cidr block = "0.0.0.0/0"
 nat_gateway_id = aws_nat_gateway.main[count.index].id
 }
 tags = {
 Name = "${var.cluster_name}-private-${count.index + 1}"
 }
}
resource "aws_route_table_association" "private" {
```





```
= length(var.private subnet cidrs)
 count
              = aws subnet.private[count.index].id
 subnet id
 route_table_id = aws_route_table.private[count.index].id
}
resource "aws_route_table_association" "public" {
            = length(var.public subnet cidrs)
 count
              = aws subnet.public[count.index].id
 route table id = aws route table.public.id
output.tf
output "vpc id" {
 description = "VPC ID"
 value
          = aws vpc.main.id
}
output "private_subnet_ids" {
 description = "Private subnet IDs"
          = aws subnet.private[*].id
 value
}
output "public subnet ids" {
 description = "Public subnet IDs"
         = aws_subnet.public[*].id
 value
}
```





variables.tf

```
variable "vpc_cidr" {
 description = "CIDR block for VPC"
type
          = string
}
variable "availability_zones" {
 description = "Availability zones"
          = list(string)
type
}
variable "private_subnet_cidrs" {
 description = "CIDR blocks for private subnets"
 type
          = list(string)
variable "public_subnet_cidrs" {
 description = "CIDR blocks for public subnets"
          = list(string)
 type
}
variable "cluster name" {
 description = "Name of the EKS cluster"
          = string
type
```





Terraform modules can not execute unless they are invoked. In order to invoke VPC and EKS module. On the root folder we will create the following files

main.tf

```
terraform {
 required_providers {
  aws = {
   source = "hashicorp/aws"
   version = "~> 5.0"
  }
 backend "s3" {
  bucket
             = "demo-terraform-eks-state-s3-bucket"
           = "terraform.tfstate"
  key
  region
           = "us-west-2"
  dynamodb_table = "terraform-eks-state-locks"
  encrypt
              = true
provider "aws" {
region = var.region
module "vpc" {
```



```
source = "./modules/vpc"
 vpc_cidr
                = var.vpc_cidr
 availability_zones = var.availability_zones
 private subnet cidrs = var.private subnet cidrs
 public subnet cidrs = var.public subnet cidrs
 cluster name
                   = var.cluster_name
}
module "eks" {
 source = "./modules/eks"
 cluster name = var.cluster name
 cluster_version = var.cluster_version
 vpc_id
            = module.vpc.vpc_id
              = module.vpc.private subnet ids
 subnet ids
 node groups = var.node groups

    outputs.tf

output "cluster endpoint" {
 description = "EKS cluster endpoint"
          = module.eks.cluster endpoint
 value
output "cluster_name" {
 description = "EKS cluster name"
```





```
= module.eks.cluster name
 value
}
output "vpc_id" {
 description = "VPC ID"
value = module.vpc.vpc id
}
   • variables.tf
variable "region" {
 description = "AWS region"
 type = string
 default = "us-west-2"
}
variable "vpc_cidr" {
 description = "CIDR block for VPC"
 type = string
 default = "10.0.0.0/16"
}
variable "availability_zones" {
 description = "Availability zones"
 type = list(string)
 default = ["us-west-2a", "us-west-2b", "us-west-2c"]
```





```
variable "private subnet cidrs" {
 description = "CIDR blocks for private subnets"
         = list(string)
 type
 default = ["10.0.1.0/24", "10.0.2.0/24", "10.0.3.0/24"]
}
variable "public_subnet_cidrs" {
 description = "CIDR blocks for public subnets"
         = list(string)
 type
 default = ["10.0.4.0/24", "10.0.5.0/24", "10.0.6.0/24"]
}
variable "cluster name" {
 description = "Name of the EKS cluster"
         = string
 type
 default = "my-eks-cluster"
}
variable "cluster_version" {
 description = "Kubernetes version"
 type
         = string
 default = "1.30"
}
variable "node_groups" {
 description = "EKS node group configuration"
```





```
type = map(object({
 instance_types = list(string)
 capacity_type = string
 scaling_config = object({
  desired_size = number
  max_size = number
  min_size = number
 })
}))
 default = {
 general = {
  instance_types = ["t3.medium"]
   capacity_type = "ON_DEMAND"
  scaling_config = {
    desired_size = 2
    max size
              = 4
    min_size
              = 1
On the root directory create
```

main.tf

```
terraform {
 required_providers {
  aws = {
```



```
source = "hashicorp/aws"
  version = "~> 5.0"
 }
 backend "s3" {
             = "remote-backend-s3"
  bucket
           = "terraform.tfstate"
  key
             = "us-west-2"
  region
 dynamodb_table = "remote-backend-locks"
  encrypt
             = true
provider "aws" {
 region = var.region
}
module "vpc" {
 source = "./modules/vpc"
                = var.vpc_cidr
 vpc_cidr
 availability_zones = var.availability_zones
 private_subnet_cidrs = var.private_subnet_cidrs
 public_subnet_cidrs = var.public_subnet_cidrs
 cluster_name
                  = var.cluster_name
```



```
module "eks" {
 source = "./modules/eks"
 cluster_name = var.cluster_name
 cluster_version = var.cluster_version
            = module.vpc.vpc_id
              = module.vpc.private subnet ids
 subnet ids
 node_groups = var.node_groups
}
outputs.tf
output "cluster endpoint" {
 description = "EKS cluster endpoint"
         = module.eks.cluster_endpoint
value
}
output "cluster_name" {
 description = "EKS cluster name"
value
         = module.eks.cluster name
}
output "vpc_id" {
description = "VPC ID"
         = module.vpc.vpc_id
 value
}
```





variables.tf

```
variable "region" {
 description = "AWS region"
         = string
 type
 default = "us-west-2"
}
variable "vpc_cidr" {
 description = "CIDR block for VPC"
 type
         = string
 default = "10.0.0.0/16"
}
variable "availability_zones" {
 description = "Availability zones"
         = list(string)
 type
 default = ["us-west-2a", "us-west-2b", "us-west-2c"]
}
variable "private_subnet_cidrs" {
 description = "CIDR blocks for private subnets"
         = list(string)
 type
 default = ["10.0.1.0/24", "10.0.2.0/24", "10.0.3.0/24"]
variable "public_subnet_cidrs" {
```





```
description = "CIDR blocks for public subnets"
         = list(string)
 type
 default = ["10.0.4.0/24", "10.0.5.0/24", "10.0.6.0/24"]
variable "cluster name" {
 description = "Name of the EKS cluster"
 type
         = string
 default = "my-eks-cluster"
variable "cluster version" {
 description = "Kubernetes version"
 type
         = string
 default = "1.30"
}
variable "node groups" {
 description = "EKS node group configuration"
 type = map(object({
  instance types = list(string)
  capacity_type = string
  scaling config = object({
   desired size = number
   max size = number
   min size = number
```





```
})
}))
default = {
  general = {
  instance_types = ["t3.medium"]
  capacity_type = "ON_DEMAND"
  scaling_config = {
    desired_size = 2
    max_size = 4
    min_size = 1
  }
}
```

Go to the terminal the change directory into the root folder

Initialize terraform

terraform init

Validate the resources that will be created

terraform plan

Create the resources in aws

terraform apply

• To connect to kubernetes cluster

aws eks update-kubeconfig --region region --name cluster-name

To view kubernetes onfig

kubectl config view

To get current kubernetes config



kubectl config current-context

• To switch between kubernetes cluster

kubectl config use-context

• Clean up the resources

terraform destroy



Conclusion:

Setting up a **Highly Available Amazon EKS Cluster using Terraform** is a robust, scalable, and production-grade way to run Kubernetes workloads on AWS. The process involves:

- Designing a secure and redundant network infrastructure (VPC, subnets, NAT, routing).
- Provisioning IAM roles that allow secure communication between AWS and Kubernetes components.
- Deploying a multi-AZ EKS control plane with managed node groups for high availability.
- Leveraging **Terraform's infrastructure-as-code** capabilities to automate, manage, and version the entire setup reliably.
- Securing access via **RBAC and IAM mappings**, and enabling observability through logs and monitoring tools.
- Managing state and team collaboration using remote state backends like S3 and DynamoDB.

By following this structured approach, your EKS cluster will be:

- Highly Available across multiple AZs
- **Secure** through proper IAM and network controls
- Scalable with autoscaling node groups
- Maintainable and repeatable through Terraform

This setup forms the **foundation for a modern, cloud-native DevOps environment**, enabling smooth CI/CD, microservices orchestration, and future growth.

Let me know if you want this turned into a **document, deck, or infographic** for your team or clients!