

Amanox AWS Cloudformation Workshop Powered by Amanox

Lab Guide

Using

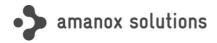


Author:



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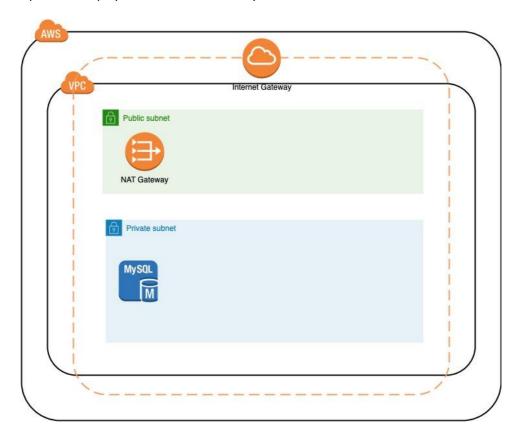


1. Starting Small Lab

This lab shows you how to start out with AWS CloudFormation.

In this lab you will:

- see CloudFormation in action making use of a ready-made open-source CloudFormation Stack File producing network components of a VPC.
- reuse this template and deploy an RDS database inside your VCP



If you have time, and **optional** *Challenge* **section** will then have you create a second private subnet in a different Availability Zone and then add a MySQL instance to it by using Amazon Relational Database Service (Amazon RDS).

1.1 Duration

This workshop consists of 3 parts each requiring approximately **45 minutes** to complete. If you get stuck it is recommended to use the provided snippets, but please try to struggle through the tasks. Don't spend more than 75 minutes with this part.

1.2 Common Lab Info

You will find several red X markers in the lab guide. You will have to replace this X with a new value based on your name. Please follow this example: for **Mi**ke **Mo**sses, X = MiMo.

All snippets and results are served using this git repo: https://github.com/amanoxsolutions/cloudformation-lab

1.3 AWS Login

Will be given by Public Cloud Team

In the top-right corner of the AWS Management Console, choose the region you are going to work in. We are going to use *Europe (Frankfurt) eu-central-1*.

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2. Part 1: Creating a Virtual Private Cloud Stack

2.1 Introduction

Services provided by AWS can be daunting at first. The learning curve is steep. Once you learned the tidbits of a service a new kind of problem arises: mundane repetitive tasks. This is where CloudFormation shines, taking away some burden making it easier to reuse commonly applicable building blocks. With the Infrastructure as Code approach people can share their take on configuration just like any other open-source developer would do.

You will deploy a CloudFormation Stack configuration and see:

- A CloudFormation template
- Configuration parameters GUI
- Usable outputs

2.2 Learning Goals

You are going to learn how to create a stack from an on-the-fly uploaded template file and how to compose complex structures nesting template inside template. You will learn how to use outputs from the generated stack as input for a consumer stack.

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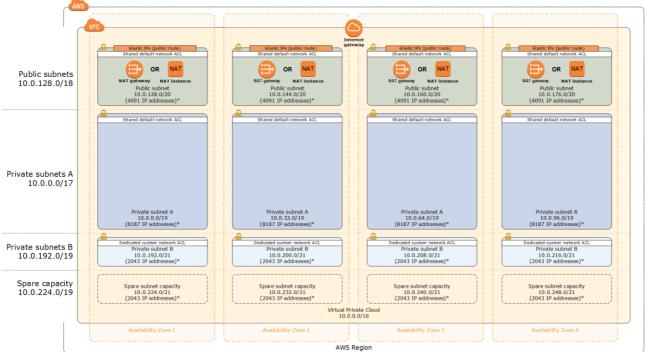


3. Part 1 - Task 1: Upload a CloudFormation template

3.1 Introduction

You will begin by downloading a template for an Amazon Virtual Private Cloud (VPC).

A template file provides full description for CloudFormation of the resources it will produce for you including input parameters, rules for them, interdependencies and outputs.



*Note that the IP addresses exclude the five (5) IP addresses from each subnet that are reserved and unavailable for use.

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3.2 Learning Goals

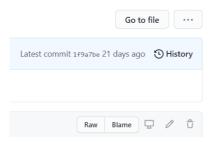
The goal is to familiarize yourself with the creation steps of a CloudFormation Stack. Then you will update it changing its parameters, finally clean up and dispose the resources.

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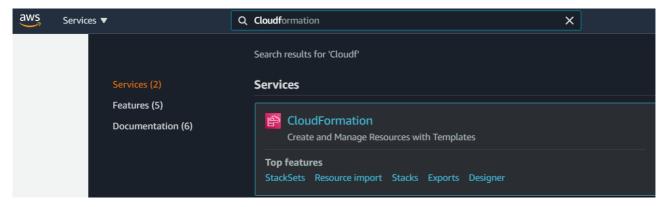
3.3 Task Instructions

- Download this template which we took directly from the official quickstart-aws-vpc github repo: https://github.com/amanoxsolutions/cloudformation-lab/blob/master/part1/aws-vpc.template.yaml
 - a. You can either clone the whole repo as mentioned at the beginning
 - b. Or at the top right of the above url right-click "Raw" button and save the file as aws-vpc.template.yaml.



Examine the template for a little. Be sure to have a look at the following keys:

- Parameters
- Resources
- Outputs
- In the top-right corner of the AWS Management Console, make sure you are using the right region intended for this workshop.
- In the AWS Management Console, on the Services menu, search for CloudFormation.



The CloudFormation console offers a wizard where you can create, update and destroy your infrastructure or application as stacks.

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- In the right navigation pane, click *Create stack*.

A wizard is shown. On top leave **Template is ready** selected, and specify your template you just downloaded via the **Upload a template file** option it, then click **next**.

Template source	
Selecting a template generates an Amazon S3 URL where it will be stored. Amazon S3 URL	Upload a template file
Upload a template file	
Choose file 👩 aws-vpc.template.yaml	
Choose file aws-vpc.template.yaml	

- Specify stack details page

Name your stack VPC-Stack-X

Plenty of parameters are shown. Select exactly two Availability Zones.

You can configure any interesting other parameter if you'd like to.

On the bottom of the page click **next.**

You land on the Configure stack options page.

There are two options to be highlighted here.

- **Permissions**: Here you can explicitly set what IAM role to be used during resource creation.
- Stack creation options > **Rollback on failure:** more complex infrastructures fail frequently during experimentation. By default everything will be rolled back and the half-baked infra is destroyed. Instead of restarting everything from scratch you can **Disable** the "Rollback on failure option", fix your error and update the stack to continue where you left off.

For now, we leave the defaults here as they are. At the bottom of the page click next.

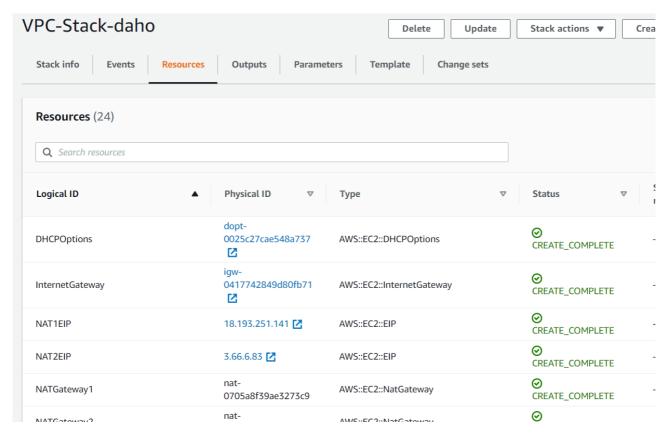
- Review
 - Once you have reviewed your planned stack, scroll down, acknowledge the implication of potentially creating IAM resources
 - Click Create stack

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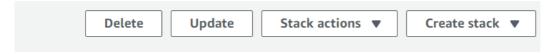
Watch as your resources get created.

On the overview there are several tabs.



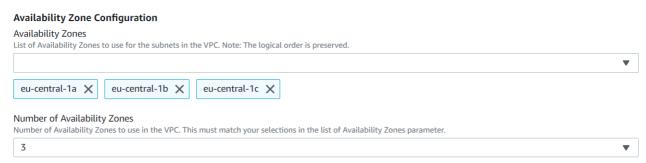
- Examine **Events**, where you can see how subparts of the template get provisioned.
- Everything on the **Resources** tab is from now on managed by this stack. Locate the VPC item and open its physical ID, you will land on the usual interface where you can inspect the details of the VPC.
- On the **Outputs** tab you will find details about your resources and other produced values the template defined.
- Open again the Resources Tab.

Notice that there are as many Elastic lps or Nat Gateways as many Availability Zones we specified (2). Let's **Update** the stack to include a third one. On top click **Update**.



Here you could choose to edit your template in the designer on the fly, **Use current template** for now and click **next**.

Add the third Availability Zone and set the Number of Availability Zones to 3.



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Notice on the **Events** and **Resources** tabs that CloudFormation creates the extra resources leaving the existing ones in place.

- Once you see the **UPDATE_COMPLETE** status of the Stack, on the top click **Delete** to remove the Stack and its associated resources.

3.4 Summary

You now have played with a ready-made template, created a Stack based on it, updated it and finally destroyed it. The next step will be starting an RDS db reusing this VPC template.

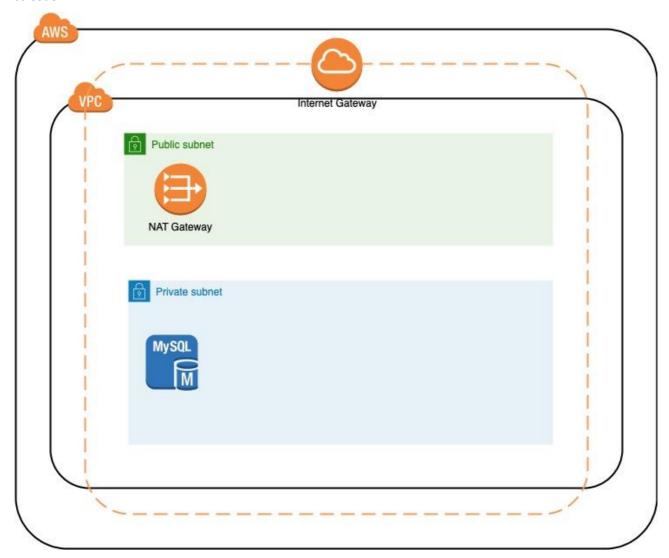
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4. Part 1 - Task 2: Create RDS

4.1 Introduction

RDS is the Relational Database Service offering from AWS where the mainstream database engines are covered. AWS manages the tiresome updates, patching and scaling of your database instances offering durability, high availability and security for you while you can focus on creating more value. RDS is at the hearth of many web applications, at the mercy of the agile nature of application changes so it is another great candidate to demonstrate the power of Infrastructure as Code.



4.2 Learning Goals

The goal is to learn and see the creation steps of an RDS instance started into a similar VPC reusing the template we have seen previously, creating a nested stack.

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4.3 Task Instructions

4.3.1 Store the VPC template in an S3 Bucket

- In the AWS Management Console, on the Services menu, search for S3.
- Click Create bucket and configure:
 - Bucket name: cflab-part1-X

Make sure to NOT have any whitespace in the bucket name

- AWS Region: as specified at the beginning of this guide.
- Leave the other set of options as is.

At the bottom, click create bucket.

- Upload your aws-vpc.template.yaml file.
- Click the created object in the Name Column to open its details. You will need the **Object URL** later.

4.3.2 Create an RDS template

Create a new textfile named e.g. myrds.template.yaml and start editing it with your IDE of choice.

We will use several snippets to assemble our working db.

You can find the template Skeleton here: https://docs.aws.amazon.com/AWSCloudFormation/latest/UserGuide/tem-plate-anatomy.html Copy the YAML format into your new template.

Set the AWSTemplateFormatVersion to '2010-09-09'

Write a **Description**, e.g. 'db template'

You can remove the Metadata, Rules, Mappings, Conditions, Transform sections

At the Resources section we add our DB. At the bottom of the **Amazon RDS template snippets** page we will make use of the section **Amazon RDS database instance in a VPC security group**'s YAML code: https://docs.aws.ama-zon.com/AWSCloudFormation/latest/UserGuide/quickref-rds.html#w2ab1c27c21c76c15

- Notice that you need to indent with 2 blank spaces the copied code to become a subsection of Resources.
- The **DBInstance**'s **VPCSecurityGroups** property refers to **!GetAtt DBEC2SecurityGroup.GroupId** which says basically "once **DBEC2SecurityGroup** exists, take it's **GroupId** attribute"

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There are many other properties in the form **Ref: SomeParameter**. We will need to add these at the **Parameters** section as string values. The format can be found here: https://docs.aws.amazon.com/AWSCloudFormation/lat-est/UserGuide/parameters-section-structure.html For our purpose now, these all will be strings.

Parameters: DBAllocatedStorage: Type: String Default: '20' DBName: Type: String Default: MyDB DBUser: Type: String Default: admin DBPassword: Type: String NoEcho: 'True' MaxLength: '41' MinLength: '8' DBClass: Type: String AllowedValues: - db.t2.small - db.t2.medium - db.r3.large - db.r3.xlarge - db.r3.2xlarge - db.r3.4xlarge - db.r3.8xlarge Default: db.t2.small MultiAZDatabase: Type: String AllowedValues: - 'true' - 'false' Default: 'true'

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Now let's have a look at DBEC2SecurityGroup's SecurityGroupIngress section, there is a reference pointing to Web-ServerSecurityGroup. This would be relevant if we configured some application working with the db, but for the purpose of this demo we can remove this property.

However, we want to launch our DB instance into a VPC, which will come from our existing VPC template, instantiated through a Stack resource: https://docs.aws.amazon.com/AWSCloudFormation/latest/UserGuide/aws-properties-stack.html

You need to specify the **TemplateURL** to be the same S3 url you noted at the beginning, e.g. https://cflab-part1-x.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/aws-vpc.template.yaml

As you can remember there are a lot of parameters however for the purpose of this lab we propagate only few of them:

```
Parameters:
  #...
  VPCAvailabilityZones:
    Description: 'List of Availability Zones to use for the subnets in the VPC'
    Type: List<AWS::EC2::AvailabilityZone::Name>
  VPCNumberOfAZs:
    AllowedValues:
      - '2'
      - '3'
      - '4'
    Default: '2'
    Description: Number of Availability Zones to use in the VPC
    Type: String
Resources:
  VPCStack:
    Type: AWS::CloudFormation::Stack
    Properties:
      TemplateURL: "https://cflab-part1-x.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/aws-
vpc.template.yaml"
      # ^ TODO adjust your bucket url
      Parameters:
        AvailabilityZones: !Join
         - ','
         - !Ref 'VPCAvailabilityZones'
        NumberOfAZs: !Ref 'VPCNumberOfAZs'
```

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Now according to https://docs.amazonaws.cn/en-us/AmazonRDS/latest/UserGuide/USER-VPC.Working-WithRDSInstanceinaVPC.html#USER_VPC.InstanceInVPC let's create a DB subnet group making use of our VPC-Stack's output: https://docs.aws.amazon.com/AWSCloudFormation/latest/UserGuide/aws-resource-rds-dbsub-net-group.html

DBSubnetGroup:

Type: AWS::RDS::DBSubnetGroup

Properties:

DBSubnetGroupDescription: Subnets available for the DB Instance

SubnetIds:

!GetAtt VPCStack.Outputs.PrivateSubnet1AID

- !GetAtt VPCStack.Outputs.PrivateSubnet2AID

- Then we need to adjust our Security Group for the DB. As mentioned, we don't care for the SecurityGroupIngress for now, but have to attach to the VpcId:

DBEC2SecurityGroup:

Type: AWS::EC2::SecurityGroup

Properties:

GroupDescription: Security group for the DB

VpcId: !GetAtt VPCStack.Outputs.VPCID

- Finally we have to specify the DBSubnetGroup for the DBInstance using the DBSubnetGroupName property

DBInstance:

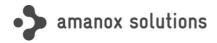
Type: AWS::RDS::DBInstance
Properties:

#...

VPCSecurityGroups:

- !GetAtt DBEC2SecurityGroup.GroupId
DBSubnetGroupName: !Ref DBSubnetGroup

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4.3.3 Create your stack based on your new template

In AWS Console go to the **CloudFormation** Service and chose **Create stack**.

Similarly to the earlier example, click **Upload a template file** and upload your newly created template yaml file. Click **Next.**

Note: the VPC will be created based on the template you have uploaded to the S3 bucket. Make sure, the Bucket URL is correct in the yml file.

Name your stack somehow and take care of the following parameters:

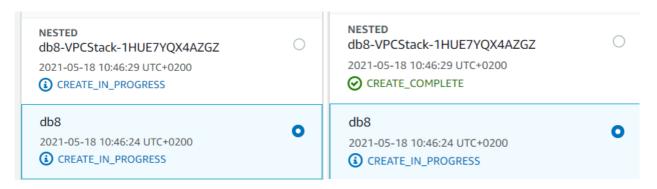
- DBPassword
- Select exactly two VPCAvailabilityZones
- Leave VPCNumberOfAZs as the default 2

Click Next.

At the Stack creation options it is now strongly recommended to **Disable Rollback on failure** to spare some time in case of failures. Click **Next.**

On the next page Acknowledge everything and Create Stack

Notice how the process instantiates first the nested VPCStack and once it is up will be the dbinstance configured.



Once it gets to the db creation, it takes relatively long. If you don't see any failure once the VPC Stack is ready, congratulation.

If you get stuck with too many failures, feel free to take a look at the fully working example:

https://github.com/amanoxsolutions/cloudformation-lab/blob/master/part1/myrds.template.yaml

Note: don't spend more than 75 minutes with this part.

Once ready, delete all your stacks.

4.4 Summary

Now you have seen a nested stack in action. Let's take this to the next level.

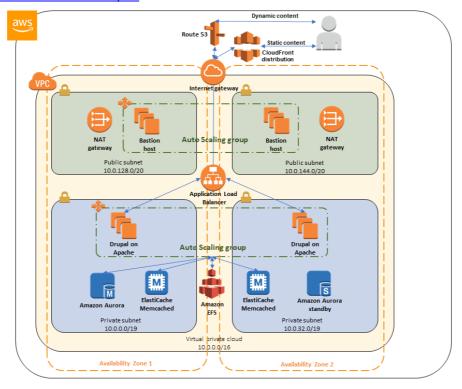
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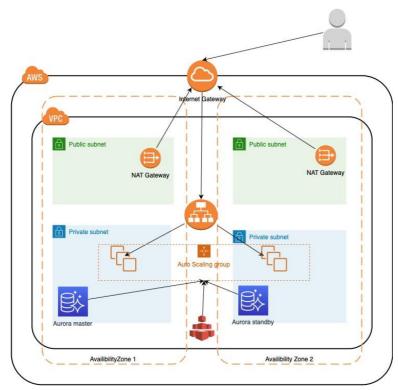
5. Part 2 – A stripped-down Drupal deployment

5.1 Introduction

There is a full-fledged template-set reference deployment on aws for **Drupal on AWS** here: https://aws.ama-zon.com/quickstart/architecture/drupal/



Drupal is a CMS which is strongly depending on a real domain name. To avoid having to work with own domains, we tweaked a little with the config, dropping the *Route 53* zone. For the purpose of this demo we also don't need *CloudFront* or any *bastion* host. We use the dns name implicitly provided by the Application Load Balancer:



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5.2 Learning Goals

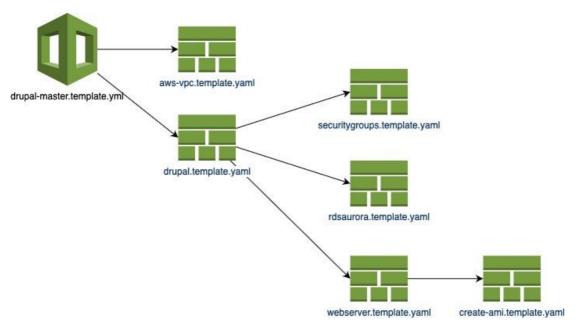
The goal is to see a bigger set of resources composed from well-rounded stack templates deployed using S3 bucket.

5.3 Task Instructions

We will work with the template structure from the git repo's following folder:

https://github.com/amanoxsolutions/cloudformation-lab/tree/master/part2/quickstart-drupal

There is a master-template where everything can be configured, and it nests other stacks to produce the drupal-stack:



5.3.1 Store the VPC template structure in an S3 Bucket

- In the AWS Management Console, on the Services menu, search for S3.
- Click Create bucket and configure:
 - Bucket name: cflab-part2-X

Make sure to NOT have any whitespace in the bucket name

- AWS Region: as specified at the beginning of this guide.
- Leave the other set of options as is.

At the bottom, click create bucket.

Create the same folder structure in S3 as in the part2 git folder:
 https://github.com/amanoxsolutions/cloudformation-lab/tree/master/part2

It is important to have the same structure, meaning the top-most folder in the bucket should be named quickstart-drupal.

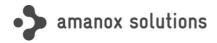
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Locate some or all of the AWS::CloudFormation::Stack code fragments using your local IDE.

You will see a pattern like the following. Notice how the TemplateURL combines 4 parameters resulting in the TemplateURL property for a Stack. This is a good practice to make one's template really reusable and independent from regions.

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5.3.2 Generate the stack from Amazon S3 URL

Copy the master template url from S3 clicking onto the Object and locating the **Object URL**. It should look like the following:

https://cflab-part2-x.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/quickstart-drupal/templates/drupal-master.template.yaml

Go to the **CloudFormation** Service and create a stack:

Specify template A template is a JSON or YAML file that describes your stack's resources and properties	i.
Template source Selecting a template generates an Amazon S3 URL where it will be stored.	
Amazon S3 URL	O Upload a template file
Amazon S3 URL	
https://cflab-part2-x.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/quickstart-drupa	l/templates/drupal-master.template.yaml
Amazon S3 template URL	
S3 URL: Will be generated when URL is provided	View in Designer

- Click the created object in the Name Column to open its details. You will need the **Object URL** later.
- Name your stack
- Fill in the following parameters carefully:

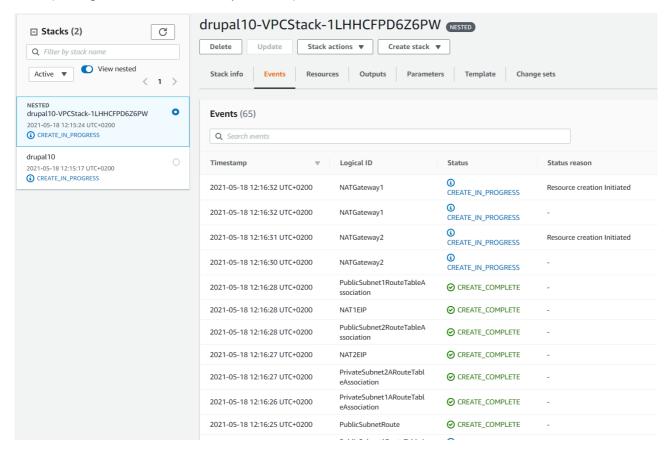
availability zones	eu-central-1a, eu-central-1b	
database admin password	dbadminpw	At your discretion, min 8 chars
drupal site admin email	Your mail	
drupal site admin password	siteadminpw	At your discretion, min 8 chars
drupal database password	databasepw	At your discretion, min 8 chars
autoscaling notification email	Your mail	
quick start s3 bucket name	cflab-part2-x	This one is really really important

- Click Next
- At **Stack creation options**, **Disable Rollback on failure** as this stack takes average 30 minutes to deploy.
- Click **Next**
- Acknowledge all, Create stack

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During stack creation, you can inspect what is currently happening using the Events Tab if you click onto the nested stacks (which get created first due to dependencies):



Examine the webserver instance code at: https://github.com/amanoxsolutions/cloudformation-lab/blob/master/part2/quickstart-drupal/templates/webserver.template.yaml#L331

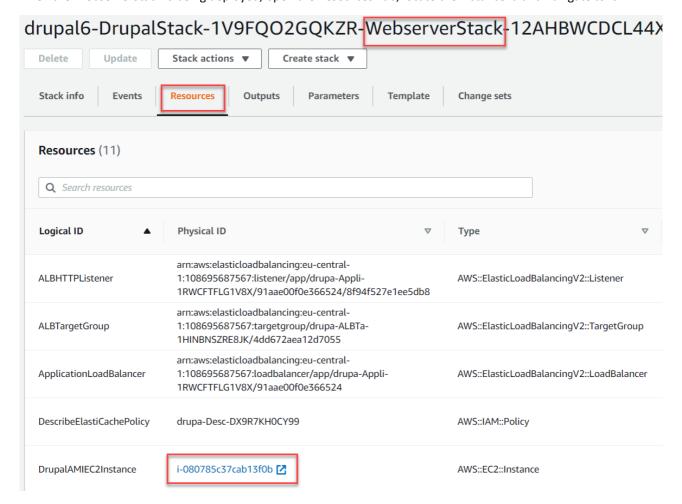
This is where CloudFormation configures the ec2 instance upon startup. You can find more info about this here:

https://docs.aws.amazon.com/AWSCloudFormation/latest/UserGuide/aws-resource-init.html

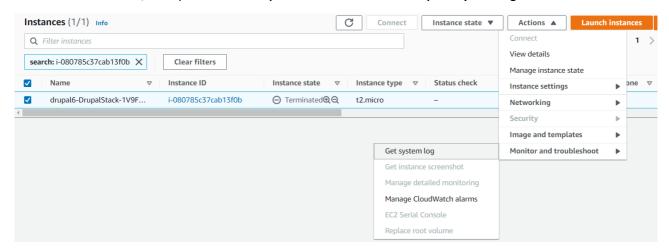
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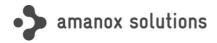
While getting acquainted with the code, periodically look at the process of the stack creation. After it gets to the stage when the WebserverStack is being deployed, open the Resources Tab, locate the instance id and navigate to it.



Select the sole instance, and open the Actions | Monitor and troubleshoot | Get system log menu.



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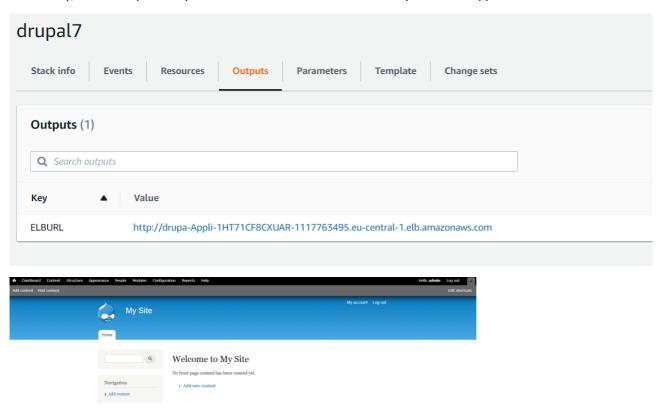


You will get a more or less live log what is happening on the host:



Once everything is ready, the stack will create an AMI from the configured instance, then it will configure its LaunchConfiguration for the Autoscaling group and things speed up from that point.

Once ready, on the Outputs tab you will find the ELBURL which is basically where the application is available:



If you see this, congratulations. Don't delete the stack just yet, we will enhance this right away. We'd like to avoid waiting another half hour to provision everything again.

5.4 Summary

You had a glimpse what's possible with multiple nested stacks.

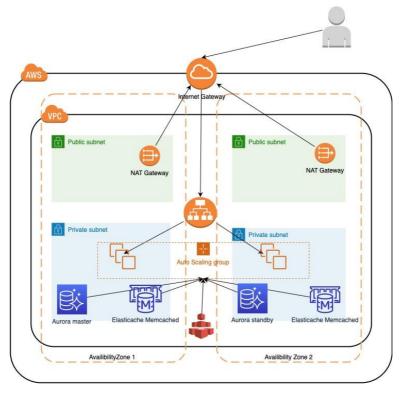
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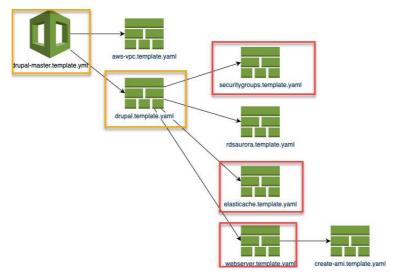
6. Part 3: Add Elasticache to the previous drupal stack

6.1 Introduction

In this second part, you will enhance the drupal webserver stack with Elasticache (using memcached).



The templates marked with red are involved in the structural extension, and the yellow boxes show the propagation of new parameters:



6.2 Learning Goals

The goal is to showcase updating the structure in a cross-cutting aspect.

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6.3 Instructions

6.3.1 Look at the change

https://github.com/amanoxsolutions/cloudformation-lab/commit/956719353fbcacb79e6d0144a49291f3b1816150

There are 4 changes:

- The drupal-master.template.yml and drupal.template.yaml templates got new parameters for the elasticache configuration. As visible on the structure picture above these are merely propagating the configuration to their nested sets.
- The drupal.template.yaml has an interesting construct:

It creates a **Condition** to determine whether to produce the elasticache stack: https://github.com/aman-oxsolutions/cloudformation-lab/commit/956719353fbcacb79e6d0144a49291f3b1816150#diff-e6559fbbe40f78dae5503b3a30a20846e459eda32218afdd2631df477f5cd531R417

If this evaluates to true, $\frac{https://github.com/amanoxsolutions/cloudformation-lab/com-mit/956719353fbcacb79e6d0144a49291f3b1816150\#diff-e6559fbbe40f78dae5503b3a30a20846e459eda32218afdd2631df477f5cd531R454 will go live$

- elasticache.template.yaml is the stack where the required resources will be produced.
- The webserver.template.yaml is the most involved, installing Memcached, registering with the cluster, etc.

6.3.2 Update the S3 bucket

In S3 update the contents of your bucket to represent https://github.com/amanoxsolutions/cloudformation-lab/tree/master/part3

6.3.3 Update the stack

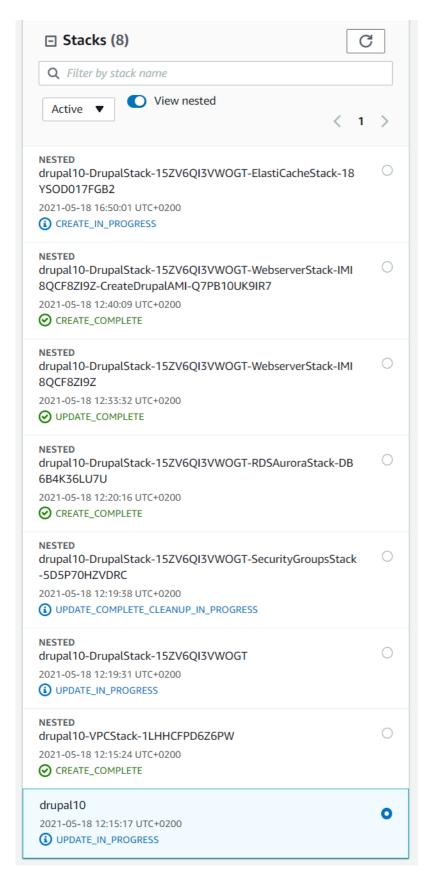
In CloudFormation on the stack overview click Update and update the root stack.

pdate stack			
Prerequisite - Prepare template			
Prepare template Every stack is based on a template. A template is a JS0	ON or YAML file that contains confi	guration information about ti	he AWS resources you want to include in the stack.
Use current template	 Replace current te 	mplate	Edit template in designer
A template is a JSON or YAML file that describes your Femplate source Selecting a template generates an Amazon S3 URL wh Amazon S3 URL		O Upload a templat	te file
Amazon S3 URL			
https://cflab-part2-x.s3.eu-central-1.amazor	naws.com/quickstart-drupal/te	emplates/drupal-master.t	template.yaml
https://cflab-part2-x.s3.eu-central-1.amazor Amazon S3 template URL	naws.com/quickstart-drupal/te	emplates/drupal-master.t	template.yaml

Leave every parameter as is and click Next, Next, Acknowledge all, Update stack

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6.4 Summary

To sum up, you now have seen a really complex system fully provisioned and configured via nested CloudFormation stacks.

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7. Conclusion

Congratulations! You completed the Lab.

You now have learned how to:

- Understand, parts of CloudFormation template files, write and extend upon them
- Modularize cohesive subsets of your infrastructure with nested stacks and reuse parts in other scenarios.
- Organize your templates in an S3 bucket
- Update stacks

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