Project

Setup a three stages pipeline to deploy a given Application using CloudFormation as a deploy provider.

By

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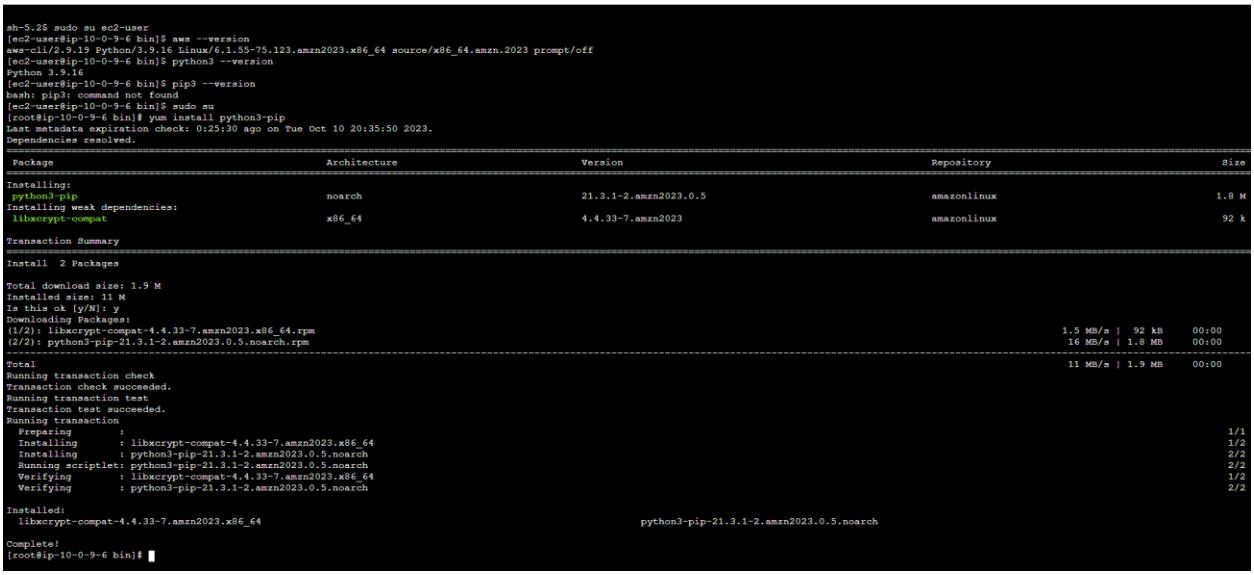
Best Practice as a DevOps engineer is to **always test your tools and codes manually before any automation.**

In this project, I used cfn-lint testing tool to integrate as part of my DevOps testing tool. For me to be sure cfn-lint tool works fine, I had to first of all, test it locally. (You can test it locally from your PC if your PC has the tools, you need or can just simply create an EC2 instance, ssh into it and test it there). In this case, I will be launching an EC2 instance.

It should be noted that cfn-lint needs python and pip3 installed. More info about cfn-lint can be found in our grand father google 😉. (https://github.com/aws-cloudformation/cfn-lint)



To install pip, run the cmd pip install cfn-lint

```
[root@ip-10-0-9-6 bin]# sudo su ec2-user
[ec2-user@ip-10-0-9-6 bin]$ pip install cfn-lint
Defaulting to user installation because normal site-packages is not writeable
Collecting cfn-lint
  Downloading cfn_lint-0.81.0-py3-none-any.whl (3.5 MB)
     |████████████████████████████████| 3.5 MB 6.5 MB/s
Requirement already satisfied: jsonschema<5,>=3.0 in /usr/lib/python3.9/site-packages (from cfn-lint) (3.2.0)
Collecting junit-xml~=1.9
  Downloading junit_xml-1.9-py2.py3-none-any.whl (7.1 kB)
Collecting aws-sam-translator>=1.75.0
  Downloading aws_sam_translator-1.77.0-py3-none-any.whl (377 kB)
     |████████████████████████████████| 377 kB 60.8 MB/s
Collecting sympy>=1.0.0
  Downloading sympy-1.12-py3-none-any.whl (5.7 MB)
     |████████████████████████████████| 5.7 MB 62.2 MB/s
Requirement already satisfied: pyyaml>5.4 in /usr/lib64/python3.9/site-packages (from cfn-lint) (5.4.1)
Collecting jschema-to-python~=1.2.3
  Downloading jschema_to_python-1.2.3-py3-none-any.whl (10 kB)
Collecting regex>=2021.7.1
  Downloading regex-2023.10.3-cp39-cp39-manylinux_2_17_x86_64.manylinux2014_x86_64.whl (773 kB)
     |████████████████████████████████| 773 kB 51.8 MB/s
Collecting networkx<4,>=2.4
  Downloading networkx-3.1-py3-none-any.whl (2.1 MB)
     |████████████████████████████████| 2.1 MB 32.7 MB/s
Requirement already satisfied: jsonpatch in /usr/lib/python3.9/site-packages (from cfn-lint) (1.21)
Collecting sarif-om~=1.0.4
  Downloading sarif_om-1.0.4-py3-none-any.whl (30 kB)
Collecting boto3==1.*,>=1.19.5
  Downloading boto3-1.28.62-py3-none-any.whl (135 kB)
     |████████████████████████████████| 135 kB 60.0 MB/s
Collecting pydantic<3,>=1.8
  Downloading pydantic-2.4.2-py3-none-any.whl (395 kB)
     |████████████████████████████████| 395 kB 61.7 MB/s
Collecting typing-extensions<5,>=4.4
  Downloading typing_extensions-4.8.0-py3-none-any.whl (31 kB)
Requirement already satisfied: jmespath<2.0.0,>=0.7.1 in /usr/lib/python3.9/site-packages (from boto3==1.*,>=1.19.5->aws-sam-translator>=1.75.0->cfn-lint) (0.10.0)
Collecting s3transfer<0.8.0,>=0.7.0
  Downloading s3transfer-0.7.0-py3-none-any.whl (79 kB)
     |████████████████████████████████| 79 kB 16.4 MB/s
Collecting botocore<1.32.0,>=1.31.62
  Downloading botocore-1.31.62-py3-none-any.whl (11.2 MB)
     |████████████████████████████████| 11.2 MB 32.7 MB/s
Requirement already satisfied: attrs in /usr/lib/python3.9/site-packages (from jschema-to-python~=1.2.3->cfn-lint) (20.3.0)
Collecting jsonpickle
  Downloading jsonpickle-3.0.2-py3-none-any.whl (40 kB)
     |████████████████████████████████| 40 kB 10.9 MB/s
Collecting pbr
  Downloading pbr-5.11.1-py2.py3-none-any.whl (112 kB)
     |████████████████████████████████| 112 kB 60.6 MB/s
```

```
Collecting pydantic-core==2.10.1
  Downloading pydantic_core-2.10.1-cp39-cp39-manylinux_2_17_x86_64.manylinux2014_x86_64.whl (2.1 MB)
     |████████████████████████████████| 2.1 MB 27.6 MB/s
Collecting annotated-types>=0.4.0
  Downloading annotated_types-0.6.0-py3-none-any.whl (12 kB)
Requirement already satisfied: urllib3<1.27,>=1.25.4 in /usr/lib/python3.9/site-packages (from botocore<1.32.0,>=1.31.62->boto3==1.*,>=1.19.5->aws-sam-translator>=1.75.0->cfn-lint) (1.25.10)
Requirement already satisfied: python-dateutil<3.0.0,>=2.1 in /usr/lib/python3.9/site-packages (from botocore<1.32.0,>=1.31.62->boto3==1.*,>=1.19.5->aws-sam-translator>=1.75.0->cfn-lint) (2.8.1)
Installing collected packages: typing-extensions, botocore, s3transfer, pydantic-core, annotated-types, pydantic, pbr, mpmath, jsonpickle, boto3, sympy, sarif-om, regex, networkx, junit-xml, jschema-to-python,
aws-sam-translator, cfn-lint
Successfully installed annotated-types-0.6.0 aws-sam-translator-1.77.0 boto3-1.28.62 botocore-1.31.62 cfn-lint-0.81.0 jschema-to-python-1.2.3 jsonpickle-3.0.2 junit-xml-1.9 mpmath-1.3.0 networkx-3.1 pbr-5.11.1
pydantic-2.4.2 pydantic-core-2.10.1 regex-2023.10.3 s3transfer-0.7.0 sarif-om-1.0.4 sympy-1.12 typing-extensions-4.8.0
[ec2-user@ip-10-0-9-6 bin]$
```

The cmd cfn-lint –version is used to verify if cfn-lint was succesfully installed.

```
[ec2-user@ip-10-0-9-6 bin]$ cfn-lint --version
cfn-lint 0.81.0
[ec2-user@ip-10-0-9-6 bin]$
```

As a root user, I made a folder and added my cloudformation template with the cmd vi cftemplate.yml

```
[ec2-user@ip-10-0-13-199 bin]$ mkdir mytemplates
mkdir: cannot create directory ‘mytemplates’: Permission denied
[ec2-user@ip-10-0-13-199 bin]$ sudo su
[root@ip-10-0-13-199 bin]# mkdir mytemplate
[root@ip-10-0-13-199 bin]# cd mytemplate/
[root@ip-10-0-13-199 mytemplate]# touch cftemplate.yml
[root@ip-10-0-13-199 mytemplate]# ll
total 0
-rw-r--r--. 1 root root 0 Oct 10 22:40 cftemplate.yml
[root@ip-10-0-13-199 mytemplate]# cat cftemplate.yml
[root@ip-10-0-13-199 mytemplate]# ll
total 0
-rw-r--r--. 1 root root 0 Oct 10 22:40 cftemplate.yml
[root@ip-10-0-13-199 mytemplate]# vi cftemplate.yml
```

```
Parameters:
  InstanceType:
    Description: EC2 instance type.
    Type: String
    Default: t2.micro
  KeyName:
    Description: Name of an existing EC2 key pair for SSH access to the EC2 instance.
    Type: AWS::EC2::KeyPair::KeyName
  SSHLocation:
    Description: The IP address range that can be used to SSH to the EC2 instances
    Type: String
    MinLength: '9'
    MaxLength: '18'
    Default: 0.0.0.0/0
    AllowedPattern: "(\\d{1,3})\\.(\\d{1,3})\\.(\\d{1,3})\\.(\\d{1,3})/(\\d{1,2})" # IP Address
    ConstraintDescription: must be a valid IP CIDR range of the form x.x.x.x/x.
  # NelieParameter:
  #   Type: String
  #   Default: 'NELIE'
  ImageId:
    Type: AWS::SSM::Parameter::Value<AWS::EC2::Image::Id>
    Default: /aws/service/ami-amazon-linux-latest/amzn2-ami-hvm-x86_64-gp2

Resources:
  WebServer:
    Type: AWS::EC2::Instance
    Properties:
      ImageId: !Ref ImageId
      InstanceType: !Ref InstanceType # Nothing is hardcoded
      KeyName: !Ref KeyName
      SecurityGroups:
        - !Ref WebServerSecurityGroup
      UserData:
        Fn::Base64: !Sub |
          #!/bin/bash
          yum update -y
          yum install -y httpd
          systemctl start httpd
          systemctl enable httpd
          echo "<html><body><h1>Hello AGHOGHO in ${AWS::Region}<h1></body></html>" > /var/www/html/index.html

  WebServerSecurityGroup: #security group ID
    Type: AWS::EC2::SecurityGroup
    Properties:
      GroupDescription: 'Enable HTTP access via port 80 SSH access'
      SecurityGroupIngress:
        - CidrIp: 0.0.0.0/0
          FromPort: '80'
"cftemplate.yml" 63L, 2013B
```

To test the cftemplate.yml using the cfn-lint tool we just installed, we run the cmd cfn-lint cftemplate.yml

If there is no error response, it means the template is good without errors as seen below.

```
[root@ip-10-0-13-199 mytemplate]# vi cftemplate.yml
[root@ip-10-0-13-199 mytemplate]# cfn-lint cftemplate.yml
[root@ip-10-0-13-199 mytemplate]#
```

Now that I have tested my testing tool “cfn-lint” locally, I can now proceed to the automation. So, the next step is to write my buildspec.yml

```yaml
version: 0.2

phases:
  install: # describes the app to be installed "Dre-App"
    runtime-versions:
      python: 3.9 # It will install python 3.9
  pre_build: # Checks if all softwares has been installed successfully
    commands:
      - echo "CHECKING IF PYTHON IS INSTALLLED"
      - python3 --version #checks the version of python installed
      - echo "CHECKING IF PIP3 IS INSTALLED"
      - pip3 --version
      - echo "WE ARE INSTALLING CFN-LINT"
      - pip3 install cfn-lint
      - echo "CHECKING IS CFN-LINT IS INSTALLED"
      - cfn-lint --version"
  build: # in here, actually runs the command to build your code
    commands:
    - echo "WE ARE TESTING CFTEMPLATE"
    - cfn-lint cftemplate.yml
    - echo "WE ARE BUILDING OUR CFTEMPLATE"
    - aws cloudformation package --template-file cftemplate.yml --s3-bucket my-deploy-artifact-bucket --output-template-file output-cftemplate.yml

  post_build: # final stage to check if the code ran successfully
    commands:
    - echo "BUILD COMPLETED at `date` "
    - ls -l

artifacts: #these are the files from your source stage you want to produce as outputs
  files:
    - output-cftemplate.yml
```

As seen on the build section;

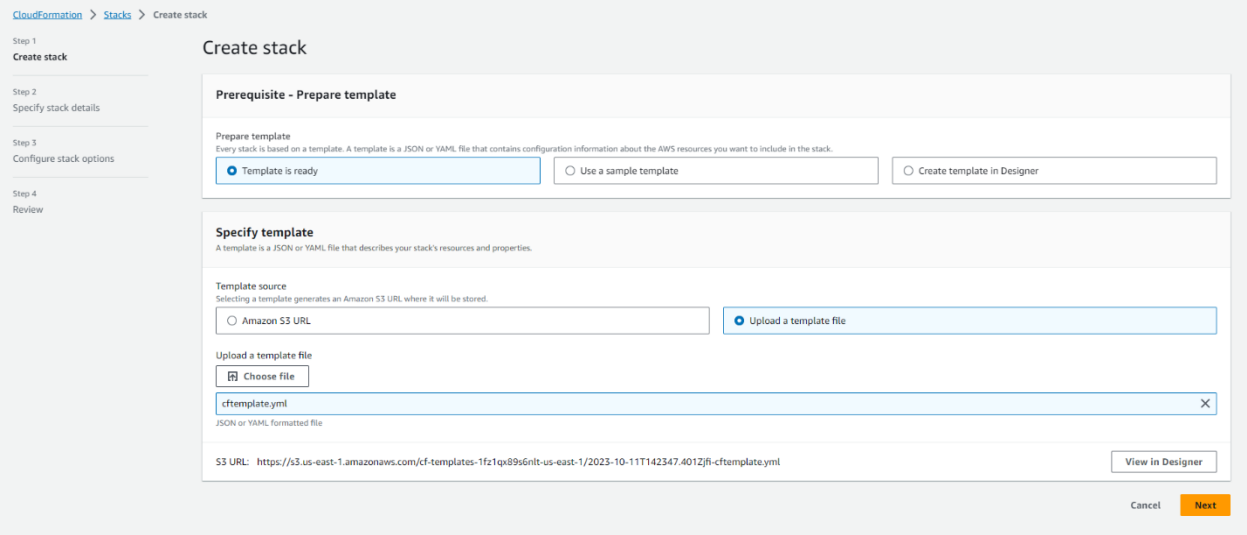
```yaml
  build: # in here, actually runs the command to build your code
    commands:
    - echo "WE ARE TESTING CFTEMPLATE"
    - cfn-lint cftemplate.yml
    - echo "WE ARE BUILDING OUR CFTEMPLATE"
    - aws cloudformation package --template-file cftemplate.yml --s3-bucket my-deploy-artifact-bucket --output-template-file output-cftemplate.yml
```

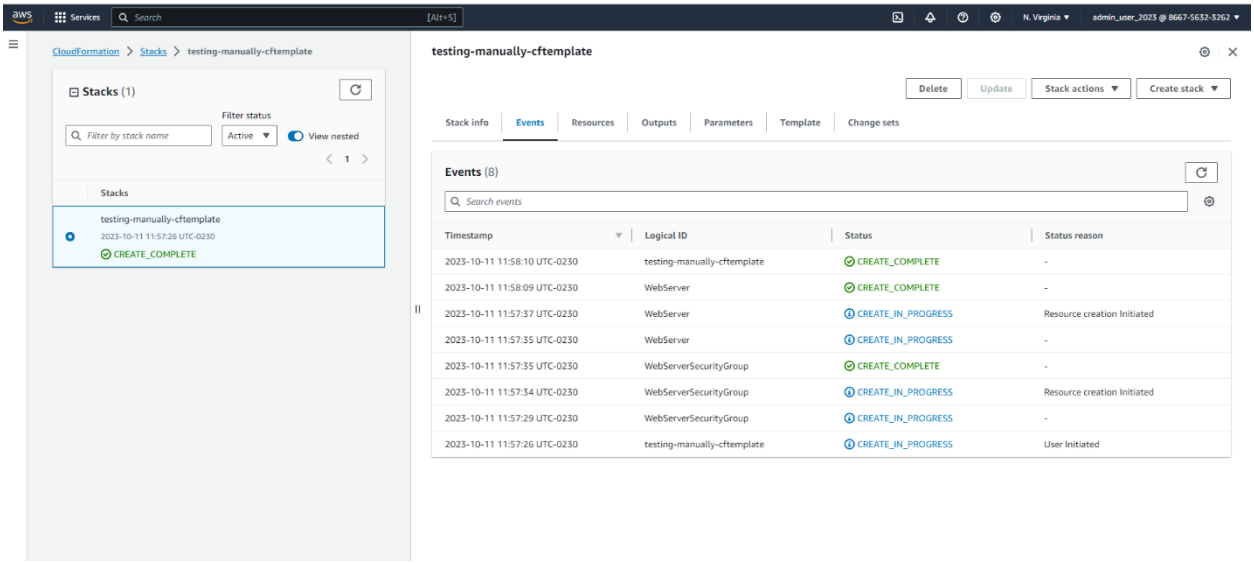
The build stage will **test** the cftemplate with the cfn-lint and will **build** the cftemplate with the cmd aws cloudformation package. Aws cloudformation package will build, clean-up the cftemplate and package it as an artifact and store on an s3-bucket u define and to your local file. (I created an S3 bucket “my-deploy-artifact-bucket).

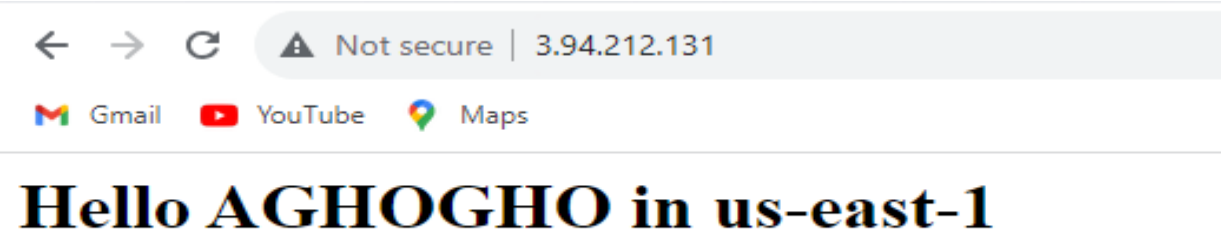
As best practice, It should be noted to test the cftemplate manually on the aws console before automating its testing with cfn-lin. Also, before adding the aws cloudformation package tool, its best practice to test it locally like I did from my ec2 virtual server below.

```
[root@ip-10-0-13-199 mytemplate]# aws cloudformation package --template-file cftemplate.yml --s3-bucket my-deploy-artifact-bucket --output-template-file output-cftemplate.yml

Successfully packaged artifacts and wrote output template to file output-cftemplate.yml.
Execute the following command to deploy the packaged template
aws cloudformation deploy --template-file /usr/bin/mytemplate/output-cftemplate.yml --stack-name <YOUR STACK NAME>
[root@ip-10-0-13-199 mytemplate]#
[root@ip-10-0-13-199 mytemplate]# ll
total 8
-rw-r--r--. 1 root root 2013 Oct 10 22:53 cftemplate.yml
-rw-r--r--. 1 root root 1768 Oct 11 15:29 output-cftemplate.yml
[root@ip-10-0-13-199 mytemplate]#
```

Testing the cftemplate manually on the aws console, I just simply deployed the it on CloudFormation in the console as shown below.





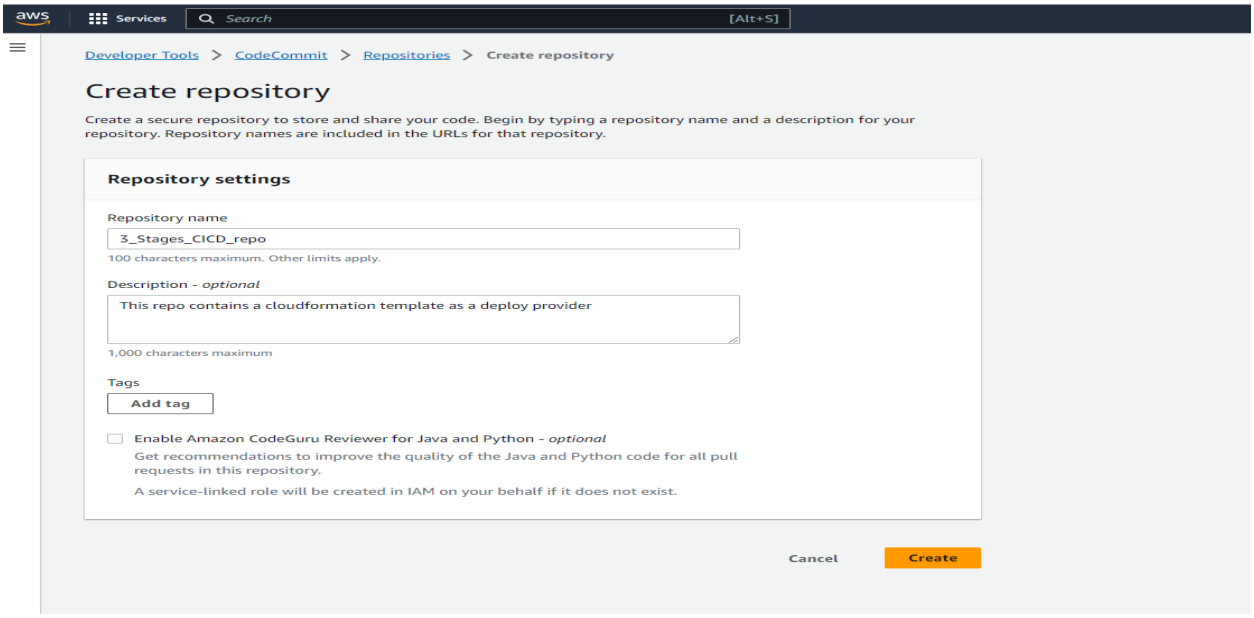


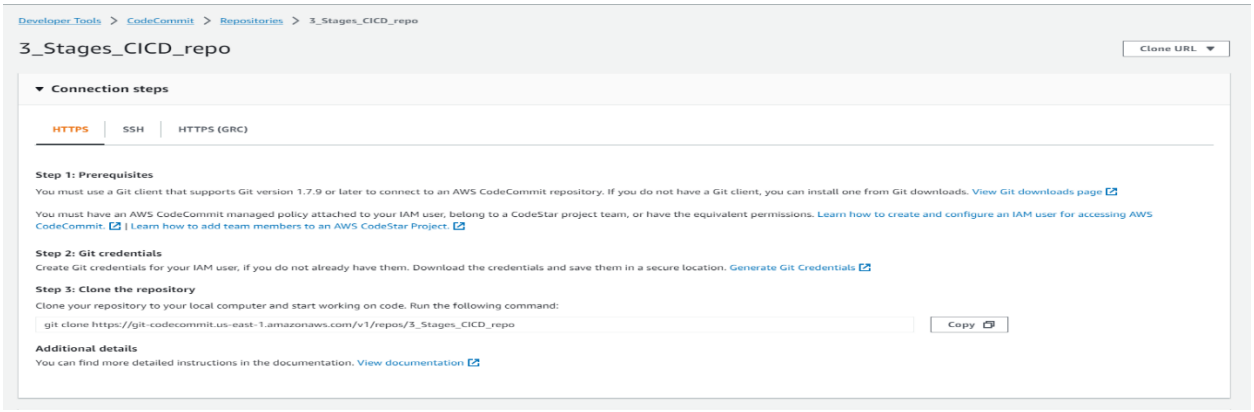
From manual testing view, the Cftemplate works.

With my buildspec well written above, I am confident in proceeding with automation. For this Project Road Map Schematics of this project the road map is

Local Testing ⟶ Write Buildspec ⟶ Source Stage (CodeCommit) ⟶ Build Stage (CodeBuild) ⟶ ⟶ Deploy Stage ⟶ CI/CD

The Next Step is creating the source stage, and I used CodeCommit.





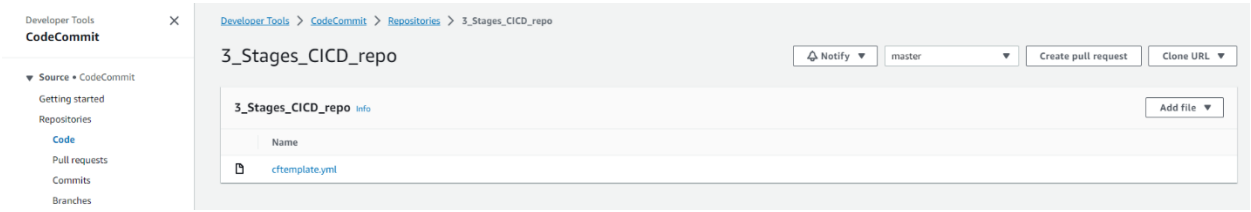
I cloned the code commit repository.

```
aghog@DESKTOP-FV0TCVU MINGW64 ~/Desktop/LocalRepo-CopdeCommit/3-Stages-CICD (main)
$ git clone https://git-codecommit.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/v1/repos/3_Stages_CICD_repo
Cloning into '3_Stages_CICD_repo'...
warning: You appear to have cloned an empty repository.
```

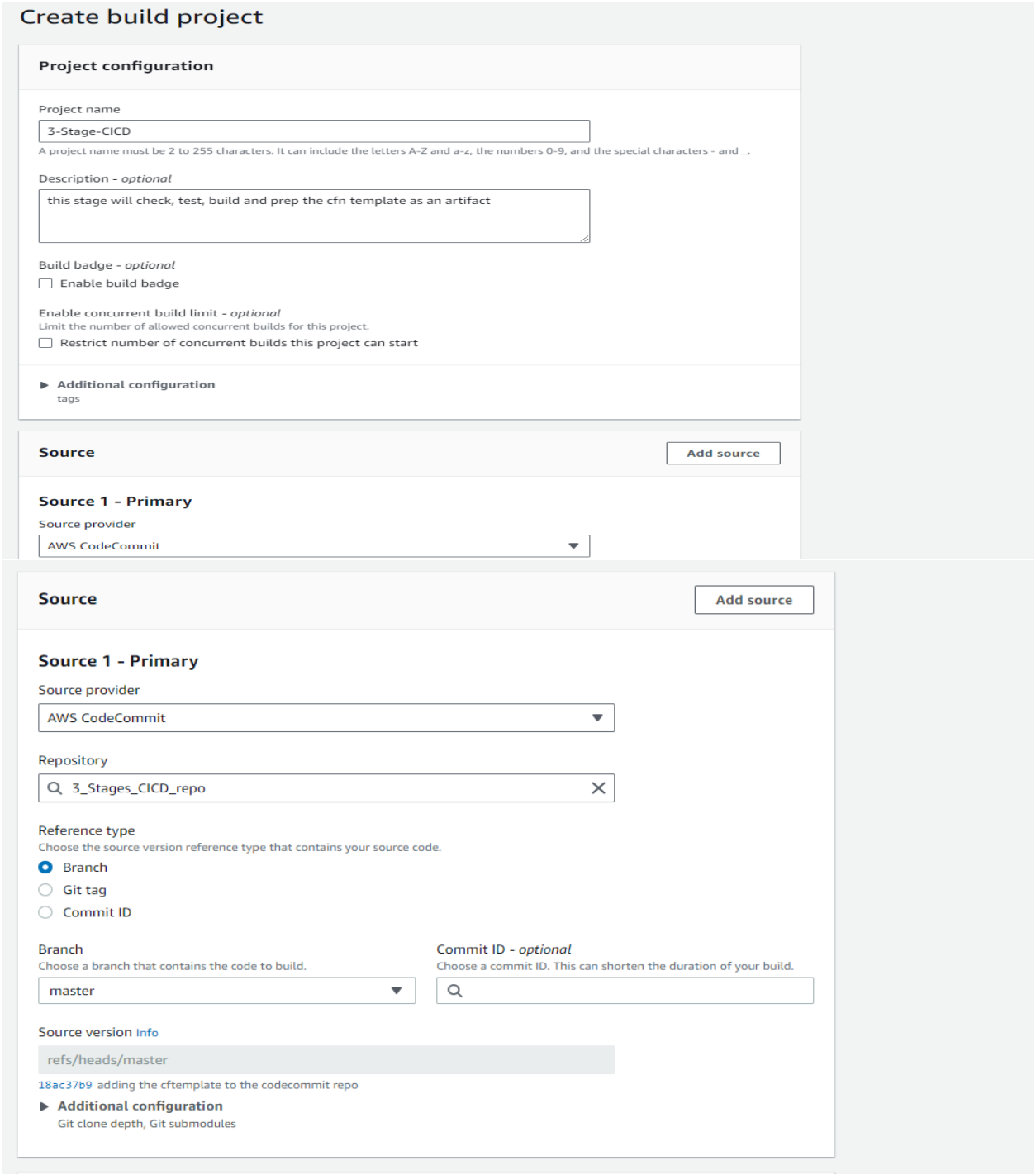
Next I pushed the cftemplate to the codecommit repository “3-Stages-CICD_repo”

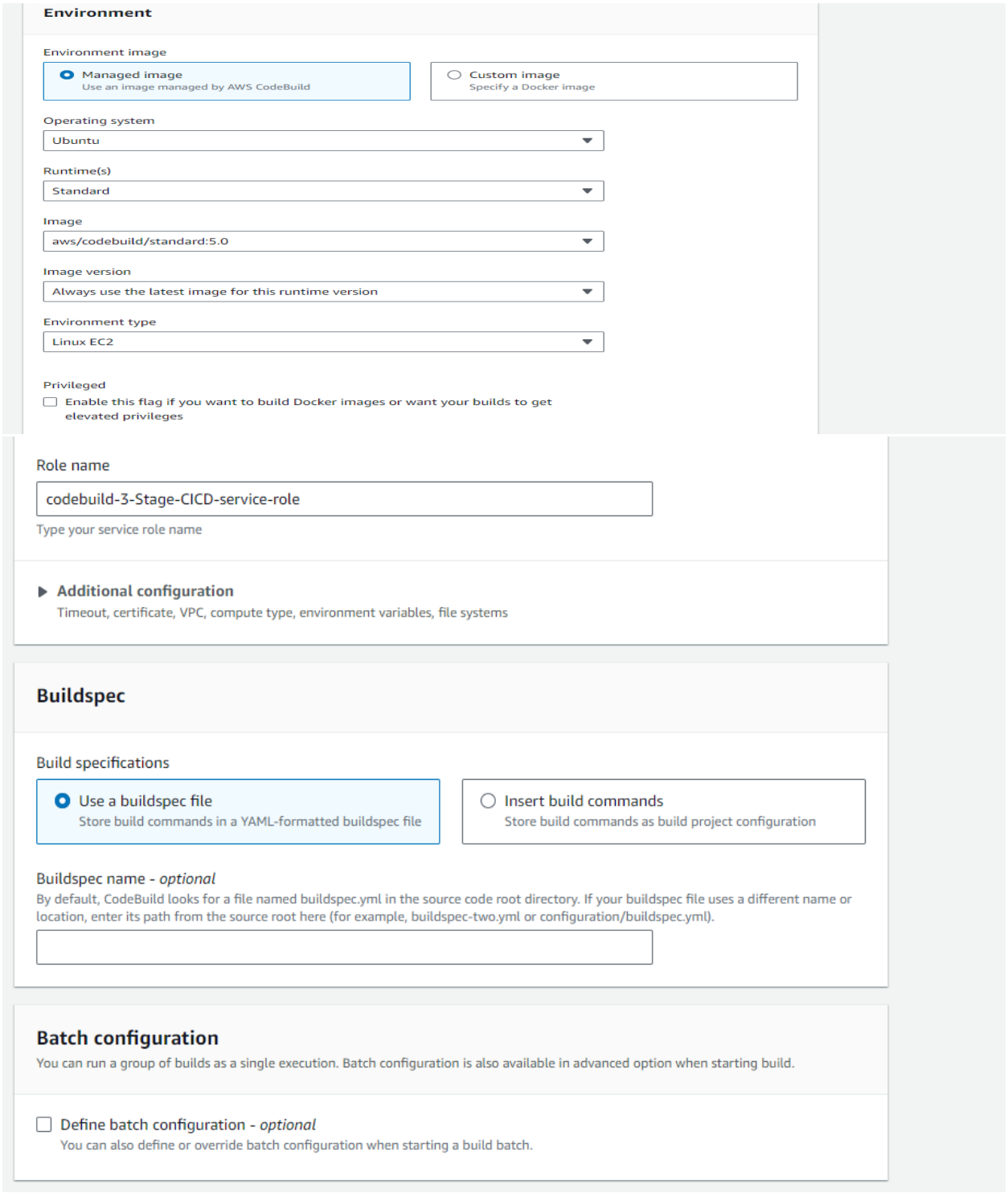
```
aghog@DESKTOP-FV0TCVU MINGW64 ~/Desktop/LocalRepo-CopdeCommit/3-Stages-CICD (main)
$ ll
total 0
drwxr-xr-x 1 aghog 197610 0 Oct 11 11:34 3_Stages_CICD_repo/

aghog@DESKTOP-FV0TCVU MINGW64 ~/Desktop/LocalRepo-CopdeCommit/3-Stages-CICD (main)
$ cd 3_Stages_CICD_repo/

aghog@DESKTOP-FV0TCVU MINGW64 ~/Desktop/LocalRepo-CopdeCommit/3-Stages-CICD/3_Stages_CICD_repo (master)
$ git add .

aghog@DESKTOP-FV0TCVU MINGW64 ~/Desktop/LocalRepo-CopdeCommit/3-Stages-CICD/3_Stages_CICD_repo (master)
$ git commit -m "adding the cftemplate to the codecommit repo"
[master (root-commit) 18ac37b] adding the cftemplate to the codecommit repo
 1 file changed, 63 insertions(+)
 create mode 100644 cftemplate.yml

aghog@DESKTOP-FV0TCVU MINGW64 ~/Desktop/LocalRepo-CopdeCommit/3-Stages-CICD/3_Stages_CICD_repo (master)
$ git push origin master
Enumerating objects: 3, done.
Counting objects: 100% (3/3), done.
Delta compression using up to 8 threads
Compressing objects: 100% (2/2), done.
Writing objects: 100% (3/3), 1.09 KiB | 1.09 MiB/s, done.
Total 3 (delta 0), reused 0 (delta 0), pack-reused 0
remote: Validating objects: 100%
To https://git-codecommit.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/v1/repos/3_Stages_CICD_repo
 * [new branch]      master -> master

aghog@DESKTOP-FV0TCVU MINGW64 ~/Desktop/LocalRepo-CopdeCommit/3-Stages-CICD/3_Stages_CICD_repo (master)
$
```

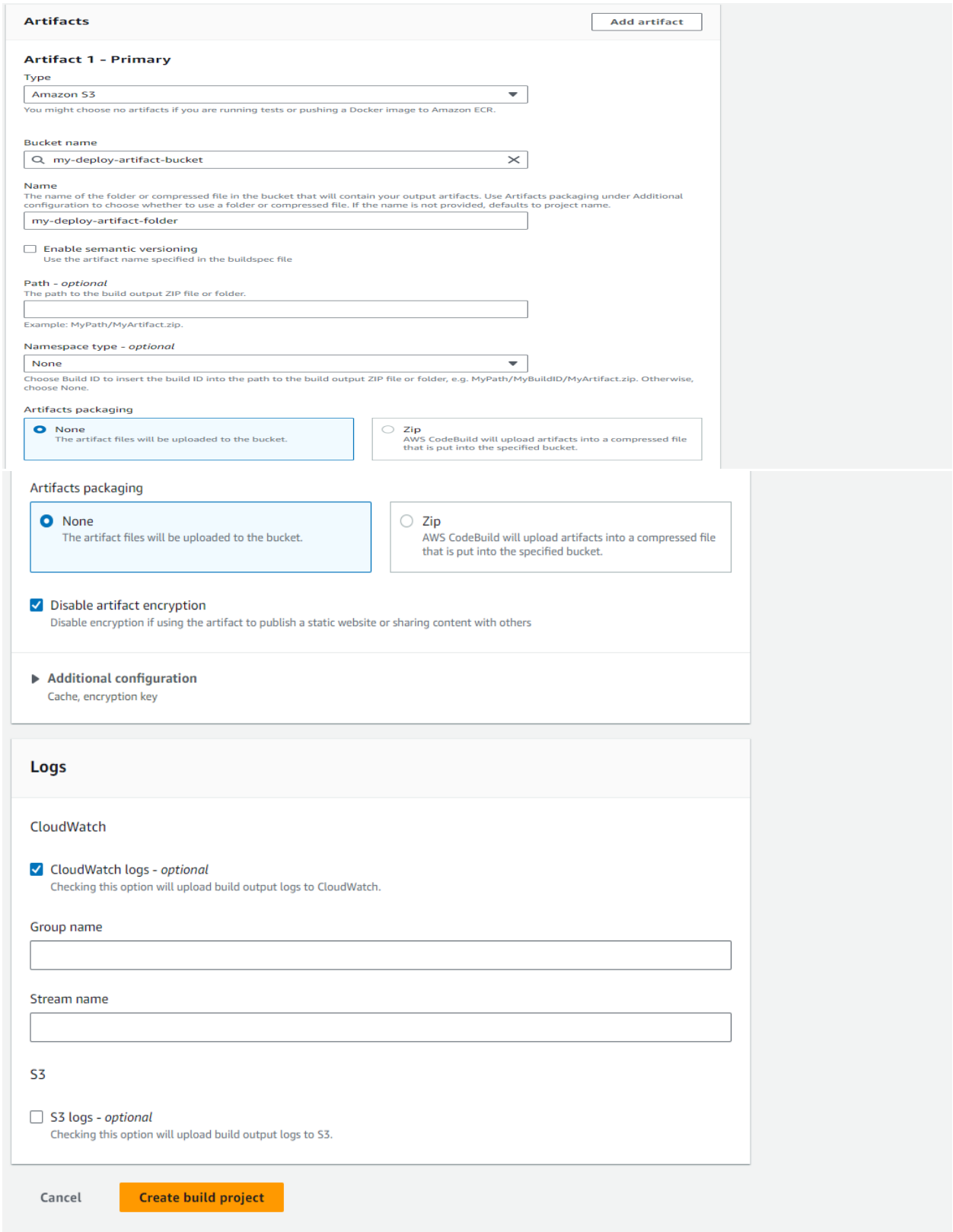
The cftemplate reflects on the 3-Stages-CICD_repo



Next stage is the Build stage, and I used CodeBuild.



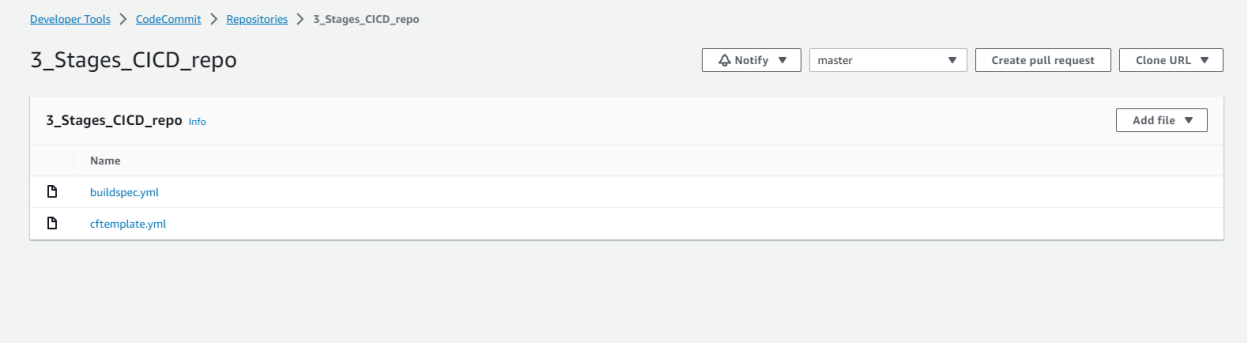

Environment
Environment image
Managed image
Use an image managed by AWS CodeBuild
Custom image
Specify a Docker image
Operating system
Ubuntu
Runtime(s)
Standard
Image
aws/codebuild/standard:5.0
Image version
Always use the latest image for this runtime version
Environment type
Linux EC2
Privileged
Enable this flag if you want to build Docker images or want your builds to get elevated privileges
Role name
codebuild-3-Stage-CICD-service-role
Type your service role name
Additional configuration
Timeout, certificate, VPC, compute type, environment variables, file systems
Buildspec
Build specifications
Use a buildspec file
Store build commands in a YAML-formatted buildspec file
Insert build commands
Store build commands as build project configuration
Buildspec name - optional
By default, CodeBuild looks for a file named buildspec.yml in the source code root directory. If your buildspec file uses a different name or location, enter its path from the source root here (for example, buildspec-two.yml or configuration/buildspec.yml).
Batch configuration
You can run a group of builds as a single execution. Batch configuration is also available in advanced option when starting build.
Define batch configuration - optional
You can also define or override batch configuration when starting a build batch.


Artifacts
Add artifact
Artifact 1 - Primary
Type
Amazon S3
You might choose no artifacts if you are running tests or pushing a Docker image to Amazon ECR.
Bucket name
my-deploy-artifact-bucket
Name
The name of the folder or compressed file in the bucket that will contain your output artifacts. Use Artifacts packaging under Additional configuration to choose whether to use a folder or compressed file. If the name is not provided, defaults to project name.
my-deploy-artifact-folder
Enable semantic versioning
Use the artifact name specified in the buildspec file
Path - optional
The path to the build output ZIP file or folder.
Example: MyPath/MyArtifact.zip.
Namespace type - optional
None
Choose Build ID to insert the build ID into the path to the build output ZIP file or folder, e.g. MyPath/MyBuildID/MyArtifact.zip. Otherwise, choose None.
Artifacts packaging
None
The artifact files will be uploaded to the bucket.
Zip
AWS CodeBuild will upload artifacts into a compressed file that is put into the specified bucket.
Artifacts packaging
None
The artifact files will be uploaded to the bucket.
Zip
AWS CodeBuild will upload artifacts into a compressed file that is put into the specified bucket.
Disable artifact encryption
Disable encryption if using the artifact to publish a static website or sharing content with others
Additional configuration
Cache, encryption key
Logs
CloudWatch
CloudWatch logs - optional
Checking this option will upload build output logs to CloudWatch.
Group name
Stream name
S3
S3 logs - optional
Checking this option will upload build output logs to S3.
Cancel
Create build project

I pushed my buildspec.yml to my codecommit repository “3_Stages_CICD_repo

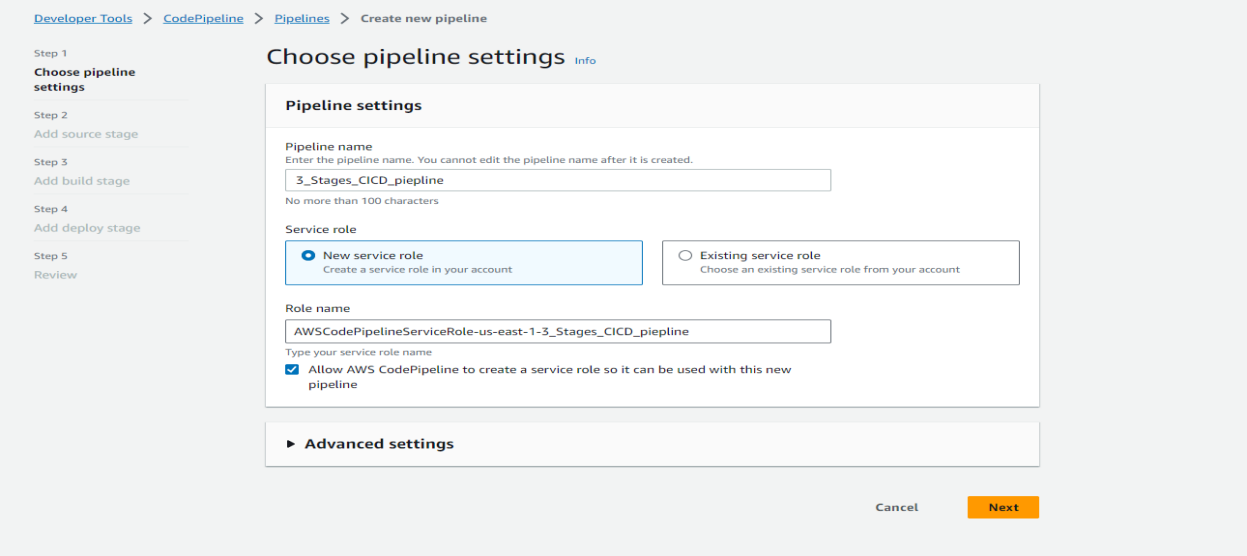
```
aghog@DESKTOP-FV0TCVU MINGW64 ~/Desktop/LocalRepo-CopdeCommit/3-Stages-CICD/3_Stages_CICD_repo (master)
$ git add .

aghog@DESKTOP-FV0TCVU MINGW64 ~/Desktop/LocalRepo-CopdeCommit/3-Stages-CICD/3_Stages_CICD_repo (master)
$ git commit -m "adding bulidspec to codecommitrepo"
[master 1634356] adding bulidspec to codecommitrepo
 1 file changed, 31 insertions(+)
 create mode 100644 buildspec.yml

aghog@DESKTOP-FV0TCVU MINGW64 ~/Desktop/LocalRepo-CopdeCommit/3-Stages-CICD/3_Stages_CICD_repo (master)
$ git push
Enumerating objects: 4, done.
Counting objects: 100% (4/4), done.
Delta compression using up to 8 threads
Compressing objects: 100% (3/3), done.
Writing objects: 100% (3/3), 824 bytes | 824.00 KiB/s, done.
Total 3 (delta 0), reused 0 (delta 0), pack-reused 0
remote: Validating objects: 100%
To https://git-codecommit.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/v1/repos/3_Stages_CICD_repo
   18ac37b..1634356  master -> master

aghog@DESKTOP-FV0TCVU MINGW64 ~/Desktop/LocalRepo-CopdeCommit/3-Stages-CICD/3_Stages_CICD_repo (master)
$
```

Confirming the push update on the console

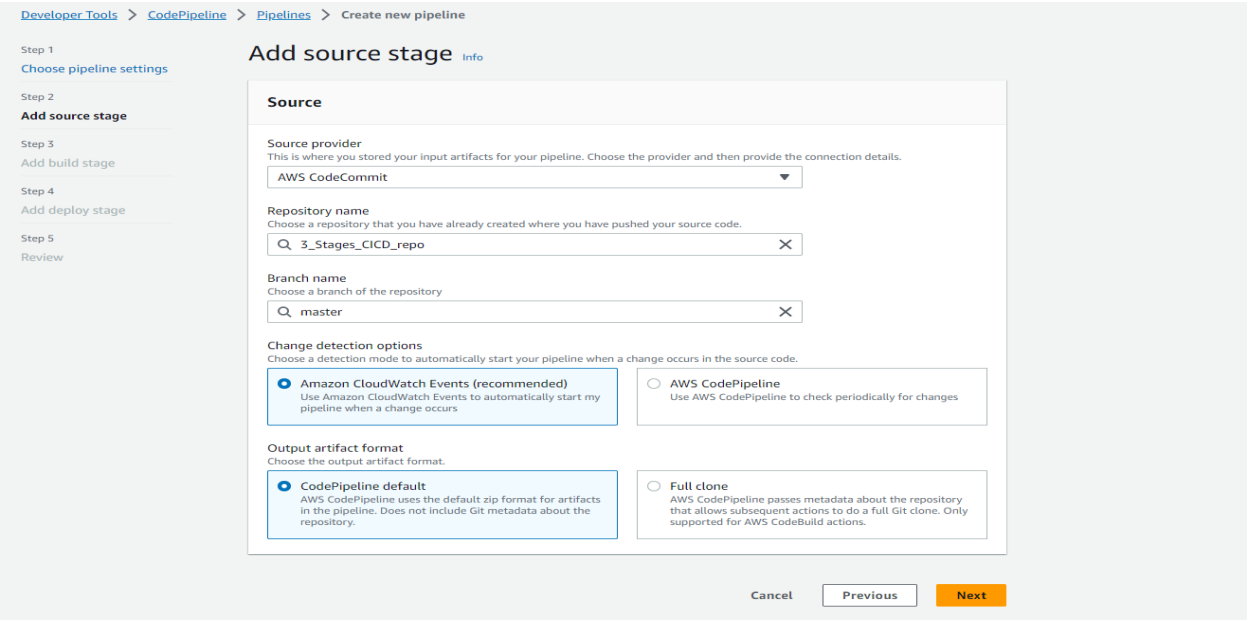


Next stage is building a CI/CD Pipeline.

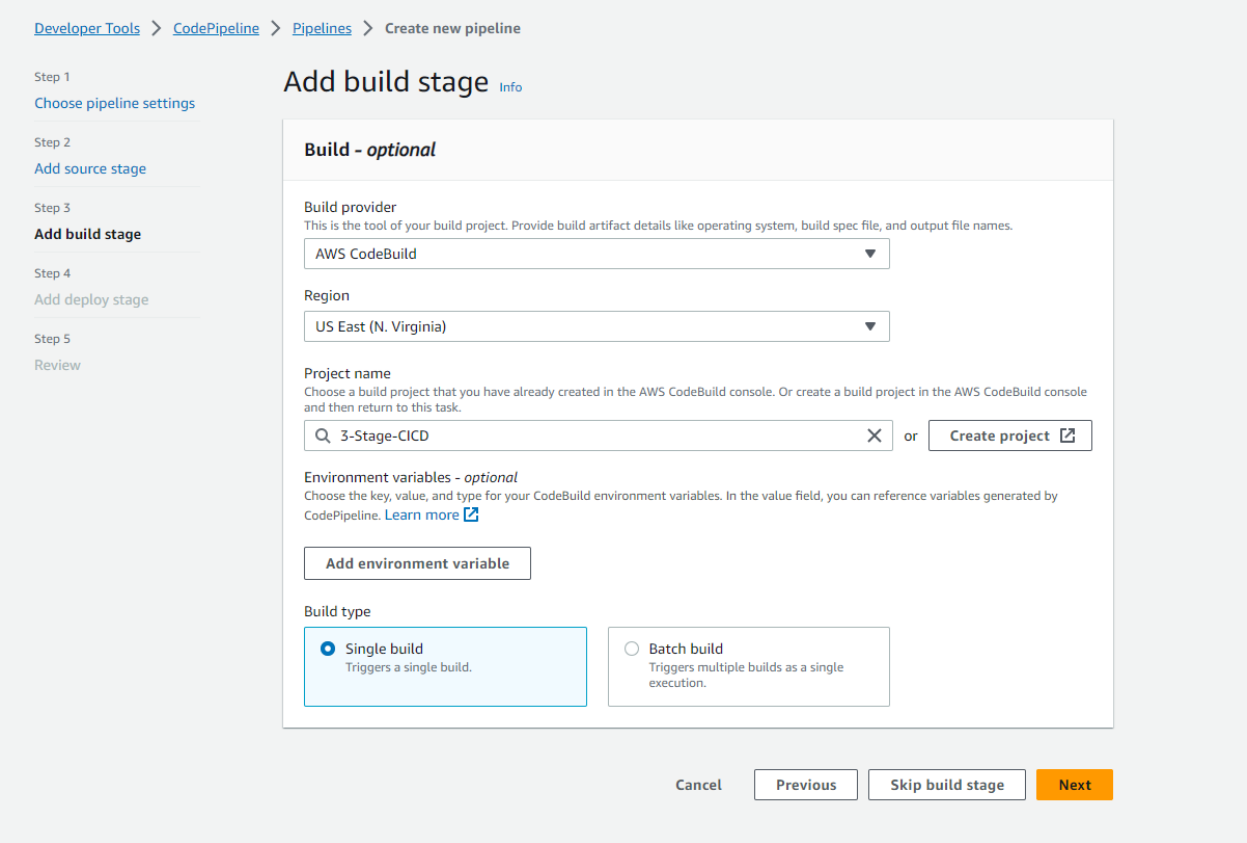
Pipeline Settings:



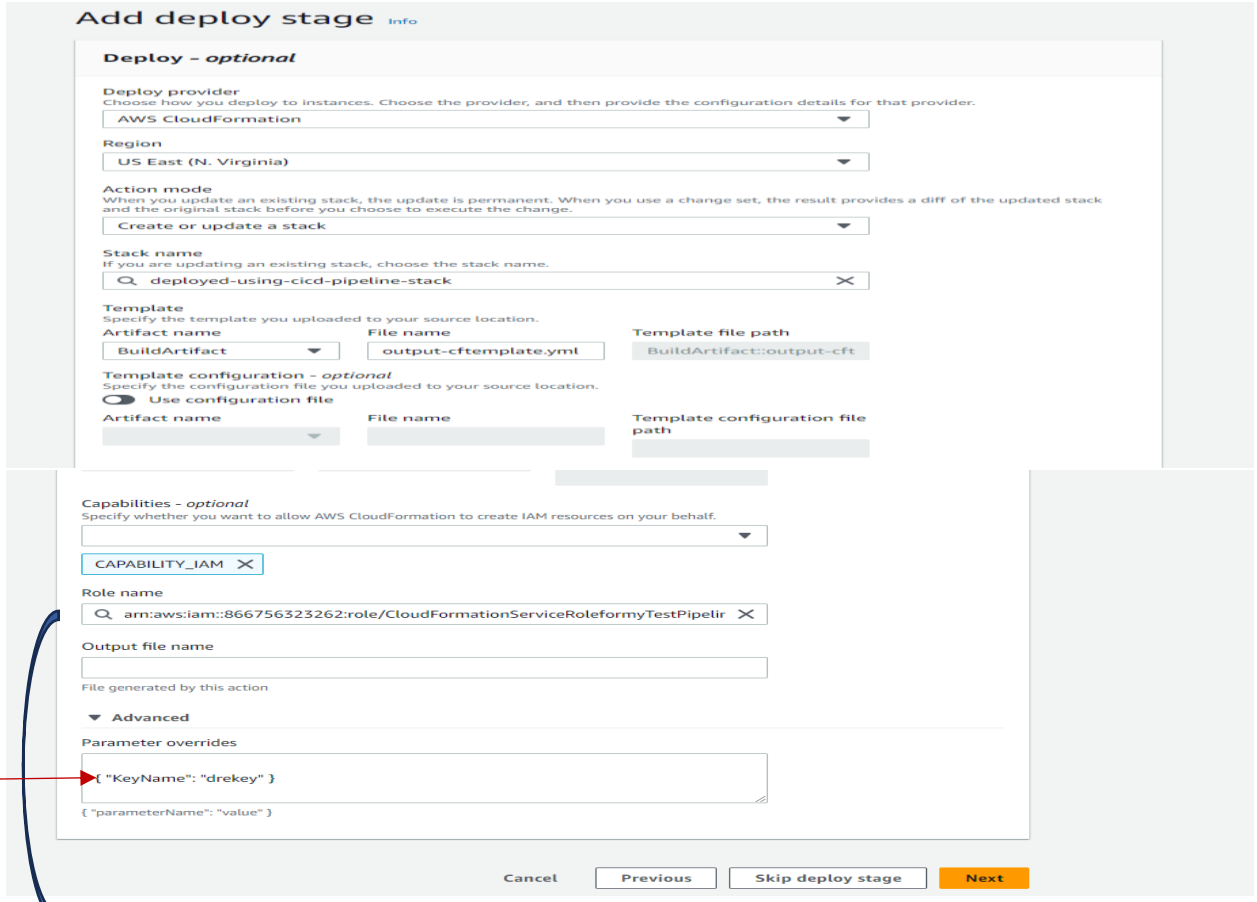
Source Stage:



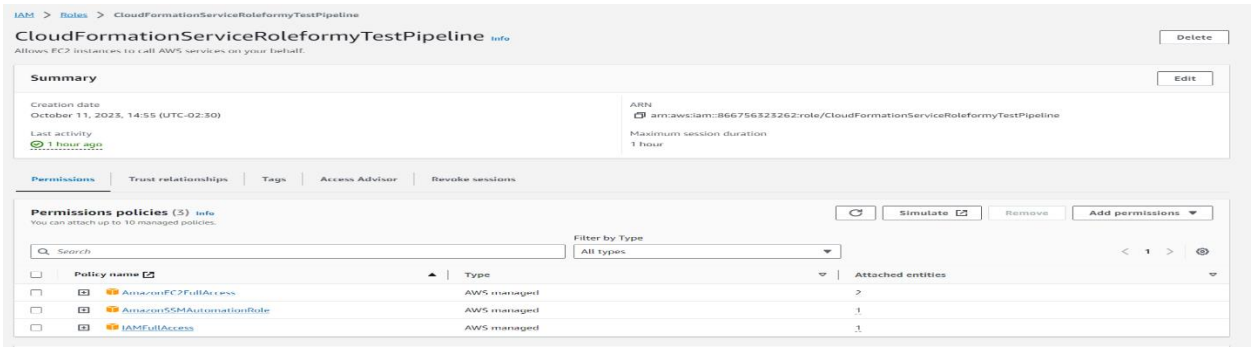
Build Stage:

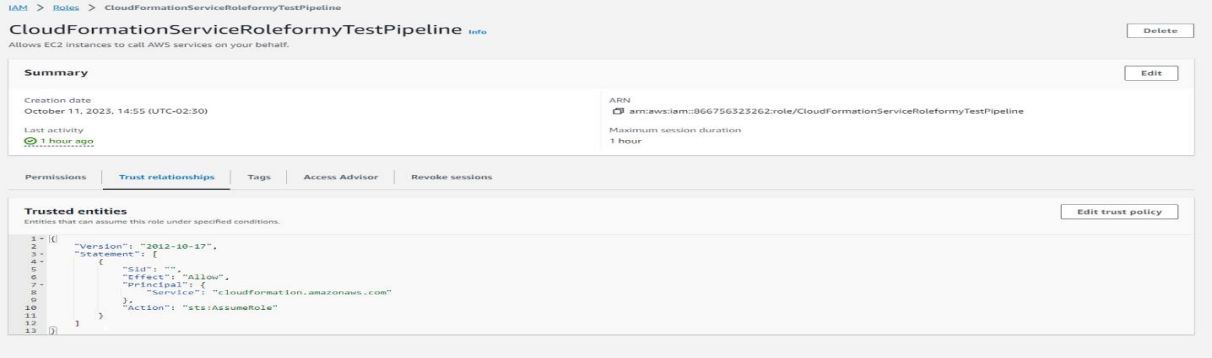

Developer Tools > CodePipeline > Pipelines > Create new pipeline
Step 1
Choose pipeline settings
Step 2
Add source stage
Step 3
Add build stage
Step 4
Add deploy stage
Step 5
Review
Add build stage Info
Build - optional
Build provider
This is the tool of your build project. Provide build artifact details like operating system, build spec file, and output file names.
AWS CodeBuild
Region
US East (N. Virginia)
Project name
Choose a build project that you have already created in the AWS CodeBuild console. Or create a build project in the AWS CodeBuild console and then return to this task.
3-Stage-CICD
or
Create project
Environment variables - optional
Choose the key, value, and type for your CodeBuild environment variables. In the value field, you can reference variables generated by CodePipeline. Learn more
Add environment variable
Build type
Single build
Triggers a single build.
Batch build
Triggers multiple builds as a single execution.
Cancel
Previous
Skip build stage
Next

Deploy Stage: First Action is the (DeployToTest) Environment

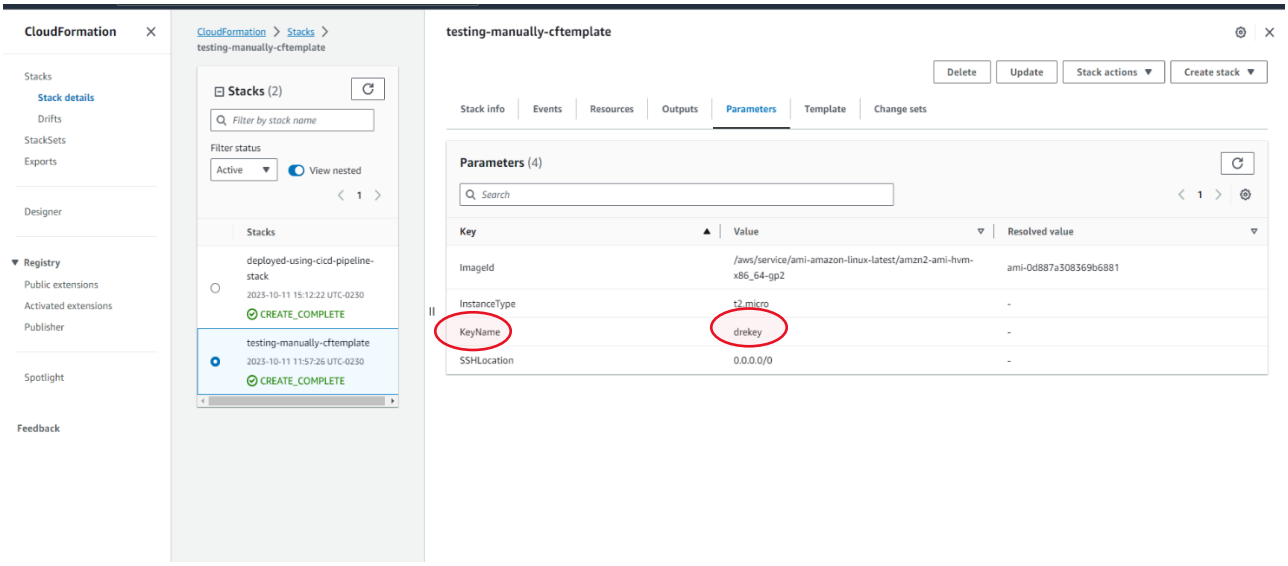


An IAM Role was created as shown below.

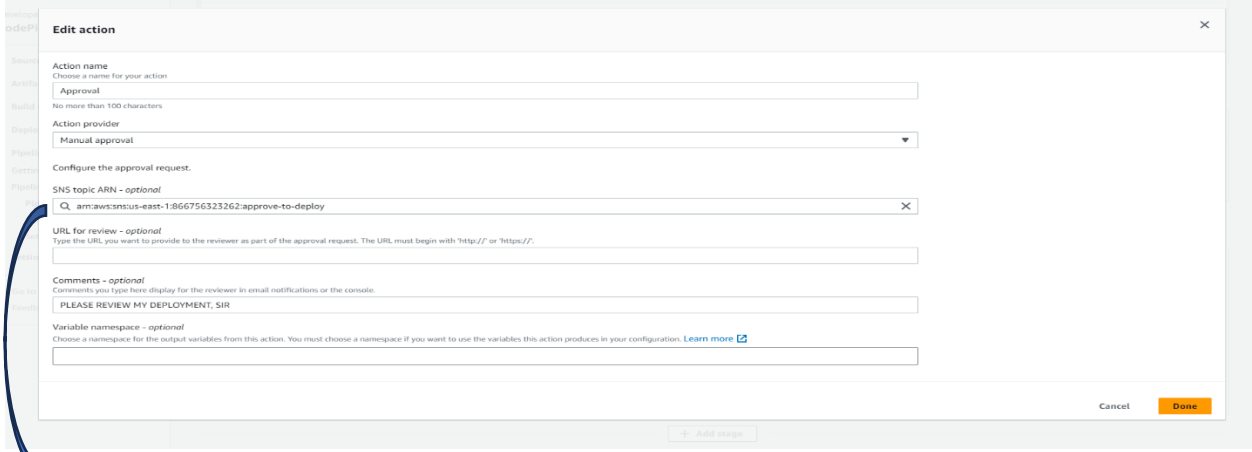




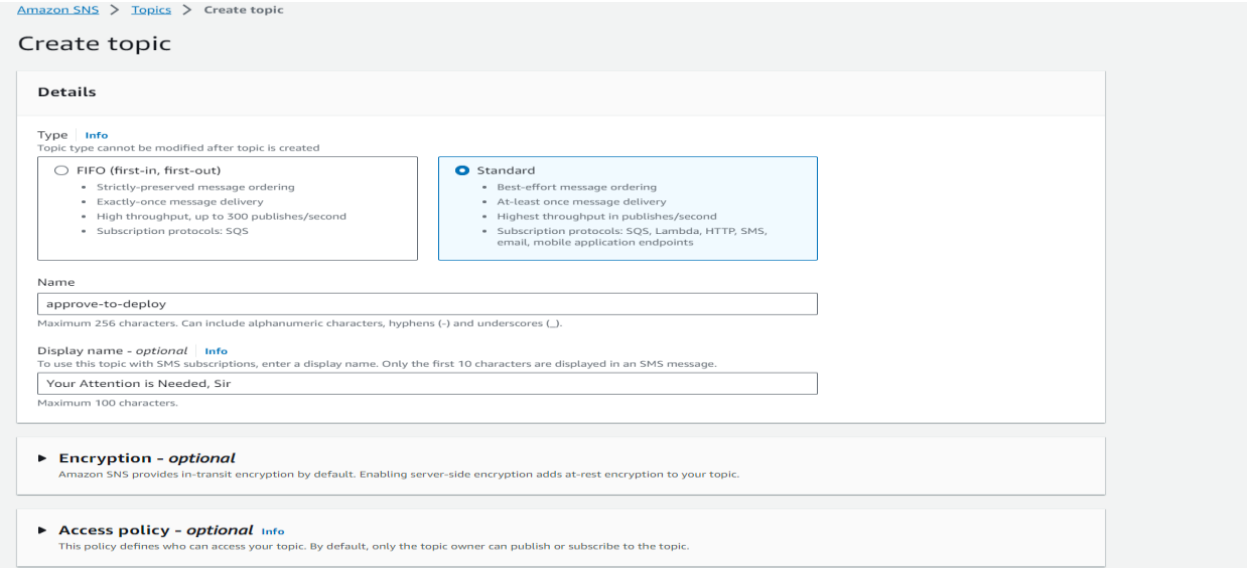
For the Parameter Overrides from the settings above, I copied the key and value on the cftemplate.

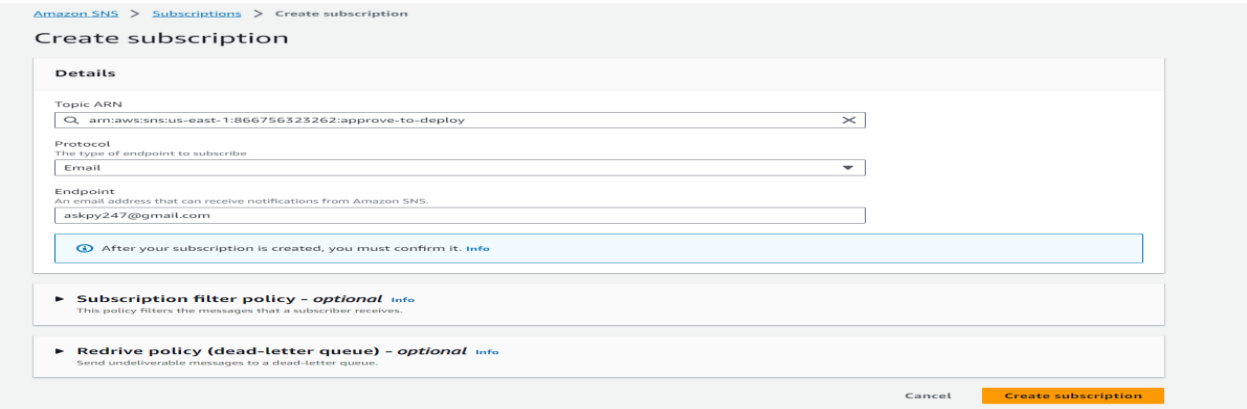


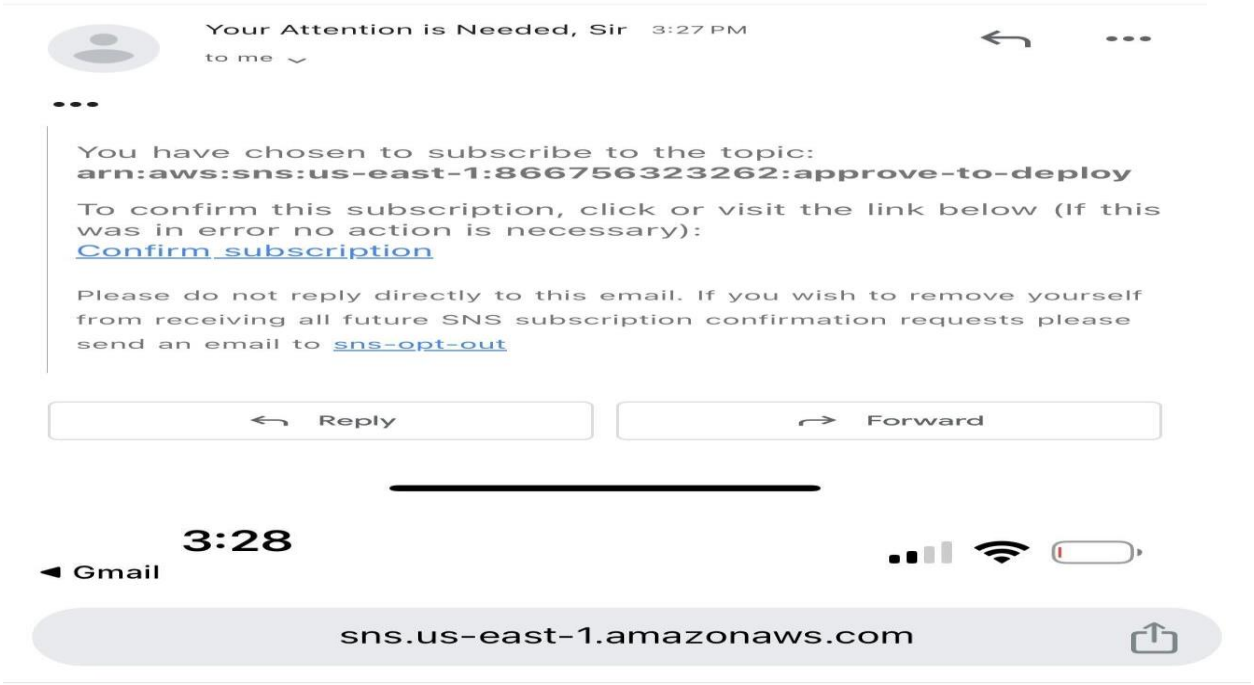
Furthermore, on the Deploy stage, the deploy stage was edited to add an “action” for manual approval as shown below.



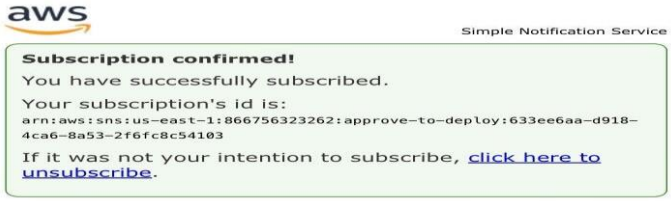
SNS topic was created to get the approval notification as shown below.

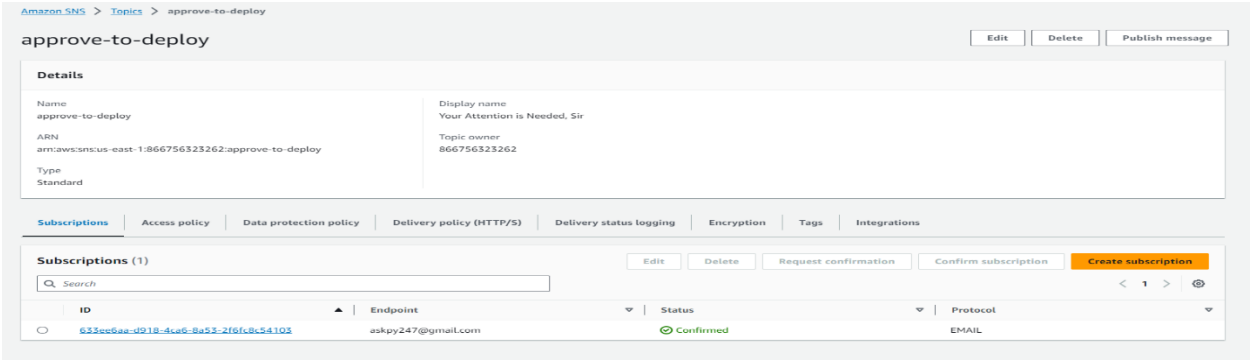




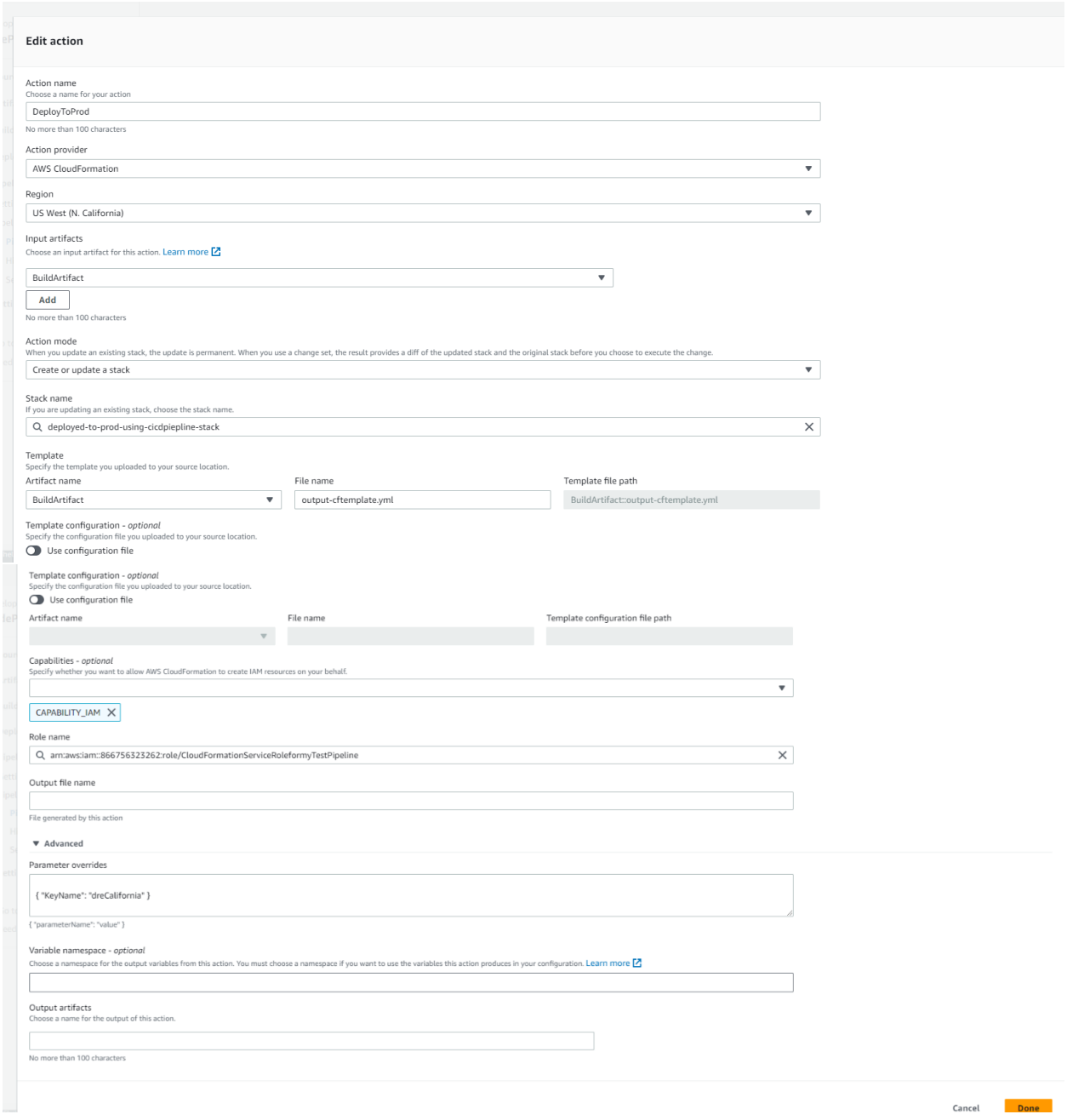

Your Attention is Needed, Sir 3:27 PM
to me
You have chosen to subscribe to the topic:
arn:aws:sns:us-east-1:866756323262:approve-to-deploy
To confirm this subscription, click or visit the link below (If this was in error no action is necessary):
Confirm subscription
Please do not reply directly to this email. If you wish to remove yourself from receiving all future SNS subscription confirmation requests please send an email to sns-opt-out
Reply
Forward

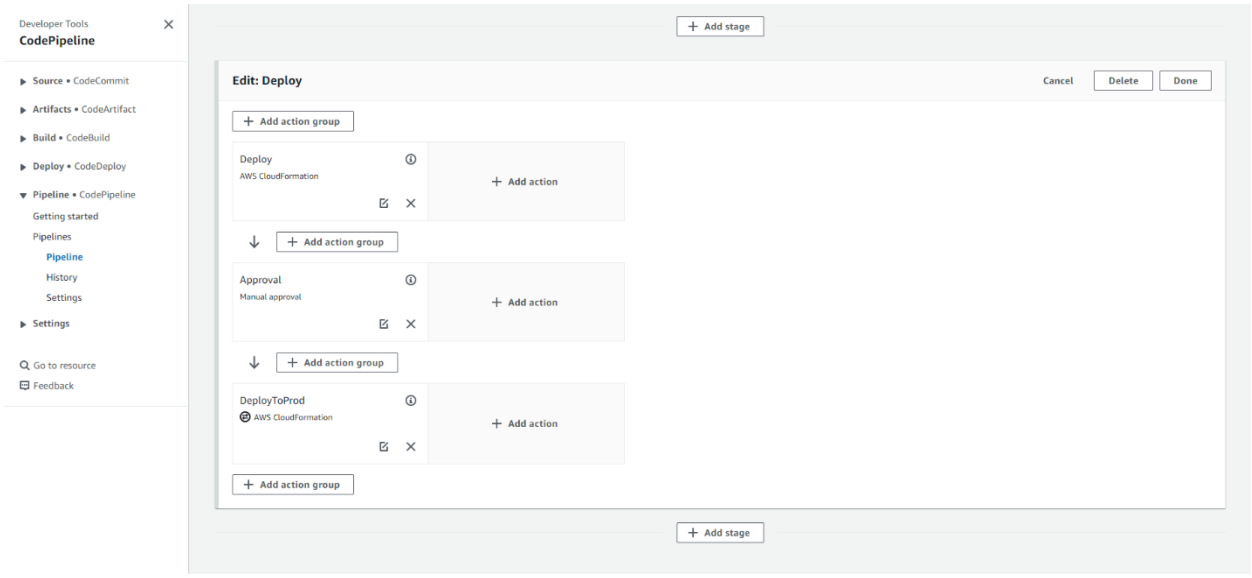
3:28
Gmail
sns.us-east-1.amazonaws.com


aws
Simple Notification Service
Subscription confirmed!
You have successfully subscribed.
Your subscription's id is:
arn:aws:sns:us-east-1:866756323262:approve-to-deploy:633ee6aa-d918-4ca6-8a53-2f6fc8c54103
If it was not your intention to subscribe, click here to unsubscribe.

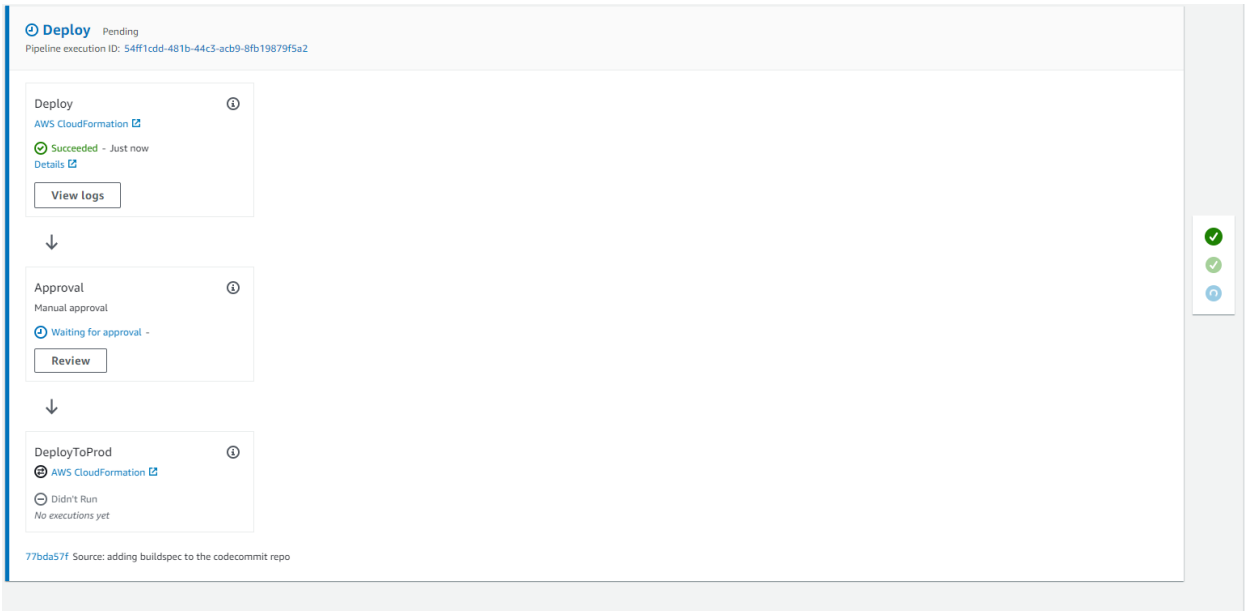

Amazon SNS > Topics > approve-to-deploy
approve-to-deploy
Edit
Delete
Publish message
Details
Name
approve-to-deploy
Display name
Your Attention is Needed, Sir
ARN
arn:aws:sns:us-east-1:866756323262:approve-to-deploy
Topic owner
866756323262
Type
Standard
Subscriptions
Access policy
Data protection policy
Delivery policy (HTTP/S)
Delivery status logging
Encryption
Tags
Integrations
Subscriptions (1)
Edit
Delete
Request confirmation
Confirm subscription
Create subscription
Search
ID
Endpoint
Status
Protocol
633ee6aa-d918-4ca6-8a53-2f6fc8c54103
askpy247@gmail.com
Confirmed
EMAIL

Another “action” (DeployToProd) was added to the Deploy stage for the Production Environment.

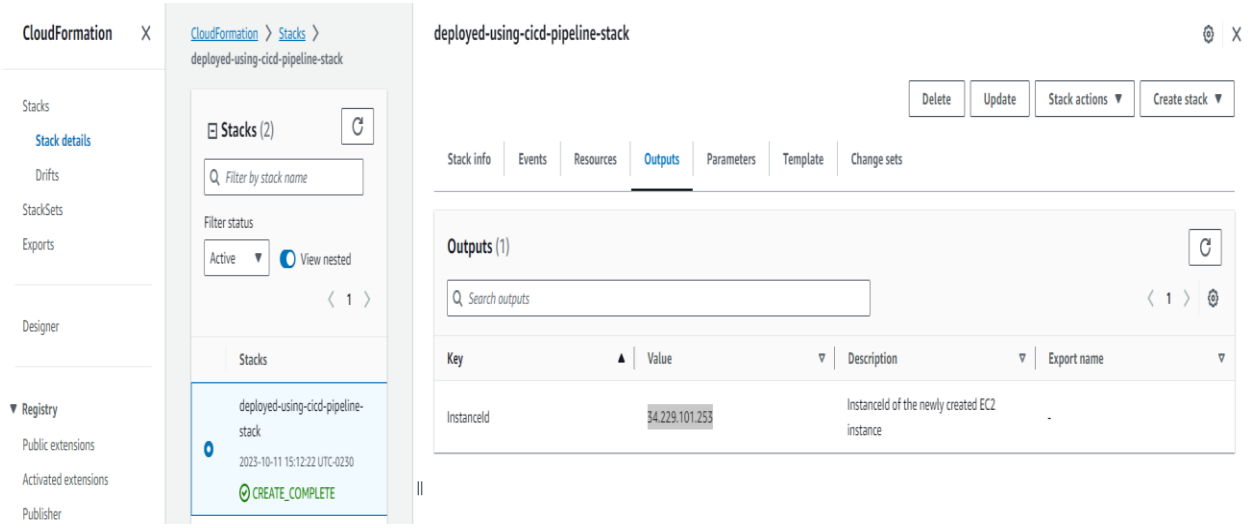




I saved the actions above and released change.

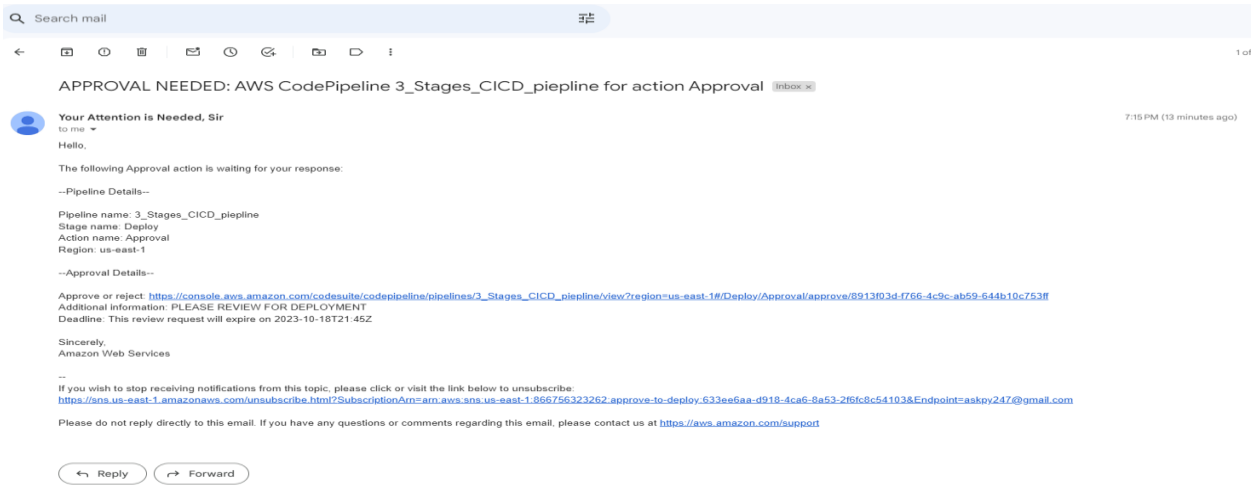


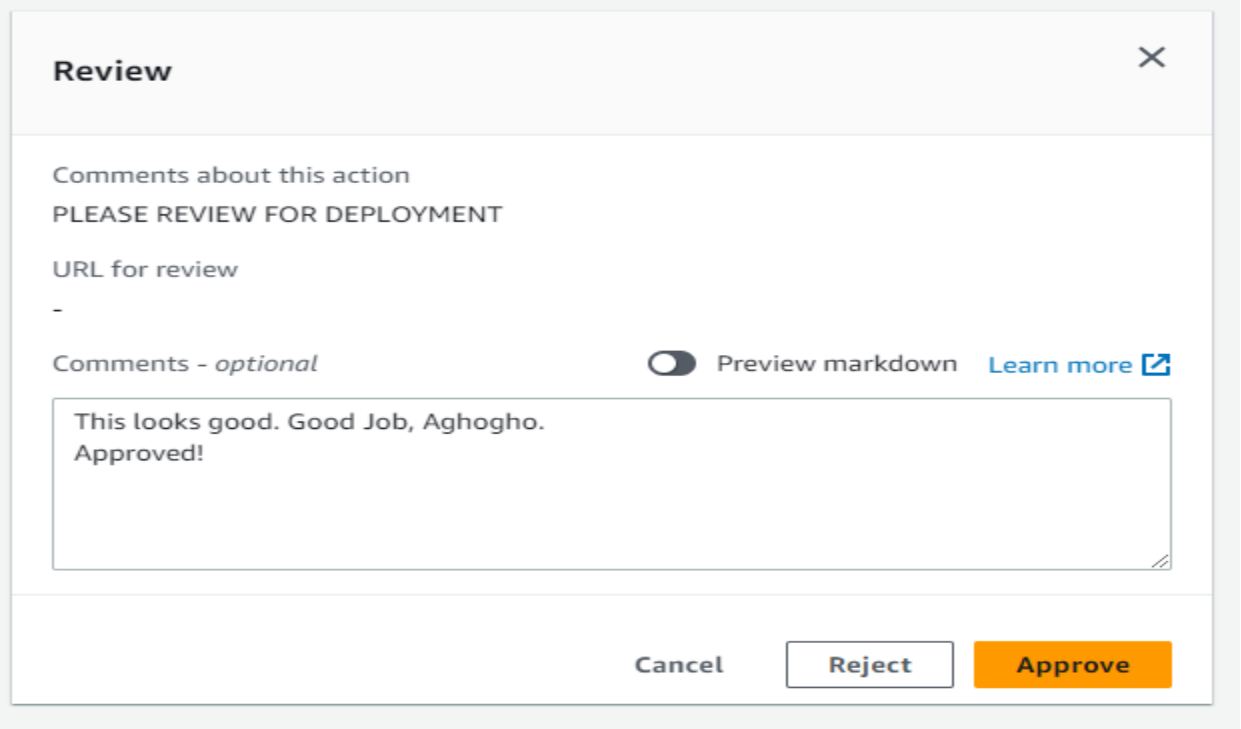
It was successfully deployed in the Test Environment. I copied the IP address from the stack created in Cloudformation and tested in a browser as shown below.



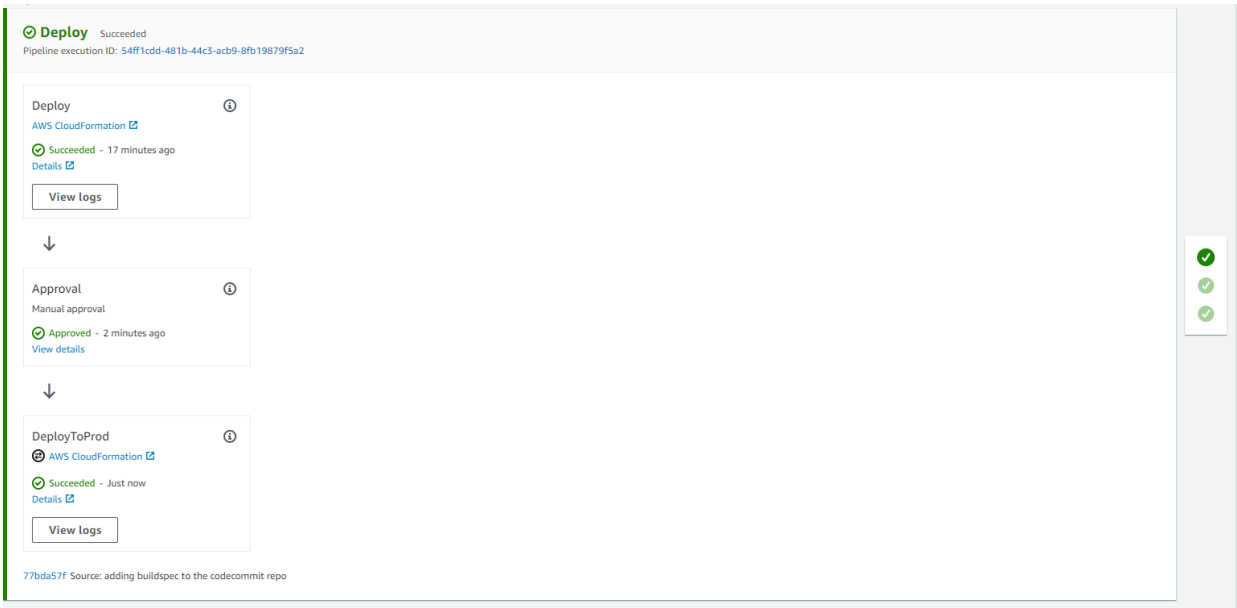
It works good in the Test Environment “us-east-1” region.

I got a notification from SNS to manual review and approve the deployment to the Production Environment as shown below.

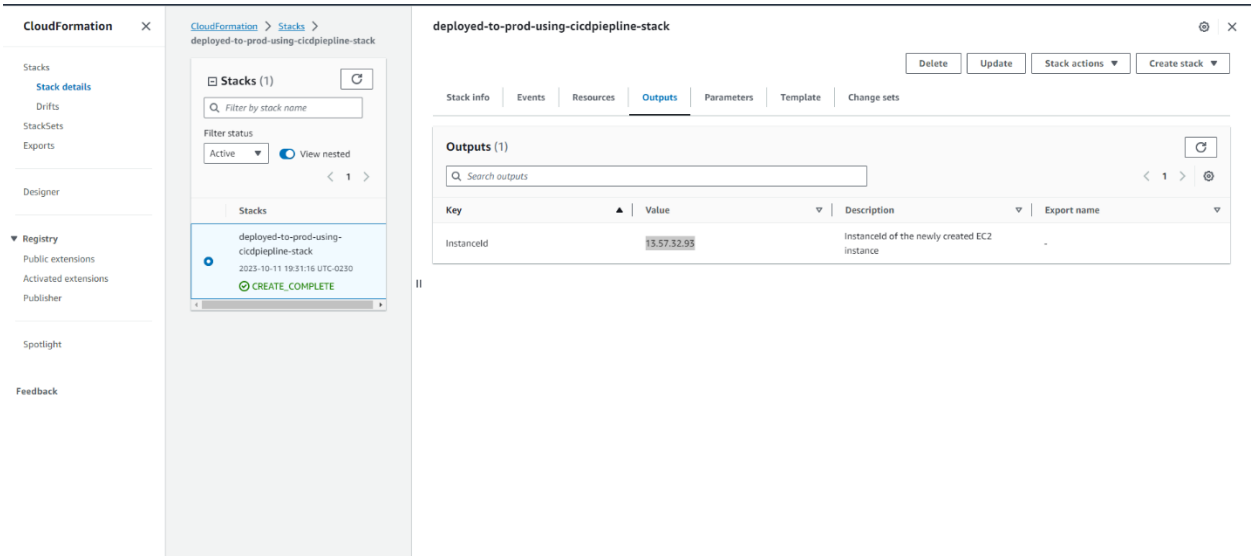




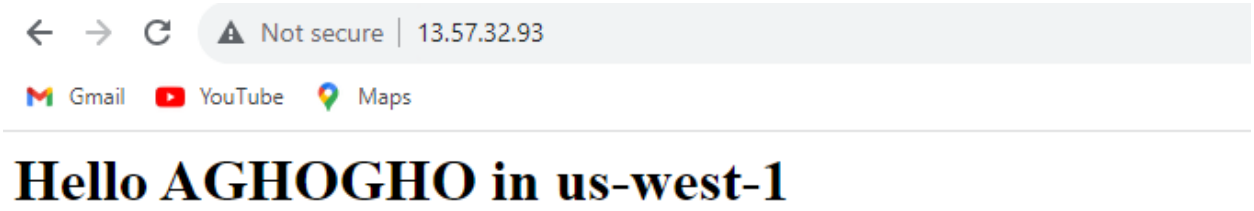
Immediately, it was approved, it started deployment to the Production Environment.



I confirmed its deployment to the Production Environment by going to the Production Environment Region “us-west-1” and copied the IP address of the output of the stack created in the Cloudformation and pasted it on a browser as shown below.



It works fine in the Production Environment.



Conclusion

I successfully built a three-stages pipeline to deploy an application using CloudFormation as a deploy provider.