Amazon S3 Tables adds managed Hive-to-Iceberg migration: when it helps and what to check

10 November 2026 · 5 min read · blogs.iictp.org/s3-tables-managed-hive-to-iceberg-migration

On 4 November AWS announced that Amazon S3 Tables can now migrate Apache Hive tables to Apache Iceberg as a managed operation. This is a data-platform change with an architecture decision attached.

TL;DR The short version

- On 4 November AWS announced that Amazon S3 Tables can migrate Apache Hive tables to Apache Iceberg as a managed operation.
- It works with Parquet tables in S3 registered in the AWS Glue Data Catalog, and AWS handles validation, type conversion and compaction.
- Before migrating, check that every engine reading the tables supports Iceberg and agree a rollback plan for consumers that break.

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What AWS announced

- It works with Parquet tables in Amazon S3 that are registered in the AWS Glue Data Catalog.
- AWS says S3 Tables handle validation, compatibility checks, type conversions, file recompression and compaction, and produce a compatibility report before copying data.
- The source table can keep receiving writes while you sync, except for a few minutes at cutover, according to AWS.
- Pricing, per AWS: you pay for the data copied, with no charge for the Hive-to-Iceberg conversion.

Why teams move to Iceberg

AWS describes Iceberg as an open standard for large analytic tables, with schema evolution, hidden partitioning and time-travel queries, queryable by any Iceberg-compatible engine. The practical gain is that the data format stops tying you to one engine.

Questions to ask before you migrate

- Who reads these tables today, and will each of those engines read Iceberg?
- What is the rollback plan if a consumer breaks after cutover?
- Is a copy acceptable, in cost and in governance terms? A migration creates a second copy of the data.

- Does the managed service tie the table's storage and maintenance to one provider, and is that a trade you accept?

This is the kind of decision expensive to undo: make it with an exit path in mind, even when the tool makes the first step easy.

> Facts in this post were read from the sources listed below on 10 November 2026; this is a developing story or product and details may have changed since.

Sources and further reading

1. AWS News Blog. Amazon S3 Tables now offer managed migration of Apache Hive tables to Apache Iceberg. 4 November 2026. aws.amazon.com/blogs/aws/amazon-s3-tables-now-offer-managed-migration-of-apache-hive-tables-to-apache-iceberg/

Published by IICTP, an independent technical credential body, on 10 November 2026. The current version of this post is at https://blogs.iictp.org/s3-tables-managed-hive-to-iceberg-migration. More guides: blogs.iictp.org.