Domestic Bovidae have been playing a central role in human history since the beginning of agriculture, about 10.000 years ago. Despite very large overall population sizes, many breeds are already extinct, and some others are highly endangered. First, we will summarize the current knowledge about the history of domestication. Cattle have been domesticated in the Fertile Crescent, but also in India, leading to the taurine and the zebu phenotypes. The wild ancestor, the auroch, is now extinct. Sheep and goats were only domesticated in the Fertile Crescent, but do not share the same history. The wild ancestors of these two species still exist, but are endangered. Then, we will examine the current threats. Since about 200 years ago, the management of domestic Bovidae has changed. The implementation of the breed concept leads to the separation of domestic species into different breeds. Such a separation can be compared to the current fragmentation many wild species suffer from. Furthermore, the artificial insemination strongly contributes to a dramatic reduction of the population sizes for the economically most important breeds, leading to genetic problems (e.g. strong decrease in fertility for some cattle breeds). Finally, we will propose management guidelines for preserving the genetic resources.