



## **Commendation**

(within the framework of the Special „Pedagogy“ Award of the Conference of Regional Film Services 2004)

**Category: Information and Documentary Films**

### **The Maldives – Luxury Island Banyan Tree (Norddeutscher Rundfunk Fernsehen, Programme Area: Culture/Documentation & Reportage, German, 43 minutes)**

The documentary film *The Maldives –Luxury Island Banyan Tree* by Vanessa Nöcker meets the special criteria of TOURA D'OR, which require constructive criticism of negative aspects and effects of tourism and an orientation to new pedagogical approaches. This is why the Special “Pedagogy” Award of Regional Film Services (Konferenz der Landesfilmdienste) is awarded.

The Tsunami disaster of last December also made headlines in the area of the Atoll of the Maldives, which are otherwise popularly described as a “tourist paradise”. The film on Banyan Tree shows how such a “paradise” is created. The local luxury is imported and the logistics and infrastructure are extremely difficult. The “pretty illusion” of 24-hour comfort for wealthy tourists is touched upon only briefly – the noteworthy aspect of the report is the exemplary view behind the touristic scenes: the working and living conditions of the predominantly male service staff is shown; two employees are shown during one of their rare and short visits to their families who live on other islands.

*The Maldives – Luxury Island Banyan Tree* has been awarded the special award because of the film’s balanced and informative presentation of interesting glimpses behind the scenes. The film is critical and reserved, and yet presents the background of luxury tourism with sympathy and not pretentious. The protagonists are given sufficient opportunity to express their views.