ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At the outset, I praise the Almighty for providing me this opportunity and granting me the capability to proceed successfully.

To be able to step strong and smooth in this way, I have been assisted and supported by many people to whom I would like to express my deepest gratitude.

It gives me great pleasure to express my heartfelt and profound sense of gratitude and my sincere thanks to my guide, Dr. K. Krishnamoorthy, Director, Space Physics Laboratory, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, for his invaluable guidance, constant encouragement, fruitful discussions and motivation rendered at each and every stage of my research. It has been an honor to be his Ph.D student. The joy and enthusiasm he has for research was contagious and motivational for me, even during tough times in the Ph.D. I am deeply indebted to him for all the knowledge and experience that I have gained from him during the course of this work.

I am deeply indebted to Dr. S. Suresh Babu, Project Manager, ARFI, for his constant encouragement and concern in the progress of my research work. I thank him for the discussions and valuable suggestions during the course of the work.

I would like express my sincere thanks to Prof. R. Sridharan, former Director, SPL for his consistent encouragement and valuable suggestions.

This research work was supported by Department of Space, Government of India, through the ISRO-Geosphere Biosphere Programme (I-GBP). I would like to acknowledge the financial assistance provided by the Indian Space Research Organization through the ISRO research fellowship. Sincere thanks are due to the library staff of VSSC for the service rendered for literature collection during my research work.

I acknowledge Dr. C B S Dutt for the support and encouragement during my research period, and especially during the W-ICARB cruise experiment for which he was the chief scientist. I would like to thank Prof. S.K. Satheesh, Associate Professor, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, for the support and encouragement during the period. I also acknowledge all team members of ARFI and ICARB for their support and the officers and crew members of Sagar Kanya SK-223 cruise for providing all the necessary facilities onboard.

I acknowledge Dr. Mian Chin of NASA, GSFC and all the team members for providing the GOCART model simulations which have been used in my thesis. I thank NCEP/NCAR for the provision of vector wind data (http://www.cdc.noaa.gov) and NOAA Air Resources Laboratory for the provision of HYSPLIT transport and dispersion model (http://www.arl.noaa.gov/ready.html) and MODIS science team of NASA, GSFC, USA for providing the required satellite data. I also acknowledge all the team members of
AERONET for making the data available through the site http://www.aeronet.gsfc.nasa.gov.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the members of the SPL family for the help and support; especially the members of the Academic Committee of SPL for the regular reviews and suggestions. It is my pleasure to express my deep and sincere gratitude to Dr. K. Parameswaran, Dr. M. Mohan, Dr. Sajani Surendran, Dr. Anil Bhardwaj, Dr. K. Rajeev, Dr. Prakash M Dolas, Dr. P. K. Kunhikrishnan, Dr. C. V. Devasia, Dr. Prabha R. Nair, Dr. Sudha Ravindran (late), Dr. Geetha Ramkumar, Dr. C. Suresh Raju, Dr. Karanam Kishore Kumar, Dr. D. Bala Subrahmanamy, Dr. Tarun Kumar Pant, Dr. R. K. Chowdhary, Dr. G. Manju, Dr. Sunil Kumar, Dr. Satheesh Thampi, Dr. S. Sijikumar, Dr. N. V. P. Kiran Kumar, Dr. S. S. Das, Dr. D. Swain, Mr. Santhosh Mularidharan, Mr. Manoj Mishra, Mr. Imran and others for their valuable comments, suggestions and encouragement.

I gratefully acknowledge the support provided by the Atmospheric Technology Division of SPL in general and those of Mr. S.V. Mohan Kumar, Mr. Pramod P.P, Mr. P. Pradeep Kumar, Ms. Sreelatha, Mr. Dinakar Prasad Vajja, Mr. Anumod, Mr. Ajeeshkumar, Ms. Lali Mr. Nazeer, Mr. Shajahan and Mr. Manikantan in particular. Thanks are also due to Mr. Asokan, Mr. Watson, Ms. Mable, Ms. Shanti and Mr. Samdas for the help received during the study period.

I thank Ms. Suseela, Mr. Hari Krishna Kishore, Mr. Jayakumar, Ms. Geetha, Jihas, Shamna, Sisira, Salini, Ajesh and Vijayan for their administrative and logistic support throughout the period of study.

My special thanks to Dr. Sreekanth, Dr. Mukunda, Manoj, Sobhan, Arun, Dr. Vajyakumar, Jai Prakash, Meenu, Anish, Prijith, Bijoy and Santhosh Pandey for their help and useful suggestions.

I wish to express my deep sense of gratitude to Dr. Preetha S. Pillai (late), Dr. Deepa, Dr. Sandhya, Dr. Smitha, Dr. C. Vineeth, Dr. Korak Saha, Dr. Susan, Dr. Maria, Dr. Indira Rani, Dr. Marina, Vaishnavi, Dr. Sreeja, Denny, Abish, Dr.Uma, Sherine, Sumod, Lijo, Liji, Sonal, Raghumaram, Tinu, Anu, Asha, Ambili, Renju, Neethu, Arya, Madhav, Hema and Abhinaw for their friendship and help. I specially acknowledge Dhanya, her sister Lavanya, Neha and Rosmy for their friendship and support.

I thankfully remember all my teachers and friends during my School and College days for their encouragement and support during those days.

Finally, I thank all my family members and relatives. Words are perhaps inadequate to express my overwhelming gratitude to my beloved parents, siblings, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sisters-in-law and all the relatives for their kind concern and invaluable support. In the closing note, I would like to thank my husband, Mr. Shyju for his constant support, patience and understanding during the final stage of my thesis.

S Naseema Beegum