ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would not have prepared the PhD thesis presented here without the help and support of many helpful minds, hearts and hands.

First of all, I should thank my research guide Prof. A. P. Thomas, Dean and Former Director, School of Environmental Sciences, Mahatma Gandhi University for his valuable guidance and constant encouragement. If someone asks me who is the most influential personality in your life, I would have answered the name of Thomas sir without a second thought. He has directed my academics and personal life with his experience, knowledge, humbleness and nobility. Dear Sir, without your help, ideas and inspiration, the Thesis would have not been possible.

I express my sincere thanks to Dr. E. V. Ramasamy, Director, School of Environmental Sciences, Mahatma Gandhi University for permitting and facilitating the work at the school with a constant research aptitude.

I am extremely thankful to Dr. M. S. R. Murthy, Head, Forestry and Ecology Division, National Remote Sensing Centre (Indian Space Research Organization) for his direction, magnanimity and constant encouragement while I was carrying out the work in NRSC. He played a major role in teaching the subject, developing the lateral thinking and broadening the viewpoints. He was instrumental in many of my achievements which I gained during this period.

Words fall short to express my admiration and indebtedness to Dr. V. K. Srivastava, Scientist ‘SG’, Land Resources Group, National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) who taught me the science of remote sensing and forestry. Out of a deep feeling of gratitude, I express my sincere thanks to him for his patience and kindness in guiding the work and motivating me to go into the advanced level studies.
I express my sincere gratitude to Dr. S. Sudhakar, Head, Land use Division, National Remote Sensing Centre for his valuable suggestions and guidance rendered during the work.

My hearty and lovable thanks to Dr. P. S. Roy, Deputy Director, RS & GIS – Application Area, National Remote Sensing Centre for motivating me to specialize in natural resources management, and providing training programs in advanced geospatial tools.

I am very much thankful to Dr. Ch. Sudhakar Reddy, Scientist ‘SD’, Forestry and Ecology Division, National Remote Sensing Centre for extending his helping hand for my professional growth by all means. More than a teacher, he was a good friend of mine and spent his invaluable time with me in all my booms and bursts.

Thanks are also due to present Director (Dr. V. Jayaraman) and Former Directors (Dr. R. R. Navalgund and Dr. K. Radhakrsihnan) for permitting me to do part of the work in National Remote Sensing Centre. Moral and technical supports from all my colleagues (I am not listing out everyone since it is long) are duly acknowledged.

I am extremely thankful to Dr. C. K. Sreedharan IFS, Principle Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief Wildlife Warden, Tamil Nadu Forest Department for permitting me to do the work in Indira Gandhi Wildlife Sanctuary and the special interest he has shown in the study. Dr. S. K. Srivastava, Geomatics Centre, Tamil Nadu Forest Department was extended his helping hand in facilitating the study. All the Wildlife Wardens, Rangers and other field staffs during the study period are also kindly acknowledged.

A number of international institutes and renowned scientists were also helped me to conduct the work. First of all, let me thank Dr. Patrick van Laake, Assistant professor, Department of Natural Resources, International Institute for Geo-information Science and Earth Observation (ITC), Netherlands for providing the theoretical background and technical supervision for carbon assimilation study.

The timely help from Prof. Lars Eklundh, Department of Physical Geography and Ecosystem Analysis, Lund University, Sweden was vital in the work. The
understanding he has shown throughout the study period was very crucial for me, and with a deep sense of gratitude, I express my sincere thanks to him.

I am extremely thankful to Dr. Alan George Blackburn, Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University, United Kingdom for spending his valuable time for correcting the writing part and providing proper directions to me.

My special thanks to Dr. Jose Kallarackal, Kerala Forest Research Institute and Mr. Sekhar L. K, ITC for providing the weather data. Prof. V. S. Ramachandran, Reader, Department of Botany, Bharathiar University helped me for the phytosociological study. Dr. V. B. Mathur, Dean, Faculty of Wildlife Science, Wildlife Institute of India and Dr. Hitendra Padalia, Scientist ‘SD’, Regional Remote Sensing Service Centre, Indian Space Research Organization supported in the early stages of the study.

Prof. Edward J. Milton, Dr. Jadu Dash (University of Southampton) and Prof. Ben Smith (Lund University) were kindly acknowledged for the beneficial discussions and constant support during the study period.

Last but not least, my thanks goes to two families, one is SES family (School of Environmental Science) where I started my professional life nine years back as an MSc student and the second is my own family. All the teachers, non-teaching staff and friends (again I can not list out since it is too long) are duly acknowledged for their support, encouragement and inspiration. I am just following the path drawn by Thomas sir, Satheesh sir and Ajay sir. In this walk, the immense support provided by my family (Pappa, mummy, brother, sister, brother-in-law and kids) empowered me to work hard and achieve the target. In all these, I keep my head down in front of my beloved wife, Anitha, for her patience, support, love and sacrifice. If I forgot to add any of the names, it is solemnly a mistake and please excuses me.

Shijo Joseph