Acknowledgements

It has been more than four years since I started this PhD experience, and now I find myself at end of this journey. This work reflects only scientific aspect of this journey, leaving to human side just these few lines. A PhD is a long way to walk, and during most of the time walk alone. However many people cross this way and give a hand, converting this long way in a wonderful trip. First of all, I wish to thank my supervisor Dr. S. Jayakumar, Department of Ecology and Environmental Sciences for his continuous guidance and encouragement during the present work. Dr. Jayakumar introduced me to the field of Remote Sensing and GIS. He was always supportive and encouraging with ideas. I am greatly indebted to my doctoral committee members Dr. G. Poyyamoli, Department of Ecology and Environmental Sciences and Dr. S. Gajalakshmi, Centre for Pollution Control and Environmental Engineering for their constructive criticisms and valuable suggestions throughout the research period. I would also like to thank Prof. Priya Davidar, Head of Department and Prof. N. Parthasarathy, Dean, School of Life Sciences and other teaching and non-teaching staff members for their help from time to time. I would like to extend my thanks to the Forest Department of Tamil Nadu and field staff of Mudumalai Tiger Reserve for permitting and providing me with all logistical support to conduct my fieldwork. I am thankful to UGC for providing me fellowship to conduct my research work. I would also like to thank my friends, Saurabh Bajpai, Saranya T S, Sharad Awasthi, M. Rajkumar, Pratheesh and Ekta for their constant support and encouragement, without which it would have been dead impossible to complete my research. I take this opportunity to thank my lab mates Dharmatma, Kuimi, Ajeet, Sathya, Nuti, Swapna, Ben and also other research scholars for providing a very friendly atmosphere, which helped me to conduct my research with ease. Last but not the least, I am extremely grateful to my parents as well as my other family members for their love, support and motivation throughout my
life. For those whose names are not mentioned, I express my sincere apologies and profound gratitude from the bottom of my heart.

Satyam Verma