ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want" Psalm 23:1

I humbly bow before the LORD ALMIGHTY for the benevolence, grace, guidance and blessings showered on me and keep me in good health in all my endeavors.

It is with due respect and sincere gratitude, I record my indebtedness to my Guide, Dr. S. Ravikumar, M. Sc., M. Phil., Ph.D., Senior Lecturer in Marine Biotechnology, Division of Marine Microbiology, Centre for Marine Science and Technology, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Rajakkamangalam for his constant encouragement, inspiring guidance, insightful ideas, counsel, motivation, keen interest, systematic and optimistic research approach to bring this thesis into existence. I sincerely thank him for skilled editing and improving the readability during the preparation of this thesis. He is much adorable not only to nurture my research career but also bring out the overall development and well being.

I am also grateful to the Vice-Chancellor and the Registrar of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli for giving me this opportunity for getting Research fellowship under USRF scheme. My profound thanks to Dr. N. Chandrasekar, Professor and Head i/c., Centre for Marine Science and Technology, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Rajakkamangalam for providing facilities. I am indebted to the faculty members and non-teaching staffs of our Institute. I thankfully acknowledge Dr. S. Babu, Lecturer in Microbiology for his valuable suggestions and timely support.

I owe many thanks to express my sincere thanks to the departed professor the late Prof. Dr. M. Peter Marian, former Head, Centre for Marine Science and Technology, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Rajakkamangalam for his focus to the problems of the Environmental Microbiology, constant support and encouragement. I also acknowledge my beloved former Teacher the Late Dr. R. Palaniappan, Prof. and Head, PG Department of Microbiology Sri Paramakalyani College, Alwarkurichi, for being my initial source of inspiration, who enignted the research interest which still enabling me to move toward my goal. May their souls rest in peace.
I immensely thankful to Prof. Dr. K. Kathiresan, CAS in Marine Biology, Dr. S. Nagarajan, Department of Chemistry, Annamalai University for their technological support to bring out this dissertation. I remember with acknowledgement the molecular work rendered by Dr. Ajaykumar, Scientist, Mr. Bijo V. Joseph, Ms. Smitha Soman and Mr. A. K. Anil Kumar, Molecular Microbiology Division, Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology, Trivandrum and Dr. R. Paul Murugan, Scientist, USA, Dr I. Bright Singh, Cochin University of Science and Technology for critically evaluated and gave suggestions for the betterment of the thesis. I emphasise the help rendered by Salt Department, Kanyakumari District, Statistics Department, Kanyakumari district, Government of Tamilnadu and Mr. Gopakumar, Research Assistant, Statistics Department, Government of Kerala for giving relevant information.

I acknowledge wholeheartedly the invaluable assistance rendered by my colleagues Dr. (Mrs.). T. M. Ignatimmal, Dr. (Mrs). S. Shanthi, Dr. S. Nazar, Mr. S. Nagarajan, Mr. G. Ramanathan, Mrs. A. Nural Shiefa, Mr. S. Krishnakumar, Mrs. N. Anitha, Mr. M. Babusevelam, Mr. S. Prakash, Mr. M. Syedali, Mr. M. Gnanadesigan, Mr. S. Jacob Inbaneson, Ms. P. Suganthi and Mr. P. Rajakumar at various levels.

I am very much obliged to my beloved professors, Dr. Sam Manohar Dhas, Department of Zoology, Dr. Reginald, Department of Botany, Dr. Isaac Samuel Nayagam, Department of Tamil, Scott Christian College, Nagercoil. I express my sincere thanks to the Chaplain, Fathers and authorities of Marthoma Students Centre, Nagercoil for their care, advice and showing their tremendous amount of faith in my capabilities. I acknowledge with thanks to all my fellow lab mates and to all my Friends, Relatives and Neighbours for their support and co-operation.

Finally, I express my heartiest thanks to Family members my Grandfather, Grandmother, Father, Mother, Brother and Sister in law and my little nephew for their continuous encouragement and support.

I thank Miss. P. Hema Mary for neat documentation and execution of this thesis.

Place : Rajakkamangalam
Date : 21.08.06

Prakash G. Williams